

# OUR TOWN

**Town Meeting again under a tent — and other news from your Select Board**  
 Melissa Makepeace-O’Neil, *Chair*, Rita Farrell, April Stein

It has been more than a year since the Covid-19 pandemic spread across the country, closing businesses, schools, town offices, social gatherings and generally bringing life as we know it to a halt. All town meetings remain virtual and we are planning **our second outdoor Annual Town Meeting on June 12, 2021.**

Throughout this time, our town employees have worked to keep the town operations functioning. This has meant a lot of time, thought and effort has had to go into keeping the town functioning. Thank you for all you are doing

for our community.

A lot of focus this past quarter has been on **the proposed Solar Arrays** being looked at for about 200 acres of W.D. Cows, Inc. property. W.D. Cows, Inc. has also recently placed approximately 1800 acres of woodland (mostly in Shutesbury) under Conservation Restriction, for perpetuity, ensuring many acres of woods available to people for recreation. W.D. Cows, Inc. has been working with AMP, a large international company. AMP is engaged in conversations with the town as they prepare to bring forth up to five projects for permitting before the Planning Board. There are currently no formal proposed plans from AMP Solar before our Planning Board. When/if they are presented there will be open public hearings on each proposal. Information regarding

these hearings will be on the Town Website.

The Select Board’s role in this process is not to approve any plans, but to ensure the town’s interests are being served. To that end we, with the Town Administrator, have met with citizens, the planning board, conservation commission, historical commission, representatives of AMP and W.D. Cows in order to more fully understand the scope of the proposed project, the impact on the environment and town. There is the potential for increased tax revenue to the town should these five arrays be built. The one large solar array in town, on the Wheelock tract of land, nets the town approximately \$90,000 per year. It is important to note that the amount of potential revenue to the town has not

**Select Board**, cont. on page 4

## Share your thoughts on Shutesbury’s open space and recreation: Take the survey!

Penny Jaques and Gail Fleischaker, *Open Space Committee*

Help us update Shutesbury’s Open Space and Recreation Plan by completing an Open Space Survey. The survey asks questions to help us understand what you love about

Shutesbury, what aspects of Shutesbury you would like to preserve, and what recreational opportunities you would like to see in Shutesbury.

An updated Open Space and Recreation Plan is important because it:

- Develops priorities to plan for future growth, protect our natural, scenic and historic resources and develop new recreational opportunities—all of the things that make Shutesbury a special place to live.
- Enables the Town to apply for state grants for land conservation and development of recrea-

tional resources. It also positions the town for other competitive state grants.

Take the survey **online** at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ShutesburyOSRP>. If you prefer to complete a **paper copy**, email [open.space@shutesbury.org](mailto:open.space@shutesbury.org) with your name and mailing address. Return your paper survey to the Town Hall drop box or by mail to Town of Shutesbury, PO Box 276, Shutesbury MA 01072-0276. The survey takes approximately twelve minutes. All answers will remain anonymous.

**The deadline is Monday, June 21.** Your input is important!



Lake Wyola Photo by Susan Loring-Wells

## A Letter from the Town Clerk

Grace Bannasch (she/her/hers),  
Town Clerk  
[townclerk@shutesbury.org](mailto:townclerk@shutesbury.org)  
413-259-1204  
Website [www.shutesbury.org](http://www.shutesbury.org)

Town Hall is closed for now. We are available by phone or by email.

### Here is a list of candidates in the order they will appear on the 2021 ballot.

\* = Incumbent

- Arleen Read\*: Board of Health – 18 Old Orchard Rd
- Mary David: Board of Health – 66 Shore Dr
- Wm Levine: Board of Health – 633 Wendell Rd
- Susan P. Millinger: Cemetery Commission – 135 Wendell Rd
- Dina Stander: Cemetery Commission – 106 Sandhill Rd
- Kate Cell\*: Library Trustees – 29 Old Orchard Rd
- Timothy Logan: Library Trustees – 15 Town Farm Rd
- Stephen Schmidt\*: MLP/ Broadband Committee – 518 West Pelham Rd
- Graeme Sephton: MLP/ Broadband Committee – 623 Wendell Rd
- Nathan Murphy: Planning Board – 452 West Pelham Rd
- Jennifer Malcolm-Brown\*: School Committee – 72 Wendell Rd
- Bethany Rose: School Committee – 315 Locks Pond Rd
- Eric Stocker: Select Board – 21 New Boston Rd

## Statements from candidates for Town Election of Officers

Space in *Our Town* for campaign statements is available to all candidates, including known write-in candidates. Each is invited to submit a statement of no more than 125 words to this newsletter. Below are all statements that were received by this newsletter. The Town of Shutesbury does not endorse any candidate.

### Select Board

**Eric Stocker**  
21 New Boston Road

I am running for Selectboard because I care about Shutesbury and I believe in community service.

We have issues facing us that require practicality and experience. I think that my experience and willingness to strive for consensus will serve the town well.

Town Committees I have served on include: Finance Committee, Selectboard, Capital Planning, Personnel Board, Education Study Committee, Regional Assessment Summer Study Committee, and the Broadband Committee.

I can promise that I will review all the issues that come to the Selectboard with an eye to doing the best thing for the town. I will work for continued fiscal stability and responsibility as well as transparency in the governmental process.

I appreciate your support.

Please vote!

### Board of Health

**Wm Levine**  
833 Wendell Road

As a nurse practitioner for the past 25 years, I have devoted myself to primary care, behavioral health and addiction medicine as specialties with potential for great impact on community health. Further, I have focused my work on some of our most vulnerable populations — the uninsured, prisoners, farm workers and individuals with substance use disorders. Most recently, I have volunteered to help vaccinate the elderly in Franklin County. The goal in doing this work is the same one I would bring to service on the Shutesbury Board of Health...enhancing the health and resilience of our community.

### Our Town Newsletter Policy

Adopted by the  
Shutesbury Select Board  
December 23, 2019

*Our Town*, published three times a year in January or February, April, and August or September, is supported by tax dollars. We welcome news from Town of Shutesbury departments, boards, and committees, and from individuals and groups about local community projects, activities, or special events of benefit to our community. Submissions must be strictly secular and nonpartisan and are subject to review, revision, and/or non-acceptance by the editorial board of the newsletter. Submissions promoting the sale of goods and services for private profit cannot be accepted. Appeals to any review decisions can be brought to the Select Board for further discussion.

Janis S. Gray, *Editor*  
Linda Avis Scott, *Town Hall Liaison*



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## Cemetery Commission

**Susan P. Millinger**  
135 Wendell Road

Shutesbury resident since 2008. Appointed to the Cemetery Commission in February to fill a vacancy, serving as secretary, and learning about its responsibilities. The Town's cemeteries are important to me because of the information they provide about the past: I've been transcribing early Town Meeting records, and doing genealogical research on inhabitants. But I also see cemeteries as places where we keep alive the memories of people who used to live here. It's important to take good care of Shutesbury's cemeteries: I want to continue the work I've begun on the Commission.

I'm in my second term on the Council on Aging; on the Record Storage Advisory Committee (2017-2019); secretary on both. A substitute at Spear Library.

**Dina Stander**  
106 Sand Hill Road

Hello Shutesbury, I am running for Cemetery Commissioner because burial grounds need good stewards and because grieving people need compassionate, knowledgeable, and timely assistance. Professionally, I work in end-of-life care and green burial education. I would like to learn more about burial ground management. Thank you for your consideration and support.

**Two CPC projects seek Town Meeting funding**  
The state Community Preservation Act allows Massachusetts communities to create a **local Community Preservation Fund** for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of the tax levy against real property, and these funds are matched in part by state funding.

CPC-funded projects are community initiated. The application and funding process is straightforward and is described in the Community Preservation Plan available on the CPC page at [shutesbury.org](http://shutesbury.org). It should be noted that the CPC does not independently appropriate funding for projects but rather submits articles for funding of allowable projects to town meeting for its approval.

This year, the CPC will be presenting two articles at Town Meeting for CPC funding. For you gardeners out there, one project (sponsored by the Recreation Committee) is the construction of a fenced-in community garden behind Town Hall, initially consisting of eight 10'x20' plots that are available to town residents for a small maintenance fee and a little volunteer labor to maintain the plots.

The second article is for evaluating trail degradation in the Southbrook Conservation area and the Town Beach Conservation area by an experienced trail consultant. Based on the assessment generated by the consultant, a team of town volunteers would re-route trails in ecologically sensitive areas and perhaps create new trails. The objective is to provide greater recreational opportunities in a unique town environment.

The CPC invites all town citizens to become involved in maintaining and improving our town and retaining our history. We welcome projects, both large and small, that add to our cultural heritage *while providing resources for open space, recreation, community housing and historic preservation.*

## MLP/Broadband Committee

**Stephen Schmidt**  
518 West Pelham Road

I am running for re-election to the MLP Board. I joined the Broadband Committee in 2014 and worked actively on the creation, installation, and startup of our fiber optic network. I am currently the financial manager of the MLP, making sure that our fees are collected and bills are paid. In addition, I prepare the MLP Enterprise Fund budget, working to offer an affordable service while also maintaining adequate reserves to provide long term network sustainability. I look forward to serving the townspeople for another term.

**Graeme Sephton**  
623 Wendell Road

Shutesbury's Broadband Network is a great asset and a credit to our whole town.

I am running for one of the open Broadband MLP Board positions.

I spent much of my engineering career in IT network infrastructure, operations, and in fiber networks in particular. Therefore I think I can do a good job on it for you and for the Town.

It is even more enjoyable to me now that I am retired! And it will help keep me out of any other mischief.

Nerdishly Yours  
Graeme Sephton

been officially calculated at this point.

The public/private partnership being proposed by AMP is still being researched by the Select Board, the Town Administrator as well as other boards in town, and nothing has been signed or decided. AMP's proposal would allow the project to become a SMART (Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target) program with potential monetary benefits and, if an agreement is signed by the town, AMP would become a Public Entity and be able to obtain STGU (Solar Tariff Generation Unit) status through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In conversation with the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) it appears the SMART program application to this project requires the Select Board to do further research. It is important to note, that NOTHING has been decided or signed by the Select Board or other town entity and much gathering of information, discussion and thought needs to be done. The Select Board is exploring the meaning of this partnership and its potential impact (good or bad) on the town. Through this complicated process, and it is important that a mutually respectful, honest and open dialogue is needed.

Another focus of the Select Board these past months has been **our Police Department**. **Dan Fernandes** resigned as chief effective 3/6/21 and the Town appointed **Officer Kristin Burgess** as Officer in Charge (OIC). In a few months she has hired several part time officers in addition to the other full time officer, who just completed the Massachusetts Police Academy, **Marcus Johansson**.

The Select Board has formed a Police Study Group. Following a listening session at a February Selectboard meeting, the Select Board made the decision to hold off on hiring a chief until such time as the Select Board has undertaken full review of how community policing is currently working in Shutesbury and whether any

alternative arrangements make sense for our community. A working group has been formed and the Select Board appointed three citizens, two members of the Select Board, the Officer in Charge, Kristin Burgess to the committee. The committee will also have a representative from the finance committee and the personnel board.

The Select Board, with the School Committee, and Finance Committee, met several times with the other three towns of the Middle/High School Region. We worked to increase the percent the Statutory Method for assessing **each town's share of the Regional School budget** to 65% Statutory Method with a five year rolling average. This was agreed to by the Regional School Committee.

We held an **All Boards Meeting** via Zoom in February. Representatives from 16 boards and committees joined the meeting and shared an overview of the work being done by the volunteers and employees of our town. Despite the pandemic, our Elementary School has remained a center for learning for our young children, providing remote and some in person teaching though the school year. Our library has remained open through curbside pick up. Story walks were created on the Town Common and behind Town Hall, in addition to other important offerings to the community. Our Broadband provider, ShutesburyNet, has 87% of the homes in town signed up, providing an important link during the pandemic. It is hard to imagine how we would have functioned as a community if we did not have our High Speed Fiber Optic Network! The minutes of the February 16 meeting provide an excellent summary of what was shared at that meeting and are worth reading.

The Warrant for Annual Town Meeting and other important documents will be available online. Please take the time to come on Saturday, June 12, 2021 to our second Annual Town Meeting under a tent.

## ~ Honoring Staff and Volunteers ~

The Select Board has traditionally sponsored a Social Hour on the Sunday before Annual Town Meeting. This Social Hour was an opportunity to acknowledge and thank volunteers and staff who retired from their positions during the past year and to hear from candidates for elected Town offices. As we did last year, we will honor those who have served in this issue of the newsletter. The following is a list of individuals who have retired from their positions since the 2020 Spring *Our Town* newsletter and whose terms will end this year. Please join the Select Board in thanking them for their service, commitment, and dedication to our Town.

- **Susie Mosher** – Assistant Town Clerk
- **Janice Stone** – Cemetery Commission
- **Penny Jaques** – Conservation Commission
- **Russ Mizula** – Conservation Commission
- **India Meyer** – Firefighter
- **Jonah Meyer** – Firefighter
- **Miguel Rivera** - Firefighter
- **Chris Donta** – Historical Commission & Community Preservation Committee
- **Craig Pepin** – Historical Commission
- **John Walter** - Historical Commission & Community Preservation Committee
- **Linda Avis Scott**- Land Use Clerk
- **James Aaron** – Planning Board
- **Anna Aaron** – Personnel Board
- **Ralph Armstrong** – Personnel Board
- **Dan Fernandes** – Police Chief
- **Rita Farrell** – Finance Committee & Recreation Committee
- **Elizabethann Lacy** – Recycling and Solid Waste Committee
- **Ezell Floranina** – Recycling and Solid Waste Committee
- **J. April Stein** – Select Board
- **Jan Buchanan** – Web Communications Committee

~ With sincere apologies if we have missed anyone ~

## You can help prevent those insect-borne diseases!

With the return of warm weather, the Board of Health urges you to protect yourself, your family, and your pets from diseases spread by ticks and mosquitoes. It is crucial that you avoid tick attachment and mosquito bites.

Shutesbury is a member of the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District, which traps mosquitoes throughout town and tests them for disease; this will help us be ready if mosquito-borne diseases such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis spread into our area.

But you have to do your part! Everyone should take care that ticks and mosquitoes are unwelcome in their home and on their property – repair screens, drain standing water, keep the grass low. If you prefer to avoid insecticides and repellents, cover up well and avoid outdoor activities from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.

When you go out hiking, take special care to avoid an insect encounter, and check everyone in the family for ticks every day. (If you find one, save it and call your doctor.)

More information is available on the Board of Health page of the town website, from [boardhealth@shutesbury.org](mailto:boardhealth@shutesbury.org), and print materials will be available at Annual Town Meeting.



## Updates from the MLP/ Broadband Committee

Our first full year in operation has been a huge success and we couldn't have done it without the overwhelming support of our volunteers, town staff, and your votes to get the project off the ground. We can't thank you all enough for putting your faith in the

committee and voting to support the project from the outset several years ago. This allowed us to complete the project at the end of 2019, just in time for everything that 2020 brought! This past year has shown us how critical broadband really is to our community and we are continually grateful to everyone who is using and loving ShutesburyNET. We currently have 763 subscribers, representing approximately 87% of all households in town. This high "take rate" assures our ability to continue offering top quality service at an affordable price.

### **For families that may need financial assistance, we are pleased to announce two federal relief programs available to ShutesburyNET subscribers.**

The Lifeline and Emergency Broadband Benefit Program will provide discounts on monthly phone and internet bills for eligible households. We'll send out information about these two programs in late spring but you can also check our website for more information: <https://www.shutesbury.org/broadband/lifeline>

During March and April we had more service calls than normal. A majority of these were due to trees and branches taking down drop lines (the fiber that runs to your home from the pole on the street). You can help prevent unexpected outages by making sure tree limbs and vines are trimmed away from the fiber lines. You can also make sure any deadfall has been removed that could be hazardous to the wires. As tree work, particularly near wires, entails personal safety risks, we recommend you consult with a professional.

This summer we hope to see a **reduction in the amount of robocalls** we all receive. Starting in July, all telecommunications carriers will be required to use a new industry-standard enhanced caller ID authentication technology.

This means that it will be more difficult for scammers to "spoof" the caller ID and thus prevent a call looking like it is coming from a friend, family member or neighbor when it is really a sales call or scam. This is a national initiative required by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Our telecommunications provider, Crocker Communications, already has this technology in place and will be in full compliance with the FCC requirements when the rest of the country's telecommunications providers also implement it by July. It is impossible to eliminate all robocalls, but this new FCC requirement should help. Visit their website to learn more: <https://www.fcc.gov/call-authentication>

## From the Administrative Assessor

Kevin Rudden, *Administrative Assessor*

**"Chapterland" Values Increasing in Fiscal Year 2022** If you have land protected under the state's Chapter 61 (Forest) or Chapter 61A (Agriculture) programs, your land values will be rising in the new fiscal year beginning on July 1. The Farmland Valuation Advisory Commission (FVAC) – which is part of the MA Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services – is increasing the value of Chapter 61 acreage by 21.4%, from \$98/acre to \$119/acre. The FVAC also is raising the value of Chapter 61A acreage by 9.7%, from \$196/acre to \$215/acre.

**Installing Solar Panels at Your House?** The new "Climate Change" bill passed this year by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Baker recently has a provision that could affect homeowners installing solar panels. As long as your solar system generates less than 125% of the power you need for your home, you are exempt from being taxed. But, the new law says if you

**Assessor, cont. on page 6**

exceed that 125% threshold, the entire solar array is subject to personal property taxes effective this July 1. Any system installed before that date remains tax-exempt.

**Housing Prices Keep Rising** The price of single-family homes across Massachusetts rose by a median 11.5% in calendar year 2020, compared to 3.9% in 2019, 5.5% in 2018, and 4.9% in 2017. That's according to the Warren Group, a Peabody-based company which collects and compiles data on real estate sales and ownership. Sale prices in Franklin County rose by 6.9% in 2020 to a median price of \$239,538 for a single-family home, according to the Warren Group.

Why such a large percentage jump last year? The Warren Group attributes it to a combination of low mortgage rates, an increase in first-time buyers (mostly "Millennials"), the desire for more space to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the extremely low supply of homes for sale.

Shutesbury is not immune to this trend: Sales prices rose above our assessed values throughout 2020 and continuing into this calendar year. Calendar year 2020 sales will be reflected in the property values for the new fiscal year beginning on July 1.

**Has the Pandemic Affected Our Property Values?** As you can see from reading above, the housing prices have soared here, just like the rest of the state. What's been affected by COVID-19 negatively across Massachusetts are the values of office space, retail sales businesses and the food and beverage and hospitality industries. Because Shutesbury has only three properties in town officially classified as "commercial," we've been insulated from these declining values. The town's only major industrial business – the Next Era solar installation on Pratt Corner Road – has a 25-year Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement

with the town, which helps to insulate Shutesbury from economic changes that could affect its value during that time period.

**It's Inspection Time** If you've done any renovations or additions to your property since last July 1 and continuing to this June 30, expect a visit from me to measure and calculate the value of the renovations or additions. The new value is known in municipal finance as "new growth," and the taxes resulting from it help reduce the tax levy (the total amount of money raised through property taxes) for the new fiscal year beginning on July 1.

### Note from the Town Collector

Dear Shutesbury taxpayers,

Happy spring! Now that the warmer weather is approaching, we are nearly at the end of fiscal 2021 and the Town Meeting for fiscal 2022.

My office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM – Noon and Thursday from 8:30-11:30 AM. If you call during these hours and I don't answer, please leave a message. I'm either on the telephone or have stepped out of the office.

Due to the time it takes for mail delivery, it is imperative that you plan accordingly when mailing your payments. Under Mass. General Law, we do NOT use the postmark for date of payment but rather the date of actual receipt. You should mail bills at least two weeks before the due date on the bill to insure they are received before that date. You can also deposit them in the drop box outside the Town Hall. I empty the contents twice every work day.

Always open all envelopes you receive from this office immediately upon receipt. The bill you think is a real estate bill (and paid by your bank) may be an excise tax bill for which you are responsible.

If you use on-line banking from your bank (not the Town's system), please change the mailing address

to Town Collector, PO Box 175, Shutesbury, MA 01072-0175. Please make sure the memo information is correct and does not reflect information from previous payments (i.e., listing real estate or excise bill numbers from previous years or an incorrect type of bill). Since your bill payment is NOT an automatic transfer into the Town's bank account, you must plan accordingly when authorizing the payment. DO NOT set up the payment on the due date as it won't get to the Town until almost a week later, which will result in fees and interest.

If you are having financial difficulty paying your real estate bills, please contact me to arrange a payment plan.

Don't forget to contact the Board of Assessors if you no longer have a vehicle on which you have received a motor vehicle excise tax bill. All bills should be paid in full before you apply for the abatement. If this is not done and the bill becomes overdue with additional fees and interest before abatement, these must be paid along with any outstanding balance due on the bill after abatement.

Be sure to notify this office if you permanently change your mailing address to avoid a delay in delivery of your mail which is returned to me for forwarding. This can take as much as three weeks, which reduces the time you have to pay the bill on time. I am glad to forward bills if you are temporarily away. However, I must know this is the situation before you leave to avoid the bills being returned as "temporarily away" by the post office which delays delivery to you.

Should a demand bill be issued on a motor vehicle excise tax, the law provides 14 days for receipt of payment before a warrant for collection is issued to the Deputy Collector. This results in at least \$22.00 in additional fees. Upon mailing of the demand bills, payment of the original bill will NOT be accepted and checks made out in the incorrect amount WILL be

returned to the sender.

Some of you have been unable to pay your bills on-line. If the bill is on warrant, it cannot be paid on-line except through the Deputy Collector's office, which can be reached during business hours at 413-527-2388.

Have a good spring and stay healthy.

Ellen McKay, Town Collector

### Volunteer opportunities!

The following committees have vacancies and are interested in having new members. If you are interested, please attend several meetings, check out the committee's webpage, and contact the committee chair to learn more about the how the committee functions and its responsibilities.

- Conservation Commission – 1 (see article below)
- Council on Aging -1
- Energy Committee – 1
- Personnel Board – 1

### Do you want to help conserve open spaces and protect town wetland resources?

We currently have one vacancy on Shutesbury's five-member Conservation Commission and are actively seeking an interested community member to fill the spot.

We are a group of volunteers responsible for protecting the town's natural resources through objectively administering the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and the town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw. We meet one Thursday evening per month from November to February and twice a month from March to October. The Commission conducts site visits all over town and manages town conservation land.

Familiarity with the state's Wetland Protection Act is certainly a plus, but not a requirement. Training is offered by the Massachusetts

Association of Conservation Commissions.

If you think this type of work might be for you, contact the Commission office at [concom@shutesbury.org](mailto:concom@shutesbury.org) or 413-259-3792 to learn how to attend a meeting to see firsthand what the Commission is all about.

You can find more information on the Commission's webpage: <https://www.shutesbury.org/concom>

Sincerely,  
Shutesbury Conservation Commission

### From the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee Trash bag distribution

Trash bag distribution is underway. All pick-ups are at the recycling shed at the elementary school. Please wear a mask, stay six feet apart if there is a line, and bring a bag to carry home your bags.

Here's the remaining schedule through June:

- Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 11:30 (School Shed)
- Thursday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 (School Shed)
- Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 11:30 (School Shed)
- Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 (School Shed)
- Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup> Town Meeting 8:30 – 11:30 (TBA)
- Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 (School Shed)
- Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 (School Shed)
- Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 11:30 (School She
- Thursday, July 1<sup>st</sup> 5:30 – 7:00 (School Shed)

### No more Bulky Waste Days in Shutesbury

Our arrangement with the Town of Leverett that makes it possible for Shutesbury residents to dispose of bulky waste (and, after the pandemic is over, use the swap areas) at the Leverett Transfer

Station (LTS) has been so successful over the past few years that the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee has decided to discontinue Bulky Waste Days in Shutesbury. As costs for renting roll-offs, hauling, collection of electronics and Styrofoam, etc. have risen, the Committee has had a hard time breaking even on Bulky Waste Days, and we have had to increase costs to residents.

In addition, more and more Shutesbury residents have taken advantage of the LTS. It is open three days a week, vs. one day a year for Shutesbury's Bulky Waste Day, and the costs for disposing of bulky waste are generally less than what the Committee has had to charge in Shutesbury.

Shutesbury residents can purchase an LTS sticker for \$20, good from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, at the Recycling shed during the trash bag distribution period.

For more information about the Leverett Transfer Station, hours of operation, and a list of disposal costs, check out the LTS website at [Leverett Transfer Station - Town of Leverett, MA](http://Leverett Transfer Station - Town of Leverett, MA).

### Household Hazardous Waste Disposal

Household Hazardous Waste collection will take place in Amherst on September 25. Shutesbury residents can dispose of insecticides, herbicides, oil-based paint, and other hazardous wastes at this event, so mark your calendar if you have stuff in your basement or garage you want to get rid of.

Information about registration, fees, etc. will be announced through the email listservs of Town Announce and Nextdoor Shutesbury as it becomes available.

### Disposal of e-waste

You can dispose of most electronics at Staples in Hadley at no cost. You can find a list of items that can and cannot be recycled at

Staples here: [Electronics Recycling | Sustainability | Staples®](#)

You can also bring electronics, including televisions and items that can't be recycled at Staples, to the Leverett Transfer Station. Check the LTS website for disposal costs.

### Disposal of Mercury-Bearing Waste at Town Hall

Once Town Hall reopens, it will again be possible for Shutesbury residents to dispose of fluorescent light bulbs, rechargeable and button batteries, thermostats, ballasts, and thermometers in the copy room at Town Hall.

In the meantime, Lowes and Home Depot accept compact fluorescent lamps at no cost.

### Join the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee!

Over the past year the RSWC has lost a couple of members. If you'd like to be part of a committee that provides an important service for the Town but has relatively few meetings during the year, this is the committee for you.

Contact **Meryl Mandel**, RSWC Chair, at [merylm@crocker.com](mailto:merylm@crocker.com) or 413-259-1282.

### Union #28 Community Network for Children

The Union #28 Community Network for Children Program (CNC) offers family programming and basic needs support for families with young children in Erving, Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell.

Some of the programs and activities are "Welcome Baby" gift bags: Tales & Tunes programs and Playgroups at our local libraries. We also offer the Ready Rosie Program for 3-year-olds; Parent/Caregiver Group Chats and parent education workshops; Ages & Stages Questionnaires to help parents and caregivers learn more about your child's development; as well as a Free Children's Clothing Closet and more!



**BIG NEWS!!!** As of May 5, CNC has begun to offer in-person programming again! Sessions are limited in the number of sessions and in how many families can join each one. A wait list will be created and we will work to try to make it as equitable as possible. We ask for your patience and understanding as the demand is great and we will not be able to meet everyone's wishes yet.

Registration is required and COVID-19 safety precautions such as wearing masks; social distancing and hand sanitizing will be in place. Most appropriate for families with children 0-5 years of age.

To sign up for CNC weekly email updates and to learn more about the program offerings, contact CNC at 413-422-0170 (call/text) or email [Budine@erving.com](mailto:Budine@erving.com).

### NEW FAMILIES WELCOME!

*The Union #28 Community Network for Children program is funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant awarded to the Union #28 Schools by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, and donations from the Community.*

### Hello from the PTO!

Greetings Shutesbury Community! What a beautiful spring we are having! What a change from last year in both weather and activity level. Shutesbury Elementary School once again has students in the classrooms and out on the grounds. We are hopeful that it will only rain on the weekends so that our kids may continue to enjoy

learning outdoors as well as inside!

The Shutesbury Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization exists to support learning at school through a variety of experiences for the students that align with the class curriculums and also offer unique opportunities. In the past year the kids have missed the usual in-person events like field trips, although many students have benefitted from teacher-organized virtual experiences with artists, authors and scientists, among others. And during this time the PTO has not stopped preparing for future fun!

Parents/guardians and teachers make up our school community and our PTO. We thank everyone from school and town who has supported our most recent efforts: Our sale of "winter warmer" frozen meals from Diemand Farm and annual spring plant sale.

This year we also updated the SES gear offerings. Look for our new yellow caps and moose beach towels at Lake Wyola! All we do would not be possible without the support of the larger Shutesbury community and we are grateful that so many are willing and able to give of themselves to make our efforts achievable.

Our students are still masked, but we hope that we will all soon return to seeing one another out from behind masks, gathering again to enjoy our beautiful town.

With enormous thanks and wishes for a healthy, happy summer,

Shutesbury Elementary School  
Parent Teacher Organization

### Get ready for Fall 2021 with the Shutesbury Early Childhood Program

The Shutesbury Elementary School Community (SES) believes that opportunities for early childhood education are essential components of a good education system.

Early experiences in an environment rich in hands-on materials and activities provide children various opportunities to grow emotionally, physically, socially and cognitively.

We believe that a trans-disciplinary team approach, in which all adults working with children are responsible for a child's learning, is the most effective way of teaching and we also believe that parents are the most important teachers of their children and that their involvement in their child's education is essential.

**Your child must be 3 years old on or before September 1, 2021 for pre-school enrollment, or 5 years old, on or before September 1, 2021 for kindergarten enrollment. Please contact**

**the school for Fall/2021 enrollment information.**

For more information, please call **Jessica Carlson-Belanger**, Main Office SES, 413-259-1212 x100 [carlson-belangerj@shutesburyschool.org](mailto:carlson-belangerj@shutesburyschool.org) or **Grace Griecci**, 413-259-1212 x140 [griec-cig@shutesburyschool.org](mailto:griec-cig@shutesburyschool.org).

**Preschool and Kindergarten enrollment/ screening for 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds in our community**

In Shutesbury, developmental screening is available through the school as a first step in a process intended to find children in need of special services and to plan for meeting those needs. The screening focuses on a child's growth in a number of areas, such as large and

small muscle control, speech/ language development and concept development. This activity takes about 20 minutes and consists of a number of games that children typically enjoy playing. The screening gives an indication of whether or not a child's skills are developing within the typical range.

If you or anyone you know has children under the age of five, or you have questions or concerns about your child's development, please contact us for more information about the program. Contact **Grace Griecci**, Pre-k teacher, at 414-253-1212 ext.140 or email her at [griec-cig@shutesburyschool.org](mailto:griec-cig@shutesburyschool.org)

**This screening is available to all families in town, including those with a child not already enrolled in the school's pre-school program.**

**How to be prepared for a medical emergency involving you or your family members**

The following suggestions by the **Shutesbury Council on Aging** are based on an article in LifePath's **The Good Life** (by Wendy Iseman, December 26, 2020). This list contains documents and information that may prove valuable to your family or caregivers in the event that you are incapacitated with a medical condition. For further information about legal documents, please see online information and/or consult with a lawyer.

**Keep your documents in a safe place**

such as a metal file box, a file box or folder, or a binder that is labeled, and let your family and caregivers know where this is located. Documents might include:

**Health Care Proxy**

The Health Care Proxy is a simple document, legally valid in Massachusetts, which allows you to name someone (an "agent") to make health care decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make or communicate those decisions. This must be signed by two witnesses who are not being designated as the agent.

**Health Care Directive or Advance Directive**

Also known as a Personal Directive or Living Will, this document states your wishes regarding end-of-life medical care,

including the treatments you do and do not want. This is not a legally binding document in Massachusetts, but it informs your Health Care Agent of your wishes.

**Medical Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)**

MOLST is a medical order form that relays instructions between health professionals about a patient's care. MOLST is based on your preferences to accept or refuse medical treatment, including treatments that might extend life. The MOLST must be signed by your health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant), with copies given to your health care professional and your health care agent.

**Power of Attorney**

This is a document used to grant someone the authority to act on your behalf, such as tending to

your finances or maintaining property. This should be signed in the presence of a notary public or two witnesses, with an official copy given to your agent.

**Health insurance information**

**List of doctors you see** and their contact information, with your emergency contact person listed.

**List of medications** and pharmacies used.

**Name of your legal counsel or estate lawyer** and contact information.

**List of relatives and close friends** with addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

**Any other significant information** that may help your authorized representative act on your behalf.

# The M. N. Spear Memorial Library

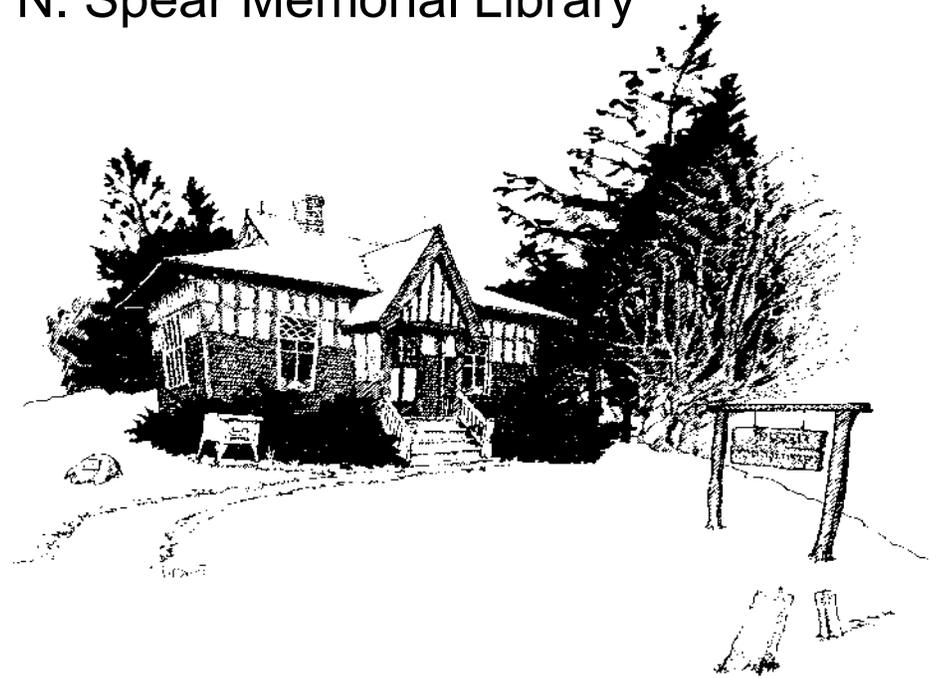
10 Cooleyville Road  
413-259-1213; [www.mnspear.org](http://www.mnspear.org)  
Mary Anne Antonellis, Director

## Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Most of you know that the M.N. Spear Memorial Library, built in 1902, is a single-room, 768-square-foot building that lacks running water. Many of you also know that despite the Library's tiny size, it supports an active and engaged community of users. The Shutesbury Library has the second highest circulation in the state for towns of our size, and hosts a creative and enriching variety of programs for people of all ages. Programs engage a wide range of community interests, including arts, fitness, literature, science, and much more.

Our active population of library users needs a library facility that supports the level of library services used by our community. We deserve a facility with the space to support the Town's Library needs now and into the future. Since 2011, the Friends of the Library, the Trustees of the Library and the Town of Shutesbury have been fundraising and saving earnestly for a future new Shutesbury Library. This sustained effort is heartwarming and inspiring and is really adding up!

Town Meeting has been appropriating funds to a Library Capitol Building Fund since 2007, with \$25,000 appropriated annually since 2013, adding up to a current balance of \$227,700. The Friends of the Library has been leading a campaign to raise private donations from the community, which now total \$259,056. To date, these funds combined total \$486,756. The bulk of the privately raised fund has been donated enthusiastically on Giving Days, Valley Gives, Giving Tuesday and Library Giving Day. The Friends and Trustees are astounded by the generous enthusiasm for a new library expressed on these giving days. Library Giving Day in April of this year brought in



more than \$21,000! Amazing! The Friends of the Library are a creative and determined group. There are a number of smaller ways they have added to the fund.

In 2012 a Shutesbury resident offered to donate a car. The Friends created an account with a vehicle donation company. Since then seven cars have been donated and the Friends have earned \$1,624.

Also since 2012, the Friends have been collecting redeemable bottles and cans, bringing in \$5,713 one nickel at a time.

Each spring since 2012, Friends have been providing Spring Spruce-Ups. A team of four adults does one of our yard work for a \$100 donation to the Friends new library fund and to date this effort has raised \$13,970.

Other efforts, including bake sales, book sales, community dinners, tag sales, Shutesbury Swag sales, and more have all contributed to this steadily growing savings account. This effort brings to mind the moral of the Aesop's Fable *The Tortoise and the Hare*: "Slow and steady wins the race."

We are not at the finish line yet, but together we have raised nearly \$500,000. It seems like a good time to pause, recognize the effort and

the possibility this achievement represents, and offer appreciation and congratulations all around.

## New Small Library Pilot Project

At their May 6 meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approved a pilot project to construct a new library building in a town of 2,000 or less population. The project will be all new construction and will be designed as a collaboration between the selected town and MBLC staff.

The goal of the pilot is to build a library that is functional, efficient, flexible, durable, and economical. The MBLC will be using this project to test some of the ideas they have for streamlining their grant process, and as a trial for using [Library Space: A Planning Resource for Librarians](#) in the field. They will also strive to incorporate the new Massachusetts sustainability and resilience goals into the project.

The MBLC recognizes that it is difficult for small towns like Shutesbury to build library facilities that meet their communities' needs. The town selected to participate in this pilot will receive expanded assistance, with more guidance from the

**Library**, cont. on page 11

construction consultants at the MBLC and a higher percentage of construction costs covered by state funds.

If Shutesbury is selected, the potential to move forward with this long discussed project is here. We will share news of the application process widely as more details become available.

**Library and the Pandemic**  
Covid-19 cases have dropped recently, making it possible for Library staff to begin thinking about allowing in-person visits again and expanding access to outdoor pickup.

Visitors to the Library will be required to wear masks or other face coverings and practice social distancing as we continue to work together to help prevent the spread of Covid-19. Unless there is another spike in cases, beginning May 19, the Library will be open for in-person browsing appointments on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Two households at a time will be able to book appointments using the online scheduling system on [mnspear.org](http://mnspear.org). Appointments can also be made by calling 413-259-1213. Outdoor pickup, by appointment will also be available on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

We will continue to provide outdoor pickup only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Pickup appointments can be made by emailing [library.director@shutesbury.org](mailto:library.director@shutesbury.org) or calling 413-259-1213 during pickup hours. If you have received a **hold available notification**, you can schedule a pickup using the online appointment system on [mnspear.org](http://mnspear.org).

Beginning Sunday, May 23, limited outdoor pickup will be offered on Sundays from 2-4 pm.

Sunday pickups will have to be booked online in advance via email or using the appointment scheduling system on the website. by 1 pm on Saturdays.

There will continue to be no telephone or email service on Sundays

or Mondays.

More details are available on [mnspear.org](http://mnspear.org).

Thank you for your patience and understanding as our small staff navigates our small space during this pandemic.

### Kayaks

We are planning to make the Library's kayaks available this summer. To make the program manageable for library staff we are planning to limit kayak loans to **Shutesbury residents only** for this season. More details are available on [mnspear.org](http://mnspear.org).

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### Working together to create community - Village Neighbors!

Village Neighbors (VN) is a volunteer-run organization offering free services to residents over 60 in our four-town area – Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell. Some of our services include assistance with household tasks, yard work, rides and delivery services, post hospital help, respite for caregivers, and technical support for internet and electronic devices. You can find a list of free services at our website. We have recently been awarded a grant to pay for small home repairs materials, and volunteers have assisted over 25 members to make free repairs to their homes.

Membership in Village Neighbors is free, volunteers of all ages are welcome, and many of our members also volunteer. Find out more about becoming a member or volunteer by calling 413-345-6894 or contact [membership@villageneighbors.org](mailto:membership@villageneighbors.org) or [volunteers@villageneighbors.org](mailto:volunteers@villageneighbors.org).

The Village Neighbors newsletter is published bi-monthly, six times a year. It contains articles and opportunities of interest to people over 60. If you would like to contribute or receive VN News, please contact [generalinfo@villageneighbors.org](mailto:generalinfo@villageneighbors.org) or [dina@dinapolizzi.com](mailto:dina@dinapolizzi.com).

**ATTN Google Mail Users:** If you are a VN member or volunteer and are not receiving the electronic newsletter, Google has been automatically diverting the VN newsletter to your Promotions folder. To receive it directly to your inbox, drag the newsletter from your promotions folder to your inbox (it will always direct it there in the future) or hover over the sender's name in the top-left corner of the email, and then click "Add to Contacts." Emails from a subscriber's contacts always go to the Primary inbox. If you need assistance you can call Village Neighbors at 413-345-6894 or contact Dina (VN newsletter editor) directly at [dina@dinapolizzi.com](mailto:dina@dinapolizzi.com)

### Learn about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) recently launched the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), a new funding mechanism to disburse state and federal funding resources for tenants and landlords to avoid evictions and maintain household stability throughout the COVID-19 emergency. ERAP is available to households earning less than 80% Area Median Income (AMI).

Renters and landlords may receive up to **12 months of assistance with** past due rent, plus up to 3 months of future rent. Please call 2-1-1 or connect directly with your regional agency, Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority, 413-863-9781, x150. For more information, please check out <https://www.mass.gov/guides/facing-eviction-we-can-help>

Renters may also receive **up to \$1,500 for overdue utilities accrued after March 13, 2020.**

Along with the enhanced ERAP benefits, tenants and landlords may be able to access free legal and mediation services. Details at <https://evictionlegalhelp.org/find-legal-help/> and <https://www.resolutionma.org/>.



TOWN OF SHUTESBURY  
P.O. BOX 276  
SHUTESBURY MA 01072

Return Service Requested

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## HOW TO CONTACT TOWN OFFICIALS

Go to [www.shutesbury.org](http://www.shutesbury.org) to find email addresses, or call the appropriate number below.

ACCOUNTANT Gail Weiss 413-259-1108	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Jackie Mendonsa, Princ. 413-259-1212	RECREATION COMMITTEE B.Z. Reilly 413-687-3605
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY Linda Avis Scott 413-259-6550	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR Walter Tibbetts 413-259-1211	RECYCLING COORDINATOR Gary Bernhard 413-259-1235
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR Rebecca Torres 413-259-1214	FINANCE COMMITTEE James Walton, Chair 413.259.5397	REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE Stephen Sullivan 413-259-1626
ANIMAL INSPECTOR Nancy Long 413-259-1279	FIRE DEPARTMENT Walter Tibbetts, Chief 413-259-1211 or at home 413-259-1286	SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE Dan Hayes 413-230-4686
ASSESSORS Kevin Rudden 413-259-3790	HEALTH AGENT Claudia Lucas 413-549-3710	UNION #28 SCHOOL SUPT. Jennifer Culkeen 413-423-3337
BOARD OF HEALTH Catherine Hilton, Clerk 413-259-2122	HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT Tim Hunting 413-259-1215	SELECT BOARD Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, Chair 413-256-0312 Rita Farrell 413-259-1297 April Stein 413-259-1074
BUILDINGS COMMITTEE Bob Groves 413-259-1200	HISTORICAL COMMISSION Leave inquiries at 413-259-1214	SHUTESBURY BROADBAND COMMITTEE Gayle Huntress Broadband Mailbox 413-345-2855
BUILDING INSPECTOR Jim Hawkins 413-774-3167 x. 113	M.N. SPEAR MEMORIAL LIBRARY Mary Anne Antonellis 413-259-1213	TAX COLLECTOR Ellen McKay 413-259-1615
CEMETERY COMMISSION Walter Tibbetts 413-259-1286	LIBRARY TRUSTEES Kate Cell, Co-chair 413-259-9129 Michele Regan-Ladd, Co-chair 413-259-1149	TOWN CLERK Grace Bannasch 413-259-1204
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMM. Rita Farrell, Co-chair Allen Hanson, Co-chair 413-259-1623	OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE Leave inquires at 413-259-1214	TOWN MODERATOR Paul Lyons 413-259-1556
COUNCIL ON AGING For Info., Med-Ride Program, Foot Clinic, leave message 413-259-3796	OUR TOWN NEWSLETTER Janis S. Gray 413-259-1584	TREASURER Ryan W. Mailloux 413-259-1801
CONSERVATION COMMISSION Leave inquiries at 413-259-3792	PERSONNEL BOARD Leave inquiries at 413-259-1214	TREE WARDEN Don Wakoluk 413-256-6736
CULTURAL COUNCIL Rory Valentine 413-256-0563	PLANNING BOARD Deacon Bonnar 413-406-2767	WEB COMMITTEE Gail Fleischaker 413-253-0565
DEPT. OF VETERANS' SERVICES Timothy Nijadlik 413-772-1571	PLUMBING/GAS INSPECTOR John Letourneau 413-367-0017	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Charles J. DiMare 413-549-5330
DOG OFFICER Nancy Long 413-259-1279	POLICE DEPARTMENT Kristin Burgess, Officer in Charge 413-259-1279 Dispatch 413-625-8200	
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR Maurice Gregoire 413-253-7505	<b>POLICE, FIRE &amp; RESCUE SQUAD 911</b>	