

The Circle

Rutland Town's Link between School and Community



October 2025

TOWN NEWS

By Mary Ashcroft
Select Board Chair

Next year, in 2026, we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of our nation. The following year, 2027, marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of Vermont. Our colleagues on the Rutland City intermunicipal committee, led by Alderman Paul Clifford (formerly a town resident and Select Board member), reached out to ask if the town would be willing to plan some festivities with the city to commemorate these historical milestones. "Sure," we said, and appointed Matt Getty and me as the town's intermunicipal committee for this project.

Governor Phil Scott has called on Vermont towns and cities to plan celebrations to mark these occasions. The State's Agency of Commerce and Community development has a webpage devoted to Vermont's 250th Anniversary; if you want to take a deep dive into history, visit <https://accd.vermont.gov/historic-preservation/partners/vermont-250>

We'd like to hear from Rutland Townspeople about your ideas for events we might undertake. You can contact us at Select Board – The Town of Rutland, Vermont.

Speaking of intermunicipal cooperation, Rutland Town and Mendon joined forces to ask for speed reductions along sections of US Route 4E through our two municipalities.

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RTS UPDATE

From Principal Sarah Tetzlaff

As summer turns to fall in Rutland Town, we are excited to share the wonderful things happening at Rutland Town School! We hope your summer was restful and filled with fun, and we are grateful to begin another year with such strong community support.

Facilities

This summer, major asbestos abatement work was completed, along with continued progress on our stormwater runoff project. Our maintenance staff worked diligently to ensure the building was safe and ready for the first day of school on August 27. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication.

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From the Rutland Town Planning Commission

By Barbara Noyes Pulling

The Rutland Town Planning Commission is currently developing a new subdivision bylaw intended to fully replace the existing subdivision ordinance, which was originally adopted in 1980. For more than a year, the Commission dedicated significant time and effort to revising the current ordinance. However, due to it being so outdated, the process proved to be extremely challenging. As a result, the town attorney recommended drafting an entirely new document. Following this advice, the Selectboard directed the Commission to pursue the creation of a subdivision bylaw rather than a revised ordinance. Unlike ordinances, bylaws are subject to more comprehensive statutory requirements.

Subdivision bylaws serve as a critical tool for the Planning Commission in guiding land use and development patterns within our community. They help ensure the orderly extension of infrastructure and public services, including the design and placement of streets, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, streetlights, fire hydrants, water and sewer systems, stormwater management facilities, and both public and private utilities.

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Mrs. Downs' class.

New Staff

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to the RTS community:

- Nikki Adams – Special Educator
- Madelyn Bell – School Nurse
- Ann Croxson – 5th Grade Long-Term

Substitute (Marisa Neary)

- Tiffany Esslinger – Middle School PE and Health
- Danielle Fagan – Technology/Library

Media Specialist

- Rebecca Hamilton – Special Educator
- Theresa (Teri) Hogan – 3rd Grade Long-Term

Substitute (Emily Quigley)

- Ashley Sears – Custodian

Achievements

• Congratulations to Jill Alderman, named UVM Teacher of the Year at GRCSU in-service on August 22. She will be honored along with other Vermont educators at UVM on October 27.

• RTS is the proud recipient of a \$15,000 Educate Innovate Award, thanks to the efforts of Jenn Tiftt (6th-grade Math/Science) and Katie McDougall (7th/8th-grade Science). This grant will bring exciting new opportunities for innovation to our students.

Student Life

• Seventh graders headed to Camp Chingachgook in September. Thank you to the RTS Board and community for supporting this tradition.

• The Boys and Girls Club after-school program launched on September 2.

• Middle school sports teams are already off to a spirited start.

Community

The school year is underway with teachers and students building routines, diving into academics, and strengthening relationships.

We are also actively looking for substitutes and volunteers—if you're interested, please contact Cindy Ondria, GRCSU Substitute Coordinator, at cindy.ondria@grcsu.org or (802) 775-0566 ext. 2126. Even a few hours can make a meaningful difference.

Thank you to all who continue to support RTS. For updates, student events, and school news, please visit our Facebook page (Rutland Town School) or our website at <https://rts.grcsu.org>.

Here's to a wonderful year ahead of learning, growth, and community connection.

Elementary Physical Education

From RTS Teacher Keith Schneider



Photo from Keith Schneider

Above: The school year is off to a great start in elementary physical education! Students have been working on cooperative games and challenges, practicing various locomotor movements, and are being challenged to think creatively while practicing for skill development.

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THE CIRCLE is a publication of Rutland Town and Rutland Town School. The newsletter informs the community about issues of local interest. Each year five issues are published every other month from October through June. The Circle is not a public forum. The principal and Select Board have the authority to exercise editorial control over style and content of the newsletter. Newsletter staff include Janelle Faignant. For more information, mailing list changes, to advertise or contribute, email rutlandtowncircle@gmail.com, call the RTS office at 775-0566 or mail items to: The Circle, c/o Rutland Town School, 1612 Post Road, Rutland, VT 05701

From The Listers Office

By Marcia Chioffi

It has been a very busy year in the lister's office as Marie Faignant, Cathy Kapitanski and I took on the challenge of completely transitioning the construction of the Business, Personal Property, and Inventory category of our Grand List total valuation from the past practice of outsourcing a majority of this function to a private contractor, Gail Gantek, which saved our town approximately \$30,000 in outside costs. Needless to say, all the work, and it was substantial, had to be absorbed in house. With my impending retirement in March it was my plan to assist and train Kathy to take over the Business-Personal Property appraisals in the future, so together with her, we successfully absorbed all the work represented by that \$30,000. Challenging for sure, but we got it done.

Our office, like all other Lister's offices in the state, have been the curious subject of massive changes brought about by our State Legislature in the past two sessions. Much of the discussion has been driven by the necessity of reappraisals in so many jurisdictions that the supply and availability of qualified appraisers has been severely constrained and timelines set by the state are physically impossible due to lack of Professional Appraiser resources.

Our office has developed and sent out Requests for Proposals to all qualified appraisers with absolutely no takers and those that did at least reply are totally committed through 2030. The state is now considering consolidating towns into entities called RADs (Regional Appraisal Districts) and conducting reappraisals en masse, potentially lumping Rutland Town into a district with other towns of much less Grand List values. It is only my opinion backed by 15 years of listing experience but this plan is a nightmare waiting to happen. In a recent seminar on this topic there were more questions than answers. I will keep our board informed as this plan more fully emerges.

The other major change adopted by our legislature is the imposition of a training requirement for a beginning Lister (Level One) of 48 hours and further requirements for Level Two and Level Three and reapplication in three years. I think at the healthy and ripe age of 80 that I will not opt for the state's re-education program. I look forward, in March, to spending much more time with my family and spoiling the heck out of my grandchildren.

As always, if you have any questions at all about your property valuation please stop into our friendly office. It is always a pleasure to serve our taxpayers.

Listers: Marcia Chioffi, Marie Faignant, and Cathy Kapitanski

RTS SNAPSHOTS



Photos courtesy of Sheri Bathalon

Above: Kindergarten bus safety. **Below:** First week of school pictures.



From the Delinquent Tax Collector

By Donald J. Chioffi

Just a note to let you all know just how important delinquent tax collection is to our town. In the years since I have held this position (just short of three years) I have turned in close to \$750,000 to the treasury of this town and cut the delinquencies significantly. At present there is still a total of about \$197,450 of total dollars of delinquency and that goes from 2017 to date. That amount is comprised of \$155 of principal and \$29,868 of interest in the present year.

I try, with all courtesy, to work with taxpayers to become current and have been mostly successful in these efforts. In spite of this, there are consistent and continual accounts that remain delinquent and more severe means need to be used, including the civil action of tax sale to collect these amounts. Presently the first 20 most serious accounts represent over \$155,000 of delinquency and all of this must be made up by those of you (the vast majority) who pay your share in a timely manner.

I have approached the Selectboard and requested an executive session to discuss these more severe delinquencies. They denied my request citing some need to consult with their attorney, which I found most curious since there are presently two attorneys on our board hearing my request. State law specifically allows executive sessions for any discussion of legal civil proceedings and even though it is my job as tax collector, by state law I cannot proceed with those actions without the express permission of the Selectboard.

I just wanted you all to know that I have made that request but need to discuss those requests and specifics including the names of our own citizens who we may be taking legal action to collect delinquencies. As severe as this is, it is not in my nature to reveal the names of delinquent citizens in a public forum and I will not do so.

That being said, until an executive session is granted to me as your delinquent tax collector and a statutory elected official of our town, there will be NO tax sale actions in the Town of Rutland. Those in authority must be more responsible in exercising that authority. And I am getting a little old to be playing these games.



Photo courtesy Sheri Bathalon

Above: Mrs. Ettori's 1st Grade Class.

News from the Rec

By Director Michael Rowe



Well we hope everyone had a great summer. It was a very busy summer here at the rec with lots going on. We would like to thank everyone for a great end of year celebration on the 23rd of August, a great time was had by one and all. Thank you to all the vendors and all the departments from the town showcasing what we all do best. We had a great turnout for this event with a shout out to the Aaron Audet band for great live music, Hathaway Farm for the use of the tractor rides, The Sunday Sister, Fortress of Fun, Kamudas for the food and North Star for the fireworks that night.

This summer we had over 10,000 visitors to Northwood Pool. Special thanks to all the lifeguards for a great season of swim lessons and daily swim. We also hosted a disc golf tournament at the park along with all the other activities that are available at the park.

The seniors group had a busy summer with many luncheons, from the pool to Lake St. Catherine to name a few. We will be going up Killington this fall with our adventurous group to ride the gondola and check out the fall foliage. If you would like to be part of our group please just contact me at the email below. We would love for you to join us.

It is getting to be the fall season and that means our soccer programs are off and kicking. If you would like to check out a game please just visit the town's website and look under recreation to see where you can check out all the fun.

The annual rec Halloween Party "Trick or Treat on the Trail" will be on October 24 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. out back behind the school. More info coming later.

If you have any questions about programming or events please contact me at mrowe@rutlandtown.com.

Enjoy the fall weather.

From the Rutland Town School Board

By Linda Mullin

Hello! Here is an update of happenings in the **Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union** and in the **Rutland Town School District** which serves approximately 330 PreK-8 students and 176 grade 9-12 students.

Rutland Town is part of the Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union (GRCSU.) Representatives from the Rutland Town School Board attend and participate in the GRCSU monthly meetings. At this summer's meetings, the GRCSU Board completed the yearly evaluation of our Superintendent, Mr. Christopher Sell; held a retreat to set yearly GRCSU goals, and created a GRCSU Communications Committee to communicate and engage the school communities, particularly with the school budget process and happenings with Act 73. Vermonters will be hearing a lot about Act 73 which calls for a transformation of the state education system. The GRCSU goal is to keep our school communities informed and take questions and concerns as they come up.

In our Rutland Town School District, the spring and summer of 2025 was a busy time to make upgrades to your Rutland Town School building as approved in the Capital Maintenance Plan. We thank head custodian, Kelly Trayah, and Principal, Sarah Tetzlaff, for overseeing this work. Here is work done and in progress:

- Asbestos Abatement: 23,000 square feet abated and new flooring installed
- Stormwater Project was completed
- Completed the stair upgrades, grip strips, and new railings leading to lower parking lot
- The Basketball Court was repaved and painted
- Grounds Improvements: Additional outdoor work included placing pavers around selected trees and the school sign to improve aesthetics and make mowing easier
- Installed a net on the back field to help catch balls
- Safety Inspections: Annual safety inspections (Fire Panel & Fire Extinguishers) have been completed. Installed a new pull station that was damaged during abatement.
- HVAC projects are scheduled to get underway
- Pre-K playground safety mats have been installed under the swingset
- All fire/evacuation maps have been updated and posted
- The teacher/staff breakroom project is complete
- A new entry check-in window will be installed shortly
- The yearly drill schedule is finalized and in place
- Building new bookshelves and cubbies
- Working with kindergarten teachers on an outdoor space

- Roof inspection- there are several buckles on the roof so Kelly has reached out to the original contractor to advise on next steps (roof was installed 2009)
- Installed a new hoop wench in the gym. It works with a key and has a safety strap
- New stage curtains installed in the cafeteria

To complete the projects, we were able to use surplus funds. The funds became available due to an unexpected reduction in high school tuition, salary savings, and revenue from tuition students enrolling in Rutland Town School.

The Rutland Town School District Board also held our yearly retreat to set goals for the upcoming year. The agreed upon goals focus on navigating the implementation of Act 73, keeping the budget process in the forefront, and continuing a positive climate and culture in the school community.

Goals for navigating the implementation of Act 73 include:

- * Staying current and up to date with the flow of information from the Legislature, the Redistricting Task Force, the Agency of Education, and the Greater Rutland County Supervisory Union, and others;
- *Inviting decision makers and stakeholders to meetings;
- *Utilizing multiple communication channels to spread information as it becomes available;
- *Seeking community feedback on their most important topics related to Act 73.

Goals for keeping the school budget at the forefront include:

- *Prioritizing communicating budget progress throughout the duration of budget building;
- *Being sure community conversations begin early in the process;
- *Working with the business office to better understand trend of actuals to budgeted to limit variance of surplus/deficit.

Goals for continuing a positive climate and culture in the school and RTS community:

- *Holding a School Board/Staff social
- *Including Rutland Town School class spotlight at each monthly school board meeting;
- *Having engagement in and promotion of school events and activities;
- * Adding the GRCSU mission/vision statement to the board agenda as a constant guide as discussions are held and decisions are made.

The Rutland Town School Board looks forward to a year of student successes and opportunities for students to learn to become responsible citizens who embrace a love for learning. Keep informed by accessing Rutland Town School District information on the Rutland Town website at www.rutlandtown.com.

From the Town Clerk

By Kari Clark

Here are a few reminders from the Clerk's office as we enter the fall and winter months in Rutland Town. First, is our town taxes. The first installment was due September 10. By the time you read this article, I'm certain the due date has passed, so if you haven't made that payment you can still do so by the means outlined in your tax bill mailing. A handy informational sheet was mailed along with your bills this year for your reference. Check it out for ways to pay and stay on time. The next due date is January 10.

There is not a November election scheduled this year. Our next election will be in March for Town Meeting. Meanwhile, we are required to "clean up" our voter checklists. We do so by "challenging" voters. This means that every other year we need to meet with our Board of Civil Authority to generate a list of voters who we think meet the criteria of a challenged voter. Those criteria are: (1) if we believe someone has moved out of Rutland Town, OR (2) if a voter has not participated in an election for several years. If a voter meets these requirements, they are sent a letter to the last known address on file. We ask that if you receive this letter, please respond with the postcard included in the mailing.

If you have a child that no longer lives in Rutland Town and remains on the voter list, please do us a favor, and if he or she did not receive a challenge letter, please have him or her write to our office, either in letter form or email, stating their new address. They may also change the address online at <https://vote.vermont.gov/public/dashboard>. This is the only way we can take someone like that off the checklist. It is illegal for anyone but the voter themselves to fill out voter paperwork including ballots. So, if you are a parent filling out your child's ballot or challenge information, you are essentially committing voter fraud and the clerk's office can identify those people.

Lastly, as a friendly reminder, the town officials housed in Town Hall run a non-partisan business. We look forward to helping the citizens of the town in the manners with which we are equipped to serve. Employees have the right to ask anyone who is violating the law, poses a threat or who is causing a disturbance to leave the premises. This is also true for anyone who harasses our employees over the phone. Please think about this when entering our building or calling our office. We are a public office and want to remain an open and friendly space.

Thank you!

RTS SNAPSHOTS



Photo courtesy Sheri Bathalon

Above: Ms. Mero's Kindergarten class.

Congratulations to Jill Alderman!

From Sarah Tetzlaff

Jill was recognized as UVM Teacher of the Year at the GRCSU in-service on August 22!

For 10 years, Jill has been the heart of 1st and 2nd grade—welcoming every student with open arms, setting high expectations, and providing the support they need to thrive. She is an extraordinary educator who not only teaches with skill and care, but also ensures her students' needs are met—academically, socially, and emotionally.

Beyond her classroom, Jill's leadership shines. She has coached Girls on the Run, leads PLCs, facilitates GRCSU professional development, guides curriculum work, and welcomes colleagues into her room to observe best practices. A lifelong learner and certified Orton-Gillingham Classroom Teacher, Jill continually expands her expertise to benefit her students.

Known for her kindness, hard work, and unwavering dedication, Jill embodies the very best of teaching—making a lasting difference in the lives of her students, her colleagues, and her community.



Great things are happening at Wonderfeet Kids' Museum! This summer, we hosted 8 weeks of preschool and big kid camp, several field trips, and were out and about at community outreach events. Autumn brings the opportunity to book field trips and birthday parties at Wonderfeet, and in December, we're available for booking holiday parties and festive field trips. If you are interested in booking a field trip, birthday party, or holiday gathering, reach out to guestservices@wkmvt.org for more information.

Last October, we once again hosted our signature event, Truck or Treat, and we are so excited to welcome you back on Sunday, October 19 from 12 to 4 p.m. This family-focused event combines elements of a Touch-a-Truck and Trunk or Treat. Kids will be able to check out all kinds of cool vehicles and collect Halloween treats from the trucks and downtown businesses. Food trucks will be on hand to keep everyone fed and happy! If your business is interested in participating, email WonderfeetEvents@gmail.com for more information.

Truck or Treat is a free event - but we are inviting families to participate in a coin drop that day. All of the change collected will be matched by our business partners! Families who bring their change will receive a free raffle ticket and additional tickets will be available for purchase. Follow the event on social media to see more details and all of the great prizes up for grabs!

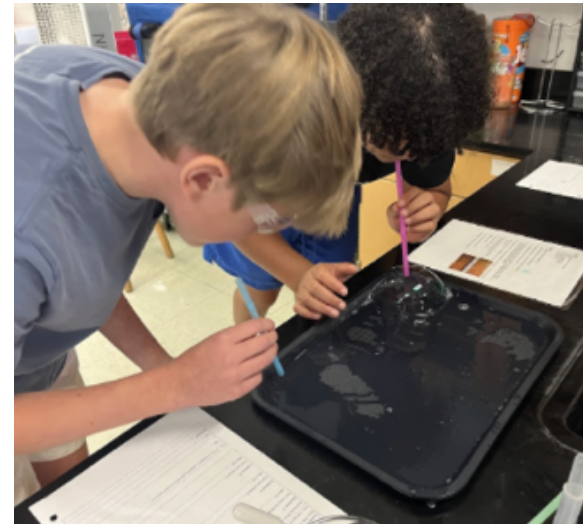
This fall, our Have a "One"derfeet Year program continues offering connection and community to residents of Rutland County. Those with a 1-2 year old are eligible for a free one-year membership to Wonderfeet Kids' Museum when they complete a developmental screening with their child. Members of the program will also receive invites to unique workshops and classes, meet-ups and support groups throughout the year hosted by Wonderfeet in collaboration with other local organizations. Stop into Wonderfeet anytime to sign up, or complete an Ages & Stages Questionnaire from home to get started. Visit www.wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org/development for information about how to join and upcoming events and screening dates.

Have time to visit Wonderfeet during the week? Join us every Thursday from 11:30-12 for Littles with Wiggles, our so-much-fun dance class led by Ms. Nicole for all our friends that love to boogie! Stay tuned for additional information about the return of our Whiz Kid Wednesday STEAM program and more to come. This Holiday season, Wonderfeet will be hosting our Santa's Workshop on Sunday, November 30th and Saturday, December 6. This special ticketed event features time with Santa, make and take keepsake crafts, and special treats to share and enjoy! We hope you and the special little one in your life will join us for some holiday magic.

Wonderfeet Kids' Museum is located at 66 Merchants Row in the GMP Energy Innovation Center. We are open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It Takes a Village, our free playgroup and support group for babies and toddlers and their caregivers, takes place every Monday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Fatherhood Fridays, in conjunction with Rutland County Parent Child Center, is a free playgroup for male care-givers that takes place the first Friday of every month from 5:30 to 7 p.m. For more information, please contact guestservices@wkmvt.org.



Students in Science 7 and Science 8 are learning about types of variables in scientific investigations. As a class, they are following scaffolded procedures to build up to an independent lab. 7th graders are using paper airplanes as their focus, while 8th graders are using soap type and bubble concentrations.



¡Hola Familias!
Spanish Program Update
By Theresa Sunderland

We're excited to share that our Spanish classes are off to a fantastic start this school year! Students across all grade levels have already begun their language-learning journey with lots of enthusiasm and energy.

In these first few weeks, our young learners have been busy getting to know basic greetings and classroom phrases, as well as school supplies we carry in our backpack to school — all through fun songs, discussions and crafts. Our goal is to build a strong foundation in Spanish while also fostering an enthusiasm for the language and other cultures.

Speaking of cultures, we have just begun celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15). This is a wonderful opportunity for students to deepen their cultural awareness and appreciation for the rich histories, traditions, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities.

Throughout the month, students will engage in age-appropriate lessons, study the geography, explore traditional music and art, and learn about important figures from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries. Our goal is to create meaningful connections between language and culture in a way that is both fun and educational.

We would also love to invite members of our school community to be a part of the learning! If you or a family member have a cultural tradition, story, profession, or topic related to the Spanish-speaking world that you'd be interested in sharing with our students, please don't hesitate to reach out. Guest visits are a meaningful way to help bring learning to life, and your voice and experiences are valuable!

We encourage families to ask their children about what they're learning in class — even simple questions like "How do you say hello in Spanish?" can spark great conversations and reinforce learning at home! Thank you for your continued support. ¡Vamos a tener un gran año!



From the
RUTLAND FREE LIBRARY
By Director Randal Smathers



Thanks from the library!

Thanks to everyone who participated in our summer reading programs this year. In addition to the regular kids' program, we tried teen and adult programs with good success, so expect them to be back in 2026!

The library's annual meeting is coming up on Oct. 15 at 5 p.m. in the Fox Room. We have turnover with both of our Rutland Town reps. The Select Board nominated Fern Fryer to replace Ken Watson, and Joe Bertelloni has had to step down due to scheduling conflicts. We expect to have a new person in place in time for the October meeting, in partnership with the Select Board.

Thanks to both Ken and Joe for their service! We have an active board, which means lots of committee work in addition to the monthly meetings, and we appreciate that folks are willing to volunteer to ensure the smooth running of the library.

Thanks also to Fern, who represented the library at the annual Rutland Town Celebration, at the Whoopie Pie Festival, and sold a stack of tickets for our quilt raffle; and to the Select Board for such a great addition. And thanks to the Maple Leaf Quilters, who donated the quilt that was raffled off on Sept. 20.

Between that and the Whoopie Pie Festival, we raised about \$3,500 for the library this month! Check out our how-to video with our recipe for Ginger-(b)-Read whoopie pies on PEG-TV, that's available on their YouTube channel. Thanks to our many volunteers for making that a success.

Finally, thanks to the Friends of Rutland Free Library, whose book sales support our work. Among many other things, they replaced our broken coin box at the print station with one that takes both currency and cards. Next up will be trying to add wireless printing, to make the process easier for users and less time-consuming for librarians.

RTS SNAPSHOTS



Photos courtesy Sheri Bathalon

Top: Mrs. Zaengle's 5th Grade class. **Above:** Mrs. MacIntyre's 8th Grade class.

Planning Commission continued from pg. 1

In addition, the bylaw will establish standards for the design and configuration of parcel boundaries and the placement of necessary improvements. These standards are intended to support the implementation of the town plan and promote the desired settlement pattern for the area in which a subdivision is proposed.

The bylaw will also include provisions related to boundary line adjustments which are not considered subdivisions. These adjustments, while involving the transfer of land between adjacent parcels, do not constitute subdivisions as they do not result in the creation of new, separate lots. The Planning Commission anticipates completing its work on the new subdivision bylaw later this year and getting your feedback on the bylaw.

Town News continued from pg. 1

In Rutland Town, this section of state highway, from the City/Town Line at Gleason Road to the Rutland Town-Mendon Line at Town Line Road, boasts many local businesses, and presently has a posted speed limit of 45 MPH. Too many vehicles exceed that limit, which makes turning onto our local roads hazardous, and results in accidents. In Mendon, the problem is even more acute, as Mendon's "town center" is Route 4.

Our joint Select Boards' request to VTrans paid off. The State will decrease the speed limit to 40MPH on Route 4E in our town, and along a significant portion of Route 4 in Mendon. A special thanks goes to our own Joe Denardo who ably argued Rutland Town's case with state transportation officials.

Rutland Town and Mendon are also working together to solve another local dilemma. Each town has a local road named Heather Lane. Although some distance apart, both Heather Lanes have the same zip code—05701—resulting in confusion with postal and other delivery services, and more significantly with emergency dispatch services. Not long ago, an ambulance was called to Heather Lane in Mendon, but responded to Heather Lane in Rutland Town.

Mendon's Heather Lane has been around longer and has more houses on it than Rutland Town's, so it made sense for us to yield. Our Select Board has reached out to residents on our Heather Lane, explaining the situation and asking their ideas for a new road name. Thank you, Rutland Town Heather Lane residents, for your understanding and helpful suggestions. You've made both of our communities safer. Our Select Board and E-911 officials will finalize the name change soon, to take effect at the end of this year.

Here are a few other things your Select Board worked on over the summer:

--We made the final payment to VMS for our new McKinley Avenue Public Safety Building. All punch list items have been addressed, and the retainage released.

--With the help of Town Treasurer Kari Clark, the Select Board set the property tax rate for FY 2025-26. The combined school/town rate is lower than last year's rate, so most taxpayers should see a reduction in their property taxes.

--Our town once again celebrated the end of summer with our Townwide Celebration at Northwood Park on August 23. The Select Board is grateful to all who made this annual event a success. Our special thanks go to Mike Rowe and the lifeguards, Bill Sweet, Kurt Hathaway on the tractor ride, and celebrity chefs Sharon Russell and Matt Getty.

The Rutland Town Select Board meets every other Tuesday evening at 6 p.m. The public is always welcome in person at Town Hall in Center Rutland, or via zoom. You can find meeting agendas, zoom information, and contact information on the town website at <https://www.rutlandtown.com/>. We are glad to hear from you anytime.

~ Meet the RTS New Hires ~



Madelyn Bell grew up in Saratoga Springs, NY. She earned a degree in Biology from SUNY Geneseo before

pursuing her BSN in Nursing at Utica College. During nursing school, she completed her practicum at John Hopkins All Children's Hospital, where she discovered her passion for working with children and decided to make that a key part of her future career. Madelyn has spent the past few years working at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in both the Surgical ICU and Neuro ICU, gaining invaluable experience in critical care. However, her passion for working with children has always remained central to her career goals. She is excited to begin her new role as the School Nurse at Rutland Town School, where she can combine her healthcare expertise with her love for supporting and caring for children in a school setting.

Outside of work, Madelyn enjoys running, hiking with her dog Finn, practicing yoga, and spending time with family and friends. She also loves traveling, cooking, and paddleboarding. Madelyn looks forward to this new chapter and is eager to make a positive impact at Rutland Town School.



Tiffany Esslinger grew up in Clarendon, VT. She attended Johnson State College to earn a bachelor's

degree in Health Science with K-12 Physical Education Licensure. After college she returned to the Rutland area and began her career as the PE teacher at Proctor Jr/Sr High School. She spent 21 years as a Proctor Phantom. During this time she took on a variety of roles such as wellness leader, mentor teacher, class advisor, Peer Leader advisor and leadership team. In 2015 she earned her Master's Degree in Athletic Administration and Coaching from Concordia University. Tiffany is looking forward to meeting the students and their families and is excited to become a part of the RTS community. She is passionate about helping students find ways to enjoy exercise and to help them become lifelong movers. Outside of school, Tiffany pursues a variety of interests—hiking, snowmobiling, making earrings, reading, strength training, spending time with family and enjoying nature with her 3 dogs. She is looking forward to a new chapter with the RTS Chargers.



Colby Hescock grew up in Brattleboro, VT. After graduating high school, he attended Castleton State College, where he graduated with a degree in Mathematics with Elementary

Education. He later went on to get his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from the Upper Valley Educators Institute in Lebanon, NH. After observing here at RTS during his early days at Castleton, he went on to mentor and student teach here as well. After a pleasant experience, he was then hired as one of our 5th-grade teachers. For the past nine years, he has taught fifth grade, the last eight of which have been in a math and science role. He has been fortunate enough to work with hundreds of tremendous fifth-grade students and their families over the past decade!

As the years went on, Colby developed an interest in leadership roles within our building. He went on to be involved in such things as school scheduling, Lifetime Sports, and professional learning community (PLC) leadership, to name a few. He credits working with so many great students and staff over the years as an inspiration towards him pursuing a career in educational leadership. He hopes to build upon the positive influence he can have within a school building. Colby believes that all students can grow and succeed in their educational, social, and emotional well-being. He hopes to support and advocate for systems and structures that help make success in learning a reality.

Outside of the classroom, Colby has many interests—spending time with his wife, his dog, family, and friends are at the top of the list. He also enjoys watching and playing a wide variety of sports, snowboarding, riding his motorcycle and four-wheeler, and traveling! He is very excited to take on a new and challenging role within Rutland Town School!

~ Meet the RTS New Hires ~



Rebecca Hamilton is a dedicated educator who is excited to join the special education team at Rutland Town. Rebecca grew up in the community and attended Rutland Town herself as a child. Returning as a teacher holds special meaning for her, and she is deeply committed to giving back to the school that helped shape her.

Before entering the field of education, Rebecca spent time living in Colorado, where she worked with horses—a beneficial experience that taught her the value of hard work, patience, and understanding. These qualities continue to shape her compassionate, student-centered approach in the classroom and her commitment to supporting diverse learners.

Outside of school, Rebecca enjoys spending time with her husband, their two boys, and their two dogs. As a family, they love hiking, skiing, camping, and exploring all that Vermont has to offer. She is excited to be part of the Rutland Town community once again and looks forward to making a meaningful impact on her students' educational journeys.



Danielle Fagan has lived in Vermont for most of her life. She earned her Master's degree in Education from Castleton University. She has worked with the wonderful students and staff at Proctor Elementary for the past 11 years.

She is so excited to begin her new role as Library Media Specialist at RTS. She enjoys working with students to help them become successful communicators, collaborators and creators. She is passionate about literacy and deepening kids' joy of reading. Outside of work, Danielle loves to spend time with her family. Along with her husband and two sons, she has started a mini-farm, raising chickens and goats. She also has a pet dog, Cricket and a cat named Nelly. She enjoys gardening, traveling, exploring Vermont's various hiking trails, and of course, reading.



Nikki Adams brings over 20 years of experience working with youth and families to her role at Rutland Town School. A Rutland High School graduate, Nikki then completed a post-graduate year at Berkshire School, excelling in athletics and fine arts. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Sociology/Anthropology with a minor in Studio Art from Castleton University, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 2009. As a student-athlete, she played on Castleton's Women's Ice Hockey and Lacrosse teams, earning a scholarship to pursue graduate studies and play lacrosse in the UK.

Nikki furthered her education earning a Master's in Social Science and Culture from Durham University and then a Master's in Education from Castleton University. Her diverse experience includes roles as a college admissions counselor and coach, high school librarian, K-12 support staff, art teacher, camp counselor, recreation program director, and special educator across several states. This broad background has shaped her energetic and holistic approach to education. In addition to teaching and coaching, Nikki is a freelance artist and musician. Outside of work, she enjoys playing music, pottery, gardening, hiking, physical fitness, reading, traveling, and spending time with her family and dogs. Nikki is excited to join the Rutland Town School community and looks forward to helping students discover and create new opportunities.

7th Grade at CAMP CHINGACHOGOOK

Photos courtesy Sheri Bathalon



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Rutland Town Community Calendar

OCT	7	Select Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	10	RTS - No School/GRCSSU In-Service
	13	Town Hall Closed
	13	RTS closed for Indigenous Peoples' Day
	14	School Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	21	Select Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	23	Planning Commission meeting - 6:30 p.m.
	24	Halloween Party at RTS - 4 p.m.
NOV	4	Select Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	6,7	RTS Early Dismissal
	11	RTS closed for Veterans Day
	11	School Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	13	Planning Commission meeting - 6:30 p.m.
	18	Select Board meeting - 6 p.m.
	26-28	Thanksgiving Holiday



Town & School websites: rutlandtown.com & rutlandtownschool.org