The Barnard Bulletin

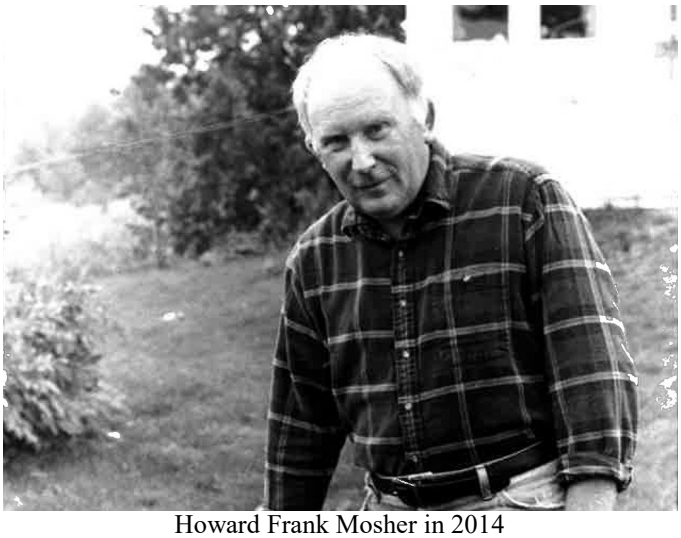
SEPTEMBER 2024 Vol. XXXIX No. 9

A VERMONT WRITER

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

This column is an offering of the Danforth Library in Barnard and a chance to introduce Vermont writers who deserve wider renown.

Howard Frank Mosher **1942 – 2017**



Howard Frank Mosher in 2014

From his earliest youth in upstate New York, in a town called Catskill Mountain, young Howard Mosher made no secret of the fact he wanted to be a writer. Nothing else. He was an avid reader—books were an amusement, an obsession, and a lifeline. Eventually he would be known among his numerous friends (many of them writers like himself) as a word craftsman of great discipline and unswerving ambition. They also appreciated his jaunty love of fly fishing and his passion for the Boston Red Sox.

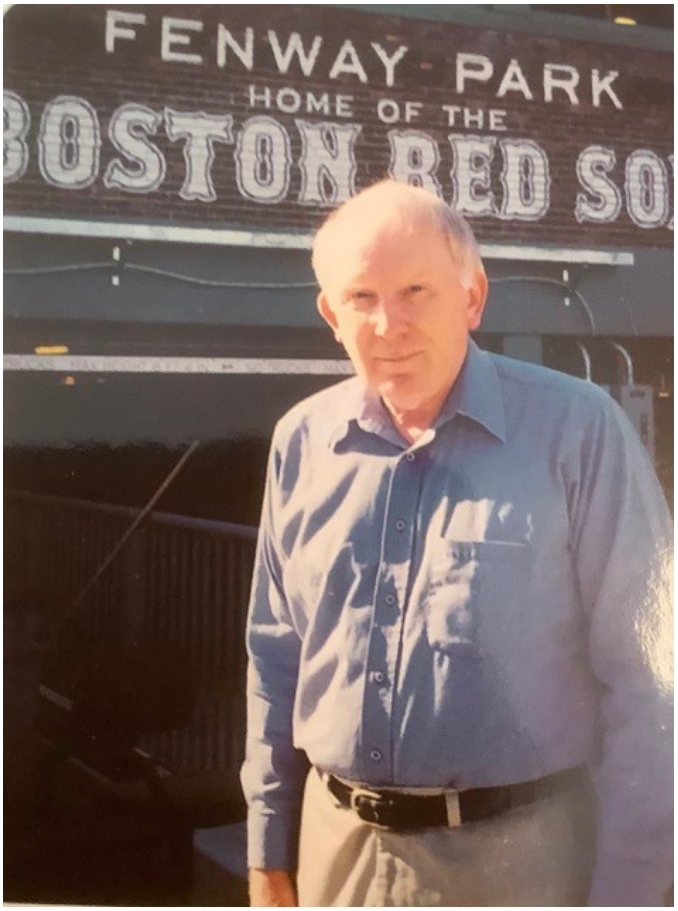
Mosher graduated from the central high school in Cato, New York, and earned his BA in 1964 from Syracuse University. His decision to teach high-school English was no doubt predicated on the hope that free summers would give him blocks of time for his writing.

At the university he met and married a woman named Phillis—also a writer aiming to be a teacher—and in most accounts of Mosher's life, she keeps a very low profile. She was always his mainstay, full of encouragement, who championed his work. But what was her maiden name? And where is she now?

In 1964, fresh out of college, the couple moved to Orleans, Vermont, to take their first teaching jobs. They were not just in love with each other—both fell deeply in love with the wild beauty of the Northeast Kingdom and with its reticent, hardy people. They settled in the small hamlet of Irasburg, where they raised a son and daughter, and they remained there until Howard's death. He died at home of an aggressive cancer at the age of 74, with the manuscript of his final novel completed for his publisher in the nick of time.

In the course of his life, Mosher wrote and published thirteen books: eleven were novels and two were works of non-fiction. Because he wrote episodic narratives that seem close to the folklore of the backwoods, he was sometimes reviewed as "Vermont's Mark Twain." But the more apt comparison would be to William Faulkner, who stuck to his region—in his case Mississippi—and created a whole imaginary South he called Yoknapatawpha County, populating it with characters who make recurrent appearances in his various fictions.

Mosher introduces his readers to an imaginary version of Vermont's actual Northeast Kingdom, a northeastern corner of the state comprising three counties (Essex, Orleans, and Caledonia). The twentieth century brings to Mosher's proud family of Kinnesons, who live in what he calls Kingdom County, a struggle with changing times. Rural Yankee life meeting modern society is a constant theme.



Mosher opens his fifth novel, *Northern Borders* (1994), in this way:

> *When I was a boy living on my grandparents' Kingdom County farm, I sometimes amused myself by looking through an ancient family Bible in the farm-*

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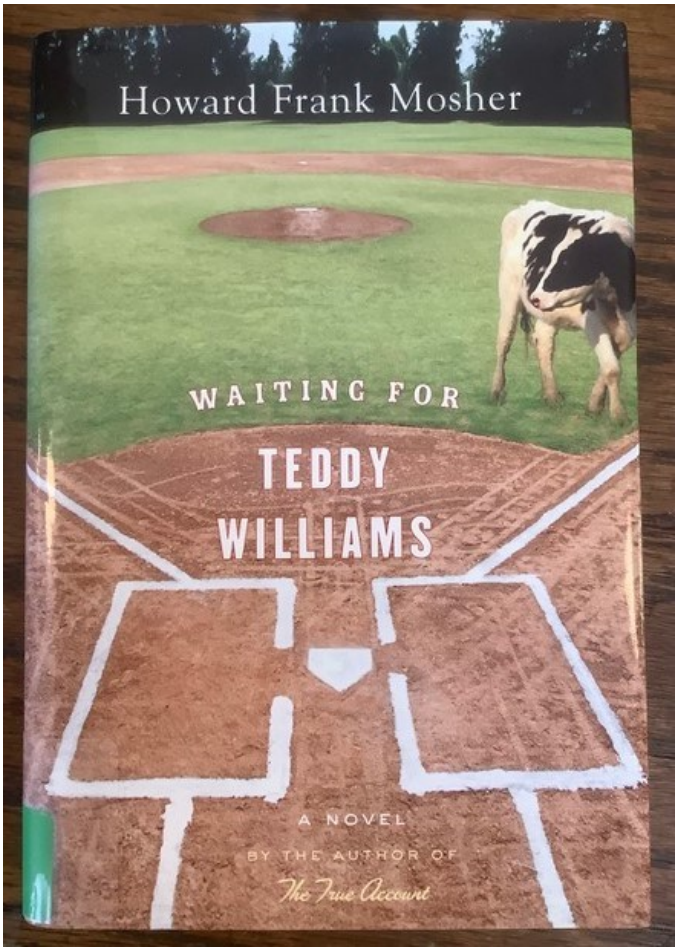
Mosher - Cont. from previous page

> *house attic. This ponderous tome was a gloomy-looking affair…It weighed a good fifteen pounds, and it was bound tightly shut by a tarnished metal clasp which snapped open with the report of a pistol and never failed to startle me, alone in the remote, dim attic of my grandparents' vast old house.*

This sets up a lengthy fiction in which we get to meet and watch the grandmother and grandfather as they negotiate a hardscrabble life. We learn to admire them, even as the narrator does: two flinty, stoic people who can face down anything. The book ends with both of these elders dead and gone, in a flight of description aiming to evoke an emotion quite common to Mosher's work: *nostalgia*. This is the book's final paragraph:

> *They come at night, unbidden, just before I fall asleep and on nights when sleep comes slowly. They are photographs, sepia-tinted. Most are of my grandfather and grandmother, who throughout my boyhood were at the center of everything for me. They remain at the center of my memories today, frozen in those recollections of my youth in Lost Nation, along with all their ancestors and mine… They are a lost nation themselves now, existing in my memory, and on these pages, and nowhere else.*

Mosher is particularly adept at descriptive writing, a talent which can become a flaw in some of his books. His narrative is leisurely, rarely fast-paced. There is sometimes a meandering quality to events and observations.



Even so, the evocation of place and character is impressively vivid. And the writer's voice has a warmth and a genuine tone that sparks loyalty in a reader.

Vermont writer Don Bredes, for a while a neighbor of the Moshers, composed a tribute to Howard's memory that brings the charming man back to life:

> *When I first arrived in Vermont in the fall of 1969, fresh out of college, to teach high school English in Barton (and to write, I promised myself), by chance I moved into a place a mile down the road from Howard and Phyllis Mosher. Five years my senior, Howard himself had been teaching at the same school until that spring, when he left to give himself the time to write. We had plenty in common, and Howard, ever the exuberant conversationalist, was full of stories and advice about the school, its students and faculty, our colorful Northeast Kingdom community, and the difficult craft we intended to pursue. In his dedication and ambition, right from the start Howard proved as inspiring a friend as I've ever had.*

Here is a chronological list of the literary works Howard Mosher produced during his lifetime, with the dates of publication given. *Points North* was published after Howard's death. The double stars (**) indicate the four books that, so far, have been made into films by Jay Craven:

** 1. Disappearances (1977)
** 2. Where the Rivers Flow North (1978)
3. Marie Blythe (1983)
** 4. A Stranger in the Kingdom (1989)
** 5. Northern Borders (1994)
6. North Country (nonfiction, 1997)
7. The Fall of the Year (1999)
8. The True Account (2003)
9. Waiting for Teddy Williams (2004)
10. On Kingdom Mountain (2007)
11. Walking to Gatlinburg (2010)
12. The Great Northern Express (nonfiction, 2012)
13. God's Kingdom (2015)
14. Points North: Stories (2018)

Mosher described his evolution as a writer not only as his finding his "voice," but also as his learning what his true subject matter should be. "I struggled—writing about things I didn't really know enough about—I didn't realize at the time that I was stepping over hundreds of great stories that had never been told, right in my back yard."

There was something of the journalist in Mosher—the careful note-taking and the willingness to venture forth

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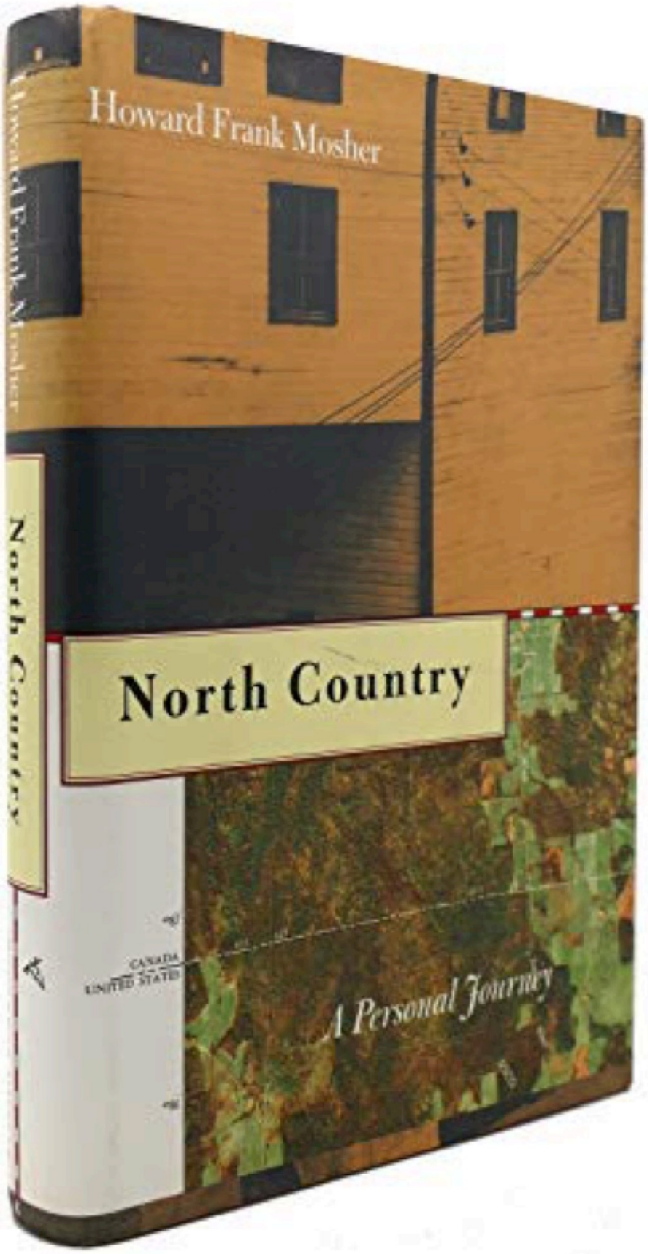
Mosher - Cont. from previous page

into an unscripted adventure. Wikipedia recounts the "unusual journey" that Mosher took in 1993, which was the basis for his book *North Country*, published in 1997.

> *Beginning at Lubec, Maine, [Mosher] drove along the U.S.-Canadian border to the Pacific, resolved to make his trip "one of exuberance and affirmation rather than lament." Unfortunately, most of the places he visited complicated his task, as he found innumerable ghost towns, deserted home sites and abandoned mines. The people he met, however, were a different story. From coast to coast, they agreed that life is hard in the north country but that living there is a pleasure; all were willing to put up with the long, cold winters in exchange for the joys, particularly fishing, that the rest of the year brings. Among those he met were ex-smugglers, a former rodeo rider now an authentic cowboy, an idealistic Native American leader, an overworked veterinarian and two hostile survivalists, all but the last two with entertaining tales to tell.*



What is most refreshing about all of Howard Mosher's work is the evidence it provides of his love of people, the more quirky the better. It was a quality that made him recoil the one time he left his "Kingdom"—in 1970, at age 26—and went out to University of California at Irvine to become a student in its well-respected creative writing program. There he must have met some people who did not cozy up to his Muse, for Mosher and his wife didn't stay long in hipster California. After a few weeks, they departed.

According to their friend Don Bredes: "Howard and Phillis found themselves so appalled by the place that they packed up the old Chevy and headed back to the northern climate and familiar comforts of the Kingdom. Howard then determined to steep himself in the culture and people that were to occupy the heart of his fiction for the rest of his life."

The Charles B. Danforth Library has nine of Howard Frank Mosher's 14 published works. All of them have public circulation. The five books of his that are not in the collection , but are now on order, are: *North Country*, *The True Account*, *On Kingdom Mountain*, *The Great Northern Express*, and *God's Kingdom*.

Mosher was a Guggenheim Fellow in 1979, and the 1981 recipient of the Literature Award bestowed by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. His novel *A Stranger In the Kingdom* won the New England Book Award for Fiction in 1991. In 2006, Mosher received the Vermont Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. In 2011 he was awarded the New England Independent Booksellers Association's President's Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts.

CHARLES B. DANFORTH LIBRARY

Open Hours

3 - 5 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays

4 - 6 p.m., Thursdays

10 a.m. - Noon, Saturdays

More new books are coming soon!

Charles B. Danforth Library,
P.O. Box 204, Barnard, VT 05031

6208 VT Route 12 Phone: 802-234-9408

Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com

Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/charlesdanforthlibrary/

Trustees: Berna Donlon, Margaret Edwards, Judy Maynes, Susan McNulty, and Susan Salter Reynolds

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Upcoming National Holliday
Labor day – September 2, 2024

BARNARD PRIMARY ELECTION BALLOT RESULTS

AUGUST 13, 2024

PROGRESSIVE PARTY

FOR US SENATOR
- BERNIE SANDERS (Write-in) 1

FOR REPRESENTATIVE TO CONGRESS
- MARK COESTER (Write-in) 1

FOR GOVERNOR
- PHIL SCOTT (Write-in) 1
- MARIELLE BLAIS 0

FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
- THOMAS RENNER (Write-in) 1
- ZORAYA HIGHTOWER 0

FOR STATE TREASURER
- MIKE PIECIAK (Write-in) 1
- TIM MACIEL 0

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
(No Votes Cast)

FOR AUDITOR OF ACCOUNTS
- LINDA GRAVELL 0

FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL
- ELIJAH BERGMAN 0

FOR STATE SENATOR
- JUSTIN TUTHILL (Write-in) 1
- MARK NEHMETH (Write-in) 1
- JACK WILLIAMS (Write-in) 1

FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
- HEATHER SURPRENANT (Write-in) 1

FOR HIGH BAILIFF
- JUSTIN LANCASTER (Write-in) 1

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

FOR US SENATOR
- BERNIE SANDERS 86

FOR REPRESENTATIVE TO CONGRESS
- BECCA BALINT 84

FOR GOVERNOR
- ESTHER CHARLESTIN 33
- PETER K. DUVAL 11

FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
- THOMAS RENNER 24
- DAVID ZUCKERMAN 53

FOR STATE TREASURER
- MIKE PIECIAK 76

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
- SARAH COPELAND HANZAS 73

FOR AUDITOR OF ACCOUNTS
- DOUG HOFFER 75

FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL
- CHARITY R. CLARK 75

FOR STATE SENATOR
- ALISON H. CLARKSON 72
- JOE MAJOR 38
- MARC NEMETH 13
- JUSTIN TUTHILL 20
- REBECCA WHITE 67

FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
- HEATHER SURPRENANT 83

FOR HIGH BAILIFF (No Votes Cast)

REPUBLICAN PARTY

FOR US SENATOR
- GERALD MALLOY 21

FOR REPRESENTATIVE TO CONGRESS
- MARK COESTER 21

FOR GOVERNOR
- PHIL SCOTT 26

FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
- JOHN ROGERS 16
- GREGORY M. THAYER 8

FOR STATE TREASURER
- JOSHUA BECHHOEFER 18

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
- H. BROOKE PAIGE 18

FOR AUDITOR OF ACCOUNTS
- H. BROOKE PAIGE 20

FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL
- H. BROOKE PAIGE 18

FOR STATE SENATOR
- ANDREA MURRAY 14
- JONATHAN GLEASON 18
- ROBERT RUHLIN 13
- JACK WILLIAMS 15

FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE (No Votes Cast)

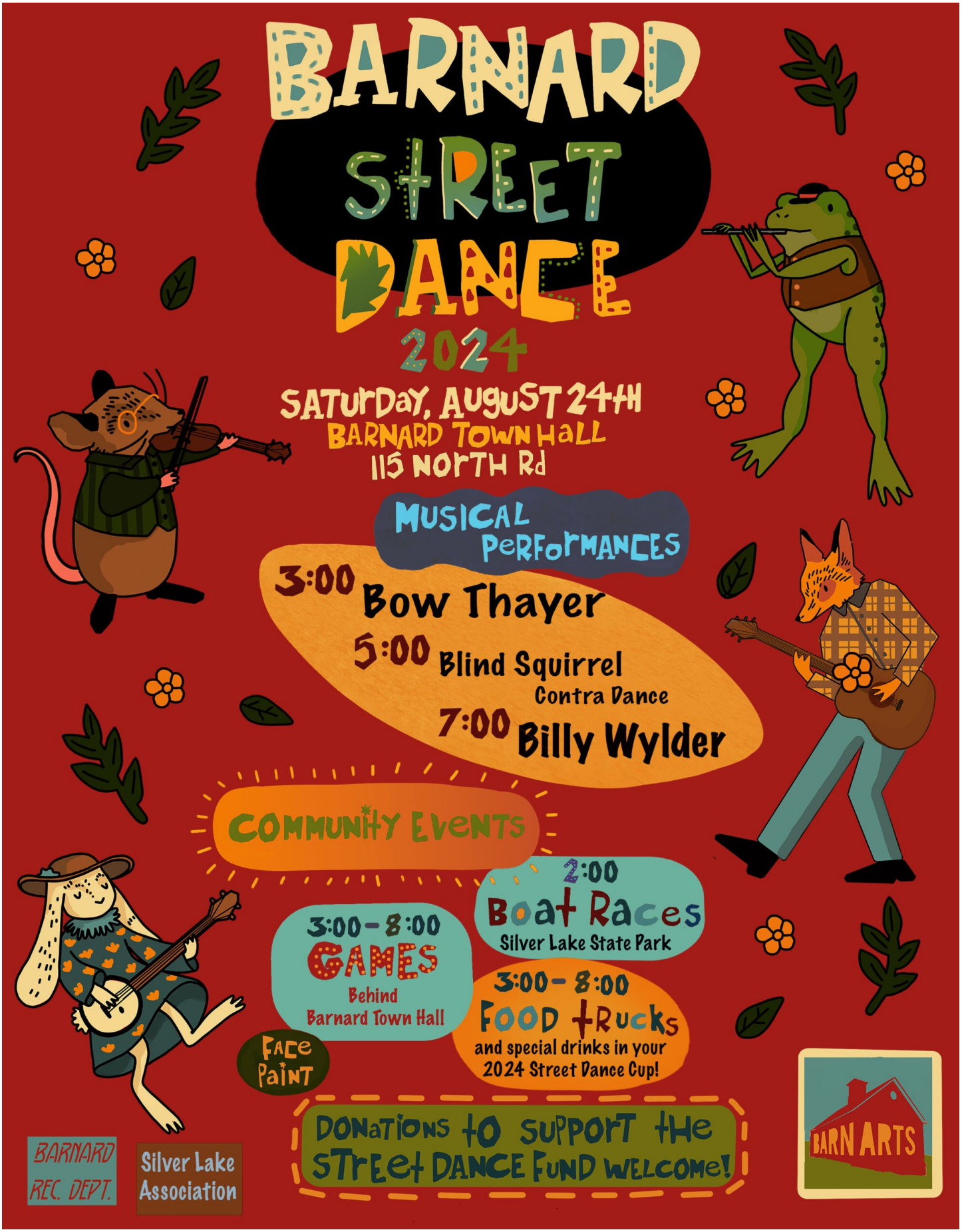
FOR HIGH BAILIFF (No Votes Cast)

Registered Voters in Barnard	703
Absentee Ballots Cast	8
Total Primary Ballots Cast (Including Absentee)	115

The 2024 Presidential (General) election is scheduled for Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

As a citizen of the United States you have the right to vote, a right which many others living on this planet do not have.

As the old saying goes, “Use it or lose it”. Please exercise your right to vote in November, in person at the Town Hall, or by Absentee Ballot.


BARNARD
STREET
DANCE
2024
SATURDAY, AUGUST 24TH
BARNARD TOWN HALL
115 NORTH Rd
MUSICAL PERFORMANCES
3:00 Bow Thayer
5:00 Blind Squirrel
Contra Dance
7:00 Billy Wylder
COMMUNITY EVENTS
2:00
Boat Races
Silver Lake State Park
3:00 - 8:00
GAMES
Behind
Barnard Town Hall
3:00 - 8:00
FOOD TRUCKS
and special drinks in your
2024 Street Dance Cup!
FACE PAINT
DONATIONS TO SUPPORT THE
STREET DANCE FUND WELCOME!
BARNARD
REC. DEPT.
Silver Lake
Association
BARN ARTS

AT ARTISTREE

MUSIC ON THE HILL SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

You are invited to Artistree's Summer Concert Series. Performances of live music every Wednesday at 6:30pm until September 11th, at our hillside venue in South Pomfret.

Upcoming Schedule:

August 21: Grey Cats
August 28: Prickly Heat Tantalizers
September 4: Route 5 Jive Trio
September 11: The Sidewinders

Pack a picnic, bring a blanket, and unwind to the tunes under the open sky. Whether you're a fan of rock, jazz, folk, or classical, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

This years Summer Concert Series is FREE thanks to Haystack Needle

Please note that all events are weather dependent, so check our website for any updates. No reservations are required – just bring your friends and family for a memorable evening. No pets, other than Service dogs, are allowed.

Artistree Community Arts Center & Gallery
2095 Pomfret Road/PO Box 158
South Pomfret, VT 05067
802.457.3500 ext. 129

Support Artistree at https://artistreecommunityartscenter-bloom.kindful.com/ and www.artistreevt.org

The Editor apologizes for not having the correct cryptogram clue letters in last months Bulletin.

BARNARTS 2024 FEAST & FIELD MUSIC SERIES

2024 FEAST & FIELD MUSIC SERIES

Aug 22	Zikina Music Afro-folk
Aug 29	Pointe Noire Cajun Band Cajun
Sept 5	Mames Babegenush Balkan jazz/Nordic folk
Sept 12	Pluto Rising new wave/retro soul
Sept 19	Funky Flats funk/soul
Sept 26	Dance Party DJ

Doors open & food is available at 5:30pm

Music Starts at 6pm music with another set at 7:30p

Feast & Field features locally sourced food and drink from the Feast and Field Farmers and our hosts: Fable Farm, Eastman Farm & Kiss the Cow.

BarnArts Center for the Arts
PO Box 41
Barnard, VT 05031
www.barnarts.org info@barnarts.org
802-234-1645 (BarnArts voicemail)

ZACK'S PLACE 65 GOLF BALL DROP

Happy 65th Birthday to Norm Frates, Jr., Zack's Place Founder and Board President. Help Zack's Place celebrate by buying 65 (or more!) golf balls this weekend.

The Golf Ball Drop will be held on September 12, 2024 at the Woodstock Country Club. Come and see the golf balls drop from a helicopter on to the 8th hole green between 5:30-6PM. Golf Balls are $50 and you can win up to $5000 for closest to the pin.

1st Place wins $5000	2nd Place wins $2000
3rd Place wins $500	4th Place wins $100 There are ten 4th place winners

Use this link to purchase your golf ball
https://zacksplacevt.org/helicopter-golf-ball-drop/

FALL GLAD RAGS SALE & DONATIONS

Our Fall 2024 Sale dates will be Friday Sept. 20 - 2 PM - 6 PM, Saturday Sept. 21 - 9 AM - 2 PM, Sunday Sept. 22 - 10 AM - 1 PM (when everything is half price)

We recommend bringing your own shopping bags.

For more information about the sale, please visit our website at https://www.gladrags.org/

For the latest information join our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/145529065206

The Barnard Bulletin is published around the twentieth of each month. On the web at BarnardBulletin.news. Send mail to PO Box 161, Barnard VT 05031-0161, email Info@BarnardBulletin.Info or call 802-457-1792.

LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word "Church" could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be so throughout the entire message. In this message X = N. The solution is found by trial and error. The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on the last page.

"Q A L I Z E M L X O Z M G P R L E E Z C

Q A L W Z O X G P Q F O X G X I S O Z C X

Q A L Q O L L P G X H K K E L

Z O W A H O M P

C G Q A U O F G Q H O L S L X M G X I

M Z C X."

- W A G E M O L X'P P Z X I

(K H O Q Z U 'P L K Q L D S L O' S R

A L E L X A F X Q V H W B P Z X)

THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the Monday prior to the first Wednesday of every month at 7 PM in the Town Office.

BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the first Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Monday & Wednesdays 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.; Thursdays 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., & Saturdays 10:00 a.m. to Noon. Phone: 802-234-9408. Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com. ECF Wi-Fi.

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, selectboard@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2. By phone at any time, or by appointment. Office hours coming soon

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, zoning@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2. By phone at any time, or by appointment. Office hours coming soon.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday and Tuesday, 8:00am—3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm. https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org

RECYCLING Click here for Hours and Regulations

THE BARNARD INN is running a "Feeding Neighbors & Sustaining Community" campaign. Purchase an e-Gift Card and in turn the chefs will feed neighbors. Whole chicken dinners (serves 4-6) and individual sized meals to help feed Vermonters in need. Thank you and please stay safe. E-Gift Cards are available at www.barnardinn.com.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm via. Zoom. Contact the clerk of the District. secretary@ecfiber.net, for meeting information or visit https://www.ecfiber.net/virtual-meetings/

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? Email: historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com

DELECTABLE MOUNTAIN QUILTERS (DMQ) meet the 1st Tuesday of every month at the Bethel Library from 1-3pm. Contact: Mary Croft 802-763-7074

MT. TOM FARMERS MARKET AT SASKADENA SIX

Mt. Tom Farmers Market will be open every Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm in the Saskadena Six parking lot. Woodstock Resorts has generously donated this great location.

Mt. Tom Farmers Market is an old-fashioned market where vendors sell right out of their trucks and cars. We have been operating since 1982, which makes Mt. Tom Farmers Market the oldest operating open-air market in the area.

Farmers markets are great places to get the freshest local products and support local businesses. Truly local business at its best!

Contact Neil Lamson tel (802) 763-2070 or email foxxfarm22@gmail.com for more information.

Hope to see you at Mt. Tom Farmers Market!

Neil Lamson
Manager, Mt. Tom Farmers Market
foxxfarm22@gmail.com
(802) 763-2070

"A VERMONT QUILT SAMPLER"

The Exhibition will be open until September 2. This exhibition highlights a variety of quilting techniques, styles, and stories celebrating the talent, creativity, and storytelling of quilters in Vermont. Open daily, 10:00AM-5:00PM starting June 29 and is included with admission. https://billingsfarm.org/quilt-exhibition/

Billings Farm and Museum, Woodstock, VT, info@billingsfarm.org

SILVER LAKE SYRUPS IS OPEN

Silver Lake Syrups at 5613 Stage Road is open for the season, and will be serving Maple Creemees!

Also available is fresh Maple Syrup, along with Maple Pecan Pies, Raw Honey, Fresh Eggs, and so much more.

July and August hours are - Friday 3pm-8pm, Saturday, Sunday, 12pm - 8pm.

Cash - Check - Credit Card - Apple Pay.

Sonja & Eric Withington 802-234-1647

CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

"The goldenrod is yellow
The corn is turning brown
The trees in apple orchards
With fruit are bending down."

- Children's song
(part of 'September' by Helen Hunt Jackson)