

VerShare

To enhance a spirit of community, foster economic development, and contribute to projects that benefit the residents of Vershire.

Please join your friends and neighbors for the annual VerShare Dinner & Presentation

Friday January 31st

Lasagna Dinner 5:30 - 6:30pm

Presentation 6:30 - 7pm

VerShare Annual Meeting: 7 - 8pm

This year's presentation will be from a group of Rivendell students.

(David Hooke will be cooking the lasagna, and you are welcome to bring something to share.)

President's Message - Aaron Hoopes

With the dawning of 2020, modern society appears to have reached another important crossroads. Our way of living has reached the point where our destructive, all-consuming way of life must change. For too long we, as a civilization, have come to consider the Earth, the plants, the animals, and other human beings as resources to be exploited. This mentality must give way to something different.

What is going to happen, and indeed is already happening all over the world, is that people are starting to wake up to the situation and demand that things change. For the most part, people want peace and harmony. They want to live in healthy communities, raise families, and grow old without the anger and stress that has been cultivated and encouraged by the system we live in.

As people wake up and realize that the behavior patterns of the past no longer enable us to move forward effectively, old structures begin to breakdown. As more and more people start searching for answers to the fundamental questions regarding the purpose and meaning of life, a shift in consciousness takes place.

Small community organizations like VerShare are going to be the backbone of this new paradigm. Groups of like-minded people gathering together to share resources, knowledge, and positive energy can have an enormous impact on communities.

Please consider getting more involved with VerShare as we head into this new decade with clarity and commitment. Thank you!

Aaron Hoopes - VerShare President

VerShare Financial Report - Helen Wilson



Church-Orr House Upgrades & Repairs

Stagecoach Hostel donations from visitors totaled \$4,029, and the hostel was able to contribute \$3,000 to the upgrades and repairs to the Church-Orr House. We raised \$830 through the cabaret and \$4,800 from the Live Auction. Our fundraising efforts netted an additional \$4,000 in grants (a \$1,000 Gifford/Levesque Grant and \$3,000 from the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation). In 2020 we hope our fundraising will enable us to complete work on the porch and ramp for better, safer access to the building.

Children's Programs, Library, and General Operating

In 2019, VerShare was the recipient of a \$250 grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, a \$500 grant from Washington Electric Coop, a donation of \$1,800 from the Sheep and Wool Festival (thanks to VerShare volunteers who worked both days of the festival), \$1,429 from the Coop's "Pennies for Change" program, and a \$5,000 donation in support of the summer camp. Other fundraising events included the Snowshoe-A-Thon (\$4,685), the June Book, Bake, and Plant sale (\$804), The Fall Festival Book sale (\$398), and the VerShare Day events, including pizza sales, shortcake sales, and the live and silent auctions (\$4,112). The Made-in-Vershire shop had sales of \$5,780 and paid out \$5,176 to vendors. In addition to the many, many volunteer hours that made all these events successful, our members and friends contributed \$3,725 for the support of VerShare.

Our total income for the year, including the house project and hostel, was \$46,059, and our expenses totaled \$41,147. Our cash position at 12/31/2019 was \$4,003 in the Hostel account and \$15,715 in the General Checking Accounts (which includes funds designated for the house project.) A detailed financial statement will be available at the Annual Meeting or can be obtained by emailing Helen at hhwilson@gmail.com.

Made in Vershire Shop - Marissa Mazzucco

We had another wonderful year at the Made-in-Vershire Shop, filled with unique items and products from local artisans and farms, and the availability of the town's green bags at the shop has brought many new faces through the door - even some longtime residents who either didn't realize the shop existed or felt they never had a reason to stop in. The weatherization and new heater have made our quaint space as warm in temperature as the welcome you receive from our shop keepers.

The MIV shop has been staffed and supported this year by several wonderful volunteers. Thank you to Helen Wilson, Madge Morris, Amanda Sheehan, Meghan Carroll, Peggy Darrow, Naomi LaBarr, and Jo Hamlin. The "Café" has continued to help support the building with donations for coffee and goodies prepared by Peggy and other Vershire residents. Not only has Peggy provided goodies for the café (and organized Library volunteers), but she has also been graciously taking VerShare's trash and recycling to the transfer station, so a HUGE thank you to Peggy, one of our more silent volunteer extraordinaires. New to town, Meghan not only jumped right in as a shop clerk, but she also offered to be our downstairs cleaner. Amanda helps in the shop and is also doing the majority of the upkeep for our website. Helen and Madge help in the shop and are on the Vershire Board as treasurer and assistant, respectively. And thanks to Naomi, we had a complete rearrange mid-year to freshen up the shop.

We've welcomed back some of our old vendors and had a few new ones join as well! Our biggest sellers as usual have been maple products and meat, followed by pottery and knitted goods. Thanks to all who have helped or stopped by the shop this year!



Vershire Community Library Report - Andrea Herrington

The Vershire Community Library remains a gathering place for our community with a focus on its mission as a children's library. In September, our hours expanded to 12:30 - 4:30pm.

With an increase in local homeschooling families, Homeschooler's Hours were added from 12:30 to 2:30pm, with school bus kids arriving at 2:30pm. Throughout 2019, approximately 191 unique visits by children and teens occurred, as well as 170 unique visits by adults. Over 150 books were borrowed, and 181 books were documented as returned. New volunteers have stepped up to help curate the collection, and we will work together to refine our system for documenting circulation and recording a more accurate picture of our visitation.

The Vershire Community Library relies on a robust base of volunteers to open, run programs, and offer services. In 2019 we had over 9 regular & substitute adult volunteers running our Saturday and Thursday hours, in addition to special programs. This year's teen volunteers, Tovahn, Benjamin, William, and Jonathon, have helped with book sorting for the book sales. A special note of gratitude to Merle 4 for his consistent cheerful help with the younger children on Thursdays.

The Friends of Vershire Library continue to facilitate the Spring Book, Bake, & Plant Sale and the Fall Book Sale that are the primary fundraisers for the Library. This loose-knit group of reliable folks step up year after year to donate and sort books, lug boxes, repot plants, bake delicious treats, and spread the word about these fundraisers, as well as clean up afterwards. Again, thank you to all, truly too many to name but all gratefully held in our hearts.

Special programs this year included Seed Swap/Planting, Gaming UnPlugged, Green Up Day kids activity, Painting, Baking, Dr Seuss Birthday Party, Pinecone Bird Feeders, Bike Decorating for 4th of July Parade, Halloween Open House, 2nd Annual Winter Wonderland Pajama Storytime, Walking field trips around town to playground & Town Offices & Vershire Historical Society, Hike up Patterson Mountain, Snow & Ice art and science, Library Passport, ECHO pass. Additionally, 10 local children enjoyed a field trip to Northern Stage to experience *The Sound of Music*. Many, many, many thanks to the anonymous donor who made this possible!

Stagecoach Hostel - Shirley Collins

The Hostel joined AirBnB this year and saw an increase in guests, particularly skiers visiting Killington and Sugarbush and also groups from Kripalu training, who have expressed an interest in leading a group at our 2020 summer camp. We are seeing more connections among the folks staying at the hostel - reaching out and getting to know one another, which has been heartwarming. A big thanks to the Stella family for their generous donation.

Vershire Helping Hands - Zanni Lacey

There are plenty of folks in our community who are in need and don't know how to get help. The Vershire Helping Hands organization would connect our neighbors with volunteers who are willing to lend a hand. Be it a drive to the doctors, a needed meal, or raking leaves. An initial meeting to develop this program happened in January 2020, and we are still looking for volunteers and people who are interested in being involved. For more information, contact Zanni. To check out a similar group, visit www.barnardhelpinghands.org.



Klatch Report - Ethel Pike

Klatch is a library sponsored VerShare event for adults that meets on Wednesday mornings at the Church Orr House at 7:30. Meeting at the COH (which is delightfully warmer), the group of 7-10 are engaged in discussions of current affairs, climate science, and historic voyages that influenced world development.

This fall we embarked on a video overview of the history, culture, and influence of the Han people of China on the world. Conversations often link the historical ideas with the current news.

We added new folks to the group this year. Anyone is welcome, come see what we are about and join in. We are always pleased to have new views and voices to enliven the discussions. Let's keep the conversations going! Contact Ethel at 685-3874 for more.

Community/Senior Lunch - Ethel Pike

Over 20 folks enjoy connecting with friends and meeting new people while eating family-style lunches on the first Wednesday of the month at noon in the Town Center Building.

We are grateful to Jeannine Ricker for her handcrafted reminder cards and a top notch kitchen staff led by Chef Ken, who continues to try new ways to prepare our meals using the Bread Oven and his new smoker. We have a lot of fantastic desserts too! COME ENJOY!

I would like to acknowledge all the folks who have helped in the kitchen this year. We are grateful for your contribution. We are always in need for back up help and new crew members. Contact: Ken Stella.

4th Friday

Community Potluck - Ethel Pike

The 4th Friday Community Potluck, which used to be known as Soup Night, draws a sometimes small but loyal group to share food and conversation. There is often a lively game of bananagrams or pirate scrabble, or other games that people bring.

This informal gathering is open to everybody, and a potluck contribution is not required. We would love to see more folks at this event, so bring your friends and neighbors.

Contact: Laura Craft.



Sustainability Committee - Gregory Wilson

The Sustainability Committee of VerShare is committed to sponsoring educational events that encourage VerShare residents to think about our community, our region, our nation, and the world at large, in terms of sustainability, current events, and what complex cultural trends might mean for VerShare. We hope this endeavor will help us to act responsibly and with care.

In April, we hosted a seed swap, with around 15 people in attending. Late spring saw Michelle Sanborn, president of the New Hampshire Community Rights Network in Alexandria, coming to VerShare to lead a workshop on community rights with over 20 people attending. We began a working group to determine if Community Rights is something that would help VerShare protect itself from our rapidly changing culture and businesses hunting for resources. In the summer we began a Presidential Educational Series with presentations on Elizabeth Warren, Tulsi Gabbard, Pete Buttigieg, Gloria La Riva and Leonard Peltier, so far. The next candidate presented will be Independent Mark Charles. The attendance has been around 10-15 people. For 2020, the Sustainability Committee will continue to host events, bring guest speakers, and will begin hosting documentary nights. Contact Gregory for more.



House Committee Report - David Hooke

The House Committee is composed of Shirley Collins, Mary Pat Donaldson, Neil Hochstedler, David Hooke, and Ethel Pike, with guest help from Nate Thames, Gregory Wilson, Ken Bushey, and Reva Seybolt, and worked on a number of projects on the Church-Orr House in 2019.

We completed the first stage of weatherization begun in 2018, which had included a complete basement foam insulation, evacuating old cellulose, foaming the attic floor, reinstalling the old cellulose, and sealing the attic hatch. In 2019, we completed the full cellulose program in the attic and insulated/filled in the old east library door. With help from Thetford Energy Network volunteers, we built and installed removable interior storm window panels for 16 windows. These improvements led to a 49% decrease in the air infiltration rate and dropped the annual propane heating cost from \$4,300 to \$2,600. We received an incentive payment of \$2,364 from Efficiency Vermont based on these results.

We completed the first stage of new entry work. We developed a plan to build a new shed-roofed porch starting at the west end of the building and running east, going 8 feet past the existing unused door in the hall from dining room to shop and swapping the window and door in that hall, so the entry into the dining area would be more direct. With this plan done, we hired Wesley Parker to rebuild what will become the entry corridor - putting in a new door and window, replacing the floor, dressing up the ceiling, drywall/plastering the walls, and re-doing the electrical. This will set us up for the new porch project, as soon as we have the funds.

We came to contract terms for replacement of the old, deteriorating standing seam roof on the front of the house. This will involve stripping the existing metal, along with some old wood shingles that are under the metal, adding new roof paper and then new metal, plus some sheathing/soffit repairs. Iron Horse Standing Seam Roofing should complete the work this winter. We are planning to do extra reinforcement of the roof attachment so that solar panel racking could be attached to it in the future.

The next stages of work will be 1) complete the porch, and 2) add cellulose insulation and proper air barrier to the rear wall. The porch will cost approximately \$18,000 - \$20,000, assuming a lot of volunteer work. We are in the process of getting estimates for the north wall work and are seeking new grants for these efforts. Any support for these projects - cash or labor - would be greatly appreciated! Contact David if you are interested in contributing!

Vershire Day Live Auction

Last year we revived the Country Auction that we used to great effect in fundraising for the initial round of repairs to the Church-Orr House in the early 2000s. We had the help of the fabulous Uriah Wallace, Auctioneer, around 60 "live" items and another 75 or so in the "silent" auction portion. Over 60 people turned out to bid, and with great weather and great help, we raised \$8,000, split 60% for house improvements and 40% for general operating.

Auction 2020? Many people have inquired if VerShare will host another Auction after last year's success! The short answer is we don't know yet, but we might if you can help! We need an auctioneer (we have not been able to reach Uriah Wallace - anyone know his whereabouts?), and we need a solid core of donation recruiters and helpers. If you're interested, please contact David Hooke, 802-685-4353.



23rd Annual VerShare SNOWSHOE-A-THON



Leap Day! Saturday, February 29th, 2020

The Snowshoe-A-Thon raises funds for Vershire Camp Week.
About 70 children are able to participate in Camp Week **FOR FREE** each summer.

The Snowshoe-A-Thon needs your help to make this a super year!

Help your children raise a few dollars (or many) from friends, neighbors, and family, and
Encourage kids to snowshoe at the event.

There will be prizes!

a \$25 Gift card for Most Money raised by an elementary-aged participant.

a \$25 Gift card for Most Money raised by a middle/high school-aged participant

Our wonderful Snow Angels pledge so every kid helps simply by participating!

We have snowshoes for adults and children to use at no cost.

We also need Volunteers! We need people indoors and out the day of the event to make
everything go smoothly. About a 4 hour commitment, plus a hot lunch!

We need Captains to coordinate preparatory activities (Trails, Parking, Registration, etc)

We need mid-station helpers, bakers, and food donations (baked goods, juice, etc)

We need Set Up Crew Friday night and Tear Down Crew Saturday afternoon
and Trail Monitors to keep everyone safe during the event.

Call Aaron or Ethel if you'd like to volunteer.

We are hoping to see creative Leap Day themes and costumes!

Registration at the Vershire Town Center 10 - 10:45am.

Must be on the trail by 11am.

Become a Member of the Community

VerShare is a non-profit, tax-exempt community organization incorporated in 1998. Thanks to the hard work and support of many Vershire residents, VerShare has enriched our way of life for nearly 20 years. Member support, dedicated volunteers, and generous contributions are essential for VerShare to keep doing what it does. No town taxpayer money goes to VerShare. If you are reading this newsletter, you are a member of this community, and we want you involved. We want you to come to our events, gatherings, and programs. Please join us in making Vershire a special place.

Annual Membership* Levels:

Individual \$10 Family \$15 Friend \$25 Associate \$60 Sponsor \$150 Sustainer \$500

*All members receive discounts at the Made-in-Vershire Shop.

Sponsor or Sustainer members receive a \$5/night discount at the Hostel.

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Town: _____

Mail Checks payable to VerShare to: P.O.Box 112, Vershire, VT 05079

Donations above individual/family membership are tax-deductible. VerShare FIN: 03-0356227

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



VerShare Board of Directors

Aaron Hoopes - *President* Helen Wilson - *Treasurer* Eleanor Zue - *Secretary*

Shirley Collins - *Hostel Manager* Ethel Pike Marissa Mazzucco - *MIV* Kareen Obydol-Alexandre

Committee Leaders: David Hooke - *Church Orr House*, Andrea Herrington - *Library & Summer Camp*,

Karl Vitols - *Snowshoe-A-Thon*, Gregory Wilson - *Sustainable Vershire*, Debra Kingsbury - *Cabaret*,

Jean McDonald - *Civics Clatch*, Reva Seybolt - *Directory*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, January 24th, 5:30pm - 8:30pm - VerShare Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 2nd, 3pm - 6pm - Chinese New Year Feast - Town Center

Saturday, February 29th, All-Day Event - 23rd Annual Snowshoe-A-Thon from the Vershire Town Center to the Mountain School (Lunch Provided) Volunteers, Email - snowshoe.a.thon@gmail.com

Saturday, April 18th, 6:30 - 8pm - Vershire Cabaret

ONGOING EVENTS

1st Wednesday Every Month - Community Lunch/Senior Lunch at Town Center

Saturday Mornings 10am - 1pm - Made in Vershire Shop

Wednesday Mornings 7:30am - Klatch at COH

Fourth Friday Every Month - Potluck/Soup Night at Town Center

VISIT US ONLINE: vershare.org facebook.com/madeinvershireshop email: information@vershare.org

VerShare

Annual Meeting Newsletter 2020

VerShare
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