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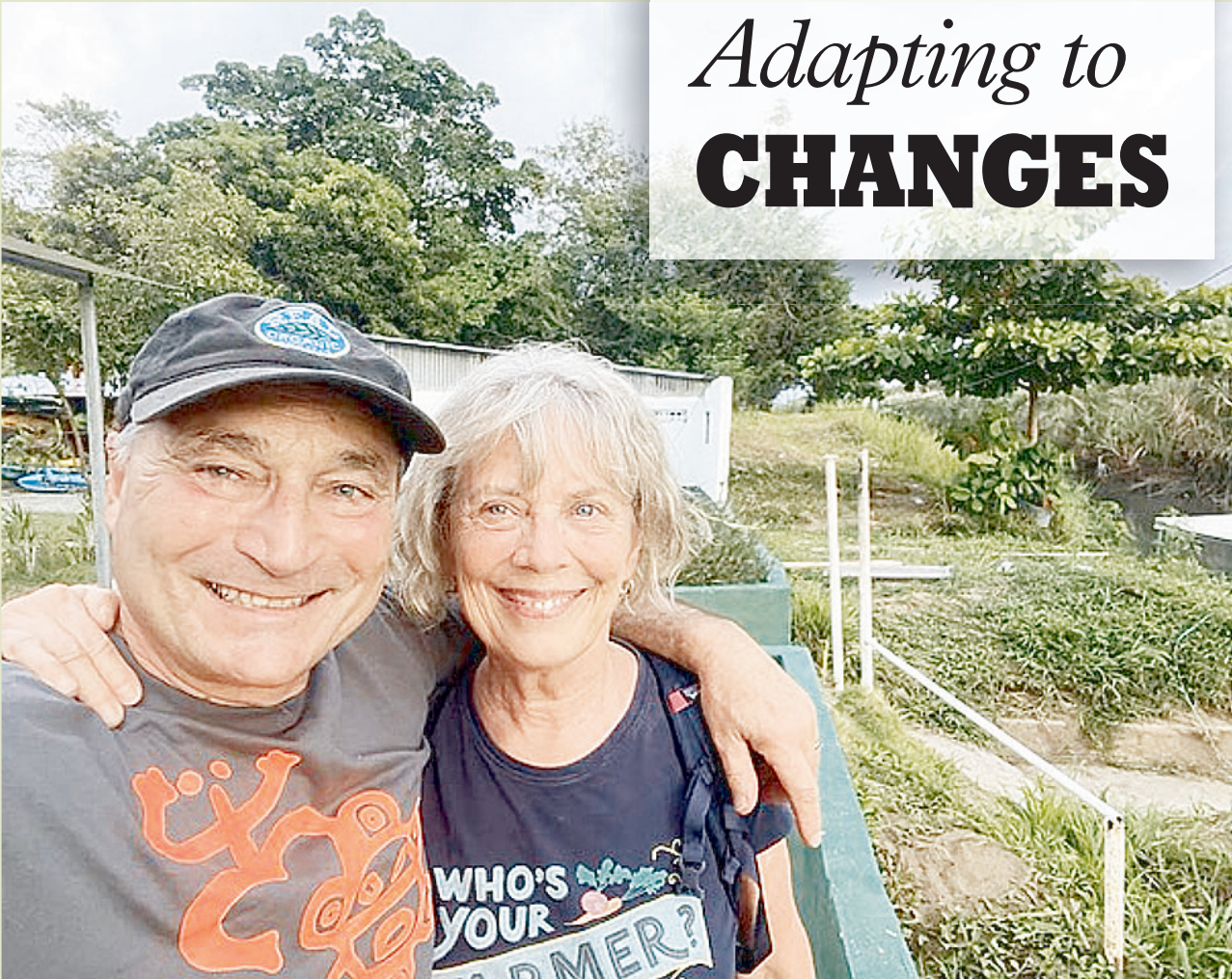
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Adapting to CHANGES

Howie and Elizabeth Prussack are the owners of High Meadows Farm in Westminster West.

'I'm always thinking about what's next,' says Howie Prussack, who stumbled on his calling 50 years ago: organic farming

By Fran Lynggaard Hansen
The Commons

WESTMINSTER WEST—Howard (Howie) Prussack is relaxed, sitting in the warmth of his greenhouse on this overcast March day, enjoying 70-degree weather among the tomato plants he started in late February.

“The celery is up, and we’re potting turmeric today. We’re also working on ginger propagation,” Prussack says. Turmeric and ginger? “People are getting older and want foods that keep us healthy,” he says. “Powerful herbs and vegetables, carrots, turmeric, ginger — they are all important as one ages.”

These are new crops for High Meadows Farm — ginger was added last year, and this is the first year it’s grown turmeric. Prussack, 71, says that both are in demand, and he ought to know: He has been farming for more than 50 years.

“People ask me about when I’m going to retire, but I’m having too much fun,” he says with a smile. “I’m still enthused about farming, and I’m always thinking about what’s next,” he says, shifting his weight from foot to foot, a sign of this farmer’s near-constant activity. “My local farming role models all worked well into their 80s, so I guess I’ll be like them,” he adds.

Brattleboro Town Meeting will consider \$22.9M budget

Members will decide bond for backup Pleasant Valley water tank; only users will repay the debt

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO — Representative Town Meeting here will convene on Saturday, March 23, at 8:30 a.m., in the Brattleboro Union High School gymnasium.

If members do not finish the warrant, the meeting will recess at 5 p.m. and continue on Sunday, March 24, at 8:30 a.m.

In anticipation of the RTM, the Selectboard hosted an informational meeting on March 13.

“This is not the meeting to get into substantive debate on any of the articles,” warned Selectboard Chair Ian Goodnow, who several times told RTM members to save their points of opinion or advocacy for the March 23 meeting.

Goodnow also explained that two articles historically on the warning — those requesting financial support for the Southeast Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) and the community marketing initiative for the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance (DBA) — do not appear on this year’s.

That’s because the board, knowing financial support for

both will be coming out of the revolving loan fund, decided that neither needed voter approval.

Substantive articles to be considered by voters, as well as the board’s explanations (where offered), are as follows.

Water storage tank bond issue

Members will be asked to approve a loan to build a secondary Pleasant Valley water storage tank at an estimated cost of \$1.62 million, and with an interest rate not to exceed 3% for up to 10 years.

This is a bond article that state law requires be voted on by Australian ballot. Only users will pay the debt.

The primary 3-million-gallon water storage tank, at Pleasant Valley reservoir next to the treatment facility, provides water at high-demand times. That tank serves all of West Brattleboro and the downtown area.

A recent inspection by scuba divers identified needed maintenance, which would require draining the tank and taking it offline. This is typically done with the aid of a temporary storage tank, but that requires costly

SEE BRATTLEBORO ARTM, A5

Rockingham Selectboard hopefuls make their cases

Election on Tuesday, April 2 also includes three contests for school boards

By Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—The five candidates running for two open one-year seats on the Rockingham Selectboard — Jamey Berrick, John Dunbar, Bonnie North, Stan Talstra, and Deborah Wright — held a forum at the Rockingham Free Public Library.

The March 13 forum also included candidate Rick Cowan, who is running unopposed for the three-year seat left vacant by Bonnie North.

Voters will cast their ballots at the polls on Tuesday, April 2 at the Masonic Temple at 61 Westminster St. in Bellows Falls.

If there were common threads among the candidates’ platforms, it was the need for transparency in local government, that Rockingham has enjoyed an exciting period of growth and positivity, and that citizen pride in the town’s rich history has been a big plus for the community.

The well-preserved, authentic beauty of the town’s walkable villages of Bellows Falls and Saxtons River was also frequently mentioned as an asset.

Former board member Susan Hammond attended the meeting and was thanked for her decade of service to the town. The one-year candidates are vying for her former seat.



Candidates for the Rockingham Selectboard met at the Rockingham Free Public Library for a March 13 forum. From left, moderator Steven Crofter, three-year candidate Rick Cowan, and one-year candidates Jamey Berrick, John Dunbar, Bonnie North, Stan Talstra, and Deborah Wright.

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Rockingham candidates

Jamey Berrick introduced himself as having lived in the community for 34 years, since moving here from Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.

He noted that, though he is now retired, he has a background in construction and electrical generation, and has worked in many different locations over the years. He said he's been involved with various town committees, and considers it part of his civic duty.

Berrick added that being proactive instead of reactive in dealing with issues is one of his goals.

John Dunbar works in the building trades, has lived in Saxtons River for 50 years, and owns rental properties in town. He raised his family here and has served on several town committees, including as a member of the Planning Commission, which will soon release the new town plan.

Dunbar said he has also worked as a teacher, is a weatherization expert, and is part of the Rockingham Development Group.

Bonnie North has lived in Rockingham for 14 years and is an incumbent who has served on numerous local boards and committees. A journalist and publisher, she said she became interested in local politics after relocating from Maryland in 2010.

She is the chair of Rockingham For Progress, and has served on the Planning Commission for four years, as well as on the Selectboard. She said that learning the "nuts and bolts" of running a town "has been an education for me."

Deborah Wright has lived in Bellows Falls for 20 years and has been involved in local politics since 2011. She previously served on the Selectboard and was chair of the Planning Commission, and is a current member of the Bellows Falls Union High School Board.

Wright runs Green Mountain Traffic Control with her husband Cass and family, which has as many as 30 employees during the busy construction season.

Stan Telstra is the candidate who is newest to Vermont, having moved to a new home near Saxtons River from Seattle, Washington, in 2019. Telstra brought a unique perspective in discussing what drew him to move across the country while looking for a new home in southern Vermont and why he finally decided to make Rockingham his home.

He was among the first to note that the numerous walking, hiking, and biking opportunities in the town and its villages was a powerful draw for both residents and visitors. He serves on the town's Bike/Walk Committee, which helps develop trails in the community.

The moderator, Steve Crofter, asked two questions that the candidates had received in advance.

The first addressed how the candidates would balance keeping taxes affordable with providing the services people wanted.

Wright made clear that, while she is consistently tough on budgets, her vision for the town has always been in terms of generations, not just a few years.

"What will the community look like in three generations, or six?" she asked. "It's not just about us."

Telstra said it was necessary to attract businesses, create jobs and grow the housing stock, which would help retain younger citizens, and that his approach would be to work with the Chamber of Commerce.

"Everybody wants everything," North said, explaining the board's dilemma, "but nobody wants to pay for it. It's really hard."

North complimented Town Manager Scott Pickup for his leadership, as did other candidates. North described Pickup as competent, experienced, and patient, helping guide the board to both "look back and ahead" and to ask, "Where will we be in one or five years?"

These are concerns shared by all small communities, Dunbar said, citing a need to be creative in finding ways to increase revenues while decreasing costs.

Dunbar was the first to bring up the idea of consolidating the town's three fire departments, which a recent in-depth study done by outside consultants recommended as a way to cut costs.

Consolidation has been a subject of debate in Rockingham for decades — not only the fire departments but also the town's Selectboard and two village trustee boards.

Dunbar said he felt that improving and increasing housing stock was the key to resolving many of the issues facing the town, including attracting businesses.

He noted that Rockingham has some of the oldest buildings in Windham County and that they are expensive to maintain and heat, while building new housing averages around \$540,000 per unit.

Berrick also focused on the need for greater cooperation among the town boards, and on the need to look closely into each proposed project, as there are not enough resources to do everything. Putting needs before wants is vital, he said.

When asked to sum up their philosophy and vision for serving as trustees, Talstra said his was to serve the people.

"People are what attracted us to this area," he said. We need to maintain the town's "charm and character while attracting new business."

North referred to her years of working on various boards "promoting progressive growth" and getting people involved to help preserve the town's "unique history."

Dunbar spoke of "always looking for the data involved" when figuring out the difference between "perception and reality" as he considers projects. He added

FROM SECTION FRONT

that Rockingham is becoming known for "what a good community this is," but cautioned that "past decisions to put things off are being paid for now."

Berrick declared that he was "not a politician," but wanted to step up and serve the community.

Wright referred again to her comment that she works with one eye focused on what is good for the generations to come.

Several written questions from the audience were addressed by the candidates.

When asked whether they would reopen the recycling center's popular community recycling building, which closed during Covid, most candidates agreed that the former location had not worked out. They agreed they would like to see one somewhere else in town, and mentioned similar locations in nearby towns that could be used.

Another pressing concern raised was the future of law enforcement and emergency services.

Wright agreed that, while Bellows Falls has its own police department, rural Rockingham has a serious need for expanded police coverage.

Talstra said he has been aware of the "very contentious issues" surrounding the police and fire departments and added he was "not sure why." Combining fire departments would be one step in helping solve the issue, he said.

Dunbar also spoke about the need for consolidation and a regional approach to emergency services as in the mutual aid arrangement already being in use.

Berrick described himself as "passionate about public safety," and said that though Saxtons River has a separate contract with the Windham County Sheriff's Department that seems to be working well and Bellows Falls has a "capable police department," there needs to be an ongoing conversation about this topic with all parts of the town.

Falls Area Community Television, the local public access station, broadcast the forum live and has it archived at fact8.com.

School races contested

Other contested races on the ballot include Rick Holloway and Priscilla Clough Lambert, who are vying for a three-year term as Rockingham School District director.

Deborah Wright is also running for the remaining year of a two-year term for school director for Union High School District #27, as are Virginia (Ginger) Driscoll, former Bellows Falls Union High School Principal Christopher E. Hodsdon Sr., Kim Keefe, Michael P. Stack, and Jason Terry.

Paul J. Obuchowski and Jason Terry are competing for one full three-year term on the board.

Neighbors take Putney project protest to Vt. Supreme Court

Plaintiffs contend fraudulent process in planned housing development

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

PUTNEY—Less than a month after their third appeal was turned down, two neighbors of the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust's proposed affordable housing community on Alice Holway Drive have filed a fourth appeal — this time to the Vermont Supreme Court.

Laura Campbell and Deborah Lazar have made the appeal, filed by attorney Hal Stevens, protesting the planned 25 units of mixed-income housing in two buildings on land on Alice Holway Drive next to the Putney Community Garden and Putney Farmers' Market.

"We're not surprised by this latest move from the opponents of this project, but we are disappointed on behalf of every person who needs a new place to live and has to wait yet again," said Elizabeth Bridgewater, WWHT executive director.

Bridgewater said that during a housing crisis such as the one Vermonters are experiencing, "every new home created is step toward a solution."

"We are confident that this fourth round of litigation will be resolved in our favor, and we look forward to a groundbreaking on the site later this year," Bridgewater continued, adding that she expects the delay to

add a few months to the current timeline, according to which construction would have begun this spring.

After the third appeal was denied in February, Bridgewater said the delay caused by the lengthy appeal process had increased the cost of the project by 14%, from \$10.3 million to \$11.7 million.

On Feb. 22, State Superior Court Judge Thomas S. Durbin denied Campbell and Lazar's third appeal, stating that "to find that the project is subject to Act 250 jurisdiction, merely because of the presence of a Class III road, would be an irrational and impermissibly strict reading of the statute that stymies the legislature's intent to encourage mixed-income housing in designated growth areas."

In their third appeal, Campbell and Lazar contended that the Trust's lots are not contiguous — and should be. Because Alice Holway Drive runs between the lots, they claim that the site does not meet the legal definition of "affordable housing" vis-a-vis Act 250.

They also contested a previous district commissioner's jurisdictional opinion that concluded that the project is exempt from Act 250 land use review.

This week, Campbell told *The Commons* that she believes the permit application

by WWHT to Town Manager Karen Astley in December 2021 was "fraudulent," as was the Putney Development Review Board's approval of it in March 2022.

"Steamrolled on one hand and stonewalled on the other were we," Campbell said, adding that the WWHT "plans and permit deserve a fair and thorough review to reinstate" the terms "impartial," "contiguous," and "border" "to their true meanings."

She added that her attorney "argues there is a distinction to be made between Lister Dept. interpretation and permitting for land use and construction of PUDs [planned unit developments]," which relates to whether the three lots are considered for tax purposes to be a single parcel or multiple, contiguous parcels.

"We thank housing advocates and community members who have voiced — and continue to voice — their strong support for affordable housing in the community," Bridgewater said.

The project, which is funded by a mix of private equity, grants and loans, has gone to bid.

ReArch Company, Inc. of South Burlington has been hired as general contractor, and the architect is Vermont Integrated Architecture of Middlebury.

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■ Brattleboro ARTM

FROM SECTION FRONT

site preparation. Town officials looked into alternatives and found that a more cost-effective solution would be to install a secondary permanent water tank.

Thus, this article proposes a 400,000-gallon tank to be installed next to the existing, larger one.

The loan would be at 0% interest, and the town has up to 40 years to repay the bond.

Financial approvals

Members will be asked to spend \$131,698.86 through special assessments on properties within the Mountain Home Park Special Benefit Assessment Tax District.

Basically, Goodnow said, the town is a “pass through” for a loan taken out by Mountain Home for water and sewer work in 2007, adding that the loan payment was restructured subsequently and the payment lowered.

Members will be asked to spend \$80,000 through special assessments on properties within the Downtown Improvement District, for capital and operating costs of projects of the town’s duly designated downtown organization, as reflected in its work plan and budget.

This annually recurring article asks approval to raise the money through a special tax on properties throughout the Downtown Improvement District to fund the work of the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance, the town’s designated downtown organization.

Members will also be asked to spend \$367,810 to support 36 human service programs and facilities for residents:

AIDS Project of Southern Vermont, \$2,000; American Red Cross — New Hampshire and Vermont Region, \$3,750; Big Brothers Big Sisters, \$7,500; Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, \$10,000; Boys and Girls Club, \$17,000; Brattleboro Area Hospice, \$7,400; Brattleboro Centre for Children, \$5,400; Brattleboro

Housing Partnership/Tri-Park, \$12,000; Brattleboro Senior Meals, \$10,000; Building a Positive Community (BAPC), \$4,000.

Also, Family Garden, \$2,500; Food Connects, \$10,000; Gathering Place, \$5,000; Green Mountain RSVP, \$1,000; Groundworks Collaborative, \$20,000; Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), \$10,000; Meeting Waters YMCA, \$10,000; Out in the Open, \$16,500; Putney Foodshelf, \$4,260; Rich Earth Institute, \$1,500; Senior Solutions, \$6,000; Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), \$13,300; Southeast Vermont Transit (MooVER), \$24,000.

Also, The Root Social Justice Center, \$25,000; Theatre Adventure Inc., \$3,000; Turning Point, \$25,000; Vermont Adult Learning, \$2,400; Vermont Association for the Blind, \$700; Vermont Center for Independent Living, \$1,600; Vermont Family Network, \$2,500.

Also, Windham County Dental Center, \$15,000; Windham County Humane Society, \$2,000; Windham County Safe Place Child Advocacy Center, \$15,000; Windham & Windsor Housing Trust, \$10,000; Winston Prouty Center, \$15,000; Women’s Freedom Center, \$17,500; WSESU Summer Food Program, \$10,000; and Youth Services, \$20,000.

Members will also decide what to pay Selectboard members. Currently, the chair receives \$10,000 annually and board members each receive \$8,000.

Members will also be asked to transfer \$268,862 from the Unassigned General Fund balance for street paving and capital road improvement projects (non-operating capital costs).

Town seeks 4.3% budget increase

Members will consider the proposed \$22,993,830 fiscal year 2025 operating budget — an increase of \$955,153, or 4.3%, over the current fiscal year’s operating budget.

“The board believes this is a favorable budget for RTM to consider and allows for expansion or continuance of all services and to enact a full municipal mode for EMS and addresses a vulnerability in the IT area and capital needs plus,” Goodnow said.

Staffing accounts for 44.5% of the total budget, and when employee benefits are added in, that rises to 61.2%.

“The town employs people, and those people provide services, and those services are what creates municipal government,” said Goodnow.

The proposed budget reflects a 13.1% jump in salaries, or \$1,185,322. That includes a Selectboard-approved 4% cost-of-living increase and all increases negotiated as collective bargaining agreements.

Part of the increase relates to the board’s decision to turn to a municipal delivery plan for emergency medical services, thereby expanding the fire department to include six more firefighters and an EMS director and creating most of the 38.5% increase in that department.

Revenue from the new EMS program is anticipated at \$837,522, for a total of \$921,017 budgeted.

Other parts of the increase include hiring an outreach program specialist for the library, changing the town clerk’s job to full-time, and adding an IT manager to the administrator’s office. In addition, benefits increased by 1.3%, or \$48,511.

Policing costs are up 23.5%, mostly for special equipment of various types.

Town clerk expenses increase



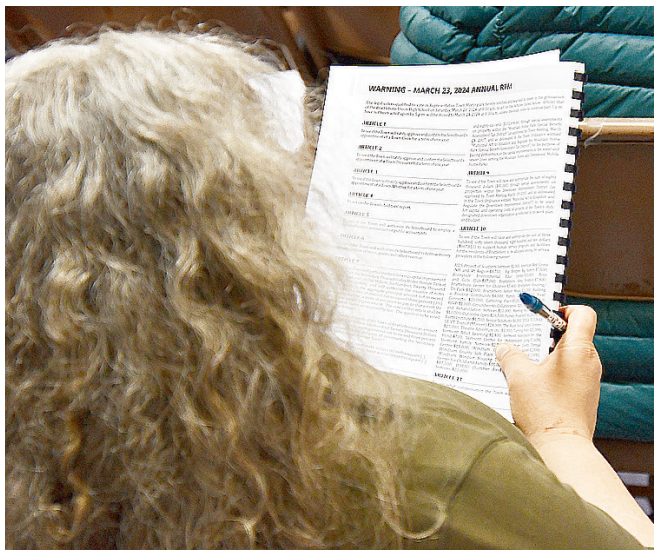
RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Representative Town Meeting members listen to an explanation of a warrant article during an informational meeting at Academy School in West Brattleboro on March 13.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

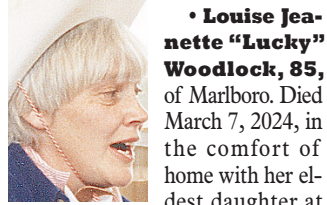
Brattleboro Selectboard Chair Ian Goodnow speaks while Town Manager John Potter, center, and Selectboard member Daniel Quipp, right, listen.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

District 7 Representative Town Meeting member Paula Melton looks over the warrant for the March 23 annual meeting.

INFORMATION: A private burial will take place at Meeting House Hill Cemetery in Brattleboro. Donations to the Shriners Hospital for Children, 516 Carew St., Springfield, MA 10014. To offer condolences, visit folevfuneralhome.com.



• Louise Jeanette “Lucky” Woodlock, 85, of Marlboro. Died March 7, 2024, in the comfort of home with her eldest daughter at her side. Lucky was born in Revere, Massachusetts, on Nov. 17, 1938, the daughter of Fred and Dorothy (Perkins) Collar. She was raised on Revere Beach and was a graduate of Revere High School. In the late 1960s, she took a vacation that brought her to Higley Hill in Marlboro, where she stayed at a country inn operated by Alice “Grandma” Whitney and family. It was a life-changing trip. She would soon make Marlboro her new home. On Oct. 18, 1969, at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Wardsboro, she married Edmund “Woody” Woodlock. They spent nearly 50 years together prior to his death on Aug. 25, 2019. Together, they built their own log home with the help of family and friends. With her husband, she owned and operated The Berry Shed Sugar House, a berry farm in Marlboro. In conjunction with running the farm, Lucky was the assistant nursery school teacher at the Marlboro Meetinghouse School from 1983 to 1990. Lucky’s young students honored her playful nature by referring to her as “The Big Kid.” She will be remembered fondly for her elaborate extended-day rodeos. Gifted with a beautiful singing voice, Lucky played guitar and ran sing-a-longs for the Horizon Inn in Marlboro for many years. Along with playing the guitar, she also played the accordion, banjo, tin whistle and several other instruments. Lucky loved John Denver’s music, old Western movies, canoeing with her husband, and animals. Survivors include her daughters Danielle Marie “Dani” Woodlock of Marlboro and Teresa Dorothy Woodlock of Brattleboro; Melody “Little Sister” Squires of Guilford; brothers-in-law John Woodlock of Norwell, Massachusetts, and Gerard Woodlock (Bernice) of West Bridgewater, Massachusetts; sister-in-law Ellen O’Connell (Timothy) of Norton, Massachusetts, and first cousin Barbara Oliver (Victor) of Dunnellon, Florida. Additionally, she leaves a host of dear friends, including lifelong friends Liz Averill of Wareham, Massachusetts, William Gibson of Winthrop, Massachusetts, and the MacDougall family, originally from Medway, Massachusetts. She was predeceased by her brother, Fred Collar. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside committal services in King Cemetery in Marlboro, where she will be laid to rest beside her beloved husband, will be private. Donations to Marlboro Cares, P.O. Box 222, Marlboro, VT 05344. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

by 7.5% in the proposed budget, most due to election-related costs. Other increases will be seen in human services and general services (computer and software expenses), and the municipal center (old building maintenance), while some reductions can be seen in health insurance expenses as well as auxiliary services since there is no outside ambulance contract included. The proposed budget takes into account increases in the property tax, as well as increased revenues from the 1% local-option rooms tax and the 1% local-option sales tax. The 2024 report of the Representative Town Meeting Finance Committee, as well as all articles and attendant reports for this year’s meeting and a video of this information session, can be found at Brattleboro.gov. Registered Brattleboro voters may attend and voice their opinions, but only Town Meeting members may vote.

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WWAC talk looks at migration from Central America

BRATTLEBORO—The multiple factors that have driven a migrant exodus from Central America over the past 10 years will be considered at Windham World Affairs Council's talk with Latin America expert Dr. Sarah Osten on Thursday, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. at 118 Elliot, 118 Elliot St.

The event is co-sponsored by the Community Asylum Seekers Project (CASP). Executive Director Liv Berelson describes CASP as "a nonprofit founded in 2016 that supports asylum seekers in the Brattleboro area. We provide lodging, food, healthcare, employment placement, and legal support to newly arrived asylum seekers. More than half of CASP's clients are from the Northern Triangle region."

According to Berelson, a former student of Osten, "Sarah deeply understands the complex and interwoven factors behind why people from this region are seeking asylum in and migrating to the U.S., and the U.S.'s role in creating these factors."

Homemade empanadas will be available made by a CASP client who came from Honduras with her two children several years ago. She hopes to one day have her own restaurant or food truck, and enjoys cooking and baking.

To explore why so many people in the Northern Triangle region of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have chosen to flee to the U.S., this talk examines

long-term political and social histories of the region, which have included U.S. interventionism, and the long-term social, political, and economic legacies of violent Cold War conflicts that Central Americans are still living with today.

Among others, these include the effectively unchecked spread of organized crime and street gangs in the region, themselves the products of an earlier migrant exodus to the U.S., and then a mass deportation.

Osten is a historian of Latin America and an associate professor at the University of Vermont, specializing in 20th-century Mexico. She is the director of graduate studies in the UVM history department, as well as the director of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program. In recent years she has served as a Spanish-English interpreter for detained asylum seekers as well as a Mexico country conditions expert for asylum cases. She holds a doctorate in history and a master's in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, both from the University of Chicago. Her bachelor's degree is from Brown University.

As the sole historian of Latin America at UVM, Osten teaches on a variety of Latin American topics and countries, from the ancient world to the present. In addition to introductory courses on Latin American history, she teaches courses on topics including revolutions, authoritarianism,

indigenous history, history and memory, drugs and drug trafficking, and modern Mexican history.

Her newest teaching project is an interdisciplinary immigration justice program and course sequence.

This event is free to the public, but a \$10 donation is suggested. Registration is encouraged at www.wwacmigration.eventbrite.com. A Zoom link is available upon registering for those unable to attend in person.

CCV offers free cyber skills course

MONTPELIER—The Community College of Vermont (CCV) has partnered with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and Microsoft to deliver a free cyber skills course for Vermonters. The course is made possible by a grant from AACC and Microsoft, and funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The one-credit class, Foundations of Information Security, will be offered in a Flex format, meaning students can participate remotely and at their own pace. Students will examine the issues of online threats, build cyber awareness, and learn personal and professional strategies for reducing vulnerabilities.

The three-year Cyber Skills for All: Community Colleges Lead the Way grant aims to encourage economic development through a focus on cybersecurity pathways at community colleges. AACC received numerous applications from community colleges across the country, and applications were reviewed by workforce and economic development experts along with Microsoft staff. CCV was one of just 14 institutions selected for funding.

"As technology evolves, cyber skills have never been more important in the workplace, and CCV looks forward to expanding and promoting cybersecurity education and IT programming to better meet Vermont's workforce needs," Nicole Stetson, CCV associate academic dean, said in a news release.

Students can register now through July 5, and the course runs through Aug. 12. Learn more and apply at ccv.edu/apply.

In computing, turning the obvious into the useful is a living definition of the word "frustration."

—ALAN PERLIS

AROUND THE TOWNS

Brattleboro Town Report is now available

BRATTLEBORO — The annual Brattleboro Town Report is available for pick-up at the circulation desk at Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St., and at the Town Clerk's office at the Municipal Center, 230 Main St., Suite 108. The town report can also be found at brattleboro.gov.

Youth Services' Summer Resource Calendar available for download

BRATTLEBORO — Youth Services has once again created a downloadable spreadsheet of all camps in Windham County as a service to area families.

"Our Summer Camp Listing gives parents and grandparents a listing of all the options in one convenient location," Youth Services Executive Director Russell Bradbury-Carlin said in a news release. "We've been doing this for years as a service to local families."

Dates, age range, cost, and scholarship availability are listed, as well as contact information. Organizations who provided information include Beaver Brook Children's School, Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, Brattleboro Music School, Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department, The Collaborative, Kroka Expeditions, Giant Journey Farm, In-Sight Photography Project, Meeting Waters YMCA, Miss Martha's Creative ELP, New England Youth Theatre, New England Center for Circus Arts, The Putney School, River Gallery School, Road's End Farm, Theatre Adventure, and more.

Youth Services' Summer Resource Calendar is available online. For more information, call Youth Services at 802-257-0361 or visit youthservicesinc.org/publications.

Learn about home weatherization at RFPL

BELLOWS FALLS — Two local experts on weatherization will kick off the Rockingham Energy Committee's "Home Energy Forum" series on Thursday, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Rockingham Free Public Library.

"Winter in Vermont does not have to mean a drafty, uncomfortable house that requires wearing multiple sweaters and uses lots of expensive fuel to heat," organizers wrote in a news release. "While the traditional approach to winter's cold was to just put more wood in the stove, modern building science shows how we can be more comfortable and spend less on energy at the same time.

Local homeowners, landlords, and renters who want to increase their home's comfort and energy efficiency should attend this presentation by two local experts on weatherization: John Hyslop, the weatherization operations manager for Southeastern Vermont Community Action, and John Dunbar, a project consultant at Farnum Insulation in East Dummerston. Each will give a short presentation and then will take questions.

Hyslop will address options for low-income residents, while Dunbar will address available weatherization rebates and low-interest loans, and both can discuss the pros and cons of spray foam insulation.

They will also explain how getting a "home energy audit" will create a strategy for weatherizing homes, which is done primarily with air sealing, insulation, moisture control, and ventilation.

This event is free. Contact Rockingham Energy Committee Chair Peter Bergstrom at 802-444-1860 or rockinghamvtenergy@gmail.com for more information.

Rabies clinic in Wardsboro

WARDSBORO — The Wardsboro Town Office will sponsor a pet vaccination clinic at the office of the Town Clerk on Saturday, March 23, from 10 a.m. to noon. Dr. Miles A. Powers of East Dover will be vaccinating both dogs and cats. This clinic is open to any dog or cat owner.

Fees will be \$15 for rabies and \$25 for a distemper-complex vaccine for either a dog or cat, or \$35 for both vaccinations. Dogs must be on leashes and cats must be in carriers. For information, call 802-348-7918.

Easter Egg Hunt at Valley Cares

TOWNSHEND — Valley Cares invites everyone to an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 23, at 10 a.m. in the living room at West River Valley Assisted Living, 461 Grafton Rd.

This event is indoors, organizers said, "because you never know what sort of weather to expect on a morning in March." Egg hunters should bring their own basket or bag. To RSVP, or for more information, email cpottterearle@valleycares.org.

Crockpot buffet supper in Bellows Falls

BELLOWS FALLS — The United Church of Bellows Falls, 8 School St., will host a crockpot buffet supper with a variety of entrees on Saturday, March 23, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$6 for children 6-12, and free for children under 6. Included with the meal is a salad bar, bread, beverages, and dessert. Gluten-free and vegetarian choices will also be available. The building is accessible to all. Enter from the back.

Egg-decorating party in West Dummerston

WEST DUMMERSTON — The Dummerston Community Center, 150 West St., is holding their annual Egg Decorating Party on Sunday, March 24, from 2 to 4 p.m. The cost is \$5 per dozen of hard-boiled eggs, or \$1 each for blown-out eggs.

Call 802-380-1424 by Friday, March 22, with the type and quantity of eggs. All materials are included (dye, stickers, paint, ribbons, beads, glitter, and more.) This event is for kids and adults, and all money raised will go to the Community Center Playground Fund.

Annual soup fest, auction benefits historical society

NEWFA NE — The Historical Society of Windham County's eighth annual Soup Fest and Silent Auction will be held on Sunday, March 24, at the NewBrook Fire Station on Route 30. The event will help raise funds for the society's West River Railroad Museum and the new Windham County Museum to be housed in the 1825 Windham County Jail Building.

Sample homemade soups from these restaurants and restaurateurs "up the gauge" of the West River Railroad, from Brattleboro to Londonderry, including Whetstone Station, Brattleboro; Jon Julian, Williamsville; The Newfane Market; Harmonyville Store, Townshend; West River Community Project, West Townshend; West Wardsboro Store; West River Provisions, Jamaica; Family Kitchen & Pizzeria, Winhall; and The New American Grill, Londonderry.

Doors open at 4 p.m., with a suggested donation of \$5 to \$10. Bidding and the 50/50 raffle open at 4 p.m. and end at 5:30 p.m. Soup and bread will be served at 5:30 p.m., with desserts to follow. Contact 802-365-4517, info@historicalsocietyofwindhamcounty.org, or visit historicalsocietyofwindhamcounty.org for more info.

Senior meal in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions will present their next Senior Lunch on Wednesday, March 27, with take-outs available between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., and in-house meals served at noon. The menu will be stuffed shells, green salad, and garlic bread, with banana bread for dessert.

Reservations are strongly suggested so that they make enough food. Call the Grange at 802-254-1138 and leave name, phone number, the number of meals, and whether they are for eating in or taking out. A donation of \$3 for those 60 and above and \$4 for the younger folks is suggested.

Free produce distribution in Putney

PUTNEY — The Vermont Foodbank and the Putney Foodshelf co-sponsor a monthly food drop of free produce and some nonperishables on the fourth Thursday of every month, from 9 to 9:45 a.m., on Alice Holway drive (in front of Putney Meadows, the white building across from the Putney Co-op and the Putney Fire Station.)

All are welcome. This is a drive-up service; Bags provided. The next monthly food drop is Thursday, March 28, 9:00-9:45 a.m.

Putney Farmers Market seeks vendors

PUTNEY — Putney Farmers Market, located on Carol Brown Way, is seeking vendors of all kinds. Summer 2024 applications are available at putneyfarmersmarket.org, or contact the market manager at putneyfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

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Spring!

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

page B1

COLUMN | *Memorable Meals*

The wild taste of spring!

Fiddlehead ferns are a ritual in the Northeast, and with a fleeting season, you have to be quick

FROM MY youngest childhood days, I remember foraging for fiddlehead ferns with my Uncle Leonard, a great forager of wild native foods. Heading out to the woods with him and my Aunt Mary was always a treat; she searched for antique bottles around old cellar holes, while he turned his attention to wild foods.

In the spring, Uncle Leonard gathered fiddleheads along with the fragrant ramps (wild leeks) that grew in great abundance and, when we were lucky, morel mushrooms.

Fiddleheads appear for only a few weeks. Before they become the beautiful fronds of the ostrich ferns that green our woodlands, they can grace your table. They are delicious, extremely nutritious, and unlike any other green.

My uncle called ramps “wild leeks,” but others call them “wild garlic,” because of their strong smell. They are delicious sautéed in butter and served with potatoes. We love them.

I USUALLY GET my fiddleheads at the farmstand these days or from the forager who sells them from his truck parked on the side of the road. They can be a springtime delicacy, but you absolutely have to prep them correctly, or you will never take a second bite.

Fiddleheads need to be soaked to remove their dried brown scales, then blanched to remove the extremely bitter tannins. The blanching water will turn English Breakfast Tea dark brown when you are finished, and that means the bitterness has been removed. Cook them quickly after that, a simple sauté or warming in a dish like this pasta. (See sidebar.)

A bit tedious, yes, but not difficult.

DON'T WORRY, there are substitutions.

If the season is over for you, or if you don't have them in



DOROTHY GROVER-READ's culinary talents can be found on her blog “The New Vintage Kitchen” (vintagekitchen.org), billed as “[a] Vermont innkeeper’s collection of classics reimagined for today’s kitchen,” from which this week’s recipes have been gleaned. Her column has regularly appeared in The Commons’ Food & Drink and other special sections for years.

your area, substitute chopped asparagus for the fiddleheads and another leek for the ramps, adding a couple of cloves of garlic. The dish won't taste quite the same, but it will still be delicious.

Put the pasta water on to boil, and you will be almost there



This dish takes a bit of prep, but after the fiddleheads are blanched, it happens in the time it takes the pasta to cook.

This dish takes a bit of prep, but after the fiddleheads are blanched, it can happen in the time it takes the pasta to cook. I usually prep a big mess of fiddleheads and use them over the next few days on multiple dishes — then making it would be much less work.

If you want to make this dish vegetarian, simply omit the anchovies.

Spring Supper of Penne with Fiddleheads and Ramps

- ▶ 1 leek, white and light-to-medium green, sliced
- ▶ 1 bunch (10 ounces) of ramps
- ▶ ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ▶ 6 anchovy filets, minced
- ▶ 2 medium-sized tomatoes, chopped
- ▶ 2 cups prepared fiddlehead ferns
- ▶ Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- ▶ 12 oz. brown rice or whole wheat

- penne or pasta of choice
 - ▶ ½ cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
 - ▶ ¼ cup chopped hazelnuts for a little crunch
- Put the water on to boil for the pasta and to blanch the ramp leaves. Cut the bulbs from the ramps and dice them. Set the tops aside. Slice the white and most of the green of the leeks, leaving only the darkest, toughest

leaves. They are often quite dirty, so give them a good wash once they are cut. Chop the tomato and mince the anchovies. Once the water is boiling, salt it and add the ramp tops and blanch them for 10 seconds, no more, only until you have softened them and the green color has set. Put them in a food processor, and immediately add the pasta to the same water. Meanwhile, in a large skillet,

■ SEE FIDDLEHEADS, B2

COLUMN

Maple memories

Making maple candy in Grandma's kitchen

ISMELL MAPLE SYRUP in the air and travel back to the kitchen of Grandma and Grandpa John. I am 12.

Daddy has brought them the first taste of maple syrup from Hazelton's Orchard. Grandma has promised to make sugar cakes with me.

Grandma heats the syrup in her cast iron pot. She shows me a long-handled wooden spoon, and she asks if I remember how to tell whether the syrup is hot enough for candy. She lifts the spoon through the hazy fog above the amber liquid and asks me whether



FRAN LYNGGAARD HANSEN contributes frequently to the pages of The Commons. This piece originally appeared in the March 23, 2011 issue.

I can see the syrup sheet.

When the sweet, thick syrup begins to boil and bubble toward the top of the pot, I know it will boil over. I begin to shift my weight from foot to foot and fidget with my hands.

Grandma is so calm. She smiles at me. I watch the liquid rise, and suddenly, about an inch from the top of the pan, the bubbles drop to the bottom.

I look at Grandma, confused. “Butter,” she says.

I remember. Before she boils the syrup, she coats the top of the pot with a thin rim of butter. When the hot syrup reaches the top area, the butter reacts, and the liquid quickly settles down.

Grandma tells me that in the Bible it says to use oil to calm troubled waters. That's why she knows about the

butter.

Grandma pours all that heavenly syrup into her mother's yellow mixing bowl. On another day it will be the Cry Baby Cookie bowl, or the Swedish Coffee Bread bowl, or the Oatmeal Banana Muffin bowl. (It's never the tomato canning bowl. It's never the pickle-making bowl or the bean soaking bowl, either.)

She hands me the metal beaters. I'm allowed to beat the syrup until it's whipped. The two metal beaters dance around each other, sending bubbles across the bowl. It's a sea of

■ SEE MAPLE CANDY, B2

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DOROTHY GROVER-READ/THE COMMONS
Fresh from the forest, fiddleheads are covered with brown scales.



DOROTHY GROVER-READ/THE COMMONS
After a rinse and a rub, the fiddleheads are ready to blanch.

Fiddleheads

FROM SECTION FRONT

heat the olive oil over medium and add the leeks, ramp bulbs, and anchovies. Sauté until the leeks are soft and anchovies have just about disappeared. Toss in the tomatoes and the fiddleheads and let cook until these are warmed through. Shut off the heat.

Pulse the ramp tops in the food processor and add the lemon juice and zest and the purée. Add that to the pot of vegetables and mix well.

If you do not have a food processor, very finely mince the leaves, or pulverize them with a mortar and pestle. Then combine the leaves with the vegetables.

Once the pasta is cooked, reserve 1 cup of the water and drain. Add to the rest of the ingredients along with ½ cup or so of the pasta water, and ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese.

Combine everything well, and add a bit more water if you

think it needs it.

Place on a large platter and top with a drizzle more of olive oil, the nuts, a bit of parsley if you have it, and a little more Parmesan. The wild taste of spring!

Any leftovers of this dish can easily be transformed into a pasta salad. Just add your favorite vinaigrette, mix it well, and enjoy on a bed of lettuce. Fantastic!

Preparing your fiddleheads

TO PREPARE the fiddleheads: First, soak your fiddleheads in cold water for 10 minutes and rub off any brown, papery scales with your fingers or a soft cloth. This substance is extremely bitter.

Drain, add fresh water, and soak an additional 5 minutes. If the second water is still quite dark and murky, soak them a third time.

These prep steps are extremely important, so don't rush the process. Put on some

music and putter around with other tasks. It is well worth the effort.

Set a large pot of salted water over high heat and, once it is boiling, add the prepared fiddleheads. Return to a good boil, then blanch for 1 or 2 minutes.

The water will darken as the tannin is released from the sprouts. This can be alarming, as the water will be as dark as over-steeped English breakfast tea. That is good! It means the tannin has left the greens, and your fiddleheads

will not be bitter. Drain the fiddleheads and immediately blanch them by plunging them into a colander submerged in ice water to stop the cooking and set the color.

Once the fiddleheads are completely chilled, put them onto a fresh tea towel and pat them dry, or spin them in your salad spinner.

You can do all this ahead of time and refrigerate the fiddleheads for several days before you are ready to use them.

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Maple candy

FROM SECTION FRONT

maple syrup, fluffing, thickening. Grandma finishes the last strokes for me. She lets me touch the tin maple-leaf molds that her grandma used. She's buttered the tins while I whipped the sugar, and now she's ready to ladle the mixture into the molds.

We fill eight small maple leaves about 1 inch wide and a ½ inch thick, and we fill one big maple leaf 3 inches wide in the center of the mold.

I know I'll never get to taste these. The candies will go in a tiny red metal tin lined with waxed paper. On Sunday, the tin will travel to the Methodist church for the pastor and his wife.

The big maple leaf will go to my Grandpa John's black metal lunch box. He'll nibble at it all this week at the C.F. Church toilet seat factory on Flat Street.

Grandma pulls the waxed paper from the box and snaps it across the cutting tool. She drops the sugar by the teaspoonful onto the waxed paper. Syrup runs away into a thin, almost round pool.

Grandma will scold me if I put my finger in the bowl, so I wait until the candy hits the paper. I try to move the hardening sugar candy into a better-looking circle with my finger. I know

these candies will be for me; I know Grandma won't mind if I try to make the candy round.

Grandma bends low and asks me whether I want walnuts in mine. I do. She lets me drop a big, fat, chunky walnut meat into my first candy. I help form six more candies, and Grandma says she'll do the rest.

It's hard to wait for the candy to set up. I spend the time telling Grandpa John every detail of candy making. We sit on the worn-out sofa. He is amazed at my story.

"Tell me the part about the magic Bible butter again," he teases with a wink.

Before I leave, Grandma gives me a little package with my candies stacked tall inside waxed paper and folded up like a sandwich. Grandma gives Daddy the little red tin.

"What will the minister get?" I wonder.

Maple Sugar Candy

Most of the higher grade syrup is made at the beginning of the maple sugar season. The darker syrup comes later. Because the lighter shade of maple is more expensive and considered (at least by my grandmother) more "delicate," she made her candy out of the darker syrup.

In the days of my youth in the early 1960s, Grandma Russell still used her manual egg beaters to whip the syrup. These days, you can use an electric mixer, or let the kids try out the old-fashioned way of getting the job done and wear out a little of their energy in the process.

2 cups of dark maple syrup
1 Tbsp. butter, plus additional butter to rim the pan

Walnut meats, chopped if desired

Before putting the maple syrup in the pan, rim the pan with real butter. This will keep the liquid from boiling over the rim of the pan when it begins to boil.

Place the pan on high heat, and pour 2 cups of maple syrup into the bottom of the pan. Stir constantly as the syrup becomes warm so that it doesn't burn. Bring it to the soft ball stage of candy making, about 240 degrees. If you don't have a candy thermometer, the temperature can be approximated by taking a few drops of syrup when it is quite hot, and allowing it to drip into a glass of warm water. If it forms a ball, the candy is done. If it drips and won't come together, continue heating it.

When it reaches the soft ball stage, remove it from the heat, and add one tablespoon of pure butter. Allow the mixture to cool for several minutes, and discontinue stirring it. Don't let it drop down past 110 degrees, or it will harden in your pan.

At this point, the candy can be whipped with an egg beater or in a regular mixer. When the mixture is fluffy like egg whites, pour it out by tablespoons onto a sheet of waxed paper to form the candies. Or, use candy or butter molds, after first greasing them.

Maple candy can be successfully stored in a tin for about a month.

If you'd prefer to make maple cream, add a teaspoon of pure vanilla extract, and add more butter, about a cup full. Don't whip the finished product, but ladle it into jars with tight lids to avoid spoilage.

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COLUMN

The unbearable lightness of daffodils

The first sight of it signals that the dark heaviness of the heart in winter is over and gone

DUMMERSTON AFFODILS CAN break your heart in so many lovely ways. “I wandered lonely as a cloud/That floats on high o’er vales and hills/When all at once I saw a crowd/A host, of golden daffodils,” wrote William Wordsworth a few years after he and his sister, while walking by a lake, unexpectedly came upon great masses of the flowers.

But he was with his sister, so how lonely could he be?

Dorothy Wordsworth described that walk with her brother this way in her journal: “But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore... I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and about them; some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow, for weariness, and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind...”

Obviously, a talent for writing ran in the family. And yet too few people know only his name, not hers. Sigh.

And I only know about Dorothy because several years ago my husband, bless his heart, brought me home a lovely little 1994 book, *Flora’s Gems: The Little Book of Daffodils*, by Pamela Todd, in which her prose appears

Narcissus is the Latin name for all daffodils, Todd informs us, as well as the common name for a familiar fragrant flower.

The multitude of shapes and sizes that are daffodils take their name from the Greek myth of Narcissus, the beautiful boy who became enamored of his reflection in a pool of water and withered away for love of himself.

“And narcissi, the fairest among them all/Who gaze on their eyes in the stream’s recess/Till they die of their own dear loveliness,” wrote Percy Bysshe Shelley.

In Olde English, the flowers were also called daffodilly and daffodowndilly — words that are now among my favorites.

THE FLOWERS have been with us seemingly forever.

“He that has two cakes of bread, let him sell one of them for some flowers of the Narcissus, for bread is food for the body, but Narcissus is food of the soul,” wrote the Prophet Mohammed.



JOYCE MARCEL, an award-winning freelance business journalist and columnist, contributes frequently to The Commons. We’ve published this column several times over the years, most recently in the April 16, 2014 issue.

“In medieval times, highborn ladies occasionally cultivated daffodils in their gardens as they used the yellow dye the flowers yield to tint their hair and eyebrows,” Todd tells us.

Daffodils grow all over the world. Todd tells a wonderful story from Fujian, China, about a poor widow who was so touched by the plight of a hungry beggar that she gave him her last half-bowl of rice. He ate the rice, thanked the woman, spat a few grains on the floor, and disappeared.

The next morning, scores of graceful daffodils had appeared where he spit. The widow sold the blooms and became prosperous. And Fujian became famous for its daffodils.

“So in China the flower symbolized prosperity and benevolence,” Todd writes.

No one knows when the first daffodil bulbs were brought to the Colonies, but in the 1730s, “John Bartram, who established one of the first plant collections in the six-acre garden at his home on the Schuylkill River, a few miles from Philadelphia, wrote to Peter Collinson, the English horticulturist, to say that daffodils were plentiful and he did not want any more,” Todd says.

Another negative, but slightly daft, approach was taken by Edward Augustus Bowles in his 1914 book, *My Garden in Spring*.

“I greatly dislike the huge race of trumpet Daffodils... A man might almost feel nervous of looking down some of their trumpets, for fear of falling in and getting drowned in the honey, and a lifebelt or two should be hung among the beds,” Bowles wrote.

Getting drowned in the honey of spring — what a lovely image!

BUT DAFFODILS can also symbolize the fleeting nature of spring, and that can make us sad.

“Fair daffodils, we weep to see/You haste away so soon,” wrote poet Robert Herrick in the 17th century. “We have

short time to stay, as you/We have as short a spring[...].”

“We die/As your hours do, and dry/Away,/Like to the summer’s rain;/Or as the pearls of morning dew,/Ne’er to be found again.”

So much pain, so much poetry, so much imagination!

“There is scarcely a poet in the English language who has not celebrated daffodils,” writes Todd.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO

A Dummerston daffodil.

And all of it attached to such a beautiful, cheerful, early little flower!

The first sight of it signals that the dark heaviness of the heart in winter is over and gone.

“When daffodils begin to peer/With height! the doxy over the dale/Why, then comes in the sweet o’ the year;/For the red blood reigns in the winter’s pale,” Shakespeare wrote in *The*

Winter’s Tale. So heigh the doxy, drown in the honey of spring, and enjoy the sweet of the year.

BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

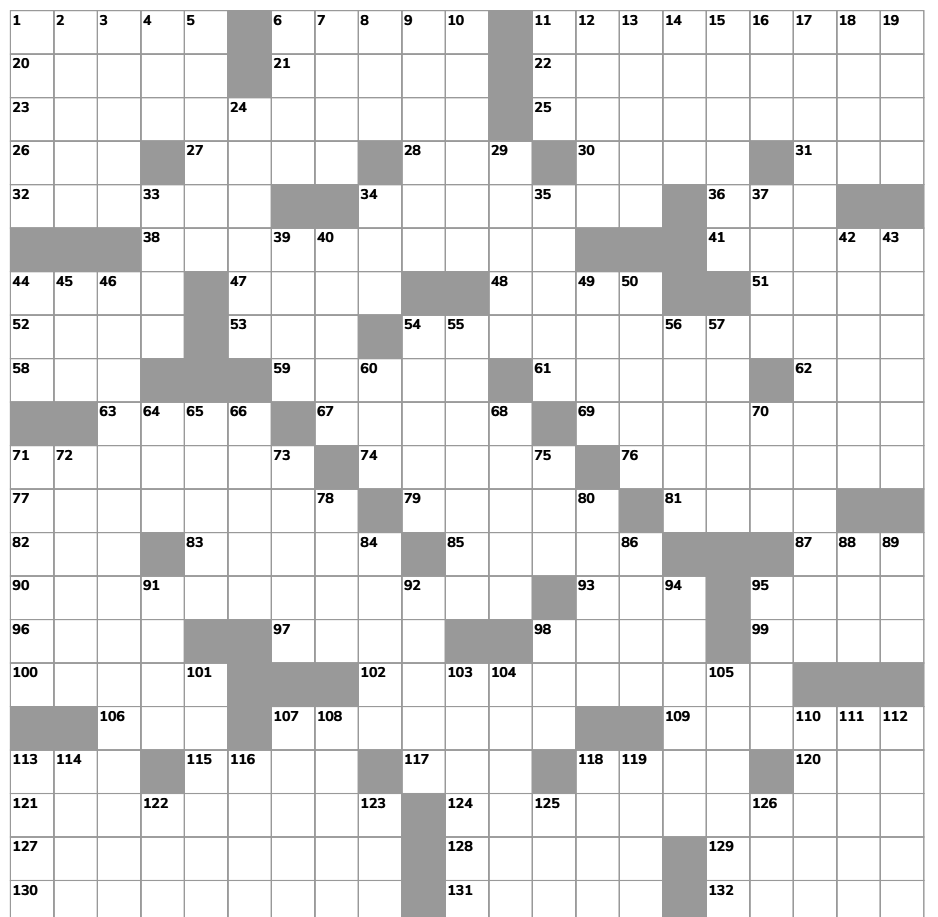
“Writing Reassignments”

Across

- In the ___ of
- Drop an F-bomb
- “Get comfortable”
- Hand and foot?
- Japanese dog
- “A Night in Tunisia” co-composer Frank
- Author who should have written “Harriet the Spy”?
- Turned on
- Worcester-to-Bost on dir.
- New Mexico resort
- Inc., in London
- “Carmina Burana” composer
- Real-estate ad abbr.
- Cease and ___
- Dependent (on)
- Historic Swiss canton
- ... “On the Beach”?
- Escorted
- Place to get belts
- Place to play catch
- “Wynonna ___”
- Like some cheeses and wines
- Secure, as a ship
- Org. with a caduceus in its logo
- ... “A Taste of Honey”?
- Not outgoing
- “I don’t buy that!”
- Board material
- Drama in a lab
- Spelunker’s spot
- Ends of the earth
- Small steeple
- It’s not on the menu
- Some are inert
- Set back?
- One way to march
- “OMG!”
- “The Thin Man” dog
- “___ Slave 4 U” (Britney Spears song)
- Schlepped
- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- Internet encryption letters
- ... “Postcards From the Edge”?
- Relyvrio treats it
- Star Wars knight
- Have memorized
- Actor Morales
- “Indeed!”
- Word with exam or vaccine
- Soccer star Mohamed
- ... “Fear of Flying”?
- “What have we here?!”
- Wedding planner?
- Treating
- Drug safety org.
- Ski lift
- Day when most colleges play football: Abbr.
- Indian bread
- Islanders GM Lamoriello
- Tesla, famously
- ... “The Winter’s Tale”?
- Scientific samples
- Rapper ___ Shakur
- Desert stop
- Guinea pigs
- Sister of Terpsichore
- Hear again

Down

- Thought at length
- Loopy
- Small change
- Letters 19-21
- Flybelt pest
- Guitar accessory that changes keys
- They’re picked around a campfire
- Shred
- Does salon work
- CA city with a Latino Walk of Fame
- Maps tech
- Sell out
- Separately
- “That’s disgusting!”
- Like Dickens’s Dodger
- Get a load of
- ... “Slaughterhouse e-Five”?
- Bard returnee
- Rewards for waiting
- New Orleans mayor Cantrell
- Lunch spot
- Inventor Sikorsky
- Bloodshot
- “Opposites attract,” e.g.
- 500 sheets of paper
- Turnpike exit
- Hold
- Movie preview
- “Space ___” (Bowie)
- X communications, for short
- “So pretty!”
- ... “The Horse’s Mouth”?
- Hits head-on
- Warm up
- Kuala Lumpur resident
- Stunning
- “Love & Hip Hop” star Mena
- Jaguars have four of them, gov’nor
- Monopolize
- Gagging cry
- Panoramic view
- Popular brand of stationery
- Waste of space?
- Doc prescribing a

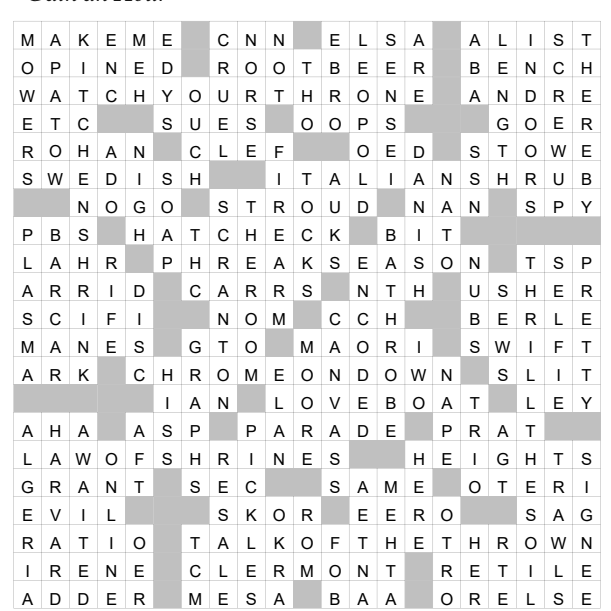


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- CPAP machine
- Moves stealthily
- NHRA Motorsports Museum city
- “I can show you”
- “Kill Bill” singer
- Potpie legumes
- National rival
- Model Kovalchuk
- Great deal
- Lovebirds’ activity, briefly
- Zero
- Cartoony kissy sound
- Zoo favorites
- Attack verbally
- Williams who won the 1997 Peace Prize
- Unreturnable serve
- Blooper picker-upper
- Game similar to euchre
- French bicycle race, for short
- Sought, as office
- Phonies
- Sherlock Holmes’s rival Adler
- “You were too good”
- Polite turndown
- Bold
- Ritual abstinence
- Fool
- Ole Miss rival
- Straight, at the bar
- Marathon subsidiary
- Dyslexia Awareness Mo.
- Feed inits.
- Bad chemical in plastics
- Influencer Addison

Last issue’s solution

“Gain an Hour”



Joon Park

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arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY	THURSDAY CONT.	FRIDAY	FRIDAY CONT.	SUNDAY	SUNDAY CONT.		
<h1>21</h1>	<p>official rules, visit www.windham-countyhumane.org.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Wednesday, June 19. Windham County Humane Society, 916 West River Rd. Information: 802-254-2322; windhamcountyhumane.org. <p>Community meals</p> <p>WILLIAMSVILLE Breakfast at Williamsville Hall: Enjoy homemade pancakes, pastries, tea, coffee, and orange juice. Open to everyone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8-10:30 a.m. Monthly breakfast is complimentary (donations for the hall are appreciated). Williamsville Hall, Dover Rd. Information: 802-365-7772; williamsvillehall.com. <p>Visual arts and shows</p> <p>BELLOWS FALLS Canal Street Art Gallery present: the Spring Salon 3rd Edition and the 2024 New Works Show: Hung in the floor-to-ceiling salon style, this year's artwork showcases 38 local artists. Program is an artist's studio and exhibition space within the gallery. The New Works show, open through 4/13 exhibits one new artwork from a selection of the gallery's roster of 35 represented artists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues.-Sat. Artists: Jennifer Anderson, Penelope Arms, Carol Aspesi, Debi S. Barton, Simi Berman, Tafi Brown, Len Emery, Jacqueline Evans, Mindy Fisher, Nancy Fitz-Rapalje, Judi Forman, Kim Grall, Judy Hawkins, Sharon Ormes Hinds, Ailyn Hoey, Deedee Jones, Theresa Karpinski, Carol Keiser, Sara LaMott, Su Lin Mangan, Dierdra Michelle, Gail Mickle, Martha Nichols, MC Noyes, Phyllis Odessey, Phyllis Rosser, Roxy Rubell, Melissa Rubin, Gretchen Seifert, Marianne Shaughnessy, Mitch Sidd, Megan Song, Jeannette Staley, Della Thompson, John van der Does, John Terry Woods, Kathleen Zimmerman, Teresa Zuverino. Through Saturday, June 1. Free. Canal Street Art Gallery, 23 Canal St. Information: More information: canalstreetartgallery.com, Mike: 802-289-0104, email: artinfo@canalstreetartgallery.com. <p>BRATTLEBORO Eileen Christelow: "Telling Stories with Pictures": Retrospective exhibition: "Writing picture books is a process of telling stories with words and pictures. I start with sketches: Who are the characters? What are they doing? I write some words, sketch some more. As I change the words, I change the pictures. As I change the pictures I might decide to change the words again. I put everything on the wall so I can see the whole story. The process can take months."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays. Christelow is author/illustrator of over 30 picture books for children such as "Five Little Monkeys" series, "The Great Pig Escape" (takes place in Putney), "Letters from a Desperate Dog" (Windham County Humane Society adoptee), "Where's the Big Bad Wolf?" more. Several books are nonfiction. Through Wednesday, May 1. Free. CX Silver Gallery, 814 Western Ave. Information: 802-257-7898; cxsilvergallery.com. <p>Ideas and education</p> <p>BRATTLEBORO Windham World Affairs America 250 Speaker Series Migration from the Northern Triangle: "They Are Here Because We Were There": Speaker Dr. Sarah Osten will talk about multiple factors that have driven a migrant exodus from Central America over the past 10 years. Event is co-sponsored by CASP, the Community Asylum Seekers Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30 p.m. Event is free but \$10 donation will be requested. Register at https://WWW.Cmigration.eventbrite.com. One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. If unavailable to attend in person a Zoom link is available at link above. ; 118elliott.com. 	<h1>22</h1>	<p>by about 4:30 PM. If your child plans to attend Afternoon At The Library on Friday 3/22 and/or Monday 3/25 (or any Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) let us know if you can. If your child plans to be dropped off by the school bus, please send a note to Renee, giving your permission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Monday, March 25. Free. Guilford Free Library, 4024 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-257-4603; guilfordfreelibraryvt.org. <p>BRATTLEBORO Little Explorers Nature Playgroup: Children ages 3 to 5 and their caregivers come together to explore, discover, wonder, and play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-11:30 a.m. on Fridays: Continues 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19. Free. Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, 1221 Bonnyvale Rd. Information: Learn more and sign up at BEEC.org. <p>Community building</p> <p>Fertilizing with Urine: Recent Findings from the Rich Earth Institute's On-Farm Research (via Zoom): Join Rich Earth Institute and three farmer partners for webinar about urine fertilizer on sweet corn and nut tree seedlings. Be part of the conversation about completing food nutrient cycle in VT! Dive into the concept of urine nutrient reclamation, exploring practicalities, safety concerns, social research with farmers, buyers, consumers. Rich Earth will also share insights from 12 years of prior on-farm/lab research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 a.m.-12 noon. Engage in lively discussion, pose questions to research team and farmer partners, contribute to shaping forthcoming "Farmer Guide to Urine Fertilizer." Free. Zoom. Information: Register tinyurl.com/RichEarthWebinar. <p>Dance</p> <p>PUTNEY Next Stage Arts and Twilight Music present Roots and Music Quintet: The Gaslight Tinkers - Dance Party: Blending African, Caribbean, Funk, Reggae, Latin grooves with traditional fiddle music, the quintet creates the genre-bending future of the music of the past. Brothers Sammy Divinda, Israel Mbombo, and Gershom Mbombo - new Brattleboro residents from the DR of the Congo and Uganda - open the show with original and traditional music of their homeland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30 p.m. \$20 in advance, \$24 at door, \$10 livestream. Advance ticketing closes two hours before showtime. Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org. 	<h1>23</h1>	<p>Visual arts and shows</p> <p>BRATTLEBORO Art Among Friends presents YUM! - a feast of bright bold watercolors depicting a variety of delicious foods: Celebrate these edible delights from mousse to macarons, paella to potato chips, shortcake to strawberries. Artists: Connie Evans, Alice Freeman, Kathy Greve, Laurie Klenkel, Louise Zak, Lynn Zimmerman.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On view during library hours. Through Friday, April 26. Free. Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org. <p>Film and video</p> <p>WILLIAMSVILLE Williamsville Hall presents Forrest Gump (PG-13): In this 1994 comedy-drama directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Tom Hanks, the life story of an Alabama man with an IQ of 75 who longs to be reunited with his childhood sweetheart unfolds against the backdrop of major American historical events from the 1950s to the '70s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30 p.m. to 9:50 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Hall is ADA compliant. Admission by donation and will raise funds for Williamsville Hall. Williamsville Hall, Dover Rd. Information: 802-365-7772; williamsvillehall.com. 	<h1>25</h1>	<p>ber Palm Sunday - an ancient community coming together to welcome the return of Jesus to Jerusalem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 a.m. All Souls Community Breakfast before Worship Service - "For the Earth Forever Turning" - celebrating the coming of Spring, and we'll create an Earth Altar together. 10 a.m. Service in person and via Zoom. Free (donations welcome). All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 29 South St. Information: Go to ascvt.org on Sunday shortly before 10 a.m. to join via Zoom. <p>NEWFANE The Historical Society of Windham County's Eighth Annual Soup Fest and Silent Auction: This is a great way to shake off the winter blues and come home with a great auction find or two. Sample homemade soups from The Whetstone Station, Brattleboro; Jon Julian, Williamsville; The Newfane Market, Newfane; Harmonyville Store, Townshend; West River Community Project, West Townshend; West Wardsboro Store, Wardsboro; West River Provisions, Jamaica; Family Kitchen & Pizzeria, Winhall; New American Grill, Londonderry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 p.m. doors open. 4-5:30 p.m.: Bidding and 50/50 raffle. 5:30 p.m.: Soup and bread served with desserts. This will help raise funds for the Society's West River Railroad Museum and the new Windham County Museum to be housed in the 1825 Windham County Jail Building. \$5 to \$10 suggested. New Brook Fire Station, Rte.30. Information: Questions: 802-365-4517, info@historicalsocietyofwindhamcounty.org. Visit historicalsocietyofwindhamcounty.org.
<h1>25</h1>	<p>Arts and crafts</p> <p>BRATTLEBORO The Root and Hatchspace Woodworking Affinity Spaces: "The Root has partnered with HatchSpace to bring our community a free BIPOC affinity woodworking space. Whether you're a woodworking newbie or pro this space is for you! Come explore something fun or new to you within a safer BIPOC centered space."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:30-8:30 p.m. Mondays (except holidays), 3rd fl. Free. HatchSpace, 22 High Street, 3rd fl. Information: hatchspace.org. 						
<h1>26</h1>	<p>Arts and crafts</p> <p>BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro in Stitches - Bring a work in progress to Sew, Knit, Crochet, Embroider, or Mend: Sewing machines, irons, and companionship will 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 welcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Free. Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org. <p>Community meals</p> <p>BELLOWS FALLS Crockpot Buffet Supper - Variety of Entrees: Plus salad bar bread, dessert, beverages (gluten and vegetarian choices)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-7 p.m. Building is accessible to all. Enter from the back. \$12 adults, \$6 children (ages 6-12), free for age 6 and under. United Church of Bellows Falls, 8 School St. Information: 802-463-4323. 						
<h1>24</h1>	<p>Request for Bids</p> <p>Windham Solid Waste Management District 327 Old Ferry Rd, Brattleboro, VT 05301 Compost Aeration and Heat Recovery Project</p> <p>Project Overview: Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD) seeks bids for a new Compost Aeration and Heat Recovery Facility Project at 327 Old Ferry Road in Brattleboro, VT. See separate provided Scope of Work Packages.</p> <p>Scope of Services: There are three separate bid packages for Sitework, Compost Aeration, and Fabric Building. Perspective bidders must specify which package(s) they are interested in. Provide all labor, materials, tools, and equipment per the plans and specifications. All inquiries, questions, and clarifications must be directed to Bob Spencer, Executive Director of Windham Solid Waste Management District at: director@wswmd.org. Addenda information shall be shared, as necessary, to all participants.</p> <p>Bid Instructions: Bids are due no later than April 10 at 2:00 PM. Bid forms are provided. Bids may be either mailed or hand delivered to: Bob Spencer, Executive Director, WSWMD 327 Old Ferry Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301. No email, fax, or other electronic delivery will be accepted.</p> <p>Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for bids issued March 11, 2024. Questions no later than the end of day March 29, 2024. Responses to questions will be provided to all interested bidders by the end of the day April 3, 2024. Bids due April 10 no later than 2:00 PM. Award to lowest qualified bidder subject to Board approval. Notice of Award immediately following Board approval. Site work is intended to start in early summer of 2024. <p>Expiration of Bid: By submitting a bid the applicant offers to enter into the Contract, the form and content of which shall be agreed upon by both parties. The applicant's proposal shall not be revocable for thirty (30) days following the response deadline indicated above.</p> <p>Reservation of Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSWMD reserves the right to waive any defects in the offer of any vendor, to reject any or all offers, and to request additional information from any vendors. If an agreement cannot be reached with the firm initially chosen for the contract, WSWMD may enter into contract negotiations with other qualified firms that submitted acceptable proposals or bids, rather than redoing the bid process for the project. Negotiate with another firm to include further services not identified in this RFB. 						

Kids and families

BRATTLEBORO Sing & Dance with Robin: This class is an enriching musical experience for toddlers and preschoolers, designed to support healthy cognitive, physical, and social development. Children sing, clap, stomp, dance, and play along with the curriculum of traditional and modern folk songs. Parents are encouraged to fully sing and participate with their child in the class.

- 10:30-11:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room.
- Free.
- Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO Tots + Caregivers = Art + Play: Come and make art with your child! We provide all materials for 2-D or 3-D creations using colored pencils, water color pastels, markers, collage materials, fabric, repurposed objects, more. All materials will be kid safe. Instruction will be open-ended and emerge from the artists through inquiry and play. Kids and grownups will go home with art explorations every class.

- 11-11:30 a.m. Tots must be accompanied by a parent or adult caregiver. This class is for children ages 2-5. Additional dates: Thursday, 3/28: 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; Thursday, 4/4, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; Sunday, 4/14, 1 p.m.-2 p.m.
- \$20 drop-in fee. Discounted price for full semester.
- River Gallery School, 32 Main St., #201. Information: 802-257-1577; rivergalleryschool.org.

Pets

BRATTLEBORO Windham County Humane Society Rescue Raffle: You could take home 50% of Rescue Raffle's pot of gold! Tickets are on sale through 6/19. One lucky winner will take home a check for 50% of the Rescue Raffle Pot, and the other 50% will go directly toward helping homeless pets in our community. Our hopes are that the pot will reach \$40,000 or more, but we need your help to get there. Last year's winner pocketed \$14,000!

- 1 p.m.: Drawing takes place on 6/20. When you purchase tickets online, you'll receive an email within 3 business days containing your lucky ticket numbers and serving as proof of purchase. You will not receive the actual tickets.
- All participants must be 18 years old and available to pick up the prize in person at WCHS in Brattleboro, VT. To view complete

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Putney is considering making application to the State of Vermont for a Planning Grant under the Vermont Community Development Program. A public hearing will be held at Putney Town Hall - 127 Main St. Putney, VT 05346 on April 4th, 2024 at 5:30 pm to obtain the views of residents on community development, to furnish information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities that may be undertaken under this program, the impact to any historic and archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed project, and to give affected residents the opportunity to examine the proposed statement of projected use of these funds.

The proposal is to apply for \$60,000 in VCDP Planning grant which will be used to accomplish the following activities: preliminary and final architectural drawings of town hall renovation; a section 106 review for historic preservation of the property; an asbestos and hazardous materials inventory; and develop a firm cost estimate for all the work required to complete the project. Deliverables for this grant will be: a section 106 report, a hazardous materials report, construction drawings and a detailed construction cost estimate report.

Copies of the proposed application are available at Putney Town Hall, 127 Main St. Putney, VT 05346 and may be viewed during the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm on Monday through Thursday. Should you require any special accommodations, please contact Karen Astley at 802-387-5862 Ext 11 to ensure appropriate accommodations are made. For the hearing impaired please call (TTY) # 1-800-253-0191.

Legislative Body for the Town of Putney

TOWN OF JAMAICA, VERMONT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
ROADSIDE MOWING AND CEMETERY MOWING 2024

Roadside Mowing

The Town of Jamaica is seeking bids for Approx. 25 miles of Roadside mowing. Bid for roadside mowing should be on a per mile basis. The contractor is responsible for furnishing all equipment, fuel, materials and labor necessary to perform the requested services. Mowing should be completed in July or August of 2024. The Jamaica Selectboard reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

The contractor hired will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance listing the Town of Jamaica as Loss Payee. For questions please contact the Jamaica Town Garage at 802-874-4265 or roads@jamaicavermont.org.

Cemetery Mowing

Clean-up/mowing services for Town Cemeteries, bids should include Spring and Fall Clean-up and the following mowing schedule:

Rawsonville Cemetery:	mowed 7 times May to Oct.
East Jamaica Cemetery:	mowed 8 times May to Oct.
South Hill Cemetery:	mowed 3 times May to Oct.
South Windham Cem.	mowed 4 times May to Oct.
Pikes Fall Cemetery	mowed 3 times May to Oct.
West Jamaica Cemetery	mowed 3 times May to Oct.
Village Cemetery	mowed 8 times May to Oct.

Ball field mowing- every three weeks throughout the summer

Bids shall be broken down as follows:

Price per Clean-up for each Cemetery and a price per mowing for each Cemetery. Also include six extra hours for additional clean-up as needed.

Contact the Jamaica Town Clerk at 802-874-4681 or townclerk@jamaicavermont.org for more information.

Sealed Bids marked "Roadside Mowing" or "Cemetery Mowing" are due by Monday April 8, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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5 p.m. Friday

Community building

W. BRATTLEBORO "For the Earth Forever Turning" with Rev. Telos Whitfield (In-Person Zoom): We will celebrate the coming of Spring and create Earth Altar together! Plus we'll remem-

Rolf and Cynthia Parker-Houghton's fake university brings to life 'goofy things that tie that in with actual local history' — and uses hope in humor 'to help people deal with the challenges of day-to-day life'



ROLF PARKER-HOUGHTON COURTESY PHOTO

A model of the "puffer chicken," whose eggs the Parker-Houghtons will launch into the Whetstone Brook on March 30 — using a catapult, of course.

'Most people get it; some don't'

by Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—What happens when a couple combines high intelligence, high creative writing and art skills, along with what a native New Englander might call a "wicked good sense of humor"?

For over 20 years, Rolf and Cynthia Parker-Houghton have merged their skills and talents to leave their creative marks — from concrete to the absurd — on the region, creating institutions like the University of Brattleboro, which Rolf refers to as the "oldest non-existent university in the world." Its official disclaimer? "We don't exist, but we do good work."

Cynthia has painted murals celebrating both the fact and fiction of historic Brattleboro, including one of the elusive free-range dinosaur Chicken-Rex in the downtown Harmony Parking Lot.

"There is real history," Cynthia said, "and here is the fictional history that we create. The idea is that we are having fun with it."

They have also created and helped organize events investigating fictional alien spaceship crash sites in Brattleboro, burying and then re-excavating "dinosaur bones" for local paleontology digs, and documenting sightings of the extremely rare Green Mountain

Tiny Foot.

Flotillas and catapults are also a recurring Parker-Houghton theme, used in one instance to launch Easter eggs into the Whetstone Brook. The Parker-Houghtons have also organized a popular October jack-o'-lantern flotilla on the Connecticut River.

They also helped with the Riff Raft Regatta, where participants build large boats — more accurately, human-powered floating devices — that they hope will last long enough to finish the 50-yard regatta course, usually held at The Marina on the West River.

And that is very much just a partial list of Parker-Houghton projects.

Looking for, and helping create, community

Originally from Connecticut, Rolf said he first came to the Brattleboro area in 1999 after graduating from the University of California at Irvine. He had a master's degree in entomology and was working on a Ph.D. project involving the study of flatworms.

He said he was looking for a creative community where he could live and work. Brattleboro seemed ideal in many ways, but at the same time, Rolf said, he also became well aware that it was a town with its share of challenges.

Some of those challenges hit painfully close to home.

One of the first local friends he made, and an early member of the University of Brattleboro project, was a talented, creative, and funny artist who had struggled all his life with alcohol addiction. This friend's suicide was part of Rolf's introduction to the continuing cost of substance abuse in the region.

Rolf said he also witnessed a drug-fueled, extremely violent fight on Elliot Street when he first lived here, which shocked and upset him.

"I had never seen violence like that before," he said.

Humor as an antidote to despair

Finding creative ways for a community to use humor to deal with despair, and to help people heal from trauma, became a goal of the Parker-Houghtons.

Thus began the list of local projects they became involved in for over two decades, from fake alien crash sites to fake digs of highly unlikely dinosaur fossils, to the very real Brattleboro Words Project and the Brattleboro Words Trail app, for which Rolf served as the main historian. Cynthia created ceramic map murals for the project, which provides a walking tour of the town's and the region's literary and publishing history with recorded narratives about the people and the projects.

■ SEE UNIVERSITY OF BRATTLEBORO, B6



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

"There is real history, and there is the fictional history that we create," says Cynthia Parker-Houghton, who creates that history with her husband, Rolf. "The idea is that we are having fun with it."



Gaslight Tinkers return to Next Stage on March 22

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts Project and Twilight Music present roots and world music quintet The Gaslight Tinkers at Next Stage on Friday, March 22, at 7:30 p.m.

The Gaslight Tinkers' mix of sound includes global rhythms, traditional New England old timey, and celtic fiddle music organizers call "joyful [...] merging boundless positive energy with melody and song." Band members draw from their extensive musical backgrounds, they say, and "craft a sound that brings world traditions

together."

Since its formation in 2012, the band has performed coast to coast as well as in the Caribbean headlining clubs, dances, and major festivals. The Gaslight Tinkers have performed at Green River Festival, the Iron Horse Music Hall, The Parlor Room, Old Songs Festival, Caffe Lena, Strange Creek, Rock and Roll Resort, Old Songs, Falcon Ridge Folk Festivals, and the Wormtown festival.

Next Stage, 15 Kimball Hill, will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$24 at the door, and \$10 for access to livestream. Advance tickets are available at nextstagearts.org. For information, call 802-387-0102.

The Gaslight Tinkers

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Singer-songwriter Evie Ladin will perform

BRATTLEBORO—Brattleboro House Concerts—Under the Maple (chez Grossman/Peel) presents banjo player, singer, songwriter, and percussive dancer Evie Ladin on Thursday, March 28 at 7 p.m.

Ladin’s clawhammer banjo playing, voice, real stories, and rhythmic dance have been heard from *A Prairie Home Companion* to Lincoln Center, *Celtic Connections* to *Hardly Strictly Bluegrass*, Brazil to Bali.

A creator and facilitator, Ladin grew up steeped in traditional folk music/dance up and down the East Coast, engaging in new work and classic roots. “She writes clever lyrics with mature arrangements, calls rowdy square dances for urban crowds, choreographs new body music/percussive dance for contemporary dance and film, leads seminars in movement anthropology, ... and gardens,” from her home base in Oakland, California, say organizers.

The evening concert also offers drinks and homemade baked goods. Admission is by donation at the door, with 100% going to the performer. Reservations are required; email BrattleboroHouseConcerts@gmail.com to attend and receive more details.



Evie Ladin

Putney Public Library exhibits ‘Domestic Pleasures, Photographs by Lynne Weinstein’

PUTNEY—“Domestic Pleasures,” a series of black and white photographs by Lynne Weinstein, is on exhibit at the Putney Public Library through June 1.

Weinstein is a teacher and photographer whose work has been supported by the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Community Foundation Arts Fund. Before teaching at The Putney School, Lynne was a long-time volunteer at In-Sight Photography Project and the Vermont Center for Photography in Brattleboro.

Before moving to Vermont, she worked as a photo editor at *Life* magazine and as a freelance editorial photographer. She has experimented with many formats including alternative processes, 4

x 5 cameras, and iPhones.

Weinstein, who lives in Putney, said in a news release that “Domestic Pleasures” grew out of my interest in chores and their enduring presence in our lives. I wanted to investigate how I could transform mundane work into moments of beauty. It was both a mindfulness activity of finding wonder and a formal exercise in building strong compositions with the help of natural light. Each image is a self-portrait shot on 4 x 5 film and printed on silver gelatin paper.”

The show is free at Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. The library is open Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (10 a.m. to 1 p.m. from April to October).

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University of Brattleboro FROM SECTION FRONT

Even with those projects that are fictional, funny, and seemingly silly, the Parker-Houghtons’ intent is deep, serious, and concrete. For example, the motto of the mythical University of Brattleboro is “Pugna desperandum cum humor et in conventu cum aliis”, which loosely translates as “We fight despair with humor and in community with others.”

And that is the key to understanding the science and art of the Parker-Houghtons: using humor to attract and bring people together, to create a sense of hope, and to help develop a sense of community.

“Brattleboro has a lot of challenges,” explains Rolf. “It always has. If you can make part of something where we do goofy things, and then tie that in with actual local history, that’s a way we can use humor to help people deal with the challenges of day-to-day life.”



UNIVERSITY OF BRATTLEBORO

A grainy photo shows a glimpse of Green Mountain Tiny Foot, part of the alternate universes imagined by Rolf and Cynthia Parker-Houghton.

this happened to him.

Instead of “lying awake in bed” trying to deal with insomnia and depression, he decided he would “use creativity to help with depression during Covid”—in particular, writing poetry. That led to one of the Parker-Houghtons’ latest adventures earlier last year.

Rolf took part in the Ó Bhéal Five Words International Poetry Contest, where each week five words are released and writers and poets have a week to include them in a poem of 50 lines or fewer using the words. The poet could focus on the five words or use them to explore other ideas.

“I did several poems,” he said. “I did it every week as part of my therapy, and then I’d share it with writers in the group.”

Rolf’s ideas about what to write began to center around what his life in Brattleboro had been. Eventually, his poem “The University of Brattleboro and the Uncluttered Table” was shortlisted in the contest.

“I knew there was a story I wanted to tell,” Rolf said. He wanted to pull all of his personal history in Brattleboro into a single poem.

“There was the University of Brattleboro. Our relationship as a couple,” he said. “There were the problems of Brattleboro. But it was mostly a poem about the joy of creation in a community.”

Having his poem shortlisted opened up the opportunity for him to read the poem at a pub event in Cork, Ireland. The Parker-Houghtons decided to make an adventure of it and go to the reading.

The fact that they lacked passports complicated the situation, but with the help of U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders’ office, they were able to get them in early April and left for Ireland the next day.

They jokingly refer to it as the “University of Brattleboro International Poetry Tour.” They were in Ireland from April 8 to 16 and did the reading on the 10th.

Rolf is part of the Write Action writers group in Brattleboro, and the reading opened up some new ideas about “what an open mic and writing group can be,” he said.

“It was so friendly, and people stayed and listened to others

after they read their own work. There was hugging, a feeling of community,” he said. Writers also read the poetry of other poets and not just their own, and “having great poetry read by people who love it was wonderful,” Rolf said. “It was exposing all of us to great poetry.”

Being used to readings where poets come, read their own works, and get feedback, Rolf said it’s been great to bring the poetry reading ideas he saw in Ireland to his readings in the Brattleboro area.

The third Thursday open poetry readings held at 6 p.m. at Brattleboro’s Drawing Studio are open to all kinds of poetry. Rolf said that the poets first read and discuss a favorite poet’s work before they read their own, which has helped turn the reading into a “mini-education symposium.”

The couple always have projects in the works. The Parker-Houghtons unveiled the first of their Perpetual Treasure Code projects: a cryptogram on the side of the Boomerang Building on Main Street.

It’s the first of 10 such crypto codes that they hope to get up on the side of several Brattleboro buildings, all leading to modest treasures hidden around the community.

The one going up in the alley by Boomerang tells people how to find a glass diamond the couple buried somewhere in the area.

“So many people are on the verge of giving up hope,” Rolf said. “That is another form of depression. I believe that being creative with other people in a community is a way of dealing with that, a way of creating a completely different situation. Housing and other issues are extremely important to a community, but we also need to have community art spaces and events.”

The couple funds all the projects through t-shirt sales available at the free events they run, and at Cynthia’s website, houghtonart.com.

More information and details about new projects — including an upcoming March 30 Eggster catapult event on Whetstone Brook — can be found on the University of Brattleboro website (universetyofbrattleboro.com) and its Facebook page.

A creative team

Rolf can be a challenge to interview — ideas stream out of him at a rapid rate, and one idea leads quickly to another. Cynthia, an artist, seems both uniquely equipped and in tune enough to help turn Rolf’s visions into a version of reality.

That includes altering photos of local construction projects by digitally inserting dinosaur bones, creating obviously fake “ancient” artifacts with Viking runes, or designing and crafting objects intended to resemble fossilized donuts, then placing them around the community.

Cynthia took Rolf’s idea that Vermont should have its own mythical variation of Bigfoot, and she turned it into Green Mountain Tiny Foot, a hairy, 6-inch-tall doll, crafted from what used to be a GI Joe action figure.

Patrons can borrow Tiny Foot from Brooks Memorial Library, and they are encouraged to photograph it in various locations.

That is the Parker-Houghtons’ concept — goofiness helping to create community — put in action.

Cynthia is also part of the University of Brattleboro faculty, where she is dean of the art department, the paranormal paleontology department, and the reverse archaeology department.

If you create your own department, you also can become a dean at the university, or if you create a free, fun, and substance-free event, they’ll award you a complimentary doctorate diploma — no pesky classes or thesis required. For a \$25 handling fee, they’ll even print and send you a copy of the diploma.

Faculty also have to create their own University of Brattleboro alter ego. Rolf is Prof. Balderdash; Cynthia is Dr. Rea L. Faux. Another faculty member is Dr. Very O’Kay.

Their approach to building community through humor is unique and admittedly different, and as Rolf noted, “Most people get it; some don’t.”

Writing your way out of depression

For some, one of the many side effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic was isolation and depression. Rolf said

Marlboro Studio School announces spring workshops and classes

MARLBORO—The Marlboro Studio School is enrolling for its third term of studio classes beginning this April on the 500+ acre Potash Hill campus on South Road. Spring 2024 course offerings include week-long workshops and multi-week studio classes.

The School began offering studio classes in the spring of 2023 in the visual arts facilities of the former Marlboro College. In response to positive feedback, the Marlboro Studio School has increased the number of courses, widened the breadth of media offered in studio classes, and

added a variety of workshops for spring 2024.

Multi-week community studio class offerings include several ceramics classes using both handbuilding and wheel-throwing for students of all levels, led by Marlboro Studio School director and ceramic artist David Eichelberger.

One-week artist-led workshops will provide the opportunity for intensive study in Greenwood chair making with Gina Siepel; wax carving and lost wax metalcasting with Vanessa Graham and Will Nevins-Alderfer; and a weekend intensive botanical

contact printing with Hilary Baker.

Workshops will take advantage of both the purpose-built studio spaces and the surrounding natural area of the Potash Hill campus.

More information about classes, workshops, and enrollment can be found at marlborestudioschool.org. For updates about Marlboro Studio School programs and courses delivered to your email inbox, subscribe to their email list at marlborestudioschool.org/subscribe.

Actors sought for VTC 24-hour Play Festival

BRATTLEBORO—Vermont Theatre Company is seeking actors for its first ever 24-Hour Play Festival, which will be performed Saturday, April 27, at the Evening Star Grange in Dummerston. Four short plays will be written, cast, rehearsed, and performed within a 24-hour period.

“24-hour plays are a fun, fast, and intense way to create theater,” note organizers in a news release. Actors will audition for a group of writers and directors on Friday, April 26, at 6 p.m. at

the Grange. Writers will then each write a 10–20 minute play overnight. Actors will return to the Grange the next morning, rehearse their play over the course of the day, and give one performance that evening.

Actors of any age, type, or level of experience are encouraged to participate. All actors who choose to participate will be cast. If interested, visit vermonttheatre.org/auditions and fill out the audition form.

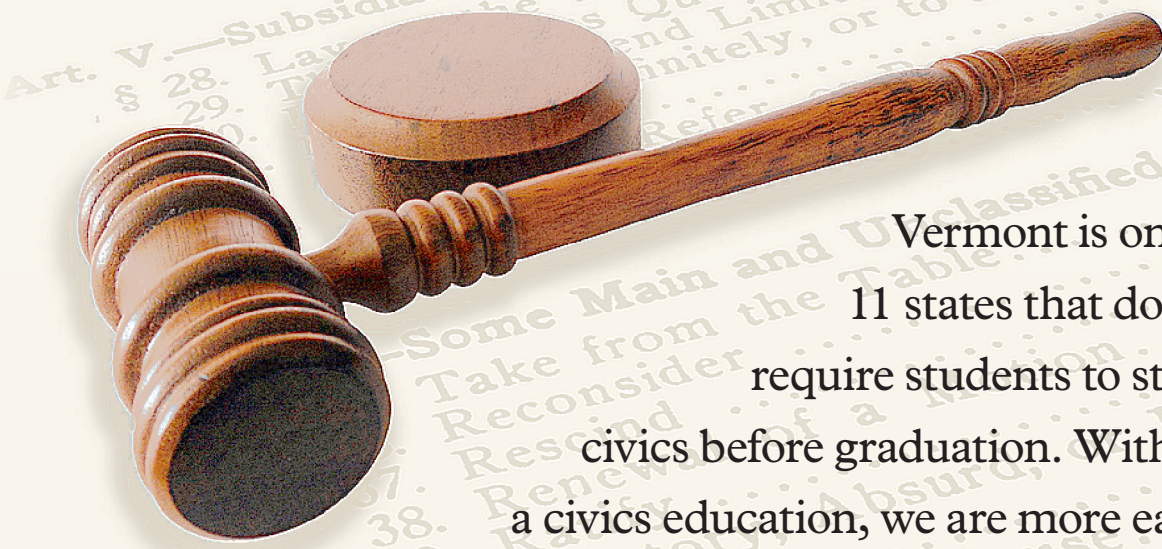
The writers for this year’s

festival will be Jesse Tidd, Michael Nethercott, Jessica Callahan Gelter, and James Gelter. Their plays will be directed by Ben Stockman, Charlene Kennedy, Shannon Ward, and Isaiah LaPierre, respectively.

Vermont Theatre Company is a nonprofit community theater that has provided Brattleboro-area artists and audiences opportunities to enjoy theater for 40 years. For more information, visit vermonttheatre.org.

VIEWPOINT

Can civics save us from ourselves?



PHOTOILLUSTRATION/IMAGE FROM JUMPSTORY.COM

Vermont is one of 11 states that do not require students to study civics before graduation. Without a civics education, we are more easily seduced by the beliefs of the majority — and we are at risk of believing that the majority speaks for everyone.

DEMOCRACY HAS a lot to recommend it: all those opportunities to participate in the governing process, to consider public matters with your neighbors in Town Meeting or with elected representatives in Congress.

Unlike a monarchy, with a single person in charge, or an aristocracy, with a few elites in charge, a democracy gives ordinary citizens the chance to think beyond their private concerns and about the public good.

But thinking about the public good is extremely challenging for human beings. We know how monarchs confused their personal whims for divine decree. But that can't be true of citizens in a democracy, right?

Just as monarchs devolved into tyrants, so (lowercase-d) democrats dissolve into factions. And when one faction becomes a majority, it can threaten the body politic.

A tyranny of the majority, just like an individual tyrant, can impose its will on everyone, thus destroying everyone's freedoms.

MEG MOTT, a longtime Marlboro College professor of political science, serves as Putney's town moderator and describes herself as a "Constitution wrangler."

LUCKILY, THE Constitution puts up a lot of guardrails to protect the rights of minority viewpoints.

Majorities are thwarted by the separation of powers. Just because a faction takes over the legislative branch doesn't mean it will control the White House.

Majorities are also thwarted through federalism. A faction may take over in one state but not the nation as a whole. The majority may impose its will on the citizens of Alaska but not on the citizens of Vermont.

And finally, an independent judiciary ensures that the rights of minorities are protected under the Constitution.

These three elements — separation of powers, federalism, and rule of law — are designed to save us from ourselves. By forcing each branch of government to check the other, by giving states sovereignty over their own affairs, and by

limiting government powers through a Bill of Rights, the Constitution makes it harder for any single faction to take over. This form of government is the most complicated form of government there is. Indeed, its complexity is why it has lasted as long as it has.

WITHOUT A civics education, however, people have no clue about the purpose behind the complexity. They may not understand why we have a Bill of Rights, why we have three branches of government, or why the states have as much power as they do.

Without a civics education, citizens might come to believe that the right to free speech serves only fanatics or that the right to religious expression serves only bigots.

They might come to believe that a majority faction has pretty good ideas and that the real threat to democracy is their political opponents, who certainly shouldn't be allowed to say nasty things or believe superstitious nonsense.

In other words, without a civics education, we are more easily seduced by the beliefs of the majority.

■ SEE CIVICS, C3

DISPATCH

'I am grateful to be reminded of our North Star'

A guest in the audience for the president's State of the Union address reflects on the experience

WHEN YOUR U.S. representative calls to ask if you'll be her special guest at the State of the Union, you say "Of course!" and hope nothing occurs in your life to prevent it. I am sure I won't forget getting that call from Becca Balint, and not only because there is a video on social media of her making it. Even though Vermont is a small state, there are still thousands of people she could have asked, and it was an honor to be chosen. And it is a tremendous gift to share the work happening in our community in a broader way.

I was amazed by many things during my time in Washington, D.C.

First, there are a lot of different kinds of people roaming the halls of the congressional office buildings, not just political appointees and their staff. I am not sure how many of us realize you can just go in and hang out. The accessibility made it really feel like it was "for the people," even if you aren't guaranteed an appointment or the chance to be in committee rooms.

I loved the diversity of people I saw — veterans, teenagers, a group of people wearing teal-colored sashes, another wearing orange shirts and black pants, people in suits, families with young children — and wondered why each of them was there. I had been worried about being uncomfortable in an unknown environment, and instead I felt like I belonged because I was one of many from far-flung corners of the United States.

AS I SPENT TIME with Rep. Balint and her staff, I was also

CHLOE LEAREY is the executive director of Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro. In announcing that Learey would accompany her to the State of the Union address, U.S. Rep. Becca Balint said that her guest "understands the impacts bold and creative investments in housing mean for a family's stability and a child's future" and said that Learey "represents the type of creative community leadership we need across the state and the country to address the housing crisis."

struck by the pace of the environment. It felt relentless, always on the move, trying to keep to the schedule as planned, digest and respond to new information on the fly (a proposed bill about TikTok was causing the phones to ring a lot that day), be present to vote, meet with media outlets for interviews, then find a few minutes to eat before the evening activities begin.

It made me appreciate that we have a representative who is committed to thinking deeply about issues that matter to us, researching to understand, staying curious and open to new information, and bringing her best self to decision-making.

D.C. feels like a place that wears down many people in the grind, and I am grateful for those who are truly willing to serve in the face of these challenges. It is vital to stay connected to the world outside of the D.C. bubble, and having

■ SEE NORTH STAR, C2

LETTERS FROM READERS

'This thinking isn't gonna go down too well at the Union Hall'

FOR those of you in the Windham Northeast wondering how negotiations are going, I've got news for you: Thanks to Susan Smallheer's recent story in the *Brattleboro Reformer* ["Windham Northeast Supervisory Union, teachers' union, head to mediation," March 11] you already know as much as the school boards do, which is: It's headed for mediation.

Let me explain. Right now, it looks like after making nicey-nicey with the Windham Northeast Education Association for a few negotiating sessions, we just didn't manage to cuddle the teachers union quite hard enough.

But I don't actually know, because our board negotiators won't tell us.

Personally, I think at least the high school would be better off with some anticipatory reductions in force. How can you set staffing, as a for-instance, if you

don't have an inkling of what you're going to need to pay them? It's called lunacy.

The way I look at it — which, of course, is blindfolded — a high-performing school board, or boards, would RIF a negotiating team that refuses to share basic, essential information with the boards they represent.

Maybe we'd all have to show up in Kevlar after that, but try thinking long here.

Never mind that many current Vermonters can no longer afford the largesse. At the high school, there's a cadre praying every day for the return of Chris Hodsdon, our former principal, and Paul Obuchowski, a longtime school insider, who aren't too happy about our dismantling of their Bridge Over the River Kwai. So much so that they've admitted to being players in the effort to defeat the BFUHS budget, which in their town of Rockingham they actually succeeded in doing.

Wow! A 3.5% year-over-year budget increase which entailed only one reduction in force wasn't good enough for them

because they wanted our administration's proposed budget increase of 7.7%.

And operating on the "free money" mantra from the original Act 127 legislation — which opened up an early \$250 million shortfall in the state education fund, now hastily stitched closed by the Legislature — they make the argument that most property owners are "protected," based on their incomes, from paying the full freight.

Well, let me tell you, it don't work that way, because only about a third of the ed fund is funded through the property tax. The rest of it comes from sources like the state sales tax, the rooms and meals tax, and the property transfer tax — and, oh, and I almost forgot, the most regressive tax of all, the Vermont Lottery.

No, it wasn't free money — it was simply coming out of your other pocket.

So what do I want? I want to reduce our profligate spending at Bellows Falls Union High School, where we have a significant group of scholars who aren't reading above

a third-grade level. (Oh, yes, really!)

And I want to collapse those redundant resources down to the elementary level so kids will have a better chance of getting the basics when it would do every single one of them, and us, the most good.

Yeah, I know this thinking isn't gonna go down too well at the Union Hall, but I do think it's about time we start having that discussion.

David Clark
Westminster

Thanks to Brattleboro voters

Thank you to all of the voters who turned out for the Brattleboro election on March 5. Democracy is alive and well in our town.

And thank you to those who voted for me. I hope to represent those who voted for me and those who voted for other candidates. The Brattleboro Selectboard is a nonpartisan institution, and that means that we have a great deal of potential for collaboration and

consensus-building.

I hope to promote that climate on the Selectboard and to be a voice for the people of Brattleboro. I intend to ask a lot of questions and make sure issues important to all voters are discussed openly and in sufficient detail.

Richard Davis
Brattleboro

A history lesson

From the 1977 Likud Party platform, as published on the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise website (jewishvirtuallibrary.org):

"The Right of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel (Eretz Israel): a. The right of the Jewish people to the land of Israel is eternal and indisputable and is linked with the right to security and peace; therefore, Judea and Samaria will not be handed to any foreign administration; between the Sea and the Jordan there will only be Israeli sovereignty."

Sound familiar?

Mary Norton
Westminster West

To address root causes, a horrific humanitarian conflict needs to stop

As a retired teacher in Brattleboro who has served the children and families of my community for 27 years, I am heartbroken to know that the horrific humanitarian conflict in Gaza continues.

Since Oct. 7, this conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives, mostly women and children. The lives of millions of civilians and the remaining hostages are again under threat, and the United Nations is warning of a famine soon.

Rep. Becca Balint should use her position to advocate a cease-fire. She should pledge to vote against any more military assistance for Israel without a cease-fire in place.

Only when the killing stops for good can we address the root causes of the conflict. Israelis and Palestinians deserve to live in peace.

Deb Pierotti
Brattleboro



Here's a great option for your investment or as an owner occupant!

This 4 unit multi-family has a convenient country location within an easy drive to Mount Snow and Stratton as well as lots of character and history. Three units are rented and the fourth unit is a canvas for a buyer to finish to their taste. There's also generally unfinished space on the third floor for storage or potential other uses. There's a carport out front and a garage that could be utilized with some attention. There is a lot of potential here just waiting for the next owner!



Ask for AJ

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VIEWPOINT

Few signs of support. Literally.

The signs at protests are directed at Israel — not at Hamas, the entity that started this war by murdering, raping, and kidnapping more than 1,200 people on Oct. 7

Brattleboro

AT A FEW pro-Palestinian protests that have taken place in town, two of which I've witnessed in person, I've seen several of my good friends and many other familiar Brattleboro faces — people whom I greatly respect, sincerely expressing their horror at the civilian casualties that have happened in Gaza. As a father, I connect viscerally with this horror, and I join my friends in wanting the death to stop as soon as possible.

I'm here to talk not about what I've seen, but about what was missing.

I haven't seen many signs, or heard any chants, that promote peace in the region while also recognizing the realities of the Israel/Hamas war.

Anyone who has studied the history of this conflict understands that Israel is defending itself against an enemy that continues to proclaim that they will not stop killing Jews and will not stop trying to destroy the entire state of Israel.

No nation on this Earth would not have declared war after the barbaric attack that occurred on Oct. 7. Anyone seeking to bring peace to the region should understand why Israel must defend itself against Hamas — an internationally recognized terrorist organization that is intentionally putting Gazans in the line of fire by literally hiding beneath them using a well-documented series of tunnels.

I understand that many of my friends attending these rallies are there because innocent people are dying. Babies are dying. Women and the elderly are dying. But if Hamas has caused this danger to a populace of millions, why do I not see any signs condemning Hamas or insisting on the return of hostages?

Why have I seen no signs for a true bilateral ceasefire, one in which Hamas surrenders or at least lays down arms (and stops shooting daily rockets) and agrees to recognize the nation of Israel? This would bring immediate peace.

So where are those signs and chants?

Instead, it's "Ceasefire now!" with no mention of this ceasefire being mutual, which is the definition of the term.

The signs I see are directed at Israel — not at Hamas, which started this war by murdering, raping, and kidnapping more than 1,200 Jews, Americans, Arabs, and citizens of two dozen countries who happened to be in Israel in October.

Instead of chants and signs for a practical peace, I've seen charges of "genocide" — not directed at the terrorists who promise and show willingness to deliver a Jewish genocide, but directed at the Jews of Israel, six million of whom were actually murdered in the Holocaust, for which the term was invented.

Why would you use that term to describe Israel defending its citizens but fail to use it to describe Hamas, the death-obsessed cult that began this war in the first place? Can it be "genocide" when the population of Gaza has essentially tripled in the last 25 years?

I believe that at the heart of these protests is an agenda that refuses to acknowledge that Israel, and the Jews who live there, have a right to exist. That's a problem. And Israelis see calls for ceasefire as a call to stop defending themselves against those who want them all dead. Also a problem.

IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, I've become friends with many Jews throughout Windham County who have family and friends in Israel.

TIM WESSEL is a former member of the Brattleboro Selectboard and was an independent candidate for state Senate in 2023.

They have asked me, as a non-Jew, to help them understand why so many people chant and carry signs with slogans that point fingers directly at Israel, and none at Hamas.

They have asked me why people who we all know to be good, kind, and progressive could possibly blame Israel for defending itself against terrorists.

They want to understand how people who claim to believe in women's rights, LGBTQ freedoms, and a democratic rule of law could possibly be on the side of an extremist belief system that actively works to destroy those ideals.

My answer to those questions is often that I don't believe most of the protesters fully understand the politics of the Middle East. I say that many haven't studied the history of the conflicts and that most have been taken in by an advanced Hamas propaganda machine that ridiculously claims that Jews are not indigenous to the land of Judea.

I say that I hope most of my friends in those protests are reacting to the death of innocents, even though I know that many of those same friends never expressed outrage at the horrors of Oct. 7.

This has shaken me to my core.

I don't want to believe that my friends and others that I respect could possibly be showing a bias against Jews, just for being Jewish. But as time goes by, I'm having trouble believing that theirs is only a concern for innocent lives.

Time and time again, I see only one side represented in these emotional moments at pro-Palestine events. Even when I point out that over 20% of Israeli citizens are Arabs with full rights and serve at high levels in elected government, I'm told that Israel practices "apartheid."

More than half of the Jews of Israel would be considered non-white here, yet the perception of Israel being a "white oppressor" in a region of brown-skinned people continues. Is this ignorance, or is it a willingness to believe that whatever skin color a Jew possesses, they are bad?

My new Jewish friends who support Israel, neighbors you know and see daily, are exhausted and frightened at how one-sided the conversation has become.

To them, it seems that protesters speak loudly for innocent Gaza lives, but are silent for the Israeli victims. They hear the rage for the babies caught in the current crossfire, but they never heard those voices crying out for the Jewish babies killed and kidnapped.

They watch in disbelief as women's rights groups here are silent as Israeli women and girls tell their tales of horror and rape. And they are stunned to witness the credibility afforded to the terrorist lies against Israel — many easily refuted — while Jewish voices and video evidence are brushed aside.

So WHY DO I, as a white, non-Jew, German/Irish American, write all of this?

Because if you are on the streets demanding that Israel lay down arms and you are not asking the same of Hamas, you are siding with terrorists, and I question your moral compass.

Because you are on the wrong side of history, and the world will not look kindly upon you, just as the world has now condemned all apologists for Hitler leading up to and through World War II.

Because you're being played by groups who seek to dehumanize Jews and delegitimize Israel's right to exist. Your concern for innocent civilians is being used as a political tool to strengthen a group of radical thugs who care nothing about the loss of innocent Palestinian life — and truly despise the ideals of progressive democracy that you hold.

History also does not look kindly on those who are silent when Jews are threatened or attacked here on our soil. If you have chosen to not speak out, consider doing so.

If you do nothing else, think for a few moments about your Jewish friends. Ask them how they've been since Oct. 7, and tell them that you will stand by their side if they are attacked.

It's likely this will be met with tears and gratitude, because this moment in time is scary for Jews. Many have a visceral connection to Israel, if not a direct connection. For many, it feels like Germany in the 1930s, when hate was growing into a movement of mass murder.

DO YOU FEEL the need to criticize Israel?

Go for it. My Jewish friends largely dislike the leadership of Israel, and many sympathize deeply with the plight of Palestinians, who are saddled with even worse leaders.

But for the sake of all that's morally decent, do not deny an entire people the right to defend themselves from murderers. Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, but denying Jews the right to defend themselves from attacks most certainly is.

If I find that over time those messages on the rally placards change from the very threatening "Globalize the Intifada" to ones like "Self-Determination for All," that they seek to promote a lasting and co-existing Arab/Israeli peace, I'll be out there marching by your side.

But you cannot advocate for a real, lasting truce by denying one side its right to exist.



President Joe Biden speaks to the three branches of our federal government in his State of the Union address on March 7. In the audience was Chloe Learey, executive director of the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro, the guest of U.S. Rep. Becca Balint.

North Star

FROM SECTION FRONT

guests at the SOTU seems like one way to keep it real.

I was also able to meet with staff members of our two Vermont senators, Bernie Sanders and Peter Welch. They took time to learn about our plans to build 300 units of mixed-income housing on the Winston Prouty Center campus, hopefully starting in mid-2025. They listened attentively,

offered suggestions, and said they would keep an ear out for opportunities to help.

THE STATE OF THE UNION itself is a ritual of pomp and circumstance.

Watching senators, cabinet members, and Supreme Court justices enter the chamber, then greet representatives and colleagues, reminded me that this

is one big workplace, and that it has dynamics we all experience. *Who is sitting where? Who is talking to whom? Who is being avoided?*

Our jobs and the scope of our responsibilities may be different, but we are all humans just the same.

This idea resonated for me when President Biden spoke about our North Star in his address: "The very idea of America is that we're all created equal, deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives. We've never fully lived up to that idea, but we've never walked away from it, either."

This is one of the possibilities for us as we look to the future — to keep walking, to build the world we want, where everyone belongs, has what they need,

and contributes their gifts to the community.

I visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the morning before the State of the Union and was reminded of how much further we must go in combating systemic racism despite the gains we have made.

I was particularly struck by the Emmett Till exhibit and the fact that so many things have not changed. It is hard not to feel hopeless.

I am grateful to be reminded of our North Star and inspired to keep recognizing community needs, identifying creative solutions, and inviting collaboration in problem solving to create hope and possibility during daunting times.

Be Sure To Check Our Full Program Schedule @ brattleborotv.org

bc tv LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

March 11-17
CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

Here We Are - Ember Rebrina, LGBTQ+ Activist, Asylum Seeker: Mon 8:30p, Tues 6a, Wed 12:40p, Thurs 10:25p & 9:15p, Fri 10a, Sat 3:25p, Sun 8:15p	Brattleboro Representative Town Meeting 2024: Sat 8:30a (LIVE)
The World Fusion Show - Ep 174 - John Hughes: Mon 5:30p, Tues 4:30p, Wed 9a, Thurs 6:30a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 12:30p, Sun 2:30p	Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 3/21/24: Thurs 6:15p (LIVE)
Media Mentoring Project - Voices Live with Becca Balint: Mon 7p (LIVE), Fri 3:45p, Sat 9a, Sun 6:15p	Windham Southeast School District Annual Mtg. 3/19/24: Tues 6p (LIVE), Fri 6p, Sun 2:30p
Community Conversations on Compassion - Compassion for (Non-Humans) Animals 3/6/24: Wed 4:30p, Thurs 9a, Fri 9:30p, Sat 2p, Sun 9:30a	River Valleys Unified School District Board Mtg. 3/18/24: Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 12p
Keeping Up with Senior Solutions & American Legion Lunch for Veterans 3/1/24: Mon 4:20p & 6:35p, Tues 6:35a & 11:50a, Wed 6:15a & 11:50a, Thurs 1:15p, Fri 7:45a, Sat 12:20p & 6:50p, Sun 8:50p	Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 3/18/24: Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:30p
Couch Potatoe Productions - Harris Hill People 2/18/24: Tues 12:45p, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 9:45p, Fri 10:35a, Sat 11a, Sun 5:15p	Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 3/19/24: Thurs 9:15p, Fri 5:25a
Windham County Genealogy Interest Group - Using A.I. in Genealogy & Navigating David Rumsey Map Collection: Mon 6a, Tues 9a, Wed 9p, Fri 6a, Sat 5p, Sun 12:30p	Windham Elementary School District Board Mtg. 3/19/24: Fri 8:30p, Sat 5:45a, Sun 12p
Harris Hill Ski Jump 2024 - Saturday: Mon 1p, Thurs 1:30p, Sat 8p	Brattleboro Development Review Board Mtg. 3/20/24: Sat 6p, Sun 9a
Harris Hill Ski Jump 2024 - Sunday: Tues 8p, Fri 1p, Sun 9p	Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 3/20/24: Sat 8:30p, Sun 5:45a
Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	Putney Selectboard Mtg. 3/20/24: Sun 6p
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	Newfane Town Meeting 2024: Mon 6:15p
News Block: WTSN News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p, Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p, BHHS-TV News: Mon-Fri 12:20p & 6:40p	Jamaica Town Meeting 2024: Tues 5:45a
St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	Guilford Town Meeting 2024: Tues 10a
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 5p	Putney Town Meeting 2024: Wed 11:45a
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
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**

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RESPONSE

Developer addresses ‘areas of persistent confusion’

Windham-Windsor Housing Trust offers a response about Alice Holway Drive project in Putney

Brattleboro

AS THE Windham & Windsor Housing Trust and its co-developer Evernorth continue to plan for breaking ground on the Alice Holway Drive Development that will create 25 new rental homes in Putney, a lot of questions have been circulating about the project.

The first issue pertains to who is eligible to live in the new Alice Holway Drive homes and how they are selected.

These are two distinct components to the process, but they are both determined through the application process.

The first component — eligibility — is solely determined by the applicant’s income. And because we serve households with a range of incomes, within the mix of the 25 homes, some apartments will have lower income eligibility limits, and some will have higher eligibility income limits, with these limits applied to each apartment size.

This mixed-income approach is designed to meet the housing needs of households with a variety of income levels. The income ranges at Alice Holway Drive are \$34,400 for a single person and up to \$88,400 for a family of three.

The income limits that determine eligibility are based on a percentage of area medium income (AMI) and were determined during the planning process. While the percent of AMI hasn’t changed and won’t change, the actual income used to determine eligibility will fluctuate from year to year as area medium income rises or falls.

ELIZABETH BRIDGEWATER is executive director of the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust, whose Alice Holway Drive apartment project (homemattershere.org/alice-holway-drive-info-page) in Putney is the subject of a series of appeals and lawsuits against the town regarding the project’s approval process. This piece is in response to “Anything but compassionate and responsible” [Viewpoint, Feb. 21].

There is no wait list for this new property and applications will become available when construction is near completion.

The second component comes after eligibility is determined. Applicants are processed through a resident selection protocol that includes reference checks, a credit report review, and a determination of whether the applicant can afford to pay the rent for the apartment for which they qualify.

ANOTHER AREA OF persistent confusion is whether this project was designed exclusively to provide homes to community members who are currently homeless. The answer to this is no.

Alice Holway Drive is not designed as a Permanent Supportive Housing community, a model that offers programming and on-site supportive services to residents who have experienced chronic homelessness. The only two permanent supportive housing sites in Windham County are both in Brattleboro.

Instead, Alice Holway Drive is designed to meet a variety of housing needs in the community, including for those at the very low end of the income spectrum.

As such, five apartments have been designated for community members with very low incomes

who are at risk of homelessness, and they all have project-based vouchers attached to them which will pay a portion of the resident’s rent. These apartments are built to the same specifications and quality as all the other apartments in the project.

All residents at Alice Holway Drive will have access to services through a collaboration with SEVCA and WWHT’s SASH (Support and Services at Home) for All Team, which provides community programming and individual support with a focus on health and well-being, community building, and housing retention.

QUESTIONS HAVE ALSO come up about our co-developer, Evernorth. People want to know who they are and what role they play in the community.

Evernorth, previously known as Housing Vermont, is a non-profit organization that provides extra capacity to Vermont community development organizations like the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust. In its 35-year history of working in Vermont, Evernorth has co-developed more than 120 communities throughout the state, including the Exner Block and the Howard Block in Bellows Falls, the apartments above the Brattleboro Food Co-op, and the Noyes House and Putney

Landing Apartments in Putney.

Evernorth has decades of experience in real estate development finance and helps identify and secure equity investments for the projects it co-develops.

Admittedly, this tax credit program is complicated. Essentially, the equity funds from investors pay for the construction, and their return comes not from rents paid by tenants, but from tax credits allocated to the project.

This isn’t unique to Alice Holway Drive or Vermont. This is a federal program that Congress created in 1986 to incentivize private investment in new housing production to minimize the use of taxpayer dollars for this purpose.

Investors include community banks like Brattleboro Savings & Loan, Mascoma Bank, and Passumpsic Bank. Regional banks include TD Bank and M&T Bank (formerly People’s United Bank).

One thing unique to Vermont: WWHT, Evernorth, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, and the Vermont Housing Finance Agency have all played critical roles in ensuring that public investments go toward affordability in perpetuity.

Instead of allowing for the affordability clause to expire after 15 years — which is allowed and happens elsewhere in the country — it is protected in deed restrictions and covenants and continues as a stabilization resource and protects the community against the volatile market prices.

WE SEE A LOT OF interest across the state to solve the housing

Civics

FROM SECTION FRONT

VERMONT IS one of 11 states that do not require students to study civics before graduation. The only Vermonters who are required to understand the complexities of a (small-r) republican form of government are those taking the U.S. Citizenship Test.

Immigrants are more likely to know that there are currently four women on the Supreme Court and that the Constitution was ratified by state conventions and why that is important. They are more likely to know that to run for Senate does not require that you are native born.

Recognizing the need for civics education, the Secretary of State’s Office recently launched a civics program offering resources and incentives for public school teachers.

Two children’s books by Vermont author Christy Mihaly, one on the First Amendment and one on the Supreme Court, explain the complexities of a republican form of government using poetry and pictures.

Young readers learn how the five freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment are “democracy’s foundation” and how the Supreme Court protected the rights of school children to not pledge allegiance to the flag just one year after they had ruled in the opposite direction.

Both of these books help young Vermonters see the guardrails in place to restrain democratic excesses.

FOCUSING ON democratic engagement itself does not necessarily save us from the error of failing to protect minorities. It becomes all too easy to believe that one point of view speaks for the whole.

A recently published Vermont civics education resource shows how this can happen.

On page 14 of the informational comic book *Freedom and Unity*, Take Back Vermont protesters are labeled as an “anti-gay” movement. The caption informs us that Vermont has a history of racism and eugenics, implying that only conservatives are cut from the same fabric as the bigots of the past.

Just as religious majorities in other states revel in imposing their values on LGBTQ communities, so Vermont progressives take delight in imposing their values on religious minorities.

A fundamental premise of freedom of speech is that minority voices have value. Without an informed understanding of the First Amendment, leaders endorsing a liberal orthodoxy may believe they are acting in everyone’s interests when they make it harder for conservative and libertarian speech to be heard or for religious beliefs to be respected.

Without civics, Vermonters are at risk of believing that the majority speaks for everyone.

The First Amendment reminds all of us that our freedoms depend on our capacity for mutual respect. These freedoms give minorities the opportunity to counter the reasoning of the majority.

If more people knew their civics, minorities might be more outspoken, causing the majority to reconsider some of their own biases.

We don’t have to endorse what others say, but we all benefit from their right to say it.

We don’t have to believe what others believe, but we all benefit from their rights of conscience.

By respecting each other’s freedoms enough to actually consider dissent, majorities have less control over what can be said.

crisis through in-fill development and private efforts. We applaud this approach and firmly believe that private property owners play a critical role in addressing the housing crisis.

This is why we elected to implement the Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP), which provides grants to private property owners who are either creating a new home or rehabilitating an apartment that is not occupied.

This all-hands-on-deck approach, with every strategy employed to create more homes, is exactly what we need to move us toward a more sustainable

future. We are delighted to be in the final stages of pre-construction for Alice Holway Drive, and we look forward to the fourth appeal of this project being resolved.

These homes will be energy efficient and will use sustainable sources like solar power and ground-source heat pumps to generate the electricity and heat for the building.

Most importantly, however, is that community members seeking a new home will have a wonderful new opportunity in Putney.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Crazy shade of winter

We can no longer ignore the signs that have visited us this past year: catastrophic flooding, drought, smoky summer air, and now this barren winter. The Legislature is working on it.

Brattleboro

AS OUR ATTENTION turns to spring and daffodils pop up out of the ground, it is sobering to reflect on a winter that never really arrived.

For more than 30 years, we have heard about the future weather and climate scenarios that would come to pass if we failed to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

Those warnings, mainly unheeded, predicted what seemed like a far-off future of disruption caused by a warming planet. Unfortunately, that future appears to have arrived at our doorstep.

We can no longer ignore the signs that have visited us this past year: catastrophic flooding, drought, smoky summer air, and now this barren winter.

For all the complaints about winter, it serves a celebratory function. To me, the first snows spread quiet across the land and serve to inspire reflection and an inward orientation.

So many of our social and cultural traditions are based in the winter season — skating on ponds, skiing, snowmobiling, sledding, Winter Carnival events.

Without a real winter, a snowy winter, we have cold rain and a drab landscape, not to mention the impact on the ski industry that is so important for Vermont’s economy.

And while this affects me as a personal loss, I know that the effects of climate change here and all over the world are causing loss of life, damage to crops and property, and economic and social disruption.

AS A MEMBER of the Vermont Legislature I have been given the responsibility and the privilege of helping to address what our state can do about this problem here.

MOLLIE BURKE, a Democrat, represents the Windham-8 District in the Vermont House of Representatives.

In 2020, the Vermont Legislature passed the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA). This important bill made mandatory the climate and energy goals that were enshrined in our Comprehensive Energy Plan. It also established a Climate Council of stakeholders tasked with writing a plan to help the state reach its emissions goals.

The Climate Action Plan (CAP), released in 2021, laid out pathways by which the various sectors of the Vermont economy could reduce emissions.

I serve on the transportation committee. The transportation sector constitutes about 40% of Vermont’s greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). One of the pathways in the CAP is vehicle electrification. To reach our climate goals we should have 47,000 electric vehicles (EVs) registered in the state by 2025 and 126,000 by 2030. We are not currently on track to meet those goals, but the pace of EV adoption is accelerating thanks to our vehicle incentive programs.

In 2019 my committee adopted legislation to set up an incentive program to help low- and moderate-income Vermonters purchase a new electric or hybrid electric vehicle. At the same time, we established a program, MileageSmart, to help low-income residents purchase a used fuel-efficient vehicle.

I encourage readers to check out the Drive Electric Vermont website (driveelectricvt.com). You can find information about different vehicles and a calculator to determine what you



CASEY DARROW, COURTESY PHOTO VIA INSTAGRAM COMMONS FILE

Apple buds in orchards throughout Windham County and Vermont were damaged by freezing temperatures one night last May, destroying much of last year’s crop — just one example of the disruption from climate change to Vermont’s economy and well-being.

would pay with the various incentives.

Electric vehicles not only reduce GHG emissions; they also promote better air quality and reduce transportation costs. The transportation energy burden for low- and moderate-income Vermonters is significant.

These programs have been popular. They can make it possible to purchase an electric vehicle. There are now approximately 13,000 EVs registered in Vermont. But we face profound challenges to meeting our climate goals.

NO FEWER than 50 bills are circulating in the House and Senate related to addressing climate change. There are bills about land use and biodiversity protection, renewable energy, flood resilience, funding for transit and the deployment of

EV charging stations.

On the federal level, I give credit to President Biden for the Infrastructure and Jobs Act that is bringing about \$32 million to Vermont for carbon-reduction programs. Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act may provide us with another \$90 million through the IRA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program.

This does not mean that we are solving the problem, but we are working on it.

We are not going to prevent the effects of climate change on our state. But in concert with other states and countries, we can try to avoid the worst consequences.

Much more is needed on a scale of mobilization we haven’t seen since World War II. Hopefully, more people will see the emergency.





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COLUMN | Sports Roundup

Local teams well-represented at North-South games

Our four local high schools were well represented at the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association's (VBCA) Senior All-Star Games at Windsor High School on March 16.

Unfortunately, their presence wasn't enough as the North all-stars swept all four games.

On the South's Division III-IV girls' team was Eryn Ross and Delaney Lockerby of Bellows Falls and Maggie Parker and Mary Sanderson of Leland & Gray. Parker scored eight points as the North won, 49-46, in the closest game of the day.

The South's Division III-IV boys' team had Colby Dearborn and Jaxon Clark of Bellows Falls and Noah Dornburgh of Twin Valley. The North rolled to a 94-65 victory. Dearborn, who also represented the South in the three-point shooting contest, scored eight points.

The South's Division I-II girls' team had Mallory Newton of Brattleboro. The North squad cruised to a 68-49 win.

No Brattleboro players were selected to the South's Division I-II boys' team. The North finished their sweep with a 97-75 win in that game.

The day wasn't a total loss for Windham County basketball, as Alan Libardoni of Brattleboro was honored as one of the VBCA's Officials of the Year.

A question of fairness

Last March, Mid-Vermont Christian Academy (MVC), a private school in Quechee, made the national news when it forfeited a girls' basketball play-off game to Long Trail School (LTS) of Dorset because Long Trail had a transgender player on its roster.

The school said it believed the presence of Rose Johnson on the Long Trail squad jeopardized "the fairness of the game and the safety of our players."

In response, the executive council of the Vermont Principals' Association (VPA), the governing body for sports and extracurricular activities, said that Mid-Vermont Christian violated Vermont's nondiscrimination and public accommodation laws by refusing to compete against LTS and ruled that MVC is ineligible to participate in any future VPA-run academic or sports competitions.

Mid-Vermont Christian in turn filed a lawsuit last November in federal court in Burlington challenging Vermont's anti-discrimination laws and saying those laws violated the school's constitutional right to freedom of religious expression.

According to the suit, Vermont has violated the school's First Amendment right to believe "that sex is based on biology, unchangeable, and predetermined by God."

While banned by the VPA, Mid-Vermont Christian continued to play basketball in the 2023-24 season, except it played against other Christian schools around New England. Also, Vermont students from towns without their own high school are attending MVC, with the state paying the cost of tuition, despite MVC's beliefs about transgender students.

Trans athletes have been targeted by a variety of laws and initiatives in conservative states. According to the Movement Advancement Project (lgbtmap.org), 24 states have enacted bans in the past four years that prevent transgender students from



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

participating in sports consistent with their gender identity. Vermont is one of the 25 states, along with the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories, without such a ban.

I saw Johnson, a senior forward, and her teammates play against Leland & Gray in the Green Mountain Holiday Tournament in Chester on Dec. 14. She didn't look out of place on the floor. Yes, she is tall at 6-foot-1, but I've seen taller and more burly girls play high school basketball over the years. And the Leland & Gray defenders did a good job containing Johnson, holding her to seven points.

The Long Trail Mountain Lions have plenty of other good players and didn't rely solely upon Johnson over the course of the season. LTS earned the top seed in Division IV and made it all the way to the championship game at the Barre Auditorium on March 9, but they were beaten by West Rutland, 49-38. The Golden Horde won their third straight state title as Johnson was held to five points by an exceptionally good West Rutland squad.

In other words, the walls of "the Aud" didn't come tumbling down because a transgender player was on the floor, and Johnson did not pose an unfair advantage or safety risk to the girls she played against.

"There is no evidence of transgender girls dominating girls' sports in Vermont or creating unfair competition," the VPA wrote last year in response to MVC's contentions. "Nor is there any evidence of transgender girls injuring others when they play on girls' teams in our state."

Vermont isn't perfect in terms of protecting LGBTQ+ folk, but VPA and state policy are very clear — discrimination on the basis of sex or gender identity is illegal. While four Republican lawmakers in the Vermont Legislature introduced a bill to add Vermont to the list of states banning transgender students from school sports, it received little support.

According to *The Boston Globe*, Mid-Vermont Christian is getting help with its federal lawsuit from the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), a conservative organization that has been involved in numerous cases around the country involving transgender folk.

One of ADF's senior counsels, Ryan Tucker, wrote in the federal lawsuit that "the state of Vermont has adopted its own orthodoxy on human sexuality and gender. Simply put, the state believes sex is mutable and biological differences do not matter. The state is entitled to its own views, but it is not entitled, nor is it constitutional, to force private religious schools across the state to follow that orthodoxy."

While the American Civil Liberties Union is not involved in this case, the *Globe* reported the ACLU is keeping an eye on it, quoting Harper Seldin, a staff attorney with the ACLU's LGBTQ & HIV Project, who said the ACLU sees the Vermont case as part of a nationwide effort by conservatives to roll back protections for transgender and nonbinary



Rose Johnson, a senior at Long Trail School in Dorset, has played varsity girls' basketball for the past two seasons but her presence on the team as a transgender athlete has prompted a federal lawsuit. She is seen here playing against Leland & Gray in the Green Mountain Holiday Tournament in December.

students. "I'm skeptical of the attempt to use the First Amendment to impose their views on other people," Seldin said of Mid-Vermont Christian's contention that its religious freedom is being infringed.

This case seems destined to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which in its current configuration is predisposed to supporting religious liberty at the expense of civil rights. My opinion on this? I agree with what Vermont Gov. Phil Scott said when the Republican bill banning transgender folk in school athletics was introduced in the Legislature: "Let them be who they are and let them play."

Sorry, Abby

Last week, I inadvertently left out Bellows Falls guard Abby Nystrom, a ninth-grader, from the girls' Division III-IV Dream Dozen team as selected by the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association.

Nystrom had an exceptional season with the Terriers and was deserving of the honor, especially for her tenacious defense that helped lead her team into the Division III quarterfinals. She will be a key member of the BF varsity for another three seasons.

Seventh annual Rockin'Ham 5K set for April 6

Central Elementary School in Bellows Falls will host the seventh annual Rockin'Ham 5K on Saturday, April 6. The 5-kilometer event will begin and end at the school. Runners may register online at active.com/bellows-falls-vt/running/distance-running/rockin-ham-5k-2024, download a paper registration at ces.wnesu.org, or pick up at Central School, 50 School Street Extension. Same-day registration will begin at 9 a.m., and the race start time is 10:30 a.m.

"We are so excited to be hosting our seventh annual Rockin'Ham 5K," said race coordinator Kerry Pickering in a news release. "This event brings out the best in our community. So many local businesses show their support for our students and our school by sponsoring the race or by providing an item for our raffle. We would love to include every business in town, so please reach out to the school if you haven't yet joined us. This is a super fun, family-friendly



Bellows Falls guard Abby Nystrom (3), seen here being guarded by Twin Valley defenders Bianca Place (10) and Ella Martinez (13) during a game in December, was selected to the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association's girls' Division III-IV Dream Dozen as one of the top 12 non-senior players in the state.

Senior bowling roundup

Week 11 of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on March 14 saw first place High Rollers (38-17) have a 5-0 week, while Stayin' Alive (32-23) and Stepping Stones II (30-25) also had 5-0 weeks to move into second and third place, respectively. Four Seasons (27-28), is in fourth, followed by Good Times (25-30), Hairiers (21-34), Four Pins (19-36), and Slow Movers (16-39). Nancy Dalzell had the women's high handicap game (287) and series (721). Rick Westcott

had the men's high handicap game (246), and Robert Rigby had the high handicap series (675). High Rollers had the high team handicap game (937) and series (2,618). Rigby had the men's high scratch series (650) with games of 227, 225, and 198. Gary Montgomery had a 571 series with games of 199 and 192, while Westcott had a 536 series with a 201 game, Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 516 series with a 194 game, and Charlie Marchant had a 505 series with a 190 game. Dalzell had the women's high scratch series (559) with games of 164 and 162. Carol Gloski rolled a 160 game.

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