

MT. VERNON & VIENNA

News

& Comment

Page

- 1 Luther Gray on Making Hay
- 5 Our Schools: Mt. Vernon
- 7 Candidates Speak Out: Mt. Vernon
- 12 Vienna: Our Taxes

Page

- 13 Candidates Speak Out: Vienna
- 15 Vienna: Where Does The Money Go
- 16 Community Activities: Vienna
- 18 Our Schools: Vienna

Interview with Luther Gray

By ALICE BLOOM

For the past several years, Luther Gray, Mt. Vernon dairy farmer, has rented over 100 acres of hay land from Elizabeth Arden Trust. But this year, he's looking for new land to rent. The fields he mowed last summer, directly across from his farm on the Belgrade Rd., are now a "residential development site," part of the approximately 250 acre parcel - from Bean Rd. to the Dyer Rd. - one of the 2 large Mt. Vernon parcels bought by Patten Realty of Portland at this past August 20th land auction.

"Of course it's hard for me," says Luther Gray in a recent News interview. "I'll just have to try to find hay land further away. There are some lots there I can have, but as far as the back land, I don't know. I don't know if they will allow me to cut it now. I've called Patten Realty office many times, but no one ever returns the call. There are only 7 or 8 dairy farmers left in Mt. Vernon - Milton Hall, Clyde Clough, Ray Hall, the White farm, the Jacobs farm, 1 or 2 more, and myself. That's all that's left. And if this development goes through across the road, and it will, I may be out myself. I'm picking up a field here, a field there, but nothing close to my farm, and of course that makes it harder. I depended on this land across the road, absolutely depended on it. But, unless you can get a 5 year lease on a piece of land - so that you can improve it with top dressing, lime, fertilizer, maybe plowing and re-seeding - you can't get that much of a yield anyway, and I'm sure that Patten Realty is not going to give me a 5 year lease.

But it's not myself I'm really concerned about. I'm concerned about everybody. Mt. Vernon is just one little community and this is the 2nd or 3rd subdivision we have had in Mt. Vernon. There is going to be no more land. It's happening here, it's happening all over the state of Maine, all over the country. The agricultural land is being eaten up. There's going to be no more land to farm on. In today's paper (Kennebec Journal, February 1, 1984) it says, "Agriculture Commissioner Stewart Smith called for the creation of a program to promote the preservation of Maine farmland. 'Since World War II we have lost two-thirds of our agricultural land base,' said Smith."

Two-thirds! Two-thirds! since World War II! Now what does that mean? First, it means that two-thirds is gone, that leaves one-third, and it's going fast. Second, what are we going to do about it? Humans can make cars, they can make bombs, they can make most anything, but we can't make land. Land cannot be made. And I don't know, in generations to come, where the food for the people is going to come from. Where is the agricultural product going to come from? What are people going to eat? What will our grandkids eat? A pill? Some kind of vitamin? Well, can't live completely on pills, I think. Not enough people are thinking: where is the farm land going to come from?

No, it's not just myself I'm concerned about. And it's not the present time I'm concerned about. It's the future. These big pieces of land Patten Realty is going to develop now, these were the last big open pieces in Mt. Vernon. Now some people, especially people in the real estate business, they want to sell the land, not keep it. That's what they're concerned about. They don't think about tomorrow, they don't care about tomorrow. They're worried about today, and about making money today, and that's what is happening not just in Mt. Vernon, but all over the country. The agricultural land is being sold off for house lots, and people think - Great! that's progress!

And people say, well, what can you do? What can the individual farmer do? The individual farmer! He can't do...well, here's an example. Some will say, well, you went to that land auction this summer, you had the opportunity to bid on this parcel of land and you didn't do it. Well, I was prepared to bid on this parcel of land at the auction, quite a few of us got together and we were prepared to bid, but as soon as it started--the first highest bidder can take any or all of the pieces--well, the everyday guy can't compete with that, can't compete with the big land and real estate developers, just can't. Why, what with the price of a tractor at \$58,000 and everything else as high, the individual farmer, 9 out of 10, no, 9 1/2 out of 10, is barely just creeping by!

I think if this is going to continue to be a farming community, there has got to be some legislation, some controls, some laws--from small community on up--that say you can't develop farm land anymore. Just to take a nice clean open field and put houses on it? That's got to stop.

News: Do you think there's not been enough concern for the farmer in this state?

Luther Gray: Absolutely not. Absolutely not. For instance, it hasn't been balanced, it hasn't been controlled. Take the Maine Potato industry, for instance. For years and years, Idaho potatoes have been shipped into this state for school lunch programs and what have you, and right in the potato warehouses of Aroostook County, there are potatoes rotting every day. But I think Stewart Smith has the right ideas, and it looks like there will be a change for the better. But the farmer has got to back him, and Smith has got to have backing from the state and federal governments, too. And they've got to want to help the farmer who has been neglected. Why has he been neglected? Because he's taken for granted, that's why.

You know, if Elizabeth Arden could actually see herself what is happening to this land she owned, I think she'd turn right over in her grave. All these farms, all this open land, just gone. You walk through the woods and see the stone walls, all piled up just right in a straight line. Do we think - how many hours - our forefathers, generations and generations before us - have worked with a pair of oxen, or a horse - to build those walls? Clear this land? Get ready to farm? And now it's a subdivision? We've got to do something before it's too late.

People say - well, what can we do, what can this little town do, but there's got to be a start somewhere. And it's got to start with being aware of what's happening and making some laws to protect the future of the land.

News: What do you think can happen at the town level, here in Mt. Vernon?

Luther Gray: Well, it's too late to do anything about what Patten Realty has bought. But, towns can make ordinances. First, we should strictly enforce the few ordinances that we do have. And second, we should make some further ordinances controlling the use of open land, potential farm land. Then all meetings and agendas of meetings should be better advertised on the town bulletin boards and in the newspaper so that people know what's going on. And I absolutely think the 5 members of the Planning Board and the 5 members of the Appeals Board should be elected by the town, and not just

appointed by the Selectmen. And I think we should make damned sure there are people on those boards who represent the interests of the farmers and the interests of the agricultural land.

News: Is there something you'd like to say in summing up?

Luther Gray: The only thing I would like to say to the people of Mt. Vernon is this: we've got to think of what is going to happen in the years to come - to the farmer, to the land, to food supplies. And not just here in Mt. Vernon, but in the state, the whole country, the world.

And other farmers have to think about this, too. They can't ignore it. They have to talk about it. I'm sure they do. There must be people like myself who think about this. Because I think about it. That day at the auction, I felt so bad, I mean, there was no way to even express how bad I felt that day, how bad I felt that this was happening, and it was too late for us to be able to stop it. I lay awake a lot of times just thinking - what is happening? Where is the food going to come from?

If people would just take 10 minutes and stop and think: what is happening to our land. You can't put houses everywhere. But we're doing it! Every little piece of land that's open - bang! - there goes a house on it. It's got to stop, or all we're going to have here in Mt. Vernon and all across the country is a mass of houses.

News: And geraniums.

Luther Gray: And geraniums. That's all. But, we've got to do something. And we can start here, and we've got to be thinking about it now. Really, it's something hard to think about.

Dr. Shaw Library

For the first time in its 40-year history, the Dr. Shaw Library is turning to the town for financial support of its operating budget (last year's requested funds were earmarked for painting and building). The request is for \$2,000.

The trust fund has been yielding an average yearly income of about \$3,000 over the past five years. During the same period of time, the budget to operate the library (salaries, insurance, utilities, books and maintenance) has averaged \$5,000 per year. Operating in this manner has been possible only because of unexpended interest which accumulated over a period of years. However, many necessary repairs and improvements to the property (including rewiring, insulating, storm windows, interior painting and papering, building a driveway, a new handrail, etc.), done in the past 8 years, have depleted surplus funds.

Efforts at supplementing the library's income have included application for state percapita funding (available through the Maine State Library), energy conservation funds (50% reimbursement on energy-conserving measures taken at the library), fund-raising efforts of the Friends of the Library, and an attempt to have the trust fund invested more profitably. Even with these measures, the library trustees now find themselves in a critical situation: additional funds are necessary to continue to operate at the current level of service. We are calling on the townspeople to show a vote of confidence in this move toward town support of the library.

Please vote to support your library at town meeting time. It is your library.

Bonnie Dwyer,
Library Trustee

Adventures of the School Committee: Mt. Vernon

The first task of the Mount Vernon School Committee this year was to arrange to have the school roof replaced. In August, we interviewed two engineering firms and selected Herbert Doten of Hunter-Ballew Associates to undertake the preliminary work. By the September meeting the engineering work had been completed with plans and specs. drawn up and we selected G & E Roofers from six bidders to do the actual work. The job progressed smoothly in October while school was in session, apparently with a minimum disturbance of the normal school routine. The contractor was called back to make minor adjustments after the job was completed but, overall, it seems to have been well done and hopefully our

school will be leak-free for many years to come. Incidentally, the total cost of the work came to considerably less (about \$6,000) than the town authorized the School Board to borrow for the job.

When we arrived for the October meeting, we were surprised to see the parking lot overflowing with cars and the meeting room filled with agitated and emotional parents. Big trouble, maybe? It turned out that the parents were very concerned about the division of the fifth grade class resulting in some of the students being placed with the fourth grade for part of the day. It was pointed out that some kind of arrangement is necessary because there are only six rooms for seven grades (including kindergarten). However, the parents were upset because of the negative sociological and educational effect the division was having on the class as a whole. The School Committee was generally sympathetic to the demands of the parents and directed the Superintendent to explore other options for the fifth graders. There was another unofficial meeting of the School Board with the same group of parents a few nights later and the parents were urged to wait and see whether or not the Superintendent could come up with a solution to the problem. Fortunately, Superintendent Popham and Principal Doughty came through like champs. It was suggested that the fifth and sixth grade students be combined in one of the larger classrooms and that Mrs. Merrill's duties be increased to full time. This plan has been carried out and is apparently working fairly well. Whew!

In the middle of all this uproar, Ann Turner resigned. We were saddened by this event because, even though not everybody agreed with Ann's strong opinions all the time, she was, nevertheless, an energetic, conscientious, and hard-working member of the School Committee. Judy Dunn was appointed to take Ann's place and seems to be doing a fine job.

At the January meeting the superintendent reported that the insurance coverage for the school union had been pooled and put out to bid, saving the union about \$12,000. Good work, Ms. Popham! The possibility of including an itinerant art teacher and part-time librarian in the upcoming budget was discussed.

Overall, we feel school affairs have gone along well this year. We are very concerned about the lack of space in the school and the lack of a library. These are issues we

will be addressing in the near future.

William C. Hayes

The Candidates: Mt. Vernon

KERRY CASEY

For all the people saying...

"Who does this Kerry Casey think she is, just moving to town and running for selectman?" Well, if you sit back for a minute, I'll try to explain. My husband and I moved to Mt. Vernon the summer of '82 from outside of Boston. We're your everyday city transplants learning about woodstoves, skunks and corn-hungry coons...and loving every minute of living here. This town is really something special with its own wonderful personality made up of every individual living here. This is the kind of place we have always wanted to call our home, a statement with which most will agree. It is for that reason that I would like to give some of me to the town. I have some ideas and energy I would like to contribute.

I am not an extremist, but my first and major goal is the most controversial. I believe that we need to start a definite strategy for the direction of this town. We are at a very critical and precarious point. There is a lot more money floating around in the real estate market and we have left ourselves open for uncontrolled development. Mount Vernon is one of the few towns around without strict laws governing subdivisions of property. Having large parcels of land developed means much more than losing that "pretty view" next to your house. It means much more than a destruction of the present town personality, and other aesthetic attributes of Mount Vernon life. Uncontrolled growth means a threat to the ability of many of the residents to continue to live here. It's all well and good to say "you shouldn't tell a man what he can do with his property," but without some guidelines we're guaranteeing that many of us will no longer be able to afford to live here. Whenever a group of lots is sold off, the town is ultimately responsible for supplying services. These services include schools, school transportation, trash facilities, fire, rescue and eventually more road maintenance, town sewage, water and more town administration. Services are paid for

with tax dollars. Unfortunately the services must be available immediately for new population, but the increased tax revenue from the new population is not realized for quite a while. The result is the tax rates must be increased immediately to provide the services, and we all know that even when we do start seeing the new population's taxes, our property taxes do not go back down. How much more can you afford to pay in taxes on your house and land before you are forced to move? We can't stop the growth of Mount Vernon, but we need to put measures in place to ensure it happens at a tolerable rate.

The above is a major and immediate concern that needs to be addressed, but there are other creative things we can do for the town. Communication seems to be a problem at times and I would like to see informal, non-decision making forums take place. Perhaps that means opening up my home Saturday mornings when people can drop by to find out what's happening and suggest what they would like to have done. The town officials are elected as representatives of the residents and need to be open to their concerns. Did you know that Mount Vernon used to let people work off their taxes? It is the people, not their money that make up the resources of this town.

I could go on and on, but I think I've made my points. I am open to all suggestions. Please give me the chance to try your ideas and mine.

JACK FLANNERY

I'm afraid I can't give you a long list of reasons I want to be a selectman. If my experience in the business world can help me contribute to the Town of Mount Vernon's well-being and stability then I would like to offer whatever I can. I am very proud to live in Mt. Vernon and anything I can do to help the Town I will do. I do not have any expertise in running a Town, but I do have some common sense that should help.

GEORGE A. SMITH

I moved from Winthrop to Mt. Vernon for many reasons. More space to roam. Less regulation. Lower taxes. The town meeting form of government. I found much more. Friendly neighbors. Community spirit. A surprisingly fine

library. A good active fire department and rescue squad. Even a country store with everything you need and an excellent restaurant.

Sure, we could stand improvement. The grade school needs help. We haven't arrived at a final solution for our dump. Sewage disposal remains a problem for the future of the village. And other problems confront us as well, such as increasingly expensive road repairs and welfare costs.

Should I be elected Selectman, I hope to provide leadership on these and other issues. Five years on the Winthrop Town Council and four years as a Kennebec County Commissioner provide the experience needed to do the job. More importantly, five years residence in Mt. Vernon has given me a feeling for what the people want from their town government.

In a nutshell, maintain current services, don't rock the boat, use common sense, keep taxes down, think about and plan for the future, don't lose what we have here.

These will be my goals. I'll need your help not only in getting elected but in serving afterward. Your advice and assistance will be appreciated during the election, and expected afterward.

DEANE JONES

Deane Jones has lived in Mt. Vernon for 14 years and is a former selectman. He is presently on the Mt. Vernon Fire Department and Rescue Unit. He is employed by the A.I. Larsen Company and is the Divisional Manager for their operations in Maine. He is a registered Maine Guide and works weekends as a whitewater rafting guide on the Kennebec and Penobscot River. A 1961 graduate of the University of Maine he lives with his wife and family at Dunns Corner. He submitted the following article to explain his candidacy for office of selectman.

Mount Vernon is unique because as other towns in the area have switched to town managers or town council forms of government we have clung thankfully to the pure democracy of a town meeting - selectman form of government. Each year the voters gather on the second saturday in March for our town meeting and what we do that day sets the course that town government will travel for the next year. The people at town meeting pass or reject ordinances, raise whatever taxes it will take to run the town, decide how much should

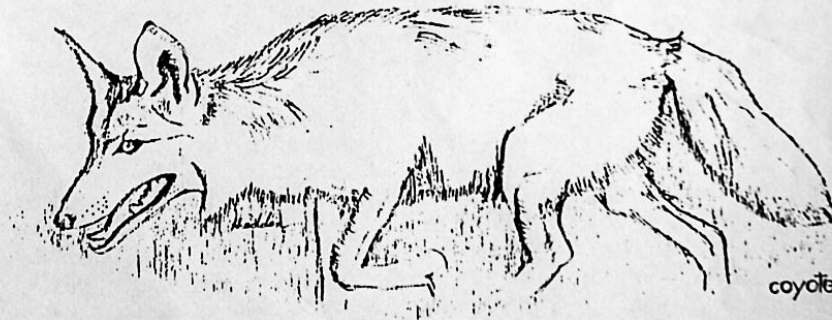
be spent on what and about 5:00 go home until the next town meeting. It is the job of the selectmen to see the town runs well and to carry out the wishes of the people. As opposed to representative forms of government the selectmen can't raise extra money, or transfer money from account to account and don't set town policy without permission of the people. Those things can only be done by the vote of the people at town meeting. The selectmen for the next 364 days are business managers and it is their job to carry out the wishes of the people to the best of their ability. Management of the \$300,000 or so, it takes to run our town is a serious matter and can't be taken lightly. A bad or un-informed decision by the selectmen can waste many hard earned tax dollars. For example, this year we will appropriate over \$10,000 for road sand. If the selectmen were to purchase the least expensive sand it would be unscreened sand that might be full of rocks and will not work well in a sanding machine. While it looks like the selectmen saved the taxpayers money by purchasing the cheapest sand it will never do the people any good if it can't be spread easily on a slippery road. This example is typical of the hundreds of decisions the selectmen make each year with the tax money they are trusted to administrate.

In 1970 Mt. Vernon had about 600 residents, and in 1980 over a thousand, and no one can project what we will have in 1990. With no comprehensive growth plan we may lose valuable farm and forest land and face higher taxes as more people demand more services. People ask me as a candidate for selectman what can be done and my answer is that with our present form of town government the people are the only ones who can take any real action. If you want lower taxes, as I do; if you want better services, as I do; and if you want sensible growth, as I do, get involved. Attend meetings and participate, make your feelings heard and your wishes known. Elect people you have confidence in and help them do their job well by keeping in touch. We live in a unique and beautiful town and my only goal as selectman is to administer it well. I will appreciate your vote on March 10th.

CANDIDATE - ROAD COMMISSIONER

HERBERT CHOATE SR.

Herbert Choate Sr. has been a resident of Mt. Vernon for 25 years and has raised his family there as well. He held the office of Road Commissioner once before and he would like to hold that office once again. If you feel the conditions of the roads could be kept better, vote for Herbert Choate Sr.



Vienna : Property Tax Update

BY COLLOMAN VON GRAFF

It was an unhappy moment when the Selectmen were informed by the State Assessors that they, the State Assessors, would challenge the decision made by the municipal Valuation Appeals Board to reduce the State valuation for the town of Vienna by 1,400,000 - and that they the State Assessors have entered a plea at the State Superior Court to this effect. What this means is that they would like to prove that the Board of Appeals (using their own language) is in violation of constitutional and statutory provisions, in excess of the Board's statutory authority, based upon unlawful procedure, affected by bias and error of Law unsupported by substantial evidence on the whole record and arbitrary and capricious and an abuse of direction. This is strong language yet it is the usual wording in a case such as this. Our Lawyer advised us that it is the responsibility of the State to prove these allegations, we are the defendant - (We are the party referred to in the appeal) and, therefore, have to substantiate the decisions made by the Board of Appeals.

The Assistant Attorney General will handle the case for the State, the Board of Appeals will have a lawyer assigned to them by the State and we will seek representation from a private law firm. We used no legal assistance when bringing our complaint to the Board of Appeals but feel a lawyer is needed to represent the town before the Superior Court. The cost for such representation can vary considerably and if we loose the case against the State we would be in double jeopardy having to pay our lawyer and not getting our valuation reduced. The Board of Appeals decision may be declared invalid on a technicality and that would mean we would have to again start all over and make our appeal to the Board of Appeals hoping they made a similar decision avoiding the aforementioned technicality. Hopefully neither will happen. We are putting an article in the Warrant asking the Town to set aside the amount of \$2,000 for legal fees. The support of this article will indicate how much support the Town will give us in this undertaking. Our lawyer assured us that this is more than his fee and should readily cover any additional expenses such as getting the transcripts of former proceedings and other relevant expenses. It may be

valuable at this point to compare the benefits with the possible losses. If the reduction given us by the Board of Appeals holds firm and our school budget and our payments to the County Commissioners would be reduced by 15%, the town would show a savings of approximately \$14,000 - for not only this year, but also for any future years. Recognizing the advantages of winning the case against the State we the Selectmen urge you to vote for this article.

The Candidates: Vienna

Tax Collector: Betty Clark, Gary Seamon, Dodi Thompson

GARY: I will not have certain hours. I will be available whenever I am home and I am mostly home after work. I also will try to be able to give out the stickers for the license plates when people pay their excise tax. I will make sure my driveway will be plowed and sanded.

DODI: My experience in bookkeeping and accounting will be a great asset as Tax Collector. As far as the money I receive I think it is adequate, I'll know better next year. I am mostly always home and have not thought about specific hours - to get to my house is no problem except in mudseason but then we all have a problem. I like people and have a good memory.

BETTY: I am not running for Tax Collector "just for the money." The money part is secondary. I will be available any time that I am home but I will always be home Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. I want to run the office of Tax Collector similarly as Eddy Kohtala has done it, and I heard no complaints about him. It is also easy to get to my home, summer or winter.

Road Commissioner: Harold Bean, Alvin Hastings

HAROLD: I, Harold Bean, am running for Road Commissioner because I think that after having had the position for one year, working on the roads and looking over the road conditions that I can see what needs to be done.

A lot of ditching was done this past year, more needs to be done. I see a need for more paving. Some was done

last year but due to the cost for the shimming the money did not go as far as we had hoped it might.

The gravel roads need to be kept in repair so that everyone who lives on one will be able to travel them without too much aggravation. I shall try to do my best if I am re-elected.

ALVIN: I have been working on the roads of Vienna all my life. My dad was Road Commissioner for our town for many years. He always did the snowplowing for Vienna since I was just a kid. I have helped my dad with road work all my life and finished my dad's term as Road Commissioner when he died. I would like to be Road Commissioner again and will continue with the same dedication as my father had. I am aware that conditions have changed in the last few years. Nevertheless I have the manpower, the equipment, the experience, and I'll do the best I can with the money the town will appropriate.

First, Second, and Third Selectman:

Irene Goff, Ed Collins, Coloman VonGraff

Our first priority for the coming year is going to be to set up and have in operation a "Road Committee." What we envision is a committee where the members are appointed for a period of 3 to 5 years to make specific recommendations so that there is a continuity in the work planned and budgeted in accordance with the ability of the town to pay for it. The hit and miss approach we have used in the past will hopefully be eliminated. We hope to be able to receive help from the State, having a professional engineer going over our roads preferably with the members of the committee to advise them, and a long range plan could then be worked out by the committee. This plan would cover 3 to 5 years so it goes beyond any one set of selectmen.

Another very important item on our agenda for the coming year is the assessing. We are not happy the way it is now. Our dispute with the State has brought to light the discrepancies and the difficulties in having our overall fair and true assessment. Since we have had some professional help in the past it has made a bad situation even more obvious. We are giving much thought to this problem and can hopefully resolve it within the next one or two years. Here

again the amount of money we can spend is, of course, the limiting factor.

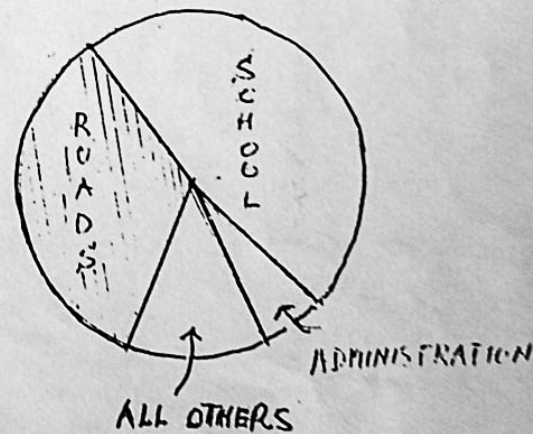
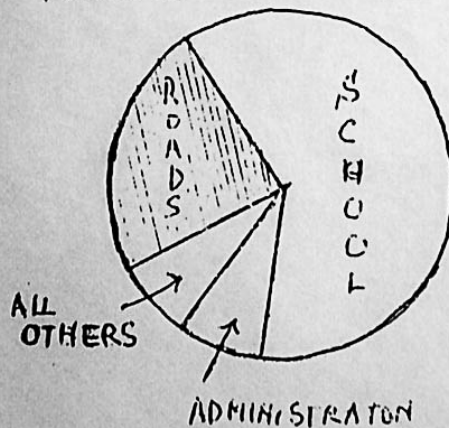
PLEASE NOTE: IF ALL ARTICLES AT THE TOWN MEETING ARE APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED, YOUR TAXES WILL INCREASE BY APPROXIMATELY 2%, SO BE CAREFUL!!

Vienna : Where Do Our Taxes Go?

1982			1983		
School	\$ 87,303.35	62.0%	School	\$ 92,333.00	46.7%
Roads	32,000.00	22.7%	Roads	72,315.00	36.5%
Adminis- tration	11,342.67	8.0%	Adminis- tration	12,400.00	6.3%
County Tax	5,049.13	3.6%	County Tax	5,862.00	3.0%
Fire Pro- tection	1,000.00	0.7%	Fire Pro- tection	3,500.00 *	1.8% *
Dump	2,000.00	1.4%	Dump	1,378.00	0.7%
Other	<u>2,002.00</u>	1.4%	Other	<u>9,871.00</u>	
Total	\$140,697.15		Total	\$197,884.00	

From 1982 to 1983 there was an increase in taxes by \$57,187.00 of which \$40,315 went for roads.

* \$2500.00 OF THIS AMOUNT WAS APPROPRIATED IN 1982 FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEW FIRE TRUCK.



Community Activities in Vienna

JOHN LJUNGGREN, Chief, Vienna Fire Department

This year we are asking the town to pay for our basic operating expenses. Since 1977 the town gave us \$1,000 per year to cover these expenses. At that time heat, electric, repair, etc. was \$552.00. Today our basic expenses are approximately \$1,550.00. In 1983 the basic expenses were as follows:

Heating oil	\$ 616.00
Electric	145.00
Repairs	194.00
Telephone	430.00
Gas/oil	<u>144.00</u>
	\$1,529.00

The town is also paying for our insurance (trucks, liability, fire, etc.) which is part of the package of all insurance the town carries.

Our total expenditures last year was \$6,700.00 of which the Fire Department raised \$3,200.00 through dances, barbecues, raffle, etc.

The Vienna Historical Society, formed in 1981, is a non-profit organization involved in the research and recording of local history for the benefit of the community. The group meets on alternate Fridays, 7:00 p.m., at the society's center located next to the Baptist church in Vienna Village. Membership is open to everyone.

WHAT THE GRANGE MEANS TO ME

The Grange, originally known as "Patrons of Husbandry," means many things to me.

"Fellowship, Fun, and Food" might be a good slogan for Grange members, for it is at the Grange meetings where we enjoy all three.

The Fellowship gives me a chance to visit with friends I might not meet anywhere else.

The Fun we have comes, in part, from a planned program. This program will contain music, singing, skits, speakers,

and discussions of timely topics.

Food? Well, we may be served a meal before the meeting or refreshments after. At any rate, we always have food.

The Grange, having been started as an aid to farmers, endeavors to include an agricultural note in each of its meetings.

All of these things I enjoy, and look forward to.

Thus the Grange means many things to me. Love of God, Community, and Country, a chance to learn and share what I have learned, and an opportunity to serve this beloved Order in the best way possible.

Wouldn't you like to join?

Hazel Bean

Statistics: The Grange is a national organization with no restrictions as to race, religion or origin. We meet every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month. Dues \$5.00 a year. Activities are: Agriculture, Community Projects, Civic Duties, Help for the Needy, and others.

Comprehensive Plan Revised

by Creston Gaither

The Vienna Planning Board's chief concern for the past few months has been the development of a Comprehensive Plan. The Plan is described in State statutes (M.R.S.A. Title 30, Section 4961), though it has little direct legal significance. However, it is an important part of the Town's overall approach to land use and regulation and to growth, development, and change. Basically, it is a statement of the Town's goals and possible approaches to achieving them, together with pertinent data about the past, the present, and the future, with as much public input as possible.

The Board held an informal public hearing in November to get general comments from townspeople about the Plan before starting work on it. Attendance was low, and most seemed to feel that the Plan should be somewhat general. It was noted that several proposals for further land use regulation have been voted down by the Town in recent years. There was general agreement, however, that roads have become a major problem in Vienna, though the Board was urged to avoid trying to set priorities for specific roads.

The Board then began work on the Plan, using the 1979 Plan as a guideline in some areas. Topics selected include: Vienna's History; Vienna Today; Growth and Development; Vienna's Future; Land Use Regulations; Roads; Water Quality; and Beautification and Esthetics. Members of the Board and others chose topics based on interest or expertise and wrote rough drafts of articles. The Board is currently reviewing and editing these and attempting to decide what (if any) recommendations it will make to the Town. The Board hopes to present a final proposal to the Town for comments and possible changes at a public hearing on February 16th. The Town will vote on the Plan at March 3rd's Town Meeting.

Perhaps it would be useful to consider what is not in the Comprehensive Plan. Many (perhaps most) people in Vienna commute long distances to work. As travel costs arise, many have stated wistfully that a small, clean, quiet source of employment would be a boon to the Town. Perhaps there are ways that the Town could seek or encourage such development without threatening its rural quality.

How S.A.D. 9 Serves Vienna

SAD #9 is a well-managed school system where parents can feel confident that their kids will get a better than average education in a school system that has a lot to offer their children. The students in our district score above the national and state norms on tests of achievement given in all the grades up to the high school. In the future, even further emphasis will be placed on the quality of instruction in the classrooms. To this end, the high school has hired a new principal, David Leigh, who came to the district this year with the highest recommendations possible from the three superintendents he had worked with before in the state. He has been called "one of the state's outstanding young educators." His particular strength is in improving the instruction in the classroom.

The costs of education, however, continue to rise as inflation rises. Additionally, in Vienna the costs rise because our town's valuation rises more each year than any other town in our school district. If the current Board of Selectmen succeeds in its appeal to the State for reduction in our valuation, we will save thousands of dollars in the future of our school taxes. With SAD #9's present expendi-

tures, when we compare our costs to the twelve other school districts in the State roughly equal to SAD #9 in enrollment, twenty-five hundred to thirty-five hundred pupils, we rank ninth in administrative costs per pupil, ninth in per pupil cost for elementary instruction, and fifth in per pupil cost for secondary instruction, which includes teachers salaries, text books, supplies, etc. The relatively high cost of secondary instruction is due to our High School having a relatively high number of senior faculty, who are paid more for length of service.

One of the important additions to our school in the past year is a written kindergarten through grade twelve computer curriculum. We expect to see every child in the near future graduate with computer literacy. According to one of the many recent national reports on education, the size of the schools in our district are considered the ideal size for a public school. Our schools are small enough so the children are not anonymous, and yet large enough to provide the resources to meet the needs of the individual.

Finally, this district's Adult Education program has grown substantially in recent years. We now have excellent evening courses in Computers, Welding, Mechanics, Wiring, Chair Caning, Cooking, Word Processing, Painting, Radio, Square Dancing, Rug Braiding, Jewelry, Calligraphy, History, English, High School Diploma Prep and more. For a ten dollar per semester fee, it is one of the best bargains to be had in our area. If you have not had a look into Adult Ed in the past, take a look now and think of taking a good friend along.

Respectively submitted,
Albert Raedle

Keeping an Eye on Vienna Water

BY FRANK FIORE

Generally, Vienna's water quality is excellent. It appears based on the 1982 and 1983 sampling conducted by volunteer monitor Ernest Saunders that the drop in water clarity observed in Flying Pond during the summer of 1981 was probably just a temporary change rather than the start of a downward trend. Even so it is important that Vienna's residents take care to abide by local laws and state regulations aimed at controlling water pollution if Vienna's waters are to remain clear and clean. The two most important

threats to water quality in Vienna are nutrients and sediment. Nutrients make algae and weeds grow in a lake just as fertilizers help your garden grow. Nutrients from fertilized lawns or fields, detergents used to clean clothes or your car in the driveway, badly maintained or designed septic systems or untreated sewage, even a seemingly harmless activity like bathing or shampooing in the Pond can contribute to an excess of weeds and algae. Sediment, whether it washes from a roadside ditch, a farmer's field or a logging area on the side of a mountain can reduce water clarity, and smother fish eggs as well as the insects fish depend upon. Eroding sediment also acts as a "vehicle" carrying oil or gas, pesticides, nutrients, bacteria etc. into the water. Vienna has a wealth of small brooks and streams which, unfortunately, can act as a very efficient network for transporting unwanted nutrients and sediment into waters like Flying Pond. (Over half of the land area of Vienna drains into Flying Pond.)

In terms of human health the biggest threat to water quality in Vienna is bacteria, whether from human or animal sources. Although bacteria contaminated waters can cause more serious ailments, by far the most likely result of drinking such water is intestinal upsets such as diarrhea. Swimming in bacteria-contaminated water can cause sore throats, ear aches, "colds" and diarrhea-like symptoms. In Vienna as elsewhere the houses and camps nearest to brooks and ponds are more likely to be sources of such bacteria, especially if their septic system is not up to State standards. If you have an old, non-existent or poorly designed system and you think it is polluting a stream, brook or pond you may be qualified for a grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection which will pay 90% of the cost of installing a new system. If you have any questions about this program or anything else regarding water quality call Frank Fiore at 293-2677 or call DEP's Citizen Environmental Assistance toll-free 1-800-452-1942 during weekdays, (listed in the front of your phone directory).

Note: Are you unable to find transportation to and from a doctor or hospital or other non-emergency treatments and have not the means to pay for such transportation? Contact Demand Response (Transportation Service) 101 Water Street, P.O. Box 278, or Waterville, ME 04901 (1-800-452-8760)



We intend to publish the **MT. VERNON / VIENNA NEWS AND COMMENT** quarterly (if we can find the necessary financial support). We will try to bring to you the happenings and concerns in our two communities. The first edition was geared to inform you about issues before us at our upcoming Town Meetings.

Our material will be gathered from you, our readers, and we hope you will send us your articles and statements.

Editors:

Peter Devine
Coleman von Graff
Bob Weingarten

Address:

P.O. Box 3
Vienna, Maine 04360