



Town of Chester

Newsletter

January-March

Winter 2024

www.chestervt.gov

TOWN CLERK

Town Meeting will be March 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall (upstairs). Please visit the *Latest News* section at chestervt.gov for Open Office information. Petitions for Open Offices can be picked up at the Town Clerk's Office and are due back January 29, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.

The following Elections will take place in 2024 at the Town Hall (upstairs) from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. -

March 5, 2024:

- Town Meeting Australian Ballot and GMUSD vote
- Presidential Primary

August 13, 2024:

- Statewide Major Party Primary

November 5, 2024:

- General Election

Absentee ballot requests and election information can be found at mvp.vermont.gov. Please call the Town Clerk's Office at (802) 875-2173 to request an absentee ballot or if you have any questions.

Town Manager's Message

Happy New Year from Town Hall!

Thank you all for bearing with us as we have struggled through the latter half of 2023, dealing with flooding, flooding, and more flooding! The July flooding hit Chester hard with damages of over \$1.9 million – very close to damage during Irene. Thanks to our road crew and water/wastewater departments, all infrastructure was opened and operating within a few short days. There are lingering long term projects to be completed in 2024, but the town has mostly recovered. The December flooding event definitely had an impact, but not as significant. We are hopeful that the State will be contributing funding towards those repairs as well. As we are seeing, this is likely to be a new trend for Vermont. We will be working towards learning more about climate resiliency and how Chester can better prepare ourselves for these more frequent events.

Town staff had a few retirements this year – if you see Cil Mathews (Bookkeeper) and Matt Wilson (Fire Chief) please take a moment to thank them for their many years of service to the town.

The Town budget is well under way and will be set within the next couple of weeks. The budget is up, much like all of our household budgets. We are working hard to keep this increase at the lowest possible amount, providing only what is absolutely necessary to run the town. With the rate of inflation and cost increases on almost every line item, this has proven difficult to do. I am so hoping that this economy will stabilize as we all know that these constant increases are just not sustainable. The Selectboard will be holding some workshops throughout 2024 to discuss town priorities.

We look forward to seeing you all at Town Meeting to vote on our municipal budget as well as the elections for the school budgets and local officers.

Chester - Andover Family Center

Celebrating the Chester Andover Family Center Thrift Shop: A Season for Giving and Receiving

The Chester Andover Family Center Thrift Shop has much to celebrate. We are a thriving retail thrift shop, bursting at the seams with clothing, household items, linens and books, thanks to the generous donations from our loyal local and 'away' supporters.

Did you know that proceeds from Thrift Shop Sales fund our Financial Assistance and Food Shelf Programs?

Did you know that this year we gave holiday gift certificates valued at \$2,750 to 50 households? These gift certificates were redeemed in our thrift shop, providing recipients with an opportunity to purchase gifts for friends, neighbors and loved ones.

Last week Jenna came to the thrift shop with her two children, Ella and Ben. She told the children they could purchase gifts for their grandparents, and they had \$5 to spend. The children were very excited to be in charge of their gift giving and indeed were very thoughtful about their selections. The conversations were delightful, "do I have enough money for three things? do you think Grandma would like this?" It was a wonderful lesson in thoughtfulness and yes, math. All thrift shop volunteers working in the shop that afternoon, were given a gift of joyfulness.

And then there was Linda, shopping for her children and her neighbor's children. At checkout she was over the amount remaining on her gift certificate. A kind person behind her offered to make up the balance with his gift certificate, "I wouldn't be spending it all anyway", he said with a smile.

Sometimes we simply do not charge someone for an item. Giving them what they need at the time is the gift we give ourselves as volunteers. One evening before Christmas, a young woman and her daughter saw the lights on and knocked on the door. They were having a "wardrobe emergency" and needed a dress for the school concert that evening. The crisis was averted as we found the perfect holiday concert outfit. This is why we are here. We strive to bring a positive shopping experience to customers and volunteers.

If these stories sound like an experience you would like to have, consider volunteering at our thrift shop. Hours are flexible; you choose how much time you would like to volunteer. Stop in to the thrift shop during our regular hours; Thursdays, 1-4, Fridays, 10 -4, and Saturdays 10-2, and pick up a volunteer application.

In the meantime, please shop with us and continue to donate your gently used and often new clothing as well as household goods. We also invite you to peek at our thrift shop expansion project going on at the back of our building. We will soon have a beautiful new space to receive and sort donations. If you are looking for a job, we are interviewing for a thrift shop manager. A job description is on our website at www.chester-andoverfamilycenter.org. You can also e-mail us at cafc302@gmail.com.

Chester Celebrates Winter

Chester Townscape decked out the town in evergreen finery to welcome in Christmas and to make Chester appealing and cheery through the snowy winter months – thus concluding the past year's seasonal, floral decorations. Many weeks from now, the yearly cycle will begin again as flowers appear to start the new growing season. In this annual effort, Chester Townscape thanks all the volunteers who design, grow, plant, weed, and water the plants that make the town attractive. If you are interested in supporting CT's efforts by donating or participating, please learn more by visiting www.chestervt.gov/chester_townscape.html.



Chester Historic Preservation Committee

Yosemite Fire House. Floods came and subsided. Surrounded by water during the December rains, the historic firehouse prevailed; but it's still waiting for windows to be removed and restored over the winter months, so they can then be protected by new storm windows. The window project is a slow, but necessary, step in sealing the building's exterior from the elements. With luck, other grants will be awarded soon. But in the meantime, we continue to solicit appropriate donations to the future fire museum and also can accept tax-free contributions if a check is sent to Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum – a relatively new corporation set up to gather funds to help with the renovation and running of the museum – at PO Box 318, Chester, VT 05143. For further information, please contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net.



Chester Townscape's

2024 Tree and Shrub Sale!

To support its community beautification projects, tax-exempt Chester Townscape will soon be offering especially chosen specimens for its 2024 Tree and Shrub Sale. All are extremely hardy and adaptable plants with colorful blossoms and multi-season interest. These reliable, low-maintenance plants are nursery grown and good size. They are offered to the public at below regular retail prices and would make excellent additions to anyone's property or memorable presents for birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's or Father's Day, house-warming events, and more.

Buyers do not have to be Chester residents; but they do have to preorder and pay before April 1 and then pick up the plants, likely in the first week of May, from a location off Main Street in Chester. Visit www.chestervt.gov/chester_townscape.html in February to download information about this year's offerings, as well as the colorful order form that gives details about the plants, their prices, and where to send the check and order form. Or contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net for more information.

WHITING LIBRARY

Whether your New Year resolves to save money, get healthier, or spend more time with your family, Whiting Library can help you achieve it. Your local library likely offers far more than just self-help books to assist you in learning new skills and applying them,

- Get healthy: Find cookbooks to eat healthy, read health magazines, and check out fitness, yoga, and Zumba DVDs.
- Give back to the community: Call the library at 802-875-2277 about volunteer opportunities with your library!
- Land a promotion or job: Learn new skills with a free online class at Learning Express, Universal Class, and Udemy. Study and practice for a professional test with Peterson's Test and Career Prep. You can get to these by going to www.whitinglibrary.org/services/catalog-and-databases.
- Make friends: Meet community members while visiting and through our programs. Book clubs are a great place to connect.
- Rest, relax, and decrease screen time: Get hands-on with a soothing craft, check out your next title, play a game, or enjoy the library's atmosphere.

Whiting Library wants to remind you about the incredible selection of audiobooks and ebooks available to library card holders through ListenUp VT at gmlc.overdrive.com/ and the Libby App. A valid library card and PIN are required to download titles. Stop by the library if you need a new card.



Chester Winter Carnival

February 17 & 18, 2024



Visit chestervt.gov/calendar

TOWN HALL
BLUEGRASS & OLD TIME COUNTRY
OPEN MIC

ALL MUSICIANS & SPECTATORS WELCOME

CHESTER TOWN HALL
556 ELM STREET
CHESTER, VT

Acoustic Instruments Only

FMI CALL:
802-380-4106

SCHEDULED DATES
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023
SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2024
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024
SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024
11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

ADMISSION:
DONATIONS GREATLY APPRECIATED

FOOD & BEVERAGES:
WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

TOWNHALLBLUEGRASSOPENMIC@GMAIL.COM

[/TOWNHALLBLUEGRASSOPENMIC](https://www.facebook.com/TOWNHALLBLUEGRASSOPENMIC)

2024 DOG AND CAT RABIES CLINIC CHESTER, VERMONT

Saturday, March 9, 2024, 10:30 a.m. to Noon
at the Chester Public Safety Building

Rabies shot cost \$15 per animal

Dog Licenses are available for Chester residents

Reminder to renew dog licenses by April 1:
Neutered: \$9; Non-Neutered: \$13

After April 1:
Neutered: \$11; Non-Neutered: \$17



Whiting Library Events



Tuesdays at 10 a.m. ~ Playgroup for Wee Littles (0-5) & Caregivers

Wednesdays at 10 a.m. ~ Story Hour with Carrie

Fridays from 1 to 2 p.m. ~ Adult Crafternoon: Cookies, Crafts, and Conversation

Fridays at 3 p.m. ~ Games Group for School-Aged Kids

The second Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. ~ Book Club

The second Friday of the month at 3 p.m. ~ After School Pokémon Club