

VerShare

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

President's Message - Aaron Hoopes

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

As we enter another year of uncertainty and disruption, it is time for us to rededicate ourselves to the vibrant community that Vershire has.

While we have all been doing the best we can given the confusion that persists in the world, one thing is sure. We are all in this together. This is our community, and it is what is going to get us through the challenging times that may be ahead.

Now that we are deep in the winter season, it is time to think about the ways we can prepare for the spring and summer and the opportunities that will come with the warmer weather. So many people have been volunteering their time or donating their food, clothing, and money to the Food Shelf. The hostel continues to operate with a full house. The Fall Festival was a great success. The upcoming Snowshoe-a-thon in the beginning of March will be a special opportunity to bring us together and heal some of divisions that have been put upon us.

I want to invite everyone to our Annual Meeting. This year it will be a Zoom Meeting on January 28th at 7:00pm (with the option to call in if you do not have access to zoom). We will be remembering Ethel Pike, one of our board members who we lost this year. We will also be recapping the past year, meeting new people who have joined the community, and unveiling our plans for the year going forward,

I look forward to seeing all of you at the meeting. Until then please stay warm, safe and healthy.

Aaron Hoopes - VerShare President

Vershire Helping Hands - Tonya Gunn & Reva Seybolt

In 2021, the Vershire Food Shelf went from pre-packaging bags for our families to opening up a designated food shelf area in the downstairs of the Vershire Town Center building. Visitors can now “shop” for themselves. Thanks goes to those that have made this possible - donations, time and effort, and to the town of Vershire for being so accommodating.

The food shelf received two grants from the Vermont Food Bank. One grant was used to purchase a commercial refrigerator for the Town Center Building. This has been wonderful for storage and is also available for other organizations that use the building. The other grant was to buy food from local farmers at their retail price in an effort to support our local food systems. The food shelf purchased local beef, chicken, turkey and lamb, as well as potatoes and maple syrup.

The Food Shelf saw on average 7 households per week, which included one or two deliveries. We continue to stock the food shelf by buying food from local supermarkets using money from donations. The food shelf also places monthly orders from the Vermont Food Bank, and Willing Hands continues to provide weekly produce and milk. In addition, the food shelf appreciates the food donations that our community members have provided, which included homemade holiday cookies and hand knit hats.

Finally, the food shelf would not be possible without the volunteers that give their time on Friday mornings. Thank you so much!

We look forward to serving the community this coming year and welcome donations, volunteers, and suggestions.

Warmly,
Tonya Gunn and Reva Seybolt - Food Shelf Coordinators

Comunity Coffee Bar - Justin Will

The pandemic has been a scourge on so many levels, but it's hard to overstate the impact it has had on communities. We are social creatures after all, and our communities are held together by the bonds between friends and neighbors.

This is why VerShare launched the Vershire Coffee Bar to bring the community together on a regular basis to enjoy the warmth of each other's company over a handcrafted coffee.

The Coffee Bar has become a weekend staple for those craving a warm cuppa joe after a stop at the dump or to capture visitors passing through town on 113. It's a communal space unlike anything else in the Upper Valley, and you're invited to join us each week. Keep an eye on the listserv for the latest days and times.

Klatch - Jean McDonald

What caused the volcano in Tonga? Who was Naddodd and why did he leave home? What is the world's oldest surviving civilization? If you like to learn about “new” things, you might enjoy attending the VerShare Klatch. VerShare Klatch is a group that has been meeting for about 8 years to hear lectures delivered by some of America's most popular college professors. The lectures are produced by *The Learning Company* and include lots of visual material: videos, pictures, maps, etc.

The lecture starts at 7:30 every Wednesday morning and lasts about half an hour or 45 minutes. We generally share our observations and then have a chat about local and national news for another half an hour or so. We are doing it all by Zoom now as part of the VerShare Library Program. We would welcome new participants, and there is no fee. If you have questions or want to sign up for a trial class, please send a message to Jean McDonald at jmacdusa@aol.com.

Hostel - Shirley Collins

The Stage Coach Stop Hostel is hosting guests again! Guests have stayed at the four bedroom hostel for both short and long stays. With many folks working remotely and moving to new jobs and communities, the hostel has been home to traveling teachers and nurses and to newcomers in the area until their homes are ready for them. Some of our recent guests have come to Vermont to ski and snowboard or to work on their seasonal maple sugar operation. Funds from the hostel provide income for some of the recent construction projects as well as all of the other programs that VerShare offers.

MIV Shop - Amanda Helali & Justin Will

The Made-in-Vershire Shop was able to open full-time again in 2021! A big thank you to our volunteer shop keeps: Peggy, Madge, and Zanni! This year, Jamie Blondin will become our Volunteer Manager, so if you're interested in volunteering at the MIV shop, please email jlblondin18@gmail.com.

Also this year, Justin Will will be taking the reigns as our Vendor Manager! VerShare is looking for all the makers, bakers, doers and growers in town to join our list of vendors. If you make, produce, craft, harvest, manufacture, or package a product in Vershire, you may be eligible to be carried in our store. A small portion of your proceeds will go to VerShare, but you get to keep the rest. This is a great way to help get your products out to your community, and to those visiting from other places.

In addition, VerShare is in the process of updating our sales system, so someday soon we will be offering the option for customers to purchase your goods online and be able to ship them anywhere in the country (and maybe the world?). The MIV shop continues to be a VerShare effort to enable economic development in Vershire by ensuring home-based businesses thrive through community support.

Snowshoe-a-thon 2021 - Amanda Helali

Last year we invited folks to participate in our Virtual Snowshoe-a-thon, getting outdoors wherever they lived and enjoying nature. Despite not being able to gather in person, we had a successful virtual event! Vershire residents, current and former Mountain School students, and people from all over the country donated and participated, sending us pictures of their outdoor activities. We raised over \$2,000, and we're looking forward to gathering for this event in-person this year!

Financial Report - Helen Wilson

Income for the year broke down as follows:

Hostel: \$10,122.27
COH Fundraiser: \$7,793.12
Helping Hands: \$1,365.19
Membership: \$2,551.22
Book, Bake, and Plant: \$180
Fall Festival: \$455.92
MIV Sales: \$3,693.52
Snowshoe-a-thon: \$2,369.17
Summercap: \$17,300

Expenses for the year broke down as follows:

COH (electricity, heat, fuel, taxes, etc.): \$9,694.32
Payouts to shop vendors: \$2,922.09
General Operating Expenses (insurance, printing, postage, telephone, accounting, etc): \$6057.47
Helping Hands/COVID payouts: \$15,107.01
Church-Orr House repairs and upgrades: \$13,607.62
Summer Camp: \$10,873.96

We ended the year with a net loss of \$1,771.27
Our total Equity as of Dec. 31, 2021 was \$63,657.87

House Committee - David Hooke

The House Committee's major projects for 2021 were the new porch and front yard drainage.

The porch was a great success. The old porch was deteriorating, but its real drawback was that the snow from the roof above cascaded directly onto the front steps, making access to the building nearly impossible at times and creating a nightmare of shoveling compacted ice. After long discussion and with funds raised in 2019, we resolved to move the front door 10 feet to the west, turning the shop hall into an entry vestibule and then making it possible, with a single 36' long shed roofed structure, to get from the parking lot to the entry in completely snow-free, wheelchair-accessible route. All that was left was to raise the funds and build it! Thanks to

- The generous donors to our "Back on Our Feet" drive this past spring, and to one particularly generous anonymous donor, who together provided \$13,000
- Foggs Hardware, Iron Horse Standing Seam Roofing, Laughing Stock Farm (timber,) Thrasher Construction, Tilden Electric, TimberHomes LLC who collectively gave over \$6000 in discounts and free services
- and the 20+ volunteers young and old who donated over 250 hours of work

we got it done. One minor detail is to fix the ceiling that buckled because we did not allow enough space for the kiln-dried paneling to expand...but we'll get there. Other than that, it seems to be working. Snow shoveling is now a tiny, safe task, and we gained a new outdoor space, which has already seen a lot of fine sitting and chatting, Justin's Coffee Bar and more.

While excavating for the porch piers, we also managed to deal with a long-standing drainage problem by creating a front curtain drain and tying it into an ancient clay-tile drain that goes all the way under Route 113. All that's left there is to cap the front stone so surface water will be diverted away.

With this, and our earlier insulation//weatherization work, we are closing in on the round of improvements we planned back in 2018. Here's what's left:

- Completion of drainage work in the back, roughly a \$4000 job
- Repairing the rotting sheathing on the back wall
- Insulating the exterior walls, which are completely hollow. We have a quote of \$9000 to do that.
- Patching the clapboards in the front, where the old door and porch were.

Those things will complete the critical weatherization, and should cut our gas bill to about 1/4 of what it was in 2018.

There's more we could do - solar on the roof, heat pump water heater, replace (if needed) the gas wall heaters with mini-splits. Let's keep the conversation going and make this old house a true model for the future!

Shirley Collins, Neil Hochstedler, David Hooke, Ethel Pike, in memoriam, Justin Will

VerShare is looking for a new Treasurer, Bookkeeper, and Member Database Manager (Some of these could be combined if people are interested in more than one). For more information, contact information@vershare.org.

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 over 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 \$100 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): _____ Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Add to email list? Yes No

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!



Board of Directors

Aaron Hoopes, *President* Shirley Collins, *Vice President & Hostel Manager* Eleanor Zue, *Secretary*
Amanda Helali, *Treasurer & MIV Shop Manager* Karen Obydol-Alexandre, *Facebook Manager*
Ethel Pike, *in memoriam* Jamie Blondin Justin Will

Committee Leaders: David Hooke, *Church Orr House* Andrea Herrington, *Library & Summer Camp*
Gregory Wilson, *Sustainable Vershire* Debra Kingsbury, *Cabaret* Helen Wilson, *Bookkeeper*

Ongoing Events

Fridays, 10a-12p - Vershire Food Shelf at the Town Center

Saturdays 10am-1pm - Library & MIV Shop open

Wednesdays 7:30am-9am - Klatch Virtual Gathering

Annual Meeting Agenda

Join us Friday, January 28th at 7pm on Zoom or by phone for our Annual Meeting.

Link and phone number available at www.vershare.org

Meeting Agenda

Greetings and Introduction

Thank You Ethel

What we did in 2021

A return of some favorites from our Virtual Snowshoe-a-thon to our Fall Festival and some fantastic new addition from our New Porch to the Coffee Pop-Up

Looking Forward to 2022

The return of an in-person Snowshoe-a-thon! Our full-sized Book, Bake, and Plant Sale, an online MIV shop to compliment the Saturday mornings, and more

New To Vershire Introductions

Local Business Presentations

Request for New Members

2022 Board Elections

General Discussion

Thank you and Goodnight