

# Town of Mount Vernon Community Newsletter



[www.mtvernonme.org](http://www.mtvernonme.org)

January 2023 Edition

## TOWN OFFICE STAFF

### Town Office

Phone: 207-293-2379  
Fax: 207-293-3507  
[clerk@mtvernonme.org](mailto:clerk@mtvernonme.org)  
Mon 8am-6pm  
Tue, Wed, & Thu 7am-3pm  
Fri, Sat & Sun - Closed

### Town Clerk & Tax Collector

Heather Wheeler @ 207-293-2379  
[clerk@mtvernonme.org](mailto:clerk@mtvernonme.org)

### Deputy Clerk

Rachel Meader @ 207-293-2379  
[deputyclerk@mtvernonme.org](mailto:deputyclerk@mtvernonme.org)

### Treasurer

Kerry Casey @ 207-293-1103  
[treasurer@mtvernonme.org](mailto:treasurer@mtvernonme.org)  
Mon, Wed 10-12

### Select Board

[selectboard@mtvernonme.org](mailto:selectboard@mtvernonme.org)

Anna Libby @ 207-951-2385  
[anna@mtvernonme.org](mailto:anna@mtvernonme.org)

Robert Grenier @ 207-293-2783  
[bob@mtvernonme.org](mailto:bob@mtvernonme.org)

Carl Rogers @ 207-200-8058  
[carl@mtvernonme.org](mailto:carl@mtvernonme.org)

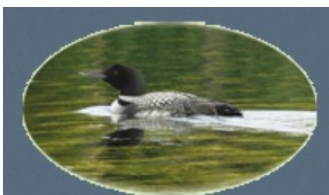
### Select Board Admin. Assistant

Open position

**Select Board Meetings are held  
every other Monday at the Town  
Hall 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 Dr Shaw Memorial  
Library @ 344 Pond Road**



## TOWN DEPARTMENT STAFF

### Animal Control Officer

Eric Johnson 207-931-7684  
dogs, cats and other domesti-  
cated animals only.

### Cemetery Sexton

Bob Grenier @ 207-293-2783  
[bob@mtvernonme.org](mailto:bob@mtvernonme.org)

### Code Enforcement Officer and Plumbing Inspector

Bill Butler Work: @ 207-293-2636  
Cell: 207-446-6541  
[CEO@mtvernonme.org](mailto:CEO@mtvernonme.org)  
Tuesdays 8am-4pm

### Fire Chief

Jason Beckler @ 207-293-2114  
(non-emergencies)

### General Assistance

Anna Libby @ 207-951-2385  
[anna@mtvernonme.org](mailto:anna@mtvernonme.org)

### Health Officer

Rachel Criswell, MD

### Rescue Director

Pat Rawson @ 207-293-2597  
(non-emergencies)

### Road Commissioner

Lee Dunn @ 207-242-5828

### Tax Assessor

Roger Peppard @ 207-293-1105  
3rd Thursday of each month  
Call Town Office for Appointment  
[assessor@mtvernonme.org](mailto:assessor@mtvernonme.org)

### Transfer Station

Megan Goucher @ 207-213-3523  
Sat & Sun 8:30 am - Noon

### Dr. Shaw Memorial Library

207-293-2565  
Website: [drshawlibrary.org](http://drshawlibrary.org)  
Email: [librarian@drshawlibrary.org](mailto:librarian@drshawlibrary.org)

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

*Masks appreciated.  
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:**

[newsletter@mtvernonme.org](mailto:newsletter@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 Meetings are now live streamed here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/  
UC3UCAtx3K5rqMCNAcBCqnLQ/live](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3UCAtx3K5rqMCNAcBCqnLQ/live)

## From the Clerk:

New Office Hours starting in January 2023:

Monday 9-5. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 7 AM to 3 PM.

To avoid a \$25 fine, please license your dogs this month!!

The clerk's office will be closed on MLK Jr. Day on 1/16/23

## From the Select Board

Happy New Year to our Mount Vernon residents and vacation homeowners!

We are at the start of 2023 ready to move forward with all the activities needed for the upcoming year. The end of 2022 gave many of us a double wallop from storm activity. First, we had a foot of very heavy snow that brought down many power lines and then we had a warm up with heavy rain and high winds that again took aim at our electrical and utility infrastructure. CMP crews worked feverishly to restore power after both storms to get critical power back to our homes and offices. Hats off to the dedicated electricity, cable and telephone workers who restored our utilities!

George returned to his post at the transfer station after being on medical leave for much of the Fall season. Bob spent many of his weekend days handling the recycling compactor while George was out. Thank you Bob! We also worked with Lynn Martin, a consultant, to help us generate safety manuals needed to meet Department of Labor (DOL) requirements for the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, Town Office, Library and Transfer Station. Our public works department led by Lee transitioned to being a contractor to the town instead of his crew being town employees starting January 1, 2023. A lot of work was put into bringing our management of employees into compliance with DOL rules. Thank you to all who helped with this effort.

The Governance Committee is continuing to research whether transitioning to a Town Manager type role makes sense for our community. This is a discussion that was started multiple times over the past several years. As our employee base, budget and day to day management responsibilities grow, it is important to assess whether a Town Manager would allow our town to better fulfill our daily operational mandates. We are reaching out to other communities to get a better understanding for why they chose to move to a Town Manager approach and determine whether they achieved the benefits they expected. We anticipate a lot of additional discussion on this topic and recognize this would likely take 1 to 2 years to implement if the community agrees.

Other tasks currently under review and consideration include: 1. Finding a new town attorney to replace Tom Corey who indicated he was too busy to handle our legal needs. We will be interviewing a replacement town attorney in January. 2. Getting bids for generators for the town office and the community center. 3. A part time social worker was hired to work with the Aging in Place committee to ensure we meet the needs of our older citizens who want to continue living in their homes. 4. We adopted the updated state General Assistance Ordinance (new rates and some changes in language). 5. A discussion is starting on junk yards and the process needed to maintain junk yard status. 6. We are revisiting purchasing accident insurance for volunteers. Many communities suspended volunteer insurance when COVID hit. Unfortunately, we had a volunteer recently injured at the community center. 7.

We are replacing the chains at the transfer station next to the dumpsters with gates to reduce the chance a person can fall into the dumpster when dumping trash. 8. We are interviewing candidates for the administrative assistant position. We expect to make a decision imminently. As you can see, there is a lot being worked on by the selectboard. We look forward to your input regarding opportunities to address current concerns and improve our community.

We hope you have a safe, healthy and happy New Year in 2023. Am I the only one looking for more seasonal weather?

Carl and the Selectboard.

### **Mount Vernon Volunteer Fire Department news – from Chief Beckler**

The fire department meets the first four Thursdays of each month. The first Thursday is set aside for training and meeting, and the second Thursday is set aside for mandatory equipment checks. The third Thursday is set aside for training, and the fourth Thursday is set aside for station work whether it be on equipment or on the buildings themselves. December was a very busy month with weather events, answering calls for down power lines trees in the roadway as well as the normal calls like carbon monoxide and chimney fires, car, fires, and fire alarms.

Six of our firefighters will be starting to train with other firefighters from the Lakes Region Mutual Aide learning Firefighter 1 & 2. Once completed these firefighters will be fully certified to work most any call we respond to. There is still time to join in on this class. It's only offered every 3 to 5 years so now's the time to join if you want to get right to work as a firefighter. If you don't want to go into burning buildings that's ok too we can train you for the areas you want to work , like traffic control or even office paperwork. We'd love to work with you. The end result is being a part of a great group of people that are dedicated to helping their community.



**Mount Vernon Community Partnership Corporation,  
Inc. (CPC)**

### **DO YOU LIVE IN MOUNT VERNON AND NEED FUEL ASSISTANCE?**

The Community Partnership has a fund that **may** be able to help. Do the following first:

- Contact Anna Libby, General Assistance Manager for the Mount Vernon Select Board, at 293-2532. Make an appointment to meet with her and apply for town assistance. She'll determine if the town can help or she'll contact the CPC and request our help.
- If you qualify to get food at the Food Bank, when you go there to get your weekly food, let them know you need fuel assistance. They will contact the CPC.

#### **January Dates to Remember:**

- **01-02-23— Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **01-03-23— Board of Appeals meeting (training only, no new appeals being heard)**
- **01-04-23—Community Center Board meeting at 6:00 PM**
- **01-04-23 —Ordinance Review Committee—6:30 at the Library**
- **01-05-23—Governance Committee at the library 6:30PM—Public hearing on remote meeting policy**
- **01-07-23—Community Breakfast at 9 AM at the Community Center**
- **01-14-23—Fundraiser breakfast at 9 AM and the Community Center—for the heating assistance fund**
- **01-16-23— Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**
- **01-18-23 — Planning Board at the CC. 6:30 PM**
- **01-30-23— Select Board Meeting in the Town Hall at 7:00PM**

If you have a meeting you want to post, please Email [newsletter@mtvernonme.org](mailto:newsletter@mtvernonme.org)

## **Mount Vernon Selectboard Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2022**

Attending: Select Board: Bob Grenier (chair), Anna Libby, and Carl Rogers

Kerry Casey (Staff)

Governance Committee: Susan Herman, Sandy Wright, Kathleen Farrin, Barbara Skapa and Cathy Jacobs

Guests: Bill Smith, Aaron Berls, Barry Skilling, Alice Counts, Doug Stevens, and Kathy Smith

Charlie Baeder and Anthony Wilson (7 Lakes Alliance)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Bob Grenier

A motion was made to accept the amended minutes for 11/7. Motion was seconded by Anna – Approved 3-0.

### **7 Lakes Alliance** – Charley Baeder and Anthony Wilson presented

- Grant funds were awarded that are good for 2 years for roads
- Grant funds are about \$57,000
- Will need matching funds from town
- Can put more money into one road than another
- Baeder to meet with budget committee to work on budget allocations
- Need separate warrant to match funds
- Talked with Lee about road projects that could be funded, can include ditching, culverts and roads
- Need to use the funds or lose them
- December 24 2023 end date – need to coordinate with town's fiscal year.
- Need to look at which roads
- Anthony Wilson is Director of Communications for 7 Lakes Alliance.
- Would like to get an article for a warrant
- Anthony to leave brochure behind

Flag pole with flag presented – Bill Smith requested that each SB meeting start with Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Governance Committee** – Sue Herman discussed prior recommendations

- Nov 10 – Committee felt it was important to talk to SB about the town office coordinator as previously recommended as an interim step to the town manager role
- Original committee made recommendation 2 years ago
- Documents to be put on the town website for all to review
- Town clerk, tax collector position descriptions were approved
- Bob - Need someone who can manage the town. SB cannot manage employees effectively day to day.
- Need someone in a position to exercise supervisory role.
- As envisioned by the ordinance committee, the town office coordinator does not have supervisory capabilities.
- Bob feels we need someone with supervisory capabilities who can manage employees.
- Our town charter would need to be updated to adopt a town manager type role as this role would deviate from our existing charter.
- Suggestion made to try an interim step, a full fledged administrator but would need direction from SB. Wayne, Fayette and Readfield have town managers.
- Town office coordinator is not a supervisory role.

## **Selectboard Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2022 Continued**

- Recommendation to increase hours to 25 from 12 and to know TRIO
- Town manager could require approximately \$100k per year
- Consider a contract position for 2 to 3 years
- A part-time town manager may not yield the benefits we are looking for.
- Possible example – Durham in Androscoggin County
- Identifying what a town manager may need to do may not be ready for our annual town meeting. Need to vote 90 days prior to the town meeting.
- Hire office assistant now to begin getting the office cleaned up – then decide what more is needed.
- \$19.00 to \$20.00 per hour may not be sufficient to get the level of capability needed
- Position should be able to bring in money through grant development
- This will be at least a year long process. People who are getting benefits may be a good target for this position.
- There have been savings from not having an admin assistant since July
- \$19.00/hr. for 32 hours for planning board
- Committee is looking for a commitment will not be put on a shelf

### **Transfer Station –**

- Bob purchased gates – gates should be up next week but no later than 2 weeks
- All residents need to show Transfer Station passes going forward
- George's shed – won't pass Dept of Labor inspection
- Sheds at Hammond are \$3K
- Suggestion made to ask for donations and Labor
- Possibly seek student labor, i.e. Foster Tech in Farmington.

### **North Road Drainage**

State doesn't have the drain catch basin. We'll probably need to wait to complete until the Spring

### **Safety Procedures –**

- Fire and Rescue are complete
- Library is complete
- Lynn set up their books
- Jason has done a great job at FD
- Town Office is scheduled for December 12
- Need to set up procedures for each department

### **Cemetery – Spring Hill –** Need to cut prune leaning tree

Bob reported he reached out to 4 contractors but doesn't have a bid yet.

**Planning Board** – needs to write up a procedure when appointing a person to have MMA Training within 6 months and every 3 years after that to ensure planning board members are kept up to date

- Bob motioned that we buy an OWL for planning board meetings but motion was retracted
- Discussion about the need for a computer for planning board.
- Bob asked why computers and monitors haven't been purchased. Bob to contact Scott

**Financial Audit** – Samantha Ruggles – scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup>. Need to be sure we are not late this year.

## **Selectboard Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2022 Continued, 2....**

**Discussion about using Trio for budget and another package for payroll** – Kerry suggested using a payroll service that communicates with Trio for budgeting purposes.

Payroll services will do all of the servicing – as opposed to the payroll package

Trio and payroll to do a presentation

Ask about getting Paychex to do a presentation

Ask about getting a demo from Payroll Management, a Maine based company – used by Waterville

**MMA did an ordinance for GA** – To be included on the agenda for our next meeting.

Aging in Place was to recommend a person to hire but Pat was not in attendance.

Meeting on December 12 @ 10:00 with Lynn Martin to go over the transfer station and town hall safety procedures .

**Bob made a motion that the SB go into executive session per MSRA 405 (6)(A) at 8:29**

No decisions in executive session. Executive session ended at 9:07

Meeting adjourned at 9:07

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## **Mount Vernon Selectboard Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2022**

Attending: Select Board: Bob Grenier (Chair), Anna Libby, and Carl Rogers

Kerry Casey (Staff)

Guests: Aaron Berls, Kathy Smith, Bill Smith

Joe Kelly (Harris) (Guest)

The meeting was called to order at 7:01

A motion was made to accept the amended meeting minutes from November 21, 2022. Approved 3-0

### **Payroll systems – Joe Kelly from Trio discussed Trio's capabilities**

- Trio payroll module – goes with Trio, does "anything" payroll related that's needed.
- Trio system is software – put in hours or stipend amount. 941 report, has budgetary capability
- Trio does withholdings, prints a paycheck
- Kerry – indicated we have to pay by EFT. To do so, one has to create an EFT voided check
- Process is to upload ACH to our bank, bank then vets the ACH transfer file – discussion about stricter security requirements from the bank.
- For direct deposit, once employee is setup, upload ACH to the bank.
- There is 1 ACH file for all employees which is sent to the bank. Can get a paper voided copy or email.
- Kerry is interested in a payroll service provider like Paychex or Payroll Management
- Payroll reports/register
- Service provider handles changes in laws automatically, have all Maine requirements including new hire reporting file
- Discussion about Trio pricing \$3595.00 1 time plus \$2695 yearly M&S for up to 62 employees
- Payroll service provides freedom from liabilities
- Joe to get pricing for payroll services offered by Trio as well as more definition about the services Trio will be offering. Joe indicated Trio intends to begin payroll services offering in January.
- Joe to inquire about a trial for Trio services. Need an Excel spreadsheet with selected fields for conversion.
- Does Harris (Trio) take the liability? Joe to get more details

### • **Selectboard Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2022 , Continued**

- Kerry indicated we are planning to do a 1 year trial with Payroll Management but would consider coming back to Harris next year to see where Harris/Trio is
- Joe indicated Harris will have payroll services in place by January of 2023.
- Data would remain on site
- Joe was asked to review our current modules to see if there are any that could be eliminated if we were to implement payroll services.
- Bob moved that we proceed with Payroll Management Services for 1 year. Approved 3-0.
- Suggestion was made that we cross train someone on staff to learn what to do in the event Kerry is out sick.

### **Transfer Station – Rain gear**

- Anna made a motion that the town purchase 3 sets of rain gear for transfer station employees including bib overalls and a hooded jacket. Funds are to come out of the transfer station budget. Approved 3-0.
- Safety inspection with Lynn scheduled for 12/12
- New shed for George will cost \$2250 plus a donation if purchased from the Technical School.
- Discussion about using the shed Lee has that is half full. May be able to put the signs, etc. that are in the shed into the end of one of the empty trailers and haul the existing shed to the recycle compactor area.

Admin Assistant – to be discussed in executive session.

### **Governance Committee –**

- Looking for Governance Committee to come up with a recommendation for town manager type role
- Ask Governance Committee to meet with other town managers to get better understanding of what other town managers handle
- Will a town manager require a 3-year contract with benefits? Concern that year 1 may be good but if something happens, want to be sure town gets value in years 2 & 3.
- Need list of responsibilities, a job description.
- Bob described Belgrade which has a town manager, town clerk and treasurer who all work collaboratively to get things done. The Selectboard still approves activities.  
A town manager won't input data directly.

### **Safety Procedures – Lynn Martin**

- Lynn Martin to meet with Megan at the transfer station on 12/12 in the morning.
- Lynn will meet with Kerry and Heather on 12/12 in the afternoon.
- Public Works will not have to work through safety procedures as Lee's team will begin submitting invoices as a contractor rather than as employees.
- Lee will bill the town as a business contractor
- Need to work up a contract with Lee.
- Already paid \$1850.00 for public works safety procedures. Lynn to refund funds.

### **Generators – Looking for bids for the town office and community center**

Current bids are from May.

Mid-Maine Generator

Kaplan Electric to look at the breaker panel.

Will go through procurement procedure – need at least 3 bids

### **Town Attorney – Tom Carey Resignation**

Tom wrote to the Selectboard to indicate he is too busy to continue as Mount Vernon's town attorney. He recommended that we consider Amanda Meader who worked with the town on the ballot language for the broadband warrant.

Bob made a motion to accept Tom Carey's resignation as town attorney – Approved 3-0

## **Selectboard Meeting Minutes – December 05, 2022 Continued, 2....**

### **Junk Yards**

Bob to talk with Bill about conditions

### **Town Office hours change**

The town office will change it's hours on Mondays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM instead of the current 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Heather presented records of the very limited number of transactions that occur after 5:00 PM. She recommended the hours be reduced to more better fit their authorized hours.

Question came up about whether the town voted for a specific number of hours that the town office be open – there is no requirement for number of hours.

**Workers Comp rates are going up by nearly 50% next year.** Claims look back over 3 – 5 year period

### **Community Center – Exterior work began**

permit from the DEP was received. Ellis brothers began work on the CC. All paperwork is now in except paper to work near the water.

### **Purchase of OWL for Planning board meetings**

The OWL used for Selectboard meetings was purchased with money from broadcast people. They indicated they don't want the current OWL to be taken out of the town office.

Bob made a motion to purchase an OWL for Planning Board meetings but retracted the motion.

Kerry recommends we wait until the town meeting to purchase the OWL. Bob indicated there is \$36,000 in contingency funds

To use the OWL, we need a laptop. Bob indicated we should have a laptop.

We will wait until the next town meeting

### **Drinking spigot at the fire department**

Received a request from a resident to test the water at the fire department.

Question came up about who would do the testing. We don't have resources to do the testing.

Carl to write MMA about testing requirements for a public drinking spigot.

Selectboard went into Executive Session on personnel matters at 8:49 per 1 MRSA 405-(6)(A)

Select board came out of executive session with no decision at 9:00

Bob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00. Approved 3-0.

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## **Mount Vernon YouTube channel**

You can watch the Select Board meeting LIVE now on YouTube at the link below. When we have enough subscribers, we can name our own link. Please help Mount Vernon to achieve our own dedicated YouTube Link. All we need is 100 subscribers.



Follow this link and then hit the subscribe button. The current URL is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3UCAtx3K5rgMCNAcBCqnLQ/live>

Once we have 100 subscribers, the channel would be something like <https://www.youtube.com/townofmountvernon> instead!



## Heating - and other resources in Mount Vernon

With prices for many essential items going up and the temperatures growing cooler, we know many families struggle to make ends meet. Here are a few resources that might be able to help.

Home Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP) through KVCAP - This is a great place to start! You can schedule an appointment online or give them a call. They have a list on their website of the paperwork you'll need, as well as the guidelines for eligibility. Their website also has a handy list of other local resources - please check it out.

General Assistance - This is a state program that is administered through the municipalities. It is meant to help provide temporary assistance with fuel, utilities, food, housing, non-elective medical necessities, and basic services essential to maintain a household; services provided on a case by case basis and with income restrictions.

CPC - Our local Community Partnership Corp - a non-profit here in town that helps make Mt. Vernon a great place to live - has a heating fund to help provide assistance to families in town who are in need. You may be referred to this fund if you are not eligible for GA. If you are lucky enough to have extra resources this season, please consider a donation to help support this fund - details below!

Weatherization program - You may be eligible for programs that will loan you funds or help cover expenses for repairs or upgrades to your home that will help lower your heating bill. Learn more about these at [efficiencymaine.com](http://efficiencymaine.com) or through the HEAP application process with KVCAP (mentioned above).

Electric bill assistance - There are some limited programs to help with your electric bill if you have seen increases in those costs as well. You can learn more at [MaineElectricHelp.com](http://MaineElectricHelp.com).

To help stretch your dollars, there are also local resources to help provide you with food. These include:

Mount Vernon Food Bank - Located at the First Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon, this food bank is open on Saturday mornings from 9:30 to noon.

Maranacook Area Food Pantry - Located at Maranacook Community School in Readfield, pick up is on Thursday afternoons and more information can be accessed by contacting Kim at [kim\\_fletcher@maranacook.com](mailto:kim_fletcher@maranacook.com)

Here in Maine we also have some resources to help you find local organizations that may be able to help. These include:

211 - Either via the website or by dialing 211, this resource is meant to help you find local organizations that can help with any challenges you have.

Emergency mental health number - If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, you can dial 988 to be connected with resources to help.

*Do you have some extra resources this winter? Please consider a donation to the heating oil fund! You may send your checks to the Community Partnership (made out to MVCPC) and mail them to Sandy Wright, 1664 North Road.*



**KEEP A MOUNT  
VERNON  
FAMILY WARM  
THIS WINTER**

**DONATE TO THE  
MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY  
PARTNERSHIP'S  
FUEL ASSISTANCE FUND**

**TAX  
DEDUCTIBLE**

**AND A  
REALLY NICE  
THING TO DO**

You may send your checks to the Community Partnership (made out to MVCPC) and mail them to Sandy Wright, 1664 North Road.

We work with the Board of Selectmen's General Assistance Manager and the Food Bank\* to help people who need fuel or firewood.

(\*People needing fuel assistance must apply to the above before assistance can be given. For more information, contact Sandy at 293-2582 or [scwright@fairpoint.net](mailto:scwright@fairpoint.net).)

**Dr. Shaw Memorial Library**  
**Phone: 293-2565**  
**Email: [librarian@drshawlibrary.org](mailto:librarian@drshawlibrary.org)**

"Isn't it splendid to think of all the things there are to find out about? It just makes me feel glad to be alive – it's just an interesting world."  
L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables

First -- **Thank you to all of our volunteers**, who make our service to the community possible. We have such good-hearted, fun, committed people working along with us. Your support helps to keep us moving forward.

**Events Email List:** We have started sending out a group email to people of the Metroplex each Wednesday, to help keep folks informed of community events or happenings in the area. If you would like to be on the email list, please email us at [librarian@drshawlibrary.org](mailto:librarian@drshawlibrary.org) and use the word **Events** in the subject line, and request that we add you to the list. If you have an event or information you would like to send out to the community, please also email us, and use Events in the subject line, then in the body of the email, write what you would like to share, so we can just cut and paste it into the group email.

**Story Time and Take&Makes:** Alice will continue to put together some little craft or art Take&Makes. They will usually be available the 2<sup>nd</sup> week each month. And – Bobbi Jo will continue with regular **story times on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, at 10AM!** Bring your pre-schooler or homeschooler and join us for a good story and some craft time together!

**Tax Help:** Our marvelous Tax Gurus, David and Christine, will be back to provide tax help for community members who need assistance, as a service of AARP. They will have appointments on Saturdays: February 25, March 11, & March 25. Please call the library (293-2565) during our regular hours after January 3<sup>rd</sup> to schedule an appointment.

**Income Tax Informational Workshop:** Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 28, 2023 at 4PM here at the library, when David Fuller, our local certified AARP Tax-Aide Counselor, will discuss changes affecting 2022 tax returns and answer questions about income tax and the Tax-Aide Program. He will highlight changes in Maine tax law regarding enhancements to the Property Tax Fairness Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit, an increase in the Pension Income Deduction, and revisions to the Education Opportunity Tax Credit. Join us for a very informational meeting that will help you through the upcoming tax season!

**Tech Help and Digital Inclusion:** The Digital Equity & Digital Inclusion town group will be meeting a few times in January to see about how to offer Tech help or training to community members, here at the library. We have a couple of possible community volunteers who will meet with us, and we'll see what we can put together. We would love to be able to help folks navigate their digital devices, or learn how to use various programs or apps. We'll let you know as we work through how to make this service available.

**Bendable Maine:** Our local public libraries are planning to provide a zoom session for our patrons to learn about the public learning commons on Bendable, provided through the Drucker Institute. On January 18 at 6PM, patrons and others living in the towns served by the Dr. Shaw Memorial Library, Readfield Community Library, Underwood Memorial Library in Fayette, and Cary Memorial Library in Wayne will be able to join a zoom presentation that will explain easily discovered learning content on a wide variety of subjects that can help you acquire new knowledge and skills through online courses and some local in-person learning sessions.

## Dr. Shaw Memorial Library—Continued...

It is all about lifelong and universal learning, and Bendable hopes to reach those in Maine who are often underserved. It is a lifelong learning system, geared for working adults, but people of any age, from elementary school through retirement, will be able to find interesting subjects to pique their interest. You can learn about personal finance, cooking, health, language, crafting, job readiness and more. The majority of the resources featured are free to Maine residents. When there is a cost, it is clearly indicated. **Please join our zoom meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> at 6PM. The link is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81221692674>**

I have just started Sarah Sundin's novel, Until Leaves Fall in Paris, about a bookshop during WW2, and up next is Margot Anne Kelley's nonfiction, Foodtopia: Communities in Pursuit of Peace, Love & Homegrown Food, which has been getting rave reviews in various book blogs. What are you reading as you take a few minutes to relax by the woodstove?



Please join friends and neighbors at the Community Center on Saturday January 14th for a fundraising breakfast to benefit the CPC's fuel assistance fund. With oil prices at historic highs, it is so important that we help look after our neighbors this winter.

### Other news you could use: (new labor laws in Maine for 2023)

December 13, 2022

In preparation for the new year, the Maine Department of Labor is reminding employers of upcoming labor law changes, such as updates to minimum wage and vacation payout.

#### **Maine's Minimum Wage to Increase to \$13.80 Per Hour in 2023**

#### **Interpretive Guidance - Vacation Payout**

Title 26, chapter 7, section 626, Cessation of Employment, was amended by P.L. 2022 c. 561, to address the circumstances in which vacation must be paid out upon cessation of employment. Beginning January 1, 2023, all unused paid vacation time that had accrued must be paid to the employee on their next regularly scheduled pay day after employment ends. This law does not apply to employers with less than 11 employees or a public employer. If employees are covered by a collective bargaining agreement that addresses payment of vacation pay at the end of employment, the collective bargaining agreement will determine if the unused accrued vacation pay is paid out at the end of employment.

Also, you might want to check this State website to see if you have unclaimed property !!

<https://www.maineunclaimedproperty.gov>

Are you thinking about starting a business this year? This State website has some useful information:

<https://www.maine.gov/portal/business/starting.html>

Here's a quick reminder: If the whole town seems to be without power, the transfer station and town have are more than likely going to be closed.

## THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW : a message from the Mount Vernon Community Center

As you probably know the Community Center on the "Honk" is going through with some very necessary repairs on the foundation to help mitigate water draining into the basement. We recently submitted a plan to the DEP and to the Town Code Enforcement Officer for permits to do the required work. The contractor is the Maine School of Masonry lead by the Ellis Bros., who recently became the new owners of the school. They have been certified by the DEP as qualified to do this important work to help preserve the building's foundation. The work is projected to begin in the spring of 2023. So, keep watch for the work to begin in about 12-16 weeks.

The trustees have also decided to install a generator that automatically comes on when the power goes out. That too will be in the Spring of 2023. This was voted on and approved by the town meeting last June. Going into the foyer at the Community Center you will notice a guard rail next to the trap door to the basement. This is a long overdue Safety measure needed by the building and the donation of the railing and additional work on the railing was also donated. Many thanks to the Rogers family and the Johnson family.

Long term, other work in the basement is planned to provide storage and to strengthen the integrity of the basement walls with a concrete floor, new basement stairs with a railing and new exit stairs to a second exit under the handicap platform.

All this work/repair is in line with our sworn allegiance to serve the town and to protect and maintain the community building for YOU, the townsfolk with safety in mind. Hopefully, soon, we will have an Open House for all new and current long-time citizens to come in to the Community Center to see what we can offer to you for your pleasure.

Please keep in touch with us on FaceBook at our site through our messaging system there. If anyone is interested in joining the board of trustees, please message me or email me at [jrcaldwell@gmail.com](mailto:jrcaldwell@gmail.com)

Wishing you all the Best of the Season and a wonderful and healthy New Year!  
The Board of Trustees of the Mount Vernon Community Center

### INCOME TAX INFORMATION MEETING

On January 28, 2023, at 4:00 p.m., the Dr. Shaw Memorial Library will host an information meeting about 2022 Federal and Maine tax returns. David Fuller, a certified AARP Tax-Aide Counselor, will be there to discuss changes affecting 2022 returns and answer questions about income taxes and the Tax-Aide Program.

Among the changes in Maine tax law are enhancements to the Property Tax Fairness Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit, a significant increase in the Pension Income Deduction, and major revisions to the Education Opportunity Tax Credit.

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 hundred dollars, depending on your circumstances, and more in 2022 than in previous years.



# Happy Holidays from Neighbors Driving Neighbors!

In mid-2022 we finally were able to open up to all kinds of rides, from grocery-runs and medical appointments to visits to the hairdresser and social events. Our medical committee is meeting monthly to monitor Covid-19 risks and we still require vaccination (both shots + one booster) and masking in the car. These extra precautions are necessary because many of NDN's riders are in vulnerable groups. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust our vaccination and masking policies as needed moving forward.

It is important to us to reach new riders. We have seen a drop in rides during Covid-19 and we are concerned that many may have become socially isolated. A top NDN priority is outreach and partnerships with other local groups to bring rides and other types of assistance to people in our communities. We want to get the word out that we also provide rides to social events or just to visit a friend.

We are blessed to have a broad community base of volunteers and good will including individuals helping out at events, local businesses, board members, this year's 120+ donors and, of course, the heart of NDN—the drivers. The drivers not only contribute their time and gas, but also provide and benefit from meaningful conversations and often, companionship. While other similar volunteer-based organizations have seen a decline in volunteers over the last years, we are proud and grateful for the continued strong commitment of NDN volunteer drivers.

As a final message I would like to encourage you to help spread the word that no rides are too small or "insignificant." After years of restrictions and limited social lives, we can't be happier to help bring people together.

Thank you and have a happy, healthy holiday season!

Harald Bredesen  
President, NDN



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