

## Strafford

## News



No. XXII Vol.1

"speak your piece"

January 2012

## AROUND TOWN

**Alan W. Ricketts Jr.**, 70, died at home Tuesday December 20, after a long battle with cancer. He was born in Philadelphia, on May 18, 1941. He was the son of the late Alan W. & Jane Ricketts. He graduated from Upper Darby High School in 1959, attended MIT and received three degrees: Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, Master of Science in Electrical Engineering in 1965 and an Electrical Engineer Degree in 1966. Alan played clarinet and saxophone in both the travel band at Upper Darby HS and the Concert Band at MIT. He belonged to the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity at MIT. He worked at Digital Equipment Corporation from 1967 to 1976, while residing in Derry, N.H. Alan holds patents for his work at DEC in the area of Programmable Logic Controllers.

From the mid 1970's to the mid 1980's, Alan owned and operated a commercial greenhouse in South Strafford. In 1984, Alan was hired as an Assistant Professor at VTC. He would go on to achieve tenure, full Professorship and became the Chair of Electrical Engineering Technology and Electromechanical Engineering Department. Alan was an active liaison for VTC with Vermont Industry and especially IBM in Essex Junction, where he taught classes. Alan's devotion to teaching and professionalism earned him the respect of both his students and peers.

Alan loved the community of Strafford where he was an Auditor and a Lister. Over the last years Alan lovingly rebuilt and restored his 1830 home. He taught himself carpentry and cabinetmaking. The furniture he built is cherished by his family.

He is survived by his wife Marie, of Fairlee, son Christopher Ricketts and his wife Rebecca, of Goffstown, N.H., daughter Cathleen Bell and her husband James, of Wynantskill, N.Y., three grandchildren, step-children: Matthew Riegert of Watertown, Mass., Luke Riegert of Somerville, Mass., Lance Riegert of Rochester, N.Y. and Trista Riegert of Burlington, Vt., who is currently serving in the Peace Corps in Jordan.

A Celebration of Alan's Life will be held at Barrett Hall, on January 7, 10:00 A.M.

**Ryan Johnson**, son of Richard and Cindy Johnson was involved in a serious car accident ten days ago. He had been in a coma following the accident but word now is that he is moving on one side of his body and opens his eyes. To be sure, everyone is wishing for his return to health and offer the family their support and prayers for his total recovery.

**Helen Stone** was given a surprise 90th birthday party at Barrett Hall. Relatives and friends packed the hall to honor this mother of eleven, grandmother of 27, great grandmother of 31 and great great grandmother of six. Helen and her late husband, Ernest Stone, settled in the Miller Pond area of Strafford in 1946. While many of her extended family lives in this area, other relatives came from North Dakota, Arizona, Maine and Massachusetts. Helen says she was "surprised out of my mind" and very touched by the event.

A friendly but fierce holiday lights competition in Strafford village between Scott Knoerlein and his family and Sperry Wilson and her boys ended when Sperry's electrical system could take no more lights and the breaker tripped, shortly before Christmas. Graciously conceding defeat in what had been a daily escalating contest, Sperry sent a message in lights, "You Win" to her friends across the street from her 2nd floor apartment in the Brick Store. (originally printed in the Randolph Herald / John Frietag photo and story)





The **Strafford Nordic Center** has pushed back the Grand Opening Event by one week due to the lack of snow here in Strafford. Now scheduled for Saturday, **January 7th**, the **Grand Opening Event** will coincide with Winter Trails Day. Winter Trails Day is a nationwide event geared to encourage newcomers to the winter sports of cross country skiing and snowshoeing. Newcomers can try both sports for free, and even receive free instruction to get started! The Grand Opening Event will offer free wax and ski clinics, a few prizes, a raffle to win a season pass, Biathlon Demos at 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. where you can watch and learn, then try it for free, as well as music, lunch and fun! Tickets for experienced skiers will still be just \$5 for kids and \$10 for adults, and classic style rentals are available. Please come visit us from 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, January 7th. If there is still no snow on this date, or for snow conditions any time, please visit our website [www.straffordnordicskiing.com](http://www.straffordnordicskiing.com) or 'like' us on Facebook for an update.

## Letters

It is my pleasure to write an article for the Strafford newspaper. I have only resided in Strafford since 1988. However, since that time I have met many fine people from this town. We are fortunate to live in a such a beautiful village where there are so many people of good character. I love coming home to Strafford each day after a long and hard day at work.

As some of you may know, I'm a trial lawyer. We all know that there is a lot of injustice in this world. I became a trial lawyer because I wanted to help people fight against injustice. The government, insurance companies and other large corporations do not always treat people honestly and fairly.

When that happens, it is very difficult for a citizen to fight against because those entities have massive power, money and resources. I'm very proud to stand tall and strong on principal and help people with a just cause fight hard. The place where we have a chance at justice is in the courtroom in front of a jury of our peers. I became a trial lawyer because I want to be the one on that battlefield called a courtroom fighting to get ordinary citizens justice.

In October, after nearly 12 years of working at the same law firm, I decided to open my own office in Lebanon. I continue to represent people in matters involving both civil and criminal law, with an emphasis on trial work. For me, it does not matter how big, small, simple or complex the case may be. If there is a just cause to be fought, I'll be there.

The calling of a trial lawyer is to stand up for people, stand strong on principle, and fight to the end for justice. If a citizen's rights are not protected or the constitution is not followed then freedom and democracy is lost.

Some of you may already know of me. For those of you that don't, if you share these beliefs and think that I can help you preserve your rights and freedoms, feel free to contact me. My new office is at 79 Hanover Street in Lebanon. My phone number is 603 - 727 - 9595. You can visit my web page at [www.spaneaslaw.com](http://www.spaneaslaw.com) to learn more about me and the kind of work that I do.

*George Spaneas.*

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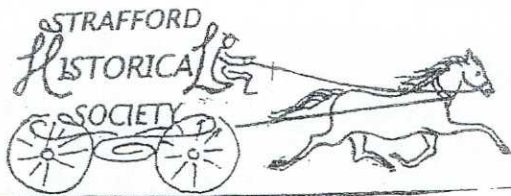
### **Tom Root** *Master Electrician*

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*Strafford News* is edited by Kate Linehan, proof reader is John Linehan. If you would like to write a letter or an article, place an ad or comment in any way, please send it to *Strafford News*, 207 Morrill Highway, Strafford, 05072 or [Klinehan@aol.com](mailto:Klinehan@aol.com). Mail subscriptions are available at \$12/year.





**An in-depth look at the Elizabeth Mine** is provided by a recent gift to the Historical Society from Dick Josler. It is a treasure trove of mine-related materials saved by Carrie and Charlie Judd, which their son Bob gave to Dick, because their fathers had worked together in the mine. Included are copper ore samples, diamond drill cores, a copper ingot, and Charlie Judd's "Blasters' Handbook," as well as many news articles and *Elizabeth Miner* magazines. An August 1943 poster states "100 Men Wanted At Once," 16 or older, no experience necessary, with a clip-and-mail coupon to apply. The \$48.43 wage for a 63-hour week was high. Costs were low - rooms \$1.00 per week, meals 50 cents.

Charlie Judd will be remembered as the longest serving employee at the Elizabeth Mine. He started as a carpenter in September 1942, working on construction of the mine buildings. He then began to work underground as a rigger and timber boss, shoring up loose rock. Charlie worked his way up the ladder, as it were, from laborer to foreman to assistant mine supervisor in charge of all underground operations, until the mine closed in 1958. At the peak of mine operations, 250 workers were employed, with a million dollar payroll. Three shifts allowed work around the clock.

According to Charlie Judd, mining at the Elizabeth Mine was safer than lumbering or farming. His confidence in this evidently defied superstition: his hard hat, part of this collection, holds the metal I.D. tag # 13.

Carrie Judd was a charter member of the Historical Society, working for many years on its Board of Directors and as Treasurer. She was also a member of the town Select Board, and the Planning Commission, as well as serving as librarian for the Morrill and Harris Library. As local correspondent for the Randolph Herald, Carrie kept many clippings which now give a comprehensive record of local social and mine history over many years. Not long after leading a large tour of the copper mine in May 1992, Carrie suffered a stroke which marked the end of her service with the society.

Thanks to Dick Josler's donation, Strafford now has significant additional resource material through Carrie and Charlie Judd's collection of mine-related artifacts and nearly 200 news articles documenting local history

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**MORRILL MOUSE** by *Rebecca Seibel, Librarian*

Special thanks to The Friends of the Morrill Memorial Library and to everyone who donated items and stopped by to purchase items for a very successful Holiday Sale. The funds raised are essential to the library and we are very grateful for the support.

The Reading Group will meet Thursday, January 26th at 1 P.M. to discuss *The Man in the Wooden Hat* by Jane Gardam. After enjoying her book *Old Filth*, all agreed to continue with this companion piece. Everyone is welcome. We are hoping to sponsor a reading sometime in January by Mame Willey, as her book of poetry is expected soon. Watch for flyers and postings on the list serv. The Cartooning Workshop will also be rescheduled for a Saturday later in January. Again, watch for postings.

It's a great time to pick up some books (or DVD's) to read over the long winter evenings. Some new titles include: (mysteries) *Death Comes to Pemberley* -PD James; *Red Mist* - Patricia Cornwell; *Leopard* - Jo Nesbo; *I am Half Sick of Shadows* - Alan Bradley; *Impossible Dead* - Ian Rankin; *The Time In Between* - Maria Duenas; *The Marriage Plot* - Jeffrey Eugenides; *The Call* - Yannick Murphy; (non-fiction) *Vermont Wild* Volume 2 - Megan Price; *Beyond Religion* - Dalai Lama; *Catherine the Great* - Robert Massie; *Cook This Now*- Melissa Clark; *Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams* - Jeni Bauer; plus some young adult and books for younger readers.

DVD's: *The Help*, *A Better Life*, *Beginners* and coming soon - *In a Better World*; and *Midnight in Paris*.

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## Notes from the Minutes of the Selectboard Meetings

**HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM:** The length of the cut-bank on Howard Kidder's land along the West Branch of the Ompompanoosuc River, just downstream from the Tyson Road Bridge, was increased dramatically by the flooding from Tropical Storm Irene. Photographs of the changes and several

maps of the area were circulated. The question is whether the increased velocity of the West Branch caused by the scouring away of trees and rocks that tended to slow the river down will place sections of Route 132 above the recently repaired highway in jeopardy of collapsing.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** Bill Burden has been assisting the Barrett Hall Trustees in obtaining a \$2,000 contribution from Mascoma Bank's Marketing Department, funds which will be used to pay for a concrete pad for the emergency generator that has been donated to Barrett Hall. He said that he has a lead on another grant to help pay for the electrical hookup. Bill advised replacing the radio antenna on the Municipal Building, which is deteriorating, and estimated that the cost plus installation would be about \$700. He also noted that it had been suggested that people isolated by floods or other disasters could be reached by someone on horseback and he thought it might be worth talking with local riders about using the network of riding trails to reach people who become isolated.

**TOWN HIGHWAYS:** Jon Mackinnon has indicated that many driveway culverts are partially or completely plugged and that the Town has not had the time this fall to inspect them and make sure they are working properly. Tori proposed sending out a reminder to residents that they can prevent damage to their driveways by using a shovel to make sure their driveway culverts are clear of debris and dirt.

The radiator on the John Deere grader has been replaced at a cost of \$2,200.

**SIDEWALK SNOW-REMOVAL:** The first contracted snow-removal took place last week and seems to have been managed quite well. In the future it will need to be coordinated with the Town's snow-plowing. A letter will be sent to residents of the lower village alerting them that in order to remove snow from the sidewalks, it will have to be blown onto their yards and asking residents to be patient as our contractor, Willis Phelps, learns the most efficient way to do this.

Sheriff Bohnyak reviewed his department's coverage of Strafford over the past year. He is proposing a \$1 per hour increase over last year's contract. Bill Burden and the Sheriff discussed concerns about emergency radio coverage in Strafford and Bill Burden reported that a glitch in the repeater on his radio tower, which had been interfering with the Sheriff's Department's ability to communicate in Strafford, had been fixed.

The Town's request to have its Village Center designation for South Strafford Village renewed by the Vermont Downtown Program has been approved. This designation improves the Town's chances for receiving planning grants for the village and provides opportunities for additional benefits for property and business owners, such as tax credits to rehabilitate historic buildings, to make façade improvements and to bring buildings into compliance with state code. Jon is pleased to report that the Town's experiment in adding brewer's yeast to road salt not only reduces the amount of salt used, but the brewer's yeast provides the further benefits of keeping the salt on the road surface rather than having it blow off or wash off and at the same

time also neutralizes the salt's corrosive effects on vehicles. While larger culverts have been replaced along the Class 4 section of Rockbottom Road, there is still a question as to whether sufficient gravel has been added to this section to meet the conditions set by the Selectboard to reclassify it as a Class 3 town highway. There is also currently no unobstructed turnaround area for Town equipment in Rockbottom Farm's dooryard, which will be more congested by parking for the ski touring center which is being developed there.

The compensation for the road crew members and town office personnel who are considered full-time equivalent employees will increase in 2012 by 3%, which includes increases in cost-of-living, salary and health insurance. The Selectboard decided to express the Town's appreciation by paying each employee a Christmas bonus of \$200. Nicole Kendall was commended for the work she has done on the FEMA damage documentation and it was agreed that since most of the \$4,992 allocated last year for updating Town documents was not spent (i.e., her storm damage work will be reimbursed by FEMA), the Selectboard will budget enough in 2012 for her to resume recording those town documents and also to be available as a backup. It has also been extremely helpful to have her as a third person trained in the Town Office routines and available when needed.

**RECREATION BOARD:** John Freitag, on behalf of the Rec Board, reported that the Red Barn is scheduled to be repainted, that the tennis court fencing was damaged by the flooding and that it and the tennis court itself need to be replaced, that the ice rink boards have deteriorated to such a degree that the ice rink may not be set up at all this year and that the Rec Board wants the Conservation Commission to take over responsibility for the Old City Falls Recreation Area.

The Selectboard adopted a new Traffic Ordinance on September 15, 2010 and it became effective 60 days after adoption. This resulted in a 25 mph speed limit through South Strafford, a 5 mph reduction from the previous speed limit. The time is finally right for the sign installation with the sidewalk project and Irene behind us. Please note the revised speed limit begins at Barrett Hall and continues to the Catholic Church on Route 132.

New traffic and speed limit signs, in conformance with the revised Strafford Traffic Ordinance, are being installed, including the 25 mph limit in South Strafford Village. The town constable, as a reminder to motorists, will begin to issue 'warning' tickets to those traveling faster than the new speed limit zones allow.

The cost of health insurance with the same coverage as last year, will increase by 6%. The streetlight grant is awaiting some corrections by the contractor in the federal employment documentation before it can be closed out.

Tori's availability for meetings has changed and the Selectboard will likely shift to three evening meetings and one morning meeting each month rather than alternating morning and evening meetings as has been the case.

**Newton School P.E. teacher Betsy Caldwell** and a team of helpers worked to distribute 750 new winter coats from the organization Operation Warm to Vermont children in need this winter. Caldwell working in partnership with the Newton School and St. James Episcopal in Woodstock brought this gift of warmth to children in Orange, Windsor and Rutland Counties. Operation Warmth along with Coats for Kids Foundation, whose vision is that every child wearing a new winter coat will be healthy and able to attend school regularly, hopes to serve their millionth child by years end.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED RECYCLING QUESTIONS

### **Are lids allowed?**

No lids attached, please, as this better insures that the containers will be clean. Any metal lids or plastic lids with a recycle number are acceptable in the mixed containers bin. Clean containers will also deter rodents, flies and hornets. To be a good neighbor and to comply with our recycling cooperative NRRRA, we encourage cleaning of all containers.

### **Do I need to flatten containers?**

We are encouraging the flattening of non-deposit containers to allow for more efficient hauling (hence reduced costs). DO NOT flatten deposit containers, as they then cannot be redeemed at the redemption center used by the Lions Club. Please similarly flatten all cardboard and boxboard to reduce hauling expenses.

### **What plastics are accepted?**

Plastic containers with the recycle symbol #1-#7 are accepted, with the exception of hazardous waste containers such as auto oil and gasoline. Unfortunately, our recycling cooperative DOES NOT accept plastic bags, even though they may have a recycling symbol/number on them.

### **Where should I put aluminum?**

Please put all aluminum in one of three separate containers, as we get some funds back for this material – Deposit Aluminum Cans (not flattened); Non-Deposit Aluminum Cans (flattened); and Aluminum Foil and Pans (flattened)

### **Is there a special place for glass deposit bottles?**

Look for the banana boxes – that is where we collect deposit glass bottles. All deposit proceeds benefit the Lions Club which in turn supports the Recycling Center.

### **Where should I put brown paper bags?**

Reuse them if possible, or leave them in a special box at the recycling center for reuse by Coburns' or the Rummage Sale. If they are torn or soiled, they go in the Mixed Paper Bin.

### **Do containers need to be clean?**

Yes, please rinse clean all containers as required by our recycling cooperative. It also helps deter rodents and wasps, making the Recycling Center a more enjoyable and safe place to visit and work.

### **Is refrigerated boxboard recyclable?**

No, unfortunately any paper packaging used to store food in the refrigerator or freezer (cardboard juice/milk containers, butter boxes, frozen food packaging) is not recyclable. We do have farmers who will re-use boxboard egg cartons, however.

### **Do you accept packaging peanuts?**

Yes, clean packaging peanuts are accepted, but no other packaging material is allowed. Dispose of properly all plastic air packaging and rigid Styrofoam (even if it has a recycle number on it). PEANUTS ONLY are accepted, as we can send them to businesses which re-use them.

### **May I recycle hard cover books?**

To recycle hard cover books and encyclopedias, the hard cover and binding must be removed and disposed of properly before the pages can be recycled.

### **What should I do with old electronics?**

We can no longer accept electronics or any appliance with refrigerant (unless there is the payment of a \$20 fee to dispose of it on special Large Trash days).

Everything electronic, including VCRs, stand-alone copiers, televisions, etc. is free at the No. Hartland Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District office. 96 Mill Street, No. Hartland, VT <http://www.guvswd.org/>.

Please note, that while the Hartford Recycling Center on Rt 5 also accepts electronics, there is a charge for all except computer-related equipment, which is recycled for free. There is no sticker or permit necessary to drop off computer-related items at Hartford's Recycling Center.

Norwich has expanded their recycling center at 24 New Boston Road which is open to Strafford residents (Saturdays 9-12 and Wednesdays 8-4:45):

Mixed Electronics (\$1-\$155 depending): personal computers, televisions, microwaves, cell phones, etc.



CFC appliances (\$20): refrigerators, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, freezers, water coolers.

Lighting (\$.25-\$10/ft depending): fluorescent bulbs, flood lamps, etc.

Ballasts, capacitors, and transformers.

Batteries (\$.10-\$2.00 depending): standard, rechargeable, NICAD, and lithium (no lead acid)

Mercury-Containing Devices (\$1): thermometers, switches, barometers, and thermostats.

**Oops! I inadvertently discarded something in the wrong bin. What do I do?**

If you can't reach the item, let one of the volunteers know. Using the picker, they continually scan through the mixed containers for any deposits or aluminum.

**How do I sign up to volunteer four times a year?**

Contact any member of the Recycling Committee, or go directly to Steve Willbanks

(swillbanks@straffordvt.org) who currently creates the quarterly schedules. We strive to have two volunteers helping at the recycling center each Saturday to improve quality and share the work load. The volunteer hours are 8:45 to 12:15. We'll provide you with a full training.

**What can I do with my old refrigerator if it is still working?**

Efficiency Vermont, as part of an incentive to replace older refrigerators, has contracted with Jacco Environmental (877-545-4413) to pick up old refrigerators for free as long as they are between 10-30 cubic feet, operational, clean, and someone 18 years or older is on site at time of pick-up to sign off.

All other appliances with Freon can be taken to the Hartford Landfill for a \$15 fee or brought to the Strafford Recycling center on big trash days for a \$20 fee.

**What should I do with rigid white Styrofoam packaging material?**

Please dispose of properly. Unfortunately, our recycling cooperative does not accept this material, even if it has a recycle symbol and number on it.

**Other questions?**

Let the recycling committee (Steve, Vince, Corky, Tori, Dori) know if you have any questions or concerns.

The full list of UNACCEPTABLE material include: Tyvek Envelopes, Gift Wrap, Blue Print Paper, Plastic Bags, Food Contaminated Paper Products (i.e. paper plates/napkins), Waxed Paper, Carbon Paper, Aseptic Packages (i.e. drink cartons).



### Explantion of Smart Meters from Jim Masland

Smart meters are part of smart grid technology that will enable electricity users (you and me) and electricity generators (power plants) to use real time communication to balance supply and demand more efficiently. Consumers will be able to monitor and manage their electricity bills by switching their heavier electricity use to off-peak hours.

Recently conflicting opinions have surfaced around the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) that wireless smart meters produce and their effect on human heath. EMFs are omnipresent in contemporary society and emanate from cell and portable phones, wireless Internet devices, compact fluorescent bulbs and a host of other gadgets that are increasingly ubiquitous. It is unclear whether the EMFs from smart meters are necessarily different or more dangerous than those from other gadgets, although some people are convinced that they are.

Utilities are taking different approaches to smart metering. GMP and CVPS are pursuing wireless transmission, while VEC and WEC (both coops) will use their own transmission lines. The coops' approach will not use any devices that produce EMFs. But cost effectiveness, not threats to human health, is the reason for their decision.

In the more remote areas of the Upper Valley, it is doubtful that wireless smart meters will work in all locations. Wireless Internet does not reach everybody; so, there is no reason to believe that a smart meter network will be any different. A more sensible approach that provides a winning solution for all. That's a fiber optic network that provides top of the line Internet, telephone, and perhaps TV and could easily support smart meters without relying on electromagnetic radio waves from towers scattered all over our hill tops.

I'd be happy to answer any questions that you may have, whether regarding smart meters, EMFs or wireless vs. DSL vs. fiber optic networks. I look forward to hearing from you. (802) 785-4146 [jmasland@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:jmasland@leg.state.vt.us)

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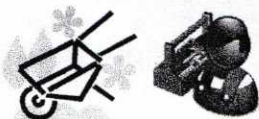


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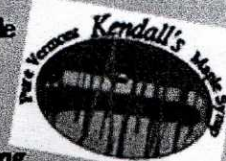
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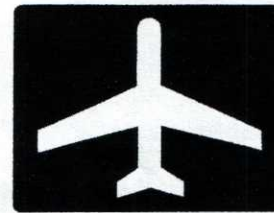
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**CALENDAR FOR January 2012**

- 2 Schools start new year classes
- 7 Strafford Nordic Ski Center 's rescheduled grand opening
- 18 Thistle reading two David Ives pieces 7:00 P.M. Home of Martha Manheim