What Lies Ahead for Health Insurance?

**GROUP SERVICES DAY EXPLORES THE OPTIONS**

If there was anything the keynote speakers at the second annual Group Services Day could agree upon, it was that current health insurance cost trends are unsupportable, and that the future might look a little like the past.

Nationally known speakers John Erb, Senior Manager with Deloitte and Touche, and Bret Connors, Vice-president, Hope Health, told the 41 VLCT trust members in attendance that two key factors are coming together to influence change in the provision of health care to America’s workers: 1) employers’ need to have predictability in the cost of their employees’ health insurance and 2) an interest on the part of both employers and employees in “health care consumerism” as a means to lower costs.

“Health care is the only consumer service in our economy where the consumer doesn’t know the cost,” Erb commented.

He added, with a dry wit that was thoroughly enjoyed by his audience, that the latest trend in health care – consumer driven health care – is now to be taken seriously as it has an official acronym: CDHC. However, his advice to Vermont municipalities was to wait a few years until the large, national employers who have introduced CDHC have a...

(Continued on Page Eight)

### FROM STATE TO CHURCH

**FORMER SHELBURNE TOWN MANAGER’S JOURNEY TO THE MINISTRY**

(Editor’s Note: Former Hardwick and Shelburne Town Manager Larry Wood was ordained last month as a minister in the United Church of Christ. Larry, who now makes his home in Durham, New Hampshire with his wife Dea and children Noah and Brady, also served as a member of the Boards of Directors for VLCT, the VLCT Health Trust and the Vermont Town and City Management Association. We thought it would be interesting to talk to Larry about his decision to leave his last local government position as Durham Town Manager and his new work as Chaplain and Executive Director of the University of New Hampshire United Campus Ministry.)

Q. What prompted you to leave government for the church?
A. It was several things. One was over a period of time I tried to reflect and evaluate what I really wanted to do and what was best for me, and my family. Practically, Dea and I started to have children and we realized that the...

(Continued on Page Ten)

### 2003 – 2004 MUNICIPAL CALENDAR

**DELAYED UNTIL MID-JULY**

The last minute approval of H. 460, the “Implementing the Federal Help Americans Vote Act”, has delayed production of the **VLCT 2003 – 2004 Municipal Calendar** by several weeks. We apologize for the delay, but decided with the Calendar’s sponsor, the Chittenden Bank, that it would be best to incorporate changes due to H. 460 even if it meant the Calendar would be a little late.

The accuracy and breadth of information in the Calendar is very important to VLCT and the Chittenden Bank. With this brief delay, neither will be compromised. We’ll use the time to incorporate the general election housekeeping changes in H. 460 that take effect this year.

You will find on Page Two important dates for the month of July, drawn from the draft Calendar. These dates have not been changed by H. 460. Please look for your Calendar to arrive in the mail toward the end of next month, and thank you for your patience!

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TOWNS SAVE ENERGY AT WASTEWATER FACILITIES

Vermont municipalities are strengthening their bottom lines by making energy-efficient improvements to their wastewater treatment facilities. Throughout the state, town officials are working with Efficiency Vermont - the statewide energy efficiency utility - to identify and to help pay for cost-effective upgrades to lighting, processing operations, transformers, heating, ventilation and cooling systems. As a result, towns are lowering energy bills and maintenance costs, improving plant operational control, and extending equipment life.

In Essex Junction and Stowe, innovative energy efficiency improvements underway at town wastewater treatment plants are establishing these facilities as industry leaders in New England.

This summer, the Village of Essex Junction wastewater treatment facility is installing an on-site power system that will burn methane gas produced by wastewater processing to generate electricity and heat for the facility. The first of its kind in New England, the system is expected to meet 41% of the facility’s annual electricity needs, and to reduce town energy bills by about $29,000 per year. To make the $245,000 project financially feasible, town officials called Efficiency Vermont.

“we didn't quite fit the standards which were designed for energy efficiency measures,” says Jim Jutras, Director of Public Works/WWTF for the Village of Essex Junction. “But there were definite savings to be realized from this project. That's where Efficiency Vermont got into the process. They went to bat for us, working with regulators to determine that this project was indeed a viable process to fund.” Consequently, Efficiency Vermont pledged $40,000 in incentives to the effort, and helped the town identify funding sources for an additional $35,000. The funding will reduce project payback time by more than two years.

“Energy efficiency creates financial capacity within our existing tax and rate structures, says Jutras. “Combine that with the energy savings and some incentives, and it can't help but make sense.”

In Stowe, municipal officials are undertaking a comprehensive upgrade to the Town's wastewater treatment facility. Due to the project's state-of-the-art energy-efficient approaches, the improved facility will reduce town energy bills by an estimated $57,000 per year. About 45% of those savings will come from energy-saving variable frequency drives and ultra violet disinfection system controls that adjust processes to match treatment needs. The energy-efficient showpiece, however, is the Claricone™ phosphorus removal system; cutting-edge technology that is expected to reduce the Town's energy use by nearly 300,000 kWh per year.

“The Claricone has no moving parts, uses no electricity and has reduced maintenance needs,” says Gillian Eaton, Project Manager for the first of its kind in New England, the system is expected to meet 41% of the facility’s annual electricity needs, and to reduce town energy bills by about $29,000 per year. To make the $245,000 project financially feasible, town officials called Efficiency Vermont.

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EMPLOYEES CAN SUE STATES UNDER FEDERAL FMLA

The United States Supreme Court has expanded the right of employees to sue their employers under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA or Act). In a less-than-enthusiastic 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court stepped back from its recent swing toward “states’ rights,” and delivered a blow to states and their respective “public agencies” in the employment arena. *Nevada Department of Human Resources v. Hibbs*, 538 U.S. ___ (2003).

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, whose tenure at the Court has been emphasized by his willingness to expand the legal rights of states and their respective municipalities, stepped back from that jurisprudence to allow an employee who alleges a violation of his rights under the FMLA to sue the State of Nevada for an alleged violation of his rights under the Act. This situation is a departure from the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence for much of the Twentieth Century, during which it has reinforced the Eleventh Amendment’s principle that “The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by Citizens of another State . . .” Essentially, unless Congress “abrogates” (revokes) the general immunity conferred on the States by the Eleventh Amendment, States are immune to lawsuits. The Supreme Court has adamantly endorsed this concept, stating, “We have made clear that the Constitution does not provide for federal jurisdiction over suits against nonconsenting States.” *Nevada Department of Human Resources v. Hibbs*, 538 U.S. ___ (2003).

Congress does have the power, however, to cancel the immunity conferred upon the States, through statutes such as the FMLA. The FMLA, for example, provides that employees may seek damages “against any employer (including a public agency) in any Federal or State court of competent jurisdiction.” 29 U.S.C. § 2617 (a) (2). A “public agency” has been defined to include municipalities, which are “political subdivisions” of a state. Additionally, the Supreme Court has held that the Eleventh Amendment does not apply to municipalities. See *Lincoln County v. Luning*, 133 U.S. 529, 530 (1890). Essentially, municipalities do not enjoy the same constitutional protections from suit that are enjoyed by the States.

The particular question at issue in the *Hibbs* case is whether Congress acted within its constitutional authority when it sought to abrogate the States’ immunity for purposes of a civil action against the States. See *Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama v. Garrett*, 531 U.S. 356 (2001) (Congress did not meet test for adequate findings detailing a pattern of constitutional violations under the Fourteenth Amendment; Americans with Disabilities Act did not confer private right of action on citizens against the States in federal court). *Hibbs* can

(Continued on next page)
LEGAL CORNER -  
(Continued from previous page)

be differentiated, however, from Garrett and other cases because, “according to evidence that was before Congress when it enacted the FMLA, States continue to rely on invalid gender stereotypes in the employment context, specifically in the administration of leave benefits.” Hibbs at *7. Chief Justice

Rehnquist’s argument basically states that, because Congress relied on detailed empirical evidence to correct a trend it considered a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment (which requires equal protection of the laws for all persons), it acted within its constitutional authority in enacting the FMLA. Therefore, because Congress used the proper methodology in abrogating the traditional Eleventh Amendment immunity rights of the States under the FMLA, plaintiffs were accorded the right to sue states in federal court.

Does this case change the playing field for the municipal employer? Probably not. Municipalities have never been accorded immunity from suit in federal court under the Eleventh Amendment like the States have. What makes the Hibbs case important is that it increases the exposure of states to claims for damages under the FMLA. What this case does for municipal employers is to reiterate the fact that they must comply with the family and medical leave provisions of the FMLA, such as granting leave when requested, and returning employees to the same or comparable positions upon return. Hibbs also shows that the federal courts are available forums in which plaintiffs could bring suit against municipalities for alleged violations of the FMLA.

- Brian Monaghan, Staff Attorney, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

FMLA REQUIREMENTS

A BRIEF REFRESHER

It is important to periodically review the main provisions of the FMLA. In general, the FMLA requires that covered employers provide eligible employees the right to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave from work for family or medical reasons. 29 U.S.C. § 2612.

When examining any employment law such as the FMLA, there are a number of threshold questions for employers, particularly municipalities, to ask. Some of these questions include:

1. Whether municipalities are “covered employers,” under the particular law;
2. Whether the employee has a right to the benefits conferred by the relevant law; and
3. Exactly what employee protections does this law provide, i.e., what do we need to do to comply with the law?

For purposes of the FMLA, an “employer” who must comply with the Act includes “public agencies,” such as municipalities. 29 U.S.C. § 2611 (4) (a) (iii), 29 C.F.R. 825.108. Private employers, on the other hand, are only covered if they employ greater than 50 employees. Therefore, the FMLA requires municipalities to provide to their employees, if the employee requests, 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period. 29 U.S.C. § 2612 (1).

Such leave can be taken because of the birth of a child, to care for a child after birth, to adopt a child, to care for a seriously ill family member, or because the employee is seriously ill. Id. In order for an employee to be eligible to receive leave under the FMLA, he or she must have worked for the employer for at least 12 months prior to the commencement of that leave, and have been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during those preceding 12 months. 29 U.S.C. § 2611 (2) (A) (i) (ii). Additionally, when an employee returns from a period of leave, he or she must be restored to the same position held prior to taking leave, or be restored to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, leave, and other benefits. 29 U.S.C. § 2614 (a) (1).

If you have further questions about the FMLA, please give the VLCT Municipal Assistance Center a call at 800/645-7915 or e-mail info@vlct.org.
Questions asked by VLCT members and answered by the League’s legal and research staff

ASK THE LEAGUE

LISTER RECUSAL; HIGHWAY DISCONTINUENCE AND DEEDS

Last month, we discussed the need for a board of civil authority (BCA) member who grieves and then appeals her tax assessment to recuse herself from the BCA for the rest of the tax appeal season.

What about a lister who grieves her taxes to the board of listers, and then to the BCA? Must a lister who grieves her own taxes recuse herself from appearing at grievance hearings on behalf of the board of listers for the rest of that tax year?

No. A lister who has grieved her own taxes must certainly recuse herself from deciding her own grievance (you can’t be a judge in your own case), but does not have to recuse herself from other grievance hearings before the board.

In fact, the appearance of a lister grieving her own taxes could add credibility to the process: in theory, appraisal decisions are agreed upon by the board of listers. Such an agreement must be made by a quorum of that board (See 1 V.S.A. § 172). For a three-member board such as the board of listers, that decision could be made in the form of a 2-1, or 2-0 vote. A lister who disagrees with her tax assessment could then grieve that appraisal figure to the board of listers, presenting evidence as to why she disagrees with the assessed value. Such a procedure would give credence to the doctrine that reasonable people can disagree on matters, and would show the public that the listers can, and do, provide a check and balance on each other’s decisions.

If the board of listers rejects her arguments, the case could be appealed to the BCA, where the appealing lister would appear in her personal capacity, and the remaining two listers would appear to defend their appraisals. VLCT does not see a conflict of interest for a lister to then return to the board of listers to hear other grievances, and to subsequently appear in front of the BCA to justify appraisal decisions. In contrast, the BCA member who grieves and then appeals his own taxes up to the BCA level should then recuse himself, because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to continue to administer the process fairly. Additionally, “listers and agents to prosecute and defend such suits wherein a town is interested shall not be eligible to serve as members of the board while convened to hear and determine such appeals . . .” 32 V.S.A. § 4404 (d). Most legal commentators have construed this statute to apply only to the BCA, and not to the board of listers.

VLCT’s opinion on this issue turns on the fact that the lister acts as a party before the BCA, and not as a tribunal with decision-making authority. That lister who grieved her own taxes should be able to appear at appeals before the BCA to defend decisions of the board of listers, because at that level of the proceedings, she has no authority to decide the outcome of the matter (only to present evidence), thus the specter of a conflict of interest becomes moot.

- Brian Monaghan, Attorney, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

Must a town execute a quitclaim deed when discontinuing a highway, or is the notice of discontinuance sufficient?

Nineteen V.S.A. § 710 states, “If the [selectboard] decide[s] to discontinue a highway, the discontinuance shall be in writing setting forth a completed description of the highway.” There is no requirement in the law that any form of deed be executed and recorded in order to make a highway discontinuance legally effective. Why gum up the works with

(Continued on next page)
OVERWEIGHT VEHICLE PERMIT EXEMPTION SUNSETS

As of July 1, 2003, the “agricultural service vehicle” definition (motor trucks used to transport agricultural inputs or outputs to or from a farm) that was established under subdivision 4(71) of the Acts of the 2001 Adj. Sess. (2002) (Implements of Husbandry) will be automatically repealed because no extension of that legislation was passed this session. In addition, subsection (b) of the same Act, which exempts “agricultural service vehicles” from obtaining local overweight permits if their gross weight does not exceed 60,000 pounds, will also be repealed. Thus, what were considered “agricultural service vehicles” for the past two years will be considered motor trucks or tractor trailers and need overweight permits in order to operate in excess of municipal road and bridge weight limits, 23 V.S.A. § 1400a.

Despite the fact that VLCT, the Department of Agriculture, the House Agricultural Committee, and the Vermont Bus and Truck Association agreed on a compromise that would have extended the permit exemption for agricultural service vehicles, in the waning days of the Legislative session, the bill to which the compromise was attached could not find its way out of a Senate committee.

Under the compromise, the permit exemption would have been extended indefinitely and municipalities would have had the explicit statutory authority to seek compensation for damage caused to roads and bridges by agricultural service vehicles operating under the permit exemption. Currently, since 23 V.S.A. §1400a(c) only explicitly allows municipalities to seek compensation when a local overweight permit has been issued, VLCT sought to make sure the law clearly allowed municipalities to seek compensation for damage that was caused by a vehicle operating under a permit exemption.

The second part of the compromise would have held municipalities harmless for injuries or damages to agricultural service vehicles and their operators that resulted from their attempt to cross a bridge with up to 60,000 pounds. This is because most municipal bridges have a weight limit of 24,000 lbs. and more than half of the total bridges that municipalities are responsible for maintaining are in an unknown condition. Since a permit exemption takes away a municipality’s ability to direct the travel of overweight vehicles, all the parties involved agreed that a “cross at your own risk” approach was appropriate.

Nevertheless, since the overweight permit exemption for agricultural service vehicles will expire, municipalities will once again be able address the safety concerns of overweight vehicles crossing bridges, by limiting where overweight vehicles can travel through issuance of permits. Even so, it is expected that the permit exemption issue will be discussed during the next legislative session. VLCT will keep you informed and seek your comments on the permit exemption process. If you have comments or questions, please contact Todd Odit, Associate for Legislative and Membership Services, at 800/649-7915 or todit@vlct.org.

- Todd Odit, Associate, VLCT Legislative and Membership Services

ASK THE LEAGUE -
(Continued from previous page)
something that the law doesn’t require? Simply execute the notice of discontinuance and make sure it is properly recorded wherever your town records its highway records, and is properly indexed.

- Brian Monaghan, Attorney, VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

Congratulations to Dick Thompson, Swanton Town Administrator, who knew that Senator Ralph E. Flanders was raised in Springfield, Vermont (though born in Barnet) and introduced the resolution to censure colleague Senator Joseph McCarthy in 1954. Special mention to Lee Krohn, Interim Manchester Manager, who reminded us that our percentage of surface water last month was a relative proportion, not a straight percentage. We apologize for the confusing wording. Here is June’s query:

This town where a railroad once passed through had 400 residents in 1890 and only 86 in 2000. It has the distinction of being one of the two Vermont towns with the smallest populations in the 2000 census. Which town is it?

Contact us with your answer: VLCT, 89 Main Street, Ste. 4, Montpelier, VT 05602; 800/649-7915; fax, 802/229-2211, e-mail, kroe@vlct.org.
chance to work the bugs out of it. “Give it a year or two,” he said, adding, “Let them make all the mistakes and then capitalize on it.”

Erb’s advice takes into account the fact that CDHC is evolving rapidly. In fact, it is still difficult to define. It appears to combine elements of the “old fashioned” indemnity plans (high deductibles) with newer concepts such as wellness benefits. The idea is to ask health consumers to make cost-effective decisions about utilizing health care, but not to skimp on preventative care (that may initially save them out-of-pocket money, but result in larger claims later on.) Concerns about CDHC center around whether it really encourages employee attention to costs, the complexity of the plan designs, and whether it will reward the healthy at the expense of the sick.

Erb also briefly discussed a new IRS regulation that allows employers to fund Health Reimbursement Accounts, which could be used by employees to pay for higher deductibles or uncovered medical expenses. The accounts are another way to allow employees to manage their own health care dollars, with some savings expected as a result.

The bottom line, Erb concluded, is that until a new health care paradigm comes along, most employers are doing a little bit of everything: disease management (with incentives); wellness programs; and plan design changes. “Don’t put all of your eggs in one basket,” he advised.

Though the dominant theme for the day definitely was health care, Group Services Day also offered a strong program of other workshops. Jon Jay Associates walked Unemployment Trust members through the unemployment claims process, an eye opener for many, and Dave Sichel, VLCT Director of Group Services, presented an amusing demonstration of the underwriting process (complete with toy fire engines!). In the afternoon, Invest EAP’s Karre Paterson led an interactive workshop on managing and resolving conflict and VLCT staff Patrick Williams, Brian FitzPatrick and Darlene Bresett offered a workshop on claims issues.

Finally, the Stoweflake Resort in Stowe provided a beautiful setting and a great lunch. - Katherine Roe, VLCT Communications Coordinator
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Money a problem? Not enough to go around … living paycheck to paycheck … credit card debt piling up … wondering about financing a house, college or retirement?
EAP can help! Call 800/287-2173 for assistance.
(Co-sponsored by the VLCT Health and PACIF Trusts for their member municipalities. Employees and their household members are eligible to use the EAP for free.)

VLCT HEALTH TRUST ANNUAL MEETING
Friday, November 14, 2003
Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier

Be Sun Wise
Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, with more than a million cases reported annually. It’s also the most preventable form of cancer. Be sun wise this summer and follow these steps from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

- **Limit time in the midday sun.** The sun’s rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Whenever possible, limit exposure during these hours.
- **Seek shade.** Remember the shadow rule: Watch your shadow. No shadow, seek shade!
- **Use sunscreen.** Apply sunscreen (at least SPF 30) liberally on exposed skin and reapply every two hours when working or playing outdoors. Most sunscreens have a “shelf life” - make sure yours is fresh.
- **Wear a hat and cover up.** A hat with a wide brim offers good sun protection to your eyes, ears, face, and the back of your neck - areas particularly prone to overexposure to the sun. Also wear tightly woven, loose-fitting, and full-length clothing.
- **Wear sunglasses.** Sunglasses that provide 99 percent to 100 percent UVA and UVB protection will greatly reduce sun exposure that can lead to cataracts and other eye damage. Check the label when buying sunglasses.
- **Watch for the UV Index.** The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent overexposure to the sun. Developed by the National Weather Service and EPA, the UV Index is issued daily in selected cities across the United States.

For more information about VLCT’s Health and Safety Promotion Programs, call 800/649-7915.

Stevens Advanced Driver Training
Monday, August 11 – Friday, August 15, 2003 (pick one day), Hartness Airport, Springfield. Sponsored by VLCT PACIF for its municipal members, this free, daylong program emphasizes “hands-on” training for better driving. For more information, or to register, please contact Maureen Turbitt, Administrative Assistant, Risk Management, at 800/649-7915 or mturbitt@vlct.org. Please note that the registration deadline is Wednesday, July 23, 2003.
LARRY WOOD -
(Continued from Page One)

demands of town managing and municipal management work were hard, at least the way I did it. The other piece was that after 20 years of local government work I really felt that I was reaching a point where I wasn’t as fresh in it as I wanted to be, and it didn’t seem that it was just a temporary lull. I was trying to visualize ten years out and I realized I didn’t want to be ten years down the road thinking about doing something different.

Q. Did you know your next step?
A. Yes. I’ve always been a spiritual person even though many people wouldn’t characterize me in that way (laughing). It has always been a part of my life, even though it’s not necessarily been an orthodox spirituality. Dea’s father died, my mom died and my brother died, all of cancer, in a relatively short time frame. My experiences during that time, as sad as they were, led me to look at life differently and more deeply. I started to think about the ministry as a way of doing some of the things I really liked about town managing and some of the things I do better. I looked into seminary school for probably a year and a half and then we just thought it was time to make the jump.

I took a class while I was still town manager, and then in 1996 I left and did school part-time. It took me five years, which is longer than I thought it would take, but throughout that time I did some consulting work, some with VLCT and some with a company here in New Hampshire. I also worked at a church half-time and at the Campus Ministry part-time as Associate Chaplain, so I was doing all those things at the same time. It was hard – hard economically and hard being a student because you always have something to do. And it is so intensive intellectually and emotionally. Many of us would say that if we had known what was involved we may not have done it. Of course it is like that with everything, and now we say it was well worth it.

Q. In what ways are government and the ministry similar?
A. The piece about being a part of a community and building a community is similar. A religious community, whether it is the church or our organization here, does a lot for both Durham and the larger community. You’re also dealing with people and that’s really what I love.

I think that to some extent, local government, when it’s done well, deals with people. I wouldn’t use the word ministry, but it deals with people in ways that maybe no other sector does. There was a green party candidate who was running for governor in Massachusetts recently, and she had one of the most profound quotes I’ve seen in my career. At a debate she was asked what she would look like as leader and she said she wouldn’t run government like a business, she would run it like a democracy.

That grassroots piece is what I always loved, and in the particular denomination I’m in, which comes out of the Congregational tradition of New England, it is still very much grass roots. The New England town meeting and the church Congregational meeting are pretty much the same thing. Part of it is that the ministry and the church are a democracy when run best, at least in my tradition where we don’t have bishops and hierarchies, and there is that sense that every person matters. Whether a person gives five dollars a year, five hundred, or five thousand, in theory, they all matter. And I think that in the church and in the best of communities we all matter. You’re fixing someone’s mailbox or the sidewalk in front of their house because that is what you are supposed to do, not because of who they are. This is probably a similarity too. I see ministers go through difficult times at a church. When I went into the seminary, and into the ministry, I had no interest in working in a parish, in the church itself. I thought about
(Continued on Page Twelve)
Much of the information VLCT disseminates to our members is also located on the VLCT web site. Our Bookstore, Calendar of workshops and meetings (including those of other organizations), the VLCT News and Weekly Legislative Report, Index to Municipal Statutes, Municipal Calendar, Classified Advertisements, group purchasing opportunities, staff and board lists, bylaws, Municipal Policy and Annual Legislative Wrap-up, and more, are there if you need them, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are also resources that VLCT doesn’t normally disseminate, such as a directory of municipal e-mail addresses and web sites, and a list of useful web site links.

On the site, you can use a topical index to the VLCT News to look up an old newsletter article (you’ll find the articles on-line back to 1/01; contact us for older material), register for VLCT workshops, fill out and download a Bookstore order form and submit your municipality’s Help Wanted or For Sale classified ad.

The League is currently working on a complete overhaul of the Group Services section of the web site, with additional enhancements to the rest of the site planned to follow. Please let us know what you would like to see on the site. Our utmost goal is that you find it useful to your work as a municipal official or employee. A secondary goal is that it is a source of information for the general public about how local government in Vermont works, and how one can participate.

Please send your comments to Katherine Roe, VLCT Communications Coordinator at kroe@vlct.org.

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**Been There – Done That**

A friend and neighbor to many, Bill Cavanaugh has a reputation for finding the best possible mortgage program for his customers.

Bill is familiar with the local market and has worked with the real estate agents you do business with. Equally important, he brings enthusiasm and dedication to each of his customers.

Northeast Home Loan is proud to have Bill on our mortgage team working with customers. Keep your relationships local and make Northeast Home Loan and Green Mountain Credit Union your mortgage-lending partners.

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**Making technology work for Vermont’s municipalities and their citizens**
LARRY WOOD -
(Continued from Page Ten)

hospice or a hospital ministry and then the Campus Ministry came about. But my four years at the Rochester Church taught me otherwise. It was a wonderful place. But I used to look at a minister at a parish and think that that’s just like a town manager. Because people can be just as critical and hard on you but it is even harder because they are supposed to be more loving. People don’t have to love you in local government!

Q. What about the dissimilarities?
A. A lot less people care, or even know, what you are doing. [Here,] it is only when something controversial comes up and we push the wrong, or the right, button, that someone notices us and says, oh, those nuisances. So, there are not a lot of people looking at you all the time.

Fewer and fewer Americans go to church, or temple, or synagogue, and I think there is a fear, or reality, that you are just, frankly, irrelevant to much of modern society. Whereas, people might forget about local government, they do interact with it every day whether they know it or not. People see it as more central. Many people don’t see spiritual or religious organizations as central.

Another difference between the two is in terms of change and innovation. I used to think the public sector was behind the private sector in innovation, followed by the nonprofits. Well, the churches are at the bottom of that ladder! Lots of churches are just getting a computer, much less e-mail, voice mail, etc. Innovation, or even the willingness to entertain innovation, is sometimes just not there.

The other thing for me, and my organization, is that we have a staff of one and a half. I don’t have a staff of even 25 any more, never mind the 110 we had in Durham. I’m always thinking that we’ve got to do this or that, and then I realize that sometimes, well, I’m talking to myself (laughing). I can’t get it all done, even with a volunteer. So I think that even with the smallest local governments there are a lot more resources and support than there are in most religious organizations.

Q. What did you bring to the ministry from your government service?
A. My administrative skills have really been helpful. Many ministers just don’t have them. At the Rochester church sometimes we’d be in a jam and I’d suggest something, and they would say, wow. So, my administrative and big picture skills are really useful. Also, my sense of public service, ability to see a project through, develop budgets and work plans, and perseverance.

Q. What do you miss most about local government?
A. I miss the fine people that I worked with and the folks in the community that I connected with. I also miss the collegiality between municipal managers. Municipal management is honorable and good work, and I am fortunate to have been able to do it for so long.

I miss seeing projects and initiatives through from beginning to end. I also miss being part of a management team, and having good people around me with complimentary and supporting skills that could cover all of my shortcomings and mistakes! It is just me and a part-time administrative director here. When I drop the ball now, it usually stays on the ground for a long time.

Q. What is the mission of the United Campus Ministry?
A. Our ministry is 60 years old. It comes out of a Christian Protestant tradition and there are five denominations which have supported us. It always has had, and certainly in the last 20 years this has evolved, a mission to be an open and inclusive community for all people. To be a place for students and others to find safe haven to explore theologically and spiritually who they are without fear of condemnation or of having doctrine or dogma jammed down their throat. We are a place they can get access to services, religious and other kinds of services, again without fear. We try to be a bridge between the traditions that exist here, on the campus and in the broader community, and to lift up that united ecumenical and interfait voice that exists and to do it from a Christian place. I am also a chaplain here at UNH and so we are committed to minister to the whole community in times of crisis and celebration. It is work I love.

Q. Given that they have some overlapping goals, should government and organized religion work together?
A. The whole faith-based initiative – I’ve never actually been a proponent of that. I worry about it. Religious organizations like Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and the Salvation Army have been doing their work for years and they don’t necessarily need the kind of faith-based help that President Bush talks about. It worries me because I believe what is driving it is that the religious right is trying to access funds and resources that haven’t previously been available to them. Most people from the interfaith and ecumenical community aren’t advocates of the faith-based initiative and a close relationship between government and organized religion.

Part of it is that the religious community has always recognized that one of our strongest voices is that we can be prophetic, and almost counter cultural. Much of what we say is counter cultural – it has nothing to do with the way America lives. So, if you are part and parcel with the government, the corporate sector – whoever – and you start challenging them, it is much harder to do. Now the other side is that you are a voice in the wilderness and everyone ignores you. This happened with the invasion of Iraq. President Bush ignored the religious voice, which was almost in consensus against the war, except for, again, the religious right. That is a challenge – to know how to be spiritual and prophetic when, on the one hand, someone wants to co-opt you and, on the other, wants you to go away.

Q. Without formal ties, can churches and government work together?
A. One thing I love about my job here, and I don’t think I am atypical for campus ministers, is that I spend a lot of time walking around. Most of the work I do is out on campus and downtown – I just stopped by town hall today. I’ve started to call it making rounds. I realize that being a chaplain, you can be a chaplain to the community. People ask you something and you may not know the answer but you can make the connection. [In this way] I think that I am an aid to people in government and the nonprofit sector. The church can be a facilita-

Contact: James Bouchard Chief Engineer
www.hltturner.com
800-305-2289

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY -
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Efficiency Vermont, which contributed $54,000 to the cost of Stowe’s upgrade. “The design of the structure creates the flow, instead of mechanical parts, and that results in great energy savings. We were very pleased to be able to support this project. Stowe is creating a great facility that will reduce town energy costs for years.”

Recommended by the engineering firm of Dufresne-Henry, the Claricone™ interested plant officials “because it’s non-mechanical,” according to Greg Lewis, Chief Operator of the Stowe wastewater treatment facility. “We could have done it with conventional clarifiers, but the electrical savings and the differential in price made it a good way to go for us.”

Efficiency Vermont encourages municipal officials and wastewater plant operators to speak with an engineer, building design professional or equipment vendor about incorporating energy efficiency into facility upgrades and new construction projects. For more information, visit www.efficiencyvermont.com, or call, toll-free, 888/921-5990.

-Amy Rubin, Efficiency Vermont

CONGRATULATIONS

The Green Mountain Water Environment Association recently presented its annual awards to water and wastewater professionals and facilities. Congratulations to all the recipients!

Andrew D. Fish Laboratory Excellence Award
Harry Locker, Endyne, Inc.

Water Facility Excellence Award
St. Albans City

Wastewater Facility Excellence Award
Orleans Village Water & Wastewater Dept.

Water Operator Excellence Award
Mark Hamel, Champlain Water District

GMWEA Corporate Sponsor Award
Efficiency Vermont

GMWEA Elizabeth A. Walker Meritorious Service Award
Ruth Taylor, VT Water Supply Dis.

GMWEA President’s Award
Carl Crawford, Otter Creek Engineering
The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) is pleased to announce the release of the Vermont Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Planning and Design Manual. The Manual contains planning and design guidance specific to sidewalks, bicycle lanes, shared bikeways, shared-use paths (formerly bike paths), rail trails, rails-with-trails and traffic calming. It provides detailed guidance on many aspects of walking and bicycling including techniques for meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Manual was developed over the past four years with the assistance of the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, a project steering committee and extensive public involvement.

The Manual is a comprehensive hands-on guide for development of bicycling and walking facilities specific to Vermont. It is intended to be used not only by VTrans, but also by a broader audience of municipalities, consultants and others working on all bicycle and pedestrian improvements in Vermont. This has required a careful balance of technical and general information, limiting engineering jargon and incorporating a generous amount of photographs and illustrations. The design guidance is flexible enough to adapt to the unique characteristics of Vermont, while providing safe facilities and complying with applicable state and national design guidance.

The Manual is available in both hard copy and electronic formats. In the coming year VTrans will be hosting a series of statewide outreach workshops to promote its use. For a copy of the Manual or information about the outreach workshops, please contact Amy Bell at 802/828-5799, amy.bell@state.vt.us or Jon Kaplan 802/828-0059, jon.kaplan@state.vt.us or in writing at VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, 1 National Life Drive, Drawer 33, Montpelier, VT 05633-5001. The Manual is also available on the web at http://www.aot.state.vt.us/.

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**NEW PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PLANNING AND DESIGN MANUAL AVAILABLE**

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**LGEAN LAUNCHES ONLINE LAND USE TOOL**

In partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Region 5) and Purdue University, the Local Government Environmental Assistance Network (LGEAN) recently launched an online tool to help local government planners measure the water quality impacts of land use changes. Specifically, local governments provide information about their location, the proposed land use change and the area’s soil type. Based on community-specific climate data, the Long-Term Hydrologic Impact Assessment (L-THIA) model estimates changes in recharge, runoff, and nonpoint source pollution resulting from proposed development.

As a quick and easy-to-use approach, L-THIA’s results can be used to generate community awareness of potential long-term problems and to support planning aimed at minimizing disturbance of critical areas. L-THIA is also an ideal tool to identify the best location of a particular land use so as to have minimum impact on a community’s natural environment.

L-THIA is available for free on the LGEAN Web site, and users only need an Internet browser to use the tool. A downloadable GIS extension is also available for local government officials with ArcView software. To use L-THIA, visit LGEAN’s Tools and Resources page at http://www.lgean.org/html/exchange.cfm and select the “Land Use Impacts on Water Quality Model.”
FOR SALE

Street Sweeper. Sweepster Street Sweeper, Model HBA84C, approx. nine years old, front end loader mounted. For more information, contact the Town of Brighton, P.O. Box 377, Island Pond, VT 05846; tel. 802/723-4753; fax, 802/723-4405; e-mail, joelcope@sover.net.

Generator. Used, three-phase, 30kw generator for sale. Take a look and make an offer. Send offers to: Town of Dummerston, 1523 Middle Road, E. Dummerston, VT 05346. Call Wayne Emery, Road Foreman, at 802/254-2411 for information. All offers are to be received by 7:30 p.m. on June 25, 2003.

HELP WANTED

Chief of Police. The Town of Rindge, New Hampshire, pop. 5,358, seeks a people-oriented leader to head their Police Dept. Qualifications include: min. 10 yrs. police exp., with 5 yrs. at a supervisor or mgt. level; certified or certifiable as a NH full time police officer; must pass state physical exam and physical agility test and criminal record check; excellent personal and communication skills. Salary commensurate with experience, $43,855-$57,012. Submit resume and 3 references by noon on July 18, 2003 to Edgar Gadbois, Town Administrator, Town of Rindge, P.O. Box 163, Rindge, NH 03461. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Zoning Administrator. The Town of Berlin, Vermont is accepting applications for the position of Town Zoning Administrator. Persons interested in the position may submit a resume to the attention of: Town Administrator, Municipal Office Building, 108 Shed Road, Berlin, Vermont 05602. Résumés will be accepted until the position is filled. Persons interested in the position must have knowledge and experience in municipal zoning and planning. Office hours are flexible while attendance at certain evening meetings are required. Salary for the part-time position is commensurate with education and experience. The Zoning Administrator shall be appointed by the Select Board, following consultation with the Town Planning Commission. Information may be obtained by contacting the Town Administrator’s Office at 802/223-4405.

Bus Cleaner. The Chittenden County Transportation Authority seeks a hard working, detail-oriented cleaner for a full time, second shift position. $9.25 to start, excellent benefits. Must pass physical and drug screen and have a valid Vermont driver’s license. EOE. Apply in person at 15 Industrial Parkway, Burlington, Vermont from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri. or call 802/864-CCTA for an application.
Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions Annual Summer Outing. Saturday, July 12, 2003, VINS North Branch Nature Center, Montpelier. A joint outing with the Montpelier Conservation Commission, this day features tours of the Commission's projects: North Branch Park, North Branch and Winooski Rivers and Berlin Pond watershed protection. For more information, please contact Virginia Rasch, AVCC, at 802/223-5527 or ilovermont@aol.com.

New England Animal Control Academy. Monday, July 21 – Friday, July 25, 2003, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire. Designed for New England’s animal care and control professionals, this four and a half day conference includes workshops on West Nile virus, disaster planning and security issues for animal care facilities, safely handling dogs and first aid for animals. For more information, contact the UNH Conference Office, tel. 603/862-1900.

Association of Public Treasurers Annual Conference. Sunday, August 10 – Wednesday, August 13, 2003, Washington, DC. For more information or to register, call 202/737-0660 or visit www.aptusc.org.

Stevens Advanced Driver Training. Monday, August 11 – Friday, August 15, 2003 (pick one day), Hartness Airport, Springfield. Sponsored by VLCT PACIF for its municipal members, this free, daylong program emphasizes “hands-on” training for better driving. For more information, or to register, please contact Maureen Turbitt, Administrative Assistant, Risk Management, at 800/649-7915 or mturbitt@vlct.org. Please note that the registration deadline is Wednesday, July 23, 2003.