

ANNUAL REPORT
Town of
RIPTON
Vermont
For the year
January 1 to December 31, 2003



Please bring this report with you to Town Meeting
Monday, March 1 at 7:30 p.m.
at the Community House

~~Note:~~ The School Meeting will be first this year, followed by the Town Meeting.

TOWN TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

YOU CAN REACH ALL EMERGENCY SERVICES BY DIALING

911

FIRE (RIPTON FIRE DEPARTMENT)	911
POLICE (STATE POLICE)	911
MEDICAL (MIDDLEBURY AMBULANCE)	911
MEDICAL (RIPTON FIRST RESPONSE)	911

NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Town Office	388-2266
Ripton Elementary School	388-2208
Fire Chief	388-3629
Fire Warden	388-3629
Cemetery Sexton	388-2377
Planning Commission Chair	388-4082
Chair of Selectmen	388-7804
Road Commissioner	388-7346
Zoning/Sewage Administrator	453-3785
School Board Chair	388-7804
Recycling Coordinator	388-4082
Delinquent Tax Collector	388-2266
Health Officer	388-0050
Town Service Officer	388-2933
Dog Warden	388-0918
	Pager (382-2390)

STATE OFFICIALS

Willem Jewett, State Representative	wjewett@leg.state.vt.us
Claire Ayer, State Senator	cayer@leg.state.vt.us
Gerry Gossens, State Senator	352-9058
	ggossens@leg.state.vt.us
Jim Douglas, Governor	1-800-649-6825

All legislators can be reached at the State House during the legislative session at 1-802-828-2228. Letters should be addressed: State House, 115 State Street, Drawer 33, Montpelier, VT 05633

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday through Friday.....9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Monday.....2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Closed State Holidays. Other hours by appointment.

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IN APPRECIATION: JEAN TODD

Jean Todd retired recently after fifty years of volunteer service to the Town of Ripton. She started in 1955 as our Union District School Director, and stayed in the position until 1961—our first representative to that body. She served on the local School Board for one year in 1963, and served on the Community House Restoration Committee from 1973 to 1976 during the hectic Bicentennial years. Jean was Health Officer for an amazing 38 years, from 1960 until 1997. Jean also served on the Planning Commission from 1978 until her resignation this year, for a total of 27 years.

Jean has also been very active behind the scenes, supporting the Fire Department, the First Response Squad, and other activities in Town. Those of us who have worked with her in her various Town capacities and who have known her as a friend appreciate her love of and dedication to Ripton. We will miss the solid energy and good sense she brought to Town government.



Elected Town Officers 2003-2004

Moderator		Joyce Dicianna
Clerk and Treasurer		Timothy Hanson
Selectmen:	Term Expires 2004	William Ford (Chair)
	Term Expires 2005	Laureen Cox
	Term Expires 2006	Ronald Wimett
Constable		Brad Braun
Delinquent Tax Collector		Timothy Hanson
Town Agent		Chris Smith
Town Grand Juror		Richard Kimler
Agent to Convey Real Estate		Willem Jewett
Listers:	Term Expires 2004	Erik Eriksen
	Term Expires 2005	Alison Joseph (Chair)
	Term Expires 2006	Bruce Malhotra
School Directors:	Term Expires 2004	Willem Jewett
	Term Expires 2004	Nancy Breiden
	Term Expires 2005	Connie Trudeau
	Term Expires 2005	David Disque
	Term Expires 2006	Carol Ford (Chair)
Union High School Director	Term Expires 2005	Joyce Dicianna
Justices of the Peace:	Term Expires 2004	Joyce Dicianna
Note: Justices of the Peace	Term Expires 2004	James Kater
are nominated at Party cau-	Term Expires 2004	Richard Kimler
cuses in the fall and elected	Term Expires 2004	Warren King
at the General Election	Term Expires 2004	Ann Barker

Appointed Town Officers:

Planning Commission	Term Expires 2003	John Anderson (resigned 6/03)
	Term Expires 2005	Warren King (Chair)
	Term Expires 2005	Jean Todd (resigned 1/ 04)
	Term Expires 2005	George Phinney (appointed 1/04)
	Term Expires 2005	Jorene Doria (Secretary)
	Term Expires 2006	Alison Joseph (appointed 6/03)
	Term Expires 2006	Richard Collitt (Vice Chair)
Conservation Commission	Term Expires 2004	Carrie Herzog
	Term Expires 2004	Freeman Allen
	Term Expires 2004	Barry King
	Term Expires 2005	Drew Palcsik (resigned 2003)
	Term Expires 2005	Ned Horning (appointed 2003)
	Term Expires 2005	Frank Wolf (Treasurer)
	Term Expires 2005	Michael Burgess
	Term Expires 2006	Warren King (Chair)
	Term Expires 2006	Chris Lacey (Secretary)
	Term Expires 2006	Becky Purdum

Appointed Town Officers (Continued):

Annual Appointments

Clerk of Selectmen
Assistant Town Clerk
Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer
Road Commissioner
Health Officer
Regional Planning Delegate
Regional Planning Alternate
Recycling Coordinator
Solid Waste District Delegate
Solid Waste District Alternate
Town Service Officer
Dog Warden
Dog Officers (Appointed by Dog Warden)

Timothy Hanson
Joyce Henderson
Alison Joseph
Ronald Wimett
Cathy Braun
Jeremy Grip
Open Position
Warren King
Steven Zwicky
Tim Hanson
Susan Prager
Jeremie Matrishon
Erik Eriksen
Brad Braun
Ross Elliot
Ron Wimett
Freeman Allen

Tree Warden

Archaic Positions

Fence Viewers:

Arthur Lord, Gary Whitman,
Herbert Billings
Perry Hanson, Jr.
Richard Collitt

Inspector of Lumber, Shingles & Wood
Weigher of Coal

Other Town Officers and Officials

Zoning/Sewage Administrator (three year contract)
Fire Warden (appointed by the State)
Civil Defense Coordinator (appointed by the State)
Fire Chief (chosen by membership)
First Response Chief (chosen by membership)

Edward Hanson
Erik Eriksen
Ross Elliott
Erik Eriksen
Anza Armstrong

MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to participate.

Selectboard: 2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 7:30 at the Town Office.

School Board: 1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30 at the Ripton School.

Planning Commission: 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 at the Town Office.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:30, Town Office.

Conservation Commission: Meetings to be held at least quarterly; notice will be posted.

Ripton Fire & First Response Department: . Saturday mornings, Fire Department.

Roles of Elected Officers

Moderator: presides at Town and School Meeting by keeping the discourse on track, ruling on points of order, and otherwise making sure that the meeting runs well.

Selectmen: General supervision and control over the Town. They prepare the Town budget, authorize expenditures, make sure the roads are passable, and in general manage the affairs of the Town.

School Directors: prepare the budget, hire teachers, and generally supervise the operation of the school.

Union High School Director: represents Ripton at the Union High School Board, which does for the District what local school boards do.

Town Clerk: responsible for running elections, recording land transactions and vital records, licensing dogs, and many other tasks.

Treasurer: receives and invests funds paid to the Town and with orders from the Selectmen pays vendors; issues tax bills and collects taxes.

Listers: create a Grand List of all Town properties and their values. The Selectmen, Treasurer, and State use the Grand List to set amounts for the tax rate, tax bills, and state aid.

Delinquent Tax Collector: collects taxes not paid by the due date.

Justices of the Peace: perform marriages, help at elections, and serve on the Board of Civil Authority and the Board of Abatement.

Constable: has the authority to arrest, perform searches and seizures within the Town, and serve criminal or civil processes, but is not encouraged to do any of these – the Sheriff or State Police are.

Town Agent: prosecutes and defends suits for the Town or School District. Today, this role is almost always delegated to the Town's attorney.

Town Grand Juror: may present offenses that in his/her judgement ought to be prosecuted, but the State's Attorney now does this job.

Roles of Appointed Officers

Clerk of Selectmen: appointed by Selectmen to carry out administrative duties of the Board such as preparing minutes and correspondence, administering grants, researching and drafting ordinances, and preparing the budget for Board review.

Road Commissioner: inspects, proposes, and advises about roadwork.

Zoning Administrator/Sewage Officer: The Zoning Administrator issues building permits and investigates zoning violations. The Sewage Officer issues sewage permits and with the Health Officer investigates sewage problems.

Health Officer: makes sanitary inspections of properties where public health hazards are suspected, inspects school meal facilities and public buildings; may order hazards be removed or destroyed.

Planning Commissioners: draft zoning regulations to be voted by the Town, prepare the Town plan, and act as the Zoning Board of Adjustment to resolve zoning issues.

Regional Planning Delegate: represents Ripton at Addison County Regional Planning Commission meetings.

Conservation Commissioners: advise the Selectboard and Planning Commission to promote community responsibility for Ripton's natural and cultural resources.

Recycling Coordinator: maintains a list and schedule of volunteers, distributes information, makes recommendations to the Selectmen, and otherwise organizes the Town's recycling efforts.

Fire Warden: gives permission for open burning, and is responsible for wildland fire safety.

Civil Defense Coordinator: organizes emergency response by coordinating the activities of radio operators, Red Cross, Fire and Rescue Departments.

Town Service Officer: receives applications for emergency public assistance, determines eligibility, and performs duties as directed by the State Commissioner of Welfare.

Fence Viewers: see that fences are intact and inspect fence lines, but do not establish property lines. They may also require that nuisance fences such as those that obstruct a view or deprive a neighbor of light and air be removed.

Inspector of Lumber, Shingles & Wood: will examine and classify the quality of lumber, shingles and wood, measure it, and issue a certificate.

Tree Warden: may remove dead or fallen limbs and propose and implement ordinances for tree planting, care and removal of trees within public ways or on public lands.

Weigher of Coal: by request, weighs all coal sold in town.

GENERAL INFORMATION—TOWN OF RIPTON

Chartered April 13, 1781; Organized 1828

ROAD MILES as Classified by the State		LAND DATA	
State Highway: Route 125	5.786	Total Area (acres)	32,704
Class 2: Lincoln Road	4.900	National Forest Acreage (68% of Ripton acreage)	22,124
Class 3: Most Town Roads	18.380	Middlebury College Acreage (6% of Ripton acreage)	1,994
Class 4: Portions of Pearl Lee & Wagon Wheel Road	1.730		
Total Miles of Roads	30.796		

VOTER INFORMATION AND VOTER PARTICIPATION

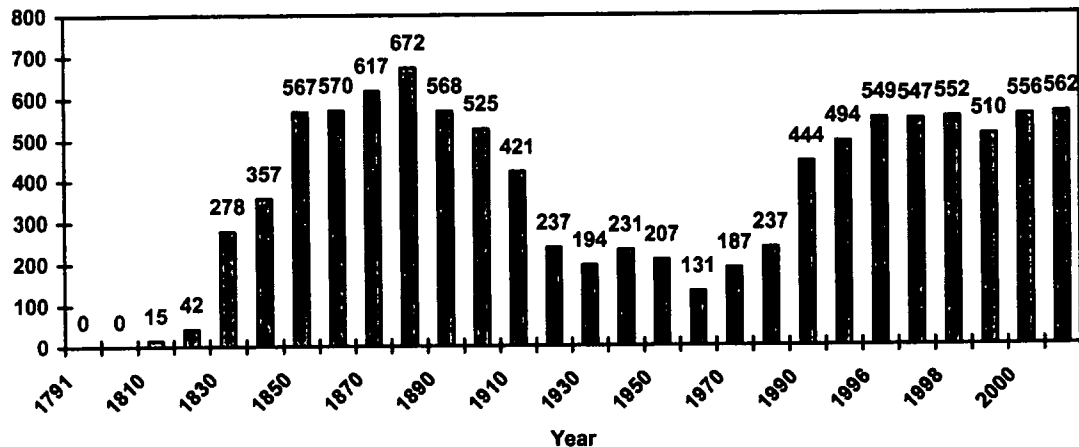
Number on Checklist as of December 31, 2004-----401
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 2003-----408
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 2002-----412
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 2001-----394
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 2000-----385
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 1999-----352
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 1998-----350
 Number on Checklist as of December 31, 1997-----335

Voter Turnout, Charter Change 2003	74 of 411 (18%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 2003	140 of 410 (34%)
Voter Turnout, General Election 2002	300 of 412 (72%)
Voter Turnout, Primary Election 2002	71 of 381 (18%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 2002	138 of 375 (37%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 2001	93 of 390 (24%)
Voter Turnout, General Election 2000	305 of 385 (79%)
Voter Turnout, Primary Election 2000	123 of 363 (34%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 2000	174 of 352 (50%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 1999	113 of 348 (32%)
Voter Turnout, Town Meeting 1998	116 of 335 (33%)
Voter Turnout, Primary Election 1998	95 of 351 (27%)
Voter Turnout, General Election 1998	222 of 352 (63%)

POPULATION DATA

The most recent estimate from the Vermont Department of Health shows Ripton with a population of 562, an increase of six from the 2000 count.

Ripton Population 1791-2002



This chart is a combination of data from the US census, the Vermont Department of Health, and the University of Vermont Center for Rural Studies (crs.uvm.edu/indicators).

TOWN REPORT PUBLISHING INFORMATION

The UVM Extension Service and the Public Records Division of the State of Vermont labeled the 2001 Town Report **OUTSTANDING**, the State's highest town report award category. Only seven other towns received an outstanding award in 2001. As we are preparing this Town Report, we have not heard how our 2002 report did. We hope to do as well as we have in the past, and are flattered from time to time when other towns request copies of our report for ideas on how to improve theirs.

The report is a cooperative effort from the start. The Chairs, the Chiefs, the Coordinators, the Administrators, and so on—mostly volunteers—try to condense into the limited format the hours of meetings, hearings, inspections, and so on that go into local government. These reports are brought in handwritten, on disc, typed, e-mailed, however it can be done, and collated by the Clerk's Office. When we have roughed together a draft, the book goes out to eight to ten very patient and careful readers who pour over the prose and numbers, looking for the inadvertent errors that tend to creep in. This crew saves a great deal of embarrassment at Town Meeting night!

Once the local proofing has been done and the corrections made, Steve Goodman and his staff at the Middlebury College print shop put the book together and mail it out. They deserve our thanks for the great work they do with the report—they only have a few days to get it out to meet the mailing deadline. They are a good group of people to work with.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT FOR 2003

ROADS AND BRIDGES

Class 2 Road Grant: The Town completed an extensive amount of work on the Lincoln Road using funds from a State Class 2 road grant. This included cutting trees and brush in the right-of-way to improve the line of sight and to make it easier to walk along the roadside. Ditching was extended and culverts added to improve water flow. Certain large boulders and sections of ledge which were traffic hazards or which impeded ditching were removed (some by blasting). All raw areas were seeded quickly, and erosion control measures were established. Finally, a portion of the Lincoln Road was repaved, along with the entrance to the Dugway. The total cost of the project was \$43,620.84; the Town's portion was \$11,620.84. The total length of the project was about 3,000 feet. After subtracting the cost of paving (\$15,889) from the total cost of the project, we calculate that it cost a little more than \$9 per foot to bring a section of road up to the Town road specifications.

Floods: It has been three years since the Town has experienced serious flooding. Heavy rains in November caused some roadside washouts, particularly on the Goshen Road. The oversized culverts the Town installed on the North Branch and Lincoln Road after previous flash-floods are doing what they were designed to do—allowing large volumes of water to go under the road rather than over it.

Goshen Road Bridge: The Vermont Department of Transportation (VTRANS) has assured the Town that they still plan to turn the single-lane bridge on the Goshen Road (just as you turn off Route 125) into a two-lane bridge. This project has been in the planning stage for at least five years. We will let the Town know as soon as it seems they are going to move on this project.

New Culvert Grants: We are still planning to work on the culvert that allows the Middle Branch to cross under Peddler's Bridge Road just above the recycling shed. This culvert is the one that failed when the Fire Station flooded. The State engineers did not like the original design the Town submitted, and we have not been able to get a redesign approved yet. We still hope to get this approved and installed in 2004, since we have a grant that will cover 90% of the cost, estimated at \$57,000.

Culvert Work: Routine culvert work continues: we spent \$4,220 on culverts in 2003. Since we had purchased and stockpiled nearly \$5,000 worth of pipe in 2002, more culverts were installed than this cost indicates.

Paving: No paving has been done since 1999 except for the Class 2 paving done on the Lincoln Road last year. The Selectmen have decided it is time to repave those portions of the Natural Turnpike that need it the most. \$15,000 has been added to the road budget to allow for this expense. Where needed, culvert work and ditching precedes the paving.

Gravel Roads: The Town spent nearly \$14,700 to add gravel on several sections of the unpaved roads last year, and has budgeted \$10,000 for gravel this year to continue to increase the gravel base of the roads. We will combine gravel work with adding new culverts or replacing undersized ones, cutting trees in the right-of-way and ditching. The section we work on will meet our Class 3 road standards and will be similar to work done on the Lincoln Road in 2003.

Pearl Lee Trail: Old road maps of the Town show that the Lincoln Road stopped where it meets with the North Branch and the Pearl Lee Roads, and the only way to Lincoln was on the Pearl Lee. In 1995 the

Town reclassified the northernmost portion of the Pearl Lee as a Legal Trail, which preserved the Town's right-of-way but did not obligate the Town to do any work on it. Now there is interest in doing some work on this trail so that it can be used recreationally. We are working with Lincoln so that it can be a through trail to serve both towns.

Winter Work: Winter was kinder to the budget than it has been in past years. We spent nearly \$5,600 less on winter work in 2003 than we expected. Late December was very snowy, and some of those expenses wrap over into 2004, so it is hard to predict the way the 2004 budget will turn out.

Projected Sand/Salt Shed: The State is paying more attention to how towns are storing salt and sand. Large stockpiles of salt require specialized buildings. We do not use that much salt—what we use is mixed in with the winter sand as it is put up to keep the sand from freezing. We do not spread straight salt on the roads as the State does, so we are not under orders to build a salt shed. However, the State is also becoming increasingly concerned about the possible pollution impact of siltation—the 'fines' from the winter sand getting into brooks and rivers and possibly altering the habitat for spawning fish. The Board will start the process of researching what is or may be required to store the sand and will report to the Town when we know more.

SALE OF THE OLD TOWN OFFICE

The Selectmen have warned an item regarding the sale of the old Town Office. The building was not high on the Board's priority list for the last ten years, since Verizon was renting it and paying for all utilities. However, Verizon chose not to renew their option in 2003, which means that the building is again fully the Town's responsibility to maintain.

The voters defeated an article at Town Meeting 1990 which would have authorized

the sale of the building. The main reasons were two: the Town should conserve a Town asset as no one knows what future use the Town might have for such a building; and the building is dedicated to Orris Manning, and any sale of the building might be disrespectful to him.

The Selectmen feel that the old Office is unlikely to be used by the Town again as a public building for two reasons. The building is in the flood zone, making it totally unsuitable for an historic society building or some other repository for Town artifacts. The possibility of using the building for a post office or some other office or commercial enterprise with high traffic flow is ill advised due to parking problems. Any car leaving the small parking lot cannot see in either direction if cars are coming on Route 125—the line-of-sight is terrible.

What is new since that Town vote in 1990 is that the Historic District Commission would have to approve any changes to the appearance or use of the building, which gives the Town the assurance that any external changes to the building would be consistent with the character of the rest of Ripton center.

There is a corollary Article in the warning asking what the Town would like to do with the dedicatory plaque on the old Office should the Town approve the sale. The Selectmen suggest having the plaque transferred to a piece of granite, and placed in the center of Town, similar to the Veterans' Stone next to the Community House. Other ideas would be considered.

The Article that authorizes the sale of the old Office also proposes that "any funds realized from that sale would be used to perform needed repair and maintenance work to the Ripton Community House and Town Office." The type of work the Selectmen are considering includes insulating the Town Office; replacing or reconfiguring the Community House furnace, and replacing

the Town Office furnace (which is nearly 30 years old).

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

Under the provisions of the Town's long-term agreement with the College, the College paid \$46,162.30 as a gift-in-lieu of taxes and \$17,595 in direct taxes on certain properties. The College has also contracted to provide \$16,000 in goods and services annually, but this year they gave nearly \$23,350. The Town used \$5,260 (recycling, Town Report printing and mailing), the Fire Department \$4,764 (purchasing a portable pump), and the School used \$9,517 (mostly for the meals program). The over-expenditure in gift-in-kind funds in 2003 means there will be only \$7,350 to use in 2004. There is a detailed report on the gift-in-kind funds in the financial section of the Town Report.

AUDITING

Angelano & Company uneventfully audited the Town's financial records in January 2004. A letter stating that they found no problems with the Town's books is printed in the financial section of this report. To save printing and mailing costs we have decided not to publish their report in full.

Copies of the complete report are available for review at the Town Office.

ENHANCEMENT GRANT

As with many Federal and VTRANS grants the process of getting to groundbreaking has taken longer than we hoped. We are excited about a new aspect to the plan—a pedestrian bridge crossing the Middle Branch just above the Bridge of Flowers. The bridge is the Selectmen's primary focus, since, we believe, it will make pedestrian crossing of that narrow bridge much safer. We hope that the project will go out to bid later this year.

A more complete description of this project is included later in the Town Report.

TRUCK TRAFFIC ON ROUTE 125

We have little of substance to report on the issue of large tractor-trailers using Route 125 as a through route. The Addison County Sheriff is stepping up patrol, and trying to ticket the trucks that cross the center line, but as far as the State of Vermont is concerned, since Route 125 is a main State road (and it is), its use cannot be restricted in a manner that would be useful to us. We will continue to prompt the State at every opportunity, but, frankly, we are discouraged.

SELECTMEN'S BUDGET NARRATIVE FOR 2003

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Financial Status: 2003 ended with a total combined fund balance of \$254,359.69, compared with \$230,858.04 at the end of 2002. The summary of these funds can be seen on the Balance Sheet that follows.

General Fund Expenses in 2003: We overspent the General Fund budget in 2003 by a little more than \$9,000. Officers' compensation was over budget by a little more than \$3,000. This section of the budget continues to be a little difficult to read, since the Clerk/Treasurer is working fewer hours, and the two Assistant Clerks are working more. The under-spending on the Clerk/ Treasurer's hours is supposed to compensate for the extra paid to the Assistant Clerks, but fell short by about \$440. The Listers also got a head start on the reappraisal (see their report for more information on this), so their budget line was over as well.

The Planning Commission also had costs that exceeded budget by about \$3,600. This over-expenditure, as it was in 2002, is due to legal expenses—mainly an appeal of a Planning Commission decision to the Vermont Supreme Court, where it was decided in favor of the Town. Now that this case is over, and we have no more cases pending, we believe the Planning line will come close to the budget.

There was a fire in the furnace room of the Community House last winter—we are lucky that we did not lose the building. The clean-up cost for the damage (some of which was covered with an insurance payment from VLCT) is the cause of this portion of the budget being overspent. We have a new standing-seam roof that we think looks just right for the building and the neighborhood.

General Fund Expenses for 2004: The Selectmen have proposed a budget increase of about \$2,660 for 2004, an increase of 2.8%. The main increase is in the line of Town legal fees, and this is due to the possibility that we will have to take several properties to tax sale this year, as the delinquent tax rolls are growing. In almost every other budget category, the Selectmen propose level funding, except for a prudent increase in anticipated fuel costs for the Community House and Town Office—the winter has started off very cold!

ROAD BUDGET

Road Expenses 2003: The Town underspent the Summer Maintenance budget by \$16,651 last year, mostly because the attention was being paid to the Class 2 road project. We only got to one application of chloride. We usually apply chloride twice a year, to bind the fine particles of the gravel to the road. Much less ditching was done than was budgeted for—again, because the equipment was working on the Class 2 project. Roadside mowing was also minimal in 2003. However, about \$4,600 more gravel was spread than was budgeted for.

Winter work is the hardest expense to project since we are entirely at the mercy of the weather. A series of small snow storms can wreck a budget quickly.

ROAD EXPENSES FOR 2004

Summer Work: The Board has level-funded the summer work budget for 2004, which will allow for continued upgrading of the gravel roads with spreading gravel, culvert work, ditching and cutting brush by the roadside. The 2004 budget reintroduces \$15,000 for paving, as discussed earlier, which is the primary cause of the 9% increase in the overall roadwork budget.

Winter Work for 2004: As noted earlier, winter work depends on the weather. We have budgeted a little less for snow-removal for 2004 than in last year's budget, and hope that the winter is kind to us.

COLLEGE GIFT-IN-KIND:

As you examine the detailed budgets, note that expenses paid for in full or in part from the College gift-in-kind funds show in the budget in ***bold/italics***.

William Ford, Chair
Ripton Selectmen

Laureen Cox

Ronald Wimett

SCENIC BYWAYS AND ENHANCEMENT GRANTS REPORT

The Scenic Byways Grant is a \$9,200 allotment for improvements to the area around the Community House and Town Office. The Enhancement Grant is a \$70,000 award for safety and aesthetic improvements to the village area of Route 125. VTRANS, along with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), administers these federal grants and has final approval over work done and reimbursement. The grants require a 20% local match in donations, in-kind services, or dollars. The match is the direct expense to the Town. For the Scenic Byways Grant the Town must match \$1,840, for the Enhancement Grant \$14,000.

To date, grant funds have been spent primarily on engineering, permitting, legal, and administrative expenses. Some funds have been spent on items classified as construction costs. This includes a deposit on a pedestrian bridge and moving salvaged granite for the project to Ripton. As of December 31, 2003 expenditures from 1999-2003 are as follows:

Scenic Byways Grant

Grant funds spent = \$2,629.04

Grant funds remaining = \$6,570.96

Match funds spent = \$657.27

Match funds to be met = \$1,182.73

Enhancement Grant

Grant funds spent = \$22,550.37

Grant funds remaining = \$47,449.63

Match funds spent = \$6,510.07

Match funds to be met = \$7,489.92

Construction is planned for 2004 and all remaining grant funds and match obligations will be spent. The totals are:

- Grant funds: \$54,020.59
- Match funds: \$8,672.65.

In 2003 our seventh VTRANS project manager, Al Pratt, was assigned to the project. He has helped the project move along much more quickly than it had and has been great at finding bargain materials and getting permits approved. The project changed course last May when Mr. Pratt told us about the sale of a pedestrian bridge that had been used as a temporary bridge during a construction project in Proctor. Sections of this bridge were available at roughly 50% of their original cost, and one looked ideal for the distance we proposed to span parallel to the Bridge of Flowers (Hwy. Bridge #15). The bridge looks like the one from the Marbleworks to Frog Hollow in Middlebury. It meets ADA and safety regulations.

The project consultant, Otter Creek Engineering, confirmed that the bridge would work here and designed approaches and the supporting structure for it. The Town placed a deposit on the bridge and the focus of design work and permits shifted from the Town Office parking area to the bridge area.

A permit for work in the river area was good until October 1. Right-of-way and permit issues could not be resolved in time to install the bridge by October 2003. We have now applied for and received nearly twenty permits. The project was among the first to go through a new, extensive in-house review policy at VTRANS. It still requires final sign-off from the FHWA.

Resolution of right-of-way issues continues at this time. The property owners on both sides of the river where the bridge is proposed have been asked to donate or sell a right-of-way to the State. This is the only area of the project that extends onto private property.

Regarding the Enhancement Grant's inclusion of a pathway through the Town center, two property owners do not want a path across their property. Although the path would stay in the legal right-of-way, the general sentiment has been to respect their wishes and not install a path in front of their homes.

Construction is now anticipated for the 2004 stream alteration permit period of June 1 – Sept. 1. The project that will be put out to bid will include:

- the bridge, a path to and from it and plantings in that area;
- definition of the driveway openings and parking area and plantings in the Town Office area, grading and a fresh gravel surface,
- and a path along Route 125.

However, it is unlikely that we have sufficient funds to construct everything. We are required, per the Scenic Byways grant, to spend the \$7,228.23 remaining in that grant and its match at the Town Office area. This leaves approximately \$50,000 for the bridge area. The bridge and its installation, including relocating a driveway, are anticipated to cost at least that much. There is a possibility of more funds through a pool of federal highway money, but that will not be definite until after bids are known.

The project was featured in the Vermont Forum on Sprawl newsletter in fall 2003. They will do a follow-up article after construction. It has been suggested that we submit the project plans for an Institute of Transportation Engineers pedestrian project award.

Alison Joseph
Municipal Project Manager

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT FOR 2003

Alison Joseph, Joyce Henderson and I continue to work as a team to get the work of Clerk, Treasurer and Clerk of Selectmen done. As it was last year, the budget for Town Clerk, Treasurer and Clerk of Selectmen was underspent, while the line for Assistant Town Clerk is overspent by almost the same amount. I continue to spend fewer hours working for the Town, while Alison and Joyce have been spending more. The office is open the hours it always has been, and the work of the Town is getting done.

Recording of deeds keeps Joyce busy. The Town recorded 909 pages in the Land Records, compared with 650 in 2001 and 683 in 2002. Recording fee income was \$6,531, which offsets three quarters of the Assistant Town Clerks' salaries.

It seems that each year there is more to do at the Town Clerk's Office. Not only is there a greater volume of people traffic in general, but there are also many new things to do, brought on by new Federal and State laws.

Act 68, the new education finance law, has already required us to change how we do our tax bills (do you know your 'span number'?), and will require the Listers to do their job differently. Just when you think you have it all figured out, someone changes the rules.

We believe 2004 will be particularly busy, mostly because of the Town-wide reappraisal and the changes that will be required to deal with Act 68.

I believe the Town is well served with its officers in general, and I continue to be grateful for the efforts of Alison Joseph (Lister, Assistant Town Clerk, Assistant Treasurer, Grant Project Manager, Firefighter and First Responder) and Joyce Henderson (Assistant Clerk, indexer and document recorder).

Timothy Hanson
Town Clerk and Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR 2003

ROAD ACCOUNT BALANCE SHEET FOR 2003

Beginning Balance January 1, 2003		\$20,596
Regular Road Expenses in 2003	(\$117,704)	
Grant Expenses in 2003	(\$43,863)	
Road Income for 2003—Tax Based	\$67,184	
Road Income for 2003—National Forest and State	\$97,828	
Ending Road Fund Balance Dec 31, 2003		\$24,041

GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT BALANCE SHEET FOR 2003

Beginning Balance January 1, 2003		\$52,809
General Fund Expenses in 2003 (including Schools)	(\$982,015)	
Transfer \$ to Roads	\$0.00	
General Fund Income for 2003	\$878,523	
Accounts Receivable (Delinquent Taxes)	\$84,615	
Ending General Fund Balance Dec 31, 2003		\$33,932

MAJOR PROJECT FUND BALANCE SHEET FOR 2003

Beginning Balance January 1, 2003		\$56,510
Town Payment for 2003	\$6,500	
Interest on Major Project Fund	\$1,313	
Ending Major Project Fund Balance Dec 31, 2003		\$64,323

REAPPRAISAL FUND BALANCE SHEET FOR 2003

Beginning Balance January 1, 2003		\$10,087
Town Payment for 2003 ¹	\$3,483	
Interest on Reappraisal Fund	\$78	
Ending Reappraisal Fund Balance Dec 31, 2003		\$13,648

¹ The Town voted a \$5,000 transfer to this fund in March 2003, but the Listers and Selectmen felt that funds spent in 2003 in anticipation of the 2004 reappraisal could come out of this allotment.

BALANCE SHEET FOR 2003 AND 2002 TWO YEAR COMPARISON

	Dec 2003	Dec 2002	\$ Change
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
Land Sale Fund	\$63,082.48	\$62,566.13	\$516.35
Reappraisal Fund	\$13,648.05	\$10,087.21	\$3,560.84
Major Project Fund	\$64,322.65	\$56,509.90	\$7,812.75
Chittenden Savings	\$22,238.44	\$73,333.34	(\$51,094.90)
Chittenden Checking	\$5,428.34	\$71.56	\$5,356.78
Total Checking/Savings	<u>\$168,719.96</u>	<u>\$202,568.14</u>	<u>(\$33,848.18)</u>
Accounts Receivable			
Delinquent Taxes	\$34,418.82	\$27,264.90	\$7,153.92
Class 2 Road Grant	\$32,000.00	\$0.00	\$32,000.00
Enhancement Grant	\$18,195.91	\$0.00	\$18,195.91
Total, Accounts Receivable	<u>\$84,614.73</u>	<u>\$27,264.90</u>	<u>\$57,349.83</u>
Other Assets			
Cash Box	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00
Payroll Buffer Account	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>\$1,025.00</u>	<u>\$1,025.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
 Total Current Assets	 <u>\$254,359.69</u>	 <u>\$230,858.04</u>	 <u>\$23,501.65</u>

Explanatory Notes:

The cash surplus at the end of 2003 was significantly less than at the end of 2002, but this is more than made up for by the accounts receivable for the Class 2 road grant and the Enhancement Grant. Most of these monies should be in the Town's coffers by Town Meeting. The Major Project Fund has appreciated due to interest and the annual payment of \$6,500. The amount of Delinquent Taxes owed as of December 31, 2003 is over \$7,000 more than it was at the end of 2002, which is of concern and may necessitate some tax sales.

STATEMENT OF TOWN INDEBTEDNESS FOR 2003

An explanatory statement regarding Article 3 on the 2004 Warning needs to be made. If the Town votes this article in the affirmative, the Selectmen will be authorized to borrow \$212,500 for a period not to exceed 10 years for the purposes of building the Fire Station. This item is a long time coming and should come as no surprise to anyone who has been in Town for a few years. The reason the Selectmen are to be the prime borrowers is because they can borrow with the Town's low interest rates—a rate that might not be available to a Fire Department that does not have taxing authority.

The Fire Department has acquired grants totaling \$150,000 to help with this project. One grant, for \$50,000, is to acquire the land for the project. The Fire Department is currently in negotiations with the School to use a portion of School land, which will be accessed off the Dugway, for the building. We already have State approval to hook up to the School's water and sewer system, which will of course save a lot since the Fire Department will not have to drill a well or install a septic system. However, whatever is left over from this grant after the engineering and permitting is done will go to the School to pay for the use of the land, and will not be available directly to the Fire Department to build the station. We believe the

School plans to ask the Town for the authority to put this money in the School's building project fund, so that it will not be considered "income" by the State, which would in turn reduce our State Aid to education. The money will not be "lost" to the taxpayers of the Town, but will be unavailable for building the Fire Station. On the other hand, the Fire Department will have a place to put the building, and an excellent water and sewer hookup.

The second FEMA grant, for \$100,000, is to pay for the value of the old fire station, to pay for its demolition, and to return the site to a natural state. FEMA will not pay these funds until the old building has been removed, and the land has been graded and seeded. The Fire Department therefore needs the money from the loan to build the new fire station in 2004 so that the old building can be removed by June 2005 (the grant deadline). All funds that are received from this grant will go towards paying down the loan. No more money will be borrowed than is absolutely needed for the project. Once the final bills are in and the final grant payments have been received, the Town can decide how it wants to finance the balance.

For more details on this please see the Fire Department Report.

Long-term Debt: The Town has no long-term debt.

Short-term Debt: The Town has no short-term debt.

School-Town Fund Borrowing: The Town and School continue to reserve the option to "borrow" from each other (interest free) at certain times of the year. However, due to the General Fund and Road surpluses the last few years, the Town has not had to borrow from the School to meet current expenses. With State Aid payments increased and spread out through the year, the School's cash flow situation is better as well, so they "borrowed" twice in 2003.

CAPITAL BUDGET STATEMENT FOR 2003

The Town has no "sinking fund" or other similar program to set funds aside to buy machinery or other equipment. The Selectmen continue to fund the Major Project Fund to help pay for large road projects. This helps level out the tax rate. Each year we add \$6,500 to the fund, which had a value at the end of 2003 of \$64,322.65.

FEDERAL AND STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED IN 2003 AND ESTIMATED FOR 2004

In 2003 the Town received financial assistance from the Federal and State governments shown in the 'Actual 2003' column. The Selectmen anticipate receiving the amounts listed in the 2004 column.

Federal Assistance		Actual 2003	Estimated 2004
	National Forest Funds	\$29,975.00	\$25,000.00
	Total	\$29,975.00	\$25,000.00
State Assistance			
	State Aid for Roads	\$44,772.16	\$44,000.00
	Bridge & Culvert Program	\$0.00	\$35,000.00
	Land Use Reimbursement	\$5,995.00	\$5,500.00
	Listers' Funding	\$3,598.00	\$3,500.00
	Total	\$54,365.16	\$88,000.00

LISTING OF TOWN OFFICERS' COMPENSATION FOR 2003 AND PROPOSED COMPENSATION FOR 2004

The salaries and reimbursements to Town officers are listed below. As in 2003, the Selectmen have proposed a cost of living increase for the Clerk, Treasurer, Listers, and Assistant Town Clerk.

Position	Actual 2003	Budget 2004
Selectmen (Annual Stipend per Selectman)	\$650.00	\$650.00
Town Clerk Salary	\$7,800.00	\$7,950.00
Treasurer Salary	\$7,450.00	\$7,600.00
Clerk of Selectmen Salary	\$5,200.00	\$5,300.00
Delinquent Tax Collector (8% of Del. Taxes)	\$3,314.09	Estimated \$3,200.00
Assistant Town Clerk	\$10.00 to \$15.00/hour	\$10.00 to \$16.00/hour
Listers	\$10.00 to \$15.00/hour	\$10.00 to \$16.00/hour
Planning Commissioner (Annual Stipend)	\$250.00	\$250.00
Election Workers and BCA Meetings	\$8.00/hour	\$8.00/hour

TAX RATE FOR 2004

The annual challenge of estimating a tax rate for the coming year has become even more difficult with Act 68, the new education tax law. This will be the first year that we will operate under its provisions. As we understand it, there will be a two-tiered tax rate—one for residents (have you sent in your resident declaration forms?) and one for non-residents. The rates are still being determined at the State level as this is being written.

One thing to be aware of: when you see a tax rate of \$1.10 (residential) or \$1.70 (non-residential) in the paper, please understand that this is a **starting point**. First of all, the local tax rate will be increased by however much the Town's Grand List is below what the State says the value of the properties in Town is. For example, if the State says we are under-appraised by 20%, the base rate will be increased by 20 %. Further, the base rate assumes a per-pupil spending level much lower than we actually spend in Ripton (both for the Union District and Ripton Elementary students), so the base rate will be increased to reflect our higher spending.

Act 68 payments—State Aid to Education. The first estimates that the Ripton School Board has seen show that we will receive a significant increase in our State

Aid to education payment, but as the Legislature is still in session, this all could change.

Changes in the Grand List. The Listers are planning a Town-wide reappraisal for 2004. This usually means a significant increase in the value of the reported Grand List, which means (usually) a significant increase in each individual's property value. This does **not**, however, necessarily mean that what an individual pays in taxes will go up, since, all things being equal, as the Grand List goes up, the tax rate falls.

It is interesting to note in the State's Annual Report from Property Valuation and Review for 2003 that:

- 71% of all properties in Town are owned by residents.
- The average listed value of each property is \$89,365, with an average tax bill of \$2,627.
- There were 40 rebates with an average tax reduction of \$753.98, and 98 pre-bates with an average tax adjustment of \$948.54

RIPTON CEMETERY REPORT FOR 2003

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The Cemetery Association holds 243.787 shares of Alliance Balanced Shares, a stock mutual fund which pays dividends and capital gains based on the performance of the stock market. This year the fund paid \$72.21 in dividends, which were reinvested in the fund, not taken as cash. Value of the 243.787 shares with a net asset value of \$15.85 per share as of December 31, 2003

was \$3,864.02, an increase in value of \$716.82.

Expenses for 2003 were for Cemetery maintenance—mowing and trimming.

If you have any questions call Sexton Bonnie Clark (388-2377), or Timothy Hanson, Town Clerk and Cemetery Treasurer.

CEMETERY BANK FUNDS

Beginning Balance		\$9,707.13
Receipts		
Interest on Savings	\$37.90	
Sale of Plots	\$1,300.00	
Total Receipts		\$1,337.90
Expenses (Cemetery Maintenance)	(1,000.00)	
Ending Balance		\$10,045.03



EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003 AND BUDGET 2004

Note: Items in *bold italics* are paid for in part or whole by Middlebury College

	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
Selectmen	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00	\$0.00	\$1,950.00
Clerk of Selectmen ¹	\$5,200.00	\$4,517.47	\$682.53	\$5,300.00
Town Clerk	\$7,800.00	\$5,642.15	\$2,157.85	\$7,950.00
Treasurer Salary	\$7,450.00	\$5,618.23	\$1,831.77	\$7,600.00
Social Security	\$3,000.00	\$4,266.08	(\$1,266.08)	\$3,500.00
Assistant Town Clerk	\$3,500.00	\$8,610.25	(\$5,110.25)	\$4,000.00
BCA Hearings	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
Auditing	\$2,500.00	\$2,545.00	(\$45.00)	\$2,750.00
Listing ²	\$5,000.00	\$6,197.34	(\$1,197.34)	\$2,000.00
Officers Meetings\Training	\$150.00	\$209.34	(\$59.34)	\$300.00
Election Costs ³	\$450.00	\$453.00	(\$3.00)	\$1,300.00
Delinquent Collector's Fees	\$2,800.00	\$3,314.09	(\$514.09)	\$3,200.00
Dog Warden	\$250.00	\$98.40	\$151.60	\$250.00
Officers Subtotal	\$40,250.00	\$43,421.35	(\$3,171.35)	\$40,300.00
TOWN OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATION:				
Fuel	\$2,500.00	\$2,483.70	\$16.30	\$2,800.00
Lights	\$900.00	\$906.13	(\$6.13)	\$925.00
Office Maintenance	\$700.00	\$1,545.16	(\$845.16)	\$750.00
Office Repairs	\$3,500.00	\$663.50	\$2,836.50	\$2,500.00
Office Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$1,027.86	(\$27.86)	\$1,000.00
Photocopier	\$500.00	\$675.63	(\$175.63)	\$700.00
Computer Costs	\$750.00	\$986.25	(\$236.25)	\$850.00
Postage	\$1,000.00	\$1,225.07	(\$225.07)	\$1,300.00
Telephone	\$1,350.00	\$1,334.20	\$15.80	\$1,350.00
Town Report Prep. & Printing	\$3,300.00	\$3,398.92	(\$98.92)	\$3,500.00
Town Shed Maintenance	\$250.00	\$145.00	\$105.00	\$250.00
Document Preservation	\$2,000.00	\$1,745.50	\$254.50	\$2,000.00
Old Office Maintenance	\$250.00	\$482.50	(\$232.50)	\$250.00
Town Office Subtotal	\$18,000.00	\$16,619.42	\$1,380.58	\$18,175.00

¹ The Clerk of Selectmen, Town Clerk and Treasurer is job-sharing with the two Assistant Town Clerks. Par of the Clerk's salary is being used to pay the two Assistants.

² Most of the Listing costs for 2004 will be in the reappraisal.

³ There will be three elections this year—Town Meeting, Primary and General.

EXPENDITURES JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003
AND BUDGET 2004 (CONTINUED)

INSURANCE:	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
Clerk's Insurance	\$1,855.00	\$1,855.00	\$0.00	\$1,855.00
Bonds ⁴	\$329.00	\$329.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fire, Liability, and Officer's	\$2,454.00	\$2,454.00	\$0.00	\$2,700.00
Workman's Compensation	\$1,744.00	\$1,028.00	\$716.00	\$957.00
Insurance Subtotal	\$6,382.00	\$5,666.00	\$716.00	\$5,512.00
MISCELLANEOUS:				
Street Lights	\$2,100.00	\$2,040.56	\$59.44	\$2,100.00
Legal Fees ⁵	\$500.00	\$1,755.15	(\$1,255.15)	\$2,500.00
Animal Damage	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$250.00
Zoning and Sewage Administration	\$6,000.00	\$9,604.99	(\$3,604.99)	\$6,000.00
Miscellaneous Subtotal	\$8,700.00	\$13,400.70	(\$4,700.70)	\$10,850.00
COMMUNITY HOUSE:				
Lights	\$900.00	\$774.43	\$125.57	\$900.00
Fuel	\$1,800.00	\$2,361.92	(\$561.92)	\$2,900.00
General Maintenance	\$2,500.00	\$6,018.06	(\$3,518.06)	\$2,500.00
Community House Subtotal	\$5,200.00	\$9,154.41	(\$3,954.41)	\$6,300.00
CONTRACTS AND DUES:				
Vt. League of Cities & Towns	\$623.00	\$623.00	\$0.00	\$623.00
Regional Planning	\$501.40	\$501.40	\$0.00	\$501.40
Addison County Sheriff	\$6,500.00	\$5,918.91	\$581.09	\$6,500.00
Mapping Update	\$650.00	\$0.00	\$650.00	\$700.00
Humane Society	\$300.00	\$280.00	\$20.00	\$280.00
Recycling	\$5,500.00	\$6,360.49	(\$860.49)	\$5,500.00
County Tax	\$3,575.00	\$3,285.48	\$289.52	\$3,600.00
Contracts & Dues Subtotal	\$17,649.40	\$16,969.28	\$680.12	\$17,704.40
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$96,181.40	\$105,231.16	(\$9,049.76)	\$98,841.40

⁴ The costs of Officers' bonds are now included in the Town's property and liability insurance.

⁵ The Town is budgeting some extra funds for possible Delinquent Tax sales.

EXPENDITURES JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003
AND BUDGET 2004 (CONTINUED)

ROADS:	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
Winter Work	\$69,750.00	\$64,638.35	\$5,111.65	\$66,700.00
Summer Maintenance	\$48,400.00	\$31,251.36	\$17,148.64	\$48,580.00
Major Project Fund	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$0.00	\$6,500.00
Resurfacing ⁶	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00
Summer Gravel Project	\$10,000.00	\$14,671.31	(\$4,671.31)	\$10,000.00
Phone Line Damage Repair	\$0.00	\$642.67	(\$642.67)	\$0.00
ROADS TOTAL:	\$134,650.00	\$117,703.69	\$16,946.31	\$146,780.00
ROAD/GENERAL FUND TOTAL:	\$230,831.40	\$222,934.85	\$7,896.55	\$245,621.40
WARNED ITEMS:				
Fire Department	\$17,500.00	\$17,510.75	(\$10.75)	\$19,000.00
Social Service Agencies	\$8,853.84	\$8,803.84	\$50.00	\$9,073.84
Reappraisal Savings Fund	\$5,000.00	\$3,482.55	\$1,517.45	\$5,000.00
Subtotal of Warned Items	\$31,353.84	\$29,797.14	\$1,556.70	\$33,073.84
NON-RECURRING EXPENSES				
Ripton Center Improvement Grant ⁷	\$9,000.00	\$24,941.82	(\$15,941.82)	\$62,693.24
Class 2 Grant	\$0.00	\$43,620.84	(\$43,620.84)	\$0.00
Peddler's Bridge Culvert Grant ⁸	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$57,000.00
Community House Roof	\$15,900.00	\$17,700.00	(\$1,800.00)	\$0.00
Sub of Non-Recurring Expenses	\$24,900.00	\$86,262.66	(\$61,362.66)	\$119,693.24
TOTAL BEFORE SCHOOLS:	\$287,085.24	\$338,994.65	(\$51,909.41)	\$398,388.48
SCHOOLS:				
Elementary School	\$689,896.00	\$288,101.00	\$401,795.00	\$703,730.00
High School	\$516,245.00	\$516,245.00	\$0.00	\$520,000.00
SCHOOL TOTAL⁹:	\$1,206,141.00	\$804,346.00	\$401,795.00	\$1,223,730.00
TOTAL SCHOOL & TOWN:	\$1,493,226.24	\$1,143,340.65	\$349,885.59	\$1,622,118.48

⁶ The Selectmen have budgeted for paving after several years of just doing crack-sealing.

⁷ Much of this expense will be covered by State and Federal Grants.

⁸ This is for the Peddler's Bridge culvert. 90% of the cost of this project will be paid for from a State grant.

⁹ The budgeted amount (for both 2003 and 2004) is the total amount the School expects to spend (including paying tuition at the High School and Middle School). The actual amount is the amount the Town paid the School in taxes. The difference between the two numbers is the reduction from State Aid and other non-tax income sources. There are more details on this in the School portion of the Report.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES
2000 THROUGH BUDGET 2004

OFFICERS:	Actual 2000	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004
Selectmen	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00
Clerk of Selectmen	\$3,900.00	\$5,000.00	\$4,496.53	\$4,517.47	\$5,300.00
Town Clerk	\$7,350.00	\$7,525.00	\$5,886.06	\$5,642.15	\$7,950.00
Treasurer	\$7,000.00	\$7,175.00	\$5,806.95	\$5,618.23	\$7,600.00
Social Security	\$2,796.79	\$3,095.31	\$2,902.69	\$4,266.08	\$3,500.00
Assistant Town Clerk	\$2,483.25	\$3,315.26	\$6,666.00	\$8,610.25	\$4,000.00
BCA Hearings	\$102.00	\$101.50	\$161.14	\$0.00	\$200.00
Auditing	\$512.00	\$4,340.01	\$2,500.00	\$2,545.00	\$2,750.00
Listing	\$3,445.36	\$4,070.12	\$5,148.16	\$6,197.34	\$2,000.00
Officers Training	\$59.52	\$74.30	\$90.00	\$209.34	\$300.00
Elections	\$1,361.22	\$282.26	\$1,340.74	\$453.00	\$1,300.00
Delinquent Collector's Fees	\$2,992.60	\$2,131.11	\$2,927.81	\$3,314.09	\$3,200.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$1,498.25	\$218.40	\$98.40	\$250.00
Officers Subtotal	\$33,952.74	\$40,558.12	\$40,094.48	\$43,421.35	\$40,300.00
TOWN OFFICE AND ADMINISTRATION					
Fuel	\$2,318.13	\$2,073.51	\$1,885.27	\$2,483.70	\$2,800.00
Lights	\$823.02	\$789.39	\$835.42	\$906.13	\$925.00
Maintenance & Supplies	\$1,214.15	\$1,313.60	\$594.10	\$1,545.16	\$750.00
Town Office Repairs	\$0.00	\$439.00	\$990.00	\$663.50	\$2,500.00
Office Supplies	\$830.32	\$843.71	\$980.55	\$1,027.86	\$1,000.00
Photocopier Costs	\$380.48	\$455.92	\$457.84	\$675.63	\$700.00
Computer Costs	\$692.76	\$835.62	\$1,882.76	\$986.25	\$850.00
Postage	\$889.05	\$953.97	\$970.57	\$1,225.07	\$1,300.00
Telephone	\$1,466.95	\$1,372.48	\$1,316.60	\$1,334.20	\$1,350.00
Print Town Report	\$1,230.31	\$146.61	\$3,306.06	\$3,398.92	\$3,500.00
Town Shed Maintenance	\$140.00	\$626.58	\$90.00	\$145.00	\$250.00
Document Restoration	\$2,842.83	\$1,337.00	\$1,881.95	\$1,745.50	\$2,000.00
Old Office Maintenance	\$409.25	\$155.76	\$210.00	\$482.50	\$250.00
Town Office Subtotal	\$13,237.25	\$11,343.15	\$15,401.12	\$16,619.42	\$18,175.00

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES
2000 THROUGH BUDGET 2004 (CONTINUED)

INSURANCE	Actual 2000	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004
Clerk's Insurance	\$1,855.00	\$1,855.00	\$1,855.00	\$1,855.00	\$1,855.00
Bonds	\$329.00	\$329.00	\$329.00	\$329.00	\$0.00
Fire/Liability/Errors	\$1,237.91	\$2,038.91	\$2,751.00	\$2,454.00	\$2,700.00
Worker's Compensation	(\$96.00)	\$1,214.00	\$1,471.00	\$1,028.00	\$957.00
Insurance Subtotal	\$3,325.91	\$5,436.91	\$6,406.00	\$5,666.00	\$5,512.00
MISCELLANEOUS					
Street Lights	\$2,102.71	\$2,090.01	\$1,907.92	\$2,040.56	\$2,100.00
Legal Fees	\$0.00	\$330.50	\$0.00	\$1,755.15	\$2,500.00
Animal Damage	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$27.50	\$0.00	\$250.00
Planning/Zoning	\$8,210.27	\$9,381.12	\$15,041.93	\$9,604.99	\$6,000.00
Miscellaneous Subtotal	\$10,312.98	\$11,826.63	\$16,977.35	\$13,400.70	\$10,850.00
COMMUNITY HOUSE					
Lights	\$795.69	\$828.17	\$817.03	\$774.43	\$900.00
Fuel	\$1,870.38	\$1,015.45	\$1,016.08	\$2,361.92	\$2,900.00
General Maintenance	\$1,217.41	\$2,437.03	\$1,532.71	\$6,018.06	\$2,500.00
Community House Subtotal	\$3,883.48	\$4,280.65	\$3,365.82	\$9,154.41	\$6,300.00
CONTRACTS & DUES					
League of Cities/Towns	\$328.00	\$345.00	\$361.00	\$623.00	\$623.00
Regional Planning	\$491.28	\$453.90	\$475.26	\$501.40	\$501.40
Addison County Sheriff	\$6,046.37	\$6,459.65	\$6,415.40	\$5,918.91	\$6,500.00
Mapping Update	\$650.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Humane Society	\$375.00	\$375.00	\$280.00	\$280.00	\$280.00
Recycling	\$5,411.55	\$4,811.00	\$5,577.50	\$6,360.49	\$5,500.00
County Tax	\$3,197.37	\$3,080.43	\$3,254.80	\$3,285.48	\$3,600.00
Contracts/Dues Subtotal	\$16,499.57	\$15,524.98	\$17,463.96	\$16,969.28	\$17,704.40
GENERAL FUND TOTALS	\$81,211.93	\$88,970.44	\$99,708.73	\$105,231.16	\$98,841.40

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES
2000 THROUGH BUDGET 2004 (CONTINUED)

ROADS (Excluding Special Projects)

	Actual 2000	Actual 2001	Actual 2002	Actual 2003	Budget 2004
Winter Work	\$69,440.68	\$73,375.98	\$72,614.83	\$64,638.35	\$66,700.00
Summer Maintenance	\$34,986.95	\$44,937.16	\$43,445.32	\$31,251.36	\$48,580.00
Major Project Fund	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Summer Projects	\$17,288.04	\$14,517.69	\$10,057.14	\$14,671.31	\$10,000.00
Paving	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00
Crack Sealing	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$3,446.38	\$3,500.00	\$642.67	\$0.00
TOTAL ROADS	\$133,215.67	\$142,777.21	\$141,117.29	\$117,703.69	\$146,780.00
TOTAL TOWN & ROADS	\$214,427.60	\$231,747.65	\$240,826.02	\$222,934.85	\$245,621.40



REVENUES

TOTAL REVENUES FOR 2003 & ANTICIPATED REVENUES FOR 2004

Source of Income	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Est. 2004
Taxes	\$889,657.24	\$889,426.27	(\$230.97)	\$930,722.00
Use Value Hold Harmless Payment	\$5,000.00	\$5,995.00	\$995.00	\$5,500.00
College Gift-in-Lieu of Taxes	\$43,000.00	\$46,162.00	\$3,162.00	\$48,800.00
College Gift-in-kind—Town Use	\$5,000.00	\$5,260.00	\$260.00	\$5,500.00
Delinquent Taxes	\$35,000.00	\$34,845.60	(\$154.40)	\$37,000.00
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$2,000.00	\$2,658.11	\$658.11	\$2,500.00
Delinquent Collector's Fees	\$2,800.00	\$2,756.59	(\$43.41)	\$3,200.00
Delinquent Tax Legal Fees	\$500.00	\$700.12	\$200.12	\$1,500.00
State Aid to Roads (General)	\$42,000.00	\$44,772.16	\$2,772.16	\$44,000.00
Culvert Grant	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51,300.00
Act 60 Funds for Listers	\$3,400.00	\$3,598.00	\$198.00	\$3,598.00
National Forest Payment	\$22,000.00	\$29,975.00	\$7,975.00	\$25,000.00
Elks Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$2,600.00	\$2,619.54	\$19.54	\$2,600.00
Recording Fees	\$5,000.00	\$6,531.00	\$1,531.00	\$6,500.00
Interest on Savings	\$1,500.00	\$766.82	(\$733.18)	\$600.00
Interest on Major Project Fund	\$1,400.00	\$1,312.75	(\$87.25)	\$1,200.00
Interest on Land Account	\$0.00	\$516.35	\$516.35	\$500.00
Interest on Reappraisal Fund	\$0.00	\$78.29	\$78.29	\$75.00
Speeding Fines	\$6,000.00	\$4,090.50	(\$1,909.50)	\$5,000.00
Rent Community House	\$1,200.00	\$2,050.00	\$850.00	\$1,600.00
Rent Old Office & Upstairs	\$5,600.00	\$2,400.00	(\$3,200.00)	\$2,400.00
Dog Licenses	\$550.00	\$386.00	(\$164.00)	\$400.00
Copier and Vault Time	\$500.00	\$804.64	\$304.64	\$600.00
Liquor Licenses	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00
Recycling Income	\$2,200.00	\$2,301.97	\$101.97	\$2,300.00
Zoning Permits	\$2,800.00	\$2,985.00	\$185.00	\$2,800.00
Enhancement Grant	\$0.00	\$6,984.54	\$6,984.54	\$54,020.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$826.17	\$826.17	\$200.00

TOWN NON-TAX INCOME ¹	\$190,200.00	\$154,109.15	(\$36,090.85)	\$308,843.00
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TOTAL TOWN INCOME	\$1,079,857.24	\$1,100,952.42	\$21,095.18	\$1,239,565.00
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¹ This non-tax income number is much higher than it was in 2003 mostly because of two large grants we expect to receive: the Enhancement Grant for \$54,020 and the Peddler's Bridge Culvert Grant for \$51,300.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF TOWN REVENUES **2000 THROUGH ESTIMATED 2004**

SOURCE OF INCOME:	2000	2001	2002	2003	Anticipated 2004
Taxes	\$767,145.76	\$804,499.45	\$845,683.44	\$889,426.27	\$930,722.00
Land Use Compensation	\$7,529.00	\$7,210.00	\$5,066.00	\$5,995.00	\$5,500.00
College Gift-in-Lieu of Taxes	\$40,284.76	\$41,667.95	\$42,867.23	\$46,162.00	\$48,800.00
College Gift-in-Kind	\$4,749.31	\$5,014.39	\$7,707.30	\$5,260.00	\$5,500.00
Delinquent Taxes	\$39,375.02	\$35,718.13	\$45,115.34	\$34,845.60	\$37,000.00
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$2,376.43	\$1,783.52	\$2,154.14	\$2,658.11	\$2,500.00
Delinquent Collector's Fees	\$3,168.86	\$2,554.91	\$3,485.31	\$2,756.59	\$3,200.00
Delinquent Tax Legal Fees	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$700.12	\$1,500.00
State Aid to Roads	\$42,627.31	\$44,639.13	\$42,802.24	\$44,772.16	\$44,000.00
State Aid for Bridges	\$15,750.00	\$0.00	\$32,035.50	\$0.00	\$0.00
Flood Aid	\$76,262.95	\$480,784.33	\$148,197.26	\$0.00	\$0.00
State Aid-Special Projects	\$0.00	\$9,115.19	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$51,300.00
Better Roads Grant	\$0.00	\$806.20	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Act 60 Support from State	\$3,318.00	\$3,318.00	\$3,668.00	\$3,598.00	\$3,598.00
National Forest Payment	\$17,297.00	\$24,763.00	\$26,051.00	\$29,975.00	\$25,000.00
Elks Payment for Silver Towers	\$1,836.00	\$2,494.00	\$2,583.90	\$2,619.54	\$2,600.00
Recording Fees	\$2,602.50	\$5,120.00	\$5,415.00	\$6,531.00	\$6,500.00
Interest on Cash Funds	\$3,262.54	\$2,868.49	\$1,757.13	\$766.82	\$600.00
Interest on Major Project Fund	\$1,481.33	\$1,859.41	\$1,345.63	\$1,312.75	\$1,200.00
Interest on Land Sale Account	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$516.35	\$500.00
Interest on Reappraisal Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$87.00	\$78.29	\$75.00
Speeding Fines	\$4,348.99	\$5,189.00	\$8,036.80	\$4,090.50	\$5,000.00
Community House Rent	\$1,255.00	\$1,160.00	\$1,485.00	\$2,050.00	\$1,600.00
Rental Office Space	\$4,927.09	\$5,608.88	\$5,662.77	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Dog Licenses	\$323.00	\$345.00	\$585.00	\$386.00	\$400.00
Copier Income and Vault Time	\$377.02	\$460.45	\$611.82	\$804.64	\$600.00
Liquor Licenses Fees	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
Recycling Income	\$2,196.40	\$2,257.15	\$2,205.50	\$2,301.97	\$2,300.00
Zoning Permits	\$2,085.00	\$3,235.00	\$2,955.00	\$2,985.00	\$2,800.00
Enhancement Grant	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,984.54	\$54,020.00
Miscellaneous	\$4.33	\$0.00	\$2,624.91	\$826.17	\$200.00
TOTAL TOWN INCOME	\$1,044,733.60	\$1,492,696.58	\$1,240,338.22	\$1,100,952.42	\$1,239,565.00

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE GIFT-IN-KIND ACCOUNTING FOR 2003

Ten years ago the Selectmen and Middlebury College signed a twenty-year agreement which settled how the College compensates the Town for their properties in Ripton. This agreement has three components: straight taxes on some of their parcels (about \$17,000 in 2003); a gift-in-lieu of taxes, which this year was \$46,162, and which increases each year to account for inflation; and \$16,000 in goods and services to be used by the Town, the School and the Fire Department.

The Town Report shows how these funds are spent in the Town budget by listing in *bold italics* items that are paid for in whole or in part under this gift-in-kind program.

When the College does work or buys equipment for the Town and Fire Department the value of the gift is counted as income and listed as actual expenses. Thus the voters are voting on the proposed expenditures of these funds in the Town portion of the budget.

The following is an accounting of the College gift-in-kind funds expended in 2003 by the Town, the School and the Fire Department, and an estimate of how the gift-in-kind will be used in 2003. The Fire Department received a portable pump from this fund in 2003, and will not be asking anything of the fund in 2004.

EXPENDITURES OF GIFT-IN-KIND FUNDS 2003 AND 2004

SCHOOL USE IN 2003

Program Supplies	\$961.43
Food for Breakfast/Brunch Program	\$8,555.60
TOTAL SCHOOL USE	\$9,517.03

TOWN USE IN 2003

Print and Mail Town Report	\$1,595.46
Supplies	\$23.04
Recycling	\$5,000.00
TOTAL TOWN USE	\$6,618.50

FIRE DEPT/FIRST RESPONSE USE IN 2003	\$4,808.85
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TOTAL USED IN 2003	\$20,944.38
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UNFAVORABLE BALANCE FROM 2002	\$2,405.55
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TOTAL SPENT IN 2003	\$23,349.93
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TOTAL AVAILABLE FOR 2004	\$7,349.93
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Anticipated use for 2004	(\$7,349.93 available)
School Use	\$1,849.93
Town Use	\$5,500.00
Fire Dept. & First Response	<u>\$0.00</u>
Total for 2004	\$7,349.93

ANGOLANO & COMPANY

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

P. O. BOX 639
SHELBURNE, VERMONT 05482

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(800) 540-8992
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LOCATED AT:
2834 SHELBURNE ROAD

DAVID H. ANGOLANO, CPA
HEATHER L. ANGOLANO, CPA
DAVID J. ANGOLANO

Independent Auditors' Report

To The Selectmen
Town of Ripton

We have audited the accompanying general-purpose financial statements of Town of Ripton, Vermont, as of and for the year ended December 31, 2003, as listed in the table of contents. These general-purpose financial statements are the responsibility of Town of Ripton's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these general-purpose financial statements based on our audit.

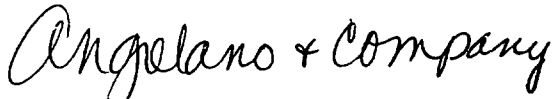
We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and the significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

The general-purpose financial statements referred to above do not include the General Fixed Assets Account Group which should be included in order to conform with generally accepted accounting principles. The amount that should be recorded in the General Fixed Assets Account Group is not known.

In our opinion, except for the effects on the general-purpose financial statements of the omission described in the preceding paragraph, the general-purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Town of Ripton, Vermont, as of December 31, 2003, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated January 15, 2004 on our consideration of Town of Ripton's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Our audit was performed for the purpose of forming an opinion on the general-purpose financial statements of Town of Ripton, Vermont taken as a whole. The schedule listed in the table of contents is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the general-purpose financial statements of Town of Ripton. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the general-purpose financial statements and, in our opinion, except for the effects on the general, special revenue, and capital projects funds of the omission described in the preceding paragraph, is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the general-purpose financial statements taken as a whole.



Angelano & Company
Shelburne, Vermont
Firm Registration Number 92-0000141

January 15, 2004

REPORT OF THE RIPTON PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission Zoning Board of Adjustment Historic District Commission

In 2003, the members of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Historic District Commission were: Warren King, chair, Richard Collitt, vice-chair, Jean Todd, Jorene Doria, and Alison Joseph. John Anderson resigned in July. The Selectboard appointed Alison Joseph to take his place. The Ripton Planning Commission extends our strong appreciation to Jean Todd for completing 27 years of community service on the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission provides land use planning for the Town. The Zoning Board of Adjustment serves as an appeal body for decisions by the Zoning Administrator. The Historic District Commission provides guidance on external changes to structures in the Historic District. The Town Plan, Zoning Bylaw, and relevant State statutes guide the boards' decisions.

Revisions to the Ripton Zoning Bylaw and new subdivision regulations were approved by a vote of the townspeople at the 2003 Town Meeting.

The Planning Commission has nearly completed work on revisions to the Town Plan, a process that is required every five years. Public hearings will be held on the plan

early in 2004. The Commission received a Municipal Planning Grant to help pay for map updates and copies of the Town Plan.

The Planning Commission also approved two minor subdivisions and a boundary adjustment, reviewed a site plan, and have several subdivisions and boundary adjustments pending. The Zoning Board of Adjustment approved three appeals for conditional use, two variances, and rejected an amendment to a planned residential development. The Historic District Commission approved the color and design of the new roof on the Community House. Approval of the pedestrian bridge at the east end of the village required approval of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Historic District Commission on different aspects of the work.

The public is always welcome at our meetings, which are held on the second Tuesday of each month. Please call the chair or the Zoning Administrator in advance if you wish to have an item on the agenda.

Warren King, Chair

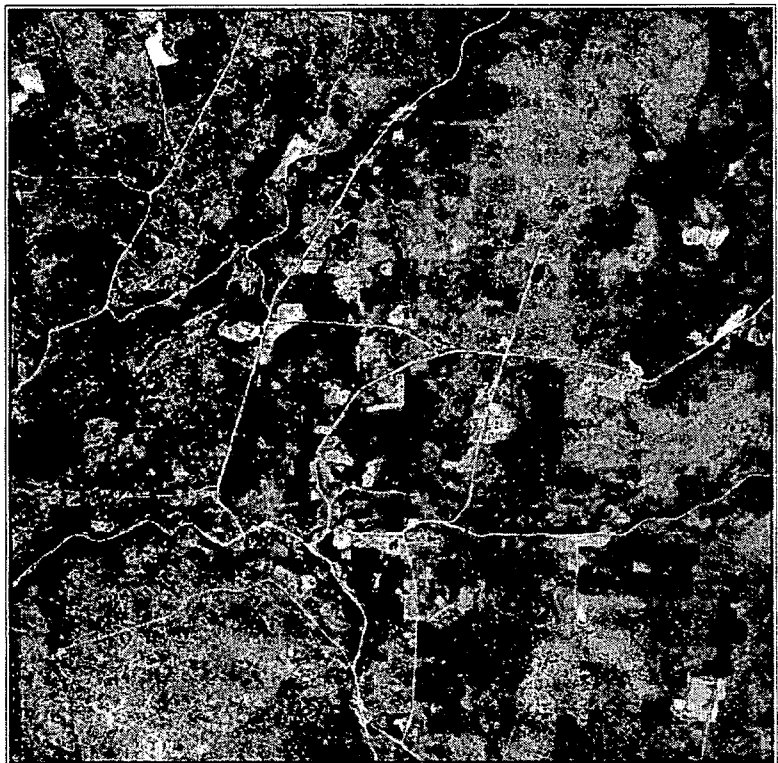
Historic Land Use 1942–1995

August, 1942



USDA photo 8-8-42 DCC 224

April, 1995



Map provided by the
Addison County Regional
Planning Commission

Vermont Mapping Program orthophoto #108160 et al.

REPORT OF THE RIPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Ripton Conservation Commission met quarterly in 2003. Member Drew Palcsik moved away in November. The Ripton Selectboard appointed Ned Horning to fill the remaining two years of Drew's term.

The Conservation Commission continued to be a conduit and sounding board for townspeople on the Village Enhancement Project. The project manager provided regular updates to the Commission. A subcommittee is working with the project manager to prepare recommendations for plantings on the island proposed between the Town Offices and Route 125. The Commission recommended consideration of turning off one or more streetlights in the project area, and made initial inquiries into the cost of burying the utility lines in the village center.

Also the Conservation Commission:

- Reviewed the maps proposed for the revision of the Town Plan and proposed a comparison of the earliest and the most recent land cover air photo maps. See the photos following this report for the results.
- Is following the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) plan revision process that will lead to a new GMNF management plan in several years. The Commission met on site with GMNF road and trail specialists regarding potential category and access changes to GMNF roads and trails in Ripton.
- Participated with the North Branch School in a community mapping project organized by the Vermont Institute of

Natural Sciences and the Orton Family Foundation to GPS and map the trails of Ripton. One outcome of this project is an updated map of trails for the Town Plan revision.

- Organized a walk by Ripton and Lincoln town officials of the Ripton-Lincoln trail from Cobb Hill Road in Lincoln to the end of the Pearl Lee Road. Recommended that the Selectboard regulate the use of this trail, and is encouraging Lincoln officials to do the same.
- Controlled wild chervil, an exotic plant that is invading the road edges of Route 125 via Middlebury Gap. About half of the area west of Middlebury Gap occupied by chervil was controlled in 2003.

The public is welcome to attend Conservation Commission meetings. Notice of meetings is posted at the Town Offices and the Ripton Country Store.

Warren King, Chair

Members:

Freeman Allen
Michael Burgess
Carrie Herzog
Ned Horning
Barry King
Warren King
Chris Lacey
Becky Purdum
Frank Wolf

LIST OF RIPTON BIRDS

This is a list of birds that have been sighted in Ripton since 1991

List compiled by Warren and Barry King, Tom Moran, Becky Purdum, and Bruce Peterson

American Bittern (rare)	Barn Swallow	American Redstart
Great Blue Heron	Blue Jay	Ovenbird
Snow Goose	American Crow	Northern Waterthrush
Canada Goose	Common Raven	Louisiana Waterthrush
Wood Duck	Black-capped Chickadee	Mourning Warbler
American Black Duck	Tufted Titmouse	Common Yellowthroat
Mallard	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Canada Warbler
Hooded Merganser	White-breasted Nuthatch	Scarlet Tanager
Common Merganser	Brown Creeper	Northern Cardinal
Turkey Vulture	Carolina Wren (rare)	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Osprey	House Wren	Indigo Bunting
Northern Harrier	Winter Wren	American Tree Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Chipping Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk (rare)	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Field Sparrow
Northern Goshawk	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (rare)	House Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Eastern Bluebird	Savannah Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Veery	Fox Sparrow
American Kestrel	Grey-cheeked Thrush	Song Sparrow
Peregrine Falcon (rare)	Bicknell's Thrush	Lincoln's Sparrow
Ruffed Grouse	Swainson's Thrush	Swamp Sparrow
Wild Turkey	Hermit Thrush	White-throated Sparrow
Killdeer	Wood Thrush	White-crowned Sparrow
Solitary Sandpiper	American Robin	Dark-eyed Junco
Spotted Sandpiper	Grey Catbird	Snow Bunting
American Woodcock	Brown Thrasher	Bobolink
Ring-billed Gull	Bohemian Waxwing	Red-winged Blackbird
Mourning Dove	Cedar Waxwing	Rusty Blackbird
Eastern Screech Owl (rare)	Northern Shrike	Common Grackle
Great Horned Owl	European Starling	Brown-headed Cowbird
Barred Owl	Blue-headed Vireo	Northern Oriole
Long-eared Owl (rare)	Yellow-throated Vireo	Pine Grosbeak
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Philadelphia Vireo	Evening Grosbeak
Chimney Swift	Blue-winged Warbler	Purple Finch
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Tennessee Warbler	House Finch
Belted Kingfisher	Nashville Warbler	American Goldfinch
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Northern Parula Warbler	Red Crossbill
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Yellow Warbler	Common Redpoll
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Pine Siskin
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Magnolia Warbler	Northern Flicker
Alder Flycatcher	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Downy Woodpecker
Least Flycatcher	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Hairy Woodpecker
Eastern Phoebe	Black-throated Green Warbler	Pileated Woodpecker
Great Crested Flycatcher	Blackburnian Warbler	Red-bellied Woodpecker (rare)
Eastern Kingbird	Bay-breasted Warbler	
Tree Swallow	Blackpoll Warbler	
Cliff Swallow	Black-and-white Warbler	

ZONING REPORT FOR 2003

The numbers and the distribution by type of the zoning applications that were received and processed in calendar year 2003 is summarized as follows:

<i>New dwellings</i>	
<i>Permanent/seasonal houses</i>	6
<i>Apartments</i>	0
<i>Mobile homes</i>	0
<i>Replacements</i>	4
<i>Renovations/additions</i>	3
<i>Accessory outbuildings</i>	8
<i>Exempt (H.875) agricultural outbuildings</i>	0
<i>Septic systems</i>	
<i>Disposal system construction</i>	6
<i>Minor repair</i>	0
<i>Privies</i>	0
<i>Ponds/dams/other land development</i>	1
<i>Temporary uses</i>	0
<i>Signs</i>	1
<i>Subdivisions</i>	
<i>Single-lot</i>	4
<i>Multiple lot</i>	1
<i>Boundary adjustments</i>	2
<i>Planned residential developments (PRDs)</i>	0
<i>Renewals of permit</i>	0
<i>Conditional uses</i>	2
 <i>TOTAL applications (including exempt agricultural)</i>	 38
 <i>Certificates of occupancy</i>	 4
<i>Certificates of compliance</i>	1
<i>Verifications of compliance</i>	15
<i>Notices of Violation</i>	1
<i>Hearing applications</i>	
<i>Conditional uses (ZBA)</i>	2
<i>Variances (ZBA)</i>	4
<i>Appeals (ZBA)</i>	0
<i>Planning Commission</i>	1
<i>Historic District Commission</i>	2

ZONING REPORT (continued)

Fifty-seven applications were received and processed during the year, including seven hearings before the Planning Commission for subdivisions and boundary adjustments, four hearings before the Board of Adjustment for consideration of conditional use, and two hearings before the Historic District Commission for the review of proposals in the Town's Historic District.

The applications also included **fifteen** requests for verification of the applicant's property compliance with the provisions of the Town's zoning regulations and sewage ordinance. **Twenty-eight zoning permits** were issued during the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December. Two applications are open pending the submission of supporting site plan and septic design data.

A **Notice of Violation** was issued in November citing a landowner on the Lincoln Road for parking a mobile home (for which an installation permit had been denied) on a property already occupied by a principal dwelling. The mobile home was subsequently dismantled and removed from the property as scrap material.

For the period from 1 January 2003 through 31 December 2003, the direct costs associated with the Town's zoning and sewage administration involved a total invoiced cost of **\$4,368.84** in man-hours and expenses, charged against **\$3,700.00** in permit application fees, resulting in a net direct cost of administration of **\$668.84**. These figures do not include the costs incurred in warning and convening hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment, nor do they include attorneys' fees, when and if the Town elects to retain their services (as, for instance, to pursue litigation in zoning violation cases). For a complete summary of the Town's officially-posted zoning and sewage administration costs, please refer to the Treasurer's Report on the General Fund in the Annual Report.

E. W. Hanson

Administrative Officer

31 December 2003

PERMITS FOR NEW DWELLINGS 1998 TO 2003

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
0	2	2	4	5	6

RECYCLING REPORT

Recycling is from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on the first and third Saturdays of each month at the Town Shed on Peddler's Bridge Road. The recycling fee is \$2 per load. Trash disposal is \$3-4 per bag. Trash drop off ends at 11:45 a.m.

Ripton recycles:

- * glass bottles, colored and uncolored
- * plastic containers: #1, #2 narrow mouth, #2 wide mouth
- * steel and aluminum cans
- * aluminum foil
- * newspaper
- * corrugated cardboard
- * mixed paper and boxboard except wrapping paper and wax coated milk and juice cartons
- * Styrofoam packing peanuts (no blocks)
- * batteries, household and button only
- * bags, plastic and brown paper
- * egg cartons

All materials should be clean and without tops or caps. Car batteries, used motor oil, and fluorescent bulbs are accepted at the Middlebury Transfer Station on Route 7 South. Please, no motor oil containers, unrinsed jars or cans, waxed corrugated cardboard or plate glass.

In 2003 the average number of households using the recycling center each drop-off was 48, slightly ahead of last year's average. Under assumptions similar to those made since 1994, Ripton's total waste stream in 2003 increased to 230 tons from 211 tons in 2002. Recyclable waste comprised 42.6 percent of the total, above the 42.1 percent recycled in 2002.

Recyclables were trucked to Middlebury College. Middlebury College may charge us a penalty for improperly prepared materials, but has not yet needed to do so.

Returnable bottles and cans were collected and redeemed by Friends of the Ripton School.

Twenty-eight Ripton households took advantage of the hazardous waste collection at the Ripton Town Office parking lot. The extent of use of this free Solid Waste District service is gratifying. The date of Ripton's 2004 hazardous waste collection will be posted a week or two before the drop-off.

Burning household waste in burn barrels is illegal in Addison County. Violators are subject to a fine. Studies show that burning household trash in burn barrels provides an ideal environment for creation of highly toxic and cancer-causing dioxin and furans.

Ripton collected 1,760 pounds of trash, 10 tires, and 2 cubic yards of scrap metal on Green Up Day 2003. In 2004, Green Up Day is Sat., May 1st. Call Steve Zwicky (388-2301) or Warren King (388-4082).

Ripton's residents support recycling by using this service and by volunteering three hours every two years to keep it running. Contact the Town Clerk (388-2266) or the recycling coordinator (388-4082) if you would like to help.

Warren King, Recycling Coordinator

ADDISON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT REPORT

Ripton is one of 16 towns that are part of the County Solid Waste Management District. The District facility is a transfer station on Route 7 South in Middlebury. The District is holding a bond vote on March 2nd, the ballot voting day of our Town Meeting.

The bond vote follows a two-year planning process for redesign of the Transfer Station. Construction is proposed to:

- Improve traffic flow;
- Make the Transfer Station a safer place;
- Save haulers time and money;
- Keep pace with growth for the next twenty years;
- Comply with State regulations.

The bond will be paid through tipping fees. The tipping fee increase has been raised by \$3.50 per ton. This is an average increase of \$1.68 per person per year.

In 2003, 108.87 tons of trash and 57.86 tons of construction and demolition material were brought to the Transfer Station from Ripton.

Individuals may bring construction waste, tires, appliances, computers, scrap metal, and furniture directly to the transfer station. However, only licensed private haulers may bring household waste.

Hazardous waste is taken at special collections. Watch for the District's newsletter for the schedule of hazardous waste drop-offs.

Transfer Station hours are:
Mon.-Fri. 7-3, Sat. 8-12

*From a report by
Teresa Kuczynski, District Manager
The full report and budget are available at the Clerk's
Office.*

COMMUNITY HOUSE REPORT

The Community House was rented on 32 days this year, excluding the monthly Coffee House, Community Potluck, and various Town functions.

The asphalt shingle roof was replaced with standing seam metal in 2003 for \$17,700.

In February 2003, after a heating system malfunction caused a small fire in the furnace and filled the building with soot, the building was cleaned from top to bottom.

Due to ongoing heating and freezing problems and the cost of opening and closing the building during the winter, winter rentals have been limited.

Rental revenue for 2003 was \$2,050. Expenses, excluding roofing and the fire clean up, but including all furnace and plumbing repairs, were \$4,756.11.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Greetings:

And hopefully a good 2004 to all. However, it seems every year we are made more aware of many dangers, of every TYPE – natural disasters, diseases - and they seem to be getting closer to home. They are a challenge to our peace and safety, and yes, nationally and locally.

So what I say to all this year is that we all must get more prepared for any of these

events, and we must work together, agencies and individuals assisting one another.

Let us all take some time to think just how we can all fit in, in doing whatever it takes to make our community and homes a safer and more peaceful place to live.

Ross Elliott,
Emergency Response Coordinator

STATE OF VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

This year, the Department of Public Service reminds us all to use DigSafe to prevent explosions and tragedy during excavation and construction projects. By Vermont Law anyone who plans to use mechanical equipment to excavate must notify the One Call

Center (Dig Safe www.digsafe.com or 802-828-4073) which in turn alerts all member utilities. Even if you do not have underground utilities, propane tanks may need to be disconnected. A contractor's obligation is to "Call Before You Dig."

RIPTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND FIRST RESPONSE REPORT FOR 2003

FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL

911

THE STATE DISPATCHER WILL CALL
PORTER HOSPITAL DISPATCH, WHO WILL
START THE AMBULANCE ON ITS WAY AND
CALL RIPTON FIRST RESPONSE

FOR A FIRE EMERGENCY CALL

911

THE STATE DISPATCHER WILL CALL
THE ADDISON COUNTY SHERIFF, WHO WILL
DISPATCH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

**PLEASE: IT IS IMPORTANT TO
HAVE YOUR 911 ADDRESS
POSTED AND VISIBLE (REFLEC-
TIVE) FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS
ON THE ROAD!**

FIRE & FIRST RESPONSE REPORT

Calls 2003

Rescue	29
Motor Vehicle Accident	7
Fire	13
Community Service	3
Total	52

The Fire and First Response Department responded to 52 calls this year. Both arms of the department NEED VOLUNTEERS! We had two new members in 2003: Roland McGlashan will be completing his Fire-fighting Essentials (170 hours) soon; Caeredwyn Alexander is completing EMT training. We were also fortunate to have a member of the Addison Fire Department who works at Breadloaf join us—we appreciate our Mutual Aid partners.

From grant monies we have purchased:

1. 3 mobile and 3 hand-held emergency radios that are on all VT State Police Barracks frequencies for dire emergencies (\$5,000).
2. 1 thermal imaging camera, purchased with a Homeland Security Grant (\$14,300).
3. 5 pagers (from a Jeffords Grant) that will enable First Responders to get MVAA tones and Ripton tones—cutting down on our response time (\$900).
4. A portable Hale pump for the tanker to replace the troublesome Japanese made pump, this from the College gift-in-kind (\$4,764).

From our funds we have purchased:

1. Automatic chains for the pumper and a full mechanical going over,
2. 3 hand held radios and one mobile radio for the new rescue vehicle, and
3. A used ambulance from Salisbury to be used as a rescue vehicle—thereby keeping everything dry and out of the weather and freeing up the mini-pumper for fire use.

Our thanks to Mountain Signs for updating our rolling stock with reflective striping that enables people to see us better, and for their continuing work on the new rescue vehicle.

In addition to the grants above, we appreciate the donations we received from groups such as the Lions Club and individuals. A year-end anonymous \$1,000 gift and several donations throughout the year were nice surprises.

In membership news, Timothy Hanson stepped down after ten years as Fire Chief and Erik Eriksen stepped up to the position. Tim is continuing as a first responder and

firefighter and heading the new fire station project. Ed Sullivan and Tim Price are EMTs and firefighters who volunteer with the Brandon Rescue Squad and Middlebury Ambulance, respectively. This keeps them up to date and learning more than they would through our relatively small number of calls. Caeredwyn Alexander attended EMT training one night per week for much of the year. Roland McGlashan completed training and is a valuable airpack-certified firefighter. Anza Armstrong continues to serve and coordinates First Response activities. In his role as Director of Emergency Management, which includes the position of fire police, Ross Elliot provides a valuable service by responding to every call and always helping with radio communications. He also has extensive emergency response training.

PLEASE VOLUNTEER!!

Department Membership

Officers: Fire Chief, Erik Eriksen; Assistant Chief, Tim Price

First Response Chief, Anza Armstrong
Fire Police and Captain, Ross Elliot

Firefighters: Mike Beardsley, Brad Braun, Melvin Coddling, Jim Doolan, Jeremie Matrishon, Roland McGlashan, Eric Warren

Firefighters/First Responders: Erik Eriksen, Alison Joseph, Bruce Malhotra

Firefighters/First Responders – EMT level:
Tim Hanson, Tim Price, Ed Sullivan

First Responders – EMT level/Medical Professional: Caeredwyn Alexander, Anza Armstrong, Tim Hanson, Kevin Mulholland

Dispatch: William Cole, Dorothy Gelinas

BUDGET

We have requested a \$1,500 increase in funding from the Town for 2003. Most of this increase is to fund the purchase of a carbon-monoxide detector to have available at fire calls. Most of the other lines in the budget are close to level-funded.

Erik Eriksen, Fire Chief
Anza Armstrong, First Response Chief

REPORT ON NEW FIRE STATION

The grant funding discussed for the last three years is assured. We have proceeded to negotiate acquiring the use of a portion of the School's land, and have developed plans for the site and station. We have received permits from the State to build the building, and to hook up to the School's water and sewer systems, which will save us the expense of drilling a well and installing a full septic system. The funds to design the building and acquire the use of the land are to be paid for from a \$50,000 grant (with a \$12,500 Town match) Regional Planning awarded us from FEMA Project Impact funds.

The money the Fire Department pays the School for the use of the land will be the School's and will not be available for the fire station's construction costs. On the other hand, these funds will most likely be added to the School's building fund, which will benefit the taxpayers in the long run when the School needs to use these funds for some future building work.

We have a second FEMA grant for up to \$100,000, which is to compensate the Town for the value of the existing fire station, and to restore the land the current station is on to a natural state. FEMA requires that the building be demolished or moved because it is in a floodplain—it cannot be used in its present location for another purpose.

The Selectmen have warned an article for Town Meeting to authorize them to borrow up to \$225,000 to move forward with the construction of the new fire station. We need the funds up front, since the grants are on a reimbursement basis. Once the new fire station is built, we can demolish or move the old building, and at that point we will receive reimbursement from the grant.

RIPTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT & FIRST RESPONSE**EXPENDITURES JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003**
AND BUDGET 2004**EXPENSES**

Fire Station:	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
New Fire Station Expenses	\$0.00	\$1,254.25	(\$1,254.25)	\$0.00
Fuel Oil for Heat	\$1,000.00	\$977.23	\$22.77	\$1,150.00
Building Maintenance	\$750.00	\$280.18	\$469.82	\$750.00
Firehouse Supplies	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Power	\$300.00	\$285.50	\$14.50	\$300.00

Total Fire Station Expenses	\$2,150.00	\$2,797.16	\$607.09	\$2,300.00
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Administrative Costs

Insurance (Liability & Vehicle)	\$5,000.00	\$5,073.00	(\$73.00)	\$5,500.00
County & State Dues	\$350.00	\$195.00	\$155.00	\$350.00
Firefighter Training	\$500.00	\$195.75	\$304.25	\$500.00
Bookkeeping Expenses	\$50.00	\$87.95	(\$37.95)	\$50.00
Firefighter Appreciation	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Miscellaneous	\$50.00	\$169.00	(\$119.00)	\$100.00

Total Administrative Costs	\$6,450.00	\$5,720.70	\$729.30	\$7,000.00
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Communications

Dispatch (Sheriff, Telephone)	\$750.00	\$460.51	\$289.49	\$750.00
Purchase Radios/Pagers	\$600.00	\$8,465.68	(\$7,865.68)	\$600.00
Repair Radios/Pagers	\$600.00	\$16.54	\$583.46	\$600.00

Total Communications	\$1,950.00	\$8,942.73	(\$6,992.73)	\$1,950.00
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Apparatus

Purchase Medical	\$0.00	\$2,511.00	(\$2,511.00)	\$0.00
Engine 1 Repair	\$3,000.00	\$2,382.13	\$617.87	\$500.00
Medical 1 Repair	\$0.00	\$1,613.81	(\$1,613.81)	\$500.00
Mini Pumper	\$500.00	\$347.39	\$152.61	\$500.00
Tanker Repair	\$1,000.00	\$84.04	\$915.96	\$3,000.00
General Vehicle Maintenance	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
Fuel/oil	\$500.00	\$67.85	\$432.15	\$300.00

Total Apparatus	\$5,250.00	\$7,006.22	(\$1,756.22)	\$5,050.00
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Protective Gear

Clothing, Helmets, Gloves, etc.	\$1,200.00	\$90.20	\$1,109.80	\$1,200.00
Breathing Apparatus	\$400.00	\$422.53	(\$22.53)	\$1,000.00

Total Protective Gear	\$1,600.00	\$512.73	\$1,087.27	\$2,200.00
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RIPTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT & FIRST RESPONSE

EXPENDITURES JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003 **AND BUDGET 2004 (CONTINUED)**

Tools and Equipment	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
Carbon Monoxide Detector	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Purchase Thermal Image Camera	\$0.00	\$14,307.21	(\$14,307.21)	\$0.00
Hand tools	\$500.00	\$3.29	\$496.71	\$500.00
Foam Equipment & Supplies	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Portable Pump	\$6,000.00	\$4,764.00	\$1,236.00	\$0.00
Hose and Nozzles and Fittings	\$1,500.00	\$1,707.34	(\$207.34)	\$250.00
Hazmat Supplies	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$275.00	\$275.00
Extrication Equipment	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Dry Hydrant	\$375.00	\$58.50	\$350.00	\$375.00
Extinguishers	\$350.00	\$406.25	(\$56.25)	\$350.00
Total Tools and Equipment	\$9,600.00	\$21,246.59	(\$11,613.09)	\$4,850.00
FIRST RESPONSE EXPENSE	\$2,500.00	\$1,814.83	\$685.17	\$2,500.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$29,500.00	\$48,040.96	(\$17,253.21)	\$25,850.00

REVENUES 2003 AND ANTICIPATED REVENUES 2004

TOTAL REVENUES FOR 2003 & ANTICIPATED REVENUES FOR 2004

Revenue Source	Budget 2003	Actual 2003	Variance	Budget 2004
Town Payment	\$17,500.00	\$17,500.00	\$0.00	\$19,000.00
Homeland Security Grant	\$0.00	\$18,590.00	\$18,590.00	\$0.00
Disburse from Savings	\$5,450.00	\$0.00	(\$5,450.00)	\$5,800.00
Donations	\$500.00	\$2,879.69	\$2,379.69	\$1,000.00
Jefford's Equipment Grant	\$0.00	\$900.00	\$900.00	\$0.00
College Gift in Kind	\$6,000.00	\$4,764.00	(\$1,236.00)	\$0.00
Interest on Savings	\$50.00	\$44.63	(\$5.37)	\$50.00
Sale of Equipment	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$29,500.00	\$44,978.32	\$15,478.32	\$25,850.00

DOG WARDEN REPORT & HUMANE SOCIETY REPORT

Dog Warden Report

Jeremie Matrishon, the Town's Dog Warden, is available to help with stray and nuisance dogs and will take calls about other animals.

Thank you to those who are keeping their animals under control. The Town does not have a "leash law" but does have a dog ordinance which requires that dogs be kept under control and that the Town may take action if there is a complaint against a dog.

In 2003 there were 140 dogs registered in Ripton.

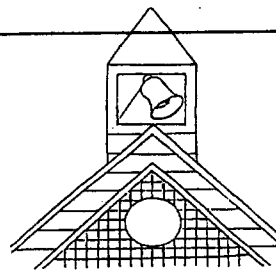
THE DEADLINE FOR 2004 DOG LICENSES IS APRIL 1.

Addison County Humane Society

If the Dog Warden has to pick up a stray dog and the owner can not be located, the dog is brought to the Addison County Humane Society Animal Shelter. The Shelter is on Boardman Street in Middlebury, behind Stone Motors.

Please consider an animal from the Shelter if you are looking for a new pet.

RIPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



“Ripton Elementary Rocks *Teaching K-8* travels over the hills and through the woods to find some very cultured kids in a Vermont hamlet.” was the title of the cover/feature article about the Ripton School in the November-December issue of the national magazine, *Teaching K-8*. Being the first Vermont school to be featured in this magazine was an exciting start to the school year. Teachers felt that the article did a great job of describing our wonderful school, and we were proud to have been chosen.

This year we hired two new classroom teachers. We were very excited to welcome Steven Lindemann to the grades 5 & 6 classroom. Steven has taught for 8 years in ACSU at these grade levels. We were also excited by the addition of Charlotte Holmquist in our grades 1 & 2 classroom with over 12 years of experience on the other side of the mountain in Granville and Hancock.

The Pre-Kindergarten class presently serves three students which has impacted our overall student count bringing it to 55. The school continues to find that this program has a very positive influence on student learning. An increasing number of Kindergarten students are beginning to read earlier in the year.

The school received many gifts and grants this year. A grant from International Paper allowed us to buy a chiller to raise salmon and/or trout. We plan to release these trout into the North Branch River this spring. Grants from ACEEF (Addison Central Educational Endowment Fund) and VAC (the Vermont Arts Council) are helping us bring two artists to school for residencies. These artists will be working with students on African drumming and mask making in connection with our thematic unit of study on West Africa. Another Vermont arts organization, VSA Arts of Vermont, has brought us a dance instructor for 5 weeks. Sophia Morris-Pittman worked with students in all classes on various forms of dance for two hours each week. Neat Repeats has given us grants to help with any initiative which the teachers choose. Finally, we have also received gifts from individuals within the community. All of these contributions help us to offer a rich and engaging program for our students.

We are in the second year of a three-year membership with FES, the Foundation for Excellent Schools. Our faculty has traveled to Basin Harbor and the Sagamore on Lake George for conferences and training. College mentors have come to school to work with students on academic and social skills as well as goal setting. Through FES we have received grants to help with a parenting program, “Shared Ventures”, the trips with our mentors, and work with a Movement Therapy consultant. Dr. William Freeman is coming monthly to school to train teachers and work with students on ways in which movement can help students to focus and be more available for learning.

Our breakfast/hot lunch program is now preparing about 350 meals per week (breakfast/brunch and lunch, adult and child). Adding an alternative to each meal has helped to increase participation. Meals continue to be free for all adults and there is an open invitation to any community member to join us for lunch.

Grades PreK-4 continue to learn and practice social skills weekly. These skills are implemented by older students in grades 5 and 6 through our Peer Advisor program. Students in all grades help to take care of our school by doing recycling, setting up and cleaning lunch tables, maintaining bird feeders, doing compost, and many other useful chores

Goals: The following are the goal as stated in our Annual Action Plan as required by the Vermont Department of Education.

- 1) Continue to improve instruction and student learning in Language Arts.
- 2) Continue to improve instruction and student learning in Mathematics.
- 3) Continue to work with students to improve their ability to work cooperatively and to solve problems constructively, to make healthy choices and to treat each other with respect.

These goals support the Vermont Framework of Standards and the ACSU Performance Targets. Our strategies for meeting these goals involve professional development for teachers in Reading instruction, Mathematics instruction (a new Math program for grades K-2), Adventure Education and Movement Therapy.

While a large amount of time is spent everyday on Mathematics and Literacy instruction, we continue to teach Science and Social Studies through school wide thematic units of study. In Social Studies we try to immerse students in the topic through the inclusion of artists in residence. In Science we try to provide the students with hands-on learning opportunities such as raising trout.

We continue to offer learning opportunities for students outside of the regular classroom and school day with programs such as our after school program, Guided Study, and our summer program (a combination camp and enrichment program). Both programs are increasingly well attended and are free to Ripton families.

The Ripton School would like to thank all of our volunteers. We are thankful that our community recognizes what a great place this school is in which to work and learn, and that good learning is taking place for both adults and students. We know this because of the wonderful support that parents and community members give to the school through volunteering their time in myriad ways; especially all the effort put forth for the Ripton Ridge Run.

The Staff and Board of the Ripton Elementary School

ADDISON CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

**Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury ID#4, Ripton, Salisbury,
Shoreham, Weybridge and Union District #3**

Addison Central Supervisory Union is a marvelous conglomeration of ten schools sustained and nurtured by seven supportive communities and 48 dedicated school board members serving voluntarily in 53 slots on nine school boards. During the past year our schools welcomed and challenged 2,101 students to learn. The educational accomplishments are exemplary, however, there is more to be achieved. Student assessments across ACSU challenge students, teachers, administrators and parents to do better. Test results show clearly what has been accomplished and what must be done to meet our ten performance targets. Those goals constitute the continuing mission of Addison Central Supervisory Union.

UD#3 Charter Change

At a November 2003, election, ACSU voters approved significant changes in the Union District #3 Charter. When schools open next September the seventh and eighth grade students from Bridport will be attending Middlebury Union Middle School for the first time in the history of ACSU.

Representation on UD#3 Board will change in 2005 with implementation of the constitutional principle of one-person one vote. Each of the six smaller towns in ACSU will have one representative on the Board. Middlebury will have seven representatives based on the number of registered voters in each of the towns.

Hannaford Center To Become A Regional Technical School District

At the March town meeting this year, all of the voters of Addison County will be asked to approve a change in the governance structure of the Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center. It will cease to be governed by the Union District #3 Board and will become governed by a board of elected and appointed officials representing each of the three Addison County Supervisory Unions. Access for students and tuition charges will remain the same. If the voters approve the proposal the Hannaford Career Center will become a separate regional technical school district.

Student Assessment Efforts Continue

Our commitment to the development of student assessments has reached the stage where the full range of test results is nearing completion for each student in the schools. Teachers have at their fingertips the individual student assessment results that provide diagnostic information to direct and inform instruction. Under the skilled leadership of Associate Superintendent Jan Willey and the long serving K-12 Assessment Committee, so much progress has been made that federal funding will soon be flowing into ACSU to expand the evaluation program, Making Assessment Purposeful for Students (MAPS), for use throughout Vermont and the nation.

Changes In State Funding Of Schools

Last year, Act 68 replaced Act 60, the state mechanism for funding education. The result will be a lightened burden on property taxpayers of Vermont. A one-cent increase in the sales tax is already offsetting some of the property tax. The new legislation places great emphasis on cost containment. All schools in ACSU will be working to achieve that objective.

A Pervasive Spirit Of Concern And Cooperation

As interim superintendent of schools I discover again, every day, a spirit of empathy, concern and cooperation, which pervades this complex and extraordinary supervisory union. From that first day on the job when a kindergartner, eyes bright with curiosity, crept around a book case in the library seeking The Wizard of Oz, to the spectacle of town trucks leading school buses onto icy roads to make sure every child is returned safely home, it is a school system to gratify the community. The mission to educate all our children is never fully achieved. It is always a work in progress. The people of this community demonstrate an abiding commitment to that task.

Harold Raynolds, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 2003-2004 PreK-12 ENROLLMENT

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Owain Alexander
Matthew Hoyt
Finn Matrishon

KINDERGARTEN

Sebastian Durante
Danika Main
Ann Manning
Nikkitta Powell

Jesse Trudeau

Rowan Warren

Hannah Williams

GRADE 1

Calder Birdsey

Jordan Coddling

Jennifer Cyr

Jessica Cyr

Autumn LaPlant

Montana Mackey

Brendan Mullholland

Meghan Mullholland

Justin Seguin

GRADE 2

Jacob Coddling

Naina Horning

Anneke Jewett

Peter Manning

Mary Shackett

GRADE 3

Gwynneth Alexander

Lydia Allen

Henry Birdsey

Benjamin Clark

Thomas Coleman

Tyler LaPlant

Nicolas Mackey

Hannah Osborne

Ashley Smith

Katelyn Williams

GRADE 4

Linus Biederman

Grace Carter

Peter Lewis

Cody McGlashan

Malcolm Mullholland

Eben Schumacher

Christian Shackett

Miles Zwicky

GRADE 5

Akassa Destromp

Kelsey McGlashan

Sean Mulholland

Annie Nicholson

Samantha Seguin

GRADE 6

Gus Biederman

Michael Desjadon

Sean Higgins

Christina LaPlant

B. J. Shackett

Dylann Swearingen

Karol Zak

GRADE 7

Michael Bullied

Meagan Carter

Ethan Dickinson

Levi Fleury

Brianna Gale

Kevin Jackson

Asa Sargent

Cameron Wright

GRADE 8

Daniel Bullied

Andrew Ford

Travis Karpak

Ashley LaPlant

Amelia Schumacher

Krystal Smith

Danielle Zak

Dylan Zwicky

GRADE 9

Brandon Bennett

Sam Chesman

Robin Lewis

Joseph Mackey

John Tubbs

GRADE 10

Peter Cummings

Charles Desjadon

Seth Dickinson

Jennifer Jackson

Isaac Larocque

Hallie Sargent

Olin Schumacher

GRADE 11

Joshua Balch

Phillip Bullied, Jr.

Alex Cox

Jake Desjadon

Tinaya Larocque

GRADE 12

Cale Dayton

Devon Karpak

Nicholas LaPlant

Mason Merriam

Mary Stewart

Jessica Webb

Katie Wimett

FACULTY AND STAFF

Jane Phinney	Principal
Susan Mock	PreK and Kindergarten
Charlotte Holmquist	Grades 1 and 2
Susan Ogilvie	Grades 3 and 4
Steven Lindemann	Grades 5 and 6
Terry Close	Speech/Language Pathologist
Amy Foley	Library/Technology Director
Jeffrey Ellison*	Physical Education
Christine Jenkins*	Art
Ann Rowell*	Music
Wendy Whaley-Sauder*	Guidance/Learning Specialist
Barbara Thompson-Snow*	Nurse
Vicki Bennett	Classroom Paraprofessional
Jorene Doria	Special Education Paraprofessional
Michele LaFlam	Classroom & Special Education Paraprofessional
Sarah Lynn	Classroom & Speech-Language Paraprofessional and First Aid Designee
Madeline Tenny	Classroom Paraprofessional
Nancy Whittemore	Classroom & Special Education Paraprofessional
Kathleen Angier	Meals Program Director
Dierdra Fleury	Administrative Assistant
Roger Larocque	Custodian
Bonnie Clark	Bus Driver

*Shared ACSU Personnel



**RIPTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INDEBTEDNESS STATEMENT
FOR NEW SCHOOL - 1989
FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION**

<u>Amount of Original Bond</u>	<u>Indebtedness July 1, 2004</u>	<u>Principal Payment 2004-2005</u>	<u>Interest Payment 2004-2005</u>	<u>Balance of Unpaid Principal June 30, 2005</u>
\$800,000	\$240,000	\$40,000	\$13,200	\$200,000

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF COMBINED EXPENSES OF THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THE UNION DISTRICT #3 SCHOOLS**

1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
\$972,405	\$1,037,731	\$1,081,726	\$1,239,332	\$1,211,024

COMPARATIVE TUITION RATES

2003-2004	Elementary Tuition Rate	\$7,750
2003-2004	High School Tuition Rate	\$10,400

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT **2004-05 FINANCE**

	Act 60	Act 68	
	Current 2003-04	Proposed 2004-05	Change
<u>Estimated Education Spending:</u>			
Elementary Budget	689,896	703,730	2.01%
High/Middle School Assessment	490,178	460,336	-6.09%
Technical Center Assessment	26,067	31,493	20.82%
Technical Center Base Payment*	20,509	24,033	17.18%
Special Article - Kitchen Improv./Maintenance Equip.	-	2,700	
Special Article - Transfer to Capital Improv. Fund	9,995	5,615	
Total Expenditures	1,236,645	1,227,907	-0.71%
Less Anticipated Receipts			
Special Ed Block Grant	28,816	28,880	
Special Ed Intensive	21,984	22,064	
Small Schools Grant	60,324	56,109	
Interest Income	1,300	500	
Transportation Aid	11,350	11,260	
Forestry Income	21,665	21,665	
Fund Balance	9,995	8,315	
Total Estimated Receipts	(155,434)	(148,793)	
Estimated Education Spending	\$1,081,211	\$1,079,114	-0.19%
<u>Estimated Education Spending Revenue from State:</u>			
Estimated Total Equalized Grand List	\$345,840	\$403,480	16.67%
Estimated Equalized Homestead Grand List	n/a	\$244,791	
Anticipated Equalized Homestead Tax Rate**	\$2.3257	\$1.8148	-21.97%
Estimated Homestead Taxes to be Raised	n/a	\$444,246	
Estimated Equalized Non-Residential Grand List	n/a	\$158,689	
Anticipated Equalized Non Residential Tax Rate	n/a	\$1.59	
Estimated Non Residential Taxes to be Raised:	n/a	\$252,315	
Education Property Tax Raised with Act 60	\$804,320	n/a	
Estimated Education Spending Revenue from State	\$276,891	\$382,553	38.16%

A change in education funding formulas occurred for FY 2005. Act 60 was in effect during FY 2004, and Act 68 takes effect in FY 2005. Changes to Act 68 were pending in the legislature at the time of publication of this report.

* Technical Center base payments are sent by State directly to Technical Center

** Anticipated Equalized Homestead Tax Rate has been adjusted from \$1.10 homestead tax rate for spending over \$6,800 per pupil. This is the rate estimated to be paid if property assessments are at 100% of fair market value as determined by the state.

Ripton School District Combined Balance Sheet
All Fund Types and Account Groups
June 30, 2003

	Governmental Fund Type General Fund	Proprietary Fund Type Enterprise Fund	Account Group		Totals (Memorandum Only)
			General Fixed Assets	General Long-term Debt	
ASSETS					
Current Assets:					
Cash	\$26,807	-	-	-	\$26,807
Accounts Receivable - Other	222	-	-	-	222
Total Current Assets	27,029	-	-	-	27,029
Other Assets:					
Fixed Assets	-	-	\$1,177,294	-	\$1,177,294
Amount to be provided for:					
Capital Lease Obligations	-	-	-	9,006	9,006
Retirement of Long-term Debt	-	-	-	280,000	280,000
Total Other Assets	-	-	1,177,294	289,006	1,466,300
TOTAL ASSETS	\$27,029	-	\$1,177,294	\$289,006	\$1,493,329
LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY					
Liabilities:					
Accounts Payable	\$1,081	-	-	-	\$1,081
Accrued Expenses	\$1,612	-	-	-	\$1,612
Capital Leases Payable	-	-	-	\$9,006	\$9,006
Loan Payable	-	-	-	280,000	280,000
Total Liabilities	\$2,693	-	-	289,006	291,699
Fund Equity:					
Investment in General Fixed Assets	-	-	1,177,294	0	1,177,294
Fund Balance, Unreserved	8,316	-	-	0	8,316
Fund Balance, Reserved	16,020	-	-	0	16,020
Retained Earnings	-	-	-	0	0
Total Fund Equity	24,336	-	1,177,294	0	1,201,630
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY	\$27,029	-	\$1,177,294	\$289,006	\$1,493,329

Three Prior Years Comparisons

ESTIMATES
ONLYDistrict: **Ripton**
County: **Addison**LEA: **167**
S.U.: **Addison Central**

Expenditures

	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005
Budget (local budget approved in prior years)	660,247	678,347	705,371	759,256
82% of base payment per FTE paid by the State on behalf of the district	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable
S.U. assessment (included in local budget)	24,003	23,470	25,483	24,033
Deficit (if included in local budget)	-	-	-	27,690
+ Block grant paid by State to tech center in prior years	15,690	15,696	20,509	not applicable
+ 1. Separately warned article passed at town meeting	-	23,538	9,995	2,700
+ 2. Separately warned article passed at town meeting	-	-	10,592	5,615
+ 3. Separately warned article passed at town meeting	-	-	-	-
- Act 144 Expenditures, (excluded from "Education Spending")	-	-	-	-

Act 68 local adopted budget

+ Union school assessment	561,921	544,066	490,178	460,336
+ Deficit if not included in budget or revenues	-	-	-	-
+ Special programs expenditures (if not included in local budget)	-	-	-	-
Gross Act 68 Budget	1,237,858	1,261,647	1,236,645	1,227,907

Act 144 expenditures (if any - excluded from "Education Spending")

+ Local revenues (categorical grants, donations, tuitions, surplus, etc., including Act 144 revenues)	162,599	198,317	155,434	148,793
+ Capital debt aid	-	-	-	-
+ Special program revenues (if not included in local budget)	-	-	-	-
- Deficit if not included in budget or expenditures	-	-	-	-
- Act 144 revenues	162,599	198,317	155,434	148,793
Total revenues	-	-	-	-

Fund raising (if any)

-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted local revenues	162,599	198,317	155,434	148,793

Education Spending (Act 68 definition)

Equalized Pupils	1,075,259	1,063,330	1,081,211	1,079,114
	105.59	103.30	99.68	96.19

Education Spending per Equalized Pupil

Excess Spending per Equalized Pupil (if any)	10,183	10,294	10,847	11,219
Per pupil figure used for calculating District Adjustment	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable

District spending adjustment
(\$11,219 / \$6,800)

Anticipated homestead tax rate, equalized (164.985% x \$1.10)	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable
Anticipated homestead tax rate, equalized	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable

Household Income Percentage for income sensitivity
(164.985% x 2.0%)

	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable
Household Income Percentage for income sensitivity	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable

Format as provided by Commissioner of Education

**RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET**

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
1100 REGULAR PROGRAMS					
110 Salaries	124,907	128,952	135,367	158,160	(1)
112 Salary - Aides	34,335	43,923	47,260	41,927	(2)
Less Title I Reimbursement	(17,000)	(15,906)	(11,615)	(12,673)	
114 Salary - Inservice	1,175	1,161	1,030	628	
115 Salary - Guided Study	0	0	1,348	1,402	
120 Substitutes	3,100	4,743	4,000	4,000	
210 Health Insurance	29,955	31,805	42,384	43,943	(3)
220 Social Security	12,511	13,683	14,459	15,768	
230 Life Insurance	270	239	274	285	
240 Municipal Retirement	1,375	1,855	1,890	1,677	(4)
270 Course Reimbursement	2,000	2,759	1,640	2,000	
280 Dental Insurance	1,297	843	643	1,280	
290 Disability Insurance	0	0	0	631	
320 Professional Services	660	269	1,000	800	
430 Repair & Maintenance	3,000	2,556	3,000	3,000	
610 Supplies	3,700	4,863	3,700	3,700	
640 Books & Periodicals	1,600	776	1,200	1,200	
650 A.V. Materials	500	550	400	400	
660 Manipulatives	650	103	700	600	
730 Equipment	500	649	400	400	
800 Field Trips	0	192	250	350	
890 ACSU Inservice	300	300	300	300	
891 Curriculum Development	505	503	519	542	
1100 Total	\$205,340	\$224,818	\$250,149	\$270,320	8.1%
1101 SUMMER PROGRAM					
112 Salaries - Summer Tutorial	915	1,248	1,123	1,168	
220 Social Security	70	95	86	89	
610 Supplies	0	0	50	75	

(1) This represents the salary of 3.8 classroom teachers.

(2) This represents an increase of .10 for one aide position and a decrease of .50 for another.

(3) Health insurance rates are increasing by 12.5%. This line represents either a percentage of insurance costs for teachers and aides, a flat sum to cover medical expenses for aides not electing insurance, or the choice of a dental plan.

(4) Municipal retirement is 4% of salaries of classroom aides.

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
Less College rent reimbursement	0	(1,296)	(1,259)	(1,259)	
1101 Total	\$985	\$47	\$0	\$73	
1200 SPECIAL EDUCATION					
110 Salaries	14,460	19,114	15,156	15,840	(5)
112 Salaries - Aides	57,875	40,129	34,736	35,508	(6)
113 Salaries - Summer Camp	0	0	1,123	1,168	
Less Medicaid reimbursement	0	(1,580)	(1,209)	0	
210 Health Insurance	15,400	10,199	10,433	11,422	
220 Social Security	5,535	4,532	3,903	4,017	
230 Life Insurance	25	29	22	22	
240 Municipal Retirement	2,315	1,567	1,390	1,420	
270 Course Reimbursement	200	75	200	200	
280 Dental Insurance	110	93	97	90	
290 Disability Insurance	0	17	0	63	
330 Other Special Ed Services	24,050	12,482	25,189	25,189	(7)
Less: CSR Grant Funds	(5,660)	0	0	0	
565 EEE Tuition	4,395	4,392	17,442	8,315	(8)
610 Supplies	100	42	150	150	
1200 Total	\$118,805	\$91,091	\$108,632	\$103,404	-4.8%
1300 SHARED PERSONNEL					
110 Salaries	21,693	21,754	22,843	21,840	(9)
210 Health Insurance	3,275	2,926	3,380	2,544	
220 Social Security	1,659	1,664	1,748	1,671	
230 Life Insurance	45	29	30	30	
270 Course Reimbursement	0	0	360	360	

(5) This represents the salary of a .3 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) special educator.

(6) This represents a decrease of .2 FTE for a special education aide.

(7) These services include a .2 FTE speech/language pathologist; a district-wide psychologist and integration specialist; physical and occupational therapy for students and other professional services as needed.

(8) The EEE program, based in Middlebury, provides services for students age 3-4 who are identified as needing extra help. We anticipate fewer Ripton students in the program next year.

(9) This represents the salaries of 3 teachers in the areas of Art, Music, and Physical Education, who each work one day per week. (Total of .6 FTE)

**RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET**

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
280 Dental Insurance	268	188	197	180	
290 Disability Insurance	105	0	0	87	
1300 Total	\$27,045	\$26,561	\$28,558	\$26,712	-6.5%
2120 GUIDANCE					
110 Salaries	14,465	14,573	15,156	15,840	(10)
210 Health Insurance	2,815	2,814	3,348	3,390	
220 Social Security	1,105	1,115	1,159	1,212	
230 Life Insurance	25	22	22	22	
270 Course Reimbursement	100	0	100	100	
280 Dental Insurance	110	93	97	90	
290 Disability Insurance	0	0	0	63	
610 Supplies	50	0	50	50	
2120 Total	\$18,670	\$18,617	\$19,932	\$20,767	4.2%
2130 HEALTH					
110 Salary	5,660	5,702	5,930	7,200	(11)
210 Health Insurance	1,875	1,876	2,232	2,260	
220 Social Security	430	436	454	551	
230 Life Insurance	0	14	15	15	
270 Course Reimbursement	120	15	120	120	
280 Dental Insurance	75	0	0	60	
290 Disability Insurance	0	0	0	29	
430 Equipment Repair	50	0	50	50	
580 Travel	25	0	0	0	
610 Supplies	200	155	300	400	
640 Books	40	0	40	40	
730 Equipment	50	50	50	50	
2130 Total	\$8,525	\$8,248	\$9,191	\$10,775	17.2%
2220 MEDIA SERVICE					
110 Salary	12,470	12,530	13,207	13,920	(12)
210 Health Insurance	0	0	0	0	
220 Social Security	955	959	1,010	1,065	

(10) This represents the salary of a .3 Guidance Counselor

(11) This represents the salary of a .2 School Nurse.

(12) This represents the salary of a .4 Library/Media Director.

**RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET**

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
230 Life Insurance	0	25	0	30	
270 Course Reimbursement	240	132	240	240	
280 Dental Insurance	0	0	0	0	
290 Disability Insurance	0	0	0	56	
430 Equipment Repair	100	0	100	100	
610 Supplies	300	299	250	250	
640 Books & Periodicals	1,200	946	1,200	1,500	
650 A.V. Materials	200	200	200	200	
730 Equipment	100	59	100	100	
2220 Total	\$15,565	\$15,150	\$16,307	\$17,461	7.1%
2250 TECHNOLOGY					
320 ACSU Technical Support	4,575	4,553	4,718	5,270	(13)
430 Equipment Repair	200	0	200	200	
580 T-1 Connection	4,400	4,300	4,300	4,300	
Less E-rate reimbursement	(2,640)	(5,467)	(2,640)	(2,640)	(14)
670 Software	200	0	260	300	
730 Equipment	2,990	3,083	3,147	3,147	
2250 Total	\$9,725	\$6,469	\$9,985	\$10,577	5.9%
2310 BOARD OF EDUCATION					
250 Worker's Compensation	1,025	1,726	1,712	2,193	(15)
260 Unemployment	300	465	100	200	
330 Board Stipends	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350	
332 Audit	0	0	0	2,385	
333 Legal Fees	350	13	350	350	
335 Payroll Service	1,000	1,202	1,061	1,325	
540 Advertising	1,660	1,974	1,850	1,900	
810 Dues & Fees	605	850	850	965	(16)
890 Publicity	200	290	200	200	
891 Miscellaneous	0	414	100	100	
2310 Total	\$6,490	\$8,284	\$7,573	\$10,968	44.8%

(13) We have the services of a district-wide computer technician for .5 days per week.

(14) Federal E-rate reimbursement reduces the cost of our telecommunication services.

(15) Workers Compensation for all employees is budgeted at a 17% increase over the current year's actual cost.

(16) This includes treasurer's bond insurance (+5%).

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
2313 TREASURER					
110 Salary	1,030	1,030	1,030	1,030	
220 Social Security	80	79	79	79	
610 Supplies	100	184	110	110	
2313 Total	\$1,210	\$1,293	\$1,219	\$1,219	0.0%
2320 ASSESSMENT					
331 ACSU	20,845	20,845	22,548	24,256	(17)
336 ACSU Insurance Pool	0	0	130	54	
339 Special Education	2,625	2,626	2,805	3,380	(18)
2320 Total	\$23,470	\$23,471	\$25,483	\$27,690	8.7%
2410 PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE					
110 Salary- Principal	36,225	36,330	37,783	26,347	(19)
111 Salary - Secretary	10,495	10,426	10,843	11,562	
210 Health Insurance	8,335	7,860	9,170	6,450	
220 Social Security	3,575	3,582	3,720	2,900	
230 Life Insurance	175	174	174	132	
240 Municipal Retirement	420	417	434	462	
245 Administrative Retirement	1,085	1,090	1,511	1,054	
270 Course Reimbursement	500	329	500	500	
280 Dental Insurance	0	0	0	0	
290 Disability Insurance	180	138	144	105	
530 Communications/Postage	625	429	500	525	
580 Faculty/Staff Travel	200	56	200	200	
610 Supplies	100	42	100	50	
640 Books & Periodicals	100	49	100	50	
2410 Total	\$62,015	\$60,922	\$65,179	\$50,337	-22.8%
2540 MAINTENANCE					
110 Salary	23,895	23,608	25,544	25,850	
111 Salary - Summer Assistance	1,000	2,089	1,000	1,680	(20)

(17) The ACSU Assessment is increasing by 3%. This amount is calculated based on professional count and shared by member towns.

(18) The ACSU Special Education Assessment is increasing by 4.4%.

(19) The Principal is reducing her time from .75 to .5 FTE.

(20) We are increasing the wage of a summer assistant custodian for extra work due to the Breadloaf Croutons summer program (for which we receive rent from Middlebury College).

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
Less College rent reimbursement	0	(1,024)	(1,067)	0	
210 Health Insurance	4,075	3,815	4,510	5,072	
220 Social Security	1,905	1,966	2,030	2,106	
240 Municipal Retirement	955	988	1,022	1,101	
310 Water Testing	465	840	600	899	
320 Contract Services	0	0	0	750	(21)
421 Disposal Services	375	252	300	321	
430 Repairs & Maintenance	2,700	2,750	2,800	2,996	
442 Snow Plowing	2,555	2,633	2,500	2,817	
443 Lawn Mowing	2,125	2,030	2,200	2,200	
521 Property/Liability Insurance	2,485	2,910	3,392	4,071	(22)
530 Communication/Telephone	2,700	1,332	2,000	2,000	
610 Supplies	2,000	1,951	2,000	2,100	
622 Electricity	11,290	12,003	12,000	12,723	
623 Propane	6,300	5,730	4,500	6,188	
730 Equipment	200	0	400	400	
2540 Total	\$65,025	\$63,873	\$65,731	\$73,274	11.5%
2550 TRANSPORTATION					
513 Contracted Services	19,375	19,373	19,857	20,453	
514 Field Trips	1,050	0	500	500	
2550 Total	\$20,425	\$19,373	\$20,357	\$20,953	2.9%
2560 FOOD SERVICE					
110 Salary	10,170	10,259	0	0	
210 Health Insurance	800	800	0	0	
220 Social Security	775	785	0	0	
240 Municipal Retirement	405	404	0	0	
270 Course Reimbursement	0	0	0	0	
610 Supplies	4,500	8,505	6,000	6,000	(23)
Less food service revenues	(15,000)	(14,422)	0	0	
2560 Total	\$1,650	\$6,331	\$6,000	\$6,000	0.0%

(21) We need to do an inventory for auditing and insurance purposes.

(22) This includes volunteer insurance and a 17% increase in property/liability insurance.

(23) This represents the net expense to the school for the Food program. Other costs

(.8 Meals Program Director, health insurance, payroll taxes, retirement) are covered by Food service revenues.

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET

	BUDGET 2002-03	SPENT 2002-03	BUDGET 2003-04	PROPOSED 2004-05	Change
5100 DEBT SERVICE					
830 Interest	18,000	18,000	15,600	13,200	
910 Principal	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	
5100 Total	\$58,000	\$58,000	\$55,600	\$53,200	-4.3%
GRAND TOTAL	\$642,945	\$632,548	\$689,896	\$703,730	2.0%

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Ripton Elementary Rocks!

Teaching K-8 travels over the hills
and through the woods
to find some very cultured kids
in a Vermont hamlet. *p.52*

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEET

	June 30, 2003	June 30, 2002
ASSETS:		
Capital Improvement Funds	0	66,016
General Fund Checking	26,607	50,997
Petty Cash Account	200	200
Accounts Receivable	<u>221</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$27,028</u>	<u>\$117,213</u>
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES:		
LIABILITIES:		
Payroll Deductions	1,612	1,916
Accounts Payable	<u>1,081</u>	<u>500</u>
Total Liabilities	2,693	2,416
FUND BALANCES:		
Reserve for Capital Project Fund	12,252	1,631
Reserve for Tax Reduction	0	0
Reserve for Foundation for Excellent Schools	268	0
Reserve for Roof project	0	87,923
Reserve for Ropes Course	0	856
Reserve for Quest	0	400
Reserve - Middlebury College Rent	3,500	3,400
Fund Balance, Unreserved	8,315	20,587
Total Fund Equity	<u>24,335</u>	<u>114,797</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY	<u>\$27,028</u>	<u>\$117,213</u>

RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT 2002-03 FUND BALANCE

REVENUE

Property Taxes	761,031	
State Aid - General Support	201,244	
State Aid - Education Fund	85,359	
State Aid - Small Schools Grant	58,930	
State Aid - Transportation Aid	12,810	
Interest Income	1,116	
Special Education - Block, Intensive & EEE	100,244	
Breakfast & Lunch Sales and Reimb	14,422	
Taiko Residency Grant	2,000	
Foundation for Excellent Schools Grant	1,000	
Green Mt Forestry	22,677	
Middlebury College Summer Rent	3,500	
Miscellaneous Income	19	
Total Revenue		\$1,264,352

EXPENDITURES

Regular Programs	251,426	
Special Education	91,092	
Guidance	18,617	
Health Service	8,248	
Media Services	15,151	
Technology	6,469	
Board of Education	7,870	
Treasurer	1,293	
ACSU Assessment	20,845	
ACSU Special Education Assessment	2,626	
Principal's Office	60,922	
Operations & Maintenance	63,872	
Transportation	19,373	
Food Service	20,752	
Debt Service	58,000	
UD #3 Assessment	564,468	
Total Expenditures		(\$1,211,024)

SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

EEE Transfer Account	4,199
Special Education Transfer Account	34,304
Taiko Drummers	2,000
Ropes Course	842
Quest Fund	395
Foundation for Excellent Schools	732

**RIPTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
2002-03 FUND BALANCE**

Continued

Middlebury College Summer Rent	3,400	
Transfer to Roof Project from Capital Improvement Fund	64,385	
Transfer to Roof Project from FY 01 Unreserved Fund Balance	23,538	
Transfer to Roof Project from FY 02 Unreserved Fund Balance	9,995	
Total Special Account Expenditures		(\$143,790)

Excess Revenue over Expenditures		(\$90,462)
Fund Balance - July 1, 2002		\$114,797
Fund Balance - June 30, 2003		\$24,335

Note: The Fund Balance is reserved as follows:

Capital Project Fund	\$12,252	
Foundation for Excellent Schools	\$268	
Middlebury College Summer Rent	\$3,500	
Unreserved Fund Balance		\$8,315

ANGOLANO & COMPANY
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

P.O. BOX 639
SHELBURNE, VERMONT 05482

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LOCATED AT:
2834 SHELBURNE ROAD

DAVID H. ANGOLANO, CPA
HEATHER L. ANGOLANO, CPA
DAVID J. ANGOLANO

Independent Auditors' Report

To The School Board
Ripton School District

We have audited the accompanying general-purpose financial statements of Ripton School District, Vermont, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2003, as listed in the table of contents. These general-purpose financial statements are the responsibility of Ripton School District's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these general-purpose financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and the significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the general-purpose financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Ripton School District, Vermont as of June 30, 2003, and the results of its operations and the cash flows of its proprietary fund type for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated October 15, 2003 on our consideration of Ripton School District's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Our audit was performed for the purpose of forming an opinion on the general-purpose financial statements of Ripton School District, Vermont taken as a whole. The Vermont Department of Education ADM Audit Report listed in the table of contents is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the general-purpose financial statements of Ripton School District. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the general-purpose financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the general-purpose financial statements taken as a whole.

Angolano & Company
Shelburne, Vermont
Firm Registration Number 92-0000141
October 15, 2003

ADDISON CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION

PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET

	2002-03 Spent	2003-04 Budget	2004-05 Proposed	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE</u>				
Salaries	523,460	557,600	594,284	
Health Insurance	86,156	112,580	112,700	
Social Security	37,453	41,600	44,659	
Life Insurance	2,032	2,250	2,310	
Retirement	13,002	16,300	16,310	
Workers Compensation	954	950	1,045	
Unemployment	928	0	500	
Dental	8,540	9,160	9,670	
Disability	1,852	2,125	2,359	
Inservice	890	1,100	1,100	
Audit	924	1,050	1,160	
Professional Services	7,323	7,800	7,800	
Legal	176	1,000	1,000	
Payroll Service	1,792	1,900	1,900	
CO Equipment Repairs	587	1,632	1,700	
Business Office Computer Support	5,384	5,450	6,250	
Copier Lease	6,911	9,500	9,500	
Postage Meter Rental	1,200	1,250	1,250	
Telephone	11,912	13,775	14,464	
Postage	6,806	7,700	7,700	
Advertising	1,521	1,700	1,700	
ACSU Schools Report	1,071	1,700	1,200	
Star Awards	1,263	1,000	1,200	
Staff Mileage Reimbursement	7,794	6,572	6,901	
Office Supplies	11,733	12,500	13,000	
Books	879	1,500	1,500	
Central Office Software	1,450	1,500	1,500	
Business Office Equipment (AS400)	5,736	5,740	6,027	
Central Office Equipment	6,474	5,000	6,015	
Conferences & Dues	10,056	14,000	14,000	
Technology Equipment Repairs	1,625	1,050	1,103	
Technology Supplies	208	840	882	
Technology Office Software	1,373	2,000	2,100	
Technology Office Equipment	10,261	12,000	12,600	
Miscellaneous	2,360	2,500	2,500	
Superintendent Search	12,356	0	0	
Contingency	0	1,000	1,000	
Total Administrative	794,442	865,324	910,887	5.3%

**ADDISON CENTRAL SUPERVISORY UNION
PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET**

Continued

	2002-03 Spent	2003-04 Budget	2004-05 Proposed	
<u>MAINTENANCE</u>				
Salary	6,110	6,085	7,493	
Social Security	467	465	573	
Monitoring System	120	130	137	
Workers Compensation	200	200	220	
Water & Sewer	647	550	700	
Trash Removal	938	945	1,013	
Maintenance	480	3,500	3,640	
Building Upgrade	4,500	2,000	2,000	
Building Rent	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Property/Liability Insurance	750	871	915	
Supplies	1,085	800	1,140	
Furniture	500	500	500	
Electricity	9,068	9,241	9,615	
Total Maintenance	28,865	29,287	31,946	9.1%
 GRAND TOTAL	 \$823,307	 \$894,611	 \$942,833	 5.4%
Less Prior Year Fund Balance		(10,000)	(32,100)	
Less Grant Administration Fees		(15,000)	(15,000)	
Assessments		\$869,611	\$895,733	3.0%

**ESTIMATED ACSU ASSESSMENTS
BASED ON PROPOSED 2004-05 BUDGET**

	Professional Count	% of ACSU Budget	2004-05 ACSU Assessment	2003-04 ACSU Assessment	ACSU Incr/(decr)	2004-05 Special Ed Assessment	2003-04 Special Ed Assessment	Special Ed Incr/(decr)	Total Assess Incr/(decr)
Bridport	14.65	6.15%	\$55,093	\$57,904	(\$2,811)	\$7,653	\$7,213	\$440	(\$2,371)
Cornwall	11.80	4.95%	\$44,375	\$38,062	\$6,313	\$6,172	\$4,744	\$1,428	\$7,741
ID#4	43.53	18.28%	\$163,697	\$168,373	(\$4,676)	\$22,755	\$20,967	\$1,788	(\$2,888)
UD#3	127.90	53.70%	\$480,978	\$468,538	\$12,440	\$55,368	\$58,353	(\$2,985)	\$9,455
Ripton	6.45	2.71%	\$24,256	\$22,548	\$1,708	\$3,380	\$2,805	\$575	\$2,283
Salisbury	13.58	5.70%	\$51,069	\$41,237	\$9,832	\$7,099	\$5,133	\$1,966	\$11,798
Shoreham	12.43	5.22%	\$46,744	\$44,989	\$1,755	\$6,500	\$5,599	\$901	\$2,656
Weybridge	7.85	3.30%	\$29,521	\$27,960	\$1,561	\$4,115	\$3,487	\$628	\$2,189
TOTALS	238.19	100%	\$895,733	\$869,611	\$26,122	\$113,042	\$108,301	\$4,741	\$30,863

ACSU SPECIAL EDUCATION 2004-2005 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

	2002-2003 Spent	Approved 2003-2004 Budget	Proposed 2004-2005 Budget	Proposed 2004-2005 Assessment
Salaries	183,130	198,247	205,608	73,145
Health Insurance	35,604	42,867	48,199	14,993
Social Security	14,092	15,166	15,729	5,596
Life Insurance	718	1,111	1,171	443
Retirement	3,872	5,706	5,062	1,588
Workers Comp	92	100	104	37
Dental	3,584	3,764	4,292	1,341
Disability	707	873	822	293
Audit	1,092	1,400	1,400	225
Payroll Services	1,376	1,430	1,600	1,600
Legal Fees	3,825	1,150	2,400	2,400
Equipment Repair	2,771	2,650	3,000	3,000
Postage	896	875	925	925
Telephone	1,816	1,394	1,259	1,100
Advertising	2,392	2,200	1,600	456
Travel	1,703	1,700	1,875	-
Office Supplies	3,197	4,176	4,200	2,500
Equipment	720	5,380	2,000	2,000
Conferences & Dues	1,293	934	1,400	1,400
Total Special Ed Budget	262,880	291,123	302,646	
Less: Revenue Resources		(182,822)	(189,604)	
Special Ed Assessments		108,301	113,042	113,042 (4.4% Inc.)

ACSU SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS

	Percent of Teacher Count	2003-2004 Assessment	Proposed 2004-2005 Assessment	Dollar Difference
Bridport	6.77%	7,213	7,653	440
Cornwall	5.46%	4,744	6,172	1,428
ID#4	20.13%	20,967	22,755	1,788
UD#3	48.98%	58,353	55,368	(2,985)
Ripton	2.99%	2,805	3,380	575
Salisbury	6.28%	5,133	7,099	1,966
Shoreham	5.75%	5,599	6,500	901
Weybridge	3.64%	3,487	4,115	628
Total	100%	108,301	113,042	4,741

Note: Technical supported added after budget was approved. Cost will be \$2,043

FRIENDS OF THE RIPTON SCHOOL REPORT

The Friends of the Ripton School (FORS) raises funds for school activities that are beyond the scope of the school budget, and sponsors events for the school and community. During the 2002-2003 school year FORS income was \$10,901.55 and expenses were \$9,083.98. To date in the 2003-2004 school year, income is \$10,788.00 and expenses are \$7,525.00. The breakdowns for major earnings and expenses follows:

2002-2003 Net Earnings

Donations	\$1,597
Ridge Run	\$4,208
Fall food sale	\$469
Sweatshirts	\$457
Bake Sale	\$243
Bike-for-Books	\$615

2002-2003 Expenses

Teacher supplies	\$1,095
Performances	\$1,733
Library	\$992
5/6 grade trip to Maine	\$730
Ski Trip	\$394

July - December 2003 Net Earnings

Donations	\$678
Ridge Run	\$4,999
Bulb sale	\$670
Sweatshirts	\$248

July - December 2003 Expenses

Teacher supplies	\$1,900
Parenting Class	\$1,302
(much of this is to be reimbursed by a grant)	

FORS has a bank balance over \$16,000.

Thank you to the Ridge Run Committee and all the volunteers who help on race day, parent volunteers, the Ripton Store, and the children and their supporters who make us successful.

LISTERS' REPORT

THERE WILL BE A TOWN-WIDE REAPPRAISAL IN 2004. CALL THE TOWN OFFICE (388-2266) OR e-mail (ripton@tax.state.vt.us) TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE LISTERS TO VISIT YOUR PROPERTY. Read the note "ABOUT VISITS" in the text below.

The Town's level of appraisal, based on sales from 2001-2003, dropped nearly 10% in 2003 and put the level of appraisal under 80%. We are one of 61 towns to drop below 80% in 2003, nearly double the 31 who did in 2002.

We have been talking about the need for reappraisal for a couple of years, but falling below 80% requires it. We have listed sales from the past three years on the Property Transfers page so you can see how the level of appraisal dropped and where there are inequities.

Fortunately, there are funds set aside for reappraisal. The State sends an annual payment of \$6.00 per parcel to towns with the intent that this money be used for reappraisal. However, nothing requires that and often the money goes into a town's general fund or to annual listers' expenses. We appreciate that our Town did save the money. With our savings and this year's State reimbursement, there are enough funds to complete the reappraisal. Note that some of the funds spent by the Listers in 2003 were for reappraisal-related expenses.

For example, in 2003 we purchased the reappraisal software (Marshall & Swift Residential Estimator) and hired a consultant to prepare a land schedule program. We will use these to complete an in-house appraisal that we estimate will cost under \$20,000.00. An appraisal by a firm would cost twice as

much, and there is currently a three-year wait to get a good appraisal firm.

Other towns that have done their own reappraisals include Tunbridge, Westminster, and Goshen. The listers from those towns and our State District Advisor think it is completely feasible for us to do our own reappraisal. In fact, the computer programs do most of the work, and the State Property Valuation and Review staff provides a lot of help. The Listers are valuable for doing the fieldwork and putting the right information in the computer. These are tasks for which appraisal firms often hire contract workers, whose work the Listers then have to review.

The reappraisal will go as follows:

- A land schedule (a list of land values) is being prepared with the help of a consultant and State Property and Valuation Review staff.
- Data from the lister cards and zoning files in the office is being entered into the new appraisal program.
- Visits will be made to homes we have not seen in the last few years or any we have questions about, along with new construction and renovation projects.
- The homes of Listers and some of the other Town officers will be inspected and appraised by the Property Valuation and Review district advisor.
- All new information will be entered into the computer and new values generated.
- All property owners will be sent a list of all of the old and new values, their value, and instructions for grievance.
- Each homeowner will be sent a new homestead value. New homestead values are required this year anyway because the formula for them has changed. Where the homestead was formerly a house, garage and two acres, it now includes all of the property.

- **ABOUT VISITS:** Property owners do not have to allow the Listers on their land or into their homes. If the Listers do not have access to a property, the appraisal is based on what is on file in the Town Office and what may be seen from the road. The most significant components of the appraisal are square footage and quality of construction and materials. Many older homes in Vermont look better on the outside than on the inside, so it can be beneficial to have the Listers actually inspect.
- The quality rankings range from low to excellent. A camp is often a low quality structure. Most homes will be average or good. Excellent homes show careful craftsmanship, custom work, details,

and high value materials. There are more of those in Ripton now than there were for the 1991 reappraisal.

In 2003, thirty-one changes of appraisal were issued. The total value of these changes was \$940,653. Three property owners grieved their appraisals. There were no appeals to the Board of Civil Authority.

Thirty-one parcels, totaling 3,174 acres, were enrolled in the State's Use Value Program. Their values are adjusted annually. In 2003 the Use Value program saved Ripton property owners a total of \$40,113.

FORM 411 – TAXABLE LISTED VALUES – 2003 GRAND LIST

This table is a modified version of the State's original 411 form

Category	Property Count	Value: Corporations	Value: Town Residents	Value: State Residents	Value: Non-State Residents	Total Listed Value
R-1: house & up to 6 acres	103	75,100	7,885,400	167,200	1,076,906	9,204,606
R-2: house & more than 6 acres	104	253,056	13,014,729	234,100	1,189,051	14,690,936
Mobile Home – no land	5	0	44,100			44,100
Mobile Home – with land	16	0	623,700	18,100	32,800	674,600
V-1: vacation home with under 6 acres	33	0	173,600	438,000	400,700	1,012,300
V-2: vacation home & 6-plus acres	28	0	222,680	628,937	1,113,100	1,964,717
Commercial	49	873,302				1,238,502
Utilities – Electric	1	534,100				534,100
Wood	127	189,546	551,794	665,412	1,221,634	2,628,386
Misc. (College)	12					
Total	478	1,925,104	22,881,203	2,151,749	5,034,191	31,992,247
Total Value of Taxable Property						31,992,247

Board of Listers: Alison Joseph, Erik Eriksen, Bruce Malhotra

PROPERTY TRANSFERS

Property Transfer Tax Returns are filed with the Clerk and are public records. Information from the forms over the most recent three-year period are used to determine a town's level of appraisal and coefficient of dispersion (a measure of equity). The transactions from the last three years are listed below. They give an indication that we need to reappraise because of the level of appraisal (the % figure) and the range in the level of appraisal (from 40% to 154%). These and sales of comparable properties in neighboring towns will be analyzed for Ripton's reappraisal.

HOME and CAMP SALES <i>listed by year of sale and number of acres</i>					
Address	Seller	Acres	Town Grand List Value	Sale Price	Town Grand List Value = this % of Sale Price
2003					
2332 Natural Turnpike	Rowe	0.43	\$67,800	\$108,000	62%
314 Wagon Wheel (camp)	Stone	1	\$15,600	\$23,900	65%
138 Maiden Lane	Rew	2	\$103,000	\$145,000	71%
1361 Route 125	Gallivan	2	\$100,000	\$137,000	72%
441 Maiden Lane	Anderson	2.3	\$82,000	\$139,000	58%
643 Lincoln Road	O'Keefe	11	\$137,900	\$200,000	68%
905 Peddler's Bridge	Ryan	24.8	\$173,000	\$370,000	46%
2002					
1411 Route 125	Austelle	0.33	\$65,800	\$118,000	55%
1169 Route 125	Ramey	1	\$81,400	\$126,000	65%
1169 Route 125	Edleson	1	\$81,400	\$127,000	64%
Goshen Road (camp)	Hier	1.2	\$10,600	\$17,000	62%
114 Whitman Road	Fritz	4.5	\$143,400	\$240,000	60%
1706 North Branch Road	Malzac	6.7	\$60,300	\$65,000	92%
701 Barrows Road (camp)	Gorey	10	\$33,000	\$24,000	137%
77 Old Town Road	Funk	10.3	\$225,000	\$230,000	98%
1012 North Branch Road	Degray	12.4	\$135,400	\$154,500	88%
155 Norton Farm Road	Svitavsky	17	\$103,900	\$129,900	79%
1238 North Branch Road	Ahearn	20.3	\$175,600	\$275,000	63%
28 Fire Brook Road	Emilo	20.4	\$216,000	\$275,000	78%
2001					
689 Maiden Lane	Nolan	0.5	\$60,400	\$100,000	60%
1078 Natural Turnpike	Chicoine	1	\$60,900	\$75,000	81%
2360 Natural Turnpike	Boksa	1.4	\$60,500	\$76,000	80%
49 Natural Turnpike	Hunter	1.8	\$132,000	\$165,000	80%
1361 Route 125	Roosevelt	2	\$80,300	\$107,000	75%
184 Natural Turnpike	Billings	2.5	\$53,800	\$72,650	74%
21 Murray Lane	Collins	2.5	\$83,200	\$126,000	60%
2124 Route 125	Schley	2.8	\$53,900	\$82,000	66%
707 off Maiden Lane	Price	5.2	\$71,300	\$95,000	75%
924 North Branch Road	Warner	9	\$108,300	\$104,000	104%

LAND SALES <i>listed by year of sale and number of acres</i>					
Road	Seller	Acres	Town Grand List Value	Sale Price	Town Grand List Value = this % of Sale Price
2003					
Lincoln Road	Burridge	5.1	\$19,700	\$45,000 part donation	43% of the value used for donation/sale
Lincoln Road	Martin	5.6	\$23,900	\$28,500	83%
off Lincoln Road	Kuk	10	\$13,100	\$15,000	87%
Old Town Rd.	Cincotta	10.4	\$27,800	\$35,000	79%
North Branch	Long	11.2	\$28,700	\$26,500	108%
North Branch	Long	11.7	\$29,300	\$28,000	104%
North Branch	Long	11.9	\$29,500	\$31,000	95%
Dan Dragon	Grube	11.9	\$29,500	\$28,100	104%
North Branch	Silva	13.8	\$31,800	\$42,000	75%
North Branch	Long	25.1	\$41,900	\$57,000	73%
Pearl Lee	Poritz	104	\$81,500	\$200,000	40%
2002					
Lincoln Road	Bowen	1	\$15,100	\$25,000	60%
Lincoln Road	Behm	1	\$10,500	\$16,900	62%
Chandler Hill	Todd	5	\$15,700	\$8,000	196%
Maiden Lane	Wimett Trust	5.2	\$23,500	\$26,500	87%
Burnt Hill Road	Andrews	5.6	\$16,300	\$25,000	65%
off Lincoln Road	Brown	10.4	\$13,300	\$10,000	133%
off Lincoln Road	Hill	11.5	\$14,000	\$11,600	121%
Lincoln Road	Steele	13.5	\$38,500	\$25,000	154%
North Branch Road	Long	13.8	\$31,800	\$39,700	81%
Lincoln Road	Wiseman	21.5	\$50,600	\$62,000	82%
Chandler Hill Road	Todd	25.1	\$41,900	\$51,000	83%
2001					
North Branch Road	Lord	9.1	\$14,100	\$15,100	94%
off Lincoln Road	Lefebvre	10	\$17,500	\$25,000	70%
Wagon Wheel Road	King	10.3	\$27,600	\$36,000	76%
North Branch Road	Mooney Est.	10.4	\$28,500	\$25,000	115%
Old Town Road	Cincotta	10.4	\$27,800	\$50,000	56%
Lincoln Road	Myers	28.1	\$44,200	\$40,000	110%

PROPERTY TRANSFERS and pages of deed recording 1993 -2003											
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Transfers	33	27	37	35	40	56	35	31	40	33	27
Pages recorded	455	422	324	370	436	648	446	329	648	683	909

STATEMENT OF TAXES
JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 31, 2003

2003 Grand List (Total Value of all Taxable Real Property in Ripton): \$31,992,247

Statement of Taxes Collected in 2003		Tax Calculation:	
Taxes Collected by 11/3/03	\$889,657		
Year 2003 Delinquent Taxes	\$16,425	1% of Grand List	\$319,923
Left to Collect as of 12/31/03	\$25,611	Tax Rate 2003	X \$2.94
Grand List Changes & Abatement	\$8,881		
Total Taxes	\$940,574	Total Taxes	\$940,574

TAX BREAKDOWN FOR 2003

	\$ of Tax Bill	% of Tax Bill
General Fund	\$0.21	7%
Roads	\$0.21	7%
Local Share Education Tax	\$1.33	45%
Statewide Education Property Tax	\$1.19	40%
Total	\$2.94	100%

"Percent of Tax Bill" does not add up to 100% because of rounding.

PERCENT OF TAXES BILLED VS. TAXES COLLECTED
AS OF THE NOVEMBER DUE DATE (AVERAGE = 94.3%)

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	1995-2003
										<i>Average</i>
% Collected	93.7	91.7	94.4	97.4	94.9	95.0	94.6	93.8	94.6	94.5

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT

List of delinquent taxpayers as of December 31, 2003

	2002	2003
Blake, Jonathan		\$1,002.54
Daukus, Paula		\$44.99
Durante, Joseph & Lisa		\$129.58
Hoyt, Brian & Tammi		\$1,523.98
Larocque, Roger		\$1,958.04
Manning, Peter, Marjorie, Susan	\$1,621.10	\$1,643.46
Manning, Peter, Marjorie, Susan	\$972.94	\$1,014.30
Manning, Susan, Peter, Marjorie	\$972.78	\$1,808.10
Manning, Eric	\$1,891.27	\$1,665.92
Manning, David & Melissa	\$1,270.71	\$2,152.08
Maynard, Red	\$249.47	\$882.00
Moran, Robert		\$249.90
Mortgage Electronic Registrations System		\$2,199.12
Olson, Thomas		\$108.78
Peck, Ian		\$300.72
Peck, Jr., John	\$220.40	\$223.44
Peck, Sr., John		\$1,546.16
Quesnel, John & Kate		\$1,117.20
Stevens, Ronald	\$406.00	\$411.60
Stiffler, Kathy & Tony		\$2,510.76
Thompson, Jim	\$806.20	\$817.32
Warner, Eugene		\$711.48
Winter, Jean		\$1,589.18
YEARLY TOTALS	\$8,410.87	\$25,610.65

OVERALL TOTAL 2002 + 2003	\$34,021.72
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COMPARATIVE PAYMENT SUMMARY 1999 – 2003				
	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Principal Collected	\$39,375.02	\$35,718.13	\$45,115.34	\$34,845.60
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$2,376.43	\$1,783.52	\$2,154.14	\$2,658.11
Legal Costs Recovered	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$700.12
Penalty to the Collector	\$2,992.60	\$2,131.11	\$2,927.81	\$2,756.59

Timothy Hanson, Delinquent Tax Collector

VITAL STATISTICS

Our vital statistics are for births in Ripton marriage licenses and civil union licenses issued here, and deaths declared here. We have records for births to Ripton residents that happened in other towns, and deaths declared in other towns, only if the clerk from that town has forwarded a copy of the certificate here. The point is that a Ripton resident may be born, or may die, and it may not be reported here. Also marriages and civil unions are not necessarily those of residents, but are for anyone who applied for and was issued a license from the Ripton Town Clerk.

BIRTHS: Six
John Sidaway, Anoushka Pschorr, Andrew Thorpe, Lucas Nelson, Maible Matrishon, Autumn Kelly

MARRIAGES: Seven

CIVIL UNIONS: Two

DEATHS: Seven
Kathleen Higgins, Richard Clark, Anthony Persuitti, Horace Beck, Mary Parker, Francis Clark, James Ogilvie

VITAL STATISTICS 1993 -2003											
	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Births	2	3	3	5	10	3	8	13	3	10	6
Marriages	8	5	10	10	6	6	6	6	3	3	7
Civil Unions									2	0	2
Deaths	6	4	2	4	7	2	0	3	0	0	7

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REPORT

The Vermont Department of Public Health has a district office in Middlebury. Their full report is available at www.HealthyVermonters.info. The 2003 report information, for printing in town reports in 2004, is based on information from 2002.

Food and Lodging Inspections: Sanitarians inspect establishments to decrease the risk of food borne disease outbreaks. At the three establishments in Ripton, four inspections were completed by a sanitarian in 2002.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC): WIC improves the health of eligible pregnant and postpartum women and their children by assuring access to health care, teaching families about good nutritional practices, and providing nutritious food. Twenty-three women and children living in Ripton received food, healthcare, and education through this program in 2002.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases: Immunization has reduced reportable cases of preventable diseases in Vermont to record low levels, but 150-200 Vermonters still die of pneumonia or flu each year. During 2002, the Dept. of Health distributed 9,206 doses of vaccine, valued at \$119,335.80, to health care providers in Addison County.

REPORTS & REQUESTS OF ORGANIZATIONS **REQUESTING FUNDS IN 2004**

Addison County Community Action Group provides services to meet emergency needs, and to help people obtain the skills and tools they need to help themselves out of poverty. ACCAG operates a food shelf, clothing room, shelter (description below), training programs, revolving loan fund, fuel purchasing cooperative, and assists people with medical and dental needs, budgets, tax preparation, etc. **Funding request: \$2,250**

ACCAG - The John W. Graham Emergency Shelter provides temporary shelter to those without housing and administers a Homeless Prevention Fund to assist families in need. **Funding request: \$1,400**

Counseling Service of Addison County offers mental health services including 24-hour emergency service; and rehabilitation, developmental, youth, family, and employment services. **Funding request: \$800**

Addison County Parent/Child Center provides support and education to families with young children. **Funding request: \$600**

Addison County Home Health and Hospice provides nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists and home health aides to assist people to remain in their home. Provided a total of 596 visits to Ripton residents in 2003. **Funding request: \$566**

Hospice Volunteer Services trains hospice volunteers and offers care, emotional support, and education to the terminally ill and their families. **Funding request: \$200**

Champlain Valley Area Agency on Aging provides Meals on Wheels, senior community meals, a senior help line, and case management. **Funding request: \$650**

Elderly Services runs Project Independence Elderly Day Care Services, specialized Alzheimer's Day Care, the Family Caregiver Support Group, and the Aging Education Center. Their programs provide transportation, companionship, meals, nursing care, and respite and support to family caregivers. Ripton residents received approximately 4,744 hours of care, 1,944 meals and 1,546 van rides valued at \$52,184 in 2003. **Funding request: \$200**

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) recruits people 55 and older to volunteer for area non-profit agencies. **Funding request: \$325**

Open Door Clinic - Community Health Services provides free health care to people who are uninsured or underinsured. In 2003 the Open Door Clinic provided 36 patient visits to Ripton Residents. **Funding request: \$500**

Vermont Adult Learning offers basic education classes to those without a high school diploma. **Funding request: \$155**

WomenSafe, Inc. provides services including a hotline (which received 2,437 calls in 2003), court advocacy and education, support groups, children's services, and a supervised visitation program to victims of abuse. Historically, Ripton residents have benefited from this service. **Funding request: \$450**

Green Up Vermont organizes Vermont's spring clean up. **Funding request: \$50**

Otter Creek Natural Resources Conservation District identifies conservation needs, provides education, technical assistance, forums for discussion, and more. **Funding Request : \$48.84**

Most of these agencies send the Town comprehensive descriptions of their programs, which we feel are too long to print in detail in the Town Report. If you are interested in getting more information on any of these agencies, you are free to come to the Town Office to review their material.

SUMMARIES OF TOWN ORDINANCES

1. Special Regulations Governing Obstructions to Highways: Passed October 1, 1973. Regulates the construction of driveways that join Town roads.

2. Speed Regulations--Special Regulation as to Speed of Motor Vehicles in the Town of Ripton. Effective October 15, 1973. The Town's first speed ordinance, it was superseded by #8.

3. Health Ordinance: Passed November 1983. The first "Sewage Ordinance," sets standards for septic systems.

4. Flood Hazard Ordinance: Passed September 1985. Protects public health and safety from the hazards of flooding and is required for eligibility for Federal Flood Insurance.

5. Open Container Ordinance: Passed February 1988. Regulates alcohol consumption in public places.

6. Zoning: Passed March 1989. Revisions passed 2003. Regulates development. Historic District added in 1995, revised 2003.

7. Revised Sewage Ordinance: Sets standards for septic systems. Passed April 1989. Updates #3 – Health Ordinance.

8. Revised Speed Ordinance: Passed December 1989. Sets a 35 mph speed limit on all Town roads.

9. Flood Plain Ordinance: Passed May 1990. Revises Ordinance #4.

10. Dog Ordinance: Passed November 12, 1993. Dogs running loose and causing a nuisance may be controlled by the Town.

11. Speed Ordinance: Passed January 11, 1999. The Town's speed limit for Route 125 is identical to the speed limit set by the State.

12. Subdivision Regulations: Regulate subdivision of land parcels. Passed March 2003.

PERMITS AND PERMIT FEES

A building or sewage permits or both, must be obtained before most types of construction begin. Permit fees put at least part of the cost of administering these ordinances on those who are building. Contact the Zoning Administrator before you begin a project. There are penalties for applications submitted after the fact.

Permit applications are available at the Clerk's Office. The application form, a sketch plan of the project, and payment are required for processing. Permits are not effective immediately. The Zoning Administrator requires processing time and there is a mandatory posting period. If your project requires a variance, a hearing is held. The hearing must be advertised in the paper and hearings are generally held only once per month.

- **PERMIT REVIEW IS REQUIRED IN ALL ZONES FOR ANY USE OTHER THAN RESIDENTIAL.**
- PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR CHANGES OF USE, SUCH AS FROM A CAMP TO YEAR-ROUND OCCUPANCY.
- CAMPS HAVE A SPECIFIC AND LIMITED PERIOD OF USE (see Zoning Regulations).
- PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR PONDS AND POOLS.
- **REMEMBER TO NOTIFY THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR WHEN YOUR PROJECT IS COMPLETE SO THAT A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY OR COMPLIANCE MAY BE ISSUED.** There is no additional fee for this certificate and it is needed on record for refinancing or property transfers.

PERMIT FEES

Effective September 1, 2003

TYPE OF PERMIT	FEE
NEW CONSTRUCTION	
Combined dwelling/sewage disposal system.....	\$ 125.00
Residential/seasonal dwelling	100.00
Mobile home	100.00
Accessory outbuilding	50.00
Major projects/commercial/industrial	(Determined on a case-by-case basis)
REPLACEMENT CONSTRUCTION	
Residential/seasonal dwelling/mobile home	\$50.00
ADDITION/RENOVATION	\$50.00
SIGNS	\$50.00

TYPE OF PERMIT	FEE
SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM	
Disposal system construction	\$50.00
Disposal field replacement/major repair	50.00
Minor modification/repair, vault privy	50.00
Pit/vault privy	50.00
LAND DEVELOPMENT	
Drainage improvements, ponds, dams, swimming pools	\$50.00
Gravel extraction/excavation	(Determined on a case-by-case basis)
SUBDIVISION	
Two to five lots	\$ 100.00 + \$ 100.00 per lot over two lots
More than five lots	\$ 400.00 + \$ 200.00 per lot over five lots
Boundary adjustment	\$ 100.00
TEMPORARY USES	
Incidental to construction projects, up to one year (ZR §516)	\$ 50.00
Campers, up to 120 days (ZR §523.2)	50.00
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING (Zoning Board of Adjustment or Planning Comm.)..	\$100.00
CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY	No charge
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE	No charge
VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Effective 1/1/98)	\$30.00
LATE PERMIT FEE SURCHARGES	
Fee surcharges will be imposed for late permits (i.e.: permits that are applied for <i>after</i> construction or land development that requires a permit has been commenced or completed):	
Permit applied for <i>before</i> discovery by ZA/Town official	Base fee + 25%
Permit applied for <i>after</i> discovery by ZA/Town official	Base fee + 50%

OTHER PERMITS REQUIRED

ACCESS ROAD/DRIVE: A "road cut" permit is required before building or altering a driveway that connects to a Town road. The Clerk can provide information and forms for this permit. There is no fee. Driveway permits along Route 125 are issued by the State Agency of Transportation. Contact VTrans for application forms and instructions.

BURN PERMIT: A permit is required before burning brush, grass, leaves, etc., except when there is full snow cover. Burning without a permit may result in a fine. A call to the Fire Warden Erik Eriksen (388-3629) on the day of the burn can usually secure a permit. No fee.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MARCH 3, 2003

The legal voters of the Town of Ripton met at the Community House in Ripton on Monday, March 3, 2003, at 7:30 p.m. to act upon articles one through seven of the 2003 Warning. There were about 80 people in attendance.

This is a summary of the minutes—a complete version can be reviewed at the Town Office.

Mid-way through the Meeting, business was suspended to allow State Senator Claire Ayer to address the gathering. She briefly reviewed ongoing activity in the committees on which she serves: Agriculture, Transportation, and Finance (including its Act 60 Committee). After mentioning an

agricultural marketing and development project and Addison County's transportation funding status, Senator Ayer discussed possible Act 60 revisions at some length. She explained that any revisions are still very much "in process."

Article 1: Will the Town vote the sum of \$259,531.40 to pay General Fund and Road expenses for the ensuing year, and pay outstanding orders or obligations of the Town, with interest, the tax rate on the 2003 Grand List to be determined by the Selectmen, divided as follows:

Roads, including winter work:	\$138,650.00
General Fund Costs:	\$95,981.40
Enhancement Grant and Community House Roof:	\$ 24,900.00
Total:	\$259,531.40

Selectman Bill Ford reviewed the following items:

- The Enhancement Grant's intent is to arrive at a Master Plan for the village center, particularly the area of the Community House, Town Office and Church. It is possible that work on curbing could occur this year. After addressing the village center the plan would be to pursue future grants and/or implement improvements on a piece-by-piece basis within the budget.
- The Community House roof will be replaced with a standing seam metal roof. Color samples are with the Historic District Commission, and ice rails are included in the plans.
- Recent problems with the Community House furnace necessitated several

thousand dollars' worth of cleaning; the claim for this is with our insurance company. As there have been questionable occurrences with the furnace, locks have been changed as a safety measure.

- The State and Forest Service plan to widen the first bridge on the Goshen Road, necessitating a few days' road closure. Notification will be posted in advance.

The following questions from the Meeting were then addressed:

- In response to a question about the necessity of widening the Goshen Road bridge, Mr. Ford explained that it would improve access. The Forest Service is interested in safer access for logging trucks, and there will be no cost to the

Town. Town Clerk Tim Hanson observed there was also scour under the abutment, making the bridge a bit unsafe—the widening project should improve safety.

- The Enhancement Grant's intent was questioned, and whether it would have any effect on property values. Mr. Ford replied that the intent is to leverage funds with Ripton's 20% share of costs in order to enhance aesthetics around the village's three central buildings. He stated that the first step is to enhance access and improve curbing/edging and the safety of playground equipment. As to the bigger picture, there is some community interest in a pedestrian bridge paralleling the Bridge of Flowers (to make it safer to cross). Selectman Laurie Cox mentioned the plan for an island with plantings – in addition to beautification such an island is supposed to have a traffic calming effect.
- It was asked how townspeople could know when there were meetings about the Enhancement Grant. Warren King explained that the Conservation Commission had held three meetings, all of which were posted. Twelve to fourteen people attended. Mr. Ford observed that the Conservation Commission had expressed an interest in moving this project forward and had solicited a lot of community input. Barry

King suggested that anyone with an interest in attending meetings inform her and she would alert them by telephone.

- It was asked if the Community House roof is leaking. Mr. Ford replied that it had not leaked this year but had in the past.
- A townsperson opined that people on the North Branch Road were out of the communications loop and asked if notices could be placed at the East Middlebury post office. Tim Hanson replied that he had tried this a few years ago and been refused permission but he could try again.
- A townsperson returned to the subject of the Community House roof, asking if there had been ice dams and advocating repair to alleviate ice dams rather than replacing the roof. Mr. Ford explained that we have already contracted for the roof replacement, the cost of which was voted last year. There was brief discussion of roofing material types and their longevity.

Article 1 was voted in the affirmative by unanimous voice vote.

Article 2: Will the Town vote the sum of \$17,500 to Ripton Fire and Rescue to help pay Fire Department and First Response expenses for the year?

Erik Eriksen spoke to the article, noting that the budget was an operating budget. He said there were 40 calls in the past year: 24 by First Responders and 16 by the Fire Department.

Mr. Eriksen announced plans for upcoming programs in extinguisher training, voluntary home safety inspections, and cadet training for teenagers.

Mr. Eriksen mentioned the desirability of an auxiliary, as the Fire Department does not have adequate manpower for fund-raising. He also stated that the Lions Club had donated \$450 to provide backboards.

Article 2 was voted in the affirmative on a unanimous voice vote.

Article 3: The Fire Department and First Response Squad continues to try to acquire grant funding for new quarters from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA requires a 25% match from the Town for such a project. Will the Town vote a sum not to exceed \$62,500.00 (25% of \$250,000.00) to affirm its support for the construction of a new Fire Station and First Response quarters? These funds would not be expended unless FEMA funding is actually approved and until the Town has had an opportunity to review plans for the new quarters.

Tim Hanson gave a brief history of the Fire Department's need for a new building. He explained the current building's inadequacies and recalled its flooding during the last culvert failure. He mentioned the FEMA grants of \$98,000 and \$50,000: the \$98,000 was retracted three months ago but now may be reinstated. While the Fire Department does not have concrete plans to present to the Town at this juncture, it needs the Town's support to leverage FEMA money.

Plans are not overly ambitious, envisioning room for four trucks, small quarters and a shower for decontamination. A recent quote for a steel building was \$75,000. Land acquisition, probably from the Ripton School, is anticipated to cost \$35,000-\$50,000. A rough estimate of needed funds is in the area of \$250,000.

Article 3 was voted in the affirmative on a unanimous voice vote.

Article 4: Will the Town authorize the Selectmen to add an additional \$5,000 to the reappraisal fund created in 2001? (Total as of 12/31/02 is \$10,087.21.) As voted last year, if the Listers begin the process of reappraisal, the total of these funds would become available for Listers' use, with the approval of the Selectmen.

Alison Joseph explained that the \$5,000 would continue to build up the reappraisal fund, but that this is probably the last year this item will be needed. A new computer was purchased last year. This year there will

be software purchases and the costs of revising the land schedule.

Article 4 was voted in the affirmative on a unanimous voice vote.

Article 5: Will the Town have current property and personal taxes collected by the Treasurer, with a tax due date of November 3, 2003?

There was no discussion, and Article 5 was voted in the affirmative on a unanimous voice vote.

Article 6: Will the Town vote to authorize the Town Clerk to add names to the Voter Checklist without a meeting of the Board of Civil Authority agreeable to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. 2144b?

Tim Hanson explained the current process. This article would streamline the process by enabling the Town Clerk to add names to the checklist without convening a meeting of the Board of Civil Authority. The process for

removal of voter names would not be changed by this article.

Article 6 was voted in the affirmative by unanimous voice vote.

Article 7: Any other business proper to come before this meeting.

Nola Kevra inquired whether there would ever be another piano in the Community House. Mr. Hanson observed that moving a piano scars the floor badly and that the winter cold precluded keeping a piano tuned. No replacement is planned.

Richard Kimler invited townspeople to attend the community pot luck dinners. He also requested the Selectboard send a note of appreciation to Miriam Nelson to acknowledge her many years as Town Clerk in Norton.

Barry King noted that Freeman Allen will be stepping down as Town Moderator after 24 years of excellent service. Mr. Allen received enthusiastic and prolonged applause.

Sally Buteau expressed concern about excessive speeds at which people drive throughout the Town, especially on Maiden Lane, Natural Turnpike, and Peddler's

Bridge Road. Bill Ford responded that we pay for 32 hours per month for the Sheriff's Department to patrol our roads, in four-hour time blocks. If speeding is noticed at a particular time of day, townspeople could notify the Town Clerk's Office and perhaps a particular patrolling schedule could be arranged. Ms. Buteau said that she has seen cars speed down Peddler's Bridge Road, losing control. Ann Barker cited the North Branch as a problem; Jim Doolan cited Goshen Road. Tim Hanson said that VTRANS has been reluctant to use traffic calming techniques such as speed bumps, but perhaps they would act if pressured by enough citizen interest.

Warren King noted that the warning for Article 3 on page 101 of the Town Report (relative to voting by Australian Ballot on March 4) should read "Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations" (not Tower Regulations).

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING

MARCH 3, 2003

The legal voters of the Town of Ripton met at the Community House in Ripton on Monday, March 3, 2003 at 8:35 p.m. to act upon articles one through four of the 2003 School Warning. There were about 66 people in attendance.

This is a summary of the minutes—a complete version can be reviewed at the Town Office.

ARTICLE 1: To see if the voters of the Town School District will approve the sum of \$689,896 to defray current expenses of the Town School District for the ensuing school year and to pay outstanding orders and obligations.

School Board Chair Carol Ford briefly reviewed the budget. She noted an increase from 60% to 70% time for a PreK-Kindergarten teacher and for a Kindergarten teacher. The goal is to have a full-day Kindergarten, a goal being reached incrementally. Ms. Ford pointed out a significant increase in aide salaries. She explained this was due to elimination of a special education aide and moving this position to one of regular aide status—expenditure being the same but differently categorized. She briefly mentioned expenditures in the categories of salaries/benefits, supplies, and professional services. Ms. Ford then asked for questions from the Meeting.

Ed Sullivan inquired about salary increases. Ms. Ford stated that the increase was about 4%, with new money based on the current year contract. Mr. Sullivan noted an increase of 19% in staff health insurance, and asked what percentage of costs is paid by staff. Ms. Ford replied that staff pay 7% of their health insurance costs, a figure expected to rise to 10% as a result of ongoing negotiations. Mr. Sullivan made the point that the increase in health insurance benefits seems excessive and more than the Town can afford.

Cathy Braun asked if the 7% staff contribution to health care costs is a change from last year. Carol Ford replied that the

figure has been 7% for a number of years and commented that we are now in a group of schools seeking to standardize benefits within the District. Ms. Braun stated that we are all aware of the crisis in health care costs, but that the Town cannot afford the percentage of health costs paid to school staff.

Joyce Dicianna noted a \$4,000 salary increase in 2001-02 as opposed to an \$11,000 increase in 2002-03—she asked why the salaries had jumped in the recent budget. Carol Ford thought it might be due to a change in personnel but did not have figures in front of her and could not be specific. Ms. Dicianna asked if the increase was related to ongoing negotiations and Ms. Ford responded in the negative.

Ms. Dicianna recommended deleting insurers' names from contracts to allow the School to shop around for health insurance providers in an effort to obtain better rates.

Eric Warren asked whether the increased health insurance costs reflect an increase in benefits, or just an increase in cost for the same benefits. Ms. Ford responded that the increase was in cost for the same benefits.

Ms. Ford returned to her review of the budget, noting the summer program at the School. Middlebury College rents the building, and rent money is then used to pay

for summer tutorials. The net expense is zero but the summer program shows as an expense in the budget.

Ms. Ford noted the large increase in Early Essential Education (EEE) costs. This is due to three students being identified for the program next year. Ms. Ford explained that the program provides remedial work for three- to five-year-olds who are 18 months behind in their development.

Ms. Ford noted that reducing one paraprofessional from Special Education to regular education resulted in reducing the Special Education budget. She also noted the items for "shared personnel" in areas such as nursing and media services who are provided through ACSU contracts.

Ms. Ford noted there has been an increase in workers compensation insurance, and in fact in insurance rates across the board. She commented on the efficacy of ACSU assessments, mentioned principal's office expenditures, and noted that we have a full-time custodian.

Ms. Ford noted that we are not eliminating food service, but that the way of accounting for it has changed; it has been netted out. This change in accounting procedure is advantageous to us under Act 60.

In summation, Ms. Ford noted the overall 7.3% school budget increase. She said this was higher than the Board wanted, but given the 3.3% increase last year perhaps the expense balances out.

Ed Sullivan inquired what deductible staff must pay on their health insurance. Ms. Ford replied that she thought there was no deductible. Richard Ruane, who works for the Lincoln School, stated that there are deductibles and some small co-pays.

It was observed that the EEE tuition seems very high and asked if there was another way to meet these needs. David Disque, Board Member, replied that although the Board itself had trouble with the expense, it is federally mandated and they cannot do much about it. Sally Buteau commented on the EEE expense, praising the efficacy of the program. She stated that the program saves money in the long run, preparing children for school who would otherwise not be ready. She feels EEE is an effective means of equalizing opportunity for children from disparate towns.

Ann Barker inquired whether the voters had to vote the whole budget up or down—whether voters could reject one portion of the budget. It was explained that an amendment could be put forward.

It was asked if School staff received dental and life insurance. Ms. Ford responded that paraprofessionals receive health insurance; teachers receive health, dental and life insurance.

Voting was done by paper ballot, and Article 1 passed by a vote of 43 in favor, 19 opposed.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize the Board of Directors to use \$9,995 of the FY 02 Unreserved Fund Balance (estimated at \$20,587) to cover the unpaid balance incurred during the summer 2002 building project renovations.

School Board Member David Disque reviewed building renovations, showing "before and after" pictures of the School as well as pictures taken during the repair work. The photographs showed the

improvements—eave extension, gravity ventilation, insulation repair, and window and siding repair.

The Board took the lowest bid, from E.F. Wall, who worked over the summer of 2002. They performed the work as contracted and did a good job in a timely manner.

Mr. Disque noted that there was leakage around the flashing on a roof vent on March 2nd and that the contractor would be returning during the week to fix the problem.

Mr. Disque pointed out several unexpected benefits of the renovation work. So much siding needed replacement that the building required repainting; 30% of this repainting was paid for by the State. Another benefit is that the newly overhanging eaves have lessened the solar overheating experienced in some classrooms.

Mr. Disque then reviewed the renovation costs. The cost estimate had been \$185,000.

The bid came in at \$117,000. The final cost was \$139,882 (approximately \$121,300 being construction costs and \$18,500 being the costs for the architect, legal fees and the like). The final reconciliation of project costs is as follows:

Final Cost:	\$139,882
Capital Fund:	\$64,385
2001 Unreserved Fund Balance:	\$23,538
State Aid:	<u>\$41,965</u>
Balance Due:	\$9,995

In 2002 the Town had approved borrowing \$90,000 for School renovations. Instead of having to borrow this money, the School Board is asking the Town to approve spending the balance due of \$9,995 from the 2002 Unreserved Fund Balance.

Article 2 passed on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize the Board of Directors to place \$10,592 of the FY 02 Unreserved Fund Balance (estimated at \$20,587) into the Capital Projects Fund.

Carol Ford stated that, having used the Capital Projects Fund to good effect last year, the Board wants to build it up again. These funds cannot be spent without voter approval. Cathy Braun inquired whether the Capital Projects Fund earns interest. Tim

Hanson replied that it does, albeit a very small amount.

Article 3 was voted in the affirmative on a voice vote.

ARTICLE 4: To transact any other business proper to come before said meeting.

Joyce Dicianna raised the issue of the failed vent on the School roof. She asked if the contractor would repair all the vents or just the one that had leaked. Mr. Disque replied that they would meet with the contractor shortly and believes all the vents will be repaired. Ms. Dicianna recommended the Board get a written guarantee to ensure the contractor returns to repair any future failures, if in fact all vents are not replaced or otherwise repaired.

Barry King requested that the Meeting show its appreciation of Freeman Allen's long service as Moderator of the Annual School Meetings, upon which Mr. Allen received prolonged and enthusiastic applause.

Cathy Braun asked the Meeting to express appreciation for David Disque's presentation in 2002 and for his presentation this evening. Mr. Disque received applause.

**WARNING
ANNUAL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING
MARCH 1, 2004**

The legal voters of the Ripton Town School District are hereby warned to meet at the Town Hall in said Ripton on Monday, March 1, 2004, at 7:30 P.M. to transact the following business:

- ARTICLE 1:** To see if the voters of the Town School District will approve the sum of \$703,730 to defray current expenses of the Town School District for the ensuing school year and to pay outstanding orders and obligations.
- ARTICLE 2:** To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize the Board of Directors to use \$2,700 of the FY 03 Unreserved Fund Balance (estimated at \$8,315) to pay for kitchen improvements and maintenance equipment.
- ARTICLE 3:** To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize the Board of Directors to place \$5,615 of the FY 03 Unreserved Fund Balance (estimated at \$8,315) into the Capital Projects Fund.
- ARTICLE 4:** To see if the voters of the Town School District will authorize the Board of Directors to enter into an agreement with the Ripton Volunteer Fire Department and Ripton First Response to lease land for the purpose of building a new fire department and first response facility.
- ARTICLE 5:** To transact any other business proper to come before said meeting.

Upon completion of the transaction of the aforesaid business, or upon adjournment of the aforesaid meeting for any other purpose, said meeting shall be reconvened on Tuesday, March 2, 2004, in the Community House for the following business of the Town School District by Australian Ballot.

Polls will be Open 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

- ARTICLE 5:** To elect a Moderator for the Town School District for a term of one year.
- ARTICLE 6:** To elect one School Director for the Town School District for a term of three years.
- ARTICLE 7:** To elect one School Director for the Town School District for a term of two years.

RIPTON SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Carol Ford, Chair
Nancy Breiden
David Disque
Willem Jewett
Connie Trudeau

WARNING
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MARCH 1, 2004 AT 7:30

The legal voters of the Town of Ripton are warned to meet at the Community House in Ripton on Monday, March 1, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. to transact the following business:

Article 1: Will the Town vote the sum of **\$365,314.64** to pay General Fund and Road expenses for the ensuing year, and pay outstanding orders or obligations of the Town, with interest, the tax rate on the 2004 Grand List to be determined by the Selectmen, divided as follows:

Roads, Including Winter Work	\$146,780.00
General Fund Costs	\$98,841.40
Enhancement Grant and Pedestrian Bridge	\$62,693.24
Peddler's Bridge Grant Project	\$57,000.00
Total	\$365,314.64

Article 2: Will the Town vote the sum of **\$19,000.00** to Ripton Fire and Rescue to help pay Fire Department and First Response expenses for the year?

Article 3: Will the Town authorize the Selectmen to borrow a sum, not to exceed **\$212,500.00**, and for a period not to exceed ten (10) years, for the construction of the new quarters for the Ripton Volunteer Fire and First Response Department? Said funds to be repaid with grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and from Town funds.

Article 4: Will the Town authorize the Selectmen to sell the old Town Office at fair market value? Any funds realized from this sale would be used to perform needed repair and maintenance work on the Ripton Community House and the Town Office.

Article 5: If the answer to the previous article is yes, how does the Town wish to rededicate the plaque that has been on the wall of the building since it was built? (See Selectmen's Report in the Town Report for a discussion of this issue.)

Article 6: Will the Town have current property and personal taxes collected by the Treasurer, with a tax due date of November 8, 2004?

Article 7: Will the Town authorize the Selectmen each year to add to the reappraisal fund an amount equal to the amount paid to the Town for reappraisal and Grand List maintenance by the State? This amount in 2003 was \$3,598.00. This use of these funds is consistent with the intent of the law under which these funds are disbursed to towns.

Article 8: Will the Town authorize the Listers to expend the accumulated Reappraisal Fund for the purpose of a Town-wide reappraisal in 2004, including the additional State funds added to this fund in 2004? (See Listers' Report and Selectmen's report for further information on this issue).

Article 9: Any other business proper to come before this meeting.

The Meeting will recess until 7:00 a.m. Tuesday March 2nd, 2004, to act upon the following articles by Australian Ballot.

Polls in the Community House will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Article 1: To elect the following officers:

Town Moderator for a one year term	Town Clerk for a one year term
Town Treasurer for a one year term	Selectman for a three year term
Collector of Delinquent Taxes for a one year term	Constable for a one year term
Town Agent for a one year term	Town Grand Juror for a one year term
Agent to Convey Real Estate for a one year term	Lister for a three year term

Article 2: To approve or to disapprove the following allocations from the General Fund.
The total amount to be allocated is \$9,073.84

Addison County Community Action Group	\$2,250.00
John W. Graham Emergency Shelter	\$1,400.00
Counseling Service of Addison County	\$800.00
Addison County Parent Child Center	\$600.00
Addison County Home Health and Hospice	\$566.00
Hospice Volunteer Services	\$200.00
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging	\$650.00
Elderly Services	\$200.00
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program	\$325.00
Vermont Adult Learning	\$155.00
Open Door Clinic	\$500.00
WomenSafe	\$450.00
Green Up Vermont	\$50.00
Otter Creek Nat. Resources Conservation District	\$48.84
Middlebury Volunteer Ambulance Association	\$879.00
Total	\$9,073.84

William Ford

Laureen Cox

Ronald Wimett

Selectmen for the Town of Ripton

January 26, 2004

TOWN CALENDAR

MARCH 2004	
1	TOWN MEETING 7:30
2	ELECTIONS
6	Coffee House
6 & 20	Recycling
8 & 22	Selectboard
9	Planning Commission
13	Fire & First Response
15	School Board
20	Community Pot-luck
Lister visits all month. Get your dog licenses.	
APRIL	
1	Dog License Deadline
3	Coffee House
3 & 17	Recycling
5 & 19	School Board
10	Fire & First Response
12 & 26	Selectboard
13	Planning Commission
17	Community Pot-luck
17	Hazardous Waste Collection
EMS Conference. Lister-visits all month.	
MAY	
1	Coffee House
1 & 15	Recycling, 1 st Green Up Day
1 & 2	County Fire Training
3 & 17	School Board
10 & 24	Selectboard
11	Planning Commission
15	Community Pot-luck
Community Garden. Bike-for-Books. Lister visits.	
JUNE	
5 & 19	Recycling
5	Coffee House
7 & 21	School Board
8	Planning Commission
12	Fire & First Response
14 & 28	Selectboard
19	Community Pot-luck
JULY	
3 & 17	Recycling
3	Coffee House
10	Fire & First Response
12 & 26	Selectboard
17	Community Pot-luck
19	School Board
AUGUST	
No Coffee House in August	
2 & 16	School Board
7 & 21	Recycling
9 & 23	Selectboard
10	Planning Commission
14	Fire & First Response
21	Community Pot-luck

SEPTEMBER	
1	First tax payment due
4 & 18	Recycling
4	Coffee House
6 & 20	School Board
11	Fire & First Response
13 & 27	Selectboard
14	Planning Commission
18	Community Pot-luck
OCTOBER	
2 & 16	Recycling
2	Coffee House
4 & 18	School Board
9	Fire & First Response
10	Ridge Run
11 & 25	Selectboard
12	Planning Commission
16	Community Pot-luck
31	Watch for trick-or-treaters
NOVEMBER * Taxes due November 8th*	
1 & 15	School Board
4	*****ELECTION DAY*****
6 & 20	Recycling
6	Coffee House
8	Taxes due
8 & 22	Selectboard
9	Taxes delinquent
9	Planning Commission
13	Fire & First Response
20	Community Pot-luck
Community Thanksgiving Feast	
DECEMBER	
4 & 18	Recycling
4	Coffee House
6 & 20	School Board
11	Fire & First Response
13 & 27	Selectboard
14	Planning Commission
JANUARY 2005	
Ballot petitions due. School budget hearing.	
1 & 15	Recycling
1	Coffee House
3 & 17	School Board - 17 th Budget Hearing
10 & 24	Selectboard
11	Planning Commission
FEBRUARY	
Town Report for 2004 mailed.	
5 & 19	Recycling
5	Coffee House
7 & 21	School Board
8	Planning Commission
14 & 28	Selectboard
12	Fire & First Response

MARCH 2005 - TOWN MEETING

Town of Ripton

Box 10

Ripton, Vermont 05766

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Middlebury College
Permit #43

PRESORTED STANDARD

State Library
109 State Street
Montpelier VT 05602-

Child Care available at the Clerk's Office during Town Meeting
Please Bring this Report to Town Meeting