

## We Might Really Do It, Cardinal Hickory Creek Is In Big Trouble

by Michael McDermott

When the Cardinal Hickory Creek high voltage line was proposed by ATC and its partners 3 years ago, the chance of beating it seemed incredibly small. CHC was the final piece of a long-term plan which included 8 new high voltage transmission lines in the area.

It's a surprisingly different world now, and the Town of Vermont and its citizens have played an important and continuing part. In July, there were public hearings in Madison and Dodgeville during which Vermont citizens testified. At one of the events in Madison, people announced where they were from and more than any place else important presentations were begun by, "I'm from the Town of Vermont." We should all be proud and thankful to our fellow citizens.

News outlets from throughout the region have been loaded with features, editorials and letters to the editor questioning and opposing the line. Most recently, the Attorneys General of Illinois and Michigan both filed briefs opposing the CHC line because as the expense is shared with other Midwest states, they did not think their citizens should pay for an unneeded line. The Public Service Commissioners accepted the briefs with a 2 to 1 vote. One commissioner said it was crucial to hear from elected officials.

There are now 7 state legislators from both parties who have questioned the need and cost of the line or downright opposed it. Both Tammy Baldwin and our neighbor Mark Pocan have written in opposition. Over 30 municipalities, including Dane and Iowa Counties have opposed the line. Just last week, the Town of Vermont joined with the other members of the Intermunicipal Energy Planning Committee signing off on a letter to Gov. Evers asking him to make his voice heard in supporting another way forward, called BWARA, that has been suggested after analysis by the PSC staff.

BWARA stand for Base With Asset Renewal Alternative and is in fact a variant of the Low Voltage option. Basically, it calls for maintaining and strengthening the lower voltage transmission lines and system that already exists and not building the CHC line at all. This might cost 90 million dollars instead of the 500+ millions that CHC would cost. While this option both reduces cost and spares us the ugly destructive nature of the CHC line, arguably more importantly, this option paves the way for developing our generation and distribution of electricity in a more modern way that is less harmful to the environment. These non-transmission alternatives include generation of local electricity with battery storage that can replace the coal and petroleum-based generation. It also includes more efficiency (building codes, better light bulbs and appliances) and using electricity better in off peak hours. Not having CHC

*(continued on page 2)*

## Road Update Haikus

By: Karen Carlock

Old Indian Trail  
Resurfacing completed  
Chip sealing, then done

County Road JJ  
Complete - resurfaced and lined  
Smooth for all travel

County Road FF  
Also resurfaced with lines  
Nice for Vermonters



**TOWN OF VERMONT**  
**PICNIC**

Sunday  
**September 8**  
1-4 pm  
@TYROLBASIN  
3487 Bohn Road, Mt Horeb Wisconsin

SNACKS & FUN  
REFRESHMENTS  
KID'S GAMES  
bring a dessert to share!

# VERMONT'S VOICE

## *ATC Cardinal Hickory Creek Project Update, continued from page 1*

frees us from what would have been new coal and natural gas generation from out of state sources. Solar generation is growing very fast in Wisconsin and pursuing non-transmission alternatives will help in promoting this growth.

A decision on the CHC line is expected by the end of September from the PSC commissioners. The opposition from citizens, business leaders, political representatives and energy and environmental experts has been intense. PSC staff has recommended an alternative. The Town of Vermont is registered as an intervenor and thus has standing as a party to the proceedings. We have submitted formal legal testimony opposing the line, another showing that the line violates our town plan and yet another showing that ATC lied about the public support for the line, distorting their own public survey.

The commissioners will have a public session with no audience participation to discuss the decision format. This will be on August 20 and 10:30 at the PSC building. Many Vermonters are planning to attend.

Much thanks go to our citizens who have been active these past years; to the Town Board who has been supportive of efforts to keep the line out of the town and out of anywhere else and to those hundreds of town residents who have shown their concern or opposition. This can really be the big one and can show a whole new direction, sparing the Driftless Area from this line, reducing carbon emissions, saving us money and giving our energy path a new future. Stay tuned.

## **Town Adopts Energy Plan**

The Town of Vermont has adopted an Energy Plan that is focused on helping residents adjust to the rapidly changing economy and environment, and to transition away from fossil-based fuels to more renewable energy sources.

The plan — adopted at the board's July meeting — has three areas of focus: 1) Communication and awareness building; 2) Support for energy efficiency, and 3) Support for expansion of renewable energy. Information and opportunities related to each area are expected to roll out over the next two years.

"Many here have been questioning the need for the Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line," said David Stanfield, a member of the ad hoc committee that drafted the plan. "That discussion has been very important. A next step in our personal lives and communities is to undermine future utility attempts to build transmission lines. We can make that happen by encouraging more efficient use of electricity and more local renewable energy generation.

"We have opened conversation with our local electric utilities on community-based solar generation," Stanfield continued. "And we will help interested homeowners and businesses to take advantage of incentives for energy efficiency or to install renewable energy on their own properties."



Barbara Borns, Peter Antonie and Warren Gaskill are also on the ad hoc Energy Committee. Anyone else in the township who is interested in joining this effort or in learning more can contact the committee via [wgaskill@mac.com](mailto:wgaskill@mac.com)

"Many of the resources and incentives are already available," noted Gaskill. "We can help make the connections to make it easier to reduce the financial and environmental costs of energy use."

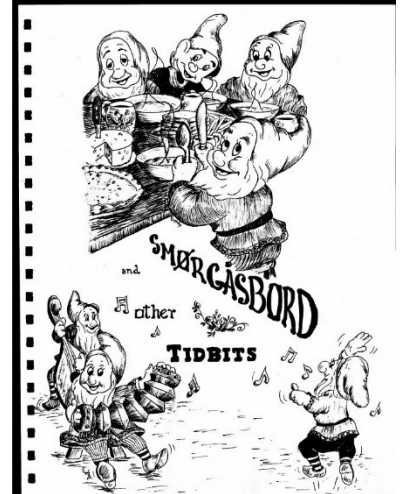
To learn more and for some initial resource links, a special page on the town's website has been started at <https://www.vermonttownship.com/community/energy>

# VERMONT'S VOICE

## Is History “History”?

By: Karen Carlock

In 1976, a group of Vermont residents formed the Vermont Bicentennial Committee to celebrate Vermont's history during the Nation's Bicentennial year. During a committee meeting, an idea took hold which was sure to require a significant level of dedication and time: the idea was to compile the history of the Town of Vermont. In just under a year, August 1977, the History of the Town of Vermont was published, having been contributed to by Viola and Joe Dybdahl, Lola and Arnold Forshaug, Fern Frame, Bette and Bertil Johnson, Dorothy Kelliher, Avis MacLean, Lola MacLean and Betty Rosenbaum. Ethel Skalet is also acknowledged as having contributed the artwork for the book. Within less than a year, this committee of dedicated historians compiled a 236 page book that traces back the history of area families, provides interesting insight into the lifestyle of the early pioneers, shares stories and records memories of the lives of Vermonters up until 1976.



I have included a couple of stories from the book in this article. Hopefully, these snippets may pique the interest of some who may then wish to check out the book in full which is available on the Town's website.

### The First Lamps in Black Earth

*Three lamps were on sale in Black Earth about 1858. They were on display in Mr. Erickson's store. Mr. Ole Vik bought one of them. He lived across the street from the old village hall where the park is now located. Mr. Vik was the father of Mrs. Halsten Peterson (Ada). The Peterson's lived on the farm now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Melver Bordson. They were the parents of Mrs. Joseph Barsness. When Mrs. Peterson (Ada Vik) was about seven years old, her father bought one of the lamps. Mr. Erickson kept one and the third one is unaccounted for. When the lamp arrived in the Vik home, there was much excitement. Of course, they were afraid that it might explode. It was placed in the center of the room on a table. The father warned the family to stay as far away as possible, cover their eyes and get ready to run out the door if it blew up. The lamp was lit, and it brought new joy to a family that had never used anything but candles. The lamp is 13 inches high with a brass pole and green marble base. The kerosene bowl is clear glass, and the original chimney is perfect. Fortunately, it was never electrified which adds to its value. It is interesting to note that this was before the Civil War. Mrs. Frances Murphy, daughter of Mrs. Barsness, had the lamp for many years. She gave it to her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Richard Bentley, who collects antiques. Last summer, when the electricity was off due to a storm, they used the lamp just as their pioneer ancestors had. The three great-great-great-grandchildren were thrilled that they were able to share in this great experience. — Story submitted by Miss Mattie Urness*

### Memories

*A man came to the Vermont chairman for a permit to shoot firecrackers for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at his farm home. He had been to the District Attorney for permission, but was told that the only ones who could grant such a permit would be the Town Board. The Chairman asked him, "Where did you get them?" He answered "That's my business." The Chairman said, "Well, as long as you brought them in illegally, you'd better fire them off the same way."*

This history book is a treasure trove of maps, newspaper clippings, memories, documents and photos. Reading through it is incredibly interesting and offers the valuable opportunity to review and reflect upon things that a group of community-minded people considered worth preserving. I found an insightful quotation on history penned by Victor Hugo, a French poet, who writes "What is history? An echo of the past in the future; a reflex from the future on the past."

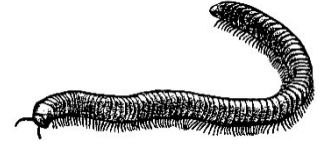
Michael McDermott asked me recently whether I knew much about the Barneveld tornado that impacted the area in June of 1984. I replied that I did not know much about it and then it dawned on me that the Barneveld tornado, along with many other moments in Vermont are not captured in this published history book. The history of Vermont did not stop in 1977. Over the past 42 years, many more stories have been lived, documents created, newspaper articles published and memories treasured. Reflecting on this has made me wonder what aspects of our life in Vermont we consider worth preserving and passing along to the next set of readers that will provide them a glimpse into our lives, who we are and what we value. In many ways, each new day gives each of us the opportunity to make history. I suppose the question is: who will record it?

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## Millipedes – The (mostly) Harmless, Hard-shelled Visitors

By: Karen Carlock

For a short span of time each summer, we've noticed dark-brown, worm-like insects in our basement. I've not given them much thought - other than to vacuum them up - until hearing from others in the Town of Vermont that there have been especially large numbers of these little creatures around homes this summer. Last week, my husband and I took our children to Stewart Lake in the early morning and saw what must have been thousands of these 1-1 ½ inch millipedes throughout the sand in the beach.



Interestingly, millipedes are not actually considered insects. Like their relative, the centipede, they are arthropods. Millipedes have segmented bodies which can be made up of anywhere from 11 to 100 segments with 2 pairs of legs per body segment. While these mostly harmless, hard-shelled worms may be a bit of a home invader at times, there is no need to worry as they do not do any damage to property in or around homes.

Millipedes enjoy areas with high moisture and lots of organic matter, such as wooded areas or fields. Outside, they live under leaves or in the ground, whether soil or sand. They are most active throughout the night and may congregate beneath objects where it is dark, cool and damp. When the sun comes up, they look for moist, sheltered areas. During times of excessive rainfall or ground moisture, as we've had this past spring and summer, they may look for areas with less moisture and may leave their homes in the ground by the hundreds or thousands. In their natural habitat outdoors, they serve as beneficial insect-eaters as well as recyclers of decaying organic matter. This brings me to the one exception to their typically harmless nature. With their love of organic matter, millipedes can cause significant damage to emerging seedlings in greenhouses.

At times throughout the year (particularly late summer and fall), they may find their way into homes or buildings through cracks in foundations or ground-level windows. Once inside, they will normally be found in basements and often congregate together in corners. They curl up tightly when touched or handled. They will die within 2 to 3 days of entering a home due to a lack of moisture. After they die, they will curl up and can be easily swept or vacuumed.

To prevent millipedes from getting inside your home, the key thing is to eliminate gaps around window frames and along the foundation of your building. Taking prevention a step further would be to consider removing organic matter such as mulch from around the foundation of your home since organic debris serves as desirable shelter for millipedes and can be a breeding site for them. If these methods do not effectively stop a millipede migration into your home, you could consider applying insecticides such as Sevin (carbaryl) outside to serve as a barrier.

*Sources:* Phil Pellitteri, UW Insect Diagnostic Lab & Jeffrey Hahn, Extension entomologist and Mark Ascerno, former Extension entomologist

## Why Can't I Just Burn Stuff?

By Jon Norris

When I was growing up my mom would give me the garbage to take out to the burning barrel. Mom would separate the items for Grandpa Norris' worm bed, and out I would go out to the burning barrel with the remainder.

Fast forward about 60 years. Now the burning of household garbage is prohibited in many states and is limited in Wisconsin as well. But why? Everyone likes to watch a fire, and every spring and summer prairie enthusiasts burn, so why not burn household garbage? Why struggle taking paper, cardboard, and scrap lumber to the transfer site, or pay for trash hauling?

The answer to this question is more than just smoke! After all, many of us burn wood in fireplaces and woodburning stoves or furnaces.

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Household garbage, including the above-mentioned items, contain many toxic substances. These toxic substances are released when they are burned, and the chemicals contained are far more harmful than what many of us believe. And, they are released in far greater quantities than even municipal incinerators create. An example that comes from the US Environmental Protection Agency is, if 15 households burn their garbage daily, the amount of toxic substances released into the air is GREATER than that released from a modern municipal incinerator with clean air technology burning 200 tons of garbage.

The reason is that modern municipal incinerators are equipped with technology that prevents the formation of dioxin and other toxic chemicals. Burning barrels, or ground level burning does nothing to mitigate the formation of toxic chemicals. Because they are released at or near ground level, they are introduced into human and animal lungs, as well as the pasture grasses that animals consume. It is deposited on the vegetables that you and I eat as well.

The threat to human and animal health is very real!

According to the State of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, burn barrel air emissions include carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>). Smaller amounts of more poisonous chemicals are commonly detected in the smoke: benzene, styrene, formaldehyde, polychlorinated dibenzodioxins (PCDDs or "dioxins"), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs or "furans"), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and heavy metals such as lead, mercury, and arsenic.

Dioxin is a known carcinogen. It is particularly harmful to young children, women of childbearing age, and the elderly. Dioxin is an endocrine disrupter and can cause reproductive, developmental, and immunological problems in humans and animals.

Dioxin enters the food chain and is concentrated in the milk and animal fat of grazing animals, and therefore very easily enters the food chain.

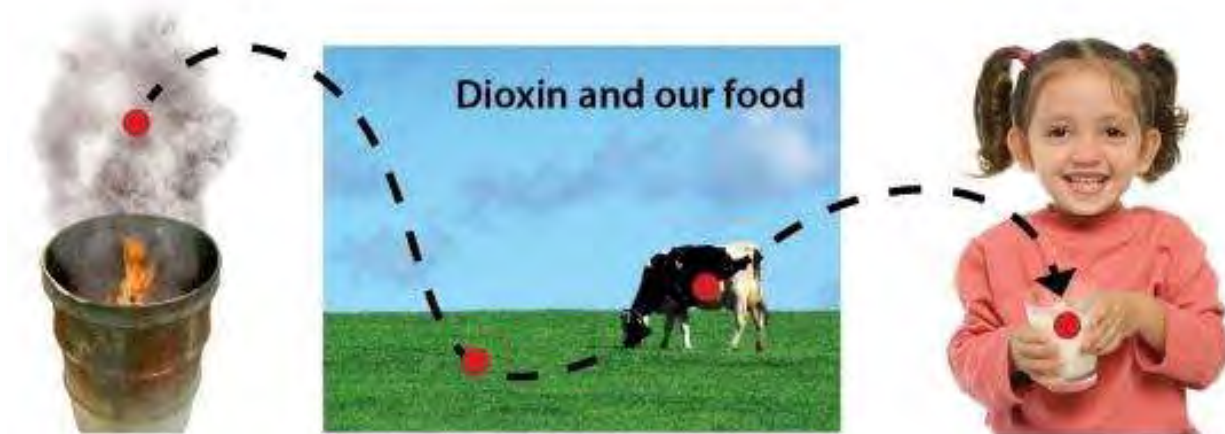


Diagram courtesy of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

So, to summarize . . . Please do not burn your garbage. It is against the law and harmful to the health of you, your family, your neighbors, and the environment.

For more information about burning regulations in Wisconsin:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/OpenBurning/BeforeYouBurn.html>

Read more about dioxins:

[Facts about dioxins \(Minnesota Dept of Health\)](#)

[An Inventory of Sources and Environmental Releases of Dioxin-Like Compounds in the U.S. for the Years 1987, 1995, and 2000](#)

[Dioxins produced by backyard burning \(U.S. EPA\)](#)



# VERMONT'S VOICE

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**Lisa and Dean**

**Mission Statement:** It is the mission of Vermont's Voice to provide information about our town and articles of interest to the residents of our town in order to promote a sense of community, encourage participation in and understanding of town government, and improve communication among residents. Vermont's

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Keep up to date on town ordinances, meetings and other business at <http://www.townofvermont.com>.

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