

# Benson Bulletin

The Community Newsletter of Benson, VT- Jan/Feb 2023

## Benson Village School GO BEARS!

January will be a busy month for the BVS Bears! Along with academic opportunities to showcase strategies students have been working on in both reading and math, there are so many additional ways that our students work towards developing their critical thinking, perseverance, and growth towards proficiency with their grade level skills. Project-based learning and STEAM projects engage our learners and allow for analytical and creative problem-solving to take place. The many clubs offered after school; American Sign Language Club, Beading & Crafting Club, Girls Scouts, Boys & Girls Club, offer students a chance to try something new. During the school day we have many visitors like Milo the therapy dog, Sadie Koponen, Outdoor Therapeutic Recreation Specialist for the Slate Valley School District and Sandra Owens, Funology Instructor. The upper grades are participating in both the Trout in the Classroom and Scat & Track programs offered through the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The kindergarten - 2nd grades will be visiting the Castleton Library as part of their Slate Valley Community Engagement study while the 3rd grade is working on integrated writing connected to their project based learning with support from Mrs. Kristen Whitman, SVUVT Teacher Coach.

The BVS Daisy and Girl Scout Troops meet every Tuesday and continue to focus on community outreach and earning various badges. Cookie sales are starting up and the girls are learning how to talk about the cookies and take orders. They will be working on money management, and customer service badges next. The BVS Troop consists of 18 girls from both Benson and other towns.

Benson Village School continues to award both students and staff with PAWs certificates for demonstrating the positive character traits associated with our district wide PBIS (<https://www.pbis.org/>). To date, 279 certificates have been written for students and staff.

The SVUVT budget work is well under way and a reminder that there is one budget for the entire district, not individual school budgets. You may obtain a copy of the Annual Report report that will be available in early February on the Slate Valley website, BVS or town clerk's office. You can also call 802-265-4905 or email Candice Joseph at [cjoseph@svuvt.org](mailto:cjoseph@svuvt.org) and one can be mailed to you. Additionally flyers will be distributed to residents' homes throughout the months of January/February with important budget information. There is also a page on the Slate Valley website, [www.slatevalleyunified.org](http://www.slatevalleyunified.org) with the complete copy of the budget as well as supporting information. Additionally, the School District Annual Meeting will be held on February 27th at 7:00 at the Fair Haven Union Middle/High School. Due to voting from the floor on certain articles needing to occur, there is only an in person option for this meeting. A Coffee & Conversation is scheduled with the Superintendent at the Wheel Inn on Wednesday February 1st from 8 - 9am.

Amy Roy M.Ed., Principal, Benson Village School  
Please visit our website: <http://benison.svuvt.org>  
Also, check out our Facebook page!



With grocery prices rising every day, many people are struggling to eat healthy, nutritious meals on a regular basis. Did you know every Vermonter over the age of 60 is qualified to receive a box of food staples through the Vermont Foodbank? The 'Bird Boxes' are available for pickup once a month in Fair Haven at Fair Haven Concerned which is located on Main Street. Jeffrey or Michele, the directors at Fair Haven Concerned, can sign you up in just a few moments! **There are no income requirements.** This is very helpful for folks to supplement their food budget. The boxes may contain a bag of flour, some beans, rice, perhaps some cheese or meat, and a number of canned vegetables and fruit. If, when you arrive, there are some food items you are not interested in using, you may choose to not take everything. While you pick up your box each month, please consider looking through the Fair Haven Concerned's food shelves as well. There is a variety of fresh vegetables arriving weekly, as well as dairy products. The shelves are usually full and offer an assortment of fresh baked breads, food staples and frozen meats.

Fair Haven Concerned food shelf and thrift store hours are 10-2 Monday through Friday and 9-4 Monday through Friday for appointments and referrals for heat assistance. Call and sign up for the 'Bird Boxes' or stop in and find some food to supplement your food shopping. The food shelf receives delivery from the Vermont Foodbank on a regular basis. There are even some prepared meals ready to go! All food is free and available. It is a great way to stretch your budget!!! All residents of Benson are more than welcome at Fair Haven Concerned. Stop in today!!

### From the Road Commissioner

Hello everyone,

It appears we are having a small winter lull, so our road crew is taking advantage, to clean up some of our higher impacted roads chipping brush and debris from our Christmas holiday storm. With the rapid temperature rise we have experienced a few road failures that we have temporarily repaired until spring. We appreciate all public concerns, and we are monitoring each and every road. If you experience an issue on your road, please contact the town garage at 802-537-2722. This is the best way to contact and communicate with your highway crew. Hope you all have a happy new year!

Brad Barrett - Road Commissioner

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Doug Hathaway  
 1080 Stage Road, Benson VT 05743

## High Speed Internet Update

The Otter Creek Communications Union District is in the final phases of negotiations to bring high speed internet to Benson. The service will, most likely be provided by Consolidated Communications/Fidium Fiber. It looks like internet speeds up to 2 gigabytes per second will be available to Benson residents. We believe that there is enough funding from the State and Federal government to pay the cost of the new service. The Selectboard has reviewed rates proposed by Consolidated Communications and Maple Broadband, as well as current rates from Go Net Speed (Otelco). Internet service provided by Consolidated Communications/Fidium Fiber is the most cost-efficient option for Benson residents.

An excel file from FCC showing the internet speeds for each address in town was made available to everyone on the new Benson web site ([www.bensonvermont.gov](http://www.bensonvermont.gov)).

A big Thank You to the over 50 people who responded reporting internet speed at their house. We hope that your responses will help us obtain more funding to bring high speed internet to Benson within the next two years.



**NEW DO'S HAIR SALON**  
 1-802-278-7002  
 1995 Stage Road  
 Benson Vermont 05743  
 JoAnne Gates  
 Mon. Tues. & Weds. 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
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## Selectboard Highlights

The Selectboard is preparing the budget for fiscal year 2023 to 2024 (July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024). While many budget costs can be estimated accurately using historic numbers, estimating prices of diesel fuel, fuel oil, and trucking, up to a year and a half ahead is challenging. The budget will be completed in late January and will be voted on at Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 10:00AM at the Community Hall.

The 2005 John Deere grader and 2013 International dump truck purchased at auction from the State of Vermont are both in use. The purchases were paid for out of the Equipment Reserve Fund. While some people criticize the idea of setting money aside for equipment purchases each year, having the money in the reserve fund enabled the Selectboard to act quickly when the grader and the truck listed at auction. We would not have been able to purchase the grader and truck if we had not had the Equipment Reserve Fund.

The Board appointed Jared Glover as our representative to the Rutland Emergency Management Committee.

The Selectboard continues to update policies and job descriptions.

## Church News

The United Church of Benson will be having another tag sale on Feb. 11th from 9-1. Please join us. We have "New" stuff all the time!

## Jeanne Bartholomew Realty

East Road Benson

802-537-4938

[Jeannebrealty@aol.com](mailto:Jeannebrealty@aol.com)

*Looking for listings! Thinking of selling? Give me a call for a "no-obligation" chat.*

**Benson**, country estate on 17 open acres. This well-maintained home consists of a 4-bedroom two story home, a large metal barn suitable for lots of storage, cars, RV, boats etc. a 4 stall horse barn and more. Seller has done many upgrades over the years, and it is now time to pass it on to another family to enjoy. Located a short distance to Lake Champlain and a few miles from the village. A great location for many endeavors! Give Jeanne a call!

**Benson**, Perch Pond lot for sale. Sellers have done all the work. driveway, septic, power, docking system and more. This property has wonderful swimming and offers plenty of peace and quiet! A great get away anytime of the year! \$135,000

**Shoreham**, 40 acres on Lake Champlain. 20 acres of hay land and the balance lightly wooded. Over 900 ft of Lake frontage. end of the road location. \$350,000

**Hubbardton**, 31 acres with large beaver pond, very private with ROW, no road frontage, shared swimming beach on Lake Hortonia, possible terms \$125,000

**Benson**, 418-acre Organic Farm. Property is conserved with the Vermont Land Trust and affords many opportunities, including a dairy or beef operation, bed and breakfast, Agri Tourism and many more. A wonderful opportunity to move forward with your New Year's plans! VLT reserves the ROFR. Give Jeanne a call for all the details.

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*February 14th is Valentine's Day!! Wishing everyone a Happy one!*



## BENSON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Tuesday 10 am to 1 pm  
 Wednesday 4 pm to 7 pm  
 Saturday 10 am to 1 pm

 *Check us out on Facebook - Benson Vermont Public Library*

### February 15, 2023

The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah. In 1974, when thirteen-year-old Leni Albright's volatile, unpredictable father, Ernst, a former POW, loses another job, he makes an impulsive, desperate decision: he will move the family north, to Alaska, where they will live off the land in a spectacular wilderness. At first, the eighteen-hour sunlit Alaskan summer days and the generosity of the locals make up for the family's lack of preparation and dwindling resources, but winter in Alaska will reveal their every weakness. As the vast Alaskan landscape grows smaller and smaller in the darkness, Ernst's fragile mental state deteriorates, and the dangers outside of their remote homestead pale in comparison to the danger within. On their small piece of land, miles from anyone, Leni and her mother, Cora, learn what all Alaskan homesteaders learn: they are on their own. There is no one to save them this far from civilization.

### March 15, 2023

The Mystery of Mrs. Christie by Marie Benedict. In December 1926, Agatha Christie goes missing. Investigators find her empty car on the edge of a deep, gloomy pond, the only clues some tire tracks nearby and a fur coat left in the car — strange for a frigid night. Her husband and daughter have no knowledge of her whereabouts, and England unleashes an unprecedented manhunt to find the up-and-coming mystery author. Eleven days later, she reappears, just as mysteriously as she disappeared, claiming amnesia and providing no explanations for her time away. The puzzle of those missing eleven days has persisted.

**Copies of the books are available in the library.**

## THE WHEEL INN

Corner of Lake Road and Stage Road  
 Benson, VT 802-537-2755

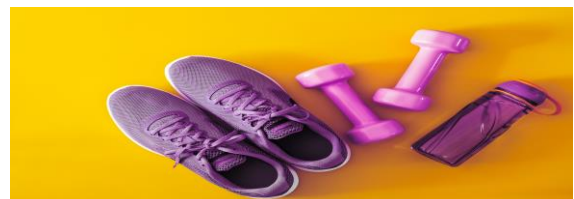


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 daily specials on **FACEBOOK**  
 Beverages to go!!!

**C'mon Over. 'Wheel' be happy to see you!!**



### Bone Builders

Meets on Monday and Thursday at 9 a.m. in the Community Hall. The program is free and weights are provided. Strength training exercises will improve bone mineral density and help prevent fractures, help strengthen your core and prevent or delay cognitive decline. Less than an hour of strength training per week may reduce risk of heart attack and stroke by 40 to 70%! If you wish to join our group, call 802-537-3021.

## Cooking and Baking!

These are from Meghan, one of our neighbors

### Käsknödel (Austrian Cheese Dumpling)



Makes 3 Servings

These cheesy dumplings served in hot broth are a traditional recipe from Austria and are a great way to warm up at the end of a cold day. While some of the original ingredients aren't found here, this is a converted recipe that uses easy to find ingredients.

#### **Ingredients:**

##### ***Dumplings***

1 medium onion

1 tablespoon butter

3 cups of bread chopped (or ripped) into small pieces or packaged bread for stuffing

1/2 cup breadcrumbs

2 cups of shredded cheddar

3 eggs

1/2 cup flour

1/4 cup milk

1/8 teaspoon paprika

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Salt and pepper to taste

##### ***Soup***

32oz of broth (you can use any kind you prefer)

2 cups of water

1/2 teaspoon chives

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

1/8 teaspoon paprika

Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment paper.
2. Dice up your onion and sauté it over low heat with your butter, stirring frequently. Cook until the onion has become slightly translucent, then let it cool.
3. In a large bowl, add the onion, chopped bread, cheese, eggs, flour, milk, and seasonings. Mix all of the ingredients thoroughly until it forms dough that is similar in texture to a meatball.
4. Form patties similar to small hamburgers with your dough and place them on your baking sheet. Bake for approximately 30 minutes, or until your patties are golden brown.
5. Heat broth, water, and seasonings in a pot on the stove.
6. Add your warm broth to a bowl and add one or two dumplings to it. Leave them to absorb some of the broth for a couple minutes before eating.

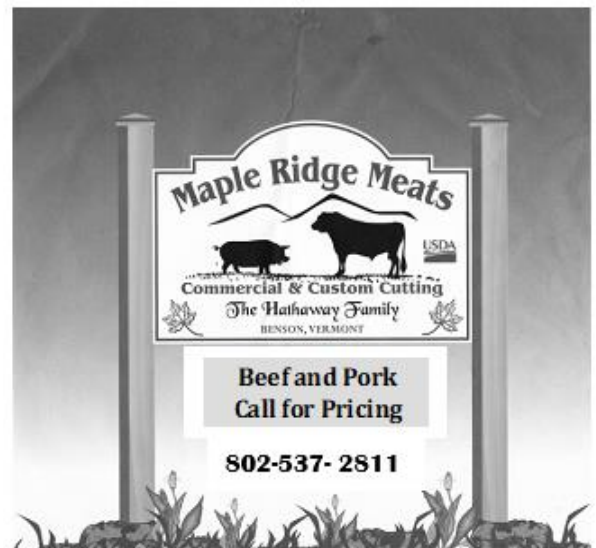
**Bon Appetit!**



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**802-537-2811**



## NOTICE TO VOTERS TOWN OF BENSON

By vote of the Benson Selectboard, there will be a floor meeting held for Town Meeting 2023. Articles will be voted on by the floor in person by registered voters of Benson.

Elections of Town Officers will be by Australian ballot with the polls open on March 7, 2023, from 10am to 7pm at the Benson Community Hall.

You may choose to request your ballot by phoning the Benson Town Clerk's office at 802-537-2611 or pick ballots up in person.

Voted ballots may be returned by mail, delivered in person to the Town Office (or to the polling place on Election Day), or left in the secure drop box located at the corner of the Town Office Building.

*Beginning on February 15<sup>th</sup>, you may also vote in person at the Town Clerk's Office during regular office hours.*

### INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR TOWN OFFICE?

Town Meeting 2023 will take place on Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. **If you've been thinking about running for a town office, nominating petitions must be filed with the Town Clerk by 5:00pm on Monday, January 30th, 2023.**

#### **Town positions to be filled in 2023:**

<u>Town Offices</u>	<u>Current Incumbent</u>
Moderator (one-year term)	John Hill
Selectboard (one-year term)	Jack Helms
Selectboard (one-year term)	Ron Stewart
Selectboard (three-year term)	John Hill
Lister (three-year term)	Lois Trenn
Lister (two years remaining)	Vacant
Auditor (three-year term)	Lynn Bowen
First Constable (two-year term)	Ben Bartholomew
Delinquent Tax Collector (one-year term)	Barbara Burlett
Trustee of Public Funds (three-year term)	Norma Phillips
Library Commissioner (five-year term)	Lisa Daigle-Fontaine
Library Commissioner (three years remaining)	Barbara Hemingway
Cemetery Commissioner (five-year term)	Leonard Lussier
Cemetery Commissioner (four years remaining)	Vacant

**Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> is the last day for voters to file a petition with the town clerk to have an article appear on the ballot for Town Meeting. Petition must contain signatures from at least 5% of registered voters in the municipality.**



## Rt 22A Update

I met on December 14th with Bruce Martin of AOT (Roadway Design Project Manager) and two design engineers who are consulting with him on the Route 22A project. They have been working on some changes to the plan for the Benson segment, based on the feedback they received at the 502 hearing in June.

They reported that they have also met with the Agency of Natural Resources to map wetlands and coordinate any issues, in order to integrate that into the plan.

The new design includes changes to the intersection of Lake Rd and Rt 22A. They are currently looking at a left turning lane, a straight through lane, and a right turning lane, heading both north and south for this intersection. In addition, they are changing the layout of the intersection to bring Mill Pond Rd a little farther north, so that it aligns more directly across from Lake Rd, instead of the angle it is currently at. I told them I thought this would be well received news for both sides of town.

Based on feedback and a closer inspection of the G&L Store regarding gas pumps, parking issues, and the setback requirements, they have designed a larger curb on the corner of Route 144 and also moved the traveled roadway more towards the west. The additional space that would be provided by shifting the roadway and adding more pavement would provide much better mobility and more opportunity for turning movements for all vehicles. In addition, there would be a one-way entrance to the G&L from Route 144, instead of the way it is now (with cars able to enter and exit from all directions).

The current plan with these changes has now been sent out to review for 3 weeks for others around the Agency to comment on, regarding permitting aspects, constructability, etc. that may need some revising prior to meeting with property owners. Once the design is finalized, they will update the website with the new drawings, and then the next step is to begin property owner meetings in February/March.

If you have any questions or would like more information, you can contact Bruce Martin directly at [bruce.b.martin@vermont.gov](mailto:bruce.b.martin@vermont.gov)

Cheryl Murray  
Rutland TAC representative from Benson

The VTrans web page regarding all Route 22A projects currently in the works can be accessed at <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/vt22a>.

Bruce Martin is the VTrans representative who came to meet with the Benson Select Board previously, and facilitated the 502 hearing on June 15th. His contact information is as follows.

Bruce Martin  
[bruce.b.martin@vermont.gov](mailto:bruce.b.martin@vermont.gov)  
802-595-9653.  
Vermont Agency of Transportation  
c/o Bruce Martin  
219 North Main St  
Barre VT 05641

# JPW

Accounting Services

Jennifer Partch

**518-538-3047**

**802-537-4021**

P.O. BOX 630      44 SUNSET LAKE RD.  
SCHROON LAKE, NY 12870      BENSON, VT 05743

[jpwaccounting@gmail.com](mailto:jpwaccounting@gmail.com)



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### Library Winter Hours

Winter hours will be  
Tuesdays 10:00- 1:00  
Saturdays: 10:00-1:00  
Wednesdays: 2:00-5:00  
2nd Monday for Senior Lunch  
10:30-1:30

### Senior Lunch

The traditional Senior Lunch will be on February 13th at 12 noon. It's held in the Community Hall first floor. The cost for seniors, those over 60 years of age, is \$3.50 but families and friends under 60 are welcome as well for \$4.00. Please reach out to Marcia Anderson to make reservations by the Friday before at 802-537-2313.

This is the combined January & February edition and the next edition will be the combined March & April edition. In May 2023 we will resume monthly newsletters!

For questions or contributions to the Benson Bulletin reach out to Kate at 537-2976 or email [benonnews@shoreham.net](mailto:benonnews@shoreham.net)

### Rescue Squad Request for Proposals

There have been a lot of rumors circulating about the board's request for proposals for ambulance/rescue squad services for the Town. Last year, voters approved \$52,185 in funding for Fair Haven Rescue Squad at Town Meeting. *The Town Purchasing Policy requires that any purchase exceeding \$5,000 needs to be put out for bid.* The Selectboard is merely doing their job, following the Purchasing Policy and managing the finances of the Town by seeking proposals. The Board feels that the decision to recommend a rescue squad needs to be based on a number of factors, including: cost, availability of services, proximity and familiarity with the Town, history of the service provider, and financial stability of the provider.



## AmeriCorps Seniors



**Want to volunteer helping children in school or day care settings?**

**\*\* \$3.15/hr stipend (non-taxable!)**

**\*\* Travel reimbursement to and from the site**

**\*\* 50 paid leave days per year**

**\*\* Monthly in-service trainings**

### Requirements:

**\*\* 10 hours per week minimum**

**\*\* Must be at least 55 years of age**

**\*\* Must meet income eligibility (No more than \$2265 per month for one person household, \$3051 for two person household)**

**\*\* No education or experience requirements**

**Contact: Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program**

**Call Deb at 774-8711 or email [debfgp@gmail.com](mailto:debfgp@gmail.com)**

**Or visit our website: <http://volunteersinvt.org/FGP>**

**Slate Valley Unified School District News**

It’s budget time for the town and the school district. You’ve probably already begun to see information about the school district budget, for instance in the recent Lakes Region Free Press. The school district website also has information on the budget. But if you would like to listen to the superintendent share information in person in the company of your neighbors, then the “Coffee and Conversation” presentations are a good choice. The scheduled events are planned for

- Friday January 20<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 8:30 at the Wooden Soldier Diner in Fairhaven
- Friday January 27<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 to 8:30 at Buxton’s Store in Orwell
- Wednesday February 1<sup>st</sup> from 8am to 9am at the Wheel Inn in Benson

The school district says you can go to any of the planned meeting sites regardless of the town you live in. And don’t forget the school district’s annual meeting will be held on

**Monday February 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Fairhaven Union Middle and High School.**

**Town Garage Update**

The concrete work for the new town garage was put out to bid in November. Bids were due on January 9, 2023. One bid was received. The Selectboard felt that the estimated cost in the bid was too high and will continue to look for proposals for concrete work.



**ARE YOU  
TRAINED TO  
HELP?**

IF YES - **CALL 911**  
IF NO - **CALL 911**

IF YOUR PET FALLS THROUGH THE ICE

**CALL 911**

**IN ANY ICE EMERGENCY**

**CALL 911**

**SECONDS COUNT!!**

**Please use caution if you are ice fishing**

**Calendar of Events**

Thursday	1/19	deadline to petition additions to the annual meeting
Monday	1/23	Selectboard meeting      Town Office
Monday	1/30	deadline to file a nominating petition to run for office
Monday	2/6	Selectboard meeting      Town Office
Monday	2/13	Senior Lunch              Town Hall first floor
Wednesday	2/15	Reading Group            Library
Wednesday	2/15	Voting at the Town Office is available
Monday	2/20	Selectboard meeting      Town Office