



BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY | Vermont Realty Group  
HomeServices Middlebury

## NOMINATE A NEIGHBOR!

**We asked you to recognize people in our community who are making a difference and it's clear that there is no shortage of people to recognize here! Thank you for participating and a VERY BIG THANK YOU to all of our friends and neighbors who go the extra mile for our community. Happy New Year from the Better Middlebury Partnership!**

### **Amy Masefield, nominated by Henry**

Amy is the best! She is always going above and beyond to help students at Middlebury Union High School. Amy is the backbone of our community because she consistently puts other people's needs before her own. She is the single most patient teacher I've known across all three schools I've worked in. She would never expect this recognition which makes her all the more deserving. I can't stop smiling while thinking about all she does for our community.

### **Wylie Cate, nominated by Pearl Riney**

Wylie volunteered to drive the eggs donated by maple meadows to HOPE each week- a big important job!

### **Tracey Orvis, nominated by Emily Landenberger**

Tracey is one of the most selfless, caring, compassionate humans I've had the pleasure of knowing. She takes personal responsibility for the wellbeing of her entire community. She works full-time as the Manager of the Wellness Department at the Middlebury Co-op, helping community members meet their wellness needs, she has served her Starksboro community for at least three decades as a volunteer EMT and first responder, she volunteers her time to teach and train future EMTs, she's a certified Death Doula and licensed green burial provider who helps people cope with end-of-life care and eco-friendly burial services, she has been taking online classes through CCV for the last year or so in the allied health field (doing all her coursework at night after full shifts at work) and is currently applying to nursing school, all while juggling the regular responsibilities of motherhood and family life with her family of four. And I'm probably not even covering it all. She's the person you go to when you need a sympathetic ear, she's the person I want beside me in a crisis, she's an amazing listener and a compassionate friend. And I really just can't overstate her capacity to care for those around her and her passion for doing so. And of course, she's the first to deflect praise when anyone tries to recognize the many ways that she dedicates herself in service to others because of her deep humility. She is not a woman of great financial means, but she'd give her last dime to someone in need. I feel incredibly lucky to call her a friend and would love to see her recognized for all that she gives to this community. She's a treasure.

### **Kristen Carra, nominated anonymously**

Kristen is extremely generous with her time, whether it's helping with the Middlebury Skate Park Project, volunteering at the library, or just being a great and caring friend. Kristen is always there to lend a helping hand loves the community she has helped build.

### **Adrienne MacIntyre, nominated by Kelly Murphy**

Adrienne goes above and beyond for our kids at Mary Hogan and Mums. Not only is she a regular much needed substitute, but she's involved in both Mesa and Friends of Mums. She's always the first one to volunteer her time and expertise. She's wonderful person!

### **Mary Dragon, nominated by Heather Blair**

Mary is an employee at the Middlebury College kitchen, on top of always having a smiling face and cheerful attitude while working full time. It extends to our entire community. She is the first person to offer to help someone in need, she is such a great friend, neighbor and community member. She would see someone on the side of the road, and definitely stop to make sure they are ok. If someone

was walking without a jacket or umbrella and if she had an extra she would stop and give it to them. She knows the true meaning of "caring for your neighbor" she will call to check in on people, send get well cards, sympathy cards, or congratulations what ever is in order. She is compassionate and caring. She makes food for people in need and is a true example of a vermonter! You would be blessed to know this woman!

### **Jane Steele, nominated by Susan Polk**

Jane runs the Charter House kitchen - as a volunteer. She is tireless and selfless in her care for all who need CH services and meals. She's a true community hero.

### **Jon Ashley, nominated by Tina Wright**

Jon aka Coach has volunteered several years to the youth in the Middlebury area as a wrestling coach. He is however so much more to all of these kids. A mentor, a father figure and just an overall great human being. Traveling in some of the worst weather giving up his evenings, weekends throughout the winter. He also goes above and beyond and travels outside of our area with these kids to experience the overall comrade team approach of wrestling. He's taken kids to watch wrestling at the higher levels and has even traveled to Atlantic City with a crew. The MAWA wrestling club has grown in participation, interest and the dedication from Coach and others is shining with state championship and New England contenders. We also want to shout out to his wife Janelle as she's often left to run their sheep farm alone and raise their newest family member. Both of the Ashley's have also been incredible foster parents to so many youth over the years.

### **Chris Anderson, nominated by Angela Cobrin Landis**

Chris Anderson is a Middlebury neighbor who does it all. He is the kind of leader and mentor who thinks deeply about the goals and challenges in front of him. Chris is an excellent listener and always allows those around him to shine. Chris volunteers on the MALT board, coordinates the Town of Weybridge Recycling program, coaches the MUHS cross country team (with an 'all are welcome philosophy') & he's the MUHS assistant track coach. If the volunteering isn't enough, Chris is also employed by Monument Farms Dairy as the Business Manager. And when Chris isn't volunteering, coaching, or working you're likely to see him running along the Middlebury and Weybridge roads training for his next race. Chris Anderson exemplifies the ideal of community service.

### **Ethan Murphy, nominated by Melissa Kin**

Ethan has put in 100's of hours to start and organize the Middlebury Skate park Project. In addition to this enormous volunteer venture and a full time job at Middlebury College, he always steps up to coach and volunteer for his kids sports and activities.

### **Lyn DeGraff, nominated by Tiffany Stowe**

Lyn is an unsung hero of the Middlebury community. She serves or has served in just about every capacity one could imagine. Her contributions that I am aware of include her service on the Board of the Henry Sheldon Museum and HOPE. Lyn volunteers at the Town Hall Theatre and Ilsley Library. For many, many years she led the local Girl Scout Troop, including planning and executing a week-long summer camp at Lake Dunmore. Lyn is also a deacon at the Congregational Church of Middlebury. Amazingly, she does even more! Lyn is

a host parent for international students at Middlebury College and a mentor with the College's new Compass program. In addition to all of these formal roles, Lyn is the first person to raise her hand when someone needs help, be it a family member, friend, colleague, or non-profit organization. Lyn faithfully gives of her time, talents, and treasures each and every week. I know that she volunteers in other roles that I am not aware of. She is always present, always cheering for the many good causes out there, and always giving of herself for the benefit of our community. I can't think of anyone who deserves this recognition more than Lyn DeGraff. Thank you for the opportunity to nominate her and to recognize how much she gives.

**Lyn DeGraff, nominated by Laurie Celik**

Lyn goes above and beyond every day of her life for others! She is the most giving individual with her time of anyone I have ever met. She works hard, cares and is always there to support whoever needs a hand. She cares about Middlebury and is involved in everything! She takes pride in all she does and it shows.

**Tony Rifelj, nominated by Betsy Killorin**

Tony dutifully does the weekly winding and maintaining the town clock atop the Congregational Church tower. Every week to keep the town on time! He is also a treasurer of the Battell Trust overseeing Chipman Hill, Battell Woods, and Means Woods. He also volunteers to build sets and constructing/design for all the Town Hall Theater and groups that perform there (Middlebury Community Players (MCP) Opera Company of Middlebury (OCM), etc. He deserves this!

**Tiffany Stowe, nominated by Laurie Celik**

Tiffany's heart is pure gold; she cares about everyone in her life and for her town. She is a volunteer on many fronts and participates in community activities as much as she is able. She is respectful and friendly - always ready to lend a helping hand. Tiffany's spirit is a true representation of what being a member of a community should be.

**Lyn DeGraff, nominated by Beth Crum**

Lyn volunteers for countless Addison County organizations, including the Town Hall Theater, the Middlebury Congregational Church, the Girl Scouts, the Middlebury Community Players, to name just a few. She also uses her talents to do countless jobs designing programs as a volunteer with her graphic designer skills. She also works tirelessly in her 'day job' for the Alumni Office at Middlebury College, yet goes far above the normal work-week by hosting zooms for post 50th Reunion alumni so they can socialize virtually together on her zoom. She's been a host family for many students throughout decades here.

**Adrienne MacIntyre, nominated by Kate O'Dell**

Adrienne is and has always given so much of herself to her community. In addition to tireless work for MESA, Very Merry Middlebury and boards like Mary Johnson Children's Center, she is also an incredible resource for Mary Hogan, subbing etc. I would love to see her recognized!

**Molly Kerr, nominated by Denise, Dee & DeeDee Bertholf**

Molly has been a huge part of creating Shoreham's Rec Department. Our kids had soccer/cheerleading this past fall. They are offering basketball and language studies this winter. Tball will be this spring. She has given our town and children an outlet in Shoreham that is invaluable. She is a ball energy and the heart that Shoreham needs! Please recognize her for her spirit and joy she brings to our community!

**Jenn Russell, nominated by Karyn Wells**

I would like to nominate Jenn Russell of New Haven. She has given countless hours and financial resources to the Mt. Abe-Vergennes collaborative football program this year (and in years past). She has gone above and beyond to make sure these young men have had an extremely parent-supported season. She has planned countless team dinners, helped run the snack shack, made sure they were fed after away games, washed and rewashed dirty uniforms week after week, hosted team breakfasts, and

helped organize a very successful senior game. Sometimes the "moms" go unnoticed for their efforts to make sure their kids have an amazing high school or sporting experience. This mom has gone above and beyond not only for her son but for all the other kids on the team who I bet would say this was one of their most favorite football seasons. I would love for Jenn to be considered for all she has done for MAV football.

**Jenn and Josh Quinn, nominated by Amber Power**

These two individuals have always stepped up and helped and coached so many kiddos with basketball. They have the best attitude, give great feedback and are just outstanding people. They take very kid they coach and treat them as their own, and they want the best for them. They are so calm and collective and have a great relationship with every athlete they coach. I love how they treat them as a team, yet help them on the individual needs. Incredible people.

**Rebecca Kerr, nominated by Denise, Dee & DeeDee Bertholf**

Rebecca has been running our ARK after school program that has been a life saver to parents in our community of Shoreham plus her center in Whiting. Above and beyond this she has been working to get our Rec Department up and running to give our kids the ability to participate in sports locally. She has been a staple and the heart of our community! She needs to be recognized for her continuing effort and drive that she shows everyday!

**Amey Ryan, nominated by Dani Archambeault**

Amey is kind, helpful & promotes others. She is the definition of what community means.

**Jennifer Kennett, nominated anonymously**

Jenn is a fantastic human being. A human dynamo. From her work with teens at the LNA program at Hannaford Career Center, Vt Food Collaborative with farmers or her Tailfeather Farm supporting children in Agriculture. She is always doing something positive for the community. She has a lovely upbeat personality and is always willing to help a neighbor in need. She is always the last person on her list. A gift card and a hearty thank you girl would mean so much to her. She never asks for anything and is often paid with just a hug or a smile from someone in need. Please consider her for this award.

**Dorothy Douglas, nominated anonymously**

Year round green up on Quarry Road, helps on blood drives, helps events at the Congregational Church, helps on voting day, etc.

**Karen LaFlamme, nominated anonymously**

Karen has been a cherished community member since her and her family moved here in 2008. Karen has been an employee of Middlebury College since then and anyone in the college could tell you who she is. She is dedicated, selfless, and caring. She takes care of the kids and students of Middlebury College and always has other's best interest at heart. She raised six kids while a single mother working full time. She is the definition of a superhero. Karen was involved with Better Middlebury Partnership, dinners with love, the chili fest, a Very Merry Middlebury, and so much more. You will always find her at community events and chances are, you'll see her helping others while she's there. Karen was at 51 Main up until they closed, and I think I speak for everyone when I say that we miss her presence just as much as 51 Main itself. Karen has a true servant heart and her love and dedication for others is something I have been inspired by since her family moved here. Every single person who knows her will tell you about how lucky they are to have crossed paths with her. If you haven't had the privilege of knowing her, I encourage you to seek her out. She is a pillar of Middlebury College and especially the community of Middlebury as a whole. We love you, Karen!

**Kathy Clarke, nominated by Catherine S. Manegold**

Kathy Clarke has spent her life working to make the Middlebury Studio School a vibrant creative space for people across all ages and socioeconomic groups in the Middlebury area and beyond. Her playfulness,

dedication to craft, joyous support of all students, and underlying expertise have made the school a warm and creative home for Vermonters first at Frog Hollow and more recently on the expanded studio space on Route 7. Kathy awakens a creative spark in kids as young as six and as old as ninety-two. She has nurtured dozens of studio assistants (I am one!) over the years and taught them everything from studio maintenance to operating the MSS gas kiln (Oscar) that fires to temps of 2300° F. She is a passionate supporter of artists of all types, and, though endlessly creative herself, she pours most of her energies into others. Anyone who has seen the Empty Bowl fundraiser at the Middlebury Co-op knows of her dedication. Year after year she has organized local potters to help in that endeavor and then done much of the unromantic behind-the-scenes work that makes it all come together. I am happy to say more about her, but suffice it to say that Kathy is an unrecognized hero in our midst and I hope you will give some serious thought to acknowledging the very many contributions she has made, and continues to make, to our community's life and spirit.

#### **Tim O'Toole, nominated anonymously**

Tim is apart of ELP (extending learning program) he is one of the adults at the Beeman Elementary school that takes care of the kids after hours. He just has such a special way with kids. I love how positive he is and how he makes my children feel so comfortable. He encourages them to express themselves and participates in all the fun right alongside them. He is away from his own family to help our community with theirs. We are so lucky to have such an impactful role model and he deserves to be recognized

#### **Wilder Harding, nominated by Megan Hendee**

Wilder is a coach for the MAHA Jam Mites. He not only coaches the minors team, but he also holds goalie practices for all interested goalies and team goalies. He often stays at the rink for extra practice for other teams. Not only is he dedicated to helping local kids find their love for a sport that is physically and mentally demanding he is kind and patient while doing so. Wilder finds a word of encouragement for each one of his players. He helps tie skates in the locker room, adjusts monstrous sized goalie pads, and offers advice all while keeping his own son and his gear in order. If anyone has every packed or unpacked a hockey bag you will know that is no small feat! Wilder connects with young athletes and their parents and deserves to be recognized for his unwavering commitment to our community.

#### **Jen Nuceder, nominated by Lisa Phelps**

She volunteers in every event for our kids in our community.

#### **Tim O'Toole, nominated by Bethany Scott**

Tim is the after school teacher for BEEMAN elementary. He is so much fun and all the kids LOVE and ADORE him! He really makes the school year better with his humor and love for the children. He deserves to be recognized and thanked for his amazing work in the school system. Thank you Tim!!

#### **Tim and Annette Franklin, nominated by Cristi Franklin, Elliot and two individuals who submitted anonymously**

Tim and Annette have gone above and beyond to help the international students at Middlebury College feel welcomed and a part of the Middlebury community.

I would like to recognize Annette for all that she does in the Middlebury community. She is heavily involved in creating a home-away-from-home for many international Middlebury College students which make our community a much more welcoming area for these students. Annette has volunteered at Middlebury Union Middle School and Middlebury Union High School for years and continues to be involved in plays and concerts even after her children have graduated. I think that Annette should receive this award to get the recognition she deserves for all that she has done in our community.

Tim and Annette are incredibly loving and giving neighbors. They work so hard to create a community for international students at Middlebury college to feel connected and have a place to call home while they are in Vermont. Their house is always buzzing with visitors.

Annette opens her home, heart, and dinner table to so many people looking for a home and family in our community, particularly those without one. Whether it be migrant workers, international college students, or those in the Addison County community that just need to feel loved, she always makes space.

#### **Bethany Morrissey, nominated anonymously**

Mrs. Morrissey has been such a terrific addition to MUMS! With all the challenges that the middle school has faced, Bethany has served as a breath of fresh air. She has met her students everyday with kindness, enthusiasm and appreciation. Her energy, passion and love of kids has come shining through these last few months. She believes in our children and brings out the best in them. I'm grateful for how she has helped my own daughter transition from elementary school to middle school. Beyond her contributions to MUMS, she has devoted an enormous amount of time to the High School Volleyball team. We are lucky to have her at MUMS and in the greater community.

#### **Chris Altemose, nominated anonymously**

He is coaching two varsity basketball teams and finding time to volunteer with the youth programs too. As a PE teacher he is committed to helping teens make healthy choices and habits for life!

#### **Cheryl O'Dell, nominated by Whitney Prouty**

Cheryl (and her boys) go above and beyond supporting and volunteering in the Middlebury community. There isn't one person who doesn't know them and had a positive experience.

#### **Dustin Hunt, nominated by Whitney Prouty**

An individual you will see at every sporting event for any age/level whether he's watching or refereeing. Dustin makes so many dreams come true for our young adults at Middlebury Parks & Rec!

#### **Tammi Swan, nominated by Whitney Prouty**

You see Tam supporting athletes at every sporting event whether her kids are playing or not. For our family, she's been a positive influence and we have appreciated her words of encouragement!

#### **Theresa Hinman, nominated anonymously**

Does a lot for the Middlebury community through the post at the legion. From Halloween drive through, Christmas bingo, and much more so as to give and support the community.

#### **Jim Gish, nominated by Alice White**

He did a fabulous job of keeping everyone informed during the rail project, encouraging people to come to town to see the progress and shop. Now I see that he is involved in the Ilsley Library project.

#### **Rosie Lovshin, nominated by Su White**

Rosie has offered her time and expertise to Quarry Hill School this fall- as a volunteer and support person. We are deeply grateful for her generosity and kindness to the children and teachers.

#### **David Pistilli, nominated by Corinna Noelke**

David, has been representing our neighborhood at the town for years now, going to Selectboard meetings, Town Construction Committee meetings (there is a real name for these meetings that escape me right now), has kept our neighborhood informed and involved. He also got us all to work towards more energy efficiency and gives us good cheer when he waves at us while biking by - preferably with a gallon of Monument Farm milk in the back, freshly picked up right from the farm. Truly a good neighbor who cheers us up, helps out when needed and gives back to the community.

#### **Maria Benoit, nominated by Hannah Manley**

Maria has been working for the Addison County Chamber of Commerce for 12 years. She has been a stable force at an organization of utmost importance to our region. When my family and I moved here 9 years

ago, she was the friendliest, warmest person I encountered. In addition to excelling at a demanding job, Maria is raising two outstanding boys, serving on the Vergennes Community Group (parent/teacher group for Vergennes Elementary), and helping a single mother raise her daughters. I think the world of Maria and would love to see her recognized!

**Amey Ryan, nominated by Liza Sacheli**

Amey is an amazing supporter of so many local initiatives-- but I just have to share this particular little story: We came to see Santa at THT. Santa and Mrs. Claus recognized my daughter Anna and called her by name as she approached (instant magic!) Then her BFF arrived, but was too scared to see Santa. We decided to help her by going together... the girls held hands and successfully visited with the big guy! Here's the really magical part: several days later, we get a little note addressed to Anna in the mail. It's handwritten on a note card with a pink heart and purple ink-- it compliments Anna on her kindness to help her friend. Signed, Mrs. Claus! Such a sweet gesture, with so much Christmas spirit. Amey makes our community better in big and small ways every day.

**Eric Mortensen, nominated by Liza Sacheli**

Eric Mortensen, or "Mort," we all call him, is the intrepid leader of our adult hockey community, and has been organizing our groups for decades. He carefully assembles our groups with care to make sure everyone enjoys competition, but just as importantly, fun and camaraderie. He shares that he's looking for skaters with character both on and off the ice! The result is a wonderful, cohesive group that has become like family. He also organizes an annual Thanksgiving morning session that includes many family members who join in the fun. And he makes sure we give back to the rink, purchasing a banner annually. As a group, we honored Mort by raising enough money for the Memorial Sports Center's renovation campaign to name a locker room after him! In the past few years, he finally decided it was time to hang up his skates. (This was after playing on two new knees, and well past his 80th birthday!) But he still shows up on Thursday mornings at 7am when we skate, ready to watch from the bench, razz us, and tell jokes. Seeing him is a highlight of the day! He's a mensch. Mort also serves our community as a musician, playing solo and with his "Shader Croft Band" for elderly service organizations. He's a retired elementary school teacher with a heart of gold.

**We randomly did a drawing of all of the names submitted to us and chose five people who each will receive a \$100 gift card to the local business of their choice as a gift from the Better Middlebury Partnership.**

**Thanks to all for being a light in our community and congratulations to:**

**Bethany Morrissey**

**Eric Mortensen**

**Tim and Annette Franklin**

**Dorothy Douglas**

**Jane Steele**