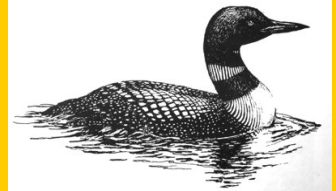


Town of Mount Vernon Community Newsletter



www.mtvernonme.org

December 2021 Edition

TOWN OFFICE STAFF

Town Office

Phone: 293-2379
Fax: 293-3507
clerk@mtvernonme.org
Mon 8am-6pm
Tue, Wed, & Thu 7am-3pm
Fri, Sat & Sun - Closed

Town Clerk & Tax Collector

Heather Wheeler @ 293-2379
clerk@mtvernonme.org

Deputy Clerk

Rachel Meader @ 293-2379
deputyclerk@mtvernonme.org

Treasurer

Kerry Casey @ 293-2379
treasurer@mtvernonme.org
Mon, Wed 10-12

Select Board

selectboard@mtvernonme.org

Anna Libby @ 951-2385
anna@mtvernonme.org

Paul Crockett @ 293-3000
paul@mtvernonme.org

Robert Grenier @ 293-2783
bob@mtvernonme.org

Select Board Admin. Assistant

Alice Counts @ 293-1105
Cell @ 714-403-6076
alice@mtvernonme.org
Mon, Tue & Wed 7am-3pm

Select Board Meetings are held every other Monday at the Town Office @ 1997 North Road

Warrant @ 6:30 pm
Regular Town Business @ 7:00pm

Planning Board Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Community Center @ 9 Main Street

TOWN DEPARTMENT STAFF

Animal Control Officer

Trish Davis @ 491-0410

Cemetery Sexton

Bob Grenier @ 293-2783
bob@mtvernonme.org

Code Enforcement Officer and Plumbing Inspector

Bill Butler Work: @ 293-2636
Cell: 446-6541
mtvernonceo@gmail.com
Tuesdays 8am-4pm

Fire Chief

Jason Beckler @ 293-2114
(non-emergencies)

General Assistance

Anna Libby @ 951-2385
anna@mtvernonme.org

Health Officer

Daniel K. Onion @ 293-2076

Rescue Director

Pat Rawson @ 293-2597
(non-emergencies)

Road Commissioner

Lee Dunn @ 242-5828

Tax Assessor

Roger Peppard @ 293-1105
3rd Thursday of each month
assessor@mtvernonme.org

Transfer Station

Megan Goucher @ 213-3523
Sat & Sun 8:30 am - Noon
May 1st thru September 30th open on Wednesdays from 3-6pm

Dr. Shaw Memorial Library 293-2565

Website: drshawlibrary.org
Email: librarian@drshawlibrary.org

Mon 3pm-6pm,
Wed 9am-12pm & 3pm-7pm
Sat 10am-3pm

*Masks Required.
Curbside always available.
Call or email us in advance.*

Mt. Vernon Post Office Hours Retail Window

Mon-Fri 7am-10am, 11am-2pm
Sat 9am-11am

Newsletter

All articles to be submitted by 25th of each month to

alice@mtvernonme.org

Paid Business Advertisements

- ◇ Business Card Size \$15/month
- ◇ 1/4 page \$25/month
- ◇ 1/2 page \$45/month
- ◇ Full page \$90/month

Select Board Meeting is now live:

You can find the link on MtVernonME.org under Government.

Scroll down to the bottom or click on this link

[Mount Vernon, Maine LIVE](#)

December Dates to Remember:

- **12-01-21—Community Center Board of Trustees in the Community Center at 7:00PM**
- **12-04-21—Christmas Tree Lighting from 5:00-7:00PM**
- **12-06-21—Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **12-07-21—Ridge Riders Snow Mobile Club in the Community Center at 7:00PM**
- **12-13-21—Girl Scouts Meeting in the Community Center at 5:15—6:45**
- **12-16-21—Tax Assessor is in town. Make your appointment early at 293-2379**
- **12-20-21—Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **12-21-21—Planning Board Meeting in the Community Center at 7:00pm**
- **12-24-21—Christmas Eve**
- **12-24-21—Christmas Day**
- **12-27-21—Girl Scouts Meeting in the Community Center at 5:15—6:45**
- **12-31-21—New Years Eve**
- **12-31-21—Deadline for Dog Licenses**

January Dates to Remember:

- **01-01-22—New Year's Day**
- **01-03-22—Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **01-04-22—Ridge Riders Snow Mobile Club in the Community Center at 7:00PM**
- **01-05-22—Community Center Board of Trustees Meeting via Zoom at 7:00PM**
- **01-10-22—Girl Scouts Meeting in the Community Center at 5:15—6:45**
- **01-17-22—Martin Luther King Jr Day**
- **01-17-22—Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **01-18-22—Planning Board Meeting in the Community Center at 7:00PM**
- **01-19-22—Mount Vernon Republican Committee in the Community Center at 7:00PM**
- **01-20-22—Tax Assessor is in town. Make your appointment early at 293-2379**
- **01-24-22—Girl Scouts Meeting in the Community Center at 5:15—6:45**
- **01-31-22—Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**

If you have something going on and want to post on this Town meeting page, please contact Alice Counts at 207-293-1105 or 714-403-6076

Mount Vernon needs your help!

Neighbors Driving Neighbors (NDN): is recruiting an Executive Director to start by the end of this year. If interested, please call NDN at (207) 860-0677.

Transfer Station: Looking for a year round person for Attendant to cover these hours: Sat & Sun 8:30 am – Noon;
May 1st thru Sep30th Wednesdays 3-6pm

Travis Mills Foundation: Looking for volunteers! <https://travismillsfoundation.org>

We have several Committees, Boards and Positions that are looking for volunteers. Please come and join us. You can contact Alice Counts at 207-293-1105, 714-403-6076 or Alice@mtVernonME.org for more information.

Athletic Committee is looking for the following:

Soccer commissioner - helps the Athletic Director plan the soccer season and meets with the other towns to plan the season which starts September 11, 2021

Baseball commissioner- helps the director plan the baseball season and meet with the other towns.

Softball commissioner- helps the director plan the softball season and meet with the other town.

Other Volunteers - help with the Athletic Director and Commissioners

We start planning for baseball/softball in February. We start the field work once the snow melts and the fields are dry enough to get gravel delivered.

Typical responsibilities:

- Helping collect registrations and importing registrations into a spreadsheet that is shared with other towns
- Helping plan volunteer days for clean up of the fields
- Helping get student refs for games
- Most communication is via email with typically one meeting in person per sports season.
- This is the link to our athletic committee page www.facebook.com/groups/185652524949106/

Broadband Committee

We're looking for someone who will work with our committee to:

- Find the best broadband solution for all of Mt. Vernon
- Attend committee meetings, usually once or twice per month
- Undertake tasks to help the committee communicate findings and alternatives to the town

Minnehonk Ridge Riders Snow Mobile Club

Next Meeting: Tuesday 12-07-2021

If you are using any of the Mount Vernon Winter Trails, you have the Ridge Riders to thank. They maintain 12 bridges and 28 miles of trails. Please contribute to this club with your donations and memberships in order to keep our trails safe and clear. These trails are using for snow mobile riders and cross-country skiers. Everyone is invited to our monthly meetings which are normally on the first Tuesday of every month at 700pm in the Community Center.

Membership fees are \$20/yr per individual or \$30/yr per family. Payable at the Town Hall. See Alice Counts.

Cash or Checks made payable to Minnehonk Ridge Riders.

President: John Karabin 207-480-0034

Mount Vernon needs your help! (Cont.)

Emergency Manager

Maine's Local Emergency Management Directors coordinate local response and recovery when more than one department is responding to a community emergency. This is usually accomplished in two ways: through the development of local disaster plans and mutual aid agreements and the establishment of an Emergency Operations Center. The local director does not replace or direct the police, fire, ambulance, or American Red Cross; he or she helps them work together in an emergency.

The Local Emergency Management Director also acts as a liaison to County Emergency Management. They can look to the County for technical assistance and training, and emergency access to needed resources, from neighboring communities, the State or the federal government.

Local Emergency Management offices vary widely depending on the hazards present, the size of the town and available funding. Most municipal Emergency Management programs have one person and little to no budget. However, the responsibility for the community does not go away just because the town is small.

When your community is struck by a hazardous materials spill, hurricane, ice storm, forest fire, flood, tornado or other type of disaster event, your municipal Emergency Management Director will step into action to manage the disaster.

Contact Alice Counts for further information at the Town Hall.

Budget Committee

The Town of Mount Vernon budget committee is currently comprised of four individuals. This committee serves in an advisory capacity to the selectmen. Our task is to explore thoughts and ideas that may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of town operations.

We meet most often during the months of late February through May - generally biweekly. We communicate as information is discovered between meetings during that time. The hope of this committee is to be more informed during the rest of the year through quarterly budget updates provided by town employees and officials. New members are always welcome and I would be happy to provide information and answer any questions. Please understand, the town budget is not just about numbers. This committee uses history, experience and common sense (in addition to spreadsheets :)) to make recommendations that help Mount Vernon avoid complacency and keep us moving in a forward and positive direction.

be the lead figure in the response and recovery efforts. And before a disaster event occurs, your local Emergency Management Director will be busy behind the scenes working on disaster plans, attending meetings, organizing training and exercises for your public safety departments and providing public information on disaster preparedness.

Handicap Equipment Available for loan AT NO CHARGE to Mount Vernon Residents:

Have friends visiting from out of state, have a temporary or long term need?

Mt. Vernon Rescue has a supply of hospital/rehab equipment for anyone to use at no charge. We have a hospital bed, wheel chairs, walkers, commodes, canes, crutches and shower seats. If you have need for any of these, call Pat Rawson, 293-2597 or Leslie Grenier at 293-2783 or Alice Counts (Admin Asst) at office: 207-293-1105, cell: 714-403-6076, Alice@mtVernonME.org

We ask that you keep these loaner items in the Town of Mount Vernon and return them to the Mt Vernon Rescue when you no longer have the need for them so we can loan them out to the next person.

We are looking to add to our Volunteer staff. If you know of anyone that might be interested, please share. Mount Vernon would cease to exist without our Volunteer help and support!

From the Mount Vernon Select Board

Greetings to our friends and neighbors,

We on the Selectboard are happy to have a third member once again! Welcome, Bob! Bob's previous experience on the Board has already been helpful, and Paul and I are looking forward to working with him as we continue to serve our town. If you see Bob, please thank him for joining us!

Another exciting update since our last note is that the work on the Cottle Hill bridge is now complete. Thanks to Lee for all his work on this project. Conversations about bridges will continue, however, as we are still exploring potential solutions for the Blake Hill Road bridge, which you may remember that the State is planning to close in the next 12 to 18 months (including to foot traffic). None of us want to see that happen, so various estimates are being gathered and potential funding discussed.

The updates continue with some good news from our friends on the Aging in Place committee. This group has successfully applied for a grant which will fund a health outreach program for our town along with the neighboring towns of Vienna and Fayette. We're excited to see this work happen, and we congratulate the team on this great proposal and project.

Over the coming months, look for more news and updates in this newsletter from other committees including our hardworking Broadband committee, who continue to explore the best ways to bring high speed internet to the town. The colder weather also means it is the time when our budget committee and ordinance review committee members gather to prepare materials and proposals for town meeting. We expect this work to begin soon, so keep your eyes out for updates on this over the winter. Thanks in advance to these committees for the work they will do on these projects.

There are many other folks in town to thank as well. The members of Mt. Vernon Rescue have been busy as always organizing the annual Giving Tree this season. Our heartfelt thanks to all of them and to everyone who donated to support this excellent cause. Many other volunteers are also helping keep things bright this holiday season. Our appreciation to the Community Center trustees for organizing the annual tree lighting, to the library for making sure we have something good to read while we sit by the fire, to the volunteers at the Food Bank for making sure our neighbors have food on the table, and to all the committees for all they do all year round to make this town a joyful place to live.

One final note, we are still looking for someone to join the team at the Transfer Station as the new transfer station assistant. Be in touch if you are interested in this position!

Wishing you all a season of light and hope,

Anna on behalf of the Board of Selectmen

The Mount Vernon/Vienna Giving Tree

Corona Virus Year 2

In the midst of the continuing pandemic, there will be a Giving Tree this year and there will be trees around Mt. Vernon and Vienna (Flying Pond Variety store, Dr. Shaw Library, both post offices). Similar to 2020, things will be different. There will be family requests for fuel (Berry Fuel) or groceries but Santa's Elves have decided to request only cash or checks for gifts for children. The elves will take these donations and purchase gift cards for parents to buy gifts for their children. This will give parents control over what their children will receive from Santa. In order to give parents time to shop, Santa is requesting that your contributions be dropped at Flying Pond Variety by December 1. Checks can be made out to Mt. Vernon Rescue Company and left at Flying Pond Variety or mailed to 970 Pond Road, Mt. Vernon, ME 04352. If you have any questions, feel free to contact elf Pat at 293-2597, call/text at 500-3306 or elf Leslie at 293-2783, call/text at 620-6448

FREE INCOME TAX SERVICES

The AARP Tax-Aide program provides free Federal and State tax return services. Tax-Aide volunteers are trained, tested and certified by the IRS to prepare returns for low and moderate income taxpayers, with particular focus on those over 60, but all are welcome!

Low income taxpayers should note that the only way they can receive the Maine Property Tax Fairness Credit and the Sales Tax Fairness Credit is to file a Maine Income Tax return. Even if you pay no income tax you may be eligible for these credits. These may be worth several hundreds of dollars, depending on your circumstances.

Covid-19 measures will be in effect at all sites. Taxpayers may be asked health-related questions. Masks will be required. Social distancing will be maintained as much as possible.

The free tax services are provided by appointment only by calling January 4th or later and are available at the following sites:

The Dr. Shaw Memorial Library in Mount Vernon (call 293-2565 when the library is open on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays). Tax dates are Tuesdays, March 1, March 15 and March 29, with April 12 as an additional day if needed. This site is intended primarily for Mount Vernon and Vienna residents.

The Cohen Community Center in Hallowell (call 377-8840 Monday through Friday, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm). Tax dates are Wednesdays and Thursdays, February 2 through April 14.



FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

Dr Jenn Cotone

The Big White Barn

169 South Road

Readfield ME 04355

207-620-2078

Cotonefamilychiro@gmail.com



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS - TREE LIGHTING

December 4th, 5-7PM

Mount Vernon Community Center beach

Cards, Christmas favorites, hot chocolate and hot cider, cookies galore!

Sponsored by Mount Vernon CC Trustees

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting of 11-08-21

Board Members Present: Paul Crockett (Chair), Anna Libby, Robert Grenier

Support Staff & Guests: Alice Counts (Administrative Assistant), Mark Gilbert (Ch 7), Kerry Casey (Treasurer), June Cauldwell (Community Center Chair, Safety Committee Chair)

Select Board Members Signed Weekly Warrant (6:30-7:00)

Meeting Called to Order

SB Meeting was Called to Order by SB Crockett at 7:00pm

Meeting Minutes of 10-25-21

Motion by SB Libby to accept the meeting minutes, 2nd by SB Crockett. Motion Carried. Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

Broadband Committee Update

new possibilities to cover (will Zoom for this)

Policy Updates

No Smoking Policy – Strike the reference to Schools 2) Add a further restriction ‘or within 25 feet of any entrance’ to the second sentence following ‘Mount Vernon’ 3) Strike Section 14.1 as it is now combined with section 14. Motion by SB Libby to accept the No Smoking Policy as amended, 2nd by SB Grenier. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

This qualifies the Town for a \$350 grant.

The remainder of the Policy Manual was tabled until the select board could further review. SB Crockett is looking for an updated version with regards to bidding that was passed in the January 2021 time frame and Treasurer Casey mentioned an update to Paid Time Off (PTO) stating that PTO does not extend after termination.

Insurance claim for “flood” and final wrap-up on the flooring project

Mattson dropped off one of two promised extra boxes of flooring. The second box has been ordered.

Mattson came in and laid the transition strip into the vault but did not cover the 4 inch strip in question. They will be back to lay a 4 inch vinyl strip as a solution to this issue.

Johnny Jones installed the new toilet

ARPA funds

Final Submittal was made, waiting on the funds to hit the bank

Emergency Manager

We are still looking for someone to fill this spot.

Blake Hill Rd Bridge project

SB Crockett thought it was better to go with DOT Engineering as he doubted the town would get the 60%. Need to convince the state that the underpinnings are fine. Need quote within 10%. The state will close this bridge to all traffic, including foot traffic if we don't reach an agreement.

Cottle Hill Rd Bridge project

This repair is underway

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting Minutes of 11-08-21 (Cont.)

Bean Rd paving

This project was finished today, 11-08-21.

Trio –

SB Crockett needs to close the loop with Harris.

Other Business

Selectmen Picture

A new group picture was taken to include our new Selectmen, Robert Grenier. Also an individual pic of SB Grenier was taken for the website.

Transfer Station Shed

Tom Brady volunteered to build, getting lumber bids, town will purchase the lumber. Tom Brady is also looking at a prefab solution with Hammond Lumber if he can get them to come down on pricing.

Spectrum Generations

Submitted their request for \$975, which is up from last year's donation of \$950. SB Crockett said we would stay with our \$950 request at Town Meeting.

Family Violence Project

Submitted their request for \$2000, which is what Town donated last year.

Oath for Overseer of the Poor and Assessor

SB Grenier was informed that he needs to sign two more oaths of office

Maps

Admin Asst Counts was asked to continue her effort on updating the Owner Index for the town maps. SB Crockett stated that Andy Dube with Diversified Drafting should have the maps updated by March 2022 provided we have the updated information to him in a reasonable time.

Clarification

Nancy Dunn did not retire, she resigned to pursue other opportunities.

Mileage rate went up to .45/mile effective 7-12-2019

Treasurer Casey verified that the Town was reimbursing for travel at the current price.

EPA/DEP

Some illegal dumping in wetlands has been reported by residents. They have contacted EPA/DEP several times with no response. The Select Board decided it was time for them to step in and contact the EPA/DEP. SB Grenier was tasked with this effort.

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting Minutes of 11-08-21 (Cont.)

Oldest Citizen

- Marjorie Jacobs and Dorothy Kent need to be added to Town's Oldest Citizen Placard.
- SB Grenier was asking if we could do the quilt again for Dorothy. June Cauldwell said she would reach out to Marie Hodgdon and Kathy Wilson regarding this possibility.

Vehicle Registration for 100% Disabled veterans

Free registration, title fee exemption and automatic excise exemption on one vehicle

Town Cleaner

Wendy Stevens has accepted this position. Town purchased a vacuum cleaner and new toilet.
Basement Trash and Toilet need to be hauled to the Transfer Station.

LUO Updates

Alice Counts has received redlines from SB Grenier and Sue Herman. The Peer Review Process continues.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Release of Liens

Treasurer Casey was tasked with providing the list of recipients to Sandy Wright requesting that they include this effort on their next CPC Meeting agenda and proactively look at each individual and sign off on these liens as appropriate.

Safety Quarterly Meeting

Meets Wednesday, November 10th at 6:00 in the Community Center

Minnehonk Ridge Riders Snow Mobile Club Meeting

Meets tomorrow November 9th at 7:00 in the Community Center

Solar Farms

Sue Herman would like the Ordinance Committee to look at Performance Standards for Solar Farms.

Department Mail boxes, Town Meeting Post it Board – Need to be hung

Obsolete Items

These items can be discarded.

Fire Drills

Library, Town Hall and Community Center held their first ever, annual Fire Drill on November 3rd and 4th.

Complaints

No television audio for select meeting.
Agenda not posted in a timely manner. Residents are requesting a 7-day notice.

Traffic delineators have been removed for the winter.

Adjourn

SB Grenier motioned to Adjourn at 8:40, 2nd by SB Crockett, Motion Carried. Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting Minutes of 11-22-21

Board Members Present: Paul Crockett (Chair), Anna Libby, Robert Grenier

Support Staff & Guests: Alice Counts (Administrative Assistant), Mark Gilbert (Ch 7), Kerry Casey (Treasurer), Barry Skilling, Maureen Brescia

Select Board Members Signed Weekly Warrant (6:30-7:00)

Meeting Called to Order

SB Meeting was Called to Order by SB Crockett at 7:01pm

Meeting Minutes of 11-08-21

Motion by SB Libby to accept the meeting minutes as written, 2nd by SB Grenier. Motion Carried. Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

Policy Updates

No Smoking Policy –Motion by SB Grenier to accept the No Smoking Policy as amended, 2nd by SB Crockett. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

This qualifies the Town for a \$350 grant. Alice Counts to Forward the signed copy of this policy to the Healthy Communities of the Capital Area.

The remainder of the Policy Manual was tabled until the select board could further review. SB Crockett is looking for an updated version with regards to bidding that was passed in the January 2021 time frame. Treasurer Casey is going to revise the following sections:

Chapter 7 Employee Wages and Benefits Disbursement Warrants – insert verbiage regarding when and how much of the stipend can be requested at once.

Chapter 8 Financial Policies Ordinance – this needs a total rework

Section 8.7.2 Tax Collector/Town Clerk – this is not currently how this job is performed

Section 10.3 Filing – Update or reword

Section 11.5.1 Work Week – massage this so that it applies to both the Town Hall and Transfer station.

Section 11.9 Sick Leave and 11.10 Personal Time – Replace with the new law regarding PTO

Section 11.11 Delete

SB Grenier stated that the Select Board needs to start considering benefits for employees to stay current with the other towns in this area.

Budget Planning for 2022 –

Treasurer Casey would like a spreadsheet for all payroll. She emphasized the fact that operating costs need to be considered and included in their budge estimates.

Emergency Manager

We are still looking for someone to fill this spot.

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting Minutes of 11-22-21 (Cont.)

Blake Hill Rd Bridge project

SB Crockett re-emphasized that the state will close this bridge to all traffic, including foot traffic if we don't reach an agreement.

If the Town wants the state to contribute 60% of the rebuild costs, then we need to build to the state's standard. This standard would require concrete columns to be constructed on solid ground with the footprint of the bridge expanded in both width and length. The new bridge would also have to be engineered. Barry Skilling, a concerned resident, recommended that we go this route because then if anything were to go wrong, the state would have ownership in this and would have to assume the majority of the liability.

Barry Skilling mentioned that we should check with the University at Orono to see if we could get a competitive bid for the engineering on this project and also look into a grant to possibly cover the Town's portion of this rebuild.

Annual Audit

Treasurer Casey stated the audit is currently in progress.

E911 Updates

SB Grenier will speak with Andy Dube regarding printing several 2x2 laminated maps which will be available for purchase to the community. These will also be available for Rescue, Fire, Planning Board, CEO and Town Office.

Trio –

SB Crockett stated there is a web version and a hosted version. The Town paid for the web version but did not implement it. He still has some questions that he needs to bounce off Harris Computers before making a final decision. He said he would try and arrange a Zoom Meeting between the Select Board, Clerks, Treasurer and Harris Computers to get these questions answered and better understand some of the problems that currently exist with the software.

Other Business

Map/Lot Index Updates

There is a new index to accompany the Town Map. There is a sort by name, by map/lot and by address.

These indices will be updated monthly so that the information contained within them will always be current. Alice Counts agreed to provide SB Crockett with an excel file so he can prepare it for Andy Dube at Diversified Drafting for inclusion on the Town Hall Map.

EPA/DEP

SB Grenier has been in contact with DEP as well as some of the residents regarding resolution to the reported dumping in the wetlands. SB Crockett asked SB Grenier to again talk with CEO Butler regarding this issue.

Oldest Citizen

Marjorie Jacobs and Dorothy Kent have been added to the Town's Oldest Citizen Placard.

Mount Vernon Select Board Meeting Minutes of 11-22-21 (Cont.)

Solar Farms

Ordinance Committee to Review the possibility in support of this for incoming tax revenue. This is go in front of the Town for approval. Decommissioning needs to be looked at to ensure that the owners of any future Solar Farms will take the responsibility of Removing their equipment from the land after it is no longer a viable source of energy.

Planning Board Training

The Select Board approved Alice Counts' request to attend the Planning Board training.

Computer Purchase for Administrative Assistant

The Select Board approved Alice Counts' request to purchase a new computer due to the many issues she has been experiencing with her current system.

Sign at Mooar Hill Road & Bean Road Intersection

Maureen Brescia, another concerned resident, recommended that a sign be placed on Mooar Hill Road at this intersection due to the fact that 3 vehicles in the past 2 weeks have ended up in newly graded ditch on the opposite corner. All 3 of these vehicles were turning left off of Mooar Hill Road and heading North on Bean Road. The corner was cleared 2 weeks ago to remove the blind corner and provide improved visibility to drivers, but it seems that with the new visibility, people are driving faster and more reckless than ever. There is concern that someone will be seriously injured if there is no deterrent.

Adjourn

SB Libby motioned to Adjourn at 9:03, 2nd by SB Grenier, Motion Carried. Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

Members of Girl Scout Troop 2096 enjoyed a visit with Mount Vernon Selectwoman Anna Libby in early November as part of earning their Democracy Badges. The girls got a tour, and had a great conversation about local government, including an explanation of the November ballot questions.

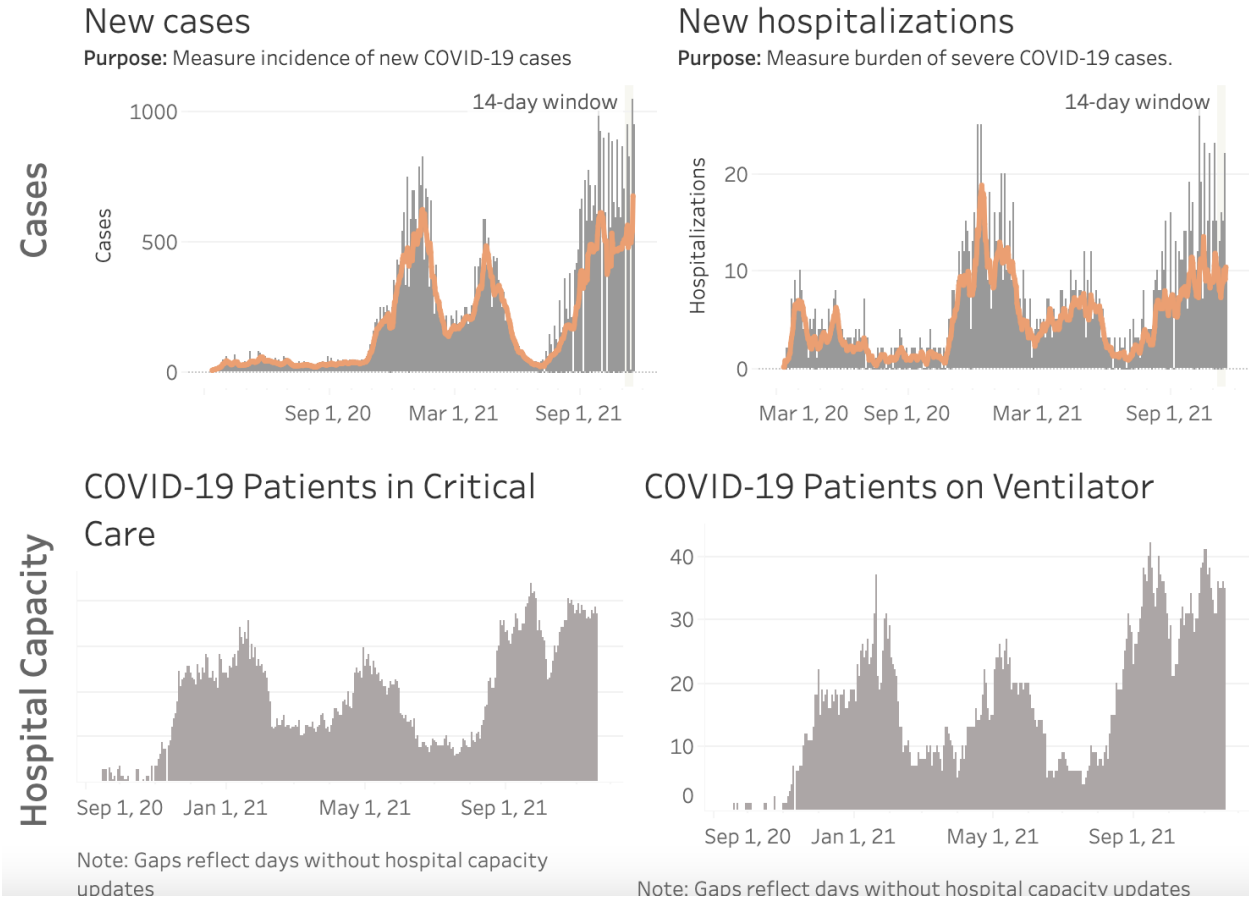


COVID19 SURGE and BOOSTERS UPDATES, plus ARSENIC IN THE WATER

Dan Onion, MD, MPH
Mt. Vernon/Vienna Health Officer
293-2076; dkonion@gmail.com
December, 2021

Lots going on; let's take these in reverse, most urgent, order

The surge of covid infections here in Maine continues to increase and now exceeds the first two (see graphs as of 11/18/21 below), undoubtedly due to the much more transmissible and virulent Delta variant, plus pockets of families and counties with lower vaccination rates than the rest.



People are often confused by the increasing numbers of “breakthroughs” in the fully vaccinated in cases and other outcomes, thinking those outcomes indicate vaccination failures. Rather, breakthrough numbers are increasing because vaccination rates (Maine at 73% or about 950,000 people) are increasing compared to the unvaccinated (25% or about 350,000). As the former goes up, the other goes down. If both groups were suffering similar case, hospitalization, ICU/Ventilator, and death rates, vaccinated people would be suffering 3 times as many of those outcomes as among the unvaccinated

COVID19 SURGE and BOOSTERS UPDATES, plus ARSENIC IN THE WATER (Continued)

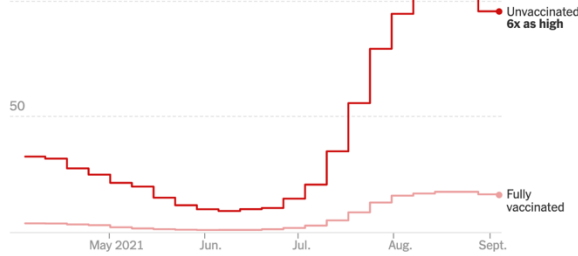
people. Instead, those numbers are way more the reverse; bad outcomes in the unvaccinated population are roughly 10 times the numbers in the vaccinated. That's called a "base rate effect," which is seen nationally as well (see graph below). That degree of protection, though, as in all medical treatments, is not 100%, is all the more impressive given that the breakthrough cases are seen predominantly in people with pre-morbid conditions (diabetes, immune suppression, chronic lung disease, etc), rates for which tend to be much lower in the younger and unvaccinated now.

Rates for vaccinated and unvaccinated

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that people who are unvaccinated are at a [much greater risk](#) than those who are fully vaccinated to test positive or die from Covid-19. These charts compare age-adjusted average daily case and death rates for vaccinated and unvaccinated people in the 14 states and two cities that provide this data. Learn more about [who had breakthrough cases here](#).

Average daily cases

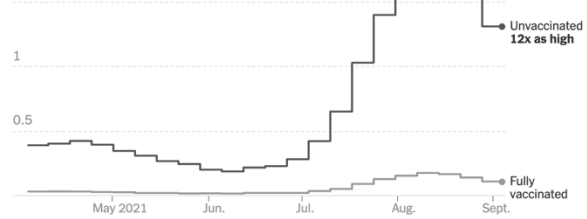
100 cases per 100,000



[About this data](#)

Average daily deaths

1.5 deaths per 100,000



Boosters: last month I urged all who qualified, to get boosters if more than 6 months out from a Pfizer or Moderna 2-shot series, or 2 months out from the single Johnson and Johnson primary immunization. Governor Mills and her staff have recognized how hard people are finding it to figure out if they qualify or not and have changed the rules so all people, no matter their age, can get boosters. The federal CDC continues to recommend restricting boosters to just high-risk people, but will likely liberalize in a similar manner soon. However, chain pharmacies like CVS, Walmart, and Walgreens may not open to all until the federal CDC makes that change. So, get a booster now! They work to increase your immunity!

Finally, Arsenic: As many in Vienna know, the Kimball Pond Rd spring has been recognized to have Arsenic levels consistently above the national safety guidelines and may have to close or have the risk to users mitigated in some way. I am exploring those choices with the owners, the Vienna Historical Society. Meanwhile, I've discovered one other nearby home on Kimball Pd Rd, where the owners have identified a similar elevation in their drilled well and have wisely gone to bottled drinking water to protect their young children and the parents as well. I suggested the town test the fire station drilled well, and that water's arsenic level is ok.

I worry that there may be other clusters of water sources where only 1 or 2 households have identified the high levels. I'd ask anybody, in any of my 3 towns, who may have found high levels of arsenic in their water, to let me know, even if you have remediated the problem. I will urge neighbors around such wells/springs to have their water tested to be sure they are safe.

Thank you and happy holidays.

Broadband Committee

For Mount Vernon Town Members

From The Mount Vernon Broadband Committee

Best wishes to you and yours for the holiday season. There's been considerable activity related to Maine and our town developing better Broadband services for its homes and members. Town (informed) support is the essential ingredient. Between now and the spring (April) town meeting, we need to know more about your interests and questions. In the next two months the Committee will be improving our communications efforts related to this initiative (see the Town Plan). If you'd like to connect with us in December, here are the email addresses of Bill Rosenberg (Committee Chair -william.h.rosenberg@gmail.com) and Ken Elliott (Communications -toby054646@gmail.com).

Art Work on Display?

Is there anyone that would like to display their Art Work in the Town Hall Reception Area? We are looking to add some color to our Town Hall and are interested in Displaying Your Art Work on a rotating basis. Please see Alice Counts in the Selectmen's Office for further information.

Dr. Shaw Memorial Library
December, 2021
Submitted by Mary Anne Libby

“When my father first took me to Ennis Library I went down among the shelves and felt *company*, not only the company of the writers, but the readers too, because they had lifted and opened and read these books. The books were *worn* by hands and eyes and minds...and I just loved it, the whole strange sense of being aboard a readership.”
Niall Williams, [History of the Rain](#)

Book sale: Right now, we can't accept more book donations, our sale shelves are overflowing. Our book sale continues, we have so much fiction and nonfiction to browse and buy. The winter holiday gatherings always provide a chance to do book exchanges – come grab a stack and share with friends, neighbors, and family!

Tax Help! Our Tax Gurus, David and Christine, are preparing to offer their annual tax help days. They will offer appointments at the library on Tuesdays, when we aren't open to patrons, so we can keep the building from being too crowded and folks can stay physically distant in order to protect health. Right now, David hopes the dates for appointments will be March 1st, March 15th, and March 29th. Appointments at the library are meant to serve primarily Mt. Vernon and Vienna residents. We hope to be ready to accept phone calls requesting appointments after January 4th. We will update any new information on our Facebook page and our website, if plans change.

'Tis the season: this month, Alice will do a holiday story video for our Facebook page and she will devise more Take&Makes to hand out. Let us know if you want some for your children. You can leave a message on our Facebook page, email us at librarian@drshawlibrary.org, leave a phone message at 293-2565, or just sign up next time you come in. And, as we do each year, we are starting to put some winter holiday books out on the children's table. Come in and grab a couple for some cozy family reading time. Jan Brett is always a popular author for holiday and winter themes!

Many of our patrons have signed up for Hoopla, the online streaming service we subscribe to so patrons can watch or listen to some free videos, music, ebooks, and more each month. This month, they are offering a few Hallmark Christmas movies, and have some children's activities to explore. Let us know if you need help signing up for this service. You simply need your email and the barcode number from your library card (we can also give you that number if you have misplaced your card).

The night sky is so beautiful during winter months. There are a few astronomy sites for young patrons to explore, which might help expand their wonder and awe and curiosity. The sites feature either constellations or planets:

<https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html>

<https://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

<https://www.planetsforkids.org/>

<https://planetarium.ipisd.org/Subpage.aspx?id=282>

<https://www.astronomy.cafe/astronomy-for-kids-the-constellations-of-winter/>

I have just started reading Colm Toibin's [The Magician](#). It is historical fiction featuring Thomas Mann as the main character. Toibin's writing is so engaging. We have a few more of his novels, if you get drawn in (once I return it). What are you reading during winter's long evenings?