

In Putney, a housing crisis flies under the radar

More than 40 people are unhoused in one small town, and residents struggle with a crisis that's seemingly invisible

By Ellen Pratt The Commons

PUTNEY—People experiencing homelessness live in a range of conditions.

Some live in motels, like the more than 93 Brattleboro households participating in the state's General Assistance Emergency Housing Program. Others, largely uncounted, live in tents in the woods, in friends' barns and sheds, in cars, garages, and campers — all situations that do not meet all the human needs for comfort and security.

In Putney, approximately 40 people live outside and in

campers, according to Fire Chief Tom Goddard, who keeps this count through his "well-person" checks.

"There's been a fairly decent increase in homelessness in Putney since the end of the pandemic," said Goddard. "We're starting to see camper trailers popping up everywhere. Sometimes that's the only option these folks have for any type of actual shelter."

Some residents of this town of 2,600 are "couch and floor surfing" until they can find housing, reported Laura Chapman, operations manager at the Putney ■ SEE PUTNEY HOMELESSNESS, A6

Brattleboro starts the budget process for FY25

Town eyes 2% rise in operating expenses, with numerous other projects still under discussion, as is the use of ARPA money

By Virginia Ray The Common

except the Emergency Medical Services program previously approved by the Selectboard, are included. Personnel costs, Town Manager John Potter says, as projected are consistent with already approved collective bargaining agreements and include a level-funded cost of living adjustment of 4%. Staff compensation totaled \$12,836,470 in this year's budget. The base budget for FY25 ■ SEE BUDGET, A3

PEOPLE I ever knew' Deirdre Baker, a beloved community volunteer,

One of

the **BEST**

retet

NIFAMO

endured a decade of surgeries for cancer before dying in a weekend blaze

By Kevin O'Connor VtDigger

RATTLEBORO— When Deirdre Baker was named grand marshal of this town's Fourth of July parade in 2012, she didn't let that morning's storm clouds dampen her spirits.

She already had weathered too much for that. The year before, Baker

was planning a free public Christmas breakfast when, set to celebrate her 50th birthday, she was unable to shake a stuffy nose. Doctors said it wasn't a cold or allergies, but instead sinus cancer. To reach and remove it, they'd have to sacrifice her right eye. Many people would have melted down. Baker instead bucked up, enduring six operations and just as many weeks of radiation before donning a pirate patch to feed 800 people a holiday meal and lead an annual ■ SEE DEIRDRE BAKER. A2

BRATTLEBORO—A first look at the draft proposal of a \$22,473,369 operating budget for fiscal year 2025 shows a 2% increase (\$434,692) to the current fiscal year's \$22,038,677 operating budget.

As the budget process continues, any — or none — of 13 potential additional expenses could be included in it.

Calling it the "first bite" when reviewing the proposal as such on Nov. 21, Selectboard Chair Ian Goodnow said while the board could pass the "base budget sandwich" without adding to it, he appreciates the process.

"I think it's a more transparent way for the Selectboard to consider budget alternatives for additional things the town can take on and actually understand the impact to the General Fund and to the taxpayer," he said.

As presented in this budget scenario, a 1% proposed property tax increase would cost each individual taxpayer an additional \$17 annually (or about \$4 each quarter) per \$100,000 of property value.

In the draft budget, personnel compensation would increase by 8%, including an overall 4% cost of living adjustment, and services and supplies by 7%.

Current staffing capacities in all departments remain consistent with levels this year, and no new programs or staff positions,





RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS Dierdre Baker, organizer of the town's community Christmas Breakfast and a cancer survivor, was the Grand Marshal of the 2012 Brattleboro Fourth of July parade.

Westminster names new town manager

Louis Bordeaux of Bernardston, Mass., brings government and retail management experience to the job

By Robert F. Smith The Commons

WESTMINSTER—After the position has been vacant for 18 months, the town has hired Louis Bordeaux as its new town manager, effective last week.

A resident of Bernardston, Massachusetts, Bordeaux has worked in local government for just over a decade. Prior to that, he had a long career in mid- and upper-level retail management.

Bordeaux said that he got into politics at the urging of a friend in 2012, when a three-year seat on the Bernardston Selectboard opened up. He ran and won "by

a landslide," he said.

"But it was a little humbling," he added, "when I attended my first town meeting. At the end of the meeting someone came up and said, 'So you're Lou Bordeaux? I voted for you, but you're not who I thought I voted for!'

Despite that start, Bordeaux said he enjoyed the work and learning how small-town government functions. He worked on the town's Finance Committee, where he said he "got an education on how towns operate and handle finances.'

When the position of town coordinator opened, he realized he'd

"love to do that," and he got the job in 2018. He served for over five years.

When he learned that the town manager position was open in Westminster, he thought it could be a good opportunity for him to use his management and town politics experience.

"This was the essence of what I'd already been doing," he said. "So I drove up and checked out the town and the commute with one of my sons.'

He liked the town, concluded that the commute would be doable, applied for the job, and got it.



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMON

After 18 months without a town manager, Westminster recently hired Louis Bordeaux of Bernardston, Massachusetts for the position.

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A2

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participation, • promotes local independent

journalism, • fosters civic engagement by

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ABOUT THIS NEWSPAPER

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Retreat Farm, HatchSpace team up for a Forest to Farm Table **Community Build**

BRATTLEBORO—If you have driven along Route 30 lately, Lars Hasslebad Torres, "It's go-ing to be an incredible learning, it's hard to miss the big changes happening at Retreat Farm. The renovation effort to transform the historic North Barn into a community gathering space is underway.

"Everything that is going into this renovation is being done with local materials, businesses, and communities in mind," said Retreat Farm Executive Director Kristin Sullivan in a news release. "From sourcing new slate for the roof, to hand-crafted tables for events, we want to make sure we're supporting businesses in our community."

With historic preservation easements, Retreat Farm is working with the State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation Trust of Vermont to restore the North Barn — preserving its hand-hewn beams and distinct architectural features.

Over the past few months, Tom Bodett from HatchSpace embarked on designing a unique farm table for the North Barn. The long farm tables will feature locally sourced and milled pine, and an innovative sawhorse design that makes the tables beautiful, functional, and easy to store.

"We are thrilled with the design Tom and his team came up with, and how it reflects a sense of place with local Vermont pine in a functional farm table. But I think I'm even more excited that these tables will be built by and for our community," said Sullivan.

"We are actively recruiting groups who want to take part in the community build," said support HatchSpace educators HatchSpace Executive Director leading the project.

Windham County Genealogy

Interest Group (WCGIG) will fo-

cus on "Navigating your Family

History at the Vermont State Archives" and "Exploring the

Digital Public Library of America

(DPLA)," on Saturday, Dec. 2,

Dobrick at the Vermont State

Archives will share genealogy re-

sources through stories in a pre-

Reference Archivist Mariessa

from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

recorded presentation.

Genealogy group offers tips

on family history resources

The next meeting of the la) through his talk. The Digital

The Vermont State Archives photographs, family bibles, cor-

required.

ly/WCGIGVIDEO.

ing to be an incredible learning, team-building, and community service effort with tangible community impact.'

Groups, whether companies or community-based organizations, are invited to sign up to adopt a build of five tables. Each group will learn how to make the farm tables from start to finish. When the table is complete, the name of the group will be added to honor their work.

"It's a really exciting way to build something that will be enjoyed by the community for years to come — while honing your woodworking skills and making new friends," Torres concluded.

The Forest to Farm Table community build project will take place over the next eight months between HatchSpace's downtown studio and the Retreat Farm, with each group making a set of tables over the course of a month. Anyone 16 and older is welcome to participate, and no prior expe-

rience is necessary. Sullivan adds, "This is a great way for folks to learn new skills while supporting the work of two incredible nonprofits, and to leave a legacy in a new community-focused event space."

The community build kicks-off in December, and those interested can reach out to Kristin Sullivan at ksullivan@retreatfarm.org or visit retreatfarm.org/hatchspace for more information.

There is no cost to participate in the community build, but those interested in making a financial contribution can sponsor a table to cover the cost of materials and

Public Library of America pro-

vides a way to search the collec-

tions of a wide range of partner

institutions: libraries, archives,

have its own collection but gives

a way to search across many other

collections in one place. Although

not focused specifically on geneal-

ogy, many of its free materials are helpful for doing family research.

respondence (for example from

the Civil War letters), local maps,

yearbooks, military records, oral

histories, family history and ge-

nealogy books. As its website pro-

claims, the DPLA is totally free to

use and open to all — no library

card, subscription, or sign-up

mal organization whose mem-

bers are dedicated to genealogy

education, research, and best

practices. Meetings are held ev-

ery other month on Zoom. Many

of these sessions have been re-

corded and are available on the

WCGIG YouTube Channel at bit.

register, go to **bit.ly/WCGIGDEC23**.

A Zoom link will be sent at least

one week before the meeting.

Participants are invited to pose

any questions that you may have

for the presenters when you

This online event is free. To

The WCGIGroup is an infor-

The website contains links to

This online library does not

and government offices.

KEVIN O'CONNOR Deirdre Baker, left, oversees volunteers at Brattleboro's 2013 Christmas breakfast, including April Lavoie, right.

54-18

Deirdre Baker

fundraising Polar Plunge. A decade and countless more procedures later, Baker ap-

peared to have beaten the odds. Then local firefighters received a call about a blaze shortly before 10 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 25.

The next day, authorities confirmed what friends and neighbors feared: The 61-yearold community volunteer had died in the resulting two-alarm blaze.

The flames burned hot enough to keep responders from entering until after midnight, when they reported finding Baker deceased on the second floor.

"My heart breaks," resident Maddy Lynch posted amid a torrent of social media reaction. "Dee was one of the best people I ever knew.'

Baker grew up in the Lexington Avenue house she died in, graduated from Brattleboro Union High School in 1980, then went on to work at the local Marina restaurant when she wasn't raising her son, Lucas.

Baker loved traditions like Brattleboro's free Christmas Breakfast, which the late car salesman Charlie Slate began in 1982 as a gathering place for locals who didn't have one.

Baker took over Slate's duties in 2007, vowing she'd volunteer and granddaughter.

to return before passing on the tradition to Flynn's daughter

FROM SECTION FRONT

(Friends soon will announce plans to honor Baker with a special Christmas Breakfast next month at the Marina restaurant, with donations to benefit

"My sister was an Angel," brother Shawn went on to post on Facebook. "She now has her wings. Rest in peace you will be missed by so many.'

news director Tim Johnson recalled interviewing Baker at many of the community events she coordinated.

"I found it amazing that, through a long fight with cancer, she had helping other people on

Johnson was an announcer at the 2012 Fourth of July parade, which Baker led as grand marshal. Waking that morning to showers, Baker nonetheless walked to the starting line to find a chauffeur-driven convertible, a dozen red roses, and a stereo system set to blast the Barbra Streisand classic "Don't Rain on My Parade."

Minutes before the kickoff, the clouds cleared. Baker soaked up the applause and adulation of hundreds of townspeople. After, she joked she had heard the show tune repeat one too many times.

Yet, as her smile confirmed, she thoroughly savored her moment in the sun.

AROUND THE TOWNS

"The doctors said I need to sit and lay low," she told this reporter in 2011. "I'm not very good at it, but my body is telling me that, too.³ Baker's heart said something else, spurring her to wrangle

enough volunteers, pancake batter, and maple syrup for not only 700 attendees but also 100 deliveries to shut-ins and emergency workers.

Tropical Storm Irene.

with cancer.

Baker hoped that year's

breakfast would serve as a re-

boot. Then she was diagnosed

"I've had so much support from my friends and community," she said of the people who shaved their heads in solidarity or drove her to treatments. "This is my way of

paying it forward.' Baker continued in her role until 2013, when Slate's daughter Judy Flynn decided to take over the event her father started. Then Flynn was diagnosed with cancer and died unexpectedly a week before Christmas, leading Baker

at least five years. She was planning her fifth event in 2011 when the community suffered a spring fire at downtown's Brooks House business block and summer flooding after her son.)

In turn, longtime WTSA-FM

the top of her mind," he said.

The paper is published weekly. the exceptions of the weeks of July 4 and Dec. 25.

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VOICES

The Commons presents a broad range of essays, memoirs, and other subjective material in Voices, our editorial and commentary section. We want the paper to provide an unpredictable variety of food for thought from all points on the polit ical spectrum. We especially invite responses to ma

terial that appears in the paper. We do not publish unsigned or anon

ous letters, and we only very rarely withhold names for other pieces. When space is an issue, our priority is to rur contributions that have not yet appeared in other publications. Please check with the editor before

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Without our volunteers, this newspaper would exist only in our imaginations. Special thanks to: Simi and Mark Berman, Diana Bingham, Jim Maxwell, Rob Bertsche, Barbara Evans; Cameron Cobane, Shannon Ward, and Hooker-Dunham Theater & Gallery; Clay Turnbull and NEC; Brendan Emmett Quigley and Joon Pahk In memoriam: Alan O. Dann, Judy Gorman, Mia Gannon

consists of records that have continuing value to the state of Vermont and its citizens. The holdings document Vermont state government from crown colony to the present. Because many of these records reflect the interactions of individual citizens with their government, the State Archives are a useful resource for genealogists and family historians

with Vermont connections. Records often used by genealogists include vital records, court records, records of state institutions and newspapers. The Manuscript Vermont State Papers documents the names of thousands of Vermonters between 1777 and 1865 who had interactions with government, from petitions to grand lists and beyond.

Wayne Blanchard, co-founder of WCGIG and genealogy volunteer at Rockingham Free Public Library, will take participants on a virtual tour of the DPLA (**dp.**

> • he thing that interests me most about family history is the gap between the things we think we know about our families and the realities.

register.

-JEREMY HARDY



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Contact one of our ad reps: 1-888-511-5150 lori@commonsnews.org (or) nancy@commonsnews.org

'Gaza Monologues' at **Hooker-Dunham Theater**

BRATTLEBORO — On Wednesday, Nov. 29, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Hooker-Dunham Theater in Brattleboro,

Brattleboro area community members present a staged reading of The Gaza Monologues on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The Gaza Monologues are testimonies written by ASHTAR youth in 2010, after the first war on the Gaza Strip. Tragically, these Monologues are still accurate today. They are highlighting the horrors, hopes and resilience of the courageous Gazans to a wider audience, bringing out the voices of children and people in Gaza.

Admission is by donation to the ASHTAR Theatre's Psycho-social Relief Intervention Campaign. For more information, visit gazamonologues.com or email gazamonologuesbrattleboro@ gmail.com .

Public forum looks at Green, High street intersection project

BRATTLEBORO — The town is considering improvements to the intersection of Green and High streets. The town has engaged an engineering team to support this effort and is inviting residents to join a public forum on the matter on Nov. 29, from 6 to 7 p.m., in the Selectboard Meeting Room.

This forum will be an opportunity to review the preliminary concept and offer comments or potential improvements. Visit bit.ly/742-street to view to view a full copy of the concept plans.

Yulefest returns to Saxtons River

SAXTONS RIVER — Santa will make his appearance in Saxtons River when the village hosts its second annual Yulefest on Sunday, Dec. 3.

The afternoon's festivities begin at 3 p.m. with a free concert at 24 Main Street community center, featuring Brattleboro Union High School's Shoulder Narrows a cappella group and the Vermont Academy chorus. A children's craft fair will also

take place beginning at 2:30 p.m.

The activities then move to Main Street Arts, where Santa's Village will host visits with the Jolly Elf himself, storytime, a model train, and kids' crafts and cookies and cocoa from 3 to 6 p.m. Local artists and artisans will be set up offering jewelry, candles, relishes and jams, bread, jigsaw puzzles, personalized ornaments, wooden ware, gloves, and other items for holiday gift shopping, and the Grafton Historical Society will be selling wreaths.

There will be caroling around the piano and selections by the Main Street Arts children's chorus, which will accompany Santa to the Saxtons River Historical Society for the tree lighting at 5 p.m. Also, Sarah James's Smokin' Bowls will be set up for familyfriendly supper dishes such as macaroni and cheese. The event is free of charge.

Holiday Bazaar set for Dec. 2

GUILFORD — Guilford Community Church will hold their Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with handcrafts, decorated wreaths, and holiday sweets.

The raffle table will feature a handmade quilt, as well as an American Girl doll and accessories, Vermont products gift basket, gift cards to area supermarkets, and much more. Quilt raffle tickets can also be purchased online at guilfordchurch. org. (On the home page, click on

Quilt Raffle 2023.) All proceeds from the Bazaar benefit the church, which actively supports numerous local programs and organizations serving the wider community. Directions to 38 Church Drive: From Interstate 91 Exit 1, go south on Route 5 to just past the Guilford Country Store, left on Bee Barn Road, left again on Church Drive. For more information, contact the church office at 802-257-0994 or guilfordchurch@ gmail.com.

Girl Scouts host teddy bear tea party in Brattleboro

BRATTLEBORO — Girls in grades K-3 and their caregivers are invited to learn about

opportunities to get involved in Girl Scouting in your community, try out sample activities, and see the many ways to get involved at a special teddy bear tea party.

Come explore Girl Scouts with your favorite stuffed animal on Monday, Dec. 4, from 6 to 7 p.m., at American Legion Post 5, 32 Linden St. See all the details at bit.ly/brattleborogs. Can't make it to the event? You can also join Girls Scouts anytime online at girlscoutsgwm.org.

Pratt Library launches new website

WEST DUMMERSTON - Lydia Taft Pratt Library, Dummerston's public library located in West Dummerston village, announces their new website, dummerstonlibrary.org.

Library staff say that the website is still under construction, and that they would love to hear any feedback about its functionality and design. For more information, contact them at dummerstonvtlibrary@gmail. **com** or 802-258-9878. They are open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings.

Windham County **NRCD** Plant and **Tree Sale begins**

BRATTLEBORO — The 34th annual Windham County Natural **Resources Conservation District** (NRCD) Plant and Tree Sale is accepting orders. All orders must be picked up in person at Green Mountain Orchards in Putney on Saturday, May 4, 2024, between 9 a.m. and noon. They do not offer shipping and will not refund orders for customers unable to pick up their orders. All orders must be submitted by Feb. 28, 2024.

Orders are not confirmed until they have received payment. You may pay place your order on windhamcountynrcd.org/orderonline. Continue to payment if using credit card or PayPal, or select "pay by check" and mail a check for the total amount to Windham NRCD, 28 Vernon St., Suite 332, Brattleboro, VT 05301. To order by mail, download an order form from their website and mail it with a check payable to Windham NRCD.

Budget

anticipates an 8% (\$1,033,004) compensation increase for a total of \$13,869,474, which would constitute 62% of the overall budget.

The town of Brattleboro is a service organization, so maintaining adequate staffing to deliver expected levels of service is always the largest expense,' Potter says.

Overall employee benefits are projected to decrease by \$14,234 from \$3,785,276 this year to \$3,771,042 in FY25. Potter says that's due to an "updated and more accurate" method of assigning health insurance expenses across the town's three operating funds — General, Utilities, and Parking.

Although health insurance premiums are expected to rise by 11%, calculating the expenses in a different way than formerly is expected to result in a slight reduction compared to this year.

While many departmental service and supply projections remain flat or reduced, fire department services and supply costs are estimated to increase by \$129,795, of which \$91,125 is "directly attributable" to the incorporation of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program.

Potter said the staff used the "lowest, most conservative model" in assuming how much would be collected through EMS billing and landed with about \$866,000.

Part of the costs associated with the newly approved municipal program, wherein the fire department will assume all EMS responsibilities in July, are startup equipment and supply costs plus adjustments to utility costs and medical billing services.

Debt service is expected to decrease by 40,700 (4%) from this year.

'Major new needs' still on the table

In his Nov. 21 budget memo (available at **brattleboro.gov**), Potter writes, "while the town is unlikely to be able to afford to incorporate many of these recommendations, staff believed it would be helpful for the Selectboard and the community to be aware of major new needs as determined from the department perspective.

In the following list, if the board were to include all, the budget would increase by \$951,395, adding another \$94 of estimated annual tax impact per \$100,000 of Grand List value or the equivalent of \$172 of additional estimated annual tax on a bill for the Grand List median home value. It would take the 1.2% overall property tax increase in the base budget up to a 6.8% increase.

proactive approach" to manage infrastructure. Adding \$109,500 to the budget would require an added \$10.21 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

• Adding more hours for the part-time assistant town clerk (\$15,000–\$25,000), changing from 26.5 hours weekly to 33 hours weekly. Adding \$20,000 to the budget would require an added \$2.85 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

• Hiring an IT coordinator (\$85,000-\$101,000); proposed by the Town Manager's office to address issues and potential cybersecurity threats and replace an "a la carte" system with an in-house system. Adding \$93,000 to the budget would require an added \$8.85 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Offering an additional 1% COLA (\$85,895) to help with the fact that "inflation continues to result in an escalating cost of living" and add to the 4% adjustment now in the draft budget. Adding \$85,595 to the budget would require an added \$8.24 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Contributing \$5,000 more to Southeast Vermont Transit for town bus service. The town currently contributes \$50,000 and has been asked to increase that to \$55,000 annually. Adding \$5,000 to the budget would require an added \$1.61 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

Capital considerations

Money to pay for capital expenses for infrastructure projects, replacement vehicles, and large equipment items — previously planned and identified in the 2022-23 Annual Town Report — is projected to come from a General Fund cash transfer of \$1,773,723. This is a 30% reduction from the \$2,531,000 in this year's budget.

A consideration that may have an impact on the final budget for the FY25 Capital Fund is the extent to which the Selectboard decides to use one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and excess fund balance to pay for identified capital needs.

It is estimated the town will spend up to \$1.375 million in ARPA money for EMS startup expenses. Among these expenses: hiring an EMS supervisor and more firefighter/EMTs by July 2024, and buying three new ambulances.

Use of this amount of ARPA money will leave about \$1.4 million in that fund for other projects.

The base budget includes paying for previously identified capital projects: three delivered by Other areas for consideration Public Works and one delivered by Recreation and Parks. The Esteyville Park Gazebo project cost estimate incorporates the need to completely replace or rebuild the bandstand structure at a newly estimated cost of \$37,000. Other planned capital expenses include vehicle and equipment replacements with contributions to both the Fire Truck and Future Ambulance reserve funds. The ambulance is the only new item and is based on the Selectboard's decision to provide municipal emergency medical services. The Williams Street Intersection Improvement Project, which had been considered a grant-funded project, is a possible ARPA project. After study and input, town staff members have determined 10 potential capital projects not included on the currently approved long-term capital plan. These alternatives total an ad-ditional \$1,225,000. Paying for all would require an additional 7.2% increase in property taxes, unless they are paid for by other means, such as ARPA money. A public survey asking for input regarding priorities for ARPA money use is available at brattleboro.gov/blog/ take-the-arpa-survey. These 10 capital project alternatives include: • Added street paving and improvement (\$100,000) to make progress to address a road repair backlog estimated at \$18.5 million. Adding \$100,000 to the budget would require an added \$9.43 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation. • Added sidewalk repair/replacement (\$100,000) to address the town's 35 miles of sidewalk and "make a project that is an appealing size to contractors." Adding \$100,000 to the budget would require an added \$9.43 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation. • Green and High Street inter-section construction (\$75,000) to complete the final design. Adding \$75,000 to the budget would re-quire an added \$7.37 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation. • Brannen Street retaining wall repair (\$75,000) to fix this wall before it compromises the road

FROM SECTION FRONT

and the home on top of it. Adding \$75,000 to the budget would require an added \$7.37 in taxes per \$100,000 of property value.

• Public Works facility site analysis (\$50,000) to look more closely at the existing site and improvements that could be made there. Adding \$50,000 to the budget would require an added \$5.31 increase in taxes per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Relocate the salt and sand shed (\$150,000) to optimize space and keep the sand dry. Adding \$150,000 to the budget would require an added \$13.54 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation.

 Cotton Mill Hill intersection improvements (\$120,000) to improve traffic issues. Adding \$120,000 to the budget would require an added \$11.07 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

 Central Fire Station HVAC control replacement (\$55,000) of a system that has never worked properly. It is expected the full \$130,000 cost can be reduced by a \$75,000 state energy efficiency grant to \$55,000. Adding \$55,000 to the budget would require an added \$5.72 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

• Dispatch console replacement (\$300,000) because Motorola, manufacturer of the system currently in use at Brattleboro Central Dispatch, has notified the town that the equipment has reached the end of its service life and the company will no longer support it. Adding \$300,000 to the budget would require an additional \$25.88 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

· Additional surveillance cameras (\$200,000) to expand the town surveillance camera inventory by four locations. Adding \$200,000 to the budget would require an added \$17.65 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

Next steps

The budget process began in April with several meetings, including a community open house in September.

The Selectboard is now at the stage of reviewing preliminary costs and income needed to continue current town service levels and planned capital projects and equipment replacement as well as possible additional expenses and their tax impacts.

Potter says the plan now is to publish a further micro-level breakdown of the budget in the

• he budget is not just a collection of numbers, but an expression of our values and aspirations. -JACK LEW

Sanders announces 14th annual State of the Union Essay Contest

I-Vt., Chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, has launched his 14th annual State of the Union Essay Contest for Vermont students.

Each year, the President of the United States delivers the "State of the Union" address to a joint session of Congress, which outlines priorities for the coming year.

Sanders knows that great ideas can come from everyone — not just those in power - which is why he created the State of the Union Essay Contest to encourage young people to engage in the political process. The contest is an opportunity for Vermont high school students to describe a major issue facing our country

next few days on the town website. He and Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland will update the board at its Dec. 5 meeting.

On Dec. 19, the board will consider alternate budget additions and use of ARPA money.

The Selectboard will vote in January on a final budget for presentation at the March 2024 Representative Town Meeting (RTM).

Visit **brattleboro.gov** and follow the prompts under Selectboard to the budget memo to read more details.

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do to solve it.

The purpose of this contest is to get young people to start thinking about the many important issues that we deal with every day," Sanders said in a news release. "We are living in very tough times. There is no doubt about it. All people have the right to express their views and help shape the direction in which our country goes — and that includes young people. I want to see our students be actively engaged, no matter where they stand on the issues."

The 250–500 word essays can be on any issue of national importance. A volunteer panel of Vermont educators will judge the essays on the students' ability to articulate an issue and propose a solution,

U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, and propose what they would without regard to the students' political views. Following the contest, Sanders will enter the essays of the finalists into the Congressional Record the official archive of the U.S. Congress

More than 5,700 students from high schools across Vermont have written essays in the past 13 years about critically important issues, including climate change, racial justice, access to mental health care, immigration reform, the state of our democracy, and much, much more.

The deadline for student essay submission is Jan. 9, 2024. More information can be found on Sanders's Senate website at sanders.senate.gov/ **stateoftheunion** or by calling 800-339-9834.







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not already included in the draft budget include:

• Hiring an independent consultant to make a base compen-sation study (about \$20,000). Adding \$20,000 to the budget would require an increase in taxes of an additional \$2.85 per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Adding a social worker to the Brooks Memorial Library staff (\$95,000-\$106,0000) to "better serve the needs of the public, many of whom also present challenging behavior within a library setting." Adding \$100,500, as a midpoint in the potential salary range, to the budget would require an added tax increase of \$9.47 per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Installing a new self-checkout and security system (\$65,000) at the library for "greater opera-tional efficiency." Adding \$65,000 to the budget would require an added tax increase of \$6.55 per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Hiring a library outreach and programming specialist (\$89,000– \$103,000) to help meet demand. Adding \$96,000 to the budget would require an an added \$9.10 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

• Hiring a community resource specialist for the police department (\$84,000–\$93,000), a con-cept in development since Chief Norma Hardy joined the department in 2021. Adding \$88,500 to the budget would require an added \$8.48 tax increase per \$100,000 of property value.

• Hiring a downtown custodian (\$70,000-\$80,000) to the facilities maintenance staff, enabling that team to add Central Fire Station and Station 2 to the list of covered facilities and "better position the team to spend time downtown." Adding \$75,000 to the budget would require an added \$7.37 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Hiring an assistant highway supervisor (\$85,000–\$100,000) to enhance communication and oversight. Adding \$92,500 to the budget would require an added \$8.81 tax increase per \$100,000 of valuation.

• Hiring a public works dep-uty director (\$97,000-\$122,000) to bring that team back to three people, as it once was, and "revamp" and "expand upon a Transcribing, Editing and Proofreading Services

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NOTICE OF **PUBLIC HEARING**

Windham Solid Waste Management District will conduct a public hearing to review the FY 25 Budget.

The public hearing will take place on December 14, 2023, @ 6:30 PM in person at 327 Old Ferry Rd, Brattleboro, VT, and via Zoom.

The Zoom link is available at our website (windhamsolidwaste.org) or contact the office at 802-257-0272.

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT Amendment to the Code of Ordinances November 21,2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Selectboard of the Town of Brattleboro on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at a duly warned meeting adopted the following AMENDMENTS to Chapter 3, Article II (Dogs, Wolf-Hybrids) Chapter 11, Articles I (General Provisions), VII (Entertainment), VIII (Liquor), and X (Parades and Open Air Meetings); and Chapter 13 Article VII (Entertainment Clubs and Restaurants). the Brattleboro Code of Ordinances, viz:

Chapter 3, Article II (Dogs, Wolf-Hybrids) Chapter 11, Articles I (General Provisions), VII (Entertainment), VIII (Liquor), and X (Parades and Open Air Meetings); and Chapter 13 Article VII (Entertainment Clubs and Restaurants)

A copy of this Amendment may be obtained from the Brattleboro Town Manager's Office. John R. Potter, Brattleboro Town Manager, 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301, telephone number 251-8151 is a person with knowledge of this Amendment and who is available to answer questions in connection therewith.

This amendment shall be posted in five conspicuous places within the Town and published in the Brattleboro Reformer on the 28 day of November, 2023 and shall become effective on the 22 day of January, 2024 unless a petition for a vote to disapprove the ordinance at a special or regular town meeting is signed by not less than five (5%) percent of the qualified voters of the Town of Brattleboro and filed with the Town Clerk within 44 days of the date of adoption stated above.

BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD Ian Goodnow, Chair Franz Reichsman, Vice-Chair Peter Case, Clerk Elizabeth McLoughlin Daniel Quipp

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only child of Lewis F. and Daisy

(Broad) Henderson. The family

Obituaries

• Henry Bell, 92, of Gallatin, Tennessee, formerly of Guilford. Died on Nov. 12, 2023. He was born Oct. 8, 1931 in Guilford to the late Frank Bell and Ethel Aldrich Bell. He served his country in the Army during the Korean War. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by brothers Howard Bell, Alden Bell, Benjamin Bell, and Frank Bell, and his sister, Eleanor Schoenert. He is survived by wife of 64 years, Helen Aldrich Bell of Gallatin; children Darlene Templeton (Fred) of Gallatin, Dennis Bell (Melinda) of Castalian Springs, Tennessee, Shayne Bolinger of Gallatin, Jennifer Crowder (Ronnie) of Gallatin, and Tim Bell (Angela) of Portland, Tennessee; a brother, David Bell (Donna) of Vermont; sisters Dorothy Hastings of Florida, Elizabeth Muench of Hendersonville, Tennessee, and Nancy Bobee of Vermont; grandchildren Alicia Robinson (Rob), Ashley Cox (Jeff), Alexis Johnson, Fred Templeton, Nathan Bell (Ashley), Nicholas Bell, Blake Bolinger, Lucas Bolinger, Meagan Crowder, Ryan Crowder, Katlin Hollis, Jordan Bell, and Tyler Bell (Alyson); and 13 great-grandchildren. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of life was held on Nov. 26 at First Baptist Church in Gallatin. To send condolences,



• Alexan-

dria "Sandy"

Winhall. Died

was born in North Bergen Township, New Jersey on July 10, 1939 to Ernest and Margaret Bosna. Following her elementary and high school education, Sandy enrolled at Glassboro State College (now Rowan University) in New Jersey and graduated with a bachelor's degree in education. Following a year or two at public school teaching, she joined her parents, who were living in Italy at the time, and taught at a U.S. military base there. While there, she enjoyed connecting with her Italian family roots. On her return to the United States, she began a career with the Aging Services division of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, where she remained until retirement in 2002. Sandra and life partner George Rosenthal met in 1975 and made Winhall their second home in 1999. Here, they spent many years making friends; supporting the community as volunteers at

Meals on Wheels; and exploring Vermont until George's death on March 14, 2018. Sandy was also predeceased by her parents. Survivors include her sister, Rose Marie Cassell; nephews Jeffrey, Clay, and Thomas Cassell; niece Laura Strueli; cousins Marie Bucco, Jean Buscema, Gloria Vena, and Lorraine Fiore; and special cousins Madeline Arms, Angela, and Sean and Edward Gulley. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A Mass, dedicated to her, will be held at the Chapel of the Snows at Stratton Mountain Resort on Dec. 10 at 12:30 p.m. Burial in Winhall and a celebration of life will be held in the spring of 2024 where family and friends will have an opportunity to speak. Details will be shared in The Commons.

• Zoa Anne (Mitchell) **Given, 77,** of Brattleboro. Died peacefully, surrounded by her family, on Oct. 29, 2023.

Zoa was born in Morristown on May 19, 1946, the daughter of William and Marjorie Mitchell. Zoa grew up in Vermont and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School in 1964. She worked at the Brattleboro Retreat for more than 50 years, including working part-time after her retirement in 2014. Among many interests, Zoa enjoyed dancing, karaoke, gardening, visits to York Beach in Maine, and time spent with friends and her companion, Frank. More than anything else, she loved her children, grandchildren, and greatgrandchildren. Zoa is survived by her son Todd Given (spouse Laurie Given) of Brattleboro, daughters Tammy Given of Rockingham, Jennifer Given of Hinsdale, New Hampshire, Angela Given (spouse Dean Shippee) of Vernon, and Amanda Montgomery (spouse Jeremy Montgomery) of West Chesterfield, New Hampshire; grandchildren Erica, Dean, Aria, Andrea, Tia, Sarah, Logan, Kyle, Alexa, and Ayla; and greatgrandchildren Andre, Layna, and Payton. Zoa was predeceased by her parents and siblings Frank, Janice, Virginia, Karen, Charles, George, and William. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: The family will hold a celebration of life at the Millstream Community Center in Hinsdale, New Hampshire on May 18, 2024 at 1 p.m.

Charles F. Henderson, 93, of Brattle-

boro. Died Nov. 16, 2023 at Pine Heights nursing home. He was born on Feb. 10,

moved to Brattleboro in 1933, where Charles attended elementary school and graduated from Brattleboro High School in 1948. He completed a post-graduate year at Tilton (N.H.) School in 1949. He attended the University of Vermont and Marlboro College. Charles was drafted and served in the Army from 1953 to 1956, stationed primarily in Karlsruhe, Germany. After he returned to Brattleboro, he began employment with New England Telephone in 1958 starting as a lineman, then installer-repairman, then cable splicing technician, achieving the rating of journeyman. When he retired in 1991, fiber optics was just being introduced. He was a strong advocate of rights for workers and involved in the labor union that represented him and his colleagues. After Charles retired, he was a volunteer at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital until 2011. He began by installing Lifeline telephone service in people's homes, then transportation in the hospital, then assisting in the office of the volunteer coordinator. He was also a volunteer in the office at All Souls Church in West Brattleboro, where he was an active member. Charles fell in love with Mary Holden, proposed at the Green Door Restaurant, and they were married June 20, 1964 in Brattleboro. He was a friendly, outgoing individual with a mischievous sense of humor and an infectious laugh. He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. Charles is survived by his wife; a son, Michael Henderson and his wife Shannon of Johns Island, South Carolina; daughters Rebecca Streeter and her husband Jon of West Swanzey, New Hampshire, and Amy Henderson of South Burlington; and grandchildren Jackson and Charlie Streeter, and Olivia Prue. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: There will be a memorial service at All Souls Church in the spring. Donations to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Development Office, 17 Belmont Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301, or All Souls Church, P.O. Box 2297, West Brattleboro, VT 05303. To view an online tribute, leave a message of condolence, or for more information, visit phaneuf.net •Mark Law-

rence Hoyt, 64, of Brattleboro. Died unexpectedly Nov. 8, 2023 at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. Mark

was born in Brattleboro on August 2, 1959, the son of Harry Lawthe Headstart Program with the Early Education Services through the Windham Southeast School District. For Bob, whether for his own family or for the many wonderful children in the Headstart program, cooking was a calling that he was extremely proud of, often attributing his secret to great cooking as "just keep it simple." His mantra has been proven time and again through his signature cheesecake and chocolate chip cookies. Bob's early years included many cycling trips with his friends from Long Island to Nova Scotia, and even to Great Britain and Ireland. His appreciation of music, from blues to alt rock, was only surpassed by his lifelong love of all things sports, a passion that he lovingly shared with his children. He was an avid reader who loved words and word puzzles, and always found a newspaper to read whenever he could. Bob was a kind and loving man whose love of his family shone through in everything he did. Always ready with his impeccable sense of humor, he never failed to rise to any challenge. He brought his considerable work ethic into every job he had and every task he undertook whether stacking firewood in his backyard or running the register at Hannaford — and the void left by his passing will be felt by his family and this community for a long time to come. Bob loved his family, loved Vermont, and loved his life with Mary Lou in their cozy little home. Their best times were spent surrounded by family on the back porch watching the many birds and animals in the yard. His daily chit-chat with his children was the most important. He couldn't get enough of his sweet grandchildren and loved being Grampa Bob. Bob is survived by his wife Mary Lou of Brattleboro; his father Eugene of Vernon; son Justin (Abby) of Atlanta, Georgia; his daughters Heather (Coby) Greif of Stamford, Connecticut, Emily of Austin, Texas and Kylie of Dorchester, Massachusetts; three stepchildren: Matt Kapitan of Tinmouth, Ben (Annie) Kapitan of Fort Worth, Texas, and Katie (Jason) Cramer of Little Rock, Arkansas; and grandchildren Tristan, Sophia, and Jonathan Kapitan, and Nora Greif. He is also survived by his siblings Corinne of Pennsylvania, Pascal of Long Island, Michel (Rebekah) of Massachusetts, and Bruno Raquillat of France; as well as many cousins and extended family members, including Zachary Dodge. Bob was preceded in death by his infant son Tyler, his

Andrew Ryder and William Ryder, and also by grandchildren Natalie Moser, Shane Siebels, Kenneth Siebels, Maxwell Moser, Mason Moser, and Colby Taylor, and three great-grandchildren. ME-MORIAL INFORMATION: A graveside ceremony will be held on Dec. 1 at Pine Grove Cemetery in Gilford, New Hampshire. Donations to Grace Cottage Hospital, 185 Graf-

ton Rd., Townshend, VT 05353. • Rhonda J. Nowell, 68, died peacefully on Nov. 13 2023 under the care of Bayada hospice with her fiance Kevin Knapp, her sister Robin and her cats Bindi and River at her bedside. Born on July 6, 1955, she had a helping hand for everyone and everyone was a friend. She loved animals and birds and doing puzzles. She leaves two sons, Benjamin and Matthew, and a daughter, Ashley. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of her life and potluck will be held on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 1 to 3 p.m., at First Baptist Church, 18 Town Crier Drive, Brattleboro. Everyone is asked to bring a dish

to share. • Gail Helen (Evans) Peters, 75, died \$ 3 peacefully on Nov. 5, 2023 in Northbridge, Massachusetts. She was born on

March 11, 1948 to the late William and Louise (Bohigian) Evans. She graduated from Classical High School in Worcester, Massachusetts, Class of 1966, and was a proud graduate of University of Massachusetts at Amherst with a B.A. in Women's Studies. She was also pursuing her graduate degree at University of Connecticut for her Masters in Social Work. She was the manager of Leyden Woods Properties from 1990 to 2000 before she retired. Gail deeply loved her family, her friends, and spending time in nature. She was an avid reader, enjoyed gardening, going to the beach, vacationing, and watching movies. She leaves a legacy of education for her family and her love of spirituality. In addition to her parents, Gail was predeceased by her brothers Robert and Jacob Bohigian. Gail's memory lives on with her beloved partner of 35 years, Stephen Haskins; her daughter Sasha (Michael) Stann and grandchildren Henry and Della. She was the eldest of nine children and those remaining are Mary (Richard) Morel, Paul Bohigian, Alfred (Michelle) Bohigian, Richard (Kanchana) Bohigian, Thomas (Annette) Bohigian, and Deborah (Paul) Maruca. Gail will be remembered for her wittiness and dry sense of humor; along with her generosity with loved ones and that she always made time to help others. She will be missed dearly. MEMORIAL INFOR-MATION: Services and a celebration of life will be held privately at the convenience of the family. Donations to the World Wildlife Fund (worldwildlife.org), a cause close to Gail's heart for wilderness preservation and reduction of human impact on the environment. To send condolences, visit phaneuf.net. Peter Solley, 75, of Brattleboro. Died peacefully at his home on Nov 16, 2023, with the help of Vermont Act 39, after a short battle with oral cancer. His wife, Susan Tondreau, and his daughter, Hannah Solley from Dublin, Ireland, were present to witness the moment of passing. Peter was born in 1948 in London, England, to Leslie Solley, a Member of Parliament and an attorney, and his mother Jose Fisher, a journalist for the *Daily* Worker. Growing up in a Socialist household, Peter was surrounded by famous American figures from the McCarthy Era exodus in the 1950s, such as Paul Robeson and many freedom fighters from newly decolonized Africa. Peter took to music at a young age, learning piano and violin and winning a scholarship to Trinity School of Music in London at the age of 13. Around this time, Solley discovered jazz, from New Orleans to East Coast bebop and used the new formats into his writing and composing, moving from band to band, each time raising the bar to new heights and raising his own profile among the very senior group of musicians in London. When Solley joined Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds, he had reached the upper echelon of session musicians and he next found Spanish rock band Los Bravos. After living in Spain for a year, Solley returned to London and joined the Crazy World of Arthur Brown enjoying a worldwide hit with the song Fire. After two tours of the USA with Cream and the Rolling Stones and all the madness that went along with those times, he returned to England with the newly acquired friendships of Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Janis

lifelong friend Keith Webb by his side, Peter joined world famous group Procol Harum and became one of the few keyboardists ever to play Whiter Shade of Pale on stage. When Procol Harum started to slow down their time on the road, Peter effortlessly slid into jingle writing, eventually earning the accounts for British Airways, Coca Cola, Kellogg's cereals, BMW cars, and many other top accounts. From there, Solley made the obvious move into record production, starting the New Wave phenomenon from London. His first big success was What I Like About You by the Detroit band the Romantics, still one of the most played singles ever since on the radio and TV. He followed that with lots of hits recorded in Australia and, in 1980, he moved his family over to Miami Beach to be closer to work and the music industry. After 20 years in the industry, playing and producing in South Florida, Solley and his wife Susan decided a change of scenery would be fitting so they set out to find a small summer house in Vermont. After much searching, they found the perfect house in Newfane and made the move permanent in the early 2000s. They never regretted the move and fell in love with Vermont, its people, politics, mountains and greenery. Peter went as far as opening a gelato manufacturing plant and built the business from a small artisan affair to a viable commercial business. In 2018, he sold the business and, this time, retired as planned. Peter Solley leaves his wife Susan; a daughter, Hannah, from his first marriage; two grandchildren; an elder brother, Stephen; a sisterin-law, Helen; eight nephews and a niece; and countless lifelong friends and a life well lived. Although life is never taken for granted, it is a lot easier if it has been well-lived as in this case. Memorial information: The Cremation Society of New Hampshire has been entrusted with arrangements. To leave a message of condolence, visit csnh.com. • Jane A

Joplin, and many others. With his



Southworth, 82, of Brattleboro. Died Sept. 2, 2023 of complications from pneumonia at St. Vincent's Medi-

cal Center in Bridgeport, Connecticut. A longtime, beloved, and hearty Brattleboro resident, lover of music, history, libraries and canines, Jane was born Jan. 29, 1941 in Lakewood, Ohio, near the town of Rocky River, where she grew up the dearly loved only child of parents Ross and Marguerite Ashbrook. Jane's heartfelt love of New England was sparked when she attended Mount Holyoke College, earning a B.A. in English history. Jane, who rarely met a book she didn't cherish, selected Mount Holyoke upon seeing its voluminous library for the first time. Her deep appreciation for libraries was lifelong; she served nine years on the Brooks Memorial Library Board of Trustees and at the time of her death was, according to Library Director Starr Latronica, "a pillar of the Buildings and Grounds Committee." Jane was a student of Medieval and English history, Celtic Mythology, and all things related to her Welsh heritage, an ancestral homeland she was able to memorably visit with her daughter later in her life. She received an M.A. from Columbia University and a Master of History degree from Boston College. During her teaching tenure, she served on the faculty of the University of Chicago Laboratory School, where she met her future husband, Bill Southworth, in the Graduate Education Department library. They were married in 1966. After returning to New England, Jane worked as a curriculum developer in Cambridge, Massachusetts until the birth of her daughter, Katie. In 1979, Jane moved to Weare, New Hampshire, where she homesteaded a 200-year-old farm and farmhouse with Bill and daughter Katie. She made Brattleboro her home in the early 1990s. Jane's lifelong love of music included singing in the Concert Choir, volunteering at the Marlboro Music Festival, and playing trumpet and cello with her Brattleboro friends. She adored animals from Morgan horses to English sheep dogs, especially her longtime four-legged companion, Bess, with whom she founded Goose Patrol. Professionally, she worked as an environmental researcher in a career that culminated as the recycling specialist for both Brattleboro and South Hadley, Massachusetts. She was a gardener and longtime coop member who loved cooking both for friends and as a volunteer with Loaves and Fishes. She also volunteered in the book section of Experienced Goods and was a loved and appreciated member of weekly writing and tai chi groups. Jane served for years as a

the Bondville Fair and delivering 1930, in Houlton, Maine, the

Milestones are published as community news at no cost to families, thanks to financial support of our members and advertisers. Send them to news@ commonsnews.org. Though we ask that content for this column be sent by Friday at 5 p.m., we will do our best to include late obituaries. Please alert the newsroom at 802-246-6397 for post-deadline urgent submissions. We will always do our best to accommodate contributors in their time of grief.



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rence and Shirley Jean (Prouty) Hoyt. He attended local public schools and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School with the Class of 1977. He had worked in the building material trade employed as an assembler for Foard Panel Company in Brattleboro. For several years, Mark resided out west where he worked in the food industry as well as on the railroad. Active civically, for several years he was an active volunteer and call fireman for the Brattleboro Fire Department. Mark loved the outdoors, going on fishing trips, liked music and playing the guitar as well as spending time with his family. Mark will be remembered for his pleasant personality and spirit of friendship. Survivors include his mother of Brattleboro and two sisters, Dawn Steinberg and her husband Bruce of Brattleboro and Debra Helin and husband Frank of Wilmington, North Carolina. Additionally, he leaves a cousin, Jolene Lane and her husband Scott and their son Ben; nephews, Josh and Kyle Wright and Ryan Dean, and a niece, Megan Manning. ME-MORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial gathering to celebrate Mark's life will be held at a future date and time to be announced by the funeral home. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com. Robert

E. "Bob" La-Fantano, 61, of Brattleboro. Died on Nov. 18, 2023, with his loving family by

his side, following a brief battle with cancer. Bob was born in Huntington, New York, on July 20, 1962. The son of Eugene and Pierrette (Raguillat) LaFantano, he graduated from Northport High School and went on to study business management at the University of Masssachusetts at Amherst. After moving his young family to the quieter life of Tinmouth, he began his career in the food service industry, a vocation for which he was a natural. His earlier work began in Rutland with Seward's Restaurant and then with several other local restaurants and pizza shops, bringing him to co-own Sunny's Deli here in Brattleboro with his lifelong friend and business partner Steve. When the opportunity arose, he became the lead cook for

LaFantano. Bob embodied what it meant to be a husband, a father, a brother, and a friend. His family was stunned by his sudden illness and at the speed at which it took him. The loss is incalculable and they will cherish their warm memories of him. MEMORIAL IN-FORMATION: Visiting hours will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 29, from 4 to 6 p.m., at Atamaniuk Funeral Home, 40 Terrace St., Brattleboro. Interment will follow at Cavalry Cemetery in Rutland in the spring. Donations to the American Red Cross or to one of the local youth organizations. To share a memory or offer condolences, visit **atamaniuk.com**. • George P. Moser Jr., of

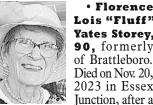
mother Pierrette (Annie) LaFan-

tano, and his sister-in-law Beth

South Newfane, died peacefully on Nov. 19, 2023. George grew up in Weehawken, New Jersey, and, as a youngster, he summered in South Newfane. He attended Vermont Academy, graduating in the Class of 1948, and was a graduate of Brown University and Rutgers University Law School. After completing his formal education, George went into practice with his father at the firm of Moser, Roveto, McGough, and Von Schaumberg in Union City, New Jersey. In 1987, he was appointed as a justice of the New Jersey Superior Court, presiding over a courtroom in Jersey City until his retirement in 2001. When George was not busy practicing law, he took great delight in spending time with his children and their cousins and friends, often towing them around Lake Winnipesaukee on water skis for hours, day after day. A favorite Saturday activity was taking his kids bowling. George loved deer hunting in Vermont, especially the annual hunting weekend with his law partners. Upon retiring, George moved onto the family farm in South Newfane, fulfilling his lifelong dream of retiring in Vermont. George met his future wife, Nancy Morse, at Brown. They married in 1954 and had four children, all of whom survive him: Charles Moser of Mason, New Hampshire, Susan Moser of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Robert Moser and his wife, Michelle, of Fogelsville, Pennsylvania, and Sarah Taylor and significant other, Phil Mann, of South Newfane. Nancy Moser died in 2002. George was also predeceased by his sister Jane Ryder, and his companion Roberta "Becky" Lincoln. He is survived by two nephews,

■ STORY CONTINUES ON FACING PAGE

Brattleboro Town Meeting Representative and on several town committees. Jane was politically engaged and aware to the end, even asking for updates on world events in her final days in the hospital. In John O'Donohue's book Anam Cara, Jane underlined "Friendship needs a lot of nurturing," beside which she put a simple "Yep." Jane was a friend par excellence. Her many friends in Brattleboro and beyond will miss her honest and thoughtful, always welcoming, sometimes curmudgeonly, smiling presence. Jane is survived by many, many beloved friends and family members: her daughter Katie Southworth of Bellingham, Washington, sonin-law Dan Kostrzewski, and dear granddaughter Flora Grace to whom she was "oooma" (with three o's) and for whom Jane wrote two children's books, Flora and the Bunnies and Flora and the Baby Dragons. She is also survived by her former husband Bill Southworth and his wife Penny Welch of Portland, Oregon, as well as by former sister-in-law Ann Lango of Marathon, New York. MEMO-RIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service will be held in Brattleboro in late spring. The time and location to be announced later in The Commons. Donations may be made in Jane's name to any of her favorite causes, including the Brattleboro Music Center, Brattleboro Area Hospice, the Windham County Humane Society, or Brooks Memorial Library, where her family is working to establish a reading bench in memoriam.



Lois "Fluff" **Yates Storey**, 90, formerly of Brattleboro. Died on Nov. 20, 2023 in Essex Junction, after a

lingering illness. Fluff was born on July 13, 1933, in Winthrop, Massachusetts, to Margaret (Bordeaux) and Donald Earl Yates. She attended elementary school in Bellows Falls, and graduated from Bellows Falls High School in 1951. She graduated from Castleton State Teacher's College in 1955. Fluff married Rodney Lee "Rod" Storey, whom she met at Castleton in her senior year of college in 1954. Their daughter Sue Carol Storey was born in Portsmouth, Virginia in 1956, where they were spending Rodney's last year in the Navy. After living in Virginia and Williamstown, Vermont in the late 1950s, Fluff and Rod moved to Brattleboro in 1960, where they both had teaching careers. She achieved her master's degree in teaching from the University of Massachusetts, and a second master's degree with combined graduate studies from the University of

Vermont, Keene State College, and Norwich University. Fluff taught for 35 of her 38 years at Academy School in West Brattleboro, retiring in 1995. Fluff was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, Eastern Star, the American Association of University Women, the American Legion Auxiliary, a charter member of the Emblem Club (Elks), the VFW, the Eagles, the Women's Evening Club, the 'West Bees" Home Dem Club, the Shriners, the Brattleboro Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, various teachers' organizations, and the Floral Arts and Garden Club, all of Brattleboro. She volunteered in church at various events, knitting many prayer shawls, as well as providing other community needs. She has been surrounded with great friends and has felt very fortunate to have them. She enjoyed crafts, travel, theater, painting, music, plants, cats, and literature. She even organized an opera appreciation group and was the keeper of the Opera DVDs and videos, of which there were hundreds. Fluff and her husband Rod once won the husband/wife golf club championship at the Brattleboro Country Club, which they were members of for many years. Fluff's daughter Sue and her husband, Tom Broido, and her beloved granddaughters Halle Broido and Galen Broido and Galen's partner Giacomo Zilli, survive her. She is also survived by two brothers, Fred and Ross Yates. She was predeceased by her husband in 1988, and by her siblings, Pauline Yates Brillant, and Donald Yates. Also, her special friend and companion Kasper Fulghum, whom she met on a senior's trip to Spain in 1996, sharing the best of the north and the south together, predeceased her in 2017. MEMO-RIAL INFORMATION: Fluff wanted

her lifelong friends, as well as her new friends from Williston Place, to know how much they meant to her, and how much they all enriched her life. Her new friends were a pleasant surprise to her after her move from Brattleboro; they all helped each other navigate their new lives in a new community. There will be no visiting hours at Fluff's request, and no formal service. There will be an informal gathering of friends at a date to be determined.

• Ruth Eleanor Thomas,

91, of Brattle-Nov. 14, 2023

period of declining health. Ruth was born at home in Halifax on Nov. 28, 1931, the daughter of Warren and Martha (Griffin) Dalrymple. She was raised and

educated in Halifax, later moving to Wilmington and then to Brattleboro. On Sept. 3, 1949, in Wilmington, she was married to Clarence D. "Sonny" Thomas Jr., who predeceased her in 2016. She had worked most of her career as a nurse's assistant, and was employed for many years at the former Linden Lodge nursing home. Previously, Ruth had worked for the Garfield family who operated Maple Rest Convalescent Home in Brattleboro. Steadfast in her walk of faith, Ruth was a longtime member of West Brattleboro Baptist Church. She was a woman of deep faith who read her Bible on a daily basis as well as keeping those in need of prayer in her daily devotions. Ruth enjoyed the simple things in life, completing word search puzzles and spending time with her family. She is remembered as a sweet, bubbly, and kind woman with a big heart, always ready to help someone in need. Survivors include two sons, Brent Thomas of Whitingham and Bruce Thomas of Brattleboro; a daughter, Bonnie Harvey of Port St. Lucie, Florida; 11 grandchildren; more than

30 great-grandchildren; several great-great-grandchildren; as well as nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews. Ruth was predeceased by a daughter, Brenda Thomas, and siblings Ralph and Warren Dalrymple, Ada LaRock, Margaret Childs, Barbara Crosby, and Evelyn Maynard. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In keeping with her final wishes, there are no formal services scheduled. Donations to West Brattleboro Baptist Church, 979 Western Avenue, Brattleboro, VT 05301. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• Virginia L. "Ginger" Thomas, 76, of Brattleboro. Died peacefully, with her family at her side, on

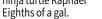
Nov. 20, 2023 at the Jack Byrne Hospice Center in Lebanon, New Hamsphire, following a lengthy illness. For the past 16 months, she had been a patient at Pine Heights. Ginger was born in Brattleboro on June 18, 1947, the daughter of Arnold and Theresa (Burdo) McCauley. She was raised and educated in kinds, and dancing (the waltz was

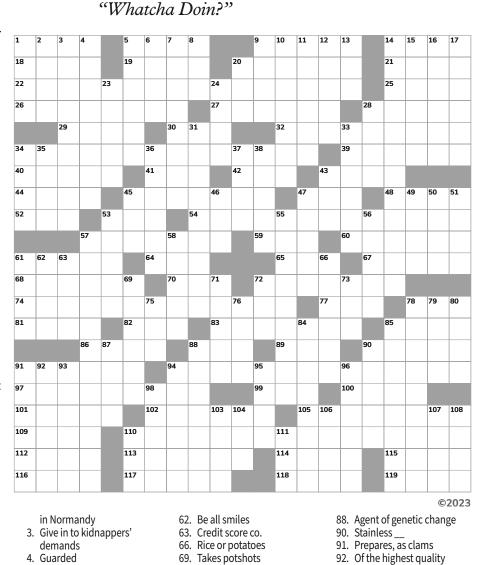
Hinsdale, New Hampshire and was a graduate of Hinsdale High School, Class of 1965. On April 15, 1967, at St. Joseph's Church in Hinsdale, she married Eugene Paul Thomas, who predeceased her in 2005. She held a deep love for children and, for 20 years, owned and operated her own children's daycare center, first in Hinsdale and later at her home in Brattleboro. More recently, she worked at Price Chopper (Market 32) on Upper Canal Street for five years, retiring early due to an injury. A devout Catholic, she was a former parishioner of St. Joseph's Church in Hinsdale where she was an active member of the Catholic Daughters. Following her move to Brattleboro, Ginger became a communicant of St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church. Ginger was a faithful and devoted wife, loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She found great joy and loved to spoil her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was also extremely proud of her Irish heritage. Of her leisure time activities, she enjoyed attending plays, music of all

her favorite). She was also an avid reader. Survivors include her five children: Jeffrey Thomas (Beverly) of Brookline, Jon Thomas (Patricia) of Apache Junction, Arizona, Jeremy Thomas (Jennifer) of Hinsdale, June Forrett (Marty) of Dummerston, and Jaclyn Flagg (Robert) of Hinsdale; one brother, Robert McCauley of Salem, New York; sisters Jeanette McCauley and Donna Corriveau, both of Hinsdale, and Karen Kirkwood of Bellows Falls; and 11 grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. Ginger was predeceased by one brother, Bradford McCauley. ME-MORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral Mass will held on Saturday, Dec. 2, at 10:30 a.m., at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, with burial in St. Joseph's Parish Cemetery in Hinsdale, where she will be laid to rest next to her parents. Donations to St Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105-9959, stjude.org. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

JOON PAHK THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

- Across
 - 1. Baking soda amts.
 - Actress Goldie 5.
- "Catch my drift?" 9
- 14. Move up
- 18. Home of Zion Canyon
- 19. Good-sized plot
- 20. Dignified 21. Workplace watchdog agcy.
- 22. Transportin' salve on a plane?
- 25. Present-day home of the Lan Xang kingdom
- 26. Unwrapped with gusto
- 27. Drunk as a skunk
- 28. Be playfully amorous
- 29. Prefix meaning "high
- 30. Farm share letters
- 32. Strike back
- 34. Makin' an oxbow? 39. 1959 movie that
- won 11 Oscars
- 40. Plus
- 41. Norse goddess of death
- 42. Scot's denial
- 43. "Right, right"
- 44. Discontinued Apple product 45. Appeared on screen
- gradually
- 47. Šcooby-
- 48. Gardener's tool
- 52. Hanks of "Asteroid City"
- 53. Domain name part
- 54. Watchin' a variety show?
- 57. Legal experts
- 59. Great Seal feature
- 60. Capital of Iran 61. 1990s Britcom, for short
 - 64. Blade used by the
 - ninja turtle Raphael





- - 69. Takes potshots

92. Of the highest quality

boro. Died on at Thompson

- House, following an extended

A5

ou will lose someone you can't live without, and your heart will be badly broken, and the bad news is that you never completely get over the loss of your beloved. But this is also the good news. They live forever in your broken heart that doesn't seal back up. And you come through. It's like having a broken leg that never heals perfectly - that still hurts when the weather gets cold, but you learn to dance with the limp.

-ANNE LAMOTT





- 67. Jah worshiper, in brief
- 68. German cameras
- 70. Walgreens competitor
- 72. Lot
- 74. What Warsaw Pact nations were doin'
- during the Cold War?
- 77. Had dim sum, say
- 78. Nonfiction film, for short
- 81. Mine, in Montréal
- 82. Android alternative
- 83. Bucks
- 85. It's just for show 86. 2022 Jordan Peele
- horror film
- 88. Chromebook alternative
- 89. Business letters?
- 90. Not high
- 91. Figure on a plinth 94. Tossin' out that
- old suitcase?
- 97. Jam
- 99. Race like Mikaela Shiffrin
- 100. Race winner's reward
- 101. Modern pentathlon blades
- 102. From Tibet's capital
- 105. Angry letters
- 109. First leg of a journey 110. Exhibitin' a scale
- at a museum?
- 112. "The kissing disease" 113.
- Ones living the underground lifestyle?
- 114. __-à-manger
- 115. Lots
- 116. Glasses, informally
- 117. "Funny Girl" composer Jule
- 118. Underfoot?
- 119. Monthly expense for many

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Down

- 1. Bit of hair
- 2. WWII battle site

Milliner's sticker 6. Dull pain

9. Attend

10. Symbol of Massachusetts

teasing your brother"

11. Betray unsteadiness

12. Possible reply to "Stop

13. Explosive compound

14. Gettin' ready to bale?

15. Biblical prophet who

foretold a messiah

- 7. Twisted violently
- 8. New beginning?
- 73. Part of TGIF
 - 75. Ballerina's support

Country on the Red Sea

72. Cable Internet alternative

- 76. It goes over a shin guard
- 78. Society newcomer
- 79. Sign
- 80. Bottle stopper 84. Taylor Swift #1 off
 - "Midnights"
- 85. French painter depicted by Picasso
- 87. Pitcher's goals
- 16. Either vowel in "humbug" 17. 108-Down follower
- 20. Bowen Yang's
- show, for short
- 23. Tag line? 24. Flanged girder
- 28. Run away
- 31. Like elite colleges
- __ Elementary' 33.
- 34. Provoke
- 35. 1970s Bruins great's
- nickname
- "To be more precise..." 36. 37. Not yet eliminated
- 38. Vivian of "I Love Lucy"
- 43. Electrolysis particle
- 45. In favor of
- "___ Kapital" 46.
- 47. Eating regimens
- 49. Rowing needs
- 50. Sing nonsense syllables
- Site of Vulcan's 51.
- forge, in myth 53. Burj Khalifa's city
- 55. Text underlined
- in blue, often
- 56. Antlered hunter of

*up to 5 qts

- English folklore
- Doin' some porch piracy?
 - Goldman _ 58. (investment bank)
 - 61. Actress Jessica

Last issue's solution "Switching Sides" S P E E D S I D E A L E L I J A H T U R B O W I R E S R E M O R S E P A S T A B A R SEEMIVES PANE SKIPS A S K S W O O L S E S S I O N S T E R N A E M B O S S N A B O B M T A U N C BIO TEM TUTOR RON LAHEY W A R N O N T H E F O U R T H O F J U L Y H M O R Y E C R E D V E T T E EATAT BRAATLAS W H E R E S F R U I T H A D SYNE EARNS ARTS W H I G P H A R M A N I K E A I R S W A N D V I L L A I N S BEELINE

- 93. When many start walking and talking
- 94. Longtime Red Sox player and coach Pesky
- 95. "This __ working"
- 96. Extensive grounds
- 98. Braid
- 103. Dam's mate
- 104. Part of Q&A: Abbr.
- 106. Adam and Eve's second son
- 107. Tapping target
- 108. 17-Down preceder
- 110. "__ Pinafore"

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111. Some printers

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Putney homelessness

Foodshelf and co-chair of the population in town," he said. "So Windham Regional Hunger Council.

"I know of Putney people who are no longer in Putney because they lost their housing here for a variety of reasons and were unable to find housing to stay," she said. "This includes families with children.

Most residents aren't aware of the homelessness issue in town.

You don't see these people because people who live in their cars are not typically on Main Street," said Josh Laughlin, former Selectboard chair.

"I think that we have done a horrendous job of being a community that welcomes people whatever their situation," he said. "And of being a community that works to improve the situation, as opposed to trying to exclude them from what we consider to be our utopia," Laughlin added.

In separate interviews with The Commons, Goddard, Laughlin, and Chapman recently offered their thoughts on homelessness and poverty in Putney.

Collectively, they have over 40 years of public service and experience with the issues of poverty, homelessness, and affordable housing.

Speaking with compassion, frustration, and sometimes anger, they talked about the stigma associated with homelessness, the struggles unsheltered people face, and the conflicts around siting affordable housing in town.

A changed perspective

Goddard, who has served in the Putney Fire Department for 23 years, has made a concerted effort to make contact with every unsheltered person in Putney.

⁴Up until about 2017, I never really paid that much attention, and then we started to realize that we had a fairly decent homeless

we started to reach out to folks, to make sure they understood that if they see us, or our vehicles, or law enforcement, don't panic."

That's when it hit him "that what I'm doing is OK," Goddard continued.

"I didn't set out to really do anything other than identify where these people were," he said. "So if there was an issue, we would at least have some sort of an idea of where we were going, what we were getting into. And it just kind of morphed into more than that.

During this summer's heavy rains, Goddard and his team contacted people who were living close to streams and the river to alert them to the potential for flooding.

"I learned very quickly that these folks just need to understand that somebody actually cares about them," Goddard said. They need to understand that if they need anything, they know who to go to and they know that everything is kept confidential."

Goddard said this work changed his perspective.

Addressing the view held by many people that homeless people should just get a job, he said, "I understand that thought, especially when there are plenty of iobs out there."

But Goddard said he soon realized that "when you start to actually listen and understand what people are going through and what they've gone through, they couldn't hold down a job if they wanted."

Citing a prevalence of physical and mental health issues, like anxiety and depression, that make it difficult (for many unsheltered people) to interact with "total strangers," he continued, "I'm sure that they just can't deal with it. So they're not just going to be getting a job. It's not quite that

FROM SECTION FRONT

clear-cut and simple."

"These people need compassion," Goddard said. "They need help. We need to understand that they're human beings. They're not animals." "I still have some pretty strong

opinions," he said. "But I'm very quick to turn that back around and say, 'OK, wait a minute. Put yourself in their shoes.'

Homelessness is a housing problem

Not everyone experiencing homelessness is mentally ill. However, experts agree that mental health issues are a predictor of homelessness, and homelessness exacerbates and increases the risk of mental illness.

The metaphor of musical chairs is often used to illustrate how so many people experience both mental illness and homelessness.

A shortage of housing creates stiff competition, and many people with mental illness, substanceuse disorder, or low incomes lack the capacity to navigate the system to access that housing. Just like the slowest runner in the game of musical chairs, those left standing are disabled by individual vulnerabilities and remain unhoused.

In their book Homelessness Is a Housing Problem, researchers Gregg Colburn and Clayton Page Aldern find that high rents and low availability of rental housing account for the most variation in rates of homelessness nationwide "We need more housing that's more affordable for people who need it," News, Aug. 2]. Places with lower rental vacancy rates and higher rents have higherper-capita rates of homelessness.

Statewide, Vermont consistently has among the lowest housing vacancy rates in the country: a 3.5% rental vacancy rate and a 0.7% owner vacancy rate in 2022. And Vermont is the fourth leastaffordable state for renters, according to a 2022 analysis by the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

The state ranks second in the nation for the highest per-capita rate of homelessness, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress. For every 10,000 Vermonters, 43 are unhoused — a 50.5% increase from 2020.

Toxic messages breed 'us against them'

One of the things that we fight consistently in this town is the stigma of homelessness," said Laughlin. "It's an us-againstthem kind of toxic message," he

Town Manager

"It's interesting to see how League's Seahawks Hockey life is a journey," Bordeaux Club on Cape Cod. said. "We make our best laid plans, then life comes along and pulls the rug out. I've been very blessed with so many things in my life. After 40 years, everything seems to have fallen into place. I'm very happy to be working in local government."

Born in Springfield, Massachusetts, he has lived in either Massachusetts or New Hampshire all his life. Bordeaux said that among other jobs, he had been an inventory control specialist and traveling district manager for the Shaws supermarket chain in the Northeast for over 12 years.

A hockey enthusiast, he coaches high school hockey and ran the pro shop at the Collins/ Moylan Arena in Greenfield, Massachusetts. He has two sons, one an honors-level engineering student and the other a goalie on the Eastern Hockey

once you're the person that's been seen living on the street in Putney, you're going to have a heck of a hard time finding a way out."

Laughlin points out that "any one of us could be in that realm relatively easily," he said. "You know, those people are us."

Not quite utopia

Addressing the image of Putney as a well-to-do, close-knit town, Laughlin said, "It's lovely to think that Putney is a progressive place where we support our residents, but look at the volume the Putney Foodshelf does."

According to Chapman, the number of shoppers accessing the Putney Foodshelf has doubled since July, "far surpassing anything we saw during the height of the pandemic." Between July 2022 and June 2023, the food shelf received 2,176 shoppers, a threefold increase since 2019.

Chapman said that the need is increasing due, in part, to changing requirements to receive the federally funded 3SquaresVt, the pressures of housing expenses, and inflation outpacing income. These same factors are driving the increasing need at food shelves throughout the region and the state, she said.

Historically, Putney has had a high number of schoolchildren who qualified for free and reduced-price school lunch, an indicator of poverty. Last year, 61% of Putney Central School students qualified for the program, according to the Vermont Agency of Education.

"That means that 61% of the families who have kids at Putney Central, for all practical purposes,

Club on Cape Cod. He says he's "very proud"

of his sons and what they've accomplished.

With his brother, Bordeaux founded the Springfield Hockey Heritage Society in 2008, which has grown to more than 500 members.

Inspired by his brother's extensive collection of hockey memorabilia, they formed the Society to preserve the legacy of professional ice hockey in Springfield, Massachusetts, for current and future generations.

The Society honors the region's players and officials, and it maintains artifacts and historical records covering nearly 100 years of hockey in the Pioneer Valley.

A love for small communities

One of the things that drew him to Westminster was that

Solutions task force was established in response to a community-wide project convened by the Vermont Council on Rural Development to identify top priorities for the town's focus. More affordable, safe, and quality housing for seniors and people of all ages and income levels was one of three priorities identified for more work.

Putney has three affordable housing developments managed by Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT): Putney Landing, on Neumann Lane; the Laura Plantz house, on Old Depot Road; and the Noyes House on Kimball Hill.

Next spring, WWHT will begin construction of 25 moderate-income apartments in two buildings on a vacant lot across from the Putney Co-op. Several of the apartments will be set aside for households exiting homelessness

The project has been plagued by opposition since its inception. In July, after a year-and-a-half appeals process, the Vermont Supreme Court affirmed that the project's permit was in good standing, rejecting a local resident's request for a five-judge panel re-review of the threejudge panel's decision.

However, opposition to the project continues.

A third appeal to the proposed housing project, filed on Oct. 31 in Vermont Superior Court, challenges the former court's opinions that the lots in question are contiguous and therefore the project does not satisfy the definition of affordable housing.

FROM SECTION FRONT

Bordeaux "loves rural, tightknit communities.'

With the move, he said, "I have the opportunity to bring my skills to help improve the community. That's what I look for at this point in my life, to do positive things for people."

The small size of the town, he said, gives him the "opportunity to get to know people."

Without a permanent town manager for so long, Bordeaux said that he knows the 'Selectboard, the town offices, and the road crews have had a rough 18 months." During his first week on the job, he met with all the town employees.

"I want to be that stable force for the town and the people who work here," Bordeaux said. 'Westminster is a nice place, and I'm grateful to be here.'

town. I've never known them to not address issues when they come up. They address them in a pretty timely fashion."

Fighting the stigma

One aspect of the stigma associated with subsidized housing is that people living there are dependent on drugs.

'One of the reasons that it's so visible is because of the concentration of population," Laughlin said. "But if you were to take 17 homes along road X in Putney, depending on the neighborhood, you would find people either have tenuous housing situations or have abusive relationships or drug-related issues. The populations aren't all that different.

"Fortunately, for some of us, we live in areas where that's less likely to be true," he said. "But that wouldn't remove the reality that those people are here in Putney and could benefit more from help than from being beaten down by the local population."

The way we talk about creating more housing, especially affordable housing, and the people who do or will live in it matters," said Chapman. "There is not enough [housing] available, and that is not due to any fault or worthiness of those that need to be housed," she added.

'The same with poverty," Chapman continued. "In a capitalistic society, it is often insinuated that poverty is preventable by, or somehow the fault of, the individual without examining the larger picture. The larger reality is that our culture of individualism and consumerism creates these issues and they will only continue to grow until we respond to them on a cultural level." "It is important to remember that Putney is not an island,' Chapman said. "We are a part of a larger ecosystem. If we try to build a bubble over Putney and not work to harmonize within that larger ecosystem of supporting housing and basic needs for the communities that hold our hospitals, schools, and other services, we will not only fail them, but we will fail ourselves and our neighbors who so desperately need us to be a part of the solution, not a make-believe utopia." We can talk in numbers, but at the end of the day, even one [unhoused person] is too many,' she said. "Too many of our neighbors are living without heat, electricity, and running water because of our cultural values.



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ΙΟCΔΙ PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS Nov. 27-Dec. 3 CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

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PLEASE NOTE NEW C	HANNEL NUMBERS!
Here We Are - Lee Ha, Brattleboro Historical Society: Mon 8p, Tues 12:30p, Wed 9a, Thurs 1:20p & 9:15p, Sat 12:15p, Sun 5:15p	Town of Brattleboro - Website Tour: Thurs 11a, Fri 11:40a
The World Fusion Show - Ep# 166 - Kinan Azmeh: Mon 5:30p, Tues 6:15a, Wed 5:30p, Thurs 12:30p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 6:30a, Sun 9p	Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 11/27/23 Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 12p
Ist Wednesdays Presents Classic Films of the 1950s with Rick Winston 11/29/23: Wed 7p (LIVE)	Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 11/27/23 Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:30p
Media Mentoring Project - Not Just the Bad News - Can Media Help Solve Societies Problems: Thurs 7p (LIVE)	Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 11/28/23: Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p
Around Town With Maria - 30th Anniversary of Landscape Artist & Sculptor Bob Boemig's "The Lift": Fri 6a, Sat 2p	Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 11/28/23: Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 2:30p
Veterans Events - Veterans Town Hall 11/5/23: Mon 1:30p, Tues 9a, Sat 9:15p, Sun 12:30p	Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 11/28/23: Sat 6p, Sun 8:30a
BCTV Annuals - Producer Awards Night 2023: Fri 1:30p, Sat 5p, Sun 7p	Putney Selectboard Mtg. 11/29/23 : Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p
Windham County NAACP 4th Annual Freedom Fund Dinner: Wed 9p, Thurs 2p, Fri 3:30p, Sat 9a, Sun 12:30p	Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 11/29/23: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p
Everyone Eats - Grateful for Brattleboro: Thurs 6a	Brattleboro Planning Commission Public Forum 11/29/23: Sat 8:30p, Sun 6:30a
Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 11/21/23: Mon 7:15p, Tues 11a, Wed 2p
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode : Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg. 11/16/23: Mon 6:10p, Tues 9:55a, Wed 12p
News Block: WTSA News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p BUHS-TV News: Mon-Fri 12:15p & 6:35p	Brattleboro Development Review Board 11/15/23: Wed 4p, Sat 5p
St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board Special Mtg. 11/14/23: Mon 8:55a, Wed 4:55p & 5:55p, Thurs 11:20a, Fri 11:50a, Sat 5:55p
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service : Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p	West River Education District Board Mtg. 11/13/23: Tues 6p, Wed 9:30a, Thurs 11:30a
Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a	Town Matters - Weekly Episode : Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p
St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass : Sat 4p (LIVE), Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p	The David Pakman Show : Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

Note: Schedule subject to change.

View full schedule and watch online at

brattleboroTV.org

BCTV's Program Highlights are sponsored by The Commons. BCTV's municipal meeting coverage helps Commons reporters stay in touch Read about it in the Town & Village section at www.commonsnews.org

Brattleboro Community Television – 257-0888

said, referring to how social media and news organizations have cultivated this message. "If we can't move past it, it's going to take us down."

Laughlin served on the Selectboard from 2006 to 2023. This is the stuff that we talked about again and again at the Selectboard level," he said. "It's just so frustrating that the stories that are cultivated are often the ones that people who don't know better are willing to listen to."

He said he gained much of his perspective on homelessness and poverty in Putney while he served on the fire department and with Rescue Inc. during the 1990s.

"You go to people's homes, you see how they're living, and you realize how tenuous it is," he said. 'You get a streak of bad luck,

which puts you in a pretty bad place pretty quickly," Laughlin continued. "And once you hit that bad luck, the recovery is really, really challenging. Because as soon

are probably a payment or two away from losing their housing," said Laughlin.

"I deeply love our community and feel that the way we work together often does lend itself to a sense of utopia," said Chapman. "But I also have lived and bear witness to the other side. There is a huge class divide and many people are struggling in this community.³

"I am not sure that I would refer to their current circumstances as a utopia," Champman added.

Affordable housing

With two town committees focused on creating more housing, and a mixed-income housing project slated for construction this spring, Putney has put a spotlight on the housing issue.

The town's affordable housing advisory committee was established by the Selectboard in 2008 to promote and support affordable housing in town. Then, as that stigma is attached to you, in 2023, the Putney Housing Trust ever since they've been in

There's no perfect model

Laughlin is frustrated with the opposition to new, mixedincome housing in town. "If we were truly the progressive town that we think we are, we would be welcoming people who needed homes," he said.

Laughlin served for five years on the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, which has been working since 1988 to fund affordable housing and conservation projects in the state.

Stating that "there's no perfect model" for building and managing affordable housing, Laughlin praised the nonprofit for its work. We are really lucky to have Windham & Windsor Housing Trust in our neck of the woods," he said. "They're really good at what they do.

Goddard also expressed admiration for WWHT. "I've worked with representatives from Windham & Windsor Housing

"That is our cross to bear as Putney, as Vermont, and as the United States. We must do better," Chapman said

Samara Fund awards grants to support local LGBTQ+ led projects, organizations

Vermont Community Foundation is pleased to announce \$86,710 in grants to 23 organizations across the state in this year's competitive grant round.

These grants include funding for LGBTQ+ events, projects, and organizational operating support. The Fund also gave 19 scholarships totaling \$18,320 to graduating seniors from across the state.

Combined with three out-ofcycle grants, this is an unprecedented \$112,230 in grants and scholarships in a single year from the Samara Fund since it moved to the Vermont Community Foundation.

This grantmaking was made possible by donors to Our Work is Not Done: Campaign for the Samara Fund, as well as ongoing donors to the fund. Grantmaking this year reflects the newly released values and priorities of the Samara Fund. The core values include:

• Being anti-racist and antioppressive by practicing intersectionality, power-shifting, and nally and externally. This includes being proudly trans-inclusive in every level of Samara's work.

• Being transparent with the community and funders about how Samara works.

• Queering fundraising and redistributing wealth for a bigger impact on the Vermont LGBTQ+ community.

• Prioritizing accessibility, gratitude, and accountability while queering Samara's work to make it fun, connective, and sustainable.

Samara funding priorities are: • Queer- and trans-led projects and organizations.

• Projects that center, are led by, or prioritize BIPOC and/or

trans Vermonters.

· Elders and youth.

Queers with disabilities.

(including HIV/AIDS prevention and advocacy). · Projects working meaning-

fully beyond Chittenden County. Smaller-budget projects.

• Long-term projects.

The Samara Fund at the transformative justice both inter- recipients in Windham County include:

• AIDS Project of Southern Vermont in Brattleboro, which has received \$4,000 for general operating support. These funds will support the work of harm reduction and prevention, including outreach programs aimed at educating LGBTQ+ and others in rural communities about HIV prevention and safe practices.

The funds will also support direct services, including access to medical care, mental heath and substance use resources, and assistance with housing and transportation. Their primary population served includes HIV+ individuals and their families and partners in Windham, Bennington, and southern Windsor counties.

• Epsilon Spires in Brattleboro • Work that is harm reduction has received \$2,500 for Connecting Queer Farmers and Community with Pop-up Dinners and Drag Performances. This project expands upon their recently successful "Golden Girls Drag Brunch" and will support Samara Fund 2023 grant two future thematic drag events

with a sliding-scale ticketing structure paired with pop-up community meal experiences that are artist-led and curated by queer performers, culinary artists, and local farmers.

• Out in the Open in Brattleboro has received \$5,000 for Rural LGBTQ+ Movement Building. These general operating funds will support work throughout the state with rural LGBTQ+ Vermonters including summits, retreats, fellowships, peer support and social groups, and community organizing.

• The Root Social Justice Center in Brattleboro has received \$5,000 to support ongoing programming including Youth for Change, a mutual aid support network, affinity spaces, and more.

• Twin States Network of Guilford has received \$1,000 for administrative expenses, including the salary of their executive director.

Visit vermontcf.org/samara for more information about the Samara Fund.

TOWNSHEND

Journeying away to see the world — and our connections

Leland & Gray students to travel to the Mississippi Delta, the Mekong Delta, and France to study food and culture

By Virginia Ray The Commons

OWNSHEND—A group of Leland & Gray High School students will spend the spring semester exploring food systems and culture here at home, then travel south to several Gulf Coast states, as well as Vietnam and France, to study how food is grown, produced, distributed, prepared, and consumed. To raise money and help pay

the estimated \$140,000 needed for the 15 students and three teachers expected to participate, the group prepared and served a Community Dinner in Town Hall on Nov. 3. They raised about \$6,000 at the meal, for which food was all locally sourced and donated.

Students will receive credit in 20th-century social studies, natural history, math, and English for the course, and their work will culminate in a "Voices and Portraits of Journey Away" proj-ect to be shared with the public in late May 2024.

Junior Wyatt Houle says for him, "understanding agriculture and food systems in other countries is a powerful means of appreciating cultural diversity, fostering global connections, and building a more harmonious world.

Houle says food "serves as a worldwide bridge that brings people from various backgrounds, offering insights into traditions, ecosystems, and societies."

"As we explore different culipractices, we gain a broader She also believes "it's good to travel while you're young." "A lot of people look back

and say they wish they'd traveled, but no one looks back and says they wish they hadn't," she says. "It's good to value other cultures. Learning about that can change your way of life and help you appreciate what you have a lot more.'

Ely White, a junior, also par-ticipated in the program last year and "thoroughly enjoyed it."

"I love to travel and have always dreamed of traveling the world, and gaining that experience at such a young age is really important," he says. "It offers the ability to step out-side your comfort zone and see things you wouldn't have seen. Your economic status or whatever doesn't matter — you can go no matter who you are; that's one of the amazing things about the program."

White also considers food to be "an important part of culture," which he finds "interesting."

"Learning about how foods are grown produced and distrib-uted will be really interesting to me, and I hope will teach me also about how to make new foods," he says

Reinvigorating the China program

Journey Away Director Jessa Harger was hired after the pandemic to "breathe some fresh air" into the then-Journey East program, which was based in travel to China.

She used Project-Based nary traditions and agricultural Learning (PBL) time — 100 minutes each week for middle and high school dedicated to the new program on Wednesdays — and set out to redesign the Journey East program while raising money for and designing a program to study climate disasters in New York City and New Orleans. Last year, a group of students, including Wright and White, spent 10 days traveling by train to New York City and New Orleans, interviewing people in both locations about their experiences with major storms such as Hurricanes Katrina and Ida in New Orleans, and Superstorm Sandy in New York City. As it turned out, the new program was just what Harger was looking for, and Journey Away became the new vision for the school's foreign travel program. "It opened things up,"says Harger. "We don't have to just go east; we can go anywhere."



Leland & Gray students raised approximately \$6,000 at a community dinner at the Townshend Town Hall last month. The funds will go toward Journey Away, a spring semester abroad program that will take the kids from southern Vermont to the Gulf Coast, to Vietnam, and to France to compare and contrast cultures and food systems.

Gray's Project-Based Learning initiatives. The West River Education District continues to support Journey Away with \$31,000 each year as part of the Leland & Gray school operating budget.

Grant applications are in process with a number of local foundations, and Harger will be applying for the Farm-to-School Vision Grant with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.

'It's not nothing'

Harger is also working with other programs that focus on helping youth around food systems in partnerships, such as Food Connects and Shelburne Farms.

She clearly has a passion for helping her students not only broaden their horizons but better understand food systems and culture — at home and abroad.

"Getting these kids from rural New England out in the world is not nothing," she says, noting that last year one girl had never been to a city before she stepped off the train in New York.

"And for so many students, having random adults in the world taking these kids seriously really changed things for them. Plus their ability to work together and understand cultural context. It's remarkable, really. It's moving," Harger says.

geographical similarities between the Mississippi Delta and Mekong Delta in Vietnam. Additionally, many refugees from Vietnam immigrated to the Southern states during and after the Vietnam War, bringing Vietnamese culture to the Mississippi Delta."

The common bond of students in both New Orleans and the

County, we know well the destruction that comes with severe storms, which is something that folks in the Gulf states have been experiencing for a long time," Harger says.

We can learn a lot about adaptive practices from the places we visit, as the entire world is faced with these increasingly dramatic and destructive storms," she adds.

In addition to food culture and production, the trips will include explorations of how the region's history and culture intertwine.

The first stop is to be Birmingham, Alabama, where students will spend time exploring the Jones Valley Teaching Farm, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, and the Equal Justice Initiative. In Leland, Mississippi, they will learn about food and land cooperatives organized by Black folks during the Civil Rights era. In New Orleans, the group will volunteer with Common Ground Relief in the Ninth Ward, the area of the city that suffered the most from Hurricane Katrina, helping plant sea grass in salt marshes and working in a local food hub. "It's impossible to explore the topics of climate and food without also understanding racial justice and equity," says Harger. 'Blues and jazz are big in the Delta, and we will try to see some music and learn some music history while in the area, too.' From New Orleans, students will depart for Vietnam and spend a week living at a farm stay in the Mekong Delta region before heading north by train to Hanoi and Ha Long Bay. This will be the first school-sponsored international trip since the pandemic. "Many Vermont students have family members that were impacted by the Vietnam War, and we will look at ways in which repair has happened for the landscape and people of Vietnam," Harger says. In France, the group will look at fruit and dairy production to 'see the similarities and differences between food production in Vermont and France" and spend time exploring the concept of "terroir," or food being special because it's from a special landscape, as expressed through culture. "Everywhere we go we will explore the United Nations" Sustainable Development Goals and make observations about where and how they are, and are not, implemented," says Harger. "We will look at large- and smallscale farms to learn various practices and techniques. We hope to share meals with all of the people we meet with to learn ways in which food brings people together.' While the choice to travel to the East has no particular tie-in to the lifting of travel bans to Mongolia and China, says Harger, Leland & Gray has had a long-standing commitment to cultural exchange, starting with the Journey East program.

students to explore different themes and parts of the world, and if it makes sense to revisit the partnerships with inner Mongolia and China in the future, we cer-tainly can," Harger says. "It's an

"Journey Away has enabled absolute privilege to be able to take these kids and show them the world."

> To donate to the Journey Away program, visit app.99pledges.com/ fund/journeyawa.

West River Valley — that both Home energy assistance have seen their homes damaged or destroyed by extreme weather caused by climate change — is funding released for the also a part of the choice. "Here in central Windham 2023–24 heating season

> WATERBURY—The Department for Children and Families (DCF) announced the release of \$12 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding for households that heat with fuel oil, propane, kerosene, coal, electricity, and natural gas. This funding helps keep thousands of Vermonters warm during the winter months.

> The benefit was sent directly to certified fuel dealers on behalf of approximately 13,000 households, and the average benefit was \$933 per household. Individual notices of benefit amounts are being mailed to program participants. Earlier this year, 1,897

encourages any Vermonter who believes they may be eligible for the benefit to apply.

Households may be eligible for Seasonal Fuel Assistance if their gross household incomes are equal to or less than 185% of the federal poverty level. For example, a family of four with a gross monthly income of up to \$4,625 may qualify for the benefit.

Households may be eligible for Crisis Fuel Assistance if their gross household incomes are equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty level and they are experiencing a heating crisis (e.g., out of fuel and have no money to buy more). For example, a family of four with a gross monthly in-

perspective on the world, nurturing empathy, tolerance, and respect for various worldviews,' he continues.

This knowledge equips us to tackle global challenges collaboratively, while the culinary and cultural experiences we gather enrich our lives and turn us into more informed, compassionate, and globally conscious individuals, laying the foundation for a brighter, interconnected future," Houle adds.

Sophomore Grace Wright participated in a similar project last year and visited New York City and New Orleans while studying natural disasters.

"I had a lot of fun and learned a lot," Wright says. "My fam-ily's been a part of study abroad things, and they learned a lot of important life lessons. I thought, 'Why not try it?'"

She believes it's "really important to learn about where our food is from, because many people are buying bad food, and it's good to source local food."

"Especially in Townshend, there are a lot of farms, and to support local farms is everything," Wright adds.

Raising the funds

With Journey Away open to all students, fundraising is essential. Apart from fall fundrais-

ing, the course has received a \$15,000 grant from the Stratton Foundation, which also contributes \$22,000 overall to Leland and

"We're looking at food — everything from how it is grown to how it is produced, distributed, prepared, and consumed," she adds. "Food is so much part of Vermont culture. You can't go anywhere without someone proudly handing you a slice of apple pie or a piece of cheese.'

The study, says Harger, also includes working with hunger questions, including, "How are we going to solve world hunger when the global population is due to hit 9 billion people in the next 50 years?"

And, she adds, "we're look-ing at small-scale farms in the East versus massive tracts in the west growing only a few products; corn, soy, wheat, and rice are grown the most."

Selecting the itinerary

Students will return to the South, says Harger, because, "when we were in New Orleans last year looking at climate disasters and mitigation strategies, we learned there are a lot of

IESSA HARGER/COURTESY PHOTO



Students work to prepare the locally sourced community dinner.

households that heat with wood and pellets were issued benefits.

This year's fuel price is expected to average about \$4.25 per gallon, a 56-cent per gallon reduction over last year's average price. The LIHEAP benefit is used to help supplement heating budgets, and the Department

come of up to \$5,000 may qualify for the benefit.

For more information, visit the Fuel Assistance page at dcfvermont.gov (dcf.vermont.gov/ benefits/fuel), or contact the Benefits Service Center at 1-800-479-6151 to apply.



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COLUMN | Deeper Dive

'Cut and fit, cut and fit'

Brattleboro contractor finds his niche in preservation of windows in historic buildings, including Pierce's Hall in Putney

Putney ISTORICAL RESTORA-TION is an art form that attempts to preserve and connect us with our roots. In Putney, one of our historical landmarks is Pierce's Hall, built circa 1831, which has served as a community center and dance hall for over a century.

A committed group of citizens has kept the hall operative for decades, restoring the roof and providing space for monthly contra dances, potlucks, celebrations, community presentations, and even food shelf pop-ups.

Once upon a time, the Ladies' Aid Society used the building for making care packages for soldiers during the world wars. Recently, building maintenance has been carried out on a shoestring budget with lots of elbow grease.

WHEN PIERCE'S HALL was the 2023 winner of a matching grant through the 1772 Foundation and the Preservation Trust of Vermont, Thomas McLoughlin's name was highly recommended for the restoration work involved.

IRENE CANARIS is a writer from East Putney and secretary of the board of the East Putney Community Club, Inc., the nonprofit associated with Pierce's Hall and Contradance. The Commons' Deeper Dive column gives artists, arts organizations, and other nonprofits elbow room to write in first person and/or be unabashedly opinionated, passionate, and analytical about their own creative work and events.

Originally a building contractor from New Jersey, McLoughlin came to southern Vermont in 2007 with his family to join his brother and sister-in law, Charlie and Mary McLoughlin, high school teachers at Brattleboro Union High School.

As a young man, Tom McLoughlin had an early interest in historic restoration. Raised in the New Jersey suburbs, he recalls taking apart the windows in his childhood house, built circa 1920, to see how they worked.

McLoughlin later found a vocation for his interests in the restoration of historical home features for clients, saving them from major expenses in modern window replacements. He worked as a contractor in his home state for 25 years before moving to Vermont.

It took three years for McLoughlin to find steady window restoration work in Vermont. He went door to door distributing fliers and became involved with Efficiency Vermont. Word of mouth and collaboration with local builders gave him a boost.

His focus on energy efficiency made him realize how many people "never opened their windows because they were painted shut or they were really drafty," he said. From 2010 to 2015, he concentrated on energy efficiency through window restoration. Preserving existing windows is a strong sustainability action recom-mended by Efficiency Vermont. McLoughlin is also a member of the Seon Group, an organization focused on the science of sustainable building practices. A Vermont restoration

Can media help solve society's problems?

Online discussion looks at 'solutions journalism' as a benefit to a healthy democracy

BRATTLEBORO—The to establish a leading shift in Needs to Know. public is invited to attend a journalism as an integral part Joining the c Media Mentoring panel discussion on Thursday, Nov. 30, at 7 p.m. on Zoom about a different approach to media that seeks to uncover and report on how people are trying to solve problems – not just the bad news, but what's working and why - offering communities with information they need to participate

in a healthy democracy. Leading this global shift in journalism is MMP guest David Bornstein, CEO and co-founder of the Solutions Journalism Network, which is working *Entrepreneurship: What Everyone*

of mainstream news - rigorous and compelling reporting on responses to social problems.

Bornstein has been a journalist for 30 years. From 2010-21, he co-authored the "Fixes" column in The New York Times, which focused on social innovation. He is the author of *How* to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas, which has been published in 25 languages; The Price of a Dream: The Story of the Grameen Bank, and Social

Joining the discussion from The Commons is Editor Jeff Potter and News Editor Randy Holhut. Joyce Marcel, writer of award-winning cover stories for Vermont Business Magazine and a government reporter for The Commons, will moderate.

News reporters and editors, nonprofits, Selectboards, freelance journalists, changemakers, and anyone who wants to be part of the solution are invited to attend.

To get the Zoom link to this presentation, visit bit. ly/742-solutions-journalism.

A close-up view of one of the decorative fans that grace the windows of Pierce's Hall in East Putney.

architect contacted McLoughlin for a bid on the restoration of the Fletcher Memorial Library in Ludlow through the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

He now divides his time between work for private homeowners and historic restoration. Word has gotten out — today, McLoughlin has contracts all over the state, and he is featured in the Preservation Trust's Vermont Restoration Directory.

In his many years restoring windows in Vermont, McLoughlin has worked on numerous churches, libraries, and historic homes. Lately, he has worked on one-room schoolhouses throughout Vermont and is currently finishing up the historic windows of the Wood Block Opera House in Hoosick Falls, New York.

ONCE PIERCE'S HALL completed its community fundraising efforts, McLoughlin was retained to restore all 11 of the building's windows and the entry door. Each window was removed to his shop, and muntins were replaced. Period glass was restored when possible.

An interesting feature of the Pierce's Hall work is the restoration of the 1831 decorative fans. The work was completed through a matching grant from the Vermont 1772 Foundation and the Vermont Historic Preservation Fund.

McLoughlin's lifelong pas-sion for taking things apart and reconstructing them was definitely put to a test. "It was fun for a while," he says.

There is no template for the mathematical construction of



Tom McLoughlin, a historic restoration specialist, worked on many of the windows and the entry door to Pierce's Hall in East Putney.

the fan, he said. Each individual blade has its own dimension, angle, and twist.

Every fan blade is a different length and a different shape," he says. "Luckily, the arch was intact, and it had grooves. The grooves were there, so I just had to work backwards from the grooves to the center, or the sun. Cut and fit, cut and fit. Each of the old blades were nailed in with a little cut nail, which is a really fine nail made by blacksmiths at the time."

The fans themselves served no function beyond the ornamentation of their day, but the present-day bats love them as a place to hide away.

McLoughlin works with his new colleague, Adam Grimes, who has a master's degree in art history and applies his art and historic preservation knowledge daily, in a hands on manner. Grimes and his partner have recently moved to Brattleboro, where McLoughlin and his familv also reside.





Wednesday, November 29, 2023

COLUMN | Creative Conversations



Kris Yunker holds a monthly funk residency at The Stone Church in Brattleboro with a rotating crew of topnotch musicians.

Funk night residency brings mix of music to area

Kris Yunker curates lineups of 'who's who of top regional players' at Stone Church

Brattleboro hen Guilfordbased keyboardist Kris Yunker, 39, moved to the area three years ago, he said to himself "Brattleboro needs a funk night." He got in touch with Robin Johnson, and the owner of the Stone Church loved the idea.

The Stone Church's final funk night of 2023 will take place Wednesday, Dec. 6. The series will start up again on



in various projects and bands, including Alan Evans Trio, On The Spot Trio (with his musical brother guitarist Danny Mayer), Jen Durkin and the Business, Wubakia, Soulive, Drew Angus, Love Raptor, and The 7 Day Weekend, just to name a few.

VICTORIA CHERTOK covers arts and entertainment in Vermont for The Commons. She is a classically trained harpist and received a B.A. in music at Bucknell University.

single, "To Be Fair," with Karl Denson, Will Bernard, Mike Dillon, Alan Evans, and the BT/ALC horns (Brian "B.T." Thomas and Alex Lee-Clark) on the Vintage League Music label. He also teaches keyboard students at his home studio, records tracks for other musicians, and works on his girlfriend Kelly Burr's web series If WeReally Were Witches. Yunker has lived all over the country, including in his home state of Texas, in Hawaii, and In Santa Cruz, California, where he attended college. He settled in southern Vermont because "the town of Brattleboro spoke to me," he says.

"I wanted to be close enough to the city but also in nature, because I feel more inspired whenever I'm in a more natural environment," Yunker adds. "I love the community of Brattleboro, and it surely has great, conscious-minded people." "You can really feel how en-

meshed Kris is with the scene here, how much care he takes to cultivate the relationships and build the musical synergy. And he's just an absolute bomb player, so fun to watch. Funk nights are pretty magical," says Erin Scaggs, director of programming and community outreach at The Stone Church. Yunker invites a rotating cast of special guests who share similar views about him and his funk night residency.

Holiday arts roundup 2023

A winter season of creative arts activity

By Annie Landenberger The Commons

his season seems to be the perfect time to support area artists and presenters, performers, and craftspeople - an apt opportunity to show gratitude for the riches that the arts bring to our lives in southern Vermont.

This year's abundance runs the gamut, promising chances to buy great one-of-a-kind gifts and to enjoy top-notch entertainments.

Here's to warming up to the cold, finding light in the darkness, and stepping out to embrace the arts. Enjoy!

Fairs, Markets, Workshops

• Festival of Trees: Governor Hunt House Community Center, Vernon, Dec. 1-3, will feature dozens of beautifully decorated holiday trees, with valuable merchandise and gift certificates under each tree. Raffle tickets will be sold to attendees, and each tree — with the accompanying gifts — will be taken home by a winner. Baked goods, kids' activities. Christmas tree lighting, and Santa's arrival, Friday, 4:30 p.m.; carols by the tree, 4:30-4:45 p.m.; pictures with Santa, 5–6 p.m.; Saturday: Fireplace photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, 1–4 p.m. All proceeds

(ascvt.org).

• Brattleboro Flea Holiday Pop-up Market: Dec. 1, 1 to 7 p.m., and Dec. 2, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Brooks House Atrium, 132 Main St., Brattleboro (brattleboroflea. com).

Brattleboro's Gallery

Walk: Dec. 1, 5 to 9 p.m., hosts a pull-out-all-the-stops event featuring tree lighting, a cappella carolers, and a panoply of art and craft all along the route. Check out Brattleboro Museum & Art Center and galleries at 118 Elliot, Harmony Collective, Vermont Center for Photography, Mitchell-Giddings, Gallery in the Woods, Vermont Artisans Designs, Gallery 34. And don't miss the art hanging at Martocci's or the unique wares at ZPots, Beadniks, and Cara Wolff Jewelry. Hatchspace celebrates winter sharing craft and products made by budding woodworkers and seasoned, perennial craftspeople, and Centre Congregational Church pitches in selling handmade quilts (brattleboro.com).

 Brattleboro-West Arts' exhibit hangs in the Brooks House Atrium (see above) through January 2024 with works by BWA mem-bers Jen Wiechers, Kay Curtis, Maisie Crowther, Cyndi Ferrante, Jason Breen, Naomi Lindenfeld, and Steve Lloyd. Individual artists can be contacted directly through brattleboro-west-arts.com to

Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2024.

Previous special guests of Funk Night have included Russ Lawton, Eric Kalb, Fuzz Sangiovanni, Tim Palmieri, Elise Testone, Molly Es, Johnny Trauma, Billy Ruegger, Jon Fisher, Pierre Aleksi, Dan Thomas, and Colin Jalbert.

A much-sought-after professional musician, Yunker has played (and continues to play)

In 2017, he played and toured with the band Goose, just before recording his first solo album, "Bicoastal Waves.

He has just accepted the keyboardist position with Bearly Dead, a Boston-based Grateful Dead tribute band. He also started a Hammond organ funk trio, Yunker Funker.

He has recently released a

"It's not often I get to play such a fun, fulfilling gig with ■ SEE YUNKER, B4 support the Community Center (governorhunt.org). Information: govhuntcc@ gmail.com.

• All Souls Unitarian Universalist Holiday **Bazaar:** Dec. 2, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. In addition to crafts and edibles, find the All Souls' firstever Art Gift Sale, featuring affordable, original selections. West Village Meeting House, 29 South St., West Brattleboro

purchase exhibited artwork or to inquire about other work.

 Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market, Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Live local music and handcrafted gifts; produce and products from local farms. At the Winston Prouty Center, 209 Austine Drive, Brattleboro (brattleborowinterfarmersma rket.org)

■ SEE HOLIDAY ARTS, B2

Vocal Ensemble Seraphic Fire performs in Grafton on Dec. 2

GRAFTON-Grammynominated vocal ensemble Seraphic Fire brings their a cappella voices to Vermont for a Christmas concert at the Grafton Brick Meeting House, 2 Main St., on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023 at 7 p.m.

The South Florida-based choir will perform festive carols from varied traditions alongside newer takes on classics

Grammy-nominated vocal ensemble Seraphic Fire comes to the **Grafton Brick Meeting** House on Dec. 2.

from contemporary composers. Seraphic Fire's associate conductor, James K. Bass, will lead the

ensemble of 13 singers. Bass is also the Director of Choral Studies at UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music and won the 2020 Grammy for Best Choral Performance for his work as choirmaster on the Naxos recording of The Passion of Yeshua.

This is the only performance by Seraphic Fire Christmas outside of South Florida, making this a special opportunity for Northerners to hear this nationally recognized choral ensemble. Tickets are \$35 and may be purchased at SeraphicFire.org/ christmas-on-tour or by phone at 305-285-9060.

Publication of this week's Calendar is underwritten by BERKLEY & VELLER GREENWOOD COUNTRY REALTORS • www.berkleyveller.com



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<text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text> FROM SECTION FRONT

Cann. Dress warmly." Brookline Meetinghouse, 632 Grassy Brook Rd., Brookline (brooklinevt.com).

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Holiday arts

Vunker

not only musicians that I've looked up to for so long, but also have become some of my best friends," says Mike Oehmen, a saxophonist based in Hartford, Connecticut who plays with Mihali and West End Blend, and Yunker, who will return to play on Dec. 6.

The Commons caught up with Kris Yunker recently by phone to talk about his Funk Night Residency, his passion for vintage instruments and gear, and what he likes about playing this style of music. Here's an excerpt of the conversation.

VICTORIA CHERTOK: What have you been up to lately?

KRIS YUNKER: I've been recording tons of albums with the Alan Evans trio and The 7 Day Weekend, with special guests Elise Testone and Sonya Rae Taylor. There are singles currently out and available on all streaming services with full albums coming out soon.

V.C.: Cool! Let's talk about vour Funk Night residency at the Stone Church. Your next one is on Dec. 6. Who will be joining you on stage?

K.Y.: I'll have Adrian Tramontano, drummer for Kung Fu and Twiddle; he also had a band called Psychedelic Breakfast. Justin Henricks, guitar, will play with Beau Sausser; he has a band, Wurliday. Mike Oehmen, tenor sax, plays with Mihali and West End Blend, and Gershon Rosen, on trumpet, plays with Bella's Bartok.

v.c.: What is the origin of Brattleboro's Funk Night?

K.Y.: It started in February 2023, so we're closing in on about one year now. I've lived in the area for three years, and anywhere I move, I like to get residencies going. Funk night just works.

I was thinking of doing it at the former Metropolis but I was like, let me hit up Robin [Johnson] and see what he thinks. He loved the idea.

A few months later we got it rolling. I've always liked the idea of having a regular thing where I can pull in all the musicians that \overline{I} don't get to play with regularly; a nice rotating cast

v.c.: How do you describe Funk music?

K.Y.: Funk is music that gets in your soul that makes you

move and dance. It originated from James Brown and spread out in all facets of music after Brown started doing his thing. I try to cover all of that

— like jazz, disco, funk, jam bands, etc. I'm an organ player myself, and I gravitate towards a lot of funky organ-player music. It's interrelated. It really gets you moving on the dance floor.

v.c.: What do you like about performing at the Stone Church?

K.Y.: I love the vibe at the Church and everyone who runs the place. They are all really good people, and they create a great atmosphere. It also sounds great, and they have really good lights.

I'm all about the vibe with places that I play in. If the vibe is high and it feels good, that is one of the most important parts of a show.

v.c.: When did you first start playing keys, and who were your early music influences?

K.Y.: At age 2, I started playing my mom's piano. She started teaching me piano, and I started taking up organ in high school — I got into the music of American keyboard player and composer John Medeski.

My dad introduced me to Jimmy Smith. I grew up in Texas and was listening to The Doors, Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder and big-band music. Oscar Peterson is one of my biggest piano influences.

v.c.: When did you know you wanted to do this professionally?

K.Y.: I knew in my soul my whole life — especially when I did piano performances as a kid and everyone would tell me it was really great. I just knew in every fiber of my being that this is what I came here to do on this planet.

It's always been a struggle to figure out how to make that work. The artist life is a lot different from the normal career path for people. I had to make ends meet with weird jobs like construction, farmers' markets, and iPhone sales.

At some point, I said to myself, "I want to make my entire income from music." That was, like, five years ago. I've gotten to that point now, and it is solidly that career.

v.c.: You play a variety of

FROM SECTION FRONT

organs and pianos, from vintage Fender Rhodes, Ludwigs, and your favorite Hammond A-100, to modern synthesizers with MIDI technology. Which of those do you bring to Funk Night?

K.Y.: I like to bring different vintage keyboards; they have a lot more depth to them, because they have strings and metal parts. They have a life of their own.

The clavinet is like the funky stringed instrument on Stevie Wonder's "Superstition." I sometimes bring out the Fender Rhodes. I have two digital keyboards that I hook up to my computer for bass sounds.

v.c.: You call the Hammond organ "one of the toughestbuilt things ever in America," likening it to a 1950s refrigerator, and you've said also that "it is the focal point of [your] gig array.

K.Y.: Laurens Hammond was a clockmaker; he invented the first synchronic clock and came up with the idea. They were building things that last for a long time. The Hammond organ was the first electric organ made to just be a stand-in for pipe organs for churches that couldn't afford the large pipe organs.

And then this guy built a Leslie speaker for it to toss the sound around. Even though Hammond didn't want his organ sold that way, the instrument just became an iconic piece of American music, rock 'n' roll, and all music. It's become an iconic piece.

My Hammond A-100 organ still functions even though I've put barely any work into it. They were built in Chicago in the 1950s, and it was the price of a car back then.

V.C.: Did you have any formal piano training?

K.Y.: I had a piano teacher and did all the band classes in school. Jim Carmichael was the local church organist in town who taught me classical piano and theory. I went to Cabrillo College in Santa Cruz, California and studied with Ray Brown, who was Stan Kitman's arranger. He was well known for his jazz arrangements. I studied jazz with him for four vears

v.c.: You play with lots of other bands and have guested with other bands. Tell me about Goose and Bearly Dead.

Schweigert work at Crowell Gallery

NEWFANE—For the month of December, the Crowell Art Gallery, 23 West St., presents "There and Back Again," an exhibit by Carol Schweigert. A reception with the artist will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Schweigert returned to oil painting during a brief visit to Vermont in the summer of 2007. Ready to take a break from her illustration and design work, she signed up for a Plein Air workshop in Bennington.

"Plein Air, with its swift application, seemed to fit easily into my life," she said in a news release. "I found it was the process of painting, as much as the final image that I enjoyed. The abstract expressionism of my past art education became so 'last century' to me.

Schweigert moved to southern Vermont nearly four years ago, traveling about the area with her French easel enjoying the fresh air. "Plein air painting hints of an extreme sport with slippery slopes, lightning storms, and friendly cows," she said. "You win a few and lose a few."

She said she is intrigued by the contradiction of carrying a 19th-century kit into the 21st

K.Y.: Goose was amazing. I toured with them for a year. I love those guys. I've been talking to them, and they want to come up and do some funk nights. Maybe we will get one of those guys up here.

I'm also playing keyboards with Bearly Dead. I'm friends with Matt Butler, their vocalist, through Soul Live, and I know all those guys — I tried a few shows in Virginia with them. I



"From the Marina" by Carol Schweigert.

century to find out what makes a piece live in the moment.

Schweigert paints in both oil and gouache, indoors and out. While she relishes the spontaneity of Plein Air, during a very rainy season, she paints from her own photographs. The exhibit at the Crowell Art Gallery provides a glimpse of her 16 years of work. She is a member of the National Association

like that they are high energy; they do funky versions of Dead songs.

I get to do what I want to do as a keyboardist. For me, it's fun to explore and use the songs as a platform to launch into something else. I am a jazz head. I love and appreciate the Grateful Dead but don't consider myself a Deadhead. It's cool. It's a perfect fit.

of Women Artists, Brattleboro Urban Sketchers, Concord Art, and the Artists Group of Charlestown.

The gallery, located in the Moore Free Library, is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 1 to 5 p.m., Thursdays from 1 to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Funk Night at the Stone Church, 210 Main Street, Brattleboro, takes place on the first Wednesday of each month. The next one is on Wednesday, Dec. 6. Doorsopen at 7 p.m.; show is at 8 p.m. For more information and to buy tickets, visit stonechurchvt.org. For more information about Yunker, visit krisyunker.com.

Latchis Gallery features artist Julia Volodina

BRATTLEBORO-On Dec. 1, during Gallery Walk, artist Julia Volodina will bring her decades of experience as a portrait artist to a demonstration and discussion of portrait painting at the Latchis Gallery, part of the historic Art Deco hotel-theatre-pub complex at 50 Main St.

She'll create a watercolor portrait of one of the attendees, chosen at random, and speak about her approach to creating portraits and some of her experiences from all over the world painting people's faces.

The artist will be accepting commissions during her residency as Featured Artist at the Latchis Gallery.

Volodina, a resident of



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Brattleboro and Cañete La Real Spain, completed rigorous art training in Russia, starting at age 12 through art college at the prestigious Saratov School of Art. Her work has been shown in Spain, Russia, Japan, Canada, and Brattleboro, and she has worked as a professional portrait artist for 30 years. She also hosts retreats/ painting trips for artists to Spain.

Visit facebook.com/juliartvt for updates on her residency at the Latchis, and view her portfolio and full website at juliavermont. com.

"Baba" by Julia Volodina.

Art by Carrie Gelfan on display at Oxbow Gallery

EASTHAMPTON, Mass.— the last two years, using mostly "Processions," a series of collages by Westminster artist Carrie Gelfan, will be on exhibit at the Oxbow Gallery, 40 Cottage St., Easthampton, Massachusetts, during the month of December. There will be an opening reception for the artist on Friday, Dec. 1 from 5 to 7 p.m. The public is invited.

The collages represent various groups of people on the move. They were completed within

materials the artist already had on hand at home, such as packing cardboard, newspaper, New Yorker magazines, sheet music, maps, construction paper, wall paper, and life drawings.

Gelfan studied art at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio; Cabrillo College in Soquel, California; and at the Art Students League in New York City, where she studied with portrait artist William Draper and with Will

Barnett.

Her work has been shown in numerous New England venues, both solo and group shows, and she is currently a member of the Oxbow Gallery.

Regular gallery hours are Thursday to Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. and Fridays, noon to 7 p.m. For information, call the Oxbow Gallery at 413-203-1196 or visit their Facebook page. For more information about the artist, visit carriegelfan.com.

NEYT presents 'The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical'

Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson *Musical*is set to take the stage at New England Youth Theatre (NEYT) for eight performances, running from a grand opening scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1, through Saturday, Dec. 9.

Adapted from *The New York* Times bestselling novel, this story follows Percy Jackson, a 12-yearold boy moving through the ever-so-relatable trials of adolescence. "This fantastical adventure rooted in Greek mythology promises to captivate audiences with its compelling characters and questcentered narrative," say orga-nizers. This local rendition is directed by Gabriel Pasculi and choreographed by NEYT Artistic Director Malia'Kekia Nicolini.

Two additional performances for sixth-grade students reading the Percy Jackson books in school are set for Thursday and Friday, Dec. 7 and 8. These community cal. "They have the same issues

BRATTLEBORO—The shows are district-wide events that will "bring literature to life" for students in the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union while also giving NEYT actors

community service hours. As described by NEYT: "In [Percy's] search for belonging, the extraordinary occurs as he discovers that he is a demigod. Aided by his closest friends, Percy embarks on an epic journey as he travels into the Underworld, where he attempts to save his mother and prevent war from breaking out. This coming-of-age tale is both endearing and edgy, with a musical score accompanied by a live rock band. Adventurous and imaginative in spirit, this tale is a must-see for all.'

"Each character has an underlying challenge similar to what people go through in their everyday lives" says ninth-grader Alex Aither, a lead actor in the musithat people have in our world, and it's cool to see how characters so young go about solving their issues in a fantasy realm.

Organizers say while the play certainly touches on challenges relevant in adolescence, its relevance expands beyond this specific time of life.

Director Gabriel Pasculli reenforces this sentiment. "What I love about this show is that everyone has superpowers, whether they are children of gods or not. Everyone is coming with some-thing special and trying to find their place in the world.

Show times are Fridays, Dec. 1 and 8, and Thursday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m.; Saturdays, Dec. 2 and 9, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday Dec. 3, 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale at \$11 for students, \$13 for seniors, and \$15 for adults, and may be purchased by calling 802-246-6398 or by visiting NEYT.org.

COLUMN | Deeper Dive

Celebrated vocalist to perform at benefit big-band concert

Scholarship Gala will raise thousands of dollars for musicians for whom Vermont Jazz Center's offerings are beyond financial reach

Brattleboro HE VERMONT JAZZ CENTER'S Big Band will present its Annual Scholarship Gala — the primary fundraiser for the VJC Scholarship Fund — on Friday, Dec. 1, at 7:30 p.m.

This year, the band will feature guest vocalist Alexis Cole, a singer who has performed at celebrated venues includ-Birdland Jazz Club, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the Blue Note. She has also sung as a soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

For six years, Cole served in the U.S. Army as the lead Jazz Knights. For her concert at the VJC, Cole will be singing the arrangements that were prepared for her by Scott Arcangel, the Knight's pianist and arranger.

Cole's most recent release (2021) is a collection of that repertoire, Sky Blossom: Songs From My Tour of Duty. She will sing some classics, include swing tunes like "Our Love is Here to Stay," "You Make Me Feel So Young," "Beyond the

She will also sing bossa novas such as "Corcovado," "Triste,"

She has recorded a dozen albums as a leader with such luminaries as pianist Harry Pickens and guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli. She has also appeared as a guest with pianist Harold Mabern on his album Afro Blue.

Cole is a world traveler who posts details of her journey on her blog. Originally from

EUGENE UMAN is director of the Vermont Jazz Center. The Commons 'Deeper Dive column gives artists, arts organizations, and other nonprofits elbow room to write in first person and/or be unabashedly opinionated, passionate, and analytical about their own creative work and events.

Queens, New York, she re-

ceived her undergraduate de-

gree from William Paterson

University and a master's de-

Queens College.

and hitchhiking.

Summit.

gree in jazz performance from

Directly after college, she served as an AmeriCorps vol-

unteer and then went to study

music in Mumbai, India with

the Jazz India Vocal Institute.

From 2000 to 2005, she traveled

extensively in Europe, busking

In 2020, Cole founded

cational community featur-

ing singing classes with some of the top names in vocal jazz. In 2021, she cofounded the an-

nual Virginia Beach Vocal Jazz

Formerly a professor of jazz voice at SUNY-Purchase and

Cole recently resigned from ac-

ademia to work on a new proj-

emerging musicians find per-

ect, musicauditions.com, to help

William Paterson University,

JazzVoice.com, an online edu-

ing The Carlyle, Carnegie Hall,

singer for the West Point Band's

Sea," and "Social Call."

and "Estate.'

forming opportunities around the world. THE VJC BIG BAND, under the leadership of Musical Director Rob Freeberg, is made up of

area professional musicians who come together to enjoy the rewards of playing invigorating, challenging, and historically significant repertoire while raising money for the VJC's Scholarship Fund.

The fund grants an annual average of \$27,000 worth of scholarships to students, offsetting fees for ensembles, private lessons, and VJC's

Alexis Cole

world-renowned summer jazz workshop. By attending this event you will be contributing to the scholarship fund; all proceeds will be earmarked towards benefiting students who otherwise would not be able to pursue their musical dreams.

This concert will be a hybrid event, with both live stream and in-person components. You can come to the Jazz Center to dance to the 16-piece band or create an intimate dance party in your home. Livestream viewers are encouraged to make an online donation to the Scholarship Fund in lieu of purchasing a ticket.

Freeberg, a seasoned trumpeter and big band conductor, leads the VJC's large ensemble with finesse and skill, drawing on his respect for the jazz legacy, an unerring ear, and decades of experience leading his own big band in the New York City region.

He moved to Dummerston in 2012, after retiring as director

of bands at New Rochelle (N.Y.) High School, where he taught for 30 years. He also serves as the musical director of the VJC Sextet and performs with the Windham Philharmonic.

This year the VJC Big Band celebrates its 19th season, thanks in great part to the persistence and organizational skills of its band manager, baritone saxophonist Sherm Fox. Organizing 16 musicians is no small task!

The VJC Big Band was originally a collaborative project initiated by Fox and Howard Brofsky (a.k.a., Dr. Bebop), the VJC's mentor and former board president, who died in 2013.

Previous headliners of this benefit concert have included Evan Arntzen, Amanda Carr, Houston Person, Dave Stryker, Samirah Evans, Rich Greenblatt, Mark Anagnostopulos, Rebecca Holtz, Kevin Mahogany, Miles Griffith, Peter Eldridge, Wanda Houston and timbalero Eguie Castrillo.

In addition to Freeberg and Fox, the members of the 2023 VJC Big Band include trumpeters Don Anderson, Rick Anderson, Haneef Nelson, and Joe Conti; woodwind

Next Stage hosts Argentinian duo César Lerner and Marcello Moguilevsky

PUTNEY—Next Stage than 20 years, he has been di-respresents Argentinian duo recting "Drum Circle," a plat-Arts presents Argentinian duo César Lerner and Marcello Moguilevsky playing their musical fusion of klezmer, tango, jazz, and South American folk music at Next Stage, 15

form for inclusion through music in areas of social services, art and education.

Moguilevsky is a multi-instrumentalist musician (clari-

players Michael Zsoldos, Matt Steckler, Carl Clements, and Donna Morse; trombonists Tim Atherton, Priyanka Magavi, Dave Sporny, and Amaranth Cole; and rhythm section members Eugene Uman (piano), Wes Brown (bass), and Steve Rice (drums).

Admission to this hybrid inperson/livestream event is offered for a sliding fee, starting at \$30. All seats are general admission and available at vtjazz. org and by emailing Alina Kulpaviciute at alina@vtjazz. org, who can also assist with accessibility needs. The streaming of this concert can be accessed at vtjazz.org and at facebook.com/ VermontJazzCenter/live.

latchis.com | 802.246.1500 **DECEMBER 1-7** NAPOLEON 3:45 & 6:40 FRIDAY SAT. & SUN. MON.-THUR 2 & 6:40 3:45 & 6:40 THE HOLDOVERS 4 / 6:45 / 9:10 FRIDAY SATURDAY 2 / 6:45 / 9:10 SUNDAY 2 & 6:45 M/W/TH. 4 & 6:45 THE HUNGER **GAMES: BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS** & SNAKES PG-13 FRIDAY 4 & 7 SAT. & SUN. MON.-THUR. 2:15 & 7 4&7 WISH 4:15 / 6:35 / 8:30 FRIDAY SATURDAY 2 / 6:35 / 8:30 SUNDAY 2 & 6:35 MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 6:35

NOW

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PLAYING



C1



Kimball Hill, on Saturday, Dec. 2, at 7:30 p.m.

The duo has played together for more than 40 years. Lerner and Moguilevsky are masters of their craft, threading various cultural ideas together into something new and exciting," Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, said in a news re-lease. "The thought that we're bringing artists from around the world to our region feels positive for our community."

Lerner is an Argentinian composer, pianist, accordion player and percussionist. Internationally renowned, he has composed the music for some of the most successful films in Argentina. For more 802-387-0102.

net, bass clarinet, soprano sax, recorder, harmonica and piano); composer, singer, and teacher. Since 2011, he has been Director of the Music Department of the National Fund and Professor of Musical Language in Fine Arts of the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (UNLP), in Buenos Aires.

This performance is supported in part by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and by AARP Vermont. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, and \$10 for access to the livestream at nextstagearts. org. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. For information, call

Festival of Trees

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Friday, Dec. 1, 4 - 8pm Saturday, Dec. 2, 11 - 8pm Sunday, Dec. 3, 11 - 3pm

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MEDIA MENTORING PROJECT

Not Just the Bad News... **Can Media Help Solve Society's Problems?**

The public is invited to attend a panel discussion about a different approach to media that seeks to uncover and report on how people are trying to solve problems - not just the bad news - but what's working and why - offering communities with

the information they need to participate in a healthy democracy.

Panelists (from left to right): David Bornstein - CEO and co-founder of the Solutions Journalism Network. Jeff Potter - Executive editor of

The Commons.

Randy Holhut - Editor of The Commons.

Who should attend?

News editors, non-profits, selectboards, reporters, freelancers, change-makers, and anyone who wants to be part of the solution.





Moderated by Joyce Marcel Writer of awardwinning cover stories for Vermont **Business Magazine** and government reporter for The Commons.

Join us via Zoom Thursday, November 30 at 7pm!

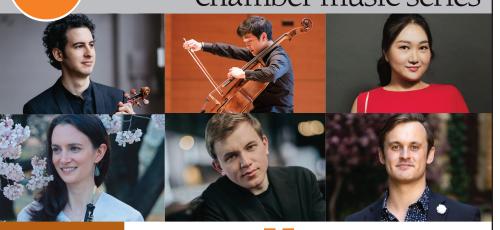
To register for the Zoom link, scan the QR code or email vermontartsliving@gmail.com



BM

BRATTLEBORO MUSIC CENTER chamber music series

More info:



Musicians from

Williams **Blake Songs** Grime Oboe Quartet Brahms Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 26

Saturday, Dec 2 7:00 pm

BMC Auditorium 72 Blanche Moyse Way, Brattleboro, VT Tickets: \$30 A limited number of reduced price tickets are available, please call the BMC for information

802.257.4523 bmcvt.org



Sandglass Theater presents 'Tricyckle'

PUTNEY—Sandglass Theater dreams. will present the Québécois theater company Les Sages Fous (Wise Fools) for two performances of *Tricyckle*. The performances are on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 1 and 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the Putney Central School gymnasium.

C2

A man in a Québec town, born in a cardboard box, roams the city collecting other people's junk. Why? And how does this junk transform his life and, possibly, ours?

Tricyckle is a dream-like adventure of mystery and transformation. A renegade "carny" from the Fairground rides a tricycle and pulls a trailer full of objects that seem most insignificant; boxes and scraps of things rusted and broken. However, hidden within is a deep puzzle of buried memories and fragmented

His tricycle becomes his accomplice, transforming itself at moments into a Wheel of Fortune, a Ferris wheel, a punch clock, a beautiful woman, and a beast. His trailer and the boxes within it reveal secrets, changing into cityscapes, back alleys, cargo ships, and fairgrounds. Through a strange and curious ritual of introspection, the tricycle guides the man to relive the cycles and images of his life in a search for freedom.

Les Sages Fous are inspired by men who roam the city of Trois-Rivières on their old tricycles, looking for all kinds of materials they carry on their makeshift trailers. The company is also inspired by people who make folk art -- those who are not professional artists with all the baggage the door; \$20 general admission, funded in part by touring support Touring program of the New arts agencies.

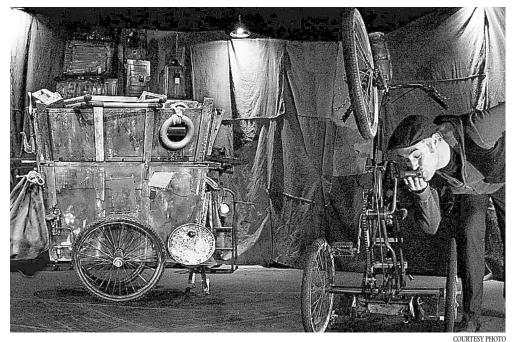
FRIDAY

and allegiance to the institutions involved.

With Tricyckle, Les Sages Fous say they hope to break down barriers between high culture and popular art. Les Sages Fous will be "transforming the Putney Central School gymnasium into a magical space for unusual theater with an intriguing musical score composed solely of invented instruments created with found objects," say organizers.

Les Sages Fous has been creating original puppetry performances for twenty years in Québec as well as abroad, and during that time, Les Sages Fous and Sandglass Theater have sustained a rich history of collaboration and exchange.

Tickets for Tricyckle are available at sandglasstheater.org and at



Les Sages Fous' "Tricyckle," will presented at Sandglass Theater on Dec. 1 and 2.

and \$16 for EBT & Medicaid cardholders.

Tricyckle is co-presented by the Putney Central School. It is

grant from The Vermont Arts Council with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New England States and the six New England state

\$18 for students and seniors, from the Québec government, a England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program

arts & community CALENDAR

SATURDAY CONT.

THURSDAY



8 p.m. Note: "If you're sad you've missed past episodes, never fear! We film all of our episodes for BCTV and they are available to stream online!".

Tickets by donation - suggested amount is \$10. Hooker-Dunham Theater, 139

Main St. Information: 802-281-3232; hookerdunham.org.

Community building WEST DUMMERSTON Dummerston Conservation Commission presents Peecyling for Clean Water and Fertile Farms": Join Rich Earth Institute to learn about the paradigm-shifting practice of peecycling: reclaiming a "waste" as an agricultural resource to complete food nutrient cycle. Human urine contains vital nutrients for growing crops. Communities can prevent downstream pollution, access an abundance of local

fertilizer, conserve clean water. For over a decade, Rich Earth Institute has operated the nation's first and largest communityscale peecycling program in So. VT. 7 p.m. In this presentation, Educa-tion Dir. Julia Cavicchi delves into how

this program works and provides an overview of the Institute's research. earn how to 'pee the chanae' by si

Performing arts BRATTLEBORO The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical: Book by Joe Tracz, Music & Lyrics by Rob Rokicki. Adapted from the book "The Lightning Thief" by Rick Riordan. Presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. In a world where things are not as they seem, how do we make sense of what is special about us? The Lightning Thief is a delightful quest of both personal and mythic proportions!

Performances: 12/1: 7 p.m., 12/2: 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., 12/3: 2 p.m., 12/7: 7 p.m., 12/8: 7 p.m., 12/9: 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. ► Through Thursday. December 7.

- Through Thursday, December 7. Tickets: \$20 in advance, \$25 at door,
- \$10 livestream. New England Youth Theatre, 100 Flat

St. Information: Tickets: tinyurl.com/ vd4cax37.

PUTNEY Sandglass Theater presents: "Les Sages Fous' Tricyckle": Quebecois theater company Les Sages Fous presents a mysterious puppetry duet between a man and his bike- dream-like adventure of mystery/transformation. Renegade "carny" from Fairground rides a tricycle/pulls trailer full of insignificant objects but, hidden within is a deep puzzle of buried memories and fragmented dreams. Through a strange/curious ritual of introspection, the Tricycle guides him to relive the cycles and images of his life in a search for freedom.

7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium. Tricyckle has been called "totally bizarre, quite clever, and jolly entertainina."

Through Saturday, December 2.

\$20 adults, \$18 students and seniors

FRIDAY CONT.

Hunt Rd.) Proceeds help pay Center's annual operating expenses. Questions: govhuntcc@gmail.com. governorhunt. org.

Visual arts and shows

BRATTLEBORO New Works by Lahri

Bond / Meet the Artist: Lahri Bond illustrates/designs magazines, posters, books, CD covers and recently completed environmentally themed murals and public works. Profoundly affected as a child by Russian-born surrealist Pavel Tchelitchew's classic "Hide and Seek" painting at the Museum of Modern Art in NYC, he formed a life-long love of artistic use of Cryptesthesia - images are camouflaged within images and hidden meanings revealed to consciousness through sensory hallucinations.
 12/1, 5-8 p.m. Meet the Artist Open-

ing. Bond's work is also deeply informed by the natural world. Much of his imagery was inspired by or come directly from forests/woodlands of New England and wild areas of the UK. This painting series combines Bond's kinship with elemental forces of the natural world with exploration of Celtic folklore, myths, archetypes of his family's Scotland home. Because of multi-layered, detailed rich nature of his art, he's begun to describe his work as Celt-edelic.

- Through Saturday, December 30.
- Gallery in the Woods, 145 Main

St. Information: 802-257-4777; galleryinthewoods.com

BRATTLEBORO Gallery Walk: Art Show Opening: 12/1/2023: Art show opening at the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center during Gallery Walk showcases the work of Jonas Emmanuel Fricke.

▶ 5-8 p.m. This show opened on 11/15 and continues until 12/15.

► Through Friday, December 15. No ac nission charae durino

Kids and families ATHENS Kids Christmas Bazaar and Cookie Swap

1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Athens Brick Meeting House/Community Center, 2 Meeting House Rd., (just

.....

off Rte. 35). **GRAFTON Christmas Trees:** Freshly cut Vermont trees on sale will benefit the Fire/Rescue Scholarship.

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Grafton Firehouse, 711 Rt. 121 East.

. **Arts and crafts**

Marlboro Community Center welcomes 14 crafts people for a one-day Makers' Fair and sale. Holiday-related and other handmade goods in ceramics, fiber arts, photography and other crafts will be on display. Proceeds go directly to the artists with 10 % to benefit the Community Center. Please come check it out!

Marlboro Community Center, 524
 South Rd. Information: More Informa-

GUILFORD Winter Craft Market: Join us for our first Winter Craft Market at the beautifully restored Broad Brook Community Center. Find unique holiday gifts, ornaments, and crafts made by local artisans alongside activities for the whole family including gingerbread We'll have delicious homemade winter soups, chili, salads and delectable treats

10 a.m.-3 p.m. Broad Brook Community

Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: More information. visit: broadbrookcommunitycenter.org/

SUNDAY CONT.

▶ 3-6 p.m.: Santa's Village. Local artists/artisans will offer jewelry, candles, relishes/jams, bread, jigsaw puzzles, personalized ornaments, wooden ware, gloves and more for holiday gift shopping, and Grafton Historical Society will sell wreaths. 5 p.m.: Caroling around piano and selections by Main Street Arts children's chorus, who will accompany Santa to Saxtons River Historical Society

want to grab s Hanukkah, Christmas, or

St. Information: 413-774-4881.

SUNDAY

PUTNEY Blight: Fungi and the Coming

pathogens across species. Wildlife, crops,

forests and humans are potential hosts

for deadly fungal pathogens. Following

readings of chapter excerpts from Emily

Monosson's book, there'll be plenty of

time for in-depth discussion of problems

of fungal pandemics, epidemics, possible

strategies for prevention, resurrection or protection of susceptible species.

door/onsite: Pre-register only. For those

choosing online option, you'll receive

a reminder email a day prior to lecture

"We no longer take payments at the

Pandemic (In Person/Livestream):

Blight is about devastating impacts of emergent (or relatively new) fungal

Well-being



Instruction **BELLOWS FALLS** Cyber Security Workshop (12/4 and 12/6 - 2 days): Learn how to be safer online with ac-

counts/passwords, overview of frauds/ scams ▶ 12/4 and 12/6: 10:30 a.m. 2 classes (12/6 class builds on what was taught in

12/4 class). ► Free.

Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463 4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.

TUESDAY



MARLBORO Marlboro Makers Fair:

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

tion: marlborocommunity.center.

house-making and other hands-on crafts.

for sale as well.

events/winter-craft-market.

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro in Stitches: Bring a work in progress to sew, knit, crochet, embroider, or mend. Sewing machines, irons, and companionshi be provided. Working on a secret project for a special gift? We have lots of space and plenty of good company. All ages and skill levels are welcome.

as Bob Cratchit. Ann Rutherford ("Gone with the Wind") as the "Ghost of Christmas Past," Lionel Brahman in his career defining role as the "Ghost of Christmas Present 10 a.m.: Movie. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Meet Santa at theater as part of JingleFest. Gift cards ready for those who

Kwanza aift. Greenfield Garden Cinema, 361 Main



for tree lighting. Event is free of charge and open to all. Main Street Arts, 37 Main St. Information: 802-869-2960; mainstreetarts.org.

MONDAY



up as a urine donor for Rich Earth's community program! Participants can contribute their 'liquid gold' to urine depots in Brattleboro and Bellows Falls. Rich Earth also offers subsidized installations of urine-divertina toilets and other peecycling systems. Julia also introduces basics of how you can safely and effectively fertilize crops with urine in your own garden.

Free. Donations are always welcome. Dummerston Community Center, 166

West St. Information: 802-254-2703.

Arts and crafts

BRATTLEBORO Exploring Bioplastics as Art Materials (Online only): BMAC's 2023 Climate Change Artist in Residence, Lia Rothstein, discusses the use of bioplastics in artmaking.

7 p.m. online only.

► Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.

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Visual arts and shows

BELLOWS FALLS Canal Street Art

Gallery presents: Art For All Seasonal Group Show: Show is curated to be reflective of what artists are currently creating with a mission to make art appreciation accessible and affordable to all.

 Curated show to reflect what artists are currently creating with mission to make art appreciation accessible/ affordable to all. By re-introducing slidina commission scale, we take lower percentage on artwork under \$200. This makes art more affordable/directly supports the artists. Gallery also consians new inventory from its 34 represented artists of unframed works for sale - many under \$50.

Through Saturday, January 6, 2024.
 Canal Street Art Gallery, 23

Canal St. For wheelchair accessibility call 802-289-0104 802-289-0104; canalstreetartgallery.com.

BRATTLEBORO Dan Welden: Artist Talk and Demonstration: With almost 60 years as printmaker, painter, author, educator and inventor of the solarplate etching process, Dan Welden's presence in the world of printmaking is ubiquitous & profound. "Solo 100" revolves around Welden's paintings and prints and a 1st-time showing of 'masterworks,' handpulled collaborative impressions created with current and past masters. Artists include Willem and Elaine de Kooning. Kiki Smith, Eric Fischl, Dan Flavin and a host of others.

▶ 11/30, 3:30 p.m.: View documentary film "Lasting Impressions." 5 p.m.: Artist Talk and Demonstration.

- Through Sunday, January 14, 2024.
- Free.

Mitchell-Giddings Fine Arts, 183 Main St. Information: 802-251-8290: mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com.



\$16 EBT & Medicaid cardholders. Putney Central School, 182 Westmin-

ster Rd. Information: Purchase tickets at sandglasstheater.org or at the door.

Music

BRATTLEBORO The VJC Big Band Scholarship Gala welcomes Alexis Cole (Livestream and In Person): VJC Big Band performs danceable tunes with NYbased vocalist Alexis Cole who, according to Jazz Times magazine, conveys "an easy sense of swing, strongly reminiscent of Sarah Vaughan." Under leadership of musical director Rob Freeberg, the band is made up of area professional musicians who come together to enjoy the rewards of playing invigorating, challenging, historically significant repertoires. This event is the primary fundraiser for VJC Scholarship Fund.

7:30 p.m. Dance to sounds of 16-piece bia band performing swinging dance music. Sample Cole's performance: www.alexiscole.com/videos.

\$31 to \$66.

Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill, #222. Information: Tickets online at vtjazz.org, by email at alina@vtjazz.org, by phone 802-254-9088 ext. 1.

PUTNEY Next Stage and Twilight Music present: Kat Wright & Brett Hughes Holiday Show: Singer/songwriters Kat Wright and Brett Hughes with their performing songs of the season with their quartet.

 Next Stage provides a beer, wine. cocktail cash bar.

Tickets: \$20 in advance, \$25 at door, \$10 livestream.

Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: Advance tickets available at nextstagearts.org. Information: 802-387-0102, nextstagearts.org.

Kids and families

VERNON Visit the Festival of Trees at Governor Hunt House: Bring fam ily/friends! Win great gifts from local merchants. Support Vernon's new community center - the Governor Hunt House - at the first annual Festival of Trees! Donated baked goods for sale and ongoing "pickle hunt" for kids. Purchase raffle tickets to win a tree and everything under it! Buy raffle tickets and place them in containers located at each tree for chance to win the fully decorated tree and all the merchandise associated with it.

12/1: 4-8 p.m. 12/2: 11 a.m.-8 p.m. 12/3: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Raffle tickets start at \$1, drops for 25 or more (down to 45 cents a ticket for 200 tickets). Santa Claus arrives Friday at 4:30 p.m. when there's tree lighting w/ carol singing and he's available for photos 5-6 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Santa will also drop by on Sat.. 1-4 p.m. Over 20 sponsors - mainly local business organizations - provide decorated trees, merchandise, aift certificates, Note: Vernon Recreation Dept's Home for the Holidays craft fair takes place same weekend across street at Vernon Elementary School on Fri., 4-8 p.m. and Sat., 9-3 p.m. Take in both events!.

- Through Sunday, December 3. \$5 per person, maximum \$15 per
- family.

 Governor Hunt House and Community Center, Governor Hunt Rd. Parking: Hunt House lot (along Governor Walk on 12/1.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center 28 Vernon St. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.

SATURDAY



Music BRATTLEBORO Chamber Music

Series: Musicians from Marlboro Group II: Group II pairs Ralph Vaughan Williams's powerful Blake Songs for tenor and oboe with Scottish composer Helen Grime's exhilarating Oboe Quartet and expansive majesty of Brahms's Piano Quartet in A Major. Ten Blake Songs (1957) Ralph Vaughan Williams. Oboe Quartet (2011) Helen Grime, Piano Quartet in A Major, Op. 26 (1863) Johannes Brahms. Itamar Zorman, violin; Haesue Lee, viola; Brannon Cho, cello; Filippo Gorini, piano, Mary Lynch VanderKolk, oboe, Patrick Bessenbacher, tenor.

▶ 7-9 p.m. \$30 general admission.

 Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moyse Way. Information: 802-257-4523, bmcvt.org.

GRAFTON Vocal Ensemble Seraphic Fire Performs Choral Magic: Grammynominated Saraphic Fire vocal ensemble shares a cappella voices for a Seraphic Fire Christmas concert. Festive carols from varied traditions alongside newe takes on classics from contemporary composers. Includes "Away in a Manger' - William Kirkpatrick; "Silent Night,' Franz Xaver Gruber, and selections from new album and prior Christmas albums: Candlelight Carols, Silent Night, plus Grammy-nominated "A Seraphic Fire Christmas.'

7 p.m. \$35.

► Grafton Congregational Church and Chapel / Brick Church Meeting House, 147 Main St. Information: Tickets:: SeraphicFire.org/christmas-on-tour or call 305-285-9060.

BRATTLEBORO Community Messiah Sing: Friends of Music at Guilford hosts the annual Community Messiah Sing with organist David Neiweem, conductor Tom Baehr, and soloists Elizabeth Wohl, Lesley Cotter, Jim Anderson, and Gary Clay. Sing with a chorus of tri-state residents or just come to listen. Bring a score or borrow one at the door. Bottled water available.

1 p.m. singing begins. "We're also collecting nonperishable food and clean winter outwear.".

 Door donations are passed along to Groundworks Collaborative for shelter and food programs.

 Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. Information: 802-254-3600, office@fomag.org, facebook.com/ FriendsOfMusicAtGuilford.

- 11 a.m. 2 p.m. on Saturdays.
- Free.

Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290: brookslibraryvt.org.

. Dance

WINCHESTER Monadnock Tri-State

Dance Club and Live Music by "Playin' Possum" ► 5:30 p.m. Potluck Supper. Bring a dish to share. Non-alcoholic beverages available. 7-10:30 p.m. live music, dancing, 50/50 raffle.

\$12. Everyone is welcome. Elmm Community Center, 21 Durkee

St. Information: More information: Call Tom: 978-249-6917 or 978-790-9322.

Or call Barbara: 802-722-9205 or 802-376-0317.

Ideas and education

BRATTLEBORO Asian Cultural Center of Vermont ACCVT presents: "The Revival of Shamanism in China": Presentation and film by Susan Ross Grimaldi focuses on a Daur shaman from Inner Mongolia. Nowadays, shamans are regarded as heroes and cultural treasures in their homeland in northeast China. The fact that shamans are again practicing healing in China is an important development. What makes this documentary outstanding is the rare opportunity to know the words of the shaman's chant, which have been translated from their original language of Daur into English.

2-4 p.m. Susan presents background history on the re-emergence of shamanic practices in China. Her dedication to cultural preservation has led her to the Amazon basin in Brazil, rural China, and to the most remote northern taigas of Mongolia, where she filmed shamanic traditions. She'll share translated words of ceremonial chants and show the 30 min. documentary video she produced: "Siqingua, Daur Shaman of Inner Mongolia, China". Free.

CX Silver Gallery, 814 Western Ave. Information: 802-257-7898; cxsilvergallery.com.

Celebrations and festivals

BELLOWS FALLS Rockingham Library **Community Holliday Party and Raffle:**

Plenty of holiday refreshments and live

music. Winning tickets for the Friends' Holiday Raffle will be drawn. All proceeds from the raffle benefit the Friends of the

Rockingham Library.

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Free. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: More information: Email programming@ rockinghamlibrary.org or call 802-463-4270.

Film and video

GREENFIELD Garden Cinema & Liberty Tax Service offer Free Holiday Movie: "A Christmas Carol "(1938): Each week the theater will show a

date which includes link to livestream via YouTube/brief instructions. \$8 each individual lecture via credit

card Putnev Community Cares. 54 Kimball Hill. Information: Click on Register Now button: learn.uvm.edu/olli/brattleboro.

w. BRATTLEBORO "The Holidays: What About Grief?": Dec. 3, Dec. 10, Dec. 17: Come to one session, or any number of sessions. These are "standalone" events. Bring your favorite mug for coffee or tea. We'll sit together and co-create a safe space to hold you and all your feelings while the holidays are swirling around. ▶ 2-4 p.m.

Free

West Village Meeting House, 29 South St. Information: Email bevermont@ gmail.com for more information and to confirm vour attendance.

Community building

W. BRATTLEBORO "Home Again": Our service on the 1st Sunday in December celebrating Groundworks Collaborative (In-Person/Zoom): "We'll share our offerings with Groundworks Collaborative- this has become an annual ASC tradition. Join guest speaker Josh Davis in his last official appearance as Exec. Dir., as well as musician Alouette Iselin who leads us in her two beautiful

songs for the season."
Variety of pre-service activities offered: 8:45 a.m. Choir Rehearsal begins. At 9 a.m. these activities take place: Children's Religious Exploration class, Adult Coffee & Conversation, followed by Ouiet Meditation. By donation.

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church. 29 South St. Information: Go to our website, ascvt.org, Sunday shortly before 10 a.m. to join via Zoom.

Dance

BRATTLEBORO West Coast Swing In Thomas Hall: Beginners Lesson: 3-3:45 p.m., Intermediate Lesson: 3:45 4:30 p.m., Ópen Dance: 4:30-6:30 p.m. \$20 for lessons and dance, \$10 dance

only. ► Winston Prouty Campus, 209 Austine Dr. Information: Bonnie: 802-249-8646.

Celebrations and festivals

SAXTONS RIVER Yulefest Returns to Saxtons River: Children's craft fair will be followed by concert featuring Brattle boro Union High School's Shoulder Narrows a cappella group and Vermont Academy chorus. 2:30 p.m. Children's craft fair. 3 p.m.

concert. Free

24 Main Street Community Center (formerly Christ Church of Saxtons River), 24 Main St. Information: 802-869-2340.

SAXTONS RIVER Yulefest Returns to Saxtons River (Part 2): Santa's

Village hosts visits with Jolly Elf, story time, model train, kids' crafts, cookies, cocoa. Local artists/artisans offer jewelry, candles, relishes/jams, bread, iigsaw puzzles, personalized ornaments. wooden ware, gloves, and more for holiday gift shopping. Grafton Historical Society will sell wreaths.

Music

BRATTLEBORO Sing Nowell (In-Person and Livestream): Songs & Carols for Midwinter & Christmastide: Fred Breunig, Andy Davis, Keith Murphy, Arthur Davis, Emma Schneider, Donal Sheets, Guillaume Sparrow-Pepin. Windborne: Lauren Breunig, Jeremy Carter-Gordon, Lynn Rowan, Will Rowan.

7 - 9:30 p.m. Proceeds from Sing Nowell benefit Groundworks Collaborative.

In-Person (Standard Admission) \$25, Sing Nowell! Supporter (Front and Center seats) \$35. Livestream: \$12 to \$20. ▶ Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St. Information: Tickets: tickettailor.com/events/

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Walk-In

patients ages 18 to 64 in our community

cannot afford their high deductibles or

5 - 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays.

brattleborowalkinclinic.com.

▶ Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic, 191

Clark Ave. Information: 802-251-8484;

WEDNESDAY

BRATTLEBORO Rhyme Time: Rhyme

Time is for kids ages 5 and under and

plays, and movement games.

Brooks Memorial Library, 224

Main St. Information: 802-254-5290;

To submit your

event: calendar@

commonsnews.org

Deadline:

5 p.m. Friday

the Community Room.

brookslibraryvt.org.

Free.

their caregivers. We offer songs, finger-

▶ 10:30 a.m.-11 a.m. on Wednesdays in

Kids and families

who do not have health insurance or who

Clinic: Primary medical treatment for

windborne/928783.

Well-being

co-insurance.



COLUMN | Sports Roundup

Turkey Trot draws nearly 200 runners

ots of sun and reasonable temperatures for a November morning in Vermont greeted runners on Thanksgiving for the Red Clover Rover's annual Turkey Trot on Upper Dummerston Road in Brattleboro.

There were 198 runners at the starting line for the 3-mile race, which was won by Peyton Joslyn, 16, of Swanzey, New Hampshire. A sophomore at Monadnock Regional High School, he was the top male finisher for the second straight

year in 16 minutes, 42 seconds. Nico Conathan-Leach, 16, of Guilford was the runnerup in 17:26. Jace Joslyn, 18, of Swanzey was third in 17:36.

Sarah Lange, 32, of Brattleboro was the top female runner for the second straight year. She was fifth overall in 17:46. Stephanie Jordan, 25, of Florence, Massachusetts was the second woman across the finish line and 10th overall in 19:07, while Eve Pomazi, 25, of Brattleboro was third (12th overall) in 19:28.

In keeping with the spirit of the day, proceeds from the race were once again donated to Groundworks Collaborative and the Vermont Foodbank. For a full list of finishers, visit redcloverrovers.com/results. shtml.

Field hockey standouts get together in Manchester

 Vermont's top field hockey players gathered at Burr & Burton's Taylor Field in Manchester on Nov. 19 for a pair of games that offered one more chance to showcase talent and have some fun.

Bellows Falls and Brattleboro players were featured in the Senior Game as Brattleboro sent Alex Gregory, Erika Favreau, Emma Gragen, Sadie Mills, and Mallory Newton, while Ava LaRoss and Eryn Ross represented BF.

Clark. RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT, deputy editor of this newspaper, has written this column since 2010 and has covered sports in Windham Countv since the 1980s. Readers can send him sports information at news@commonsnews. org.

All-State football teams selected

· Brattleboro tight end Jackson Emery, offensive lineman Jett Emery, defensive lineman Sam Madow, and defensive back Jack Cady were all named to the Division I All-State firstteam as the Vermont Football Coaches Association announced their selections on Nov. 17.

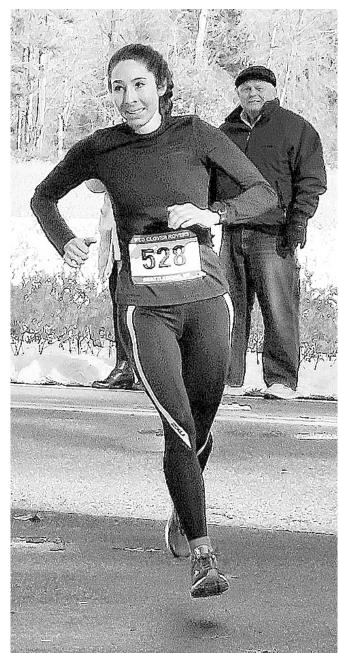
Selected to the Division I second team were Brattleboro running back Noah Perusse and offensive lineman Justin Packard. Both Emerys were second team selections as defensive linemen, along with defensive lineman Evan Velez, inside linebacker Justin Packard, In Division II, Bellows Falls

offensive lineman Will Hallock, running back/kick returner Walker James and fullback Remy Lacroix, and quarterback/tight end Cole Moore were all first-team selections.

Moore was also a first-team selection on the defensive line, while teammates Darrell and James are first-teamers at defensive back. Defensive back Jaxon Clark and linebacker Jackson Lovell both earned honorable mention.

Skiers face sticker shock this season

• The 2023-24 ski season began last week in Windham County with Mount Snow and Stratton both opening with a handful of trails for the early bird skiers and snowboarders. Magic Mountain in Londonderry plans to open on Dec. 16. However, the days of hopping in the car on the spur of the moment after a big snowstorm and heading out for an affordable day of skiing or riding seem to be over. A recent report from Babette Stolk at



Sarah Lange of Brattleboro was the top female runner for the second straight year at the annual Brattleboro Turkey Trot road race on Nov. 23.

VTDigger found that there are very few places where you get a lift ticket at a Vermont resort for less than \$90. Some have doubled their walk-up prices in the past decade.

Why? The resorts want you to buy a season pass instead,

is at Stowe, which will set you back \$219. By comparison, an Epic season pass is \$719 at Okemo and \$969 at Mount Snow, while an Ikon season pass at Stratton is \$1,309.

FRED ROS

There is also a push to get skiers and riders to buy tickets



For the second straight year, Peyton Joslyn of Swanzey, New Hampshire was the top male finisher at the annual Brattleboro Turkey Trot road race on Nov. 23.

day of inexpensive skiing and riding, the \$5 lift ticket at the Brattleboro Ski Hill at Living Memorial Park. A 12-ticket punch card is \$50, an individual season pass is \$75 and a family pass is \$200. More information can be found at **brattski.org**.

will be give for the fastest runners, best costume, and most money raised. Hot cocoa will be served.

The entry fee is \$20, \$50 for a team of four or more, and free for runners under age 17. Register by noon on

Playing for the Orange team, Gragen and LaRoss each had a goal and an assist in a 2-2 tie against the Blue team, which was coached by BF's Bethany Coursen and featured Gregory and Favreau.

The Rising Stars games featured sophomores and juniors including BF's Emma Bazin, Hadley Gleim, Nola Sciacca, and Izzy Stoodley, and Brattleboro's Leah Lane, Emily LaClair, and Elina Young.

Bazin, Gleim, and Lane played on the Blue team, which defeated the Yellow squad with Stoodley and LaClair, 2-0.

In the second game, the Orange team with Sciacca and Young played their Yellow counterparts to a 1-1 tie.

North All-Stars win football classic

• The 22nd annual North-South All-Star Football Classic was played at Norwich University's Sabine Field on Nov. 18, and the North squad won for the second straight year, 33-29.

Bellows Falls and Brattleboro players helped the South keep this game a nail-biter until the very end. Brattleboro linebacker Jackson Emery blocked a North punt and dove on the ball in the end zone for a touchdown in the first quarter and Bellows Falls running back Walker James caught a 20-yard pass from Burr & Burton quar-terback Jack McCoy just before halftime.

Also playing for the South team was Brattleboro running back Noah Perusse, while Bellows Falls was also represented by running back Jesse Darrell, quarterback/tight end Cole Moore, and guard Jaxon



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT (COMMONSFILE PHOTO Brattleboro linebacker Jackson Emery (7) scored a touchdown on a blocked punt in the North-South All-Star Football Classic on Nov. 18 at Norwich University.

which is a better deal if you do in advance online, rather than a lot of skiing and riding. If you walking up to the ticket window are an occasional snowsport, when you arrive at the resort. you're going pay a lot more for Also, more ski areas are limiting a spontaneous day on the slopes. the number of lift tickets they sell each day to keep the slopes

At our three big local ski resorts, a day pass costs \$144 at from getting too crowded. Okemo, \$150 at Stratton, and \$154 at Mount Snow. The most tions if you don't want to spend expensive day pass in Vermont

a lot to have a good day on the slopes. Magic Mountain's adult day passes are \$89 online, \$99 at the mountain, with a \$10 discount for youths under 17, seniors over 70, and military, police, and fire personnel. Magic also offers a great deal for Vermonters on season passes -\$534 for adults 30 and up, \$454 for young adults 18-29, \$254 for youths 6-17, and \$424 for seniors over 70 as well as for military, police, fire, EMS, nurses, and teachers.

• However, there are op-

• There's also the alternative to the Epic and Icon passes, the Indy Pass (indyskipass. com). For \$399 (\$199 for kids) for the basic pass, you get lim-ited access to 35 downhill and cross-country ski areas in New England and upstate New York, including Magic Mountain and nearby Berkshire East in Charlemont, Massachusetts.

 If you want to go downhill, and don't mind going uphill under your own power, there's the Uphill New England pass. Uphill New England (uphillnewengland.org) is a nonprofit that works with ski areas to provide a single purchase pass and mobile app, as well as a streamlined set of liability waivers, for uphill skiers. For \$215 (\$135 for students and National Ski Patrol members), you get access to 12 New England ski areas, including Berkshire East and Bromley Mountain in Peru,

Vermont. • Then there is the ultimate

One reason why the lift tickets are still just \$5 is because the Brattleboro Ski Hill is 100% volunteer run, including snowmaking and grooming. If you'd like to learn more about volunteering, schedule a training, or make a donation to keep the resource available for everyone, email them at

brattleboroskihill@gmail.com.

Also the Brattleboro Ski Hill will again be pairing with Mount Snow to provide instructional lessons for beginner skiers and snowboarders ages 7-14 years old.

The lessons will occur every Thursday for six consecutive weeks except for the week of February winter school vacation break. The sign ups will be done online only, and will open up in early December. Keep an eye on brattski.org for more details.

Jingle Bell Jog takes place Dec. 2

 The Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce presents the eighth annual Jingle Bell Jog on Saturday, Dec. 2. This 5K run starts at 9:30 a.m. at the Heart Rose Club on Green Street (the former Shiners Hall) and winds its way through the streets of Brattleboro.

The event is a fundraiser for the Chamber's "Skills for Success" scholarship fund which provides assistance to students who will be pursuing a technical, trade or other non-traditional post-secondary education.

Costumes are encouraged but not required. Come dressed as an elf, a Grinch, Santa, or any holiday-inspired character - or just come as you are. Awards

Nov. 30 at runreg.com/jinglebell-jog-2023%20. For more information, email greg@ brattleborochamber.org or call 802-254-4565.

Senior bowling roundup

• Week 12 of the fall/winter season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on Nov. 21 (a couple of days early due to Thanksgiving) saw Four Seasons (40-20) have their third straight 4-1 week to hold onto first place. High Rollers (35-25) had a 0-5 week to fall into a second place tie with Hairiers and Skippers (both also 35-25), followed by No Splits (34-26), Stepping Stones (32-28), Dumblebor (31-29), Four Pins (29-31), and PEWJ (21-39).

Pamela Greenblott had the women's high handicap game (266) and series (649), while Peter Deyo had the men's high handicap game (282) and series (731). Stepping Stones had the high team handicap game (895). while High Rollers had the high handicap series (2,535).

Robert Rigby had the men's high scratch series (634) with games of 226, 216, and 192, while Deyo had a 625 series with games of 226 and 216 and Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 574 series with games of 209 and 189. Milt Sherman had a 542 series, Duane Schillemat had a 530 series with a 190 game, and Wayne Randall had a 512 game.

Greenblott had the women's high scratch series (475), while Shirley Aiken had the high scratch game (175). Nancy Dalzell had games of 169 and 164, and Diane Cook had a 159 game.

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SECTION D

OPINION • COMMENTARY • LETTERS • ESSAYS COLUMNS . MEMOIRS . EDITORIALS Join the conversation: voices@commonsnews.org

SPORTS appears this week on page C3

page D1

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

IEWPOINT



A sign from a candlelight vigil in Brattleboro on Monday in support of three Palestinian students who were shot in Burlington.

U.S. financial support of war crimes undermines our own national interests. It also makes us complicit.

South Newfane ASHINGTON IS preparing to send a \$14.3 billion year-end genocide bonus to Israel so it can continue to carry out war crimes while thumbing its nose at global calls for an enduring ceasefire.

That's \$14.3 billion — with a b — on top of about \$3 billion that we send Israel every year; a total of \$260 billion in military and economic aid since World War II, according to U.S. News.

There is no strategic rationale behind our blank checks to Israel. On the contrary, America's myopic support for

DAN DEWALT, one of the founders of this newspaper and a longtime activist for social justice, clean energy, peace, and restorative justice, describes this piece as "a collaboration with another Windham County citizen whose job status would be at risk were they to disclose their name.'

FAR FROM "stabilizing the Middle East" — a colonial-ist concept in itself — the U.S. role in Israel's displacement and brutal occupation of Palestinians has been the cause célèbre of Islamist extremists.

In a video of Osama bin Laden aired by CBS in 2008, the 9/11 mastermind said, "The Palestinian cause has been the main factor that,

for Strategic and International Studies said that while most Arab youth do not support extremist violence, those who do are "often reacting to a crisis in Israeli-Palestinian relations."

Washington's patronage has allowed Israel to become the bully in the regional schoolyard with nuclear capacity that has spurred Tehran's aspirations. And despite Israel's

sympathetic to the Palestinians and wary of cooperation with Israel," observed the Brookings Institution in 2020. Aiming to stifle criticism

of its genocidal response to Hamas's brutal Oct. 7 attack, Israel is equating Hamas with Isis. But even Time magazine points out the faulty comparison. Hamas is a nationalist Islamic movement that seeks the creation of a Palestinian state. Unlike Isis, it does not aspire to an Islamic caliphate or a transnational Islamist movement.

Has Hamas refused to recognize Israel? Yes. Has Israel ever formally defined its bor-

VIEWPOINT **Mourning our** dead, betrayed by the world

'The demonization of Israel is so pervasive that we are afraid to show support for our ancestral homeland'

Leyden, Mass. HIS IS A scary time to be Jewish. Our world turned upside down on Oct. 7. Innocent Israelis were brutally murdered while their Hamas assassins happily filmed the torture of children in front of their parents and parents in front of their children. We are mourning our dead and are horrified by the utter cruelty and hatred of Hamas.

We feel betrayed by the world, as it turns a blind eye to Hamas's cynical tactics of using Gazans as human shields and portrays Israel as an aggressor that intentionally kills innocent Gazans.

The demonization of Israel is so pervasive that we are afraid to show support for our ancestral homeland. And the peace we desperately want for Israel (which has received 10,000 rockets since Oct. 7), and its neighbors, seems farther away than ever.

Some Palestinian-rights ac-tivists claim that the Oct. 7 massacre was a form of justified resistance and that Israel had it coming.

Two days after the attacks, as Israelis were trying to identify mutilated, charred, and decapitated bodies, 31 "social justice" groups at Harvard held Israel "entirely responsible."

RHONDA WAINSHILBAUM is

an artisan and a civic volunteer, living and working in Massachusetts, just over the Vermont line.

the destruction on the Jews, victim blaming continues today. Anti-Zionism is the socially acceptable way to enact a double standard, blame Israel, and excuse Palestinian violence.

We see that the compassion and respect that the Left shows other vulnerable minorities does not apply to us.

We know from history that our neighbors can turn on us, as they did during the Holocaust and, later, in Muslim-majority countries, when 900,000 Jews were expelled after the creation of Israel.

We see that terrorists who committed mind-numbing acts of violence against unarmed civilians - including babies and children — are being called freedom fighters.

Gazan civilians joined in to loot from the burnt farms and houses. The terror group did not kill right-wing settlers in the occupied West Bank, but farmers and peace activists in undisputed territory, many of whom regularly volunteered to bring Gazans to hospitals in

Israel's brutal occupation, illegal settlements, flagrant land theft, and apartheid undermines U.S. interests and makes us all partners in Israel's war crimes.

since my early childhood, fueled my desire, and that of the 19 freemen [Sept. 11 bombers], to stand by the oppressed, and punish the oppressive Jews and their allies.

over. the vast majority of Arabs A 2017 report by the Center remains, at core, far more

diplomatic ties with a growders? No. Why would Hamas ing number of Gulf states, the Arab street has not been won "Public opinion among

accept the existence of an amorphous Israeli state that has steadily stolen more and more Palestinian land and water since Israel was partitioned ■ SEE FUNDING ISRAEL, D4

A Cornell professor said he was "exhilarated" by the attacks.

A Yale professor called it an "extraordinary day."

LIKE THE NAZIS who burned down synagogues and blamed Israel to receive care.

HAMAS'S PLANNED MASSACRE is not the same as Gazans who are killed unintentionally because Israel needs to bomb a building that is hiding a tunnel, and

■ SEE MOURNING OUR DEAD, D4

DISPATCH

Peace and solidarity

Hundreds in support of the civilians of Gaza call for a lasting end to bombing and depravation — and an end to U.S. funding of war crimes

Brattleboro N NOV. 19, a passionate group of about 200 people came together to declare support for a ceasefire in the latest and most lethal fighting in Israel and Palestine.

The group was unified in the message that we strongly oppose collective punishment of Palestinian civilians, most of whom have nothing to do with Hamas and some of whom oppose Hamas.

Starting from the Brattleboro Food Co-op walkway, we chanted and sang our way up Main Street. The demonstrators carried signs in support of an immediate ceasefire and expressed their dismay that that these innocent Gazans have been subjected to widespread bombing and have been deprived of water, electricity, and communication with the outside world.

NANCY BRAUS, a longtime activist who contributes often to these pages, and **STEVE WANGH**, a retired New York University professor and playwright, contributed these words. Filmmaker **ROBBIE LEPPNER** of Shaftsbury, who is working on a feature-length documentary about the Bread and Puppet Theater, captured the images used here.

They proclaimed these actions war crimes - and demanded that the United States government stop funding the weapons for this cruelty with our tax dollars.

THE MARCH was organized by an ad hoc group of local activists, both Jewish and non-Jewish. ■ SEE DEMONSTRATION. D4





The peaceful, pastoral views to meadows and hills will captivate you! The ever changing cloudscapes and the way sunlight dances with shadows add everyday delight! In West Guilford, nestled away on 18 acres, this 1868 square foot, contemporary six room home, surrounded by mature woodlands was built by the current owners in 1974. Planned with simple lines outside, designed inside with personality and large windows for the kitchen, living room and primary bedroom to enjoy the lovely views. There are vaulted ceilings, light filled rooms, front entry w/cedar closet, a spacious living room with a centerpiece fireplace, a loft library with a sleeping alcove, the cheeriest of eat in kitchens with plentiful storage, counter space, views and a 16' x 10' deck. The versatile layout offers a dining room if desired, or a office/den as it is used now. The primary bedroom has a three quarter bath with a shower. A stackable laundry was added to the craft room/bedroom closet. The 20 foot long covered deck off the living room and primary bedroom

looks over a lawn, a rambling stone wall to the meadow and mountain views. Entry porch has EV charger. There is two bay basement garage with high ceilings, ample work space, washer, dryer and laundry sink. The 32 x 40 barn has a workroom and a loft. **EXCLUSIVE: \$685,000**

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'All tears fall to the same earth' Our region's poets respond to the Israel-Hamas War

In a 1916 letter, Robert Frost described his vision of a complete poem as "one where an emotion finds the thought and the thought finds the words."

It is impossible not to be affected by raw emotion and grief when contemplating the sheer scope of death and destruction in this latest chapter of many years of conflict and contradiction: In the Oct. 7 attacks on Israel, Hamas took the lives of 1,200 people and took 240 people hostage. By Nov. 24, some 14,500 people have been reported killed by Israel's retaliations.

Members of Write Action, a community-based, grassroots writers organization with its membership base in southeastern Vermont, have submitted this collection of poems. For a variety of reasons, The Commons usually leaves poetry to other publications and venues, but when Arlene Distler brought this idea forward, we agreed that a special feature in this week's Voices section could bring a fresh approach to helping words, ideas, and universal truths resonate in an increasingly polarized environment. And make no mistake — this environment is polarized. Just before we first wrote these words on Monday, three young people of Palestinian origin were shot in Burlington. Don't think for a moment that it couldn't happen here.

May these words from our region's poets (including Vermont's former poet laureate) speak to a common humanity and serve as a clarion call for us — all of us, from those who are trying to learn and understand what is going on to those who are approaching these issues with deep convictions and moral clarity — to retain and maintain grace, compassion, fairness, and respect. —Jeff Potter, editor

Bearing Witness

The children of Gaza with piercing dark eyes are caught by the camera, faces smudged with ash, dirt, blood confused, not yet old enough for anger, for anguish, not yet old enough to know what they've lost.

On the other side of the fence that separates the powerful from the powerless, there too are pictures of children —those captured or killed parents, siblings in grief, worried as days roll on with no mercy on either side.

Screams, the blank stares of children, their bodies contorted, limp carried through rubble by hands that had loved them, tended them.

Grief knows no language barrier. Now do you get it? Is this what it takes for two peoples to recognize their kindred humanity?

—Arlene I. Distler, Brattleboro

Beneath an Ancient Olive Tree

As I stopped to take a needed rest beneath an ancient olive tree,

within a peaceful desert grove southeast of Ashkelon, I heard a whisper, "What once had been will never be

I woke with the word "rage" embedded in "tragedy."

GAZA / GUILFORD

1. the rage :: in tragedy not arable :: unbearable

the ache :: in treachery and spite :: with no respite

scant rations :: for generations the rift :: is short shrift

the lure :: despite failure the loss :: is colossal

how vile :: to be servile literate :: obliterated...

2. Shots ring through autumn. They trigger no panic.

Who's sighting a rifle or hunting for winter?

Our pal will stop over with quick-frozen venison.

I'll offer fresh cider but it doesn't agree with him.

We chop trees for the stove. I pay in the kitchen.

This warmth changing hands is our benediction.

Did Max Ehrmann Ever Doubt?

"And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should [...]. [I]t is still a beautiful world." —from "Desiderata" by Max Ehrmann

Hamas has invaded Gaza and it's difficult to determine whether the universe is unfolding as it should or whether it's a catastrophic mess not to be confused with history as it intensely repeats itself until peace is foreign and tomorrow's promise not clear.

A notification on my phone interrupts to break my news feed obsession — a text from you

about tickets for tonight's star performance by a young neighbor in the local high school play where there's also a fundraiser at intermission and brownies I promised to bake for her class's travel to — of all places — Vietnam. So maybe things do reset if not resolve in time and I can stir the mixing bowl, regain my calm

more easily than one who ducks from Hamas's bombs shelters a child and disappears more quickly than

I swallow the last taste of chocolate on the edge of the bowl, place a pan in the oven and wait for the stage lights with their full-house applause to shine on our young friend as she takes a bow while you and I glance at one another, nod our heads in recognition. It is still a beautiful world.

Not in surrender to fire nor fury

again for thee."

- A lonely desert lark it sang a mournful dirge, but for whom I could not see.
- The song I heard exclaimed all joy and peace herein would soon be gone,
- as I stopped to take a needed rest beneath an ancient olive tree.
- Next spoke the wind. She sighed a sigh of sadness a tearful elegy —
- perhaps a warning that this peaceful desert grove was weak and wan.
- I heard a whisper, "What once had been will never be again for thee."
- The tree, itself, appeared to reach out weeping its olives rancid, foul debris.
- No one resolved to take its branches. I sensed apocalypse anon,
- as I stopped to take a needed rest beneath an ancient olive tree.
- I heard thunder in the desert. I saw Negev's scarlet scree

spread out across a stark terrain at break of dawn.

- I heard a whisper, "What once had been will never be again for thee."
- This peaceful desert grove, it is a site I had longed to see.
- So, I came, but saw instead a tribulation peace, a sacrificial pawn.
- As I stopped to take a needed rest beneath an ancient olive tree,
- I heard a whisper, "What once had been will never be again for thee."

-David Kent Young, Stratton

— Verandah Porche, Guilford

I called my Israeli cousins living in a horrible war Who grew up in South Africa so our relationships were poor.

When we tried to talk politics
We thought we were going to find a fix.
But we hear different news
Which lead us to different views.
I stopped trying to convince
No longer did we slide down a cliff.
We told stories about our lives
Which led us to discover our ties.
We continue to send love every single day
We hope to keep our differences at bay.

-Lynn Levine, East Dummerston

Current Conditions

"[Every day the adult human body produces] 200 billion red blood cells, 10 billion white blood cells, and 400 billion blood platelets[...]". — "The origins of bone marrow as the seedbed of our blood," Barry Cooper, M.D.

I look at the images in the news and have to turn away my gorge rising

I attend an event at our local school and find myself hypervigilant

I hear a plane fly overhead and struggle to imagine running with my children to the nearest shelter

Look — a pheasant runs across the road flash of blood-red face

—Nancy A. Olson, Putney

the forest leafs out at dawn.

-Anna N. Jennings, West Townshend

I keep tying and untying my shoelaces splitting hairs over definitions in the absence of meanings like little dolls bundled preterm on the hospital floor cold like the memories of tortured pasts genocide, holocausts 8 million then, now unimaginable to the point of forgetting where we came from and why we are here

-Stephen Minkin, Brattleboro

Lives Lost

Where does the story start? How did it begin?

Can we trace the path that brings us here today? The same path that ends at the heels of our feet

Tracks of countless footsteps left in dirt, sand, mud Laid across soils forever stained

We can't tell which ones wielded the sword — or fell to it Which ones drew blood — or bled

But today we can tell — we just need to look up Look up to see the swords in hands

The blood still red, flowing Cries still piercing the air

Do the cries of innocents leave their own mark? Do they share the same fate?

All tears fall to the same earth Wet the same path of countless words and lives lost

Only the story never dies

-Mel Martin,Newfane

Drooling After a Perfect World

(after Franny Choi)

The woods, this morning were perfect mostly golden soggy underfoot following a seep down

Next to the brook, a wolf maple beheaded arms akimbo, above a trunk thickened with centuries

Danny is in the Negev Trees, buildings, people all blasted Sitting shiva for soldiers died in service. And civilians by terror What's the difference? They're all dead. The hostages and Palestinians fear and maybe wish they were Who thought war was a good idea?

Perfect sunshine running water I sit in paradise Around me, decay decomposition death

A tree unable to get up feeding legions: beetles, worms, fly larvae

I've come to Paradise Shot through with spider thread Back to a tree filled with dread afraid I'll get lost while lusting to spear a white-tail dead

—Deborah Lee Luskin, Williamsville

Metta 4 Peace

'Not so Deep as a Well, **Romeo, but It Will Do'**

Sometimes reading the news is like hearing from cat after cat, crying about the monstrous dogs with no mention of the mutilations of songbirds or mice. Truly horrific true stories about kittens chased mercilessly, feline spines, bit in two by the evil dogs, and no mention of the ratcheted claws and the thrashing hind feet, gutting the squirrels who could only squirm to get free and were left headless on doorsteps at dawn. A blessing on both your houses.

-Rolf Parker-Houghton, Brattleboro

The Silence

You standing at the doorsteps, enter and drink Arabic coffee with us (you might sense you're human like us) you standing at the doorsteps of houses, get out of our mornings, we need reassurance that we are human like you! -Mahmoud Darwish

I want peace right now while I'm still alive. I don't want to want like that pious man who wished for one leg of the golden chair of paradise. I want a four-legged chair right here, a plain wooden chair. I want the rest of my life peace now. —Yehuda Amichai

is deafening here because it amplifies the ordnance exploding "over there," which no matter how hard I try not to hear, it continues to boom inside the ear inside my ear where the sounds of that intransigent, ancient war exceed the speed of light on the wings of news. I'm whispering because I can hardly speak in the din that cripples my tongue. I'm releasing doves from inside my chest through the door I've opened for them — each one a priest delivering an elegy for a child or parent or sibling or friend who's died at the hand of the enemy whose God is the same monotheistic deity with a different name. I play a song in vain to subdue the silence like a patient on the ward who hears so many voices simultaneously they cause him to scream. Can you hear? The scream grows louder and louder inside the silence.

for more than 3,000 years and left their homes, and their engraved stones, and even their bones, now all blown to bits by a bomb and then another bomb, craters replacing the carefully measured transect lines of the archeologists. The news story featured Palestinians outraged, over what was done, and more importantly, who had done it.

On the West Bank, in 2021, an ancient wall that was protecting the oldest Israelite unhewn altar stones was ripped out of the earth of Mount Ebal, by a Palestinian road crew. The news story featured Israelis outraged over what was done, and more importantly who had done it.

Ursula, I know I've fucked it up by not setting today's news on Mars, and just stealing it from the newspapers in some attempt to frame parallel stories that will be brushed aside by some readers as some attempt to create false equivalence. And these last lines are just a placeholder for the ones that will allow some reader to cradle another person's pain, like a crying newborn they tenderly welcome into their lives.

-Rolf Parker-Houghton, Brattleboro

Wisdom

better to look out a window than listen to the radio

one crow footprints a white roof pecks reconnects with snow

by mid-day warmed to ice pellets a treachery incomparable to war

that devastates scares up another holocaust as protestors not per-

ceiving rooted complexity are wise to scream for ceasefire to scream

against persecutors power-grabbers death's stench along numerous roads

Last night we watched a film, Levitated Mass, about one man's vision for an installation a massive project involving many working together in a concerted effort to accomplish this man's dream —an enormous boulder moved through the streets, communities where people came out to gawk, to cheer, to stare in wonder at the huge rock, and the four enormous trucks pulling it. Over 100 miles it traveled to its L.A. museum destination. Many of us thought of peace in Israel watching this immovable rock being moved amid celebration, the impossible possible, children gleeful. It could have been called Hope.

—Arlene Distler, Brattleboro

My Fears, Nov. 19, 2023

- I fear the chaos in thought the unexamined chaos in thought
- I fear the inhumanity its power to shape events
- I fear the impossibility of pausing, stepping back from the static
- I fear ambient projectiles blowing up dreams
- I fear Trump, MAGAs, Putin Republicans, Biden's failure to step aside
- I fear the extinction of the Commandment Thou Shalt Not Kill

I fear Humpty Dumpty and the Emperor's New Clothes I fear the bombs and cruelty

- genocides and holocausts
- the cries of child ghosts in shrouds
- I fear the deniers, the justifiers
- I fear my own indifference
- and yours

-Steve Minkin, Brattleboro

—Chard de Niord, Westminster West

Ursula K. Le Guin at the Border

Ursula, who died five years ago, told me in an essay, that fantasy literature allows people to read stories of outrageous behavior without triggering the identities of nations people feel partisan about, so that compassion can sweep the reader into the caressing currents before they have a chance to resist the final powerful tug of that great ocean, and their prejudice has a chance of getting washed off into the relief of grief. Outrageous behavior by Martians against the people of Pluto and by the people of Pluto against the people of Mars can be recognized by everyone as unacceptable, indefensible, unjust, and — most importantly — avoidable.

Bombs aren't just for maiming and killing people, they have other important purposes. And bombs aren't just dropped anymore, relying on some hotshot young ace pilot, with excellent vision, a steady hand, and a good aim. No, that's so December 1941.

Bombs are guided by lasers now and the reporter, writing in 2022, pointed out it is no accident, that they landed on Anthedon Harbour in Gaza, exactly where the archeologists had been working on a world heritage site, a place where ancient Greek and Egyptian, then Philistine, then Byzantine, then Arab sailors, displaced each other and docked their boats

as the crow gathers strength wings high onyx feathers stark contrast

to what falls imprints disappearing amid calls of prayer across air-currents

-Louise Rader, St. Johnsbury

open our eyes on this the second day of the We hostage exchange the second day of the cease fire in the land of sand under the auspices of Gods in all languages.

We rise from our beds

the second day of the ceasefire declared in the on this land of dates.

We bow our heads to the hostages exchanged released from dark tunnels who walk slowly exhausted and dazed into light.

We see the tears of the families who wait.

We bow our heads to those buried under rubble whom we cannot see or name. We open our eyes on this the second day of the hostage exchange. bow our heads to body parts let go of how why when..

We open our eyes on this the second day of the hostage exchange arranged by the brokers of peace cloaked in opulent robes who drink from golden bowls.

We stare at the hands of the clock pray the cease fire will never end.

-Toni Ortner, Putney

VOICES

THE COMMONS • Wednesday, November 29, 2023



Demonstration

Kate Casa of Brattleboro, who has many connections with Palestinian people — includ-ing some who have been slain in the most recent attacks — led the organizing effort. One of the groups supporting this action was Jewish Voice for Peace, which had sponsored demonstrations for justice in Israel/ Palestine all across the country.

At the Common, Alex Fischer of Brattleboro spoke eloquently about the Jewish Voice for Peace involvement in the opposition to Israeli oppression of Palestinians, Tim Stevenson of Post Oil Solutions spoke about the importance of what grassroots organizers are do-ing, and the Bread and Puppet Theater performed. The group then walked peacefully back down Main Street for the conclusion of the event.

At one point, a few pro-Israel counterprotesters yelled hostile words, and there was a bit of back-and-forth, but the marchers kept chanting words of peace and solidarity with the FROM SECTION FRONT

innocent people who have been caught up in the hostilities. The large majority of the crowd on the streets and in the stores was supportive of the marchers' de-mand for a cease-fire.

Vermont's U.S. representative, Becca Balint, has re-sponded to the call from Vermonters for a stop to the fighting by publishing a state-ment in support of an immedi-ate cease-fire. U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders has issued a powerful statement demanding conditions on the billions of dollars of aid we send to Israel annually. Senator Peter Welch waited until Nov. 28 to support an "indefinite" cease-fire. Organizers said that unless

the situation on the ground improves a lot, this won't be the last protest Brattleboro will witness demanding peace and a two-state solution, and they urged all Vermonters to contact our congressional delegation to let them know that we oppose the unquestioned funding of Israel with American dollars.













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Funding Israel

into existence by the United Nations in 1948?

SETTING ALL facts and logic aside, Washington parrots Israel's propaganda. Like the now-discredited beheaded babies claim, President Biden has dispensed with the facts as he takes his Hamas talking points straight from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's script.

The Commons **IDAY** Shopping Pages to benefit Project Feed

November 29 - December 20

the thousands

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Mainstream media props up the narrative, reporting first

and fact-checking later, if at all, while studiously omitting Israel's original encouragement of Hamas as a counterweight to the influence of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The media also avoids mentioning Israel's history of violent responses to any Palestinian nonviolent resistance, from the first intifada to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (which is now illegal in 35 U.S. states) to Gaza's Great March of Return, whose poet muse lost his 10-year-old son and was himself badly injured when Israel bombed his home last month.

What's more, this blindered allegiance to Israel is stoking both Islamophobia and antisemitism in the United States, widening the gaping U.S. sociocultural chasm at a time when anyone with an itchy trigger finger and a Fox News education can voice his opinion with an AK-47.

Mourning our dead

Hamas prevents them from leaving. The equivalence of the two is unfair and infuriating.

Activists use the euphemism "occupation," but in fact, all Israelis left Gaza in 2005. Hamas redirected billions of dollars in humanitarian aid into building a war machine at the expense of its own citizens.

Why does Gaza lack water? Hamas repurposes their water infrastructure to build deadly rockets. Why do Gazans live in poverty? Billions of dollars were spent on weapons and tunnels.

Can you imagine what Gaza would look like today if these funds had been spent on peacefully developing their seaside country instead of on destroying Israel?

Hamas hoards fuel as Gazan hospitals run low, stores weapons in and around schools, hospitals, and mosques, and fires rockets from populated areas.

This illogical U.S. support for Israel exists primarily for one reason: American politicians know they will face the wrath of the Israel-first crowd if they whisper even the vaguest criticism of the Jewish state. Ask those members of Congress brave enough to call for a ceasefire in Gaza. Attack ads have popped up in least seven districts, reports The Guardian, and several members are suddenly facing well-funded primary opponents.

We should be calling this what it is: a foreign government and its agents interfering in U.S. elections to the detriment of U.S. national interests

But no, we continue to look the other way, handing Tel Aviv the platinum card with no strings attached, mimicking Israel's propaganda, and acting as its No. 1 apologist on the world stage.

As OF NOV. 23, Israel has slaughtered more than 13,000 Gazans, including 5,600 children.

Their cynical objective is to

against Israel.

Palestinians.

maximize the casualties of their

own people to enrage the world

PROTESTORS CALL FOR a "cease-

fire," which would keep Hamas

armed and committing more

atrocities. They chant "from

the river to the sea" and "inti-

fada," words and phrases that

call for a violent slaughter of

Jews in their homeland. They

shout "genocide," implying that

Israel is on a mission to wipe out

If this were the case, why

do everything in its power to

minimize civilian casualties -

sending countless messages,

phone calls, and pamphlets

warning Gazans to leave the

combat zone? Hamas set up

dus and, on Nov. 4, they at-

roadblocks to prevent the exo-

tacked Israeli forces working to

would the Israel Defense Forces

FROM SECTION FRONT

provide a safe passage for residents to flee south from Gaza City.

Indeed, it is Hamas that openly plans for the extinction of Jews.

WE MOURN the innocent loss of civilians in Gaza who are exploited by Hamas, which controls the region with an iron fist. After the horrifying atrocities of Oct. 7, what alternative does Israel have but to disarm its forces?

Activists should promote coexistence for both sides, denounce Hamas, and acknowledge the role that their jihadist mentality has perpetrated on the peace and well-being for of all people in the region.

If Hamas puts down arms, there will be peace.

If Israel puts down her arms, she will be annihilated.

Another 6,000 are missing, buried under the rubble. Of 35 hospitals, 26 cannot function, and half of all homes have been destroyed.

Now the rains have started. More than 1 million humans are sheltering in bombed-out buildings and tents with rain dripping down their backs and soaking their clothes.

With almost no food or drinking water to be found, infants, children, the elderly, the sick, and the injured go to bed wet, hungry, and thirsty. Once a brief respite from the hell enveloping them, now even sleep is a luxury Gazans can no longer find.

Back here in the United States, our elected leaders are gathering with friends and family in their warm homes, a fire crackling in the woodstove, the table loaded with food, Palestinian children's blood on their hands.

It makes for messy holidays.