

# The Circle



**Rutland Town's Link between School and Community**

**December 2015**

## **TOWN NEWS**

**By Carol Bam**

Chairman Joe Dicton reports that the Select Board is in the midst of constructing 2016-2017 town budgets with department heads. "The aim for all departments is to balance spending needs with fiscal restraint. Budgets will be constructed as close to level funded as possible." One item that Dicton observed was underfunded this year was the allocation for legal expenses. This is in part due to a land acquisition, and the Town's appeal to the Supreme Court of the Public Service Board's unfavorable ruling on town solar siting restrictions. Proposed budgets for the school and town will be presented Monday, Jan. 25, at 6:30 at Rutland Town School.

This year the town acquired land adjacent to Del Bianco Park at Dewey Field from a private land owner. Congested street parking is hazardous for pedestrians crossing the street and through traffic especially during games. Rec and Highway departments are planning a gravel parking area on the new land. Rec Director Mike Rowe explains, "We are looking to add about 30 spaces with as little impact as we can. The cost of this is about \$15,000 which we are most likely including as a line item in the Rec budget."

Final interviews have been held for the position of part time administrative assistant to Joe Zingale, Town Administrator. Voters approved adding the position last town meeting. Duties will include production of Select Board and Planning Commission

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## **FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AARON BOYNTON**

We are into our second quarter here at Rutland Town School and there are so many excellent things happening. Faculty and staff have been working to implement a new math program in Kindergarten through 5th grade. This program is called Bridges Math. Not only does it meet state standards but it gives students the opportunity to practice and think at a deeper level. We are already seeing better math outcomes this year as a result.

At the Middle School level, teachers are beginning to develop proficiency based, student-centered units. This approach allows students to work at their level and pace but ultimately have to demonstrate that they understand the objective or concept being taught. It is not a packaged program, rather it is a highly effective and engaging approach and design to student centered learning. Within the next few years, middle and high schools will be expected to implement this approach within teaching practices.

Quite soon the school budget process will be starting and information and community meetings will take place. It is imperative that everyone take time to understand the factors that go into the school budget and how it will affect

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## **UNDER THE GOLDEN DOME Report from Senator Kevin Mullin**

While it is oftentimes hard to predict what issues will rise to the surface, taxes and spending will once again be the most important issues facing the legislature this year. We will be facing a \$100 million budget gap when we return to Montpelier. Much of this is due to the growing number of Vermonters on state Medicaid programs. Currently 200,000 of our friends and neighbors are utilizing one Medicaid program or another. There is growing pressure to raise the gas tax as prices for gasoline have dropped and we are driving more fuel-efficient vehicles.

Last year, I strenuously opposed the \$45 million in new taxes and fees imposed on Vermonters and I will continue to oppose tax increases this year. The Legislature as a whole has failed to manage our fiscal policy. When other states downsized spending in the aftermath of the Great Recession, Vermont chose instead to use federal funds to prop up the budget. If we had trimmed spending as the times required, we would be working on a lower, more affordable base. If we are ever going to climb out of this downward spiral, we need to do two things. First we need

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## From the School Board

By Joshua Terenzini,  
Vice Chairman, School Board

Once again, the holiday season is upon us! It's hard to believe that we are well into the heart of this school season. It has been a very busy fall as we have focused on understanding our options as a town when it comes to Act 46. This new law was passed during the final days of this past legislative session.

Act 46 looks to consolidate school districts which some felt would make for a more efficient and cost effective method on how we operate our schools. As we have discovered quickly, this is not the case at all and presents unique challenges for municipalities like ours. Our Supervisory Union has formed a study committee made up of parents, board members and others amongst Rutland Town, Proctor and West Rutland. We are very early in this study committee process and invite you to learn as much as you can about Act 46 and what this could mean for Rutland Town.

We also know that when the holidays arrive, it is time to start to take a hard look at our next year's budget. We as a board are working with our supervisory union to present the voters of Rutland Town with a fiscally responsible budget to vote on in March at Town Meeting Day. I think I speak for all board members when I say that we are committed to providing top notch educational opportunities, all while keeping your taxes as low as possible.

As always, we invite our friends and neighbors to attend our board meetings. The times and dates of our board meetings can be found on our school's website, [rutland-townschool.org](http://rutland-townschool.org)

Here's to a safe, happy and healthy holiday season and new year!

## JUNIOR NATIONAL YOUNG LEADERS Leadership Award



Every year the Middle School teachers nominate one male and one female student from the seventh grade class as Rutland Town School representatives for the Junior National Young Leaders Conference. The criteria for selection is as follows:

*"mature middle school students who demonstrate leadership potential, who are motivated to learn and excel, and who desire the critical leadership skills needed for success in middle school, high school and beyond."*

We are proud to announce this year's representatives, **Toby Jakubowski** and **Gianna Pezzetti**.

**THE CIRCLE** is a publication of Rutland Town and Rutland Town School, informing the community about issues of local interest. **The Circle** is not a public forum. The school administration has the right to exercise editorial control over style and content in keeping with a proper educational environment.

**The Circle** staff includes Principal Aaron Boynton as Editor in Chief, Carol Bam, Theresa Kulig, and Marie Pennington. Five issues are published every other month from October through June.

For more information, mailing list changes, to advertise or contribute articles, call the RTS office (775-0566) or email [carolbam@aol.com](mailto:carolbam@aol.com).

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## Successful Emergency Management Means Planning Ahead

By Martin Wasserman,  
Rutland Town Emergency Manager

Rutland Town Emergency Management is seeking voluntary registration of individuals who may need special help in a town-wide emergency. An important task of Emergency Management is to identify in advance those needing assistance in evacuating their homes to go to a town-designated protective shelter. Our primary shelter is Rutland Town School and a secondary shelter is the Center Rutland Fire Station.

If you are someone, or know of someone, who would require assistance in an emergency, please register by providing the following basic information. This information will be password protected in the Rutland Town computer and accessible only by town officials in an emergency.

- ⊗ Resident's name
- ⊗ Address
- ⊗ Home and cell phone numbers
- ⊗ Contact info for relative
- ⊗ Medical conditions; list of medications
- ⊗ Primary physician, (name, address, phone number)

We also suggest compiling in advance the same relevant personal and medical information including the resident's name, date of birth, medical conditions plus a list of medications, and contact information for a relative or other emergency contact. Place this information in a clearly labeled container or zippered plastic baggie and leave in the freezer compartment of the kitchen refrigerator where emergency personnel can find it.

Please consider signing up yourself or a loved one for this service. You can submit this information by email to [emergencymanagement@rutlandtown.com](mailto:emergencymanagement@rutlandtown.com) or send it by mail to the Town Office address:

Emergency Management Director  
Town of Rutland  
181 Business Route 4  
Center Rutland, VT 05736

If you have questions about emergency evacuation or your situation, please contact Martin Wasserman via this email address or via the town office, **phone 773-2528**.

## Bartering in Kindergarten A Social Studies Lesson

By Linda Mullin, Kindergarten Teacher

The enduring understanding about introducing history to young students includes comparing and contrasting life long ago to present day. The holiday of Thanksgiving is a good time for these lessons to occur. This theme was introduced in Kindergarten with the poem, "Indian Children," by Annette Wynne which begins, "Where we walk to school each day, Indian Children used to play." (Note: Although the term, "Indian Children" is not accurate and these were actually Native Americans, the poem describes how the world has changed since the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts.)

The lessons in Kindergarten continued with how dress, food, and homes have changed. The children were actually not surprised that the Pilgrims and Wampanoag Natives did not have money or credit cards. They wondered how people from long ago were able to get the things they needed. The concept of trading and bartering, was introduced. Students pretended to be either Wampanoag Natives or Pilgrims and paired up to make a trade.

The trades were very interesting. A boy traded his arrowheads for fish hooks. "We both need to get food," was his reason that this was a fair trade. One young girl traded her blanket for a Wampanoag canoe. "If I need a ride I can ask for one and we can share the blanket to keep warm." Another girl traded her canoe for glass beads. Why would she make that trade? "Well," she responded, "I wanted them to give to my children." Most trades were done easily. "We wanted to trade and make the other person happy," a student explained. However, there was one partnership that did not go well. "He took my fishhooks even though I said 'no'." The partner explained that he did not hear the classmate say no. Well, these problems do happen in real life. Problems happen when people do not listen well to one another. This social studies lesson in bartering was also a lesson in communication.

For information about Pilgrims and Wampanoag go to: [http://www.scholastic.com/scholastic\\_thanksgiving/daily\\_life/](http://www.scholastic.com/scholastic_thanksgiving/daily_life/).

(Principal Boynton ~ Continued from Page 1)

all students. The Rutland Town budget includes all students grades PreK-12.

As always, I welcome you to visit Rutland Town School. I would love to give you a tour. You can also find us on the Web at [www.rutlandtownschool.org](http://www.rutlandtownschool.org), as well as Facebook and Twitter.

## A & J AUTO PARTS

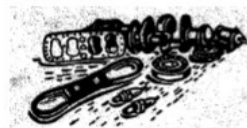
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## **RUTLAND TOWN SENIORS**

**From James B. Hall, Treasurer**

The Senior Meal folks would like to send condolences to the family of Marshall and Hilda Fish, who both passed on since the last issue. Both were active in the program when meals were held at the Cheney Hill School building and will be greatly missed.

The program is winding down for the winter season of 2015-16. Meals will start up again in March or April of 2016, mainly depending on weather. There has been some discussion about visiting other meal sites in the area, I expect that will be worked on over the winter months, with direction from the group. The last meal will be Tuesday, Dec 15, 2015 at Seward's Restaurant, Rutland City.

Discussion is ongoing with The Town Recreation Department in preparation for our holiday meal. Anyone interested in this event, please call Pat Tucker at 776-1066 for reservations.

At present, we have attendance of 12-15 folks at our lunch gatherings. We are always looking at expanding our numbers.

Enjoy the holidays and winter, and stay safe.



**Site clearing for the new Highway garage**



## ***Road Notes***

**from Byron Hathaway,  
Road Commissioner**

As we approach more active winter weather, it is necessary to remind everyone to remove obstacles you may have placed in the town's right-of-way during the summer. Objects such as fences, basketball hoops, plantings, and seasonal decorations should not be placed in the ROW. The Town will not be responsible for damages to such things due to highway maintenance operations such as snowplowing.

There will be some changes this year in our plowing routes. Quirk Bros., one of our longtime winter contractors, have decided to retire this year from winter operations. The new town truck will take care of the Post Road area and a new contractor has been hired to take care of the Grove Street area.

Make sure your vehicles are ready for winter. A good set of snow tires is recommended for safer winter travel. Remember our winter operations do not call for bare roads at all times. During snow storms or extended storms expect roads to have snow on them. Slow down, give yourself more space and time to stop, and allow more time to get to where you are going.

The new highway maintenance garage construction has started. The lot has been cleared, footings and walls have been poured. Site work is continuing. The steel for the structure is due to be delivered sometime in late December. The storm water retention ponds have been built and are functional. The Select Board recently approved the funding for the sprinkler system. Money will be taken from the timber sale account to pay for this unexpected last minute expense. I am excited that this project is finally happening.

Have a safe holiday season.



**Footings have been placed**



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(Senator Mullin ~ Continued from Page 1)

to trim spending and reevaluate what services we provide. Second, and most important, we must build our economy to increase our revenues. The Governor likes to tout our low unemployment rate of 3.7%. He doesn't like to talk about the fact that we have fewer people employed today than we did in 2007. Outside of Chittenden County, the state has seen economic stagnation. In order to reverse this trend we need to ease government regulation, keep energy costs stable, provide better workforce development training and education, and create incentives for people to invest and create jobs.

The issue that will garner the most media attention this year will be the question of whether or not to legalize recreational marijuana. We are faced with the vexing dilemma of realizing that substance abuse is bad but that prohibition isn't working any better for this than it did for alcohol. There are strong arguments to be made by both sides on this issue and it is hard to tell what the final outcome will be.

PreK to 12 education will also be a hot topic as legislators look to further clarify Act 46. There is a very wide disparity between the State Board's interpretation on how the law affects school choice and what the clear legislative intent was. Unfortunately, most school boards are taking a myopic view and not truly looking at the bigger picture when it comes to trying to redesign an antiquated system delivering education to fewer and fewer students. I hope the legislature will broaden the incentives to help focus on meaningful consolidation.

Undoubtedly, there will be a myriad of other issues that will pop up and may get traction. I look forward to working with Sens. Collamore and Flory to continue to make Rutland a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

The coming year will be interesting for the legislature, as this will be the final year of the Shumlin era. I am hopeful that people will come together, put aside differences, and work for the common good. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve Rutland County in the statehouse and encourage anyone with concerns to contact me at [kimbjm@aol.com](mailto:kimbjm@aol.com) or call me at (802) 353-6770.

## **8th Grade Self Portraits in Acrylic Paint From Art Teacher Beth McReynolds**

**Amy McGee**



**Tommy Baker**



## **SCHOOL SPEED ZONE**

**Now at 25 MPH 24/7**

The School Board and Select Board have recently decided to re-establish a school speed zone of 25 MPH 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is the best option to ensure the safety of the children, school staff and visitors to RTS.

The Speed Limit Ordinance establishing the 25 MPH School Speed Zone has actually been in place since 1998. Flashing lights have been used to reduce speed to 25 mph during school hours. When the lights were off, vehicles could travel 35 MPH. However, as John Sly, Deputy Chief of RT Police explains, "Activity in and around the school does not only take place in the morning and mid-afternoon Monday through Friday. With required evacuation and fire drills, in addition to the many music concerts, special events and sports events, and other uses of the complex, increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic occurs on almost any day of the week ranging from early morning to late evening hours making speeds in excess of 25 MPH through the school zone dangerous for all."

Sly said, "The Select Board and Police Department, with the assistance of the Highway Commissioner, explored purchasing new digital speed limit signs that could be remotely activated as the need was appropriate. However, the four signs needed to properly post the Speed Zone would cost over \$20,000, an expense that was not financially practical."

From extensive traffic observations and subsequent discussions with the Select Board and School Board, it became clear that not only the school but the community at large would be best served by re-establishing a permanent School Speed Zone of 25 MPH.

Sly wants drivers to understand, "Driving at 25 MPH through the demarcated School Speed Zone only adds an additional 24.7 seconds of travel time for a motorist as compared to driving at 35 MPH. Should a motorist be confronted with an emergency, the distance required to complete an emergency stop is greatly reduced, very possibly making the difference between a collision or a near miss.

The safety of our children, school staff and visitors is certainly worth the additional 24.7 seconds of travel time to keep everyone safe and prevent a needless tragedy."



## WHY GROVER DRIVE IS NOT A TOWN ROAD - YET

### By Mary Ashcroft, Select Board

The Town has been asked to take over Grover Drive as a town road. Once we accept a road, we are responsible for its upkeep, plowing, paving and reconstruction into the future. Because a poorly constructed road can cost our taxpayers thousands of dollars to fix, we proceed cautiously.

The Town has adopted road construction standards which new roads—and those we are taking over—must meet. These are based on state standards, and include such requirements as culvert size, base and paving depth, right of way and paved surface minimum widths.

Because Grover Drive was built a number of years ago, much of the information about its initial construction is unknown. The Town hired Stantec Engineering to pinpoint items needing further attention.

The owner of Grover Drive has asked that the Town waive certain components of our acceptance policy. We have agreed to do so in cases where we felt the town can be protected in other ways. But some issues remain, which include the following:

- a) Grover's engineer must certify to a number of items about this road, including general compliance with the town's standards, and this certification must meet with our town attorneys' approval.
- b) Grover must pay our attorney's fees in connection with this road takeover.
- c) Grover must provide the Town with two letters of credit to secure road repair costs should any be required. One letter of credit will provide this security for the entire road, and the other will extend for a longer period of time to secure possible claims from landowner(s) on a certain section of road.

Once the Town is protected with these last requirements, we look forward to adding Grover Drive as a town road.

## From TOWN CLERK/TREASURER Donna Zeller

Happy Holidays to all town residents! We look forward to meeting and helping all Town residents whenever you stop in at Town Hall!

Winter has finally arrived, which means that the second installment of Property Taxes is due on or before January 10, 2016. The Town Treasurer's Office is open Monday - Thursday, 8:00 - 4:30, and Friday 8:00 a.m. until noon. The **Town Treasurer's office will be open 8 - 4:30 pm on Friday, January 8, 2016.**

Because the tax due date falls on a weekend, the Town Treasurer will accept taxes brought into the Town Treasurer's office on Monday, January 11 as on time. Payments with a valid U.S. Postal Service postmark of January 11 will also be considered on time.

**Do NOT drop your tax payment in the outside mailbox** after hours, as doing so is illegal by federal law. Please include the payment stub from your tax bill with your payment. Thank you!

In October, the Secretary of State Elections Division rolled out an online system for voters. Vermonters will be able to go online to register to vote in Vermont or change their name and/or address on their current voter registration record.

Go to: [OLVR.sec.state.vt.us](http://OLVR.sec.state.vt.us). Once registered to vote, Vermonters can check their voter registration status, request an absentee ballot, check on their polling location and view sample ballots at MY VOTER PAGE: [MVP.sec.state.vt.us](http://MVP.sec.state.vt.us)

Use THIS MAILING ADDRESS for ALL Rutland Town Departments:

Town of Rutland  
181 Business Route 4  
Center Rutland, VT 05736

## FOUR WINDS BLOWING

By Kirsten Marsh



We are off to a great start learning about Structure and Function in the Four Winds nature study program at RTS.

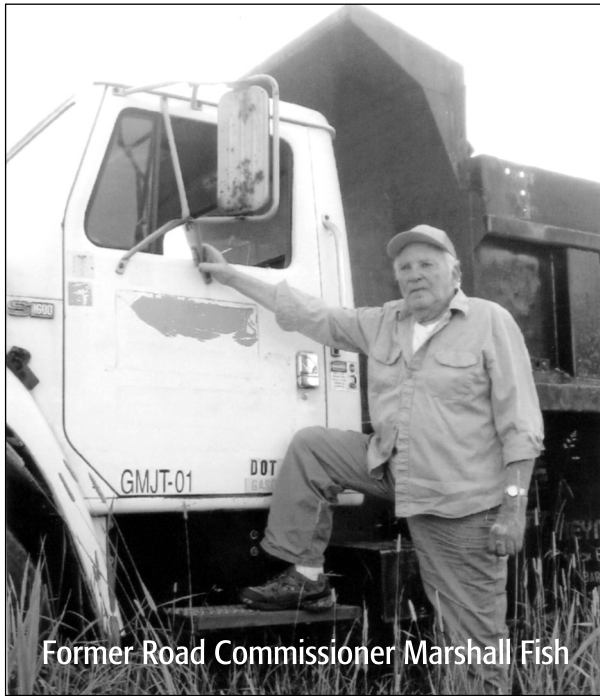
In October we studied *Grasses and Grains*. At first it seemed challenging to get the students excited about this unit. But we quickly learned just how amazing and important grasses are. Grass covers a huge amount of the land on our planet and has the incredible ability to survive mowing, grazing and even fire. The kids learned how important grasses are in sustaining animal life on earth. We were hard pressed to come up with food we eat that isn't in the grass chain in some way (even with meat... before it's on your plate it was an animal that most likely fed on some type of grass or grain!).

We examined different types of vegetation and learned how to identify grasses with specific characteristics. This unit had us mixing science with poetry as we learned a rhyme to help them with identification: "Sedges have edges, and rushes are round, but grasses have nodes from their tops to the ground."

In November we studied *Predators and Prey*. Herbivores and carnivores both must eat, but the challenges these two groups of animals face in getting enough to eat are very different. Plant eaters don't have to stalk their food, but they do need to keep from being eaten while they browse. And carnivores spend lots of time and energy looking for and capturing their prey. We studied the characteristics of both these groups and had several activities that offered us an opportunity to play these roles. It's amazing how nervous you can feel when you're the prey, even when it's just a game!! This was another unit that offered up rhyme to compliment the lesson..... "Eyes in the front, born to hunt; eyes on the side, born to hide."

Learning to investigate and pause to explore the natural world we walk by every day is what this program is all about.

We take a break for the month of December but we will be back in January for some *Skull Sleuthing*. We'll discover what we there is to learn about an animal just by studying the structure of its skull, the shape and size of its eyes, and the type and arrangement of its teeth. **More fun to come!**



Former Road Commissioner Marshall Fish

(Town News ~ Continued from Page 1)

minutes as well as assisting Joe Zingale in all aspects of town administration. The new employee, selected from a pool of several strong candidates, will be announced this month and will start work in January.

The Transfer Station received its new compactor. Manager Dick Lloyd reports that the new equipment is working well and saving money by requiring fewer hauling "pulls". Dicton said the acquisition of a second compactor in 2016 will move the transfer station closer to fully implementing a no-sort recycling system. The progress made already with consolidation of recyclables into glass, plastic, metal and paper has generated enthusiastic feedback from residents.

In January the Transfer Station will start accepting household batteries that will be collected in a dedicated receptacle.

The Select Board recently acknowledged the passing this fall of a long time town resident Marshall Fish at age 86. Fish, a dairy farmer on Prospect Rd., served as town Highway Commissioner for more than 50 years. He succeeded his father who before that followed his father as road commissioner, a family tradition of service on town roads spanning 86 years. Fish retired in 1999. Byron Hathaway recalls, "Marshall hired me in 1986 to plow the North Grove St. area and used me sometimes to help with construction and general maintenance in the summer. This gave me the background and insight into highway work that I needed to be able to step into the Road Commissioner's position when Marshall retired. Marshall was always full of information and advice and had an intimate knowledge of our infrastructure. I indeed learned much from him."

There is some positive movement on the BJ's Wholesale Club tentatively slated for construction south of Green Mountain Plaza and across from Diamond Run Mall. During Act 250 hearings, mall owners opposed a separate location for

## 60 Plus

### Feeling Blue or Are You Depressed?

From Heather Baker, SVCOA

The holidays are supposed to be a time of year that family and friends get together to celebrate and reflect on their lives. For many seniors, this is the exact opposite because they are reminders of lost loved ones, ailing health, financial hardship, and loneliness. It is normal for people to feel sad or blue during this time of year, but depression is a serious matter and is not a normal part of aging.

What is the difference between feeling sad and depression? Sadness or the blues are temporary feelings and the person is able to function normally. With depression, the person withdraws from social activities (no longer wants to be around people), cries a lot (not just shedding a tear but crying becomes disruptive), worries a lot (often about money and health), has an altered interest in food (loses weight or is overeating), sleeps a lot or does not sleep at all. Depression causes sleep problems because your brain needs to relax just like the rest of your body and when it does not, chemical imbalances can result. A depressed person may not be able to concentrate (he/she used to love to read and now can't follow a storyline). He/she may lose interest in things they used to enjoy (used to play Bingo every week and they have not gone in weeks).

How can you communicate with someone who is depressed? Talk with the person, try to relate to them, listen when they want to talk, validate that the holidays are not like the TV commercials that we see for months. Encourage them to make a doctor's appointment and offer to take them; most depression needs to be taken care of with medication. Once you crack the hard exterior, be a good listener and do not judge them. Make them feel that they can trust you, have an understanding if you think they are going to hurt themselves that you are going to seek help.

The Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging has a contracted Elder Care Clinician. Call our Senior Help-Line 1-800-642-5119 and ask how to be referred.

Be sure to tune into Peg TV on Wednesdays at 8:00pm, Thursdays at 12:30pm, and Fridays at 5:00pm to see the Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging's TV Show SVCOA Today.

the store and wanted it sited in vacant Mall property. The two sides are in negotiations to come up with a mutually acceptable cash settlement. The Board will draft a letter formally supporting their efforts to reach an agreement so the project can go forward

The long awaited Fire Dept. open house held October 4 attracted a crowd of 400 - 500 well wishers. Not only did many town residents show up to tour the facility and see the fire trucks and equipment up close, but personnel from several other area fire departments came in support of the new Rutland Town facility.

## WRITING FOR UNDERSTANDING

By Tina Ronn, Reading Interventionist

Over the past two years, teachers at RTS have been implementing a writing approach called "Writing for Understanding." These two writing pieces were composed by fourth grade students. The topic of their research and writing is one of our new Next Generation Science Standards concerning the internal and external features of animals and how these features help animals to survive. As you read their pieces, you will see that fourth graders gathered plenty of evidence to support their topic.

### SILENT HUNTERS

By Lila Tu

Have you ever known that Owls are amazing creatures? They hunt in the night and can move their heads all the way around! (270 degrees). Owls can see in the dark very good and can see in 3-D! Owls can swoop inches from your head and you can't hear anything! But guess what?! I am going to tell you all about it! Owls are amazing hunters because of their internal and external features!

Owls have many external structures. Owls can see much better than we can. Owls have a special kind of vision. Can you guess what it is? 3-D vision! Owls have to see well to catch their prey. Owls eyes are stuck in their sockets so they turn their heads almost all the way around! Owls sleep with their eyes part way open to avoid predators. Do you know what owls love to devour? Mice, voles, birds...Owls can't digest their food as well as we can. That's why they come out as owl pellets. Some of the other external features that owls have are the ears. The ears on either side of the head are higher than the other ear. They also have talons. Talons are the nails on the

owls foot. The talons help tear up the food. Last but not least, the feathers. The feathers are one of the most important things that help an owl hunt. They are so silent that you can not hear a thing hover above your head. Owls are amazing animals. Owls have many external features.

Owls have many internal structures. We will talk about two. Their first is the arteries. They help bring the blood to different parts of the body. They also have vertebrae. Their vertebrae is the part of the body that helps the neck move. The neck almost looks like a spiral staircase when they turn their head down/around. They can rotate their heads 270 degrees! Even we can't do that! Owls are amazing with their internal features!

As you can see, Owls are amazing animals and can hunt like no other animal can. As we look back, we see that owls have internal structures. Vertebrae and arteries. They also have many external structures, eyes, ears, etc. Did you know that owls are nocturnal, or that one ear hears better than the other? This is what makes owls one of the most unique animals on the planet!

### OWLS ON THE PROWL

By Rylee Serafin

Imagine being a little mouse out in the forest at night. You would be scared right. I'd be surprised if you weren't scared of all those owls hunting you. I'm going to tell you about how owls are such great hunters. Owls are such great hunters because of their internal and external structures.

Owls have so many internal structures that definitely help them when they are hunting. Did you know that owls have 14 neck vertebrae? They have twice as many neck vertebrae as you and I have. Owls wouldn't be able to turn their heads almost all the way around if it weren't for their amazing neck vertebrae. Another internal structure that owls have, is their awesome artery structures. Arteries are blood vessels that run through holes in their neck vertebrae. The holes in an owls vertebrae act like pillows to protect owls arteries from getting too tight. The holes give the arteries some slack when owls turn their heads 270 degrees. Those were only a few of an owl's internal structures.

Now I will tell you about an owls external structures that help them hunt. When you look at an owl the first thing you notice is probably not the ears, but they are very important to an owl. An owl's ears are very helpful because it would be a lot harder for an owl to hunt without its ears. Owl's ears are on different parts of their head. One ear is a lot higher than the other one. Another ear is lower on their heads. The lower ear hears different sounds than the higher ear hears. In addition to their ears, owls have a bowl shaped face which helps them by acting like a satellite dish. Their face directs sound to their ears and makes it sound louder. With a satellite dish face an owl can catch its prey without even seeing it. An owl has very big eyes which help

(Continued on Next Page)

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## Child First Advocacy Center Fighting Child Abuse in Rutland County

The **Child First Advocacy Center** (CFAC) of Rutland County is a non-profit organization, located at 80 West Street in Rutland, dedicated to providing a safe and supportive environment for victims and their families in the discovery, intervention, treatment and prevention of child sexual abuse, severe physical abuse and children affected by violence. We serve families of all socio-economic levels and are committed to providing quality services regardless of ability to pay.

CFAC is a fully accredited member of the *National Children's Alliance* serving victims and their non-offending family members with the structure of a central agency. CFAC channels reports of suspected child abuse cases for investigation and victim recovery. A multi-disciplinary team approach allows for a comprehensive and consistent response to abuse investigations and the delivery of services to the child and non-offending family members. CFAC acts as a hub coordinating with the diverse professions that address child abuse such as law enforcement, victim advocacy, child protective services, prosecution, and medical and therapeutic services. Collaboration among diverse providers is essential in the reduction of trauma to victims and successful prosecution of perpetrators.

**In 2014, the Child First Advocacy Center served 199 children and families in Rutland County.** For so many of these children, the impact of this serious crime is felt long after the abuse stops. Understanding the potential lifelong consequences of child abuse and all forms of child trauma on children and their families is key to helping them heal.

The Child First website at [www.childfirstvermont.org](http://www.childfirstvermont.org) provides information on reporting child abuse, abuse prevention and education, obtaining services and making a donation. If you have questions, please contact Wendy Loomis, Executive Director at 802-747-0200 or [wendy@childfirstadvocacycenter.org](mailto:wendy@childfirstadvocacycenter.org).



### **Haroun Round Table at RTS Library**

In late October, RTS Librarian Theresa Czachor hosted eighth graders and some parents for an evening discussion of the **Vermont Reads** book, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, by Salman Rushdie.

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## NEWS FROM THE REC

**By Director Mike Rowe**

Welcome to winter. Basketball teams for grades K-6 are starting to take shape with lots of kids playing the winter sport. We have some great coaches helping out this season. So if you get a chance come watch them play (schedule will be on the town's web page). Grades K-2 basketball will start in January and run for 6 weeks. The schedule is: Wed. 2:50-3:50 Kindergarten, 4:00-5:00 1st grade, and 5:00-6:00 2nd grade. These are coed levels that will take place in the school cafeteria.

Many thanks to those who donated and helped with the Halloween party this year. Many thanks to the RTS 8th graders who helped run the event.

The Seniors will hold their monthly luncheon on December 15 at 11:30 at Seward's Family Restaurant. The meal this month for seniors is provided by the Rec. Department. Others are also welcome to attend and pay the nominal lunch price. This is a good time and a great start to the holiday season. (For more information, see the *Town Seniors* update on page 4.)

Reminder: Northwood Park is open for winter activities so come on out and enjoy a day in the park. The dog waste stations are still out, so please pick up after your dogs and keep them on a leash. Have a great holiday season.

(Owls on the Prowl ~ Continued from Page 8)

them see at night. Owls big eyes are stuck in their socket. That is why they need to be able to turn their head 270 degrees. Owls also have sharp talons on their feet that also help them catch their prey. Those were only some of an owl's external features that help them hunt.

I hope that you've learned something cool about owls internal and external structures, now that I've told you about an owl's hunting structures. I think that you have many reasons to believe that owls are amazing hunters. If you have been paying good attention you will know the answer to this question. Are you ready? From what you have read do you think that owls play a very important role in the world? I think that owls are amazing creatures, and hope you do too.

## From the Rutland Town Fire Department

By BJ Hathaway



Hello from the Rutland Town Fire Department! October is Fire Prevention Month. Members of the Town Fire Department went to the Rutland Town School and spoke with students in grades K-5 about fire safety and fire prevention. The students then had the opportunity to look at some of the fire trucks that were on hand at the school. The fire department looks forward to speaking with the students each year and would like to pass along a thank you to the school administration and staff for allowing the opportunity to speak with students.

On the note of fire safety and prevention and as we move into colder weather and snow, the department would once again like to remind everyone to check their smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Please remember to keep outside vents clear of snow and other debris. Also chimneys and flues should be inspected by a professional to ensure safe operation. Also please keep walkways and driveways clear of snow and ice for any guests you may have and so that emergency responders have a safe means of getting to you in your time of need. These simple tasks go a long way to ensuring a safe and healthy home this winter!

In closing, we would like to thank all of those who made time to come and visit our new station in Center Rutland during the open house held on October 3. Turnout far exceeded our expectations! We thoroughly enjoyed seeing all of the folks who came, had a snack and took a look at our wonderful new building and all the equipment that the community so generously supplies us with! Thank you!

## Greetings from RTS Music!

From Aaron Audet and Sue Tall

We have had a great fall season learning and performing music! The Halloween parade was exciting with the band receiving "runner up" for the best costumed marching unit. Middle School Chorus performed a wonderful choral recital on Oct. 22.

The *Ah! Capella* vocal group from the VSO recently gave an outstanding performance to students in grades 4-8. It was chock full of vocal teaching and touched on developmentally appropriate and relevant issues in the lives of our students.

Our talented students performed their winter concerts for the school and also for audiences at the Meadows/Gables. Sincere thanks to RTS Friends of Music for helping defray the cost of the *Ah! Capella* visit and the trip to The Meadows and The Gables.

Music events to note:

- RTS Talent Show – Friday, Jan. 22, 2016 6:30 in the RTS gym.
- T Jazz and M Jazz - RHS/RTS Jazz night Jan. 28, 7:00 at RHS auditorium.
- Green Mountain Music Festival - Friday, Feb. 5, 7:00 at College of St. Joseph

Talent show forms are available now from Ms. Tall or Mr. Audet and can be downloaded from Ms. Tall's school website.

## The Holidays, January and More At Rutland Free Library

Have you checked out the *First Wednesday* series at Rutland Free Library? It runs from October to May on the first Wednesday of the month, with a different speaker and topic each time. It is our flagship speaker series, presented by Vermont Humanities Council.

Our first presentation in 2016 is about Amelia Earhart. The mysterious disappearance of Earhart in 1937 often overshadows her accomplishments as a pilot and author. Champlain College professor Nancy Nahra examines the remarkable life of the aviation legend on **Wed., January 6 at 7 pm in the Fox Room**. The talk is free and open to all. Come early for a good seat – this is a popular program.

Our meeting rooms are not only used for library programs, they are also available for use by members of the general public. The Fox Room is our big public space. Originally built as the courtroom for Rutland County Court in 1865, it seats 175. We also have a small meeting room that seats 8 to 10 people at a conference table. The library provides either space, complete with a projector, sound system – even a complete videoconferencing system – at no charge, thanks to the generous support of tax-

payers in Rutland City, Rutland Town, Mendon, Tinmouth and Ira. **To book a room, call us at 773-1860.**

If you're looking for something to do with the kids over the Christmas holidays or anytime, Rutland Free Library has the answer. We have *Babies & Toddlers Rock* every Monday morning at 10:00. On Fridays from 9:30 - 11:00 is *Play Group*, presented in conjunction with Rutland County Parent - Child Center. And on Dec. 31 we have a **family New Year's Eve event**. From 3:30 - 4:30 we're having Early New Year's, with family friendly music, food and crafts. Join us and welcome 2016!

For a complete schedule of events, please see our calendar at [rutlandfree.org](http://rutlandfree.org). Thanks, and keep reading!



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**VPR's  
DOROTHY'S LIST  
Interviews  
RTS Readers**  
By Theresa Czachor

Each year, students across Vermont read the books nominated for the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award. The list is comprised of thirty nominees and students can vote for their favorite in the spring.

This year, a group of 7th and 8th grade students at Rutland Town School participated in "Dorothy's List", a monthly segment of the Vermont Edition program on Vermont Public Radio. VPR visited our school on December 2 to hear what our students had to say about one of the nominees on this year's list. The book is called *Crossover* by Kwame Alexander. In addition to being nominated for the DCF award, this title has won the prestigious John Newbery Medal for 2015, a literary award given to the author of the best book for children.

Amy Noyes from VPR visited RTS to hear what our kids had to say about the book. She recorded the kids talking about the book and asking questions of the author. At a later date, she will play back their questions to Kwame for him to answer. The students won't actually hear Kwame's responses until the episode airs. We expect the episode to air on January 4. It will be an exciting event to look forward to in the New Year!

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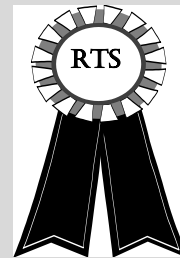
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Maci Celentano  
Brady Geisler  
Isabelle Ladabouche  
Tessa McLaughlin  
Samantha Merrow  
Zachary Nelson



**Seventh Grade**

Joseph Anderson  
Sarah Chase  
Mariah Crossman  
Isabella Decandio  
Lucienne Horrocks  
Brady Kenosh  
Maxfield Lovko  
Samuel Macpherson  
Emma Notte  
Gianna Pezzetti  
Hannah Solimano  
Jenna Sunderland  
Mary Sutton

**Seventh Grade**

Alexander Aiken  
Abigail Churchill  
Cory Drinwater  
Lucia Gallo  
Matthew Goulette  
Huntter Hathaway  
Toby Jakubowski  
Jaden Kelley  
Devon Kibbey  
Tay Lehouillier  
Maya Marcy  
Olivia Merrill  
Michael O'Neil  
Justine Peters  
Tatyana Pratt  
Gage Randall

**Eighth Grade**

Ashleah Adams  
Leah Allen  
Miles Allen  
Tommy Baker  
Laura Macpherson  
Amy McGee  
Luke Ragosta  
Dylan Roussel  
Ethan Schmitt  
Megan Smith  
Alexander Stute

**Eighth Grade**

Jamie Ashcroft-Billings  
Charlotte Chamberland  
Ethan Coarse  
William Corcoran  
John Foley  
William Hemenway  
Anna Hubbard  
Damien Glasby  
Sean Olsen  
Tyler Regula  
Kathleen Sunderland  
Jade Weinberg  
Christopher Wilk  
Amber Young

**HONORS**

**Sixth Grade**  
Molly Abatiell  
Abed Alawi  
Laurel Baker  
Regan Bird  
Emanuel Bowie-Reimers  
Jack Coughlin  
Colin Joyce  
Deidre Lillie  
Alexa McLaughlin  
Katelynn Regula  
Christopher Swezy-Hurst  
Sebastien Transue  
Kassidy Velde

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## Rutland Town School . . . Where Futures Begin!

### RUTLAND TOWN COMMUNITY CALENDAR

#### DECEMBER

- 14 School Board meets - 6:30 pm, RTS  
15&29 Select Board meets - 6:30 pm, Town Hall  
15 Chorus & Band Concert Grades 5-8  
1 pm practice, 6:30 pm concert, RTS  
Senior Lunch - noon, Seward's Restaurant  
(reservation needed, see page 4)  
17 Planning Commission meets  
7 pm, Town Hall  
18 RTS Early release - 11:55 am  
21-1/1/16 Holiday break - RTS  
**24&25 Town Hall Closed**



#### JANUARY

- 1 Town Hall Closed**  
5 Four Winds training - 9-11 am, Cheney Hill  
7 PTO meets - 6:30 pm, RTS  
7&21 Planning Commission - 7 pm, Town Hall  
**10 Property Tax Payment Due**  
11 School Board meets - 6:30 pm, RTS  
12 Friends of Music meets - 4 pm, Choral room  
12&26 Select Board meets - 6:30 pm - Town Hall

- 18 Town Hall Closed - Martin Luther King Day**  
No School  
22 FOM Talent Show - 6:30 pm, RTS  
**25 No School - RCSU In-Service**  
**Pre Town Meeting - RTS, 6:30 pm**

#### FEBRUARY

- 2 Four Winds training - 9-11 am, Cheney Hill  
4 PTO meets - 6:30 pm, RTS  
4&18 Planning Commission - 7 pm, Town Hall  
5 Article deadline for The Circle  
Green Mountain Music Festival  
7:00 Concert at College of St. Joseph  
8 School Board meets - 6:30 pm, RTS  
9 FOM meets - 4 pm, Choral room  
9&23 Select Board meets - 6:30 pm, Town Hall  
**15 Town Hall Closed - President's Day**  
15-19 Winter break - RTS  
**24 Last day to register to vote in Town Meeting election**  
25 Middle School Chorus Recital - 6:30 pm, RTS  
**29 Town Meeting Information night**  
7 pm, RTS

TOWN AND SCHOOL WEBSITES: [rutlandtown.com](http://rutlandtown.com) and [rutlandtownschool.org](http://rutlandtownschool.org)