

The Circle



Rutland Town's Link between School and Community

April 2026

TOWN NEWS

By Mary Ashcroft,
Select Board Chair

Thank you, Rutland Town voters, for approving all town budgets and spending requests for FY 2026-27. Your support for our town employees, department heads and volunteers is deeply appreciated. The Select Board will manage your tax dollars wisely.

Town Meeting voters returned incumbents Kurt Hathaway and Mary Ashcroft to the Select Board. The full board includes Kurt Hathaway, Sharon Russell and Matt Getty, with Ashcroft and Denardo. At its reorganizational meeting, the board chose Mary Ashcroft as chair and Joe Denardo as clerk.

Interested in serving in town government? The Select Board will be making appointments to fill volunteer positions over the next several meetings. Check out the openings on the town's website at <https://www.rutlandtown.com/town-departments/elected-and-appointed-officials/>. We could use your help.

Parents, grandparents and guardians: please remind your high school seniors to apply for Rutland Town Scholarships. We have \$15,000 to award to members of the graduating class of 2026 going on to 2 and 4 year colleges, tech schools and trade programs. Applications and information are posted on the town's website at <https://www.rutlandtown.com/>.

Your Select Board meets every other Tuesday evening at 6PM at Town Hall on 181 Business Route 4, Center Rutland. The meetings are open to the public and are also available via zoom, so you can watch us from the comfort of your living rooms.

Continued on pg. 10

RTS UPDATE

From Principal Sarah Tetzlaff

We want to thank all of the voters for supporting our school budget. We truly appreciate the continued support of our community and are looking forward to a fun, active, and healthy spring at Rutland Town School.

We also have many wonderful accomplishments to celebrate! Mrs. Cornell, Mrs. Neary, 8th grader Izzy Classen, and 6th grader Violet Poli will be traveling to Norwich University on March 11th to compete in the State Spelling Bee. We wish our talented spellers the very best of luck!

Continued on pg. 3

From the Rutland Town Planning Commission

By Barbara Noyes Pulling
Planning Commission Chair

Pocket Park

As promised, construction of the pocket park at Center Rutland Falls, located off Business Route 4 and Simons Avenue, will begin this year although it will be a little bit later than predicted. The town is working with Otter Creek Engineering to put the final touches on the park's phase one design. Work should begin this spring and we're still hoping to celebrate a grand opening of the pocket park this year this fall!

The pocket park will be located on an approximately half-acre parcel on the west side of Otter Creek, directly across from the Green Mountain Power hydroelectric facility. The first phase of the project will focus on site cleanup and improved access. Work will include removing dead trees and invasive vegetation, improving the small parking area off Simons Avenue, and rebuilding the path from the parking area to the falls overlook. The new path will meet ADA accessibility standards so that the site can be more easily enjoyed by everyone.

Continued on pg. 5

STANDING TALL ON MY SOAP BOX

A huge "Thank You" to those who participated in this year's Town Meeting vote on March 3. All items on the ballot passed this year, and with no contested races, all elected officials will continue his or her tenure in their respectable departments. This includes me. Thank you very much for your support on the ballot. It truly means a lot to me to be able to serve you in this capacity. I enjoy every day of it and look forward to the next three years.

I'd like to take this moment to remind everyone that Town Meeting voting is important to you as a taxpayer. This is the election where your voice is heard, your vote truly counts and it directly affects your pocketbook. Having said that, each year I'm surprised at the total turnout of our voters. It's lower than I'd expect it to be. This March we had 23% of our registered voters cast a vote. I'll be honest, that's not great. These days, the State of Vermont has made it extremely easy to vote. There are several options for you if you aren't able to make it to the polls on election day. There really is no excuse not to vote. I encourage you to think about this for future events.

It's also the time of year that I remind you to register your furry friend(s) with the Town. Registrations are due by April 1 to receive the regular rate. Neutered and Spayed dogs are \$11 and intact dogs are \$15. Anyone registering after April 1 will find a few extra dollars added to the rate. I'll stand on my soap box once again to explain the importance of registering your dog(s). Not only is it required by the State of Vermont every year, but it's in good faith to do it, for the safety of your dog. No one ever wants to think something terrible will happen to your furry friend, but I am here to tell you that it does, when you least expect it. Wouldn't you feel good knowing that your dog was in good standing with its rabies? I know I would. It's a small price to pay for peace of mind. We are aware of those of you that have dogs and do not choose to come in. Currently, there is a fine in the Town if your dog is involved in an altercation and found not to be registered with us.

I look forward to the next few months when I will see many of you. Please come in to register to vote, register your dog and pay your last installment of taxes for the year. The last payment will be due on or before May 10, 2026.

Happy spring!



Photo courtesy RTS

On March 18 the Mystery Reader dressed the part at RTS, with a craft and a sweet treat for the class!

CONTENTS

Recreation Dept.	Page 3
Rutland Free Library	Page 4
Police Dept.	Page 5
Highway Dept.	Page 7
Wonderfeet	Page 9
Listers Update	Page 10
School Board	Page 11

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**

Following up on the previously announced \$15,000 Educate Innovate Initiative grant awarded to Jenn Tiff and Katie McDougall, we are thrilled to share that they were formally recognized on the ice at the UVM Men's Hockey game recently. While Jenn was unfortunately unable to attend, Katie represented their incredible work. We are so proud of both Jenn and Katie for their creativity, dedication, and commitment to expanding meaningful learning opportunities for our students. Their recognition highlights the innovative and thoughtful work happening in our classrooms every day.

Congratulations also go out to our 7th and 8th grade boys' basketball team, who recently won the Bloodworth/Marrow Basketball Tournament in Proctor. It was a great accomplishment and a wonderful example of teamwork and sportsmanship.

At our March 10th school board meeting, we also shared our students' FastBridge reports showing academic growth in reading and math from fall to winter. FastBridge screening assessments are administered to GRCSU students in kindergarten through grade 9 three times each year—fall, winter, and spring, and provide important data to support our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). We are incredibly proud of the progress our students are making. If you are interested in hearing more about their growth and accomplishments, we encourage you to watch the board meeting recording.

Rutland Town School is currently hiring! We are in urgent need of a boys' lacrosse coach. If we are unable to secure a coach in the next few weeks, we will unfortunately have to cancel the season. If you know someone who might be interested, please have them reach out to our Athletic Director, Mike Rowe, at michael.rowe@grcsu.org. We are also seeking a long-term substitute for PE/Health (March-June 2026) and a long-term substitute for 5th-grade Math and Science (August-December 2026). Interested applicants can contact Sarah Tetzlaff, at sarah.tetzlaff@grcsu.org. Additionally, we are always looking for substitute teachers for all grades. Anyone interested in substituting can reach out to Cindy Ondria, at cindy.ondria@grcsu.org or (802) 775-0566 ext. 2126.

Thank you again for supporting our amazing school and community. I encourage everyone to visit our website at <http://rts.grcsu.org> and follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/rtsvt> to see all the great things happening at Rutland Town School.

NEWS FROM THE REC

From Director Michael Rowe

Hello All,

I would like to thank you all for getting out to vote and supporting our recreation programs. We have a couple of things going on as the weather turns to spring.

We had a lot of use of the ice rink at school this past season with lots of people skating and the school kiddos skating during the school day. Next year we hope to make it bigger and better.

Our Grab-n-Go senior lunches were a huge success this past January and February, a big shout-out to our celebrity chefs, Sharon Russell, Jeff Colomb, Stan Blicharz and Marcia Chioffi.

The basketball season was a huge success with many thanks to the following people who volunteered their time to work with the kiddos:

Collin Fingon, Zazh Hamilton, Brian Kamuda, Dennis Mazzabufi, Jeff Goelz, Steve Hawley, Kathryn Duguay, Teri Hogan, Heather Coleman and Adam Coleman.

Thank you for a job well done! The seniors have a sit down lunch at the West Rutland Town Hall with their senior group.

This will be on April 28 at 11:00 a.m., and both jazz bands from RTS and WR will be performing for the group, more info to follow.

Spring means baseball season is starting, please go to www.rutlandtown.com and under recreation you can still sign up for our T-ball program (Pre-K to K) and our Mighty Mights program (grades 1 and 2).

These programs will start the first of May so stay tuned. The summer is right around the corner which means the pool will be open and all the summer activities will be in full swing.

With spring in the air please remember to have your dog on a leash when you are in the park and make sure to use our doggie disposal bags and waste stations.

If you have any questions please contact Michael Rowe at recreation@rutlandtown.com

Enjoy the nice spring weather!



Never miss an issue!

Read The Circle online at

www.rutlandtown.com/the-circle



Photos courtesy RTS

Above: The 3/4 Girls Basketball team had a great season! **Below:** Students in 2nd and 7th grade planted their Tomatosphere seeds. Some went to the International Space Station. **Bottom:** Snow snake with RTS 5th grade.



Rutland Free Library

From Director Randal Smathers

Library thanks and tips

First off, a big thank-you to Rutland Town voters for your continued support of the library!

Talking to folks this spring, one regular concern we heard is the length of the holds queue when you try to get a new book on Libby. So here's some tips:

-- Libby in Vermont is a statewide system, as is the holds queue. So when you reserve a book and are #153 on the list, that's for all the copies of the book in the state. Rutland Free Library uses what's called the "Advantage" program to buy extra copies of popular titles just for our users. So even if it doesn't show up, we're speeding up the line for our members.

-- There's a super-handly option in Libby to let you find a book to read today, while you're waiting for your turn at the best-seller. From the home screen (picture of a little library), you can set filters. Tap the "available now" button, and it will only show you titles you can borrow right away. So after you place your holds, you can quickly find another title to tide you over.

-- Using the same filters, you can choose to only see audiobooks or ebooks if that's your preference.

-- We also recently added Kanopy movies to Libby, and a huge selection of specialty magazines, so more choices!

-- Another little frustration about Libby is that it defaults to a one-week loan, and won't let you change the default. You can, however, choose a 14-day loan from the confirmation screen when you download, just before you hit the "borrow" button.

-- Try also downloading The Palace Project app, available from the major app stores. It leans more toward independent / smaller publishers, but it gives you a whole extra set of books to choose from. It's provided free of charge by the state Department of Libraries. The interface is a little clunky, but it also has the advantage of charging much less for libraries to provide books.

-- Happy reading!



**From the RUTLAND TOWN
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

By Ted R Washburn
Deputy Chief of Police



I would first like to thank the voters of the Town of Rutland for their continued support of the Rutland Town Police Department. On Town Meeting Day you again approved our budget, we cannot thank you enough and we will continue to provide the highest level of professionalism we can offer.

On March 22, 2026, Chief of Police Edward E. Dumas II retired from law enforcement. A surprise celebration was held on March 20th at the Rutland Town Public Safety Facility, during which time many family members, friends and colleagues gathered to show their support for Chief Dumas and his many years of dedication to the Town of Rutland.

Chief Dumas began his law enforcement career in 1986 with the Windsor, VT police department. After a short time, he was hired by the Rutland City Police Department and he served for a total of 28 years protecting and serving the City of Rutland. Chief Dumas retired from the Rutland City Police in 2016, and became the full-time Chief of Police for the Rutland Town Police Department.

During his time as chief, the Rutland Town Police Department has grown from two full-time officers and one part-time officer agency, to the now five full-time officers and one full-time civilian staff. Chief Dumas has served in Vermont Law Enforcement for 40 years, and has earned this retirement. On behalf of everyone at the Rutland Town Police Department, The Town of Rutland and the Rutland Community at large, thank you, Chief Dumas, for your unwavering dedication to the citizens you protected the past 40 years.



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Planning Commission continued from pg. 1

Additional first-phase improvements will include installing fencing at the Otter Creek overlook, creating a picnic area, and placing a kiosk and informational signs along the path to share information about the site.

The Town Planning Commission has met with Indigenous tribes and plans to continue consulting with other groups connected to the history of Center Rutland Falls to help develop the content for the park's interpretive signage.

Community volunteers are welcome to assist with construction activities for the pocket park. Anyone interested in helping is encouraged to contact Recreation Director Mike Rowe at (802) 779-2518.

Subdivision Bylaws

The Rutland Town Planning Commission is also putting the finishing touches on a new set of subdivision bylaws to fully replace the current subdivision ordinance, which was originally adopted in 1980. Subdivision bylaws are an important tool for guiding land use and development within the community by allowing review 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.

The bylaws also include provisions addressing boundary line adjustments that do not qualify as subdivisions. These adjustments involve the transfer of land between adjacent parcels but do not create new, separate lots.

The Planning Commission expects to forward the new subdivision bylaws to the Selectboard for review and public feedback this spring.

Walmart Supercenter

The commission is also keeping tabs on the Act 250 process for the demolition of the former Diamond Run Mall and construction of a Walmart Supercenter at that location. Developers hope to conclude the Act 250 process this year and begin work shortly thereafter.

~ RTS Science ~
From Mrs. Katie McDougall



Photos courtesy RTS

Above: 7th graders partnered with 2nd graders to conduct the annual Tomatosphere Investigation. **Below left:** Students in 7th grade science completed a chemistry unit investigating physical and chemical changes using lab equipment. **Below right:** 7th graders have been completing the Algae Academy program using salt water microscopic algae provided to describe the benefits of algae and explore their microscopic world.





Photos courtesy RTS

Above: Pre-K invited families to their Kindness Celebration. **Below:** During a gallery walk, students in Mrs. Chappy's room shared their biography cereal box book reports. **Bottom:** 7th graders have been completing the Algae Academy program.



Highway Happenings

By Road Commissioner Dave Sears

We have a few things to cover in this article so let's get right into it.

Let me start by offering a very grateful thank you to everyone that voted and approved our budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Also thank you for approving the purchase of a much needed excavator for the department. This will greatly benefit the department and the Town for years to come.

Next, another very grateful thank you to Principal Tetzlaff, Kelly and the maintenance staff at RTS for clearing the sidewalk from Chasanna Dr. to the school for us this winter. The tractor that we use for sidewalk maintenance had a catastrophic engine failure in October. It took several months to have the engine replaced and Principal Tetzlaff generously offered to clear the sidewalk until we could get our machine back. Thank You!!!

Last but definitely not least, I need to talk about winter operations. We are working towards less reliance on salt products to treat winter snow events. Particularly rock salt.

The last two years have been a struggle for rock salt within the State of Vermont. I believe there are several reasons for the shortages that we are experiencing but that is for another time.

Last winter we were shut off by our salt vendor at the end of February with a lot of winter remaining. This year we were shut off the third week of January with even more winter remaining. Therefore, we are experimenting with a liquid magnesium chloride solution that we will use as a pretreatment. The mag/chloride will create a barrier between the road surface and the snow, allowing us to plow down to pavement. Rock salt will still be required, but at a much lower rate than it was in the past.

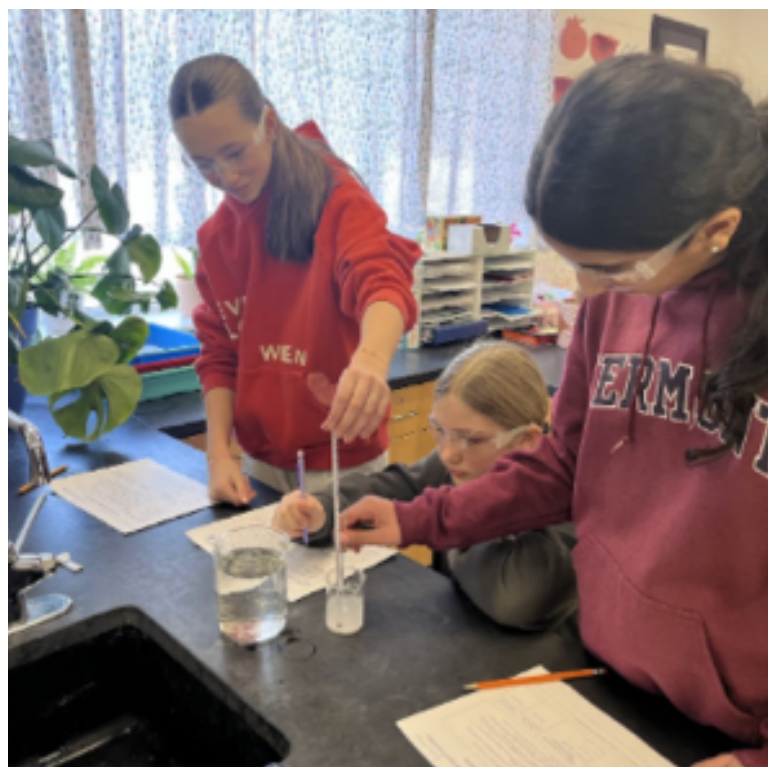
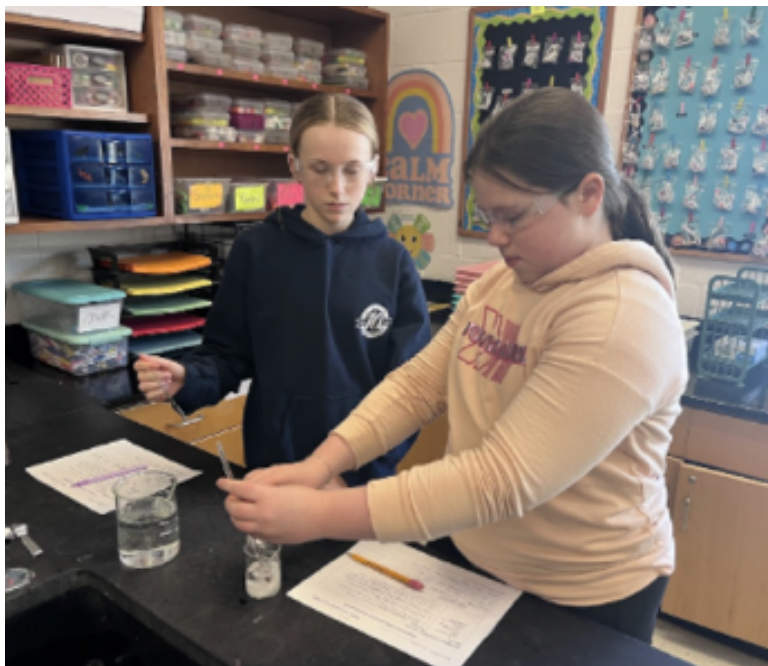
You will likely see us on the streets and in your neighborhoods spraying prior to predicted snow events. You will see us less during the storms as we let the mag/chloride do its thing under the snow.

There will be more on this issue as we get closer to the 2026/2027 winter season.

It has been a good, old-fashioned Vermont winter. Long and Cold.

Think spring!!
Be safe!

In the Classroom



Photos courtesy RTS

Above: Students in 7th grade science completed a chemistry unit where they investigated physical and chemical changes using lab equipment.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

**ATTENTION, HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
(and parents)!**

Scholarship applications are available on the town's website at www.rutlandtown.com/. **Completed applications are due at the Town Hall, 181 Business Route 4, Center Rutland, VT by noon on Friday, May 1.**

Applicants must be residents in the Town of Rutland for at least two years prior to the date of high school graduation. Scholarships are awarded based on scholastic achievement, community service, proven leadership, extra-curricular activities, and financial need.

Wonderfeet Kids' Museum

By Paula Townsend,
Education Coordinator

Happy spring!

Wonderfeet would like to thank the town for their continued support of the museum. Your funding helps us continue our mission to engage with families and children in a safe and hands-on environment.

This March we are welcoming our new Executive Director, Catherine Heatley. We are so excited for her to join our team! Please stop in and say hello.

Event Updates:

3.14 cheers for Pi Day!! Saturday, March 14 (3.14) we celebrated Pi-Day day with three of our community partners. Rutland Free Library brought circle art and books, WIC brought a cool activity: finding round foods, and Clover Exploration had patrons embark on a fun search for all the circles that could be found throughout the museum. AND thank you to The Bakery, who donated homemade pies. Yum! Circles are everywhere!

Our next event is the Laurie Berkner live concert at the Paramount Theater. The show is Saturday, March 28 at 11:00 a.m. All week before the show we will have Laurie Berkner themed crafts and activities, be sure to stop in and join the fun! There's only a few seats left, if you would like to join us grab your tickets now!

Summer Camps are back at Wonderfeet Kids' Museum. Get ready for a summer full of creativity and hands-on fun.

Please check our website for registration:

www.wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org.

Wonderfeet weekly activities:

- Takes a Village, our free playgroup and support group for babies and toddlers and their caregivers, takes place every Monday from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Whiz Kid Wednesday STEAM program from 10:30 to 11:00 a.m.
- Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:00 a.m., join us for Littles with Wiggles—this is our so-much-fun dance class led by Ms. Nicole for all our friends that love to boogie!

*Be sure to check our calendar for monthly themed pop up crafts!

Don't forget to get your end of the school year field trips in at Wonderfeet! If you are interested please reach out to guestservices@wkmvt.org or fill out the field trip form on our website!

Wonderfeet Kids' Museum is located at 66 Merchants Row in the GMP Energy Innovation Center. We are open Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please check our website and Facebook page for any program or event changes.



*Photos courtesy WKM
Facebook*

RSR Rotarians Ken Nelson and Roger Louiselle were having way too much fun at Wonderfeet Kids' Museum playing with the Spiked Lego Kits that our club donated to the organization. Paula Townsend, Wonderfeet's Education Coordinator, helped to demonstrate these fun and innovative learning tools for children.

From The Listers Office

With the April 15 tax deadline approaching, please see below some reminders:

- **APRIL 15 – TAX FORMS DUE FOR BOTH STATE & FEDERAL**
- **HS-122 THE - HOMESTEAD DECLARATIONS ARE DUE WITH YOUR VERMONT STATE TAX FILINGS,** Please be sure that your tax preparer is using your correct span number, which can be found on your tax bill.
- **VETERANS EXCEPTIONS –** are due on or before May 1 each year. To qualify for the combination of state and town credit of \$40,000 on your homestead. Eligibility is based on a VA 50% approved disability.

Site visits will begin the week of April 6. If you have received a letter to call our office and schedule a site visit, please do so as soon as possible. We have several site visits to complete in order to finalize the grand list to set the tax rate for the upcoming fiscal year 26-27.

BIG thank you to all that voted at our annual town meeting on March 2.

Until the next issue, think spring.

From the Board of Listers:

Marcia Chioffi, Marie Faignant, Cathy Kapitanski.

Town News continued from pg. 1

Meeting agendas with the Zoom link are posted on our website the Thursday before each meeting.

Please contact any Select Board member on any matter as you see us at the hardware store or around town, or email us at <https://www.rutlandtown.com/contact-rutland-town/#email>. You can also get messages to us through our Town Administrator Bill Sweet at 802-773-2528, extension 106.

We want to hear from you.



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RTS SNAPSHOTS



Photos courtesy RTS

Above: 8th graders working on their genetics unit and learning about the structure of DNA.

From the Rutland Town School Board

Dear Rutland Town School Families and Community Members,

The Rutland Town School District Board would like to sincerely thank our community for your ongoing support of our school and students. Your vote in favor of the 2026–2027 school budget reflects a strong commitment to maintaining the quality education and opportunities that define Rutland Town School.

Throughout the budget process, the board carefully balanced responsible financial planning with the need to sustain the programs, resources, and experiences that help our students grow and succeed. Your support allows us to continue providing a learning environment where students

are challenged, supported, and prepared for the future. As we move forward, we will continue to seek thoughtful, sustainable ways to address the financial realities of public education while keeping students at the center of every decision we make. It is encouraging to see our community, staff, and families come together in support of Rutland Town School.

Thank you for your confidence in our school and for investing in the future of our students.

From the Rutland Town School District Board Members: Jeffrey Colomb, Collin Fingon, Jill Hamilton, Tim Hammond, Linda Mullin

RTS SNAPSHOTS



Photos courtesy RTS

Above left: 8th graders conducting investigations related to the rate of photosynthesis when light intensity, temperature and carbon dioxide concentration have been manipulated. Students ultimately took their data and constructed a CER using their own evidence. **Above right:** An 8th grade student working on the genetics unit and learning about the structure of DNA.

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

RUTLAND TOWN COMMUNITY CALENDAR

APRIL	7	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
	17	RTS Half Day
	20-24	RTS April Break
	21	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
	23	Planning Commission Meeting - 6:30 pm
	26	Household Hazardous Waste Collection
MAY	5	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
	8	RTS Half Day
	14	Planning Commission Meeting - 6:30 pm
	19	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
JUNE	2	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
	4	Planning Commission Meeting - 6:30 pm
	16	RTS Tentative Last Day of School
	16	Select Board Meeting - 6 pm
	25	Planning Commission Meeting - 6:30 pm



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