

SHUTESBURY

MASSACHUSETTS



OUR TOWN

Breaking news on broadband

Shutesbury Broadband Committee

A big thank you to everyone who attended our informational meeting in November. About 50 townspeople gathered for an evening of cider, doughnuts and broadband information. We hope everyone who came has a better understanding of the complexities of the issues around bringing broadband to Shutesbury.

Just before publication of this newsletter, we received news from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) that the state is changing the process once again. Although we still can get our allocation of the con-

See Broadband, page 4

Updates from your Select Board

Happy New Year Friends and Neighbors! With the start of the new year we mark the halfway point in the fiscal year. The Select Board would like to take the opportunity to share some highlights from the past few months.

We have been making steps toward our goal to improve communication and accessibility by continuing to explore available options. The Select Board held a meeting with the chairs of boards and committees including department heads with a theme of using **the town website as a focal point for town information**. We encouraged all to update webpage information and to begin to use the various options in our communication tool chest to bring information out of committees into residents' hands.

In our last update, we mentioned

a discussion to explore **how to provide better information ahead of roadwork around Shutesbury**. Out of this discussion came the addition of a schedule for future road work/ Highway Department projects, as well as guidelines for communication using various forms of communication when work is anticipated to impede or interfere with traffic flow.

This new information is located on the Highway Department webpage (<http://www.shutesbury.org/highway>). Feel free to take a look.

We are continuing to work with our neighboring towns on **the regional school assessment**. We are hopeful as this conversation progresses that the four towns will be able to come together in a positive way to establish a reasonable and equitable solution.

We explored the Massachusetts Community Compact for our town. This program offers grants to improve transparency and improve resident engagement. We look forward to making a few of these programs work for Shutesbury.

See Select Board, page 3

Townspeople weigh in through surveys and workshops

Michele Cunningham, Master Plan Working Group

The Master Plan Working Group (MPWG) would like to extend our gratitude to all the Shutesbury residents who contributed to the first steps in revising the *Shutesbury Master Plan 2004* by attending a workshop or completing a survey over the past several months.

The data we collected promises to be invaluable as we prepare for

the next decade in our beloved town. We are excited and inspired to report that over 450 respondents generated thoughtful responses and creative ideas. The workshops provided an opportunity for individuals to interact and share ideas in a positive, open environment, and listen to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints.

This process was guided by members of the Boston based *Harriman* group in conjunction with the MPWG.

The data from the first workshop, and the corresponding online survey, are available on the Shutesbury Website (http://www.shutesbury.org/master_plan_working_group). Raw data from the second workshop and an Excel sheet that summarizes that data are also on the website. Paper and online survey data are still being compiled and will be posted to the website soon, along with recommendations for next steps.

Your input matters! We thank you again for taking the time to contribute your thinking to this process. Your responses will help us significantly as we move to create a comprehensive vision statement for the future of Shutesbury. Stay tuned for an announcement of our final public meeting date, where Harriman, supported by the MPWG, will present what was learned during the first two public outreach project phases.

For more information visit the MPWG website listed above, or email mpwg@shutesbury.org.

Master Plan Working Group Members: Meryl Mandell, Chair, and Mary Anne Antonellis, Jeanne Brown, Michele Cunningham, Nancy Dill, Bob Groves, Al Hanson, Dale Houle, Dave Kittredge, Jeff Lacy, Brad Spry, Mike Vinskey

Messages from the Town Clerk

Susie Mosher—Town Clerk
1 Cooleyville Rd., Town Hall
413-259-1204
townclerk@shutesbury.org

Office hours: Monday 6 – 8pm,
Tuesday – Friday 8:30 – 10:30am,
Thursday 6 – 8pm,
or by appointment

If you have recently moved to Shutesbury, Welcome! I hope you'll stop by Town Hall at the top of the hill and I'll give you a (small) tour, help you register to vote, get trash bags, license your dog, or point you in the right direction for information.

If you are fortunate enough to have Internet service, you can also get some answers on the town website www.shutesbury.org from the comfort of your own home. If you don't have Internet, you can come to town hall or the town library to get a WiFi signal.

This year the voter activity will be entirely local. Our only election is for **13 seats for Shutesbury town government**. It will be Saturday, May 6, at our Annual Town Meeting and Election. Those seats are:

- Two for Board of Health
- One for Cemetery Commissioner
- Two for Board of Library Trustees
- Four for Planning Board
- Two for School Committee
- One for Select Board
- One for Town Clerk.

Now is a good opportunity to attend a few meetings or visit their web pages to learn about the workings of these boards and positions. (For a schedule of meetings, check out the website calendar or visit the bulletin board in Town Hall.)

If you are inspired to share your skills and interests and affect local government **it is simple to get on the May 6 ballot**.

Starting Wednesday, February 1, you can pick up nomination papers at the town clerk's office. Gather 20 signatures of registered Shutesbury voters and turn the papers in to be certified by March 18.

To vote on May 6, you must be a registered voter in Shutesbury.

Last day for new voter registration is April 15. Democracy begins here.



Workers from Cotton Tree Service prepare to hoist the remaining stump of a white pine from the earth in January. Seven white pines in West Cemetery were removed to prevent further damage to historic grave stones caused by heavy branches dropping from old and ailing trees. Town Meeting approved the use of Community Preservation Act funds for this project in 2015.

You should have received a blue **Annual Street List form** in the mail. If you did not receive a form, please contact me.

Although this form is issued by the state as an effort to verify current voters, the Annual Street Listing is also a compilation of ALL Shutesbury residents, INCLUDING children.

The information is used for trash bag eligibility, to verify residence for veteran and elderly benefits, and as an address confirmation for future town mailings. Please correct, sign and return this form to prevent your name from being deactivated on the voter rolls. *And thank you very much for keeping town records accurate and up to date.*

With appreciation for our newsletter volunteers . . .

Linda Avis Scott, *Administrative Secretary*

First and foremost, let us appreciate our long-time newsletter editor **Janis Gray**. For 20 years, Janis has voluntarily copy edited all the contributions to *Our Town*. In recent years,

she has also laid out its pages, using a design created by **Greg Caulton**.

Please join me in thanking Janis for her gracious ongoing commitment to bringing our newsletter into form.

Behind the scenes of each issue that arrives in your mailbox, other volunteers assemble the inserts, fold, and seal each newsletter. Folding party conversation is always lively and interesting and, as the saying goes, "many hands make light work."

A hearty thanks for the folders of our Autumn 2016 newsletter: **Mary Anne Antonellis, Leslie Bracebridge, Sally Fairfield, Catherine Hilton, Susan Millinger, Dave Mosher, Susie Mosher, and Becky Torres**.

If you would like to join in the fun of assembling our newsletter, please let me know by calling 413-259-6550 or emailing

adminsecretary@shutesbury.org and I will add you to my list. When a new issue goes to print, I will call or email you with the date/time the folding will begin. Any amount of time is welcome.

Select Board, cont. from page 1

Early last fall the Select Board created a new policy and process for selling town-owned land. This policy sets some guiding values for consideration, sets some priority factors and sets a process for sale.

On a more fun note, the Select Board again sponsored activities at Celebrate Shutesbury. One was donut eating with no hands. This was a hit with lots of laughter and fun. The second was pumpkin painting, which displayed the wealth of creativity our town has. The pumpkins looked great. Thank you to everyone who helped put the event together and those who came to celebrate.

Each Selectboard meeting begins with a public comment session. Feel free to drop by and share your comments. All are welcome.

Mark your calendars – Annual Town Meeting is May 6, 2017. Come join us.

Sincerely,
The Three M's:

Michael Vinskey, Chair
Michael DeChiara
Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil

Timely news from the Board of Assessors

Exemption Deadline: All exemption applications (senior citizens, veterans, and CPA) must be received by **April 1, 2017**. New rules require submission of federal tax return (2015) or Form 4506-T for senior citizens.

Attention Shutesbury Businesses: Business Form of List (State Tax Form 2) Due March 1, 2017

Incorporated and non-incorporated businesses must report all equipment and machinery. In addition, non-incorporated businesses must report inventory such as office furniture, filing cabinets, chairs, adding machines, computers, printers, motorized tools, etc. Farm animals, unregistered motor vehicles and unregistered construction equipment must also be reported.

Attention owners of second homes: Household Form of List (Form 2HF) Due March 1, 2017

Owners of second homes, duplexes, etc., must report all furnishings and appliances including refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, washers and driers, TV's, lawnmowers, dishes, eating & cooking utensils, furniture, etc.

Motor Vehicle Abatements Documentation of your vehicle plate return or transfer of plate AND vehicle ownership transfer is required.

Forms for abatements, exemptions, and Forms of Lists are available from the website www.shutesbury.org/assessors. Or call our office with any questions. 413-259-3790. M&T 10-3, W 1-3, Th 12-4.

Note from the Town Collector

Ellen McKay, *Town Collector*

Dear Shutesbury taxpayers,

With the winter upon us, the third quarter of our real estate bills have become due and the calendar 2017 motor vehicle excise bills for many vehicles registered on January 1 have been mailed. Additionally, excise bills on vehicles registered late in 2016 are billed during 2017. The year for which the bill is issued is found in the upper right hand corner of the bill.

If you receive a bill on a car you have traded or on which you have changed registrations, do NOT ignore the bill. The Board of Assessors should be contacted to obtain an application for abatement. The forms are also available on the Assessors' section of the Town's website. The mailing address for the Assessors is PO Box 264, Shutesbury.

Our on-line bill paying feature allows you to pay your tax bills either directly from your checking or savings account with a fee of \$.25, or with a credit card for a fee based on the amount of your transaction.

To use this service, click on the Town's website and then on the announcement on the Home page.

For Real Estate and Personal Property taxes, you should enter 2017 for the year and just the bill number WITHOUT the RE or PP to enter the program.

For motor vehicle payments, enter the year and bill number which is found on the top right side of your

bill.

You are now able to find your bill information by clicking on the notation "Need help locating your bill" after you indicate what type of bill you wish to pay. You then enter your last name and mailing address and click on the bill information.

PLEASE PLAN AHEAD when mailing your tax payments to avoid interest due to late payment. The date your payment is received in this office or by the lockbox is the date of payment for receipt purposes under Mass. General Law.

If you receive a demand notice, you should pay it immediately as you only have 14 days from the demand date to pay before the bill goes on warrant, which results in a substantial increase in the fees.

If you have purchased your property after January 1, 2016, Massachusetts General Law requires that the previous owner's name remain on the real estate tax bill. Hence, your name will appear with an "in care of." There is nothing we can do to put the bill solely in your name.

The question has come up concerning the information found on the bills. All information is required either by Massachusetts General Law or by the Department of Revenue of the Commonwealth. The Town and this office have no discretion on the statements printed thereon.

Before venturing out to pay a bill in person, please call this office at 413-259-1615 to check the answering machine to determine if I will be here.

Have a happy, healthy, and safe New Year.

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 projects, activities, or special events of benefit to our community. Submissions promoting the sale of goods or services for private profit cannot be accepted.

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



PRINTED ON RECYCLED STOCK
30% POST CONSUMER WASTE

Broadband, cont. from page 1
struction grant money, they will not be managing the build process. MBI also announced that it will likely take another year before Shutesbury will have a design if we continue with their process.

This change comes after two years of *other* frustrating delays and policy changes. We have been beholden to the process and timing of MBI so far because they control the design, engineering and management portion of our grant money.

The Broadband Committee is moving swiftly to take action. We're working to get a warrant article ready for a **Special Town Meeting** (before Annual Town Meeting in May) in order to take control of our broadband build.

Later this spring we will have an informational meeting with all the details and a forum to address your questions. We are currently working with town leadership to weigh the financial implications and clear up legal uncertainties. Our goal is to see construction happening as soon as possible.

For those of you staying abreast of the MBI-initiated Request for Proposal (RFP) process for private companies to provide broadband (as opposed to us owning our own network), we have vetted the available options. None of them meet our town's core criteria for broadband service at this time, which is why we continue to pursue a town-owned network.

As we move forward towards construction, we will need to determine how our network will be operated once it is built.

Thanks to the population density and expected high subscriber rate in Shutesbury, we know we can sustainably maintain and operate our network working independently. However, a regional plan, such as is proposed by WiredWest, may still be the most beneficial for both cost and operational simplicity. Remember, the WiredWest plan is separate from the build process, so this aspect is **not** holding up timing on our network build.

Making progress on the build is our top priority!

Please stay up to date at our town website: www.shutesbury.org/broadband

Your Broadband Committee

P.S. Many people have been asking what they should do about the \$49

deposit they paid to WiredWest. For the time being, we are encouraging everyone to refrain from requesting a refund. Shutesbury is still a part of the WiredWest group, and at this time our research shows that operating our network regionally is the most advantageous option for our town.

Reflections by the Trustees of M.N. Spear Library

Our town loves to use our library! In our Fiscal Year 2015, the M.N. Spear Library had the fourth highest circulation of libraries serving towns of this size in the entire state, and our circulation rose in Fiscal Year 2016.

But the library does so much more than lend books (or movies, or chemistry sets, or kayaks).

The library also offered 127 programs last year, for an average of more than two a week. Many of these programs are generously sponsored by the Friends of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library; other funding comes from state agencies and private foundations. In addition to supporting the library's programming and collections, the Friends are also actively and creatively raising funds for a new library.

Weekly story time for young children is held in the library itself, but because of lack of space, most programs must be held off site. The library makes good use of the basement of Town Hall for programs for Shutesburians of all ages, from Lego Club in the colder months to Gentle Yoga from spring through fall.

Some townspeople shared their experiences with the library's programs.

Emma Beckemeyer writes: *The weekly story time allows my girls to enjoy music, crafts, and books with other children. The family movie night has given us a chance to meet other families in the area. Also, the science and other learning programs have enhanced our homeschooling with activities that I wouldn't be able to do otherwise. We have lived all over the country and this library and its programs are one of a kind!*

Jen Taylor says: *The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math programs offer an increased opportunity for science enrichment and bonding outside the classroom. We made it a point to attend as many as we possibly could.*

And **Jaime Donta** adds:

Our family loves the [library] programming... we attend every Lego Club, and all of the great science and art

See Trustees, page 7

Messages from the Mass Municipal Association

Becky Torres, *Town Administrator*

Amid the workshops and trade show, messages at the annual conference of Massachusetts's 351 cities and towns this year were mixed.

The opening speaker focused on language use, listening, speaking and understanding. Officially, Jonah Berger is a social influence expert. As town officials, he asked us, how do we persuade the public to support projects, budgets and policies? How do we

See Conference, page 7

Coming April 22: Meeting for Vietnam Veterans on Agent Orange

It has been more than 55 years since its first use, and Vietnam Veterans and their families are still learning about the issues and the diseases they may have because of exposure to Agent Orange in and around Vietnam.

On April 22, from Noon to 4pm at Greenfield Community College (Main Building-Dining Commons, 1 College Drive Greenfield, MA 01301), an event will cover risks from Agent Orange, benefits veterans may be eligible for, and include question and answer periods.

Free Health Care Screenings will be offered 12-1pm.

Information on Agent Orange is constantly changing. Even if you are already rated for a 100% service-connected disability, you are urged to attend — you may be eligible for additional compensation. Family members are also welcome to attend.

This event is sponsored by Greenfield Community College, the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District, Vietnam Veterans of Massachusetts Inc., Vietnam Veterans of America MA State Council, and the VA Central Western MA Healthcare System

Participants include: VFW, American Legion, D.A.V., V.V.A., AMVETS, MA Dept. of Veterans' Services, Marine Corps League, the Veterans Health Administration, and many more.

For more information, call 413-772-1571 or 413-775-1825.

You can now use the Leverett Transfer Station!

Over the years, the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee has received many inquiries about how to get rid of bulky waste that must be disposed of before or after Shutesbury's Bulky Waste Days in June and October. We've received calls and emails from people who are moving; people who have bought new furniture and have to do something with the old stuff; and people whose air conditioners, TV's, or dehumidifiers have conked out and have had to be replaced.

In the past, the best we could do was refer Shutesbury residents to professional haulers, who generally charge a lot to remove bulky items. But beginning in January, Shutesbury residents displaying a Leverett Transfer Station (LTS) sticker will be able to use the LTS to dispose of bulky waste any time during the year. In addition, Shutesbury residents will be able to take advantage of the "Take It or Leave It" feature of the LTS. You can

bring good stuff that you no longer need, browse through books, toys, clothing, furniture, etc., and take what you want at no cost. The LTS is located at 15 Cemetery Rd. in Leverett.

Here's how it works:

During the trial period between January and July 2017, Shutesbury residents can purchase an LTS sticker for \$10.00. This sticker gives you access to bulky waste disposal and Take It or Leave It at the LTS (see the disposal cost of various bulky items here: <http://leverett.ma.us/files/Transfer%20station%20prices%20no%20scale.pdf>). Stickers may be obtained from **Meryl Mandell**, Chair of the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee, or **Gary Bernhard**, Recycling Coordinator. Please send a check for \$10 made out to *Town of Shutesbury* and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Meryl at 453 Wendell Rd. or to Gary at 315 Montague Rd. They will send you the sticker. The sticker is mounted on the windshield of the car in front of the mirror. If there's enough interest among Shutesbury residents

during this trial period, we'll continue the program for the next fiscal year.

Hours of LTS operation: Saturday and Sunday 10am – 1pm, Wednesday 2– 5pm until daylight savings time in March, then 4 – 7pm.

No trash or recycling at the LTS for Shutesbury residents. We have curbside pickup of trash and recycling; Leverett residents pay for each bag of trash disposed of at LTS.

No hazardous waste.

Bring good, usable stuff for Take It or Leave It. No junk, please.

Once we get going with this collaboration, the LTS will need additional volunteers, especially at Take It or Leave It. If you want first dibs on items that come in, you might consider volunteering.

For more information about the LTS, check out www.leverett.ma.us/content/transfer-station

The Shutesbury Solid Waste and Recycling Committee: Gary Bernhard, Karen Czerwonka, Nancy Dihlmann, Ron Essig, Gail Fleischer, Orson Jones, Liz Lacy, Meryl Mandell, Sue Quigley, Steve Rice, Peg Ross

Developmental screening for 3, 4 and 5 year olds

Developmental screening is available through Shutesbury Elementary 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 40 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 have any questions or concerns about your child's development, would like more information, or wish to set up an appointment, please call **Grace Griecci**, Shutesbury Elementary School's Preschool Teacher, at 413-259-1212 x140 or email her at griecig@shutesburyschool.org

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

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. Our Early Child-

hood Program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which is a mark of a high quality program for young children.

Your child must be 3 years old on or before September 1, 2017 for preschool enrollment, or 5 years old on or before September 1, 2017 for kindergarten enrollment.

Please contact the school for Fall/2017 enrollment information. Call **Jessica Carlson-Belanger** at 413-259-1212 x100 carlson-belangerj@shutesburyschool.org or **Grace Griecci** 413-259-1212 x140 griecig@shutesburyschool.org

Shutesbury Elementary School Preschool Open House

Wednesday March 1, 12:00-1:00pm

This is an opportunity for families to visit the preschool, meet the teacher and hear an overview of the Early Childhood Program. Children are welcome, but are not required to attend.

Decisions for the 2017-2018 academic year will be made by March 31, 2017. Attending the Open House does not guarantee acceptance to the program.

Children must be 3 by September 1, 2017 to be eligible for the preschool.

Questions may be directed to Grace Griecci, Pre-K Teacher
griecig@shutesburyschool.org

413-259-1212 ext. 140

The M. N. Spear Memorial Library

10 Cooleyville Road
413-259-1213; www.mnspear.org
Mary Anne Antonellis, *Director*

The M.N. Spear Memorial Library is open seven days.
Monday and Wednesday: 11am -1pm
and 3 - 6pm
Tuesday and Thursday: 3 -7:30pm
Friday: 3 - 6pm
Saturday: 10am -1pm
Sunday: 3 - 6pm

What's New and Wowbrary

Recent additions include *Martin's Dream Day* by Kitty Kelley with photos by Stanley Tretick. This biography for ages 5 and up is an inspiring recount of the 1963 March on Washington.

Also new is a graphic novel adaptation of Octavia Butler's *Kindred*. Artists Damien Duffy and John Jennings transform Butler's most acclaimed novel about the violence and loss of humanity caused by slavery in the United States.

New in non-fiction is *The Case Against Sugar* by Gary Taubes. A well-researched expose about sugar, this book explores the history of how sugar has become so prevalent in our diets and the alarming rise of health related issues it causes.

Recent DVD additions include a PBS Nature production, *Moose: Life of a Twig Eater*.

Follow along as cameraman and naturalist Hugo Kitching chronicles 12 months in the life of a female moose and her calf in Jasper National Park, Alberta, Canada.

Also new on DVD is *A French Village*: a drama set in a

small French village during World War II.



These items are just highlights of the variety of new items added on a regular basis. For weekly updates about what is new at the library, sign up for **Wowbrary**.

This service provides a weekly email with titles added that week. It links directly to our online catalog, making placing a hold simple and easy.

To sign up for Wowbrary, visit mnspear.org and click on the Newest Arrivals tab.

Programs!

More programs and more details at mnspear.org.

Weekly – year round Tales and Tunes Story Time, Mondays, 9:30 – 11am, at the Library. For young children, their families and caregivers.

Weekly – beginning in March Gentle Yoga, Wednesdays, 9am, at Town Hall

Monthly Lego Club, Sundays, noon – 2pm at Town Hall
February 19, March 19, April 23, and May 21.

Ukulele Strum-Along with Julie

Usually the last Monday of the month, 7pm, at the Library

Science Fiction Book Club Usually the first Monday of the month, 7:30pm, at the Library

New!

Neurofitness for the Maturing Brain

Wednesday, February 15, 7pm at Town Hall

In this talk, Tendril Kinetics Founder Emily Hodos will explain some basics about the brain and neuroplasticity, especially as it relates to common concerns as we age – memory, vision, hearing, keeping organized, maintaining good balance and coordination. She will introduce simple and strategic movement exercises that integrate body and brain to help us maintain or regain physical and mental sharpness and agility.

Mindful Eating

Introductory meeting, Sunday, March 5 at 4pm, Town Hall, followed by four weekly meetings March 12, 19, 26 and April 2.

This program combines daily mini-lessons accessed through an online app called *Eat Right Now* and in-person meetings facilitated by Michele Miller.

[Dr. Judson Brewer](#), UMass Medical School, expert on addiction and mindfulness, has developed *Eat Right Now*, an App that delivers mindfulness training to your device. The App offers over 30 very short video modules, along with in-the-moment exercises, allowing users to build skills one moment at a time. Participants are encouraged to take 10 minutes each day to complete a new lesson and to learn how to put it into practice throughout the day in manageable, bite-sized pieces. As part of the mindfulness training, participants learn the scientific basis of how eating habits are formed and how to use this knowledge to change them. Concrete mindfulness skills will be taught to help raise awareness of, and gain control over, eating and how to activate these skills at your convenience and pace.

Look for a flyer in this newsletter for more information, and visit mnspear.org. Registration required, please call 413-259-1213.

Where to find library news?

There is always something new happening at the library and there are several online resources we use to keep everyone informed.

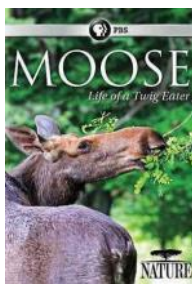
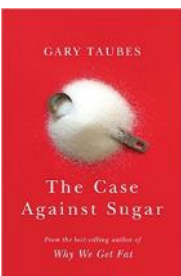
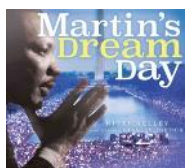
Our website: mnspear.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ShutesburyLibrary/

Nextdoor Shutesbury: <https://shutesburyma.nextdoor.com/login/>

Yes! You can return items from other Massachusetts libraries here

The state-wide library delivery system stops at the Spear Library every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. If it is more convenient for you to return items borrowed from other libraries here, please do. We are happy to help.



Friends of the M.N. Spear Memorial Library 2017 membership drive!

The Friends of the Library support the library by providing financial support for our collections and programs. Yoga, Ukulele Jams, Lego Club, Storytime, and more are all made possible by generous support from the Friends of the Library! The Friends sent out their annual membership mailing in early December and many of you have already sent in your contribution. Thank you!

Extra membership brochures are available at the library and donations can be made online. Visit our website, mnsprear.org and click on the DONATE tab.

Other ways to support the Friends: Donate your redeemable bottles and cans, volunteer to redeem the donated bottles and cans, donate used books for our book sales, purchase our Dean's Beans Organic Coffee, volunteer for a Spring Spruce-Up (SSU) crew, hire a SSU crew, help out at book sales, bake sales, and library dinners at the Shutesbury Athletic Club. Every little bit helps!

Trustees, cont. from page 4
activities for kids. I personally really appreciated the "Get to Know Your Sewing Machine" program, which gave me the confidence to make the crazy animal Halloween costumes my kids have requested (squirrel, dodo bird, thorny devil lizard...). We are so grateful for such wonderful local programming to keep us all busy up here in the woods!

Neighboring towns with larger libraries can provide even more services. Because its (relatively) new library includes meeting space, Wendell offers some 300 programs a year. The Library Trustees hope that someday, a new Shutesbury library will accommodate even more of our town's needs.

Conference, cont. from page 4
 listen and understand the needs of communities?

Our two senators and the governor urged us all to be politically engaged.

Gov. Charlie Baker traded places with Sen. Elizabeth Warren so she could join the Women's March on the Boston Common. Boston streets were full of people, men and women in pink pussy hats. Sen. Warren vowed to fight against hard right policies, for the rights of individuals over corporations and for federal funding for Massa-

chusetts.

Sen. Edward Markey delivered a serious message of concern about losing critically needed federal funds for health care, the opioid crisis, Medicare, homelessness, and university research. The National Institutes of Health, NIH, brings in \$3 billion to Massachusetts. Major state projects are funded through federal funds and it is unclear at this time how those programs will work. It is unclear how the private-public relationship will be structured. Loss of these funds will radically change the state economy.

The Governor spoke of his and the Lt. Governor's support for cities and towns. The Governor, the son of a Republican father and a Democratic mother, described dinner at his house as very lively! He was told you have two ears and one mouth for a reason. He learned to be hard on issues and soft on people. His family believes in local government as it is the closest to people.

The Governor said his administration has experience in local government and they understand the importance of the work done by select boards, and how difficult it is. He said they are continuing their commitment to local aid.

The Governor's proposed c. 70 state education aid increases by more than \$116 million, or 2.6 percent, and unrestricted aid increases by \$42 million, or 4.3 percent, statewide. But for Shutesbury, c. 70 education aid is increasing 0.42% for \$2,580 more this year, for a total of \$622,436.

The Shutesbury Elementary School (SES) and Regional schools are asking for increases in their budgets listed below:

SES	Budget FY17 1,900,317 Increase in \$ 24,114	Budget FY18 1,924,431 Increase in % 1.3%
REG.	Budget FY17 1,700,341 Increase in \$ 45,217	Budget FY18 1,745,558 Increase in % 2.7%

Unrestricted Aid for Shutesbury is increasing 3.9% for \$6359, more this year for a total of \$169,413.

Despite the Governor's stated support, c. 70 state education funding is falling behind prior years. What that means for the Shutesbury is the percentage of education funding paid by property tax continues to grow as the percentage paid for by state funding

declines.

Cities and Towns lobbied through Mass Municipal Association (MMA) over the last five years, for \$300,000,000 but again are receiving \$200,000,000 in c. 90 Highway funds.

In May of 2015 Shutesbury voted \$1,693,000 to build a broadband fiber network in Shutesbury, in conjunction with state funds entrusted to Mass Broadband Institute. It is 2017 now and Mass Broadband Institute (MBI) continues to put out contradictory policy statements. The Governor did not mention broadband in his address to 600 town officials sitting around me at the Mass Municipal Event on Saturday morning, January 21, 2017.

But on Monday night the Governor did expound on last mile broadband projects as an accomplishment of his administration in his State of the Commonwealth address. The Shutesbury Broadband Committee spent this year following all the (MBI) Mass Broadband Institute directives, documentation requirements and submissions. At this point the MBI seems to be redefining itself, what its role is, one more time.

So despite claims of support for cities and towns, the Governor has let Shutesbury down on local aid, highway funding, and failed Shutesbury, along with most other last mile towns, on the delivery of broadband.

At the end of the event, a Town Administrator complained to me about the prominent role politics took at the conference this year. Municipal government is not defined by the two-party system of partisan politics. Municipal government is not partisan by definition. While being closest to the people as Governor Baker said, it is also where we all meet at one table, at one Town Meeting.

The closing speaker, talk show host Tom Ashbrook, encouraged us to identify core values, to start with these as building blocks for conversation.

We differ in our views of taxation, fiscal policy, service levels and our vision of what our community is and should be in Shutesbury, in Massachusetts and in the country. The message from the politicians, the social influence expert and the NPR talk show host is that we are headed for a time of change that will challenge what services should be provided by municipal, state and federal governments, and challenge municipal, state and federal government's ability to provide services.



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HOW TO CONTACT TOWN OFFICIALS

Go to www.shutesbury.org to find email addresses, or call the appropriate number below.

ACCOUNTANT		ELEMENTARY SCHOOL		POLICE DEPARTMENT	
Gail Weiss	259-1108	Jackie Mendonsa, Principal	259-1212	Chief Thomas E. Harding	259-1279
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY		EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR		Dispatch	413-625-8200
Linda Avis Scott	259-6550	Walter Tibbetts	259-1211	RECYCLING COORDINATOR	
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR		FINANCE COMMITTEE		Gary Bernhard	259-1235
Rebecca Torres	259-1214	George Arvanitis, Co-Chair	259-1348	REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE	
ANIMAL INSPECTORS		Eric Stocker, Co-Chair	259-1250	Stephen Sullivan	259-1626
Denise Chiminiello	259-1020	FIRE DEPARTMENT		SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE	
Nancy Long	259-1279	Walter Tibbetts, Chief	259-1211	Fred Steinberg	259-9996
ASSESSORS		or at home	259-1286	UNION #28 SCHOOL SUPT.	
Kenneth Holmberg	259-3790	HEALTH AGENT		Jennifer Haggerty	413-423-3337
BOARD OF HEALTH		David Zarozinski	549-3710	SELECT BOARD	
Catherine Hilton, Clerk	259-2122	HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT		Michael Vinskey, Chair	253-4260
BUILDINGS COMMITTEE		Tim Hunting	259-1215	Michael DeChiara	259-1059
Bob Groves	259-1200	HISTORICAL COMMISSION		Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil	256-0312
BUILDING INSPECTOR		Barbara Goodhind	259-1428	SHUTESBURY BROADBAND COMMITTEE	
Jim Hawkins	413-774-3167 x. 113	M.N. SPEAR MEMORIAL LIBRARY		Gayle Huntress	259-1905
CEMETERY COMMISSION		Mary Anne Antonellis, Dir.	259-1213	Asha Strazzero-Wild	413-478-8368
Marilyn Tibbetts	259-1976	LIBRARY TRUSTEES		TAX COLLECTOR	
COUNCIL ON AGING		Kate Cell, Co-Chair	259-9129	Ellen McKay	259-1615
Med-Ride Program	259-3796	Molly Moss, Co-Chair	253-6717	TOWN CLERK	
Marilyn Tibbetts, Chair	259-1976	OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE		Susie Mosher	259-1204
CONSERVATION COMMISSION		Leave inquires at	259-1214	TOWN MODERATOR	
Leave inquiries at	259-3792	OUR TOWN NEWSLETTER		Penelope Kim	259-1326
CULTURAL COUNCIL		Janis S. Gray	259-1584	TREASURER	
Julie Stepanek, contact	387-5670	PERSONNEL BOARD		Gabriele Voelker	259-1801
DEPT. OF VETERANS' SERVICES		Ralph Armstrong	259-1021	TREE WARDEN	
Timothy Niejadlik	772-1571	PLANNING BOARD		Thomas Houston	259-1508
DOG OFFICER		Deacon Bonnar	259-1276	WEB COMMITTEE	
Nancy Long	259-1279	PLUMBING/GAS INSPECTOR		Jamie Malcolm-Brown	413-362-9996
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR		John Letourneau	367-0017	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	
Maurice Gregoire	253-7505			Charles J. DiMare	549-5330

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