

SHUTESBURY

MASSACHUSETTS



OUR TOWN

Continuing to explore regionalization for elementary education: *Information gathered, no decisions yet; report February 2, recommendation expected March 9*

By the Regional School District Planning Committee: Michael DeChiara, School Committee; Elaine Puleo, Select Board; and Becky Torres, Town Administrator

- **October 2011:** Shutesbury Town Meeting voted unanimously to approve a three-person Regional School District Planning Committee to explore regionalization.

The last update to the town regarding the regionalization process was in the Fall 2012 edition of Our Town.

- Committee is required by state law to represent a town in discussions regarding educational regionalization. Moderator appoints **Elaine Puleo, Becky Torres** and **Michael DeChiara**.
- **November 2011 to June 2012:** Shutesbury Committee meets with Amherst, Leverett and Pelham Committees to explore joint interest.
- **June 2012:** The four town committees vote to join as a Regional School District Planning Board (RSDPB) – a required step to formally explore regionalization. This enables all four towns to act as one entity for planning purposes.
- **June 2012 to present:** The RSDPB holds open public meetings at least monthly. These meetings are held in all six elementary schools and the regional middle school.

Public education in Massachusetts (and in America) is a continually changing field sparked by new tech-

nology, new insights and fiscal constraints.

To meet this challenge of future demands for education requires reflection and responsible, proactive action to maintain the educational quality we value and meet the needs of the future. As members of the elected boards in our respective towns, the RSDPB members felt it was important to explore the topic of regionalizing our elementary schools.

Some of the reasons identified by the RSDPB for regionalizing include:

- respond to shifting student demographics (continued declining enrollment in W. Mass)
- improve long-term fiscal stability (years of budget cuts and dwindling funding to towns)
- increase the capacity to meet the academic needs of future students (create a 21st century education to address the challenges of the future we cannot yet predict).

The Regional School District Planning Committee's work is guided

See RSDPB, cont. on pg. 4

More money coming for Shutesbury? Stay tuned!

Becky Torres, *Town Administrator*

Every January, I travel to Boston and spend two days in the Hynes Center at the Mass Municipal Association (MMA) Annual Meeting. I go to hear from the politicians and administrators in Boston and learn about the financial and policy initiatives that are driving the day. Share ideas with other town officials. This year Governor Deval Patrick's people were a chorus in unison urging support for the new revenue taxes to support a budget with increased local funding as well as infrastructure investments, programs and continued obligations.

The MMA is a nonprofit organization made up of cities and towns that lobbies for cities and towns. MMA establishes long-term goals that have support from all geographical areas of the Commonwealth. MMA creates forums where local concerns can be heard by policy makers and lawmakers. The economic forecasters' projections are optimistic about 2014, but 2013 projections are flat.

What can we expect in Shutesbury? Our budget will balance at the

See More Money?, cont. on pg. 3

Council on Aging to launch Med-Ride Program

Starting in March, the Shutesbury Council on Aging (COA) will begin a new transportation program for Shutesbury senior citizens who need rides for medical or dental appointments in Franklin or Hampshire Counties. This new program will be coordinated by

Linda Avis Scott and **David Dann**, both members of the COA.

Volunteer drivers will be matched with folks who need transportation. Look for a flyer with full program description inside this newsletter.

Find more COA news on page 2.

Messages from the Town Clerk

Leslie Bracebridge, *Town Clerk*
Office Hours: 9am –1pm Monday
through Thursday
Call 259-1204 to make special appointments.

An Annual Street List form, requesting the household census on January 1 of this year, should have been received at each Shutesbury household by the time you receive this newsletter. As required by state law, these forms should be completed and returned in the SASE within ten days of receipt.

If your household did not receive a form, please call the Town Clerk's Office (259-1204) and one will be sent to you right away.

Returning the completed street list form keeps one's voter registration active, ensures one's continued receipt of municipal mailings, and verifies eligibility for the trash bag distribution list!

Shutesbury's **Annual Town Meeting and Election of Officers** will take place Saturday, May 4, 2013 at the Shutesbury Elementary School, 23 West Pelham Road.

Polls will be open 8 AM – 2 PM. The Town Meeting usually begins at 9 AM. Watch for the late April *Our Town* mailing for all the town meeting and election details.

If you are not already registered to vote, and you wish to vote on May 4, **you must register to vote by Saturday April 13.**

Though my office will be open during the evening at least from 7 to 8 on April 13, why wait for the last minute? You can register to vote anytime: in person at the town clerk's office or by mail. Mail-in voter registration cards are always tacked up in the outdoor bulletin board of Town Hall and inside Town Hall in

the files by my door. Call if you would like a mail-in voter registration card sent to you. These cards can also be used if you have moved within the town, changed your name or if you wish to change your party affiliation.

Absentee ballots for the Annual Town Election will be available for voters who cannot come to the polls on May 4, due to health concerns, religious restrictions or because they will be out of town, between the hours of 8am and 2pm. You (or your relative on your behalf) may apply for an absentee ballot in person, or just write to the Town Clerk, P.O. Box 264, Shutesbury, MA 01072 to request an absentee ballot be mailed to you. Your request must include your residential and mailing addresses and your signature. If you apply in person, you can choose to vote at that time or a ballot will be mailed to you.

Positions on the May 4 ballot due to term expirations:

- **Board of Health** - one 3-year term and one 1-year term
- **Cemetery Commission** - one 3-year term
- **Constable** - one 3-year term
- **Board of Library Trustees** - two 3-year terms
- **Moderator** – one 3-year term
- **Planning Board** - two 3-year terms
- **School Committee** - one 3-year term
- **Board of Selectmen** - one 3-year term

Should any of these positions interest you, please request a nomination form from this office. **You need only collect 20 signatures for your name to appear on the ballot.** Completed nomination forms must

be returned by Saturday, March 16. More positions may open up due to resignations.

People sometimes ask if they can get an absentee ballot for the Town Meeting Articles. Absentee ballots are strictly for the election of officials and any ballot questions. **Town Meeting questions are voted only by those who can be present on the floor of Town Meeting** after an open exchange of information.

Senior lounge renovations to enhance new activities

A subcommittee of the Council on Aging (COA) has been working with Town Administrator Becky Torres and the Building Committee to renovate the senior lounge, the room opposite the Select Board meeting room in the basement of town hall.

The old carpet was removed by a work party late last fall. The COA is looking forward to having a newly refurbished lounge for activities that were suggested by folks who completed the COA's recent survey. Stay tuned for a special announcement when it is ready.

Meanwhile, the COA hopes to resume its monthly potluck lunches in March. All are welcome. RSVP to **Marilyn Tibbetts**, 259-1976.

The resources you seek may be close at hand . . .

The Information & Caregiver Resource Center at Franklin County Home Care Corp. answers questions and needs concerning elders, caregivers, and persons with disabilities.

Contact FCHCC at 413-773-5555 or info@fchcc.org.

Read more at www.fchcc.org.

Many thanks to our fabulous folders!

The Fall 2012 edition of the *Our Town* newsletter reached your mailbox thanks to this stalwart group: **Leslie Bracebridge, Nina Compagnon, Catherine Hilton, Susan Millinger, Linda Seidman, Marilyn Tibbetts, Walter Tibbetts and Becky Torres.**

If you would like to join a future "folding party" for *Our Town* or special municipal mailings, please call Administrative Secretary Leslie Bracebridge at 259-1204. (You will be under no obligation if a given date or time does not work for you.)

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*
Leslie Bracebridge, *Town Hall Liaison*

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30% POST CONSUMER WASTE



More money?, cont. from pg. 1

the 2.5% cap, including modest increases requested from our schools and increased obligations. We are in good financial shape.

But any decreases in the federal and state funding would quickly change the picture. Our tax levy is \$4.4 million. We receive \$1.5 million in state and federal funds plus other grants and reimbursable funding for essential services. We have to question every year, *Is this Sustainable?* If state and federal funding drops we would be hard pressed to make up the difference locally.

This year the "fiscal cliff" loomed large for months. The fiscal cliff has become symbolic of government's power to tax the people, decide how much to tax and which people to tax.

The Patrick Administration has begun the year with an overhauled presentation of the budget to make it understandable to the public, to be more transparent. They are focusing on forecasting and were analyzing potential fiscal cliff impacts through December, and will continue to detail the state impacts from changes in federal funding.

The state budget is now at \$50 billion, \$34 billion appropriated and \$16 billion from federal funding and other sources.

The practical but difficult step this year was to line up the federal budget against the state budget. 2014 will begin the America Care Act (ACA) implementation alongside MassHealth. And while the ACA used MassHealth as a model it is different. The programs will complement each other but the overlaps mean program changes for each dollar to be used effectively. Go to mass.gov for detailed information on the state budget.

What does the Governor's proposal mean for Shutesbury? It would be an increase of \$23,514 for local Education and \$9,028 in Local Aid.

Why is the Governor's proposal to increase money to cities and towns extraordinary? Because over the last decade we have seen cuts and level funding to local aid paired with increased mandates at the state and local level. The Mass Budget and Policy Center cites local aid in Mas-



Mass. Gov. Deval Patrick talks with local and town officials at a reception during the recent annual meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Photo by Becky Torres

sachusetts has declined 58% from 1982 to 2012, \$2.25 billion to under \$1 billion (approximately).

How would the Governor's tax proposal work? The income tax increase of 1%, from 5.25% to 6.25%, effective January 1, 2014, would add \$2.6 billion. Coupled with raised deductions from \$4,400 to \$8,800 for a single filer and from \$8,800 to \$17,600 for married filers, it would subtract \$1.1 billion, and tightened exemptions would add back \$1.3 billion (estimates from the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center).

The reduction of the sales tax rate from 6.25% to 4.5% would reduce taxes by an estimated \$1.4 billion a year (Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center). I haven't heard any objections to this and it could be good for businesses.

And what would it cost us as taxpayers? If your taxable income is \$20,000, it would cost \$1,050 in 2013 and \$1,250 in 2014. Your income tax would go up \$200. If you bought a new \$20,000 car in 2012 it cost you \$1250 in sales tax. In 2014 the new \$20,000 car would cost you \$900 in sales tax. Your sales tax would go down \$350.

You are right, nobody buys a new car every year, but beyond food and clothing we pay sales tax on everyday items and big ticket items. The reduction in sales tax would offset the increase in income tax and help make our tax system more progressive.

The Legislature will be tackling the Governor's budget, making their changes. The biggest question is,

will they go for new revenue as well? The Governor is asking for support and partnership from all of us to pass this.

In 2008, when the Governor was running for office, he was aware of the state's reliance on property tax. He spoke and made plans for shifting the burden off the property taxpayers, but with the recession, just back-filling the local aid budgets with stimulus money to keep them as level as possible took all our resources.

With this proposed structural change to tax policy, he is shifting the momentum and burden, though only a small amount, in a more equitable direction. There is nothing progressive about property tax and it often burdens those with less ability to pay, especially here in Shutesbury where we have no commercial base to share the burden.

At the 2006 Shutesbury Annual Town Meeting a resolution was voted on calling for an increase to state income tax to 6%. It was supported unanimously. Do you support this new proposal to raise the income tax to 6.25%? And the decrease in sales tax from 6.25% to 4.5%?

This is a complicated issue. It impacts us all differently. The state administration is working to make the state budget more understandable and readable. If you go to mass.gov the budget information links are highlighted on the home page.

Making budgets — the story of how taxpayers' money is spent — more transparent and understandable is an important goal at all levels of government.

NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Clif Read, *Chair, Shutesbury School Committee*

When the School Committee December meeting convened, it was less than a week after the tragic events at the Sandy Hook School in Newtown. This horrific incident has impacted us all, especially those with children and those responsible for educating our students.

At the meeting, Principal **Robert Mahler** provided an update on the **actions taken to protect the students of the Shutesbury Elementary school**, to reassure them and provide a safe environment within the school, and the outreach efforts to parents.

Bob also described the school's Safety Plan and the programs in place to make the school building a safe and secure facility. In addition to the physical layout of the school building, the Plan also details procedures that staff and students practice through drills in response to various safety issues, whether a school lockdown exercise or a fire alarm.

Working with a committee comprised of the Police Chief, Fire Chief, school staff members and parents, the Safety Committee routinely reviews the plans and makes improvements as recommended.

The school had applied for and was recently awarded a grant for \$5,000 from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association for building security equipment upgrades. While this covered less than half of the recommended improvements for the system endorsed by the Safety Committee, the Finance Committee supported a request from the School for an additional expenditure to complete the additional work in an expeditious manner. We would like to express our appreciation of the excellent work of the Safety Committee and the financial support of the Finance Committee as we continue to make the school a safe, secure facility.

The School Committee will be receiving periodic updates on school security and safety procedures at its monthly meetings. While changes in procedures over the coming months

may result in minor inconveniences for school visitors, we ask for everyone's support as we fully implement the School Safety Plan and ensure that we can foster a safe, supportive and creative learning environment in our school.

The beginning of the school year last September brought many staffing changes to the Shutesbury Elementary School with retirements, resignations, new hires and shifts to new positions. Thanks to the talented and dedicated school staff, the transition has been relatively smooth.

Over the course of the fall the school community directed its attention to **the musical production of "Cindy Ella,"** which debuted to rave reviews in mid-December. Kudos go out to the amazing work of the students, staff and volunteers who put on two amazing productions for the Shutesbury community.

I had the opportunity to attend the evening performance and was impressed with both the quality of the performance and by the extraordinary community turnout.

Earlier in December the School Committee hosted a **Union 28 Community Forum** as a follow-up to the Committee's discussion in October. The forum provided Shutesbury residents with the opportunity to participate in conversation about Shutesbury's membership in Union 28, to ask questions about the current structure and operation of Union 28, and to offer perspectives on the existing arrangement.

While the meeting was not designed to discuss issues related to the regionalization study currently under way, there were many questions related to the regionalization topics. Minutes from the December 4 meeting, as well as all of the School Committee's meetings, are available on the School Committee page on www.shutesburyschool.org.

In an effort to provide communication about the work of the School Committee and the major items of discussion at its monthly meetings, the Committee has been distributing a **"Letter to the Community"** for Shutesbury residents. While the Committee's meeting minutes are

the official record of business conducted, these are not finalized and voted on until the following meeting. The Letters provide a timelier communiqué that summarize the salient issues of the meetings. Special thanks go to **Emily Bloch** who pens these letters and captures the essence of the discussions held at the meetings.

The school began a **new Breakfast Program** in early January to provide students with the opportunity to buy breakfast before the start of the school day.

While the food is simple, it does provide a nutritious meal that is within the guidelines of the school's Wellness Policy and offers students the chance to be well fed before starting their classroom activities. Last year the School Committee voted to support the implementation of a Breakfast Program, recognizing the importance of the keeping kids properly fed so that they can maximize their learning experiences. With the program now operating, the Committee appreciates the work of the school staff in implementing this important component of the school's operation.

The School Committee will be **meeting on February 28, March 21, April 25 and May 16 at 7pm** in the Conference Room of the Shutesbury Elementary School. We welcome your attendance at these meetings, or your communications through your Committee representatives – **Dan Hayes, Emily Bloch, Mare Fox, Michael DeChiara, or Clif Read.**

RSDPB, cont. from pg. 1
by the following values:

- Be good stewards. We received good schools from past generations, and take seriously our responsibility to invest in the future by handing off good schools to the generations that follow.
- Be fiscally responsible. Be thoughtful and realistic about cost to the towns, and understand short and long-term results of any investment.
- Provide ample opportunities for town and resident input.

Cont. on pg. 5

Cont. from pg. 4

- Learn about, respect, and reflect the culture of the different communities.
- Maintain the best features of current schools; capitalize on their strengths.

Since June, the RSDPB has been active seeking to do its due diligence by gathering information, grappling with key issues, and creating opportunities to communicate with residents. Key developments include:

- Development of a planning timeline. This includes two key milestones. On March 9, the RSDPB will make a recommendation to regionalize or not. If regionalization is recommended, the start of a new region would be fall 2014.
- Creation of sub-committees to look at range of important issues including governance for a new region, how to maintain the educational quality and specialness of each town and how to preserve community schools.
- Hiring of two expert consultants to look at the issues of finances and

education – the big issues that concern everyone in all four towns. This is the first time that outside consultants have been hired to provide expert analysis to inform regionalization discussions. Malcolm Reid, is the Education Consultant; Mark Abrahams is the Finance Consultant. Both brought extensive understanding and expertise to their charge of analyzing the impacts of regionalization for our towns.

- Development of a website to share information with the public: www.RegionalSchoolPlanning.com

Key events/developments to come:

- **February 2, 2013: A Report to the Communities** will be made at Amherst Regional Middle School from 1:00-3:00pm. This will be an opportunity for the public to hear directly from the consultants about their findings regarding financial and educational impacts of regionalization. Public invited to ask questions about the findings.
- **February 27:** A Shutesbury Town

Forum will be convened at Shutesbury Elementary School to gather feedback from residents about the regionalization plans. This is intentionally being held prior to a RSDPB recommendation being made. Time TBA.

- **March 9, 2013:** RSDPB will meet at 9am at Amherst Regional Middle School to make recommendation to regionalize or not.
- IF a decision to regionalize is made, many months will be taken to develop a regional agreement to define and codify the relationship of the four towns within the region. Many key issues such as governance, local control, and finances will be addressed at that time.
- **November 2013:** Town elections will be held in each of the four towns to vote on regionalization. Regionalization cannot occur without approval of town residents.
- **December 2013:** IF the towns vote to approve regionalization, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must approve the plan by the end of 2013.

Union #28 Community Network for Children

The Community Network for Children (CNC), funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, hosts programs in Shutesbury and surrounding towns!

Playgroup for children 0-5 years old: Fridays (excepting school vacations and curriculum days), 9 - 10:30am, Shutesbury Elementary School, 23 West Pelham Road.

Story Hour for children 0-5 years old: Mondays (excepting school vacations and holidays), 10 - 11am, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Cooleyville Road. Enjoy time with your child(ren) and other families and care-givers from your community!

Open Gym, Greenfield: Sundays, February 3 & 17, March 17 & 24, April 7 & 21, 2:15-3:15pm, YMCA of Greenfield, 451 Main St. Most appropriate for children up to 3rd grade. No registration required. Just show up!

Building Language with Picture Books and Play Parent Work-

shop: Tuesdays, January 29 & February 5, 6 -7:30pm, Swift River School, 201 Wendell Road, New Salem. Early language is the key to later academic success. Come learn and practice simple strategies that help children gain strong language skills while playing and having fun! Free child care and dinner at 5:30 with registration. For more info or to register please call Gillian Budine, 978-544-5157 or mail budine@erving.com.

Toileting Tips Parent and Caregiver Workshop: Tuesday, February 26, 6 - 8pm, Shutesbury Elementary School. When to start? What to do? When to worry? Sarah Patton, LICSW, joins us in conversation about toilet

training. Free child care and dinner at 5:30 with registration. For more info or to register call Gillian Budine, 978-544-5157 or email budine@erving.com.

Agas and Stages Questionnaire: Do you have questions about your child's development? Interested in learning new activities to help your child learn? Completing the questionnaire can give you a great idea of your child's strengths and what areas may need more practice. Bring the results to your annual pediatrician visit to begin a conversation. Support your child's individual developmental progress. If you'd like to get started please contact Gillian Budine, 978-544-5157 or budine@erving.com.

Redeem coupon for a Welcome Baby Gift Bag!

We would like to extend a welcome to your new baby with a free Welcome Baby Gift Bag. Your bag will contain books, health and safety items and valuable information about local services for you and your new baby. Please call or email Gillian, CNC Coordinator, at (978) 544-5157, budine@erving.com, to arrange for a drop off at your home or to pick up your welcome baby gift bag at one of our local story hours or playgroups!



News from the Historical Commission

The rotted sills of **Shutesbury's 1842 one-room schoolhouse** at the West Pelham and Leverett Road intersection have been replaced, thanks to Community Preservation funds.

The 170-year-old original rotted sills, though hidden to the casual eye, had threatened the long-term existence of this Shutesbury heirloom. Now the West Schoolhouse can continue to welcome local residents and passers-by alike to our scenic town center corridor for many years to come.

The Leverett and Cooleyville Roads scenic corridor is becoming an ever-enhanced tour through our town's center and history.

The Honor Roll was rebuilt last summer and expanded to include more recent wars.

The Town Pound at the eastern end of the route was recently landscaped and a new sign installed.

Daffodil plantings, formal gardens at the Highway Garage berm and the Town Hall, a new copper dome on a straightened Community Church steeple, public and private contributions alike combine to give the walker or driver a picturesque visit through our town. Even an occasional moose or bear may contribute live action to the scenery!

The Town Buildings Committee has identified the 158 Leverett Road, **1840 Hearse House** as the next town building needing its attention, and has asked for and received unanimous endorsements of both the Historical and Cemetery Commissions for use of Community Preservation funds to repair the building in keeping with its original 1840 plan.

Originally built to house the town's hearse, the building now houses all the tools required to keep our town's three cemeteries mowed and trimmed.

Fund-raising is under way. There will be volunteer work parties. The building will be opened to the public for viewing of the interior beams constructed by Jonas H. Winter, who was the lowest bidder of the 1840 project at twenty-three dollars & sev-

enty-five cents. Present-day contributions will be gratefully accepted in any amount and can be sent to the Shutesbury Historical Commission, P.O. Box 264, Shutesbury, 01072.

The process for use of Community Preservation (CP) funds includes a vote of the Community Preservation Committee as to whether to endorse use of CP funds for the project. If the vote is positive, that vote is followed by an Annual Town

Meeting vote on May 4. The Historical Commission is available for any questions on the history of the hearse house, the Cemetery Commission can answer questions relative to the building's current day use, and the Buildings Committee can speak to the proposed scope of work versus tearing the building down and starting over.

Please feel welcome to become involved in any manner.



The 1840 Hearse House

The Community Preservation Committee invites all Shutesbury residents to attend the Community Preservation Public Hearing February 14, 2013.

Below is the text of the legal notice. Hope to see you there.
Donald Fletcher, *Chair, Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee*

Notice is hereby given that the Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee will hold a public hearing on February 14, 2013, at 6:00 PM at the Shutesbury Elementary School conference Room. The meeting has two purposes:

- 1) to contribute and hear other's ideas about Shutesbury's community preservation needs, possibilities, and resources, and
- 2) to hear about and discuss a proposal that requests \$17,900- \$21,900 of Community Preservation funding. The proposal is to preserve and protect Shutesbury's 1840 Hearse House to a fully restored and rehabilitated municipal building. The total project cost is \$20,000-\$24,000.

All interested persons should attend the hearing. Please attend fragrance free.

For special accommodations contact Rebecca Torres at 413-259-1214 by February 7, 2013. For weather-related emergency rescheduling please call the town clerk's office at 413-259-1204, or check online at www.shutesbury.org

Notes from the Assessors

Exemption Information FY 2013

Applications for exemptions must be filed annually to determine if eligibility has changed. Veterans must document that there is a 10% minimum service related disability. **The criteria for elderly are listed below.** Gross income is subject to a Social Security exemption allowance (i.e., we do not include this amount) of \$4,308 for the retired worker if single and an additional \$2,154 for his or her spouse. Total household income must be verifiable by tax returns and/or earnings statements. Assets include all bank accounts, IRAs, stocks, investments, personal property, and real estate (*exclusive of house and land*).

Exemption	Tax Reduction	Minimum Age	Maximum income	Maximum Assets
17-D (S&M)	\$175.00	70	No maximum	\$40,000
41-C (S)	\$1000	65	\$20,000	\$40,000
41-C (M)	\$1000	65	\$30,000	\$55,000

Community Preservation Act Exemption Information

The following tables show the allowable net household income to qualify for the CPA exemption. These tables are based on an area-wide median income of \$69,800.

CPA net income limits under age 60

Number in household --- income maximum

1.	\$39,100.00
2	\$44,650.00
3	\$50,250.00
4	\$55,850.00
5	\$60,300.00
6	\$64,750.00
7	\$69,250.00
8	\$73,700.00

CPA net income limits over age 60

Number in household --- income maximum

1	\$48,850.00
2	\$55,850.00
3	\$62,800.00
4	\$69,800.00
5	\$75,400.00
6	\$80,950.00
7	\$86,550.00
8	\$92,150.00

Applications for the Community Preservation Act exemption must be accompanied with copies of the federal income tax return for 2011 and received by assessors no later than March 31, 2013. All exemption and abatement forms are available from our office, 413-259-3790, or through links on our website www.shutesbury.org/assessor.

Motor Vehicle Abatements

For the benefit of persons applying for Motor Vehicle Excise abatements, the Assessors require proof of transfer of ownership as well as the plate return receipt, plate cancelled receipt or lost plate affidavit. Forms are available from the assessors at the above-mentioned website and telephone number.

Note from the Town Collector

Ellen McKay, *Tax Collector*

Dear Shutesbury taxpayers,

With the winter upon us, the third quarter of our real estate bills have become due and the calendar 2013 motor vehicle excise bills for many vehicles registered on January 1 have been mailed. Additionally, excise bills on vehicles registered late in 2012 are billed during 2013. 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 2012 for the year and just the bill number WITH-OUT 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.

If you have purchased your prop-

erty after January 1, 2012, 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 413-259-1615 to determine if I will be here.

Have a happy, healthy, and safe New Year.

Ellen

Hospice of Franklin County



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Bereavement Support Group

Thursdays, February 21 – April 11, 2013

5:00-6:30pm

Conference Room, Hospice of Franklin County

We offer 8-week support groups for people who have experienced the death of a loved one. Groups are open to any adult in the community suffering from the loss of a loved one. *A phone interview is required for registration.* It is recommended that the death be at least 3 months before the start of a group. Group membership is limited to 8 participants. There is no charge for the groups.

To Register Please Call Judy Allen, Bereavement Coordinator
(413) 774-2400

Registration Deadline for Winter Group: Monday, February 11, 2013

Spring 2013 Bereavement Support Groups

Bereavement Writing Group - Mondays April 29- June 17, 2013

5:30 – 7:30 pm at Hospice of Franklin County

Senior Spouse/Partner Loss Group - Tuesdays April 30- June 18, 2013

Co-sponsored by Greenfield Senior Center for people 55+
10:30 – Noon at Greenfield Senior Center

Loss of Parents Group (for adults) - Thursdays May 2- June 20, 2013

5:30 – 7:00pm at Hospice of Franklin County

Hospice of Franklin County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religious affiliation or disability. Our facilities and services are accessible to persons with disabilities. We accept you as you are.

The M. N. Spear Memorial Library

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

Hours:

Monday and Wednesday:
11am -1pm and 3- 7:30pm
Tuesday and Thursday: 3-7:30pm
Friday: Closed
Saturday: 10am-1pm
Sunday: 3-6pm

Volunteers!

Volunteers help the Library in many ways. **Virginia Worthington, Susan Millinger, Suzanne Hayden, Joanne Bernhard, and Janis Gray** each volunteer for one shift weekly. They help with everything from shelving books, to processing inter-library loan items, and circulation. Virginia makes many of the flyers we use to promote library programs. Their help with the day-to-day work of the library is invaluable. Together they contribute 13 hours each week, 650 hours each year. If we paid them just \$12 per hour, it would cost \$7,800 annually.

We are also fortunate to have volunteers who have coordinated programs. **Laura Walton** offers a monthly knitting class, **Pam Ososky** has taught baking classes and **April Woodard-McNiff** has been offering children's art classes for the library. Together with support from the Friends of the Library for materials and ingredients, these volunteers have been able to share their skills and enrich our community.

Programs!

In Fiscal Year 2012 the Library offered 109 programs with more than 2,000 attendees.

Programs for the coming months include a gluten-free cooking workshop led by Shutesbury gourmet chef and cookbook author **Leslie Cerier**, a Dr. Seuss Birthday party featuring a concert by **Roger Tinnell**, and a screening of the film, **Chicago 10**, a multi-media documentary about the anti-war protests during 1968's Democratic National Convention. Plans for our summer reading program are in the works and include

two visits from Boston's Museum of Science.

Details about Library programs can be found on the website, mnspear.org, the M.N. Spear Memorial Library Facebook page, on flyers posted at the Library, Town Hall and the Post Office. We include notices in the school newsletter and the *Our Town* newsletter. We send email announcements via the Friends of the

Library email list, the town-wide announce list, and two Shutesbury resident-driven resources, the E-cricket and Nextdoor Shutesbury. If there are other ways to share news about Library programs please let us know!

Encyclopedia Britannica and reliable reference resources online

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System purchase online access to a suite of databases. These databases contain researched articles and resources which are vetted and approved by librarians.

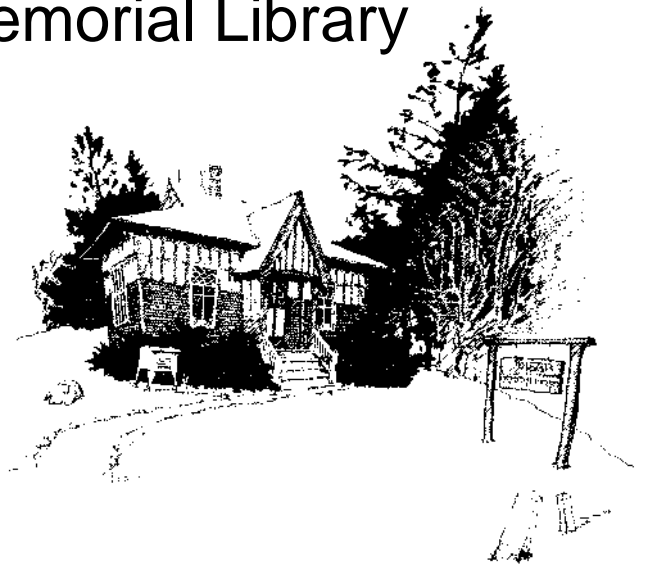
The MBLC and MLS also provide access to **Encyclopedia Britannica Online**.

Links to the databases and encyclopedia can be found on our website, mnspear.org. Just choose the **Reference Desk** tab.

C/W MARS and Evergreen, a new Integrated Library System

At the end of May, C/W MARS installed a new Integrated Library System to perform all computer functions related to maintaining online library catalogs, circulation, patron records and statistics. The new software, Evergreen is open-source software. C/W MARS and the other library consortia using Evergreen will be able to develop functions useful to both library patrons and staff over time.

Development of software to make



Evergreen the best it can be for C/W MARS libraries continues through C/W MARS and other Evergreen users. In the meantime the software operates slowly and we are learning to be patient while searching the catalog, placing holds and performing other circulation related tasks.

By now, most patrons have been able to activate their accounts in Evergreen. Everyone seems to be having better success by using Firefox as their browser. If you have not been able to access your online account please contact us so that we may help you.

Your library needs Friends

The Friends of the Library support the Library by fundraising, sponsoring activities and programs and advocating for the library. The Friends annual membership appeal was mailed to every Shutesbury home in December. Shutesbury residents can join the Friends by visiting our website, mnspear.org and clicking on the yellow **donate** button or by picking up a membership brochure at the library.

Another way that supporters have been donating to the Friends is through our **ongoing returnable bottle and can collection**. Bring your returnable bottles and cans to the library and we'll bring them to redemption centers and cash them in. A little bit of money goes a long way at the library! We really appreciate all the support!

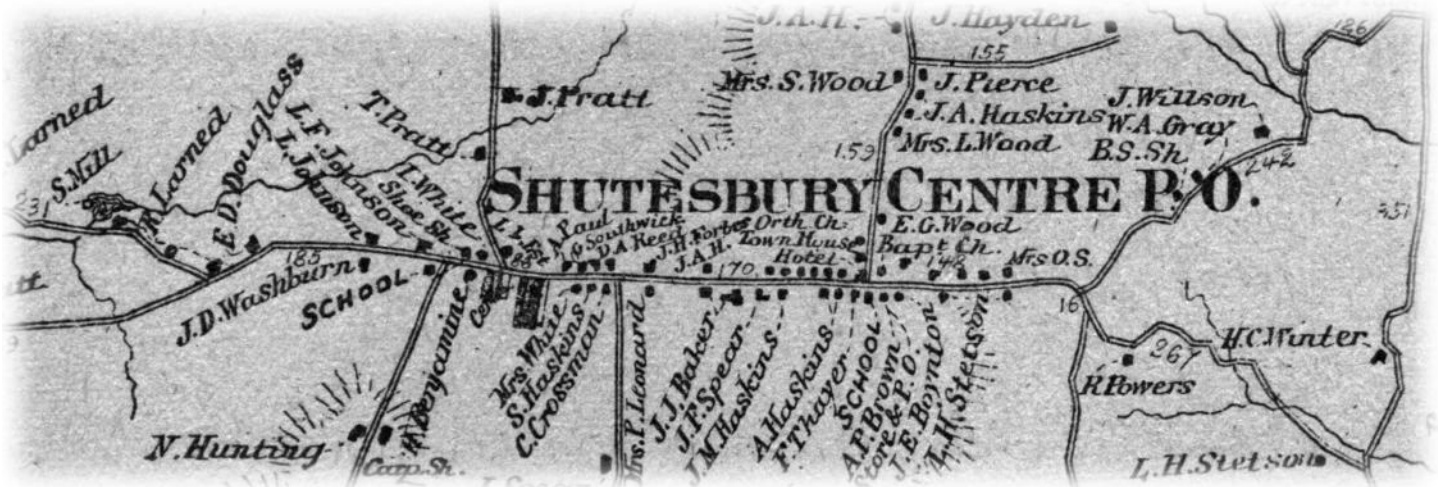


TOWN OF SHUTESBURY
 P.O. BOX 276
 SHUTESBURY MA 01072

PRSR
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 PERMIT #5
 SHUTESBURY MA 01072

Report on school regionalization plans
 Saturday, Feb. 2 at Amherst Regional
 Middle School! See pp 1 & 5.

Resident
 Shutesbury MA 01072



HOW TO CONTACT TOWN OFFICIALS

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

ACCOUNTANT Gail Weiss	259-1108	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR Walter Tibbetts	259-1211	RECREATION COMMITTEE Vacant	259-1214
ADA COMMITTEE Martina Carroll	259-1110	FINANCE COMMITTEE Lori Tuominen	259-1765	RECYCLING COORDINATOR Gary Bernhard	259-1059
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR Rebecca Torres	259-1214	Rus Wilson	259-1820	REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE Michael DeChiara	256-3303
ANIMAL INSPECTORS Denise Chiminiello Nancy Long	259-1020 259-2123	FIRE DEPARTMENT Walter Tibbetts, Chief or at home	259-1211 259-1286	ROADS COMMITTEE Vacant	259-1214
ASSESSORS Kenneth Holmberg	259-3790	HEALTH AGENT David Zarozinski	549-3710	SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE Clif Read	259-1092
BOARD OF HEALTH William Elliott Public health emergency	259-2122 659-7294	HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT Tim Hunting	259-1215	UNION #28 SCHOOL SUPT. Joan Wickman	423-3337
BUILDINGS COMMITTEE Dale Houle	259-1696	HISTORICAL COMMISSION Barbara Goodhind	259-1428	SELECT BOARD Elaine Puleo, Chair	259-1979
BUILDING INSPECTOR Jim Hawkins	774-3167 x. 113	M.N. SPEAR MEMORIAL LIBRARY Mary Anne Antonellis, Dir.	259-1213	Al Springer	259-1578
CEMETERY COMMISSION Marilyn Tibbetts	259-1976	LIBRARY TRUSTEES Karen Traub	367-9826	J. April Stein	259-1074
COUNCIL ON AGING Muriel Gross	259-1371	OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE Janice Stone	259-1557	SHUTESBURY-LEVERETT BROADBAND COMMITTEE Weezie Houle	259-1696
CONSERVATION COMMISSION Leave inquiries at	259-3792	OUR TOWN NEWSLETTER Janis S. Gray	259-1584	TAX COLLECTOR Ellen McKay	259-1615
CULTURAL COUNCIL Renee A. Richard	259-9296	PERSONNEL BOARD J. April Stein	259-1074	TOWN CLERK Leslie Bracebridge	259-1204
DEPT. OF VETERAN'S SERVICES Leo J. Parent, Jr.	863-3205	PLANNING BOARD Deacon Bonnar	259-1276	TREASURER Gabriele Voelker	259-1801
DOG OFFICER Nancy Long	413.345-8796	PLUMBING/GAS INSPECTOR John Letourneau	367-0017	TREE WARDEN Thomas Houston	259-1508
ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR Maurice Gregoire	253-7505	POLICE DEPARTMENT Chief Thomas E. Harding	259-1279	WEB COMMITTEE Fred Steinberg	259-9996
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Robert Mahler, Principal	259-1212	Dispatch	625-8200	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Charles J. DiMare	549-5330
		POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE SQUAD	911	250th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE Janis S. Gray	259-1584
				Maryélise Lamet	259-1551