

Benson Bulletin

Benson, Vermont's Community Newsletter

December 2009

WOW!

Newly appointed Selectboard member Gina Cull's first fundraiser was a fantastic success! As Chair of the Town's Fundraising Committee, one of Gina's goals is to raise money to expand the activities and entertainment we have on Family Day and she's certainly off to a good start. Thanks to the generosity of so many local people who together contributed over 100 baskets for this event, as well as to a dedicated group of volunteers who helped wrap, set up, run AND cleanup, this event drew a huge crowd and raised \$1,775. If you are interested in serving on the Fundraising Committee or have ideas you would like to share, please contact Gina: 537-2063



MEETINGS/EVENTS THIS MONTH

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION/EVENT</u>
December 6	Sunday	4:30 pm	Town Office	Memory Tree Lighting
December 6	Sunday	5:30 pm	Community Hall	Community Christmas Party
December 8	Tuesday	6:30-8 pm	Community Hall	Benson Busy Buddies
December 8	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Benson School	School Board
December 10	Thursday	6:00 pm	Community Hall	Verd Mont FCE Pot Luck
December 10	Thursday	6:30 pm	Library	Energy Committee
December 14	Monday	11:30 pm	Community Hall	Senior Luncheon
December 14	Monday	7:00 pm	Town Office	Selectboard
December 16	Wednesday	6:00 pm	Benson Library	Book Group
December 16	Wednesday	6:30 pm	Benson School	Bingo
December 22	Tuesday	6:30-8 pm	Community Hall	Benson Busy Buddies
December 28	Monday	7:00 pm	Town Office	Selectboard

If you want more information – minutes of meetings, schedules, opportunities in Town - please remember to visit our Town's website: <http://www.benson-vt.com>

**Monthly Senior Luncheon
at the Benson Community Hall on December 14th**

We hope you've had time to build up an appetite after your Thanksgiving meal and that you will come and enjoy yet another fantastic feast with friends! Proposed menu: tossed salad, pot roast with gravy, boiled potatoes with parsley, winter squash, whole grain bread or rolls, cheesecake with strawberries, milk, coffee or tea. Suggested donation: \$3.50. Come join us!

For reservations, please call Deanna Britton by Friday, December 11th: 537-2971.

**TOWN OF BENSON
AUDITORS' NOTICE**

All reports for the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 and all budgets for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 are due in the Town Office by **January 5, 2010**. Anyone who received money during the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year must submit an accounting for that money.

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

Thank you!

Benson Auditors

Robert Butman, Sharrie Hanley, John Kubin

**TOWN OF BENSON
OPEN POSITION
PLANNING COMMISSION**

There is an opening on the Town of Benson's Planning Commission for a term which will expire in 2011. If you are willing to fill this position, please submit a letter of interest to the Selectboard by December 10, 2009.

ARE YOU REGISTERED YET?

If you plan to vote on Town Meeting Day, you need to be a registered voter. The deadline for becoming a registered voter in the Town of Benson is February 24, 2010.

Questions? Call Jan Ladd at 537-2611 Monday – Thursday, 8 a.m. – 12 or 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

GOOD CHEER!

Come and enjoy some at Westbrooke Garden's Open House on Friday, December 4th from 4 – 8 p.m., Saturday, December 5th from 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. and Sunday December 6th from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.



BENSON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Open Wednesdays, 3 pm – 7 pm and Saturdays 11 am – 2 pm

Our “REALLY THE LAST” Book Discussion Group of this season will be held on Wednesday evening, December 16th at 6 pm. We will be gathering warm thoughts and sun-drenched images for the upcoming winter and reading Frances Mayes' Under the Tuscan Sun. All are welcome to come and join us.

And, although our Book Discussion Group won't be meeting again until the spring, there are still many wonderful choices available to you in our library. Come visit and check out a good read – or a good listen!

CHURCH NEWS

Our Book Study Group continues on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. or Sundays at 11:00 a.m. We are reading Moments That Take Our Breath Away by James W. Moore and everyone is welcome to join us.

Mittens, hats and scarves are once again being collected at church and will be distributed to children in Benson. All donations will be appreciated.

If you would like to place a poinsettia in the church for the Sunday before Christmas (December 20th) and you would like it to be in honor of or in memory of someone, please contact Holly by December 13th.

On Sunday, December 14th at 4:30 pm we will be going caroling, spreading Christmas cheer in our community, and then coming back to the church for soup and cocoa. All are welcome to join us!

We are also going to be continuing our tradition of preparing four Christmas baskets to be delivered to families in Benson. If you are able to donate food items for these baskets, please sign up on the sheet in the church or contact Holly. We plan to deliver the baskets on December 20th.

Our Christmas pageant will be held on December 20th during the morning worship service. The play is called “Double Take!: A Christmas Pageant as Told by Matthew and Luke” by Dennis Harton. A few roles are still available and absolutely no rehearsal or experience is required to be in the audience.

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

But, you don't need to wait for a special event to join us. Every Sunday we have:

9:30 a.m. Choir Practice

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship

**Questions? Please contact Holly Noble: 802-446-3575 or
hollyberry530@yahoo.com**

MEMORY TREE LIGHTING

The annual Memory Tree Lighting will be held on Sunday, December 6th at 4:30 p.m. in front of the Town Office. This year the funds raised will be put toward the Benson Community Scholarship to benefit a Benson student graduating from FHUHS and going to college. If you would like to donate \$1 per name of your loved ones, please complete the forms available at G & L, the Benson Village Store or the Town Office. Questions? Call Jan Ladd: 537-3434.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Community Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 6th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Children can have their pictures taken with Santa, give Santa their Christmas letter or let him know what they want for Christmas, sing Christmas carols and enjoy planned activities and crafts. Light refreshments (hot dogs, cake, cookies, cider, hot chocolate, coffee) will be served. Children must be accompanied by an adult. If you plan to attend, please respond by Friday, December 4th to: Jan Ladd (537-3434), Marcia Anderson (537-2313) or Peggy Hunt (537-2110).

VERD MONT FCE

Verd Mont members have had a busy month. Charlotte Collett and Rita Charlton attended the Vermont FCE annual meeting that was held in White River Junction on November 6th and 7th. Charlotte and Rita, along with Dale Sweet, spent a creative evening at the Craft Night sponsored by the Rutland County FCE Council. Members also took part in the Craft Fair held at the Benson Village School on November 14th.

Members will meet on December 10th, at 6:00 PM, at the Community Hall, for a potluck supper and Christmas Party.

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."

HAVE YOU HUNG YOUR MISTLETOE??

Before you go up on your tippy-toes to hang your mistletoe in just the right spot, why not drop in for a balance brush-up at our local Bone Builders? Bone Builders can help you improve your balance and strengthen your bones so that you will remain in great shape and be able to reap all the benefits of having strategically hung mistletoe. Come and see what we're all about. Free fun and fitness, right here in downtown Benson every Monday and Thursday morning, from 9 – 10 am at the Community Hall.

WEATHERIZING FOR WINTER

As you know, the Energy Committee has been doing some weatherization work on the Community Hall. This is part of a Climate Change Grant from the State. The Community Hall is a particularly good example of a building which acts as a chimney: it is a tall, open structure where the heat generated down in the basement immediately rises to the ceiling of the meeting room. So we have begun the work at the top, by preparing for an additional 6-8" of blown cellulose insulation to bring the overall R factor to 40. First, the ends of all 60 rafter bays at the soffits had to be dammed up and a piece of "proper vent" pushed against the underside of the roof sheathing so that the blown insulation does not spill out into the soffits. Other areas where the insulation would spill over also had to be dammed with plywood.

The first thing which should be done in any weatherization project is to stop the wind from blowing through the structure or, as in this case, from escaping through the ceiling light fixtures. If you look up at those fixtures you will see they are framed by metal trim. On each fixture, as seen from the attic, one could see into the room below in several places- small holes where the trim snaps together or does not meet the ceiling flush. If all the small holes are added up on each fixture, they amount to about 1.5" square hole on each light. That amount times the twelve lights means there was an 18 square inch hole in the ceiling of the meeting room. The insulation around the lights bore this out, as it was black and dusty from years of leaking warm air. So here is what we did: Each light had a piece of aluminum sheet over it going from rafter to rafter. The two exposed ends of the fixture in the bays were closed with a piece of ply, nailed to the metal, and foamed into place. The gap between the fixture and the sheetrock strapping was also foamed to produce an airtight fixture. Also the chimney race has been flashed with aluminum and caulked to the masonry with temperature rated caulk. The chimney race was acting like a chimney, leaking warm air all the way from the basement.

Addressing climate change begins very locally; by crawling around in attics and basements and doing what you can to stop heat loss. And one of the best tools available for weatherizing is a can of foam. Relative to the benefits, a can of foam is cheap, and the results last as long as the building stands. When it gets colder, run your hand around windows, doors, baseboards, bulkhead doors, chimneys and especially masonry basement walls and if you feel cold air, foam it!

8th Grade Bottle Collection

Please remember that you can now "re-cycle" and help the Benson Village School 8th Grade Class raise money for their trip to Washington. There is a container for bottles and cans located just outside the Transfer Station.

All donations to this fund-raising activity will be appreciated!

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR!

If you are interested in serving your Town by running for any of the following positions, your petition, signed by at least seven registered Benson voters, is due in the Town Office by **4:30 pm Monday, January 25, 2010**:

Agent to Prosecute: one 1 year term

Auditors: one 3 year term

Benson Village School Board: one 3 year term and two 1 year terms

Benson Village School Moderator: one 1 year term

Cemetery Commissioner: one 5 year term

Delinquent Tax Collector: one 1 year term

First Constable: one 1 year term

Library Commissioner: one 5 year term

Listers: one 3 year term

Selectboard: one 3 year term and two 1 year terms

Town Clerk: one 3 year term

Town Moderator: one 1 year term

Town Treasurer: one 3 year term

Trustee of Public Funds: one 3 year term

Remember: You can only sign ONE petition for each open position!

BENSON BUSY BUDDIES 4-H CLUB

The Benson Busy Buddies 4-H Club has been super busy! In October we had a Business Meeting and made posters for National 4-H week. We also attended the School's Community Night where new members signed up. The club got to learn how to make ice candles at one of the project meetings and boy, was it wet and messy fun!

In November we learned how to make pillowcases with french seams. This was a great way for us to practice our stitching for when we do our Fashion Review projects next year. We also had a meeting to make different goodies for the Sunshine Baskets that we delivered on November 24th. The Cloverbuds learned how to make pumpkin bread and everyone else got to make either sugar cookies or chocolate chip cookies. The best part was when everyone got to learn how to paint the sugar cookies with dyed egg yolk. It was so cool!

In December we will be caroling at the Community Christmas Party at 5:30 and then sharing the fun with the seniors at Benson Heights after at 6:30. There are also two meetings planned for the month that will have fun craft projects! For more information about the Busy Buddies call 537-2089 or visit the 4-H website to learn more about 4-H!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

For the **January 1st** newsletter, please submit your news and ads no later than December 23rd. To submit your news, please either e-mail the information to

bensonnews@shoreham.net or call Sue Janssen at 537-3111

Submit your ads to Shirley Vladyka: ShirleyV@shoreham.net

BENSON VILLAGE SCHOOL NEWS

The Benson Village School PTO would like to thank everyone who helped make their annual Ziti Dinner a success! And, they would like you to know that their next project is the creation of a Benson Cookbook. Please help by sending in your favorite family recipe. Be sure to include the time it takes to make, the temperature it is cooked at and the servings it produces. Please send your recipe in to school in an envelope marked PTO recipes. We will send out more information about purchasing the cookbooks later in the year. Thanks for your support.

Benson Heights Senior Garden Report 2009

This spring the residents of Benson Heights and the Master Gardener program at UVM started the Benson Heights Garden off with a seed party in the common room. We potted up 4 dozen plants from donated seeds and made seed strips for tiny ones like lettuce and carrots that can be difficult to plant directly. This helped keep our costs down and it was a fun night out. We're already planning another pot up next spring, so if anyone has left over seeds from this year we'd be happy to give them a good home. Just drop them off in the common room or contact Christina Shaw for pickup.

Also new this year is a brand new set of raised beds and a salad table! Special thanks goes out to Russ Symons and Master Gardener David Graham for their help in getting these built and set up in the gardens. Our plot size was doubled this year thanks to Wesley Gates and his tractor. All that tilling makes it easier for us to plant more veggies.

We would also like to give a special thank you to Paul Parents & family for the donation of super great compost and Peter Parents who helped move all that black gold into place. We really couldn't have done it without you folks and it is greatly appreciated.

Star gardeners Fernande Washburn, Millie Ricketts, Bob Lester, and little helpers Katrina Shaw and Molly the dachshund, managed to keep the blight at bay and we were able to harvest tomatoes and potatoes all summer long. That's quite an accomplishment in such a wet season and they deserve a round of applause for their vigilance. We also managed to grow artichokes this year! Yes, Virginia, they really do grow in Vermont, and they are tasty!

The weeds got us in the end, but we did our best with lots of straw mulch. The new raised beds helped a great deal. Besides keeping the weeds in check, they're also easier for residents to harvest from and see the plants and herbs. We're hoping to add a few more next year.

See you in the spring - it'll be here before you know it!

Christina Shaw, Master Gardener Project Leader

email: icicle@shoreham.net or phone 537 -2027

THE MONEY HOLE STORY

If you read Mark Bushnell's '*X*' *marked many a spot in these hills* article in this past Sunday's Rutland Herald, you may have noticed that no mention was made of Benson. Yet, we were certainly included in the treasure hunting fad that was quite widespread in the Northeast during the 18th and early 19th centuries. With that in mind, we thought that this might be the time to retell Benson's story. The following undated article was originally published in the Fair Haven Era, probably in 1934-35.

The Money Hole
A Tale of Old Benson
By Ryland Benford

Many years ago, a Spaniard came to the little village of Benson, Vermont. He was a small, quiet fellow with the polite and courteous manner of a cavalier. He called himself Emilio. As far as Benson was concerned, this was the only name he ever had and this was speedily shortened to Milo. This dark-skinned son of Spain was mistaken by the natives for a Cannuck and, as the men from Canada were known to be good workers, he quickly found employment as a month man on one of the farms where he shortly became an accepted member of the family. Milo had his shortcomings as a farmer, but what he lacked in technique, he made up for in labor. His polite manner soon won the hearts of all the ladies in the community, both young and old. More than one tired husband or hired man who tracked mud into the kitchen or ate with his knife, heard Milo's virtues extolled – and sometimes at length – but there was a fly in the ointment: Milo never went to Mass or Meeting on Sunday, but spent his weekly holiday wandering hither and yon about the countryside.

His meanderings became a favorite subject down at the store evenings. These horny-handed, cracker-barrel philosophers could not see why a feller who had to tramp behind a plow or pull a bullrake six days a week wanted to tramp the hills and valleys on the seventh. One had reported seeing him way over by the swale; another had met him nearly down to the West Haven kitchen. When they questioned Milo on the subject, he told them one and all that he just loved to be out of doors.

One Sunday he took a shovel along, explaining that he had found a den of young foxes and that he was going to try and dig them out. But when the shovel became his constant and sole companion, Pete, the other hired man, asked him why he didn't go to China to get his foxes as he must have the hole nearly dug through by this time.

One night Pete had to get up to tend a foundered horse. He called to Milo to help him and, as he received no answer, he opened the door and found the bed empty. Milo was gone, lantern, shovel and all. Pete got the horse up alone and decided he would watch Milo nights. So, for a week he vainly watched the back stairs. One night, just as he was about to give up, he heard a shingle creak on the shed roof and...

...to be continued in the January 2010 Benson Bulletin.....

PLAY GROUP IN BENSON

The Rutland County Parent Child Center hosts a playgroup downstairs in the Community Hall every Wednesday from 9:30 – 10:30 am. Any child, age 0 – 5, from any town, is welcome to participate. Please bring a snack.

Questions? Call Lori at 775-9711.