



# Times of Shrewsbury



September 2025

## WHAT DOES A.I. KNOW ABOUT SHREWSBURY, VT?

Since the release of ChatGPT in 2022, there has been a huge fuss about artificial intelligence. Emotions run high, with some predicting the demise of the human race while others enthuse about the capabilities of large language models such as ChatGPT. But here in tranquil Shrewsbury, all that hoopla seems remote. So, I thought it might be interesting to bring A.I. closer by asking one of the models what they know about Shrewsbury, Vermont.

It turns out they know a lot. Not just smarty-pants stuff like the town's household income and poverty rate, but deeper, more touchy-feely things like the town's character. Intrigued, I asked some follow-up questions such as what our greatest challenges are, funniest story, saddest story, and whether AI will be good for the town. I concluded by asking A.I. to predict what the town will be like in ten years' time.

Here's a summary of my conversation with Google's Gemini program, edited for length. Gemini can be long-winded (while very articulate) so for most of the questions I asked for short answers.



**Me:** What can you tell me about Shrewsbury, VT?

**Gemini:** Shrewsbury, Vermont, is a small town in Rutland County, known for its rural charm, natural beauty, and a strong sense of community. Here's a breakdown of what makes Shrewsbury unique:

### General Character and Lifestyle:

- **Peaceful and Rural:** Shrewsbury offers a serene Vermont atmosphere with ample acreage and a low density of development. It's characterized by wooded areas, gravel driveways leading to secluded homes, and a generally quiet way of life. Many residents own their homes, contributing to a stable community.
- **Community Focused:** Despite its small size, Shrewsbury has a strong sense of community. Residents often know each other, fostering a "feeling of being truly home."
- **Outdoor Enthusiast's Paradise:** The surrounding Vermont mountains provide abundant opportunities for year-round outdoor recreation, including hiking, biking, skiing, snowmobiling, paddling, and fishing. The Appalachian Trail/Long Trail crosses the town, and Killington Peak, a major ski resort, is nearby.

[Gemini then went on at some length, relating the town's demographics, history and points of interest. It concluded: "Shrewsbury embodies the quintessential Vermont experience, appealing to those seeking tranquility, outdoor adventure, and a close-knit community."]



**Me:** What are Shrewsbury's biggest challenges (in a summary paragraph)?

**Gemini:** Shrewsbury's biggest challenges center on its demographics and the resulting impact on its economic and social fabric. The town faces an aging population with a struggle to attract and retain younger residents and a sufficient workforce. This contributes to limited local economic opportunities and a strained volunteer base for essential town services. Exacerbating these issues are a severe housing affordability crisis, driven by high demand and limited supply, as well as ongoing needs for modernizing infrastructure like high-speed internet. Finally, like many Vermont communities, Shrewsbury must contend with the increasing frequency and intensity of climate change impacts, particularly flooding, which poses threats to both infrastructure and community resilience.



**Me:** What is the funniest story relating to Shrewsbury (in short form)?

**Gemini:** The funniest story about Shrewsbury is "The Lovesick Moose and Jessica the Cow." In 1986, a wild bull moose fell deeply in love with a farmer's Hereford cow, Jessica, on a Shrewsbury farm. For over two months, the moose persistently courted the uninterested cow, attracting national media attention and thousands of curious visitors to the small town. The absurd "romance" ended when the moose shed his antlers and lost his ardor.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SHREWSBURY MEETING HOUSE

(inside this issue)

Me: What is the saddest store relating to Shrewsbury (in short form)?

**Gemini:** The saddest story related to Shrewsbury is the profound grief of John P. Bowman, a wealthy businessman who lost his two young daughters and then his beloved wife within a short period. Overwhelmed by this triple tragedy, Bowman built the elaborate Laurel Glen Mausoleum and the nearby Laurel Hall mansion in Cuttingsville (a village in Shrewsbury) as a grand, enduring memorial to his lost family. A statue of Bowman himself, perpetually in mourning, stands outside the mausoleum, symbolizing his never-ending sorrow.

Me: Will AI help or hurt Shrewsbury (in a summary paragraph)?

**Gemini:** AI presents both opportunities and challenges for Shrewsbury. It could help by automating routine administrative tasks for the town, freeing up limited staff time for more complex issues, and potentially improving citizen services through AI-powered chatbots or data analysis for infrastructure maintenance (like predicting road repairs). AI could also enhance economic development by supporting remote work with better digital tools and assisting local agricultural businesses with precision farming insights. However, AI could also hurt if not managed thoughtfully.

It could exacerbate job displacement if not accompanied by re-skilling programs, and the high cost of implementing advanced AI solutions might be prohibitive for a small town. There are also concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the need for digital literacy within the community to fully leverage AI's benefits without widening the digital divide. Ultimately, AI's impact on Shrewsbury will depend on proactive planning, strategic investment in beneficial applications, and a focus on human-centered integration.

Me: What will Shrewsbury be like in ten years' time (in a summary paragraph)?

**Gemini:** In ten years (by 2035), Shrewsbury will likely remain a quiet, community-focused rural Vermont town, but with key modernizations and ongoing demographic shifts. Most residents will have access to high-speed internet, potentially attracting more remote workers and supporting local businesses, though many will still commute to nearby Rutland. The town will continue to navigate the challenges of an aging population and a competitive housing market, with some new housing options hopefully emerging from state-level initiatives. Climate change impacts, such as more intense weather, will be increasingly evident, leading to more integrated resilience planning. Overall, Shrewsbury will strive to maintain its charming character while adapting to contemporary needs and environmental realities.

~Article by Sandy Bragg

# SHREWSBURY DAY

**Sunday September 14, 2025**

**Rain Date Sunday, September 21, 2025**

(see details inside this issue)

## TIMES OF SHREWSBURY

The Times of Shrewsbury is published monthly from February through December, and compiled by volunteers from material submitted by residents with the goal of informing townspeople of what is happening in Shrewsbury. The views and opinions expressed in articles are solely those of the author and not necessarily those of the editors.

All submissions must be accompanied by the name of the submitting person and are printed at the editors' discretion subject to editing for length and clarity. Letters to the Editor exceeding 350 words will be subject to editing for length. Any information piece or informational political letters (without specific party or vote appeal) will be subject to the guidelines previously described.

A writer of a letter that directly names a Shrewsbury resident or organization in a critical manner must get copies to the resident or organization, and to the Times by the 10th of the month prior to publication or it will not run. If the named person or organization indicates in writing to the writer and to the Times that they choose not to respond, the letter will run. If the named entity responds, the response and initial letter will run in the same issue.

There is no charge for: jokes, poems, nature reports, family event announcements, feature articles, or letters that are not commercial. Also, there is no charge for appropriate notices of free items.

Articles and Advertisements: Deadline for submission is 5pm on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication; exceptions will be announced in the prior month's Times.

Ads in the Times are for area businesses, local non-profit events, and local ballot election advertisements.

Best Formats: Articles: Word or as an email message with no formatting. Photos: jpeg. Ads: jpeg or Word document.

Monthly advertising fees and relative sizes:

Full page	\$110	(7.5"w x 9.5"h)
Half page	\$60	(7.5"w x 4.5"h or 3.5"w x 9.5"h)
Quarter page	\$15	(7.5"w x 2.5" h; or, 3.5"wx 4.5"h)
Business card	\$10	(3.5"w x 2"h)
Classified ad	\$5	(15 words or less)

Payment due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

1/18/25

Chryl Martin ~ Rich Biziak  
Times of Shrewsbury, P. O. Box 373, Cuttingsville, VT 05738  
Email: [shrewsburytimes@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsburytimes@gmail.com) Online: [www.shrewsburyvt.org](http://www.shrewsburyvt.org)  
and <http://www.shrewsburyhistoricalsociety.com>

## SHREWSBURY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Aug 24	7pm	*Science Book Club meets at the Library
Aug 26	12-2pm	Prayer Shawl group meets upstairs in the Meeting House
Aug 27	--	*First Day of School
Aug 30	9am-noon	*Mushrooms Galore Walk-and-Talk. Location TBD. Pre-Registration Required.
Sept 6	Noon-3pm	*Laurel Glen (Bowman House) Open House
Sept 14	Start 10am	* <b>SHREWSBURY DAY</b> (see schedule of lunch and events inside this issue)
Sept 18	Multiple	*Cemetery tours of the Laurel Glen Cemetery
Sept 20	4-6pm	*Sally Deinzer's presentation "Antarctica comes to Vermont" at Pierce's
Sept 21	4pm	*Famous Books Book Club meets at the Library
Sept 23	12-2pm	*Prayer Shawl group meets upstairs in the Meeting House
Sept 26	4-6pm	*Wine Tasting at Pierce's
Sept 27	2pm	*Screening of "Far Out: Life on & After the Commune" at the Shrewsbury Library
Sept 28	7pm	Science Book Club meets at the Library
Oct 3		*Taxes due
Oct 4	8am-noon	*Shrewsbury "Center" Cemetery Clean Up Day
Oct 5	11am-3pm	*Laurel Glen will be open for tours
Oct 18	5-7pm	*Chili Cook Off at Pierce's

\*see elsewhere in newsletter for details

### **TIMES OF SHREWSBURY**

Online at  
[www.shrewsburyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.shrewsburyhistoricalsociety.com)  
[www.shsrewsburyvt.org](http://www.shsrewsburyvt.org)



**Deadline for submission to  
*Times of Shrewsbury* is by  
 5:00pm  
 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

### **REGULAR MEETINGS and EVENTS**

Selectboard Meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays – 6:30pm at Town Office
Bone Builders	Tuesdays & Thursdays--May-Oct: 9-10am; Nov-Apr: 10-11am at Meeting House
Development Review Board	4 <sup>th</sup> Wed -7pm at Town Office; check town website for agenda
Library Trustees Meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 7pm at Shrewsbury Library
Mill River Unified Union School Board Mtg	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed 7pm @ MRHS & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed. 7pm at MRHS unless otherwise warned
Planning Commission	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays 7pm at Town Office; No meeting July & August
Prayer Shawl Group	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 12noon upstairs at the Meeting House
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	Sundays – 10am via Zoom; contact wildernessfriends@gmail.com
Shrewsbury Community Church	Sundays – 10:30am - Worship service
Shrewsbury Conservation Commission	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday @ 5:15pm at 450 Frank Lord Rd
Shrewsbury Historical Society	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday- 3pm at the Museum
Shrewsbury Historical Society Museum	Open 1-3pm Sundays only from July 6 to October 26, 2025
Shrewsbury Singers	Sundays 9-10:30am and Tues 6:30-8:00pm @ Meeting House
Shrewsbury Sno-Birds	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 7pm at Southside Steakhouse in Rutland
Shrewsbury Volunteer Fire Department	Thursdays – 7pm at the Cuttingsville Station

### **Shrewsbury Town Website: [www.shrewsburyvt.org](http://www.shrewsburyvt.org)**

Clerk's Office	492-3511	Mondays & Thursdays 8:30am-1pm; Wednesdays 1pm-6pm (Fax 802-492-3383)
Town Garage	492-3656	(Follow prompts to report roadway blockage on non-work days)
Listers	492-2009	Available by appointment
Treasurer's Office	492-3558	Monday 9am-11am
Transfer Station	492-3867	Sunday 8am-4pm ~ Wednesdays 12noon-6pm
Library	492-3410	Hours: Mon 10am-12noon; Tues 7-9pm; Wed 10am-5pm & 7-9pm; Thurs 7-9pm; Fri 10 12noon; Sat 10am-12noon
Meeting House	492-6050	Reservations: 492-3361 or <a href="mailto:julanne@vermontel.net">julanne@vermontel.net</a>
News Flash Email:	<a href="mailto:vtbenbeano@gmail.com">vtbenbeano@gmail.com</a> or <a href="mailto:benbeano@vermontel.net">benbeano@vermontel.net</a>	an email list for Urgent and reminder news information

Cuttingsville Post Office 1-802-230-1996 Window Hours: Mon–Fri 7:30am–10:30am and 11:30am–2:30pm; Sat 8am–11am. Lobby Hours Mon– Fri 7:30am–5:00pm and Sat 7:30am–11am

Burn Permit: Forest Fire Warden Kevin Brown 802-345-8668 or, Deputy Fire Warden Al Ridlon, Jr. 802-282-3642

Animal Control Officer: Adrienne Raymond 802-492-3578

1<sup>st</sup> Constable: Aaron Haupt 558-9980

Game Warden: Tim Carey 793-2776

Emergency Management Aaron Korzun 492-3362

Green Mountain Power outage 1-800-451-2877

Medical-Police-Fire Emergency Dial 911

Ambulance 773-1700

Rutland Hospital 775-7111

[Updated 5/7/2025]

## SHREWSBURY SELECTBOARD MINUTES

*The Selectboard meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Town Office.*

### August 6, 2025: Minutes of Selectboard Meeting

**Present at meeting:** Selectboard members: Aaron Korzun, Francis Wyatt. Town Clerk: Rebecca Rice. Zoning Administrator and Animal Control Officer: Adrienne Raymond. Road Commissioner: Dan Cavoto. Airport Committee Member: Bob Knudsen.

**Members of the public:** Paul Stewart. Dan Golfin. Barbara Jean Chadburn.

The meeting was convened at 6:36 PM

**Agenda:** Motion made by A. Korzun to follow the agenda with the following addition: Allard Lumber Excess Weight Permit. F. Wyatt seconded. All in favor, motion approved.

**Road Commissioner's Report:** Dan Cavoto reported on grant program for Eastham Road, for ditches and culverts. New employee Timmy Mumford on Road Crew. Hauling winter sand. VELCO is looking into the damage done on Town Hill Road.

**Tax Rate:** Aaron Korzun made a motion to accept the tax rates as calculated by the Treasurer Linda McGuire of the following rates:  
Homestead Rates: Town: 0.6609 School: 1.6764 Appropriations: 0.1279 Local Agreement: 0.0030 Total: 2.4681 (2% increase from 2024)

Non-Resident Rates: Town: 0.6609 School: 1.8077 Appropriations: 0.1279 Local Agreement: 0.0030 Total: 2.5994 (3% increase from 2024)

Seconded by Francis Wyatt. Approved.

Aaron Korzun made a motion to not assess penalties for late homestead declarations. F. Wyatt seconded. Approved.

**Airport Committee Update:** Bob Knudsen reported that the airport is trying to improve airport utilization. Vermont has a tax that isn't assessed in neighboring states. The state is looking to getting that tax repealed or modified.

**Vicious Dog Update:** The Sheriff came and picked up one of the dogs Tasha, but not the dog that has bitten people (Baby Girl). Barbara Jean Chadburn and Dan Golfin claim that Baby Girl's personality has changed since Tasha is no longer around. We learned for the first time that the dog bit two people on the same day that the dogs had gotten out. The original order still stands. We decided to revisit the issue next meeting when we have all Selectboard members present, if the dog has not been picked up by the Sheriff yet.

**Excess Weight Permit – Allard Lumber:** Aaron Korzun made a motion to approve an excess weight permit for Allard Lumber. Seconded by F. Wyatt. Approved.

**New Business/Open to the Public:** None

**Review Minutes:** A. Korzun made a motion to accept the 7/16/2025 Selectboard meeting minutes. Seconded by F. Wyatt. Approved.

**Review Orders:** F. Wyatt made a motion to approve Selectboard Orders #8 for \$3,044.35 and Road Orders #8 for \$16,584.37. Seconded by A. Korzun. Approved.  
Adjourned at 8:09 PM

*Respectfully submitted, Francis Wyatt*  
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### August 20, 2025: Minutes of Selectboard Meeting

**Present at meeting:** Selectboard members: Aaron Korzun, Francis Wyatt, Marc Cimonetti. Town Clerk: Rebecca Rice. Admin Assistant: Alaina Cimonetti.

**Members of the public:** Barry Griffith. Phil Severy. Mark Goodwin. Laura Black (Remotely).

The meeting was convened at 6:30 PM.

**Agenda:** Motion made by A. Korzun to follow the agenda with the following additions: Excess weight permit Mac Elwain Contracting LLC and a special catering permit for Watson Wheeler Cider LLC. F. Wyatt seconded. All in favor, motion approved.

**Discontinuance of the Right-Of-Way for Town Highway #47:** Site was visited by Selectboard members: Aaron Korzun, Francis Wyatt, Marc Cimonetti, and Admin: Alaina Cimonetti. A. Korzun made a motion to discontinue the right-of-way for the Town Highway #47. F. Wyatt seconded. Approved.

**Next Roads Up for Discontinuance Determination:** Selectboard discussed pursuing Town Highways #46, #41, #16, #31, and #27 for the discontinuance process.

**SVFD - Next Fire Truck:** To stay within budget the SVFD is requesting a Mini Pumper for their next fire truck. The contract price is \$415,309. Deposit is \$50,000. Buying from Bulldog Fire Apparatus, Woodville MA. A. Korzun made a motion for the Selectboard to allow the SVFD to utilize the sinking fund for the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund for the purchase of this truck. M. Cimonetti seconded. Approved.

**Vicious Dog Update:** The Selectboard decided to pursue a contract with the Rutland Sheriff Office to be the town's animal control officer. Upon review of the updated information about the vicious dog situation a motion will be called. M. Cimonetti made a motion to stay the order until the next meeting 9/3/25. A. Korzun seconded. 2-1 Approved.

**Excess Weight Permit:** A. Korzun made a motion to approve an excess weight permit for Mac Elwain Contracting LLC. F. Wyatt seconded. Approved.

**Liquor License:** A. Korzun made a motion to approve a special catering permit for Watson Wheeler Cider LLC for the Tap to Table event on 10/5/25. F. Wyatt seconded. Approved.

**New Business/Open to the Public:** After the Shunpike Road traffic study A. Korzun has received confirmation that the study has been started but Ethan Pepin has not sent it since that last conversation, therefore he will be pursuing contacting the executive director of the RRPC.

Laura Black informed the Selectboard that the Cott Systems for importing and indexing the bound book land records scans quote received. The total amount to import the bound book 1-7 scans is \$12,350.00 with two scheduled payments. A separate scan of the large format prints would be around \$250 to \$350 for all of them.

**Review Minutes:** A. Korzun made a motion to accept the 8/6/2025 Selectboard meeting minutes. Seconded by F. Wyatt. Approved.

**Review Orders:** F. Wyatt made a motion to approve Selectboard Orders #8A for a total of \$5,630.56 and Road Orders #8A for a total of \$20,984.38. Seconded by M. Cimonetti. Approved.

Adjourned at 8:07 PM

*Respectfully submitted, Alaina Cimonetti*

*These minutes are unofficial until approved by the Selectboard at the next regularly scheduled meeting.*



## TAXES DUE OCTOBER 3, 2025

Payments can be delivered to the town office, mailed, placed in the drop box at the town office (to the left of the front door), made by credit card online at [www.officialpayment.com](http://www.officialpayment.com) (Credit card deadline is October 1). If you plan to pay in cash, please deliver directly to the treasurer.

Town Treasurer regular hours are every Monday from 9 am to noon.

### Additional days/times available for payments:

Saturday, September 27 from 10:00am to 12:00pm

Thursday, October 2 from 12:00pm to 3:00pm

Friday, October 3 from 12:00pm to 7:00pm

If you have not filed your Homestead Declaration, the state website at [www.tax.vermont.gov/property-owners](http://www.tax.vermont.gov/property-owners) will direct you to the proper form and the Property Tax Adjustment form is also available, if you qualify.

**State of Vermont Tax Information** for contact is:

Phone: (802) 828-2865

Toll Free: (866) 828-2865

Email: [tax.individualincome@vermont.gov](mailto:tax.individualincome@vermont.gov)

Thank you, and call or email if you have questions.

Linda McGuire, Treasurer

Town of Shrewsbury

9823 Cold River Rd, Shrewsbury, Vermont 05738

[Shrewsburytreas@vermontel.net](mailto:Shrewsburytreas@vermontel.net)

Town Office 492-3558

## NEWS FROM THE TOWN CLERK

The last few months have been busy with cleaning up the voting checklist. Since a town wide review can only be done in odd numbered years, and due to timing, it had not been done for a while. Challenge letters have been sent to all voters who the Town Clerk and the Board of Civil Authority believe are no longer residents in the town of Shrewsbury. We have had several responses and a number of letters have been returned forwarding time has expired. I have spent a good bit of time online trying to obtain updated addresses for folks who no longer live in town. I will keep searching. If the voter's mail has been returned and I cannot locate a current address, and they do not vote in the next two elections they can be removed from the checklist.

This is a reminder that land postings are only good for one year. If you posted your land last year and want to have it continued to be posted, please come to the town office so the posting stays in place.

Some COVID tests are still available at the Town Office.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 802-492-3511, 9823 Cold River Road, Shrewsbury, VT 05738, or [shrewsburyclerk@vermontel.net](mailto:shrewsburyclerk@vermontel.net).

~Rebecca A. Rice, Shrewsbury Town Clerk

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Townsfolk,

I am sorry to report that I have resigned from the post of Animal Control Officer as of 8/6/25. It is a demanding position that presents you with situations where there are no perfect solutions. I'm hopeful that someone else in town will take up this role soon, as it is truly a necessary one. The hours needed are variable. Give me a call, if you might consider taking this on and I will be happy to share both the good and not-as-good.

~Submitted by Adrienne Raymond (802-353-0973)

### Thank You from the Shrewsbury Meeting House Concert Series

Our 2025 series (the 6th annual) will go down in our community's history book as one of the best: joyful, full of rhythm, danceable, great audiences and stellar musicians who are good people too. We thank you all for your financial support of the musicians, camaraderie, good humor, and spirit of helpfulness with everything behind the scenes that makes this endeavor such a joy for us to work on each year. After a concert, we are continuously proud of the thoughtfulness of our audience members who ask if they can help pack up, or just see a need and take care of it.

We also want to give a special thank you to our local town entities that stepped up to provide our audiences with delicious food and snacks during the concerts: Spring Lake Ranch, Shrewsbury Community Church, Harry and Elena of Pierce's Store, and Hallie of Wally's Corner. And a big Thank You also goes to the Meeting House Committee who OKs the use of the hall and grounds so that we can continue to bring this community event to Shrewsbury.

Last, but never least, are the great neighbors and friends who we are so fortunate to have on our concert production team...we couldn't do it without you, and we wouldn't want to: Thomas Hartigan, Aaron Korzun, Aaron Schneider, Jean Marie Walker, Boaz Cohen, Silas Hamilton and Ray DiPrinzio.

*With gratitude, Vicky Arthur and Paul Sgalia*

### House For Rent in North Shrewsbury

Be a part of Shrewsbury history. The historic Pierce house attached to Pierce's Store's will be ready to rent on November 1. It contains a large, equipped kitchen, long enclosed back porch overlooking the nearby stream, laundry/pantry room w/washer and dryer, a living room with a large bay window, bath and two other downstairs rooms. There are three rooms upstairs. There is a nice backyard area for your grill and chairs to listen to the stream and enjoy quiet Northam evenings. Close by are hiking, x-country skiing and snowmobile trails.

The home is limited to two residents. Rent is \$1,750/month, minimum 1 year lease, heat and all utilities are included. References and credit will be checked. A two-month security deposit is required at lease signing.

For details or to arrange a visit:  
Call 802-353-0973

# SHREWSBURY DAY

## Sunday - September 14, 2025

Rain Date Sunday, September 21, 2025

**PLEASE JOIN US ~~ SHREWSBURY DAY BELONGS TO YOU!**

### 10-11am -MUSIC

DJ Brett Myhre in front of Maple Crest Farms  
(No thru traffic after 10:45am)  
*Park early and let DJ Brett entertain you!*

### 11:00am - PARADE

Parade starts at 11 am and will line up on Russellville and Northam Roads. They will merge and proceed thru Shrewsbury Center before turning up by the Meeting House -----a long, short parade featuring: Bob Snarski, Shrewsbury Mountain School Students and Members of the MRU High School Band and Chorus Singers, Shrewsbury Veterans, Shrewsbury Fire Dept, Fish and Game, Rutland Shriners, Antique Cars, our Local Business and Organizations. Also Showcasing our Shrewsbury Library as they celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary.

### 12noon - KIDS EVENTS

TATTOS · DESIGN YOUR OWN CAPS · ROCK PAINTING  
· BADGE MAKING · HAIR COLOR STIX  
· RAZZLE DAZZLE NAILS

Also

GAMES, PIZZA BOX RELAY, GIANT KICK BALL DART,  
CORN HOLE, LIMBO STICK, GIANT JENGA AND  
GIANT CONNECT 4

### 12:30pm – BARBECUE & LUNCH (By Donation)

Evening Song's Green Salad, Chili and Hot dogs in various offerings:

Chili, meat OR bean Chili with sour cream and cheese options, Hot Dogs and Chili Dogs, Taco and Potato Chips, Lemonade and Ice Cream options.

### 12:00noon ENTERTAINMENT

DJ Brett Myhre –Bring your dancing shoes!

### 1:30pm – KID'S EVENTS RESUME

### 50/50 RAFFLE!

(You do not have to be present to win!)

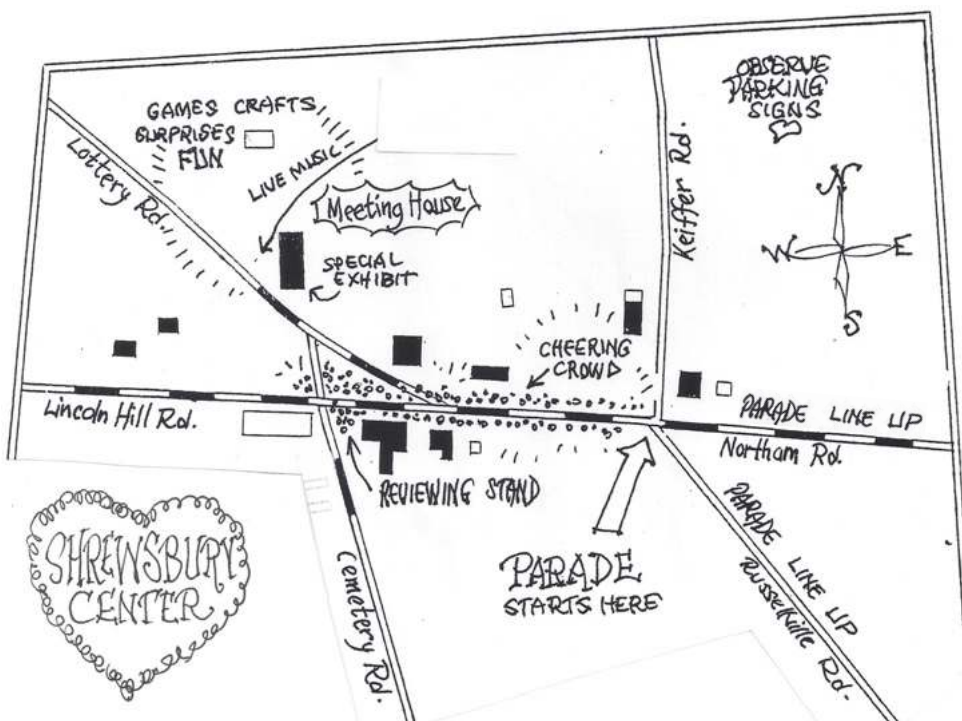
**Bring a  
blanket or lawn chairs to sit on**

### Fun For Everyone!

All festivities take place outdoors at the Meeting House following the Parade.

The Meeting House will be closed to the public.

**NO LIVE ANIMALS  
PLEASE**



Come one, come all

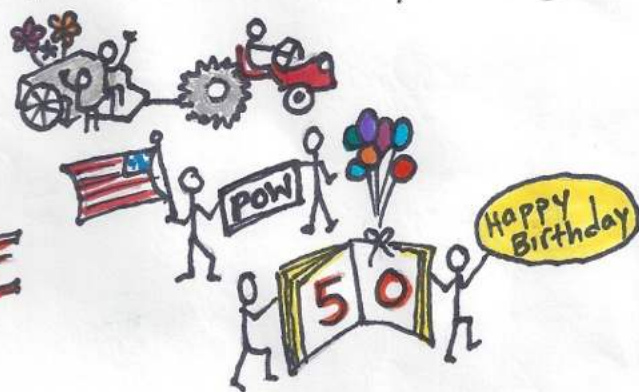
★ Celebrate ★

# SHREWSBURY DAY 2025

Sunday, September 14 raindate Sept. 21



11:00 PARADE  
Cheering Crowd  
Joyful Noise



♪ Dancing, Dancing, Dancing ♪  
in the street

GAMES • • • • •

LUNCH ~ 12:30

DJ BRETT



Poster by Ali Wilson





## SHREWSBURY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The month of August has slipped past us, and although the Cuttingsville and Northam stations seem very quiet when you drive by, your SVFD has had a lot happening. First, the calls. On August 5, at 7:16am, the department was called out to a report of a tree leaning against a power line on Cold River Road. SVFD crews rolled to investigate, but after driving the Northam Pumper nearly the entire road, they could find nothing. Green Mountain Power was notified, and they reported they had been trimming trees in that area but also saw nothing. In an incident such as this, it would be most helpful if the caller could stay at the scene and wave to show the responding units where the situation is located. On August 12, a call came in at 2:25pm, again for power lines down. This situation was on Lincoln Hill with flames showing. The department rolled again and did find an area burning around a downed wire. In this situation, the SVFD prepared to douse the area but waited for Green Mountain Power to kill the line before water was put on it. With the very dry woods and fields, this could have been a very difficult fire. Fortunately, it was extinguished safely.

On July 31, a drill was conducted at Al Ridlon's sugarhouse to practice setting up, water shuttle, and pumping in addition sizing up a response to a fire at that type of location. We thank Al for hosting and directing the drill.

On August 7, Matt Wilson, former Chester Vermont Fire Chief, came to Cuttingsville to show various pieces of personal fire gear to the members. Chief Wilson now has his own business dealing with firefighter equipment. This includes bunker gear, helmets, boots, gloves and other equipment. Many of our first line firefighters are currently using gear that is 15 or even 20 years old. It is in our budget to replace these items, and we will be taking Matt's information into consideration.

The SVFD truck committee has been investigating the purchase of a new truck. After conducting exhaustive searches, they came to the department with a recommendation that for the needs of Shrewsbury, a Mini Pumper with quick response details such as the Jaws of Life, a large capacity pump (1500 gallons per minute) and a smaller water tank (300 gallons) along with foam firefighting capabilities, good lighting, and basic tools would be the best choice. The truck will be built to department standards on a



### BURN PERMITS

If you are plan to burn brush you **MUST** call for a burning permit. **Contact Forest Fire Warden Kevin Brown 802-345-8668 or Deputy Forest Fire Warden Al Ridlon, Jr 802-282-3642.** The landowner is responsible to control a brush fire, ensure you have proper tools, water supply, and people to assist in containing the fire.

Ford chassis and equipped with 4-wheel drive. Being a smaller size, this type of vehicle is much better suited to the many long, steep and narrow driveways and roads we often encounter. It will also be an ideal truck for responding to situations such as trees on wires, vehicle accidents, lost or injured hikers and the many incidents to which we currently and most often respond. For large structure fires, this truck will be a rapid response, first attack vehicle and will be followed by larger pumpers and tankers as well as automatic mutual aid. These latter incidents tend to be very infrequent and always involve automatic mutual aid with multitudes of equipment. This mini pumper will also fit comfortably into the tight confines of the Cuttingsville station.

For many years, the department has been accruing a sinking fund for such an expenditure, so there will be no additional bonds or taxes needed. Currently, the SVFD fleet consists of our 1992 (33-year-old tanker) and the 2000 (25-year-old pumper) in Cuttingsville. The plan is to keep the current tanker and refurbish the current pumper into a pumper/tanker to be moved to Northam,

In Northam, we currently have a 2003 International tanker which the department purchased and refurbished into a small tanker. This truck was purchased used and has over 120,000 miles on it. The department plans to take this truck out of service and sell it. Also housed in Northam is the newest current truck, a 2007 (18-year-old) International pumper (engine) which was purchased new for \$296,156.

The new mini pumper will cost in the vicinity of \$415,000 and will be in service this fall. It will be housed in Cuttingsville replacing the current pumper, which once converted to the dual role of pumper/tanker, will be sent to Northam replacing the current tanker now kept there.

As of this writing, this process is now underway. In the next issue of The Times, there will be a more detailed version of this major purchase to keep everyone informed. This is a capital expense that has already been funded and will be crucial in keeping our community and our volunteers safe. It also allows the department to more efficiently respond to our unique and many times difficult terrain.

Until next month, please be careful as our forests are extremely dry. Keep us all FIRE SAFE.

*Submitted by Bob Snarski,  
SVFD Safety Officer*

## THE SVFD NEEDS YOU!

We need new and younger members. The Shrewsbury Volunteer Fire Department (SVFD) can provide equipment, training, and support. Whether you've had prior experience as a first responder or have no experience at all! We need volunteers. Men or women who would like further information may call Bob Snarski at 492-3505, Barry Griffith at 492-3573, or Jack Perry at 773-3278. No commitment necessary.





## NEWS FROM LAUREL GLEN ASSOCIATION (LGA)



We had a wonderful open house June 28 with perfect weather for dozens of guests who explored the greenhouse, mansion, and mausoleum. One woman told of visiting the mausoleum as a child. She was shocked to find no dining table there, no marble family awaiting a meal, though she was sure she'd seen that years ago. Our next open house is Saturday, September 6 from 12noon to 3pm.

Mr. Bowman died September 18, 1891. To commemorate this anniversary, docents will lead tours of Laurel Glen Cemetery in Cuttingsville on Thursday, September 18. Tours depart from the entrance near the historical society building on Rte 103 at 5:30, 5:45, 6:00, 6:15 and 6:30. This is NOT a haunted tour; it is appropriate for all ages. Park in the Olde Barn lot. Wear sturdy shoes, dress for weather, and bring a flashlight. Suggested \$10.00 donation per visitor benefits the Laurel Glen Cemetery Association.



Events held at Laurel Glen are fundraisers. Our immediate goal is to repair the indoor plumbing, so we can hold larger events where we can raise money to repair the cemetery wall and wallpaper. Imagine meetings, parties, wedding and prom

photo sessions, etc... at the mansion! The Friends of Bowman Mansion need your help to make this happen.

Thanks: to Mark and Connie Youngstrom for an icebox which adds authenticity to our otherwise anachronistic kitchen. To Stephanie Firstbrook for the beautiful rug to replace the carpet on the upstairs landing.

Laurel Glen will open for Tap to Table on October 5. Docents will be on hand 11am- 3pm. Joining us are Ripley Camp #4 Sons of Union Veterans. Donations welcome!

**Did you know?** Working plumbing will make the mansion more recognizable to Mr. Bowman, should he decide to return. He had hot and cold water in his upstairs bathroom, downstairs WC, and servants' basement WC. Even the greenhouse had running water!

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/426580458623737>

Website: [www.bomanmansion.org](http://www.bomanmansion.org)

Email: [laurelglen.bowmanmansion@gmail.com](mailto:laurelglen.bowmanmansion@gmail.com)

All donations to Friends of Bowman Mansion (P.O. Box 416, Cuttingsville, VT 05738) are tax deductible.

*~Submitted by Pam Monder*

We've made some "activities" progress in the past month. First off, we held what we called a Community Mingle in mid-July that was open to all, not just members and current volunteers. It was very well attended, and several signed on as new members and/or volunteers.

One of our current volunteers spoke for a couple of minutes about how satisfying it was for her to be able to say "yes" when a request for assistance came from a member. In addition, being a volunteer with Green Mountain Neighbors has allowed her to know more people in her community.



Our monthly luncheons continue to be favorites and the first Wine & Cheese Social was also a hit. It was fun to just sit, sip and get to know some new friends. This one was in Shrewsbury, and we anticipate others in each of the other towns. Of course, any GMNer can attend any of the events, no matter the town.

By the time this Times is published, there will already have been a talk in Mount Holly by people from the Vermont Forest Cemetery, located in forestland in the Roxbury area. According to the VFC website, "In natural burial, we dig no deeper than four feet so that the body and its bacteria can remain in contact with the active layers of the soil, where oxygen, moisture, warmth, and soil bacteria aid in recycling the body's elements." For more information, see <https://www.cemetery.eco/>.

Have questions about Green Mountain Neighbors? Call us at 802-417-2292 and leave a message. We'll get back to you within a day. *~Submitted by Sally Deinzer*

### Free Medical Equipment

Remember, various pieces of medical assist equipment have been donated by Shrewsbury residents who no longer need them. These are available at no cost on a loaner basis. On hand right now are many wooden crutches, adjustable aluminum crutches, walkers, rollators, commodes, shower seats, bedpans, toilet safety bars, a large wheelchair, and more. If you need any equipment or have any items to donate, call Donna Swart at 773-7403.

# SHREWSBURY LIBRARY

Library News Submitted by Joan Aleshire  
LEBRATING 50 YEARS & COUNTING

Monday 10 am to 12 pm  
Tuesday 7 pm to 9 pm  
Wednesday 10 am to 5 pm & 7 pm to 9 pm  
Thursday 7 pm to 9 pm  
Friday 10 am to 12 pm  
Saturday 10 am to 12 pm

Wonder if the Library has a particular book or DVD? Want to put a hold on an item or renew one you've borrowed? Please visit [www.shrewsburylibrary.org](http://www.shrewsburylibrary.org).

To suggest a book to add to our collection, please contact DONNA SWARTZ for Children's and Young Adult titles ([donnaswartz44@aol.com](mailto:donnaswartz44@aol.com)) and JOAN ALESHIRE for Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction ([joanaleshire@vermontel.net](mailto:joanaleshire@vermontel.net)). We can request books on Inter-Library Loan, if the cut in federal funding allows. We will buy books depending on our budget and our collection's needs.

MANY THANKS to everyone who helped make the ANNUAL TACO DINNER & STREET DANCE a smashing success! DONNA SWARTZ directed the show; many hands donated, cooked and served food, moved tables and chairs, washed dishes, swept the floor; played music, danced and had a great time. I'll single out Trustees LISA SHARROW (for pre-event prep); TRISH NORTON, ED RAYMOND, GAIL HARTIGAN, MARGE BENINI; Volunteers ANN VANNEMAN and LINDA DUCROT; and the COMMUNITY BLUES BAND: MARCOS LEVY, EMMETT SIRJANE, VICKY ARTHUR, PAUL SGALIA, and DIRK THOMAS. It couldn't have happened without you!

MANY THANKS to everyone who helped bring the sci-fi cult classic film, *Time Chasers* to the Meeting Room: SANDY BRAGG for outreach and publicity; LISA SHARROW for the eye-catching poster; GEORGE WOODARD for bringing and setting up his projector and speakers; Writer-Director DAVID GIANCOLA for donating signed discs and posters and leading a lively Q & A. It was a real treat!

NO BOOK SALE THIS YEAR: APOLOGIES TO ALL! The PAUSE ON BOOK DONATIONS continues as we search for ways to handle left-over discarded books. We've had some good suggestions, and will keep you posted as we look for sustainable solutions. Meanwhile, thank you for keeping your discards at home!

## COMING EVENTS:

Saturday, September 27 @ 2 pm: *Far Out: Life on & After the Commune*, the acclaimed documentary about Vermont communes in the 1960s, with Director Charlie Light, poet/activist Verandah Porche, and musician Patty Carpenter. See our ad in this issue of the Times.

## CONTINUING PROGRAMS:

NO WRITERS' GROUP UNTIL OCTOBER 5. If you have poems or short pieces of prose to share with our friendly group, please contact Penelope Weiss ([pw9@earthlink.com](mailto:pw9@earthlink.com)) or Joan Aleshire ([joanaleshire@vermontel.net](mailto:joanaleshire@vermontel.net)) for info!

Sunday, September 21 @ 4pm: FAMOUS BOOKS BOOK CLUB: Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, 2nd session. Please contact Joan if you want a Large Print Copy or a Norton Critical Edition: [joanaleshire@vermontel.net](mailto:joanaleshire@vermontel.net).

Sunday, September 28 @ 7pm: SCIENCE BOOK CLUB: *What if we got it Right? Visions of a Climate Future* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. Print and e-books are available. Please contact Margery Salmon ([salmonm@vermontel.net](mailto:salmonm@vermontel.net)).

## New Books include:

- *The Spinach King* by John Seabrook: A veteran journalist whose grandfather transformed the frozen food industry looks at his complicated family history.
- *The Place of Tides* by James Rebanks: A memoir of life on a remote Norwegian island, by the author of *The Shepherd's Life*.
- *The Scrapbook* by Heather Clarke: A novel about the home front in World War II.
- *On Freedom* by Timothy Snyder: A companion to the philosopher's earlier *On Tyranny*.
- *A Marriage at Sea: A True Story of Love, Obsession, and Shipwreck* by Sophie Elmhirst. A cautionary tale for all sailors and armchair adventurers.
- *Running Out: In Search of Water on the High Plains* by Lucas Bessire.
- *King of Kings: The Iranian Revolution: A Story of Hubris, Delusion, and Catastrophic Miscalculation* by Scott Lee Anderson.
- *The Devil Reached Toward the Sky: An Oral History of the Making and Unleashing of the Atomic Bomb* by Garrett M. Graff.
- *Hunter's Heart Ridge* by Sarah Stewart Taylor: A mystery set in Vermont, for a little entertainment!



A visit at the library by author Kelly Mitchell Schilling, the Book is *Paulie's Tail*. The children are Sigrid, Darby, Rey, and Ellie. ~Submitted by Jenny Wellenius

Return BY POPULAR DEMAND!!!

## STORYTIME

**Saturday, September 6, @10am**  
at the Shrewsbury Library  
with special guest  
Anne Marie and her fabulous dog Faith





## MUSHROOMS GALORE!!! Saturday August 30 @ 9am - noon

Fungi educator, author, and photographer, Meg Madden, will be coming back to Shrewsbury on Saturday August 30 from 9:00am - noon! Meg is a well-known expert on fungi and even she was amazed at the diversity of mushrooms we discovered two years back. She thought

This walk is appropriate for families and people of all ages.



Wear comfortable walking shoes, (expect wet spots!) weather-appropriate clothing, and bring your questions and curiosity! A smart phone equipped with the iNaturalist app is a plus, but not required. Meg's book will be available for purchase and signing (\$17).

The SCC is excited to offer this workshop with mycologist Meg Madden! The exact location will be announced via email shortly before the event. Rain or shine! Unfortunately, **we have to limit the group size to 20, so you must pre-register.**

**EMAIL: [conservationcommission@shrewsburyvt.org](mailto:conservationcommission@shrewsburyvt.org)**

*~Submitted by Louise Duda*

*Note: Additional info about the program can be found on page 21 of the August 2025 issue of the Times of Shrewsbury)*

## Screening of 'Far Out: Life on & After the Commune'



Continuing to showcase notable films by Vermont filmmakers, the Shrewsbury Library will host Charlie Light's acclaimed documentary about communes on Saturday September 27 at 2pm at the Shrewsbury Library.

The 85-minute documentary tells the story of two ground-breaking communes: Packer Corners in Guilford, VT and Montague Farm in Massachusetts.

Winner of Best New England Feature at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival, the film chronicles the communes' everyday life, as they became pioneers in the back-to-the-land and organic farming movements. A member of the communes in their heyday, Charlie Light will be joined by Verandah Porche, poet and longtime commune member; and Patty Carpenter who composed and performed the film's music.

The film received rave reviews from Seven Days: "It's hard to imagine a Vermont-ier documentary than Charles Light's homegrown phenomenon Far Out: Life on & After the Commune...The doc reminds us what was so counter about the counterculture — the insistence on rethinking and questioning everything. Far Out has an energy that could inspire young activists despondent about the current state of American institutions to do some community building of their own." *~Submitted by Sandy Bragg*

## Shrewsbury "Center" Cemetery Clean-up Day October 4 from 8am – 12pm

### Volunteers Needed

Come enjoy the fall weather and help us wash headstones and clean-up the grounds for winter. Bring a rake, your work gloves or just you and the willingness to help. We have a job for everyone!

VT Old Cemetery Assoc will be back helping to repair some old broken head stones as well.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give.

**Shrewsbury Cemetery Assoc, Inc.**  
**Cemetery Rd | Shrewsbury VT 05738**  
Got questions call 802-492-2151



### Apples, Apples, Apples!

Crabapples make GREAT jam! Extra heavy crop this year - and falling now. E-mail [jgibson@vermontel.net](mailto:jgibson@vermontel.net) to arrange a time for You-Pick-Up. Plenty to share.

*~Submitted by Jonathan Gibson*

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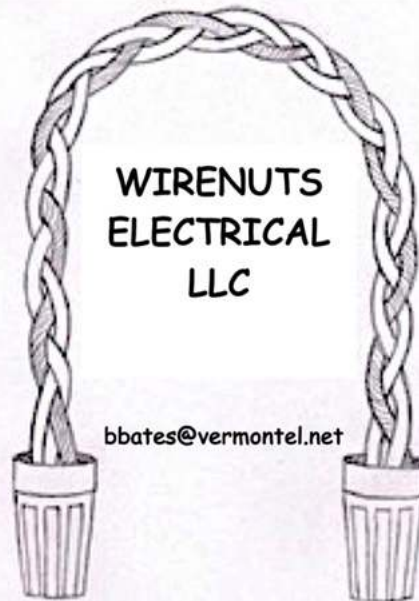
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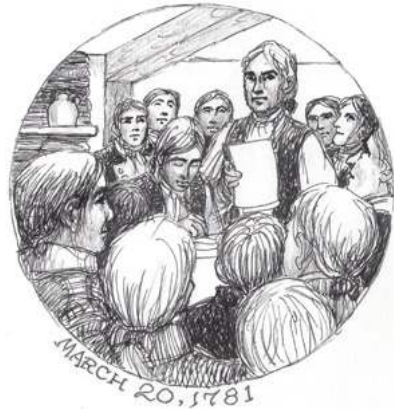
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## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SHREWSBURY MEETING HOUSE

"I call this meeting to order" announced Nebediah Angell on March 20, 1781 at the "*dwelling house of Mr. Lemuel White.*" The horses are



tethered to posts and fences outside, there is still snow on the ground, and there is a crackling fire in the big fireplace. A dozen or so men are gathered tightly in the room with their coats still on. This is Shrewsbury's first town meeting. With no previously elected moderator to open the meeting, Mr. Angell, a

justice of the peace from Clarendon, serves that purpose.

[Note: Shrewsbury Town Proceedings source in *Script* font]

The first order of business is to elect a moderator. That position goes to the host of the gathering, Lemuel White. Mr. Angell now steps down and Mr. White continues with the only remaining business, filling the necessary positions for the new town government: three selectmen, a town clerk, a treasurer, a constable, three listers, and a grand juror. Once these men are duly sworn to their new offices it is quickly "*Voted that this meeting is desolved (sic).*" The men visit for a bit then return to their homes and chores. A few stay a bit longer to toast the event with a pint of beer from White's cupboard, since he, Shrewsbury's first permanent settler, has operated a tavern here since 1776, located on the Crown Point Military Road. There is a revolutionary war still being fought from New York City south to South Carolina and several of the men at the meeting have already served in active militias. Two weeks earlier the Articles of Confederation were signed by the 13 states. The surrender at Yorktown would happen later in the year. But, in the Vermont Republic, as many refer to the independent state, the men's immediate thoughts were focused on getting through the winter, clearing and planting more land. Two thirds of Vermont's population is under 26 years old and the independent territory's future is unclear.

### The Creation of Shrewsbury

During 1761, Benning Wentworth Esq., Royal Governor of New Hampshire, signed a charter granting Samuel Ashley and 69 other Grantees title to "*about Twenty Four thousand Acres... to contain Something more than Six Miles square, and no more*" and to be "*Incorporated into a Township by the name of Shrewsbury.*" Governor Wentworth chartered 135 townships in the New Hampshire Grants, which later became Vermont, and became rich from the commissions and fees selling the subdivided 100-acre lots, as well as retaining about 500 prime acres in each town for himself. Few of those first investors settled in the uncleared forests of Shrewsbury. Likely the only access into town at the time of the charter

signing was the Crown Point military road, cut just two years earlier. However, by the 1780's the first settlers had laid out several other roads crossing the town.

The Shrewsbury charter mandated that the "*first Meeting for the Choice of Town Officers for said Town ... shall be held on the first Wednesday in October next ... and the annual Meeting for ever hereafter .... shall be on the Second Tuesday of March annually.*" Despite that decree, the first meeting waited for an entire generation, until 1781. The American Revolution waged on until 1783, but the new legislature of independent Vermont, led by first Governor Thomas Chittenden, passed a law in February of 1781, requiring each town to hold an annual town meeting in March. Vermont was organizing its own government structure, severed from England and fighting any territorial claims from New York.

### First Town Meetings

From that first meeting forward, town meetings in Shrewsbury were held in various homes and taverns, starting at Lemuel White's (now Pine Valley Farm on Lincoln Hill Road) then meeting at the home of Captain John Kilburn (house next to the Buckmaster Inn) in Shrewsbury Center, which later became Captain Phineas Page's home and tavern. One reference indicates church services were held in Moses Colburn's barn in 1818. With no building for religious services or public meetings, discussions began as early as 1787 to build a "*meeting house.*" With over 300 citizens, if just half of the men showed up for a public meeting (women could not vote until 1921), Phineas Page's tavern likely made for a tight fit.

### First Discussions of a Meeting House

It was legal in early Vermont for state government to legislate religious matters and for town governments to support and fund organized religion, including the building of meeting houses. The 1783 Vermont General Assembly passed a law "to enable towns and parishes to erect proper houses for public worship and support ministers of the gospel." Meeting houses were primarily places for worship, although also used for secular purposes.

At the Shrewsbury town meeting on October 11, 1787, it was "*Voted that there should be a Committee of men chosen to see where the meeting house shall stand*" and Nehemiah Smith, Nathan Finney, Emanuel Case, Jacob Wilson, Samuel Bishop, Peter Thompson and David Niles were so chosen. However, nothing was apparently done as, seven years later, at the March 1794 town meeting, it was "*Voted to choose a Committee and authorize the same to purchase a piece of ground to contain four acres near the crotch of the road by Capt. Kilburn's for the use of the Town to set these Public Buildings on Meeting House etc.*" Emanuel Case, John Kilburn and Ichabod Robinson were chosen. It was

*Continued on next page*



further *"Voted that the above Committee shall draft a Plan of a Meeting House and prescribe some further method of Proceeding and Notify the Selectmen when they are ready to Report the Conditions of purchasing the Land and Method of procuring."* Six months later it was *"Voted to accept the Plan of the Meeting House"* and *"to Continue the Committee that was Chosen to make preparation for Building a Meeting House with addition."*

The next year, at the June 1795 meeting, *"The Committee report that the Place for the Meeting House is on the New Road (Lottery Road) between W. Kilburns and W. Gibsons Barns"* and it was voted *"to accept the Report of the Committee upon these conditions that the Owners of the Land will give a spot of Ground and fulfil the Promise that they have made."* Progress was finally made in establishing a meeting house.

Two years later, Silas Whitney, who lived in the Center, transferred two acres to the town *"for the use of a common and to build a Meeting House a School House and such other buildings as the Town finds necessary to build on said piece of ground."* However, with just two acres, instead of the desired four acres, the school had to be located elsewhere (likely the Center Schoolhouse site just a quarter mile east).

### The First Meeting House

Seven years passed with no construction. The Shrewsbury history reports that, at an 1804 meeting, "it was decided that the meeting house was to be built within the next two years." Plans by Shrewsbury resident Philemon Adams were accepted "without the porches." Charles Bartholomew was chosen as the builder with a bid of \$1,570. He was paid  $\frac{1}{4}$  in cash and  $\frac{3}{4}$  in cattle. Construction took two years. Pews were auctioned off to raise funds to build the building: 38 pews were sold for \$19-\$75 (when town records indicate men were paid just \$1 per day for work) for a total of about \$1,200. Pews were considered real estate and could be sold, passed on in a will or forfeited for non-payment of taxes.

FINALLY, at the March 1807 town meeting, attendees assembled at Phineas Page's as warned, but the meeting immediately *"was adjourned to the Meeting House!"* The town finally had a meeting house!

Although that first Meeting House was located where the current building sits, it no longer exists. Information about that first building is lost to history, except a reference in an 1831 letter written by Stephen Gleason (Smith-Maple Crest Farm) after his son's funeral which said "... The Meeting House was crowded full. They filled the galleries until they were prevented from going up for fear of breaking them down..." From that description it is envisioned the meeting house was likely a single-story building with a single large room, high

ceiling and narrow balconies on each side, typical of many early rural meeting houses. The Shrewsbury history book describes a half pew as "3 feet 5 inches and three quarters," important since pews were personal property like land. A half-pew of that length would comfortably seat two people and therefore a full pew four people. Since 38 pews were sold to build the building, it can be estimated the seating capacity was 152 plus some standing room. Such a room could have been about the size of the main hall in the current Meeting House.

### The Year Without Summer

In 1816 global temperatures dropped across much of Europe and North America due to atmospheric ash from volcanos in the Pacific. Snow, frost and record rain occurred in Vermont the summer of 1816; newspapers reported 12 inches of snow in Williamstown and 18 inches in Cabot, VT. The Montpelier Watchman printed, "To behold the earth covered with snow, and the foliage of the fields blackened with frost in the month of June is an extraordinary fright." The cold trend continued into the winter of 1816-17 when 15,000 people left Vermont.



March 3, 1817, ten years after that first meeting in the new meeting house, the annual town meeting was opened at 10 am

and then it was immediately *"Voted to adjourn the Meeting from the Meetinghouse to Stephen Gleason's Hall"* (currently Smith Maple Crest Farm). Why? It was cold, and there was no stove in the Meeting House.

The next year, in 1818, another series of town meeting events happened that are also likely due to cold weather. The February 16, 1818 warning indicated the town meeting on March 2 would take place at *"the House of Stephen Gleason."* Once assembled at Gleason's, the first order of business was *"that this meeting be adjourned to the Meeting House, there to be immediately opened."* The men walked across the road up to the Meeting House. However, after just five votes on various warned items the meeting was adjourned until March 18 back at *"Stephen Gleason's Hall."* Heat was certainly needed, and in 1834 a wood stove was added at the cost of \$30.

### Separation of Church and State?

Shrewsbury's original charter calls for one "share" (100 acre+/- parcel of land) to be given "...for the Propagation of the Gospel..." and one share "for the Church of England "and .."one Share for the first Settled Minister of the Gospel..." In 1783, the Vermont General Assembly passed a law "to enable towns and parishes to erect proper houses for public worship and support ministers of the gospel" because "it is of the greatest importance to the community at large, as well as to individuals, that the Precepts of Christianity and the rules



## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SHREWSBURY MEETING HOUSE (Continued)

of Morality be publicly and statedly inculcated on the minds of the Inhabitants." This was common in early New England. Town and church were inseparable in many ways.

Regarding meeting houses, just seven citizens could request the town clerk to warn a public meeting to consider "a tax or taxes sufficient to defray the expense of such Building or Buildings; and to hire, or otherwise agree with, a Minister or Ministers to preach in such Town or Parish." Unlike England, with a single nationally recognized church, each community could select its Christian denomination. The so called "Ministerial Act" allowed "two thirds of the Inhabitants of such Town or Parish..., being legal Voters, and of similar Sentiments with respect to the mode of Worship, ...authorized to appoint a Place or Places for the public Worship of God," including building a meeting house and employing a minister, all supported by taxes. If one did not agree with the selected denomination, one could provide a membership certificate from another church or provide a declaration in writing which stated, "I do not agree in religious opinion with a majority of the inhabitants of the Town" to avoid the tax. A 1779 law levied heavy penalties for labor, play, travel and business on "The Lord's Day" or religious holidays and that enforcement rested with the elected tythingman. However, in 1806 the legislature repealed the Act For Support of the Gospel and other associated laws allowing towns to finance religious property and operations, making it clear that "religious societies" would be responsible for such costs. Congregations, not being a "body corporate" could not hold title to property but a "religious society" could.

In 1807 our first Meeting House was completed. A committee of religious folks notified the town clerk of their intension to form such a religious society. A "society of that denomination of Christian called Universalist" held their first weekly service on July 11 in the new meeting house. While the town acquired the land for the meeting house and authorized its construction, that first meeting house was paid for by the sale of pews used primarily by church members. This may have been an issue, since, at the 1828 town meeting, the town voted \$250 to make repairs to the Meeting House "provided the proprietors will transfer the right of the Town to transact public business in the same." This would indicate the religious society had governing control of the building, and may have indicated some tension regarding the division of responsibility, maintenance and use of the building between the public and religious "owners."

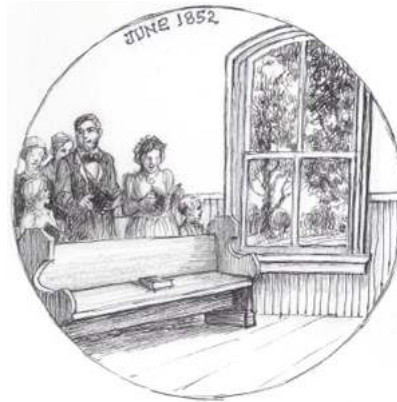
### The Second Meeting House

That first building must not have been built solidly since there was talk of "*replacement or repair*" after just 40 years. It is during discussions of replacing the Meeting House that we see the term "*Town House*" (also "*town room*") mentioned in the town records. A Town House was for secular town business, as compared to a Meeting House which was for religious purposes. At the 1842 town meeting, held at the "*Centre Meeting House*," Article 4 Reads "*To see if the Town will raise money to build a Town house.*" However, it was later voted to dispense with that article and there was no action until five years later. At the 1847 town meeting, the warning read "*To see if the Town*

*will take measures to build a Town house*" and it was "*Voted to appoint a committee of three to take such prudent measures as they may find proper and also to secure the consent of the proprietors of said house for the occupancy of the same for Town purposes if its needed.*"

Again, no apparent action was taken for three years, until the 1850 town meeting, where it was warned "*To see if the Town will raise money to Build a Town house or Repair the Center Meeting house for the use of the Town.*" Like before, it was voted to "*pass over*" this article until, FINALLY, at the March 1851 town meeting, in response to the same question, it was "*Voted that the Town raise Four Hundred Dollars to Build a Town house with a provision that individuals erect a Meeting house on said Town house.*"

Clearly, this assembly envisioned the two-story building we have today, with town business being conducted downstairs and church services upstairs, typical of many New England "meeting house" buildings. Following that meeting, the Shrewsbury Free Religious Society warned a meeting "to all subscribers that feel an interest in the building a free Meeting House at the centre of ? in Shrewsbury." The preamble to the Free Society's By-Laws reads, in part: "We...hereby voluntarily appoint ourselves together for the purposes of building a House for public worship, supporting public worship therein and keeping the same in, under the name of the Shrewsbury Center Free Religious Society said House to be located at what is now called the Center of Shrewsbury.... Their Constitution included, "We...voluntarily associate ourselves...for the purpose of building a House of Public Worship.....and keeping the same in repair."



Pews were again sold to raise money, providing \$1,492 towards the \$2,088.07 total cost. The Town contributed its authorized \$400, and \$182 was raised towards the \$322 cost of the bell. Church member Henry Waterman tore the old building down for \$8

and John Buckmaster, who lived next door (Buckmaster Inn), bought the materials for \$5. Henry Smith (who later donated the organ) was paid \$32 for "digging and underpinning." The Reverend Noah Johnson, a local minister, built the building for a fee of \$1,607.19 and the first town meeting in this new Town house was held on March 2, 1852. Town meetings have been held there annually to this day. It is likely the new town house was built on the foundation of the original meeting house. Upstairs on July 14, 1852, the Shrewsbury Center Free Religious Society held its dedication service.

*Continued on next page*

### Ringling of the Bell

Unlike today, the Meeting House bell was regularly used for several purposes: Sunday services, deaths, funerals and public meetings. The 36-inch bronze bell weighing 900 pounds was cast by the A. Menneely & Sons Foundry of West Troy, New York in 1851. It was delivered with its carriage and 5-foot diameter wood rope wheel. At the 1854 town meeting, voters approved *"a sum of money ...for ringling the Bell on the Sabbath and at such other times as be deemed proper."* But the same question the next year was voted with limits. It was *"Voted that the Select Men Employ a man to ring the Bell for funerals. Public Meetings and Sundays excepted."* The 1865 town report shows George Kinsman and J.M. Cooper were paid \$8.50 for *"tolling bell for 17 deaths"* and \$7.00 for *"tolling bell for 7 funerals."*

### The Meeting House Expansion

In a letter dated August 26, 1867, to the "Honorable Selectmen of the Town of Shrewsbury" Henry Smith offered "as a present to the Town a church organ not to cost less than one thousand dollars to be kept in the Church at the Centre of the town...." Henry was born in town, grandson of Nehemiah Smith, one of Shrewsbury's first settlers. He was living in Southboro, MA when he donated the organ and later served as a Massachusetts State Senator. The gift was accepted and the town voted \$500 to make the necessary alterations to the building. The hand-built tracker organ was built in 1867 in Westfield, MA by William A. Johnson and arrived in pieces by train at Cuttingsville and then brought by horse and wagon up the hill to the Center.

In 1872 the town voted to *"enlarge the Town House,"* extending the building 16 feet to the rear. The choir section was moved from the rear to the front of the room to accommodate the organ and the present pews were installed, replacing wooden benches. One can see this extension by observing the difference in wall width on the inside and the soffit, fascia and trim joints on the exterior. This author wonders if the ceiling was vaulted also at this time to accommodate the organ, after examining the ceiling framing. Records mention a coal furnace being installed at this time.

The pulpit was constructed by Henry Aldrich Waterman, an ancestor of Al Ridlon, Jr. The beautiful oak and chestnut doors and trim in the sanctuary are identical to those in the North Bennington Railroad Station.

A kitchen addition was added in 1907 along with the hardwood flooring in the main hall. Also, in 1907 the Town entered into a multi-year agreement with the Shrewsbury Grange to have exclusive use of the hall (except for town meetings) for \$25 per year. This lasted into the 1940's, with the Grange paying for some improvements. Electricity came in 1937 from the Shrewsbury Light & Power Company. Insuring the building grew from \$15.50 in 1928 to \$7,000 currently. An oil furnace was added in 1941 and replaced in 1954, right in the middle of the main hall. The original water supply, a spring far up the Kieffer Road which served many of the houses in the Center, plus the Smith Farm, was proving

unreliable and a bedrock well was drilled in 1963. In 1972 the kitchen was torn down, and the current kitchen, meeting room and Sunday School rooms were built. A septic system was included in the 1972 project, adding indoor bathroom facilities and allowing the outhouses to be converted to storage space. The cost of this new addition was split between the Town and Church.

### Shrewsbury Meeting House Committee, Inc.

While the cost of maintaining the building has historically been shared between town taxpayers and the congregations and Grange which have utilized the building, necessary maintenance and improvements were always a discussion as well as the fair split of necessary costs. In 1972, the Shrewsbury Meeting House Committee, Inc, a VT non-profit corporation, was formed with the explicit responsibility to maintain the building. The Committee is made up of three people appointed by the Selectboard, 3 people appointed by the church body and one person appointed by the Committee. The Committee assesses the building's needs, develops an annual budget and apportions the annual operation and maintenances costs between the town and church.

### Who Owns the Building?

The cost of both the first and present building was largely covered by the sale of pews which might make one argue "the church" owns the building. But what church? There have been at least two church organizations which have used the building, and neither claim title to the building. The land was originally acquired by the Town and tax dollars were also used for construction.

Although there is no deed or chain of title, our "Meeting House" is undoubtedly town property by default, but historically shared in use. This is a common circumstance with New England meeting houses. The current "separation" of church and state are the two staircases between floors and that works fine. But wait! It's not even that simple. Remember that nice organ in the church sanctuary? That belongs to the Town!

~Article by Mark Youngstrom

~Drawings by Grace Brigham



### Sources:

- Town Proceedings, Town of Shrewsbury Records, beginning 1781
- Shrewsbury Town Reports, beginning 1860
- Shrewsbury, Vermont, "Our Town As It Was" by Dawn D. Hance
- "The Formation of Town Churches: Church, Town, and State in Early Vermont," Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society, Spring 1996
- Shrewsbury Historical Society files on the Shrewsbury Meeting House
- Rutland Herald Archives via Newspaper





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### Upcoming Events & Announcements

September 6<sup>th</sup> 10a-11a: Leaf Print Cards 🌿

Picture wood block art, but using all-natural, local leaves! 🍁 Join us to make a handful of cards with stunningly simple & colorful designs.

**STORE CLOSED 9/10-9/14** 🚗

I'll be going to my High School Reunion this week, so will be taking in the nostalgia before the leaves begin to turn. 🍂



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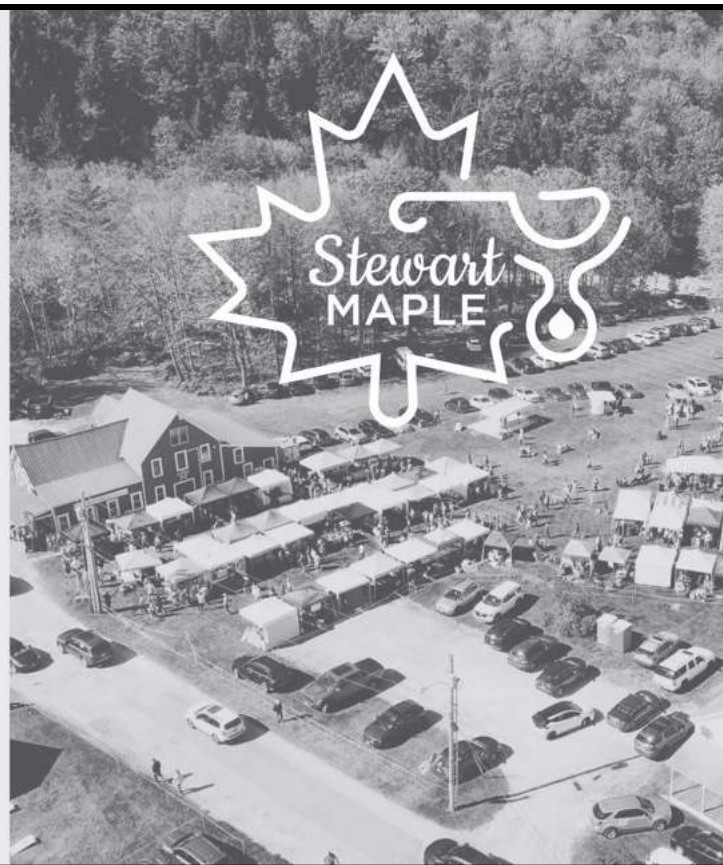
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# Shrewsbury Historical Society

www.shrewsburyhistoricalsociety.com

## 54 years ago

Can it be possible? The original members finally were able to find space for the many artifacts they acquired and took care of in their homes and had a place to go to. The one-room schoolhouse in Cuttingsville was being filled with the wonderful library of today, with some space on the second floor which became our first Shrewsbury Historical Society Museum.

I can remember Heidi Mitchell and Nancy Spencer exhibiting photos of schools and students and inviting the Mountain School students to come to see them. Another exhibit which was fun to exhibit was a display of Shrewsbury brides' wedding gowns. (*featured this page*)

Soon the space was filled and we were offered the use of the Community Church, as they had their worship in two different locations. We moved everything over to the historical church building in Cuttingsville. And the rest is history.

Space is now imperative in the Museum. Therefore, we are appealing to you not to bring artifacts to the museum until this is tended to. Photos are always welcomed.

## Wedding Gowns at the Museum

In 1992, the first Shrewsbury Historical Society Museum was located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the former 1-room schoolhouse in Cuttingsville (now the town's library). For its opening day that summer the members prepared a grand exhibit of vintage and modern wedding gowns from the 1800s to the present day.



Marjorie Pierce in her grandmother's wedding dress.

A royal invitation appeared in the May 1992 issue of the Times of Shrewsbury inviting the townspeople to a wedding gown display and reception on Sunday, May 17, 1992, from 1 to 4pm. With thanks to Joan Aleshire, president of the library board, the reception table was on the first floor--- elegantly arranged with a lace cloth, lit candles and fresh flowers. Members prepared plates of delicious tea sandwiches to accompany two large crystal bowls of fruit punch. Our lovely Marjorie Pierce proudly wore her grandmother's wedding gown for the occasion.



Vintage wedding dresses displayed at 1992 event

of handmade mugs placed at each table setting. Foods representing the era were served--- no utensils needed. Shrewsbury's own Dorothy Rice, renowned harpsichordist specializing in Renaissance music, provided the entertainment. Banners were flying everywhere.

Lois and Don Butler were hosts of the Shrewsbury Inn, and Gil was their "top" chef. The home was built ca. 1800s and sadly was destroyed by a fire on April 11, 2021 (no injuries). But sweet memories remain of SHS' annual croquet championships held on the expansive lawns of the Inn.

~Submitted by Ruth Winkler

The gowns, accessories, and photos were exhibited on the 2nd floor. One silky gown was worn by Joanne Smith using parachute silk from WW II. We also displayed wedding attire based on the medieval era and made by Lois Butler for her son, Gilbert Dillon, who married Patricia Szymberski. The bride arrived at the white church (now the SHS museum) on the back of a white horse. All guests were prompted to wear medieval-style clothing.

I was told that the wedding party crossed over Rt. 103 to the reception held on the screened-in porches of the Shrewsbury Inn. Long tables greeted the guests, complete with gifts

## Bone Builders

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November-April: 10-11am

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Bone Builder average July attendance 16



## Spring Lake Ranch

therapeutic community

### Get to Know Spring Lake Ranch: The Kitchen

*Spring Lake Ranch loves giving our neighbors in Shrewsbury updates about our day-to-day operations. "Get to Know Spring Lake Ranch" is a series that visits different SLR departments throughout the year. This month, we're talking all things kitchen!*

Harvest season is here, and our community is enjoying an abundance of Ranch-grown food. Our kitchen team, led by Chef Cathy Johnson, has been making the most of fresh, colorful ingredients coming out of our gardens. And now the team really has the space and equipment to do it! If you've been keeping up with our Capital Campaign, then you know our much larger commercial kitchen has been completed.



"The biggest change is the size of the kitchen," says Assistant Chef Kelly McCracken.

"Everyone of us has our own table to work at and we still have room for residents to pitch in without

bumping into one another. All the new equipment is lovely, no doubt, but the added space has allowed us to add variety and expand our offerings. For instance, we have vegan entrees on our daily menus now, in addition to our regular and vegetarian options."

The new kitchen will be a big part of our upcoming Harvest Dinner, the Ranch's biggest meal of the year. Harvest Dinner is a celebration of our Therapeutic Work Program, but it's also a night when our kitchen gets to shine. "To prepare for the event," says McCracken, "we coordinate with Farm Crew and Gardens Crew so we know what will be fresh and in-season. Then, we build our menu around what we produce here on the Ranch. Every item served will have SLR ingredients to celebrate harvest and the hard work it takes to provide for our community."

Those ingredients are sure to include seasonal produce from Gardens Crew, but also eggs, mushrooms, and meat from Farm Crew, and syrup and cider from Woods Crew. Highlights of past dinners include prime rib, butternut squash lasagna, and pies galore!

Outside of Harvest Dinner, our chefs work hard to incorporate meal requests from residents and staff, keeping our offerings diverse while also bringing back SLR favorites on a regular basis. A menu on any given week could include dishes like gumbo, pizza, pad thai, masala curry, and build-your-own tacos.

"My personal favorite dish to make is BBQ pulled pork from Ranch-raised pigs," says McCracken, who hails from Oklahoma. "But my favorite to eat is a BLT where the bacon, lettuce, and tomato all come from the Ranch—with a touch of SLR garlic mayo!"

~Submitted by Anna Sutton



Jockey Hill Farm

### Come Join Us for A Walk and Talk

While many of you are familiar with Jockey Hill Farm (JHF) at the end of Coldham Road (#630) in Shrewsbury, I suspect some of you who are new to this wonderful community have not had the fun of exploring the trails, fields, forests and streams at the farm. The farm is open to the public, and we strongly encourage anyone who cares to visit to contact me, Tim Stout, about a guided tour or walk the land on your own.

JHF has lots to explore and walks can be easily customized to the interests of visitors. Dogs are welcome off leash if they easily respond to voice commands. A small kiosk just before our bridge contain trail maps and other materials on the farm. My brother, Chris and I with our families own this 175 acre non-working farm and love to share it with others. The farm has been in the family for 85 years through six generations. It was originally established in the mid-1800s.

We now run the farm as an educational/experimental forest where we're administering numerous projects to demonstrate how forests can help mitigate climate change and adapt to it. Some of these project include planting climate resilient trees, actively participating in the Family Forest Carbon Program administered by the American Forest Foundation, managing the land under a conservation easement and Vermont's Current Use Program, embracing biodiversity across the property, controlling the rapid growth of invasive species of plants, insects and diseases through the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and closely monitoring the wildlife from birds (76 species to date) to moose and bear.

Since our early teens Chris and I have loved managing the farm for many reasons, now mostly because of the significant role forests like ours can play in addressing climate change. We work with numerous organizations around Vermont to advance our objectives including Vermont Coverts, Vermont Woodlands Association, the Vermont Land Trust, Shrewsbury's Conservation Commission and Planning Commission, UVM, UMass, the Nature Conservancy and the Vermont Forests Parks and Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Departments to name a few.

We'd love to meet you and welcome you to the farm. It's a fun, vibrant environment for people of all ages. You may read this, set it aside and get caught up in life. I encourage you to call or email, and we'll get something on the calendar.

~Tim Stout, stoutim@gmail.com or 617-899-1011



## The Shrewsbury Community Church



*Compiled by Sue Ransom-Kelley*

**We've had a lovely time worshipping at the Northam Church all Summer! In September we will move back to the Center Church on the second floor of the Meeting House in Shrewsbury Center. All Sunday Services will be at the Center Church.**

### In The Moment

We are only in the present moment but it is so hard to just live there and to stay there. Our minds can get stuck in reliving the past or in planning and tweaking our future plans or worries. It seems like once we hit the worry button that it gets stuck and won't shut off. Mindfulness, contemplation, sitting still and just being. Not a forte of the Western world. I was just talking to a woman who had recently retired and she said that she just sat in her chair and read for 2 hours and couldn't remember the last time that she did that. It's not a luxury. It's a necessity.

I have found that when I am on the back of a motorcycle that I can easily just BE in the present. Unlike when I am riding in a car, I can't read or knit. I can only sit. I also need to sit still for safety reasons. This is when I am moved to be grateful to God for all that I see, for all that I have been given, for the blessings that have happened in my life. Some of those blessings that I count are my family, small that they may be. For me family is not just my biological family. I give thanks for my partner, my friends, and my church family. The more that I get to know the folks in my yoga and tai chi group the more that they too feel like family to me. I remember one funeral that I did that at the end the deceased wanted the song "We Are Family" blared in the sanctuary. It was done and everyone that was able was up and dancing in the aisles. What a way to go out of this world.

We are all family to each other. It's important to be aware of that, to be grateful to God each day that we are a part of such communities that are in our world. I especially try to be mindful of that as there was a point in my life that my world had gotten really small. I have worked hard to crawl out of that dark space. Having been there I am more aware and more thankful for what at times I may have taken for granted. There is enough love in this world to go around. Amen.

*~Submitted by Pastor Karen Braeutigam*



We welcome tennis players to use and enjoy our tennis court this summer. The court is just west of the home at 7983 Cold River Road. Extra racquets and balls are in the red shed adjacent to the court. Come anytime—no need to call!!! ~Taffy Maynard 773-2087



**The kids had an awesome time during Fun Day Last Year! They celebrated the end of the year by making tie dyed T-Shirts! How cool is that? The Sunday Fun Day Program for kids will resume on Sunday September 21st 10:30-11:30 am at the Shrewsbury Center Church in the children's room upstairs at the Meeting House. All are welcome to join us and we welcome parent participation. We gather children at the church. We participate in crafts, stories, and sharing. We have an average of six children weekly with others joining us now and then. We participate in supporting community and world service projects. We often use recycled materials in our craft projects. Please join us! Call Cortney 802-683-7852, Anissa 802-779-2248, or Lynette 802-683-0631 if you have questions.**

### Shrewsbury Community Church Calendar

- Tues, Aug 26 @ 12noon Prayer Shawl Group. Upstairs at the Meeting House. All are welcome! Dessert, coffee, tea, and lemonade served. Bring a bag lunch if you would like to. Don't know how to knit or crochet? Come and we will teach you! Call Roxanne for information 802-492-3675.
- Sunday Evening Aug 31 @ 6pm Vespers Service led by Pastor Karen Braeutigam at the Northam Church (there will be no morning worship service).
- Sun, Sept 7 @ 10:30 Worship Service and Holy Communion led by Pastor Karen Braeutigam at the Center Church.
- Sun, Sept 14 No Worship Service! Come and enjoy Shrewsbury Day! We will see you there!
- Sun, Sept 21 @ 10:30 Fun Day for Kids and Worship Service led by Pastor Karen Braeutigam at Center Church.
- Tues, Sept 23 @ 12noon Prayer Shawl Group. Upstairs at the Meeting House. All are welcome! Dessert, coffee, tea, and lemonade served. Bring a bag lunch if you would like to. Don't know how to knit or crochet? Come and we will teach you! Call Roxanne for information 802-492-3675.
- Sun, Sept 28 @ 1030 Fun Day for kids and Worship Service and Holy Communion led by Pastor Karen Braeutigam at the Center Church.



## Community Food Shelf

Free Community Food Shelf at the Library in the front entry way. Those in need are welcome to help themselves any time the Library entryway is open. Limited hours are:

Mon 10am-12noon; Tues 7-9pm; Wed 10am-5pm and 7-9pm; Thurs 7-9pm; Fri 10am-12noon; and, Sat 10am-12noon.

**Food Delivery and Assistance** If you are unable to get to the Food Shelf at the library in Shrewsbury, we will deliver groceries to you. If you need items which are not available on the shelf we can provide grocery gift cards. Call Karen at 802-558-5991 or Sue at 802-779-4360 or 802-492-3738.

## Community Needs

- Wedding, Funeral or Memorial Service Requests: Contact Donna Smith 802-492-3367; or Sue Kelley 802-492-3738, 802-779-4360
- Community Helping Hand Requests: Contact Donna Smith 802-492-3367; Sue Kelley 802-779-4360, 802-492-3738; or Karen Lorentz 802-558-5991. Shrewsbury residents experiencing financial hardship. Assistance can be given for basic needs (food, heating, gasoline, etc). If you or a neighbor are in need, please let us know!
- Pastoral Care, Home, Hospital Visitation, Outreach Requests: Contact Roxanne Ramah 802-492-3675 or Ruth Kinne 802- 775-5318.

## No Bats in the Belfry

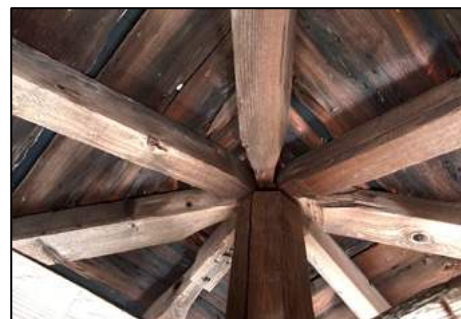
As part of the Meeting House history effort, Grace Brigham and I visited the Meeting House bell. I had been up there one other time when I showed a timber frame contractor some failing bell support beams, which he magically replaced while temporarily hanging the 36-inch diameter 900-pound bronze bell from the higher cross beams.



It's an amazing crawl. Up an extension ladder, through a trap door in the ceiling at the top of the church stairs, then

across the ceiling to a set of small stairs, then another set of smaller stairs, then through another trap door and "voila", out you crawl onto the bell carriage beams and you are face to face with the bell.

On the way up you get to admire the many hand-hewn beams framing this wonderful building. The bell had to have been hoisted by rope and pulley from the ground, through the open framing, prior to the building siding, floors and ceilings being placed. That must have been quite a sight.



On the beams framing the belfry are names and dates of folks who have visited here in the past, presumably to do work. The oldest is M.C.W. June 5, 1889. A couple of others are W.H.R. 1931 and B.A. Smith 1931. There is a beautiful roof peak framing detail above the bell.

Pretty cool! And we were able to safely exit the bowels of the Meeting House without falling through the ceiling (a good thing for sure). ~Article by Mark Youngstrom

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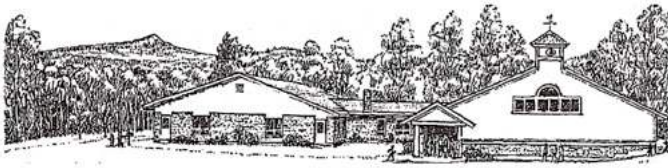
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## SHREWSBURY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL

### **Hello SMS Families and Community,**

We are so excited to have our students join us for this coming school year of learning and growing!

All school families should have received a letter in the mail with important information about the start of the school year.

### Important Dates:

Aug 23: Playground Renovation Celebration

Aug 27: First Day of School and After School Program Begins

Sept 1: Labor Day - No School

Sept 16: SMS Open House: PTO Pizza Potluck at 6:00pm,  
Back to School Night 6:30-7:30pm

Sept 23: SMS Picture Day

First Day Share! One of our favorite parts of the first day of school is seeing the big smiles, favorite outfits and summer growth of each kiddo as they walk into our school. In order to share that joy this year, I am asking any of you who would like to take a first day of school picture of your child(ren) and email it to me. I will share pictures on our website and Facebook page so we can all celebrate together.

Playground Renovation Celebration: The whole community will gather to play and celebrate the renovated playground on Saturday, August 23. Pictures coming in next month's issue of the Times! We are so grateful to each person who donated their time, talent and/or financial support to make this happen for our students!

Support our School! We need volunteers to help with our Four Winds Program, our Winter Sports Program and our PTO! If you are able to volunteer, please send me an email or call the school. We would love to have you and the students would greatly appreciate your support!

Work at SMS! We are in need of para educators in the district and substitutes at SMS. Please contact me for more information.

### Elementary Sports Information:

<https://app.formreleaf.com/organizations/mill-river-union-high-school>

### After School Program:

<https://sites.google.com/millriverschools.org/afterschoolprograms/shrewsbury-after-school-program>

Coming soon: We will have so much to share once the school year begins!

I hope that you enjoy the remaining days of summer and I look forward to seeing everyone soon! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 802-786-3995 or at [kcimonetti@millriverschools.org](mailto:kcimonetti@millriverschools.org).

~Kristin Cimonetti, Principal

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### **PUBLIC LEGISLATIVE FORUM WITH VERMONT REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP**

In 2024 Vermonters elected a gain of 25 new Republicans to the Legislature to hold the line on Property Taxes, stopped the Clean Heat Standard from taking effect with its significant impact on heating fuels, and reign in Montpelier spending and over regulation that is making Vermont unaffordable for Vermont Families. Much more needs to be done. The Public is invited to meet the Leadership, ask questions and hear about how Republicans are delivering results.

Panelists include:

Lt. Governor John Rodgers  
Sen. Scott Beck, Senate Minority Leader  
Rep. Pattie McCoy, House Minority Leader  
Sen. Brian Collamore, Chair Govt Operations  
Sen. Terry Williams, Vice Chair Nat Resources/Energy  
Rep. Jim Harrison, Vice-Chair Appropriations  
Paul Dame, Chairman VTGOP  
Rep. Kevin Winter, Ludlow, Mt Holly, Shrewsbury  
Rep. VL Coffin, Cavendish, Weathersfield, Baltimore  
Rep, Tom Charleton, Chester, Athens, Grafton,  
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## Shrewsbury Conservation Commission

### Trail Camera Picture of the month



There seems to be no shortage of bears in the Shrewsbury area this summer! Lisa King shared photos of a large bear that looked to be very comfortable as it hung out for a photo-op!



I have a camera on a nearby utility pole that is used by several bears for scent marking. I find the poses during the scenting process to be quite amusing! I hope you enjoy them. ~Submitted by Linda Shelvey

If you have a picture of a track or wildlife capture to share, please contact: Linda Shelvey, [lpurdyshe@gmail.com](mailto:lpurdyshe@gmail.com).

#### FREE

Medium size jade plant free to a good home - pot not included

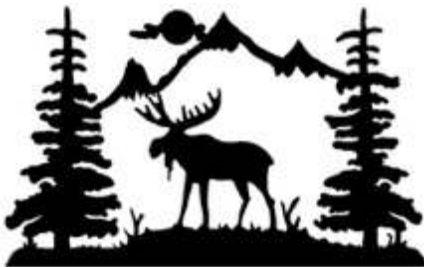
The jade is in an 8" pot is about 16" high and about 17 inches wide.

Call Mary @ 802-773-3541



Deer sighting on our lawn August 11, 2025.

~Ed and Judy Ryan



Late September & Early October: It's mating season for the moose, so watch out for them on the roads as they cross for action on the other side!



#### SAVE THE DATE!

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 18**

**Come along for a Nature Walk with SCC naturalists  
Connie Youngstrom and Pam Darrow to explore galls  
and seed pods and many more Autumn's Treasures**





The garden and orchard are lush and abundant up at the Mountain School. We have kept the space tended with the help of weekly volunteers, and it's ready for the return of the students! Veggies that have been harvested this summer have been frozen or otherwise preserved by Julia and will be used this school year for Harvest Fest and other cooking demos at SMS.



Thank you to all that came to Ben Aleshire's anothotype workshop at the school house. It was a great mix of the photographic and photosynthetic arts, and we hope to offer more programs like it in the future.

Finally, after quite the hiatus we are happy to announce that our Root Words podcast will be back September 1 with all new episodes!

We will focus on the flavors of our region and the people behind the stove making it all happen, the market vendors of Rutland, Vermont's Farmers' Market. No where else in the region can you find such a diversity of cuisine and so many different personalities in the same place.

We hope you enjoy this upcoming series from Root Words. Find it where you get your podcasts.

SAGE, Shrewsbury Agricultural Education & Arts Foundation, has a mission to support and promote sustainable farming and other arts that nourish community life. For more information about SAGE: contact Stephen Abatiell at [educate.sage@gmail.com](mailto:educate.sage@gmail.com), Joan Aleshire at 492-3550 or visit [www.sagevt.wordpress.com](http://www.sagevt.wordpress.com). Follow us on Facebook for up to date event details at ShrewsburySAGE and find our sustainability and arts videos at [www.youtube.com/@sagefoundation](http://www.youtube.com/@sagefoundation).

~Submitted by Stephen Abatiell

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## SNO-BIRD NEWS

Well, the Sno-Birds have been busy getting the prep work done for the 50-foot bridge replacement. Dave has removed the old bridge and installed the waste blocks. The four I beams should be here by August 29. Dave said that even the steel that was under the old bridge was very weak and rotted. It was an old 40-foot tractor trailer flat bed and it was well used at that time that we installed it probably 30+ years ago. I do not know what Dave's plan for finishing it is.

After the I beams are in place we have to weld cross braces between the beams every 15 feet to prevent swaying. Then we install the decking. This bridge is 10 feet longer and a little higher out of the water which is good. Irene took the bridge out but we were able to pull it back and reinstall it. The poles under it had been taking a beating from the high waters so the steel I beams will take that better when we get those super rain storms that we seem to get.



*The waste blocks all set for the I beams.*

John Hogan has started doing some debrushing in the Wheelerville area. We will be doing more of that now that the temps have gone down. With all the things with the bridge project I did not put in for debrushing with the excavator this year. We will get back at it next year. I hope to have a photo of the finished project next month.

Our first club meeting for the season is September 9 at 7:00pm at the Southside Steakhouse in Rutland. Everyone is welcome!

~Submitted by Roy Arthur

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## REINBOW RIDING CENTER NEWS

It's not all about riding at Rainbow Riding Center, it's also about the friends you make along the way. It's the beginning of a relationship between rider and horse that will continue during riding lessons making them that much more fulfilling.

At Rainbow Riding we strive to meet the needs of every individual that participates in our programs, mounted or unmounted regardless of their ability to pay. For more information about Rainbow Riding Center and our mission please visit our website: [rainbowridingcenter.org](http://rainbowridingcenter.org) and follow us on Facebook or Instagram @rainbow\_riding\_center and LinkedIn! Contact us at [programs@rainbowridingcenter.org](mailto:programs@rainbowridingcenter.org) or 802-236-2483 to inquire about our programs and lessons. For information about opportunities to volunteer with us contact [janetupton@rainbowridingcenter.org](mailto:janetupton@rainbowridingcenter.org).

~Submitted by Janet Upton





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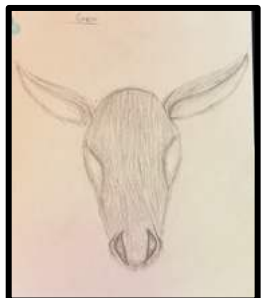
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## PIERCE'S ART SHOW

Twenty-six local artists contributed more than 50 pieces for the first Student Art Show at Pierce's Store. Art filled the space! An art table was in use throughout the evening. Three-dimensional pieces sat atop tables; including a tribute to Ozzie Osborne out of clay who sat on a lit-up cardboard stage.

The imagination and creativity on display was enjoyed by more than 85 people who visited, played games and snacked as well.

If you missed the show, don't despair. You can visit the Library to view works in clay, origami, and more during regular library hours throughout September. To view the other pieces, the Gallery at the Store will be open Wednesdays from 3-5 pm. and Sundays from 10 am - 1 pm until the Chili Cookoff in early October.

This event would never have been so successful without the support of Shrewsbury's ever enthusiastic Grace Brigham who joined in from start to finish, and held the Library Art Day. Thanks also go to Liesbeth van der Heijden who shared her artistic eye by helping mount art and hang the show. Other shout outs go to the entertainment crew, Buddy Heron for the loan of the gorgeous heron themed corn hole game, and Emmett Sirjane for his guitar music during the show. Vanessa and Betsy jumped in assisting with last minute drop offs and other finishing touches.

But most of all, here's to the following for sharing their work: Allanah, Emmaline, Aurelie, Darby, Tatum, Jaxson, Jake, Ari, Fiona, Iris, Ella Rose, Remy, Ruby, Gracyn, Isabel, Sky, Soraya, Benna, Kayla, Brewster, Everett, Laurel, Annabel, Flora, Hugh and Henri. Keep on creating art!

Grace reminded me of how much Majorie, Marion, Gordon and Glendon delighted in children. Coupled with their desire to have the store be a community gathering place we feel they'd be pleased.

I hope you find time to check it out.

*Submitted by Martha Sirjane  
Photos by the Roving Photographer*







## PIERCE'S STORE

**802-492-3326**

[www.piercesstore.com](http://www.piercesstore.com)

**Hours: 8am to 6pm**

*Closed Mondays*

### It's all happening at Pierce's!

Harry and Elena have done a great job of packing the store with your local shopping needs and supporting local businesses. Pierce's is continually growing, which is important in supplying folks the products they want to buy at reasonable prices. The store carries vegetables, fruit, meats, eggs, syrup, pastries and craft products all produced by Shrewsbury residents. Groceries from new vendors have expanded. There are sandwiches and take-out meals and of course, every Friday, fresh fish, right off the boat and cut to order. The store has built a phenomenal wine selection as well as a large selection of domestic and craft beers. It really is fun to see a visitor's face light up when they walk into the store and say "Wow!" and then they hear the story of our community continuing the Pierce's legacy. Locally operated small community general stores rock!

The Events At Pierce's have been attracting lots and lots of people. The Burger Night with live music, the storytelling night, the Blueberry Festival, the Wine Pairing night, Kids Art Show and of course the regular wine tastings have kept Pierce's the happening place this summer. Now we look forward to:

- ◇ September 20 (4-6 pm) for Sally Deinzer's program "Antartica Comes to Vermont" about her Dad accompanying Admiral Byrd on his second expedition. Then a...
- ◇ September 26 (4-6 pm) Wine Tasting with the local ragtag band The Plumb Bobs. And, of course, the...
- ◇ October 18 (5-7 pm)!ANNUAL PIERCE'S CHILI COOKOFF!

Mark your calendars and head to Pierce's!

*~Mark Youngstrom, Pierce's Store Board Member*



## COOKING CLASS

### Appetizers & Desserts, Oh My!

This year's Cooking Class and Dinner to benefit Pierce's Store will feature a variety of appetizers and desserts. We'll whip up hot & cold canapes, pat , cake, tarts etc. And students can invite a spouse/friend to join us for dinner. The date will be set by the students with myself for later this fall. The cooking class and dinner are at my home here in Shrewsbury. The cost is \$35 per student and \$25 for a guest and all of it goes to Pierce's! Anyone interested can call me at 802-492-2284 or email me at [heather@garrenshay.com](mailto:heather@garrenshay.com)

*~Submitted by Heather Shay*



### Fall Wine Tasting

**September 26 from 4pm to 6pm**

Celebrate autumn at Pierce's fall wine gathering from 4pm to 6pm on Friday, September 26. Shrewsbury's own **Plumb Bobs** will be performing in Pierce's Garage, accompanied by wines by the glass and delicious **appetizers** from master chef Heather Shay. Sandy Bragg will be hosting a free wine tasting on the porch of Pierce's Store, highlighting a selection of food-friendly wines. Please join us for a spirited session.

*~Submitted by Sandy Bragg*



**Pierces Store 4<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Chili Cookoff  
October 18, 2025  
5:00PM until 7:00PM**



**At Pierce's Store  
2658 Northam Road  
Shrewsbury, Vermont**

### **Chefs and Tasters Welcome!!!**

Chefs – Your fantastic Chili could be the winner!

All varieties of Chili are welcome!

Entry Fee – \$10.00 per Chili

To get Contest rules and registration, you can:

Visit Pierce's Store

Web: <http://www.piercesstore.com/2025-events.html>

Or, request by e-mail to: [Pierceschilicookoff@gmail.com](mailto:Pierceschilicookoff@gmail.com)

Tasters – You will be the judges!!!

Taste the wonderful variety of chilis and vote for your favorite!

Entry Fee – \$10.00

**Prizes – Bragging Rights, plus:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Prize - \$25 Pierce's Store Gift Certificate**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Prize - \$15 Pierce's Store Gift Certificate**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place prize - \$10 Pierce's Store Gift Certificate**

**Pierce's Store will be selling soft drinks, beer, and wine**

**This event is a fund-raiser for the Shrewsbury Co-Op at Pierce's Store**



If you're not on the "Fish Email Order List"....you should be! Sign up at [Orders@piercesstore.com](mailto:Orders@piercesstore.com). Helen Richards-Peelle sends out the fish list each Monday and orders must be placed by 4pm on Wednesday for pickup at the store on Fridays.

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