



Town of Chester

Newsletter

April – June

Spring 2025

www.chestervt.gov

Town Clerk

Dog licenses were due April 1, 2025. Please stop by the Town Office with an updated rabies certificate. The cost is \$11 for a fixed dog and \$15 for one that is intact.

Happy Spring!



Chester Plant Sale May 23-25

The annual Chester Plant Sale at St. Luke's Church, the gray church at 313 Main Street near the Village Green in Chester, Vermont, is a marvelous opportunity for the public to purchase an impressive selection of proven, large, healthy, hardy plants at bargain prices. Well-groomed plants with helpful labels make garden additions easy, and experienced gardeners will be on hand to give advice about planting and garden design.

The sale is scheduled to run on Friday May 23 and Saturday May 24, 9-3 both days; and on Sunday May 25, noon-3. The later timing of this annual event allows for larger and more attractive plants – all organized by kind and growing needs on the side lawn of the church. People who have perennials to contribute in advance or plants to suggest or who need more information are encouraged to contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net.

Chester Townscape Welcomes Spring!

Daffodils are popping up along the Brookside Cemetery wall in the center of town to show the first in a series of seasonal floral displays by Chester Townscape that make Chester a beautiful place in which to live, work, and visit. Volunteers and additional community waterers keep the flowers planted in so many public locations around town fertilized, watered, weeded, and looking their best. Anyone who would like to become involved in Townscape's community projects is invited to contact Lynn Russell at 802-875-2707 or chestertownscape@gmail.com to learn more.

Chester Historic Preservation Committee

Hearse House Museum. The seasonal museum – featuring the Town’s horse-drawn hearse and information about death and funeral customs – will be open for self-guided tours from Memorial Day through Columbus Day.

Academy Building. Many renovations are planned. A Municipal Energy Grant is enabling the Town to blow insulation into the attic, install heat pumps throughout to assist a back-up boiler, repair the plaster ceiling on the stairway and the upstairs landing, add a lift to the second floor, and renovate a bathroom to make it ADA compliant.

Whiting Library. Renovations are planned to include blowing in insulation and adding new heat pumps to help regulate temperature. The bathroom will become ADA compliant, the Vermont room in the basement will have replacement doors installed, and the sprinkler system will be replaced, as will some lighting in the dark hallway.

Town Hall. The Town is working on balancing the building’s temperature by adding insulation to the attic and installing heat pumps. The renovated first-floor conference room, where the listers used to work, is in regular use.

Yosemite Firehouse. Since all windows were repaired and reinstalled over the winter, custom storm windows will be added shortly. To make the building easier for public access, the Town is applying for a grant to add a new door and entrance on the north side of the building with an ADA ramp leading to a future terrace and parking area.

Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum

While the Town continues to work on protecting the building’s shell and is applying for a grant to improve access, Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum – a non-profit organization – is working to properly conserve some of the firemen coats and other equipment for future museum display. The Friends are also planning a workday to clean the building in preparation for an as-is opening for the public to see the historic fire engines and other fire equipment presently stored there and to view plans for the proposed layout of the new museum. The Friends are also working toward getting the handsome 1931 LaFrance fire engine ready for public display at an event this summer. To help move the museum forward, the Friends have also started its first appeal to the public for contributions, information, and Yosemite-related equipment. Tax-exempt contributions may be sent to Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum, PO Box 1221, Chester, VT 05143. Anyone interested in any of the Friends endeavors is encouraged to share information and contact Lillian Willis at lbwillisct@comcast.net or at 802-875-1340.

Deadline Extended to April 16 for CT Tree/Shrub Orders

Because snow still lingers in spots in our yards, Chester Townscape has extended to Wednesday April 16 the deadline for orders for its 2025 Tree and Shrub Sale. This event offers good-size trees and shrubs at below regular, nursery retail prices to help people beautify their properties. Choose from six selections offered this spring: Snow Showers Weeping Cherry Tree; Firelight Tidbit Hydrangea; Spice Baby *Viburnum carlesii*; Oso Easy Ice Bay White Rose; Sunny Boulevard St. John’s-wort; and Potentilla Happy Face Orange.

All specimens are hardy and low maintenance, feature multi-season interest, and sport beautiful blossoms. Most are native. All appeal to pollinators and/or birds. Proceeds from the sale support Chester Townscape’s charitable civic projects, such as the floral pots and bridge boxes that beautify the town for residents and visitors.

Buyers do not have to be Chester residents; but they do have to preorder and pay by April 16 and then pick up the shrubs in early/mid May from Main Street in central Chester. For an informative order form that gives details about the shrubs, their botanical names and prices, and where to send the check and order form, please hurry and visit <https://www.chestervt.gov/chester-townscape.html> or contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net.



The Chester-Andover Family Center enters the spring season with a fully stocked Food Shelf and a Thrift Shop filled with spring and summer clothing. During these past cold winter months, the Financial Assistance Program has served families in need by helping with utility bills, home heating and rent.

In February, CAFC partnered with the Chester Town Democratic Committee to sponsor the 19th annual Share Heat Fundraiser at Vermont Vines Vineyard and Winery. Through generous donations from members of the community, \$3,800 was raised. These funds helped support the CAFC home heating assistance fund for 2025.

With the arrival of spring, the Thrift Shop is busy with clothing sales for all ages. The Prom Room is open for shopping for that special event: dresses, suits, tuxes, shoes and accessories—a complete outfit all for \$20! Volunteers are busy preparing donations to add to the store shelves and racks. Consider donating gently used household items and clothing or volunteering at the shop. Thrift Shop sales support the Financial Assistance Program and the Food Shelf. Credit cards are now accepted, and customers are enjoying the popular “Frequent Buyer” card which allows a 20% discount after 10 visits. Veterans receive a discount after 5 visits. Thrift Shop hours are: Thursdays 10-7, Fridays 10-4 and Saturdays 9-4.

CAFC Food Shelf volunteers continue to serve an increasing number of Chester-Andover residents. Volunteers greet recipients and help them register, navigate the store, and shop the well-stocked shelves. Thanks to a recent VT Foodbank grant, Recipe Kits are available. Prepared each month, these kits include a recipe and all the ingredients to cook up a delicious side dish such as Apple Cranberry crisp and Black Bean, Bulgur stuffed Acorn Squash.

Food Shelf produce, canned goods and staples are provided by a variety of sources: donations from Shaws supermarkets in Ludlow and Springfield, Smitty’s in Chester, purchases from Sysco wholesale food distributor, the Vermont Food Bank and generous donations from families, local organizations and churches. The Food Shelf is also supported by financial donations, Thrift Shop sales and grants. Volunteers are vital to its function, and more volunteers are needed. When asked why they volunteer, these friendly folk say, “It gives me a purpose.” “I like talking with the people who come.” Please consider stopping by and discussing this opportunity with the staff. Food Shelf hours are Thursdays 1-4 and Fridays, 10-2.

If you or someone you know needs financial assistance, please have them call CAFC, 802-875-3236 and leave a message. A volunteer will return their call. If they would like to sign up to be a Food Shelf recipient, they can stop in at the Food Shelf during open hours. The only requirement is proof of residence in Chester or Andover.

Follow us on **Facebook**—Chester Andover Family Center-Thrift Shop and Food Shelf and **Instagram**: chesterandoverfamilycenter .Visit our **Website**: www.chester-andoverfamilycenter.org



April 27, 2025- The Vermont Symphony Orchestra returns to the beautifully restored Chester Town Hall theater on Sunday April 27th at 7 PM for an evening of traditional Shaker melodies, Scott Joplin ragtime music, selections of Brandenburg concertos and more. The evening concert features a VSO woodwind and string trio: Principal Flute Melissa Mielens, Principal Cello John Dunlop and violin Laura Markowitz.

Presented by Upstairs at Town Hall and the Town of Chester. Admission is free, A suggested donation of \$15.00 helps support arts and community events at Town Hall. No one will be turned away. Upstairs at Town Hall is a Vermont Nonprofit Corporation staffed entirely by community volunteers. Chester Town Hall is accessible with a ramp and elevator. Doors open at 6:45 PM.

The Town is thinking about developing housing on Town-owned land.
Let us know what you think!
Chester Housing Survey



Take the Survey by April 4th!



Learn more about the project here:
<https://arcg.is/1m54nr1>

Why Housing?
 As with many Vermont towns, Chester is currently experiencing a shortage of housing affordable for the local workforce and community members. To address this critical need, the Town of Chester is studying housing development potential at the 139-acre Town-owned property south of GMUHS.



Take this 10-15 minute survey to provide feedback and be entered into a drawing to win a local gift card!




Vermont Solar for All Focus Group

VERMONT'S SOLAR FOR ALL PROGRAM SEEKS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO SOLAR ENERGY. HELP MAKE THE PROGRAM A SUCCESS!

- Learn more about the Solar for All Residential Assistance in Solar Energy (RAISE) program.
- Discuss how the program can best serve Vermont homeowners.

The RAISE program aims to help low-income homeowners install small solar arrays on their roofs. All are welcome, but we particularly hope to hear perspectives of potential program participants.

GET A \$50 GIFT CARD FOR ATTENDING!
 Refreshments available at in-person focus groups

The American Legion Family Post 67
Children & Youth Month Breakfast
April 19th 8am to 12
\$8 per person kids under 12 Eat Free




Come and meet the First Responder's of Chester, see the vehicles that keep you safe. There will be games, face painting, give aways, talk about The American Flag.
 A surprise visit by The Easter Bunny and an Easter Egg Hunt to finish the Day!!



Virtual - April 17th
 Barre - April 22nd
 Newport - April 23rd
 Bennington- April 24th

6:00 PM - 7:30PM



Register or Contact Us through the QR Code

Limited space available, register to secure your spot in the conversation

Hosted by the Vermont Public Service Department
 Learn more about Vermont Solar for All at <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/renewables/solar-all-vermont>

Order by April 24 for CT Hanging Baskets and Wooden Planters

Those who would like to make sure they have flowers and special growing planters to beautify their personal properties should preorder a CT hanging basket or a special large wooden planter before April 24. The baskets are designed for either sun or shade locations and in either hot or cool colors to suit your environment and will be ready for pickup on May 10 (10-4) at the Information Booth on Main Street. For the order form for both the baskets and large wooden planters, and all necessary details, download the form at <https://www.chestervt.gov/chester-townscape.html>. All proceeds from the sale help fund Chester Townscapes seasonal displays and its landscaping projects at public locations around town.