

Governor expands paid family leave program

Originally available only to state employees, it will now be open to all Vermont businesses that employ at least two people, but Democrats say plan does not go far enough

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Last week, Gov. Phil Scott, in conjunction with The Hartford, a Connecticut insurance firm, announced a new paid family leave program that extends to the private sector a program already in

place for state employees. Meanwhile, the Senate is working on its own paid family leave bill, one that originated there and was written by Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro. That bill has already passed out of the House. The difference between the governor's plan and the Senate's

is who will pay for the program and how much pay it will actually provide. "Providing all Vermonters with access to affordable paid family and medical leave, without imposing a new mandatory tax, is truly a win-win," said Scott in a press release. "I'm excited to move forward with this new

phase of the Vermont Family and Medical Leave initiative and look forward to Vermonters benefiting from the program for years to come." There is no doubt that a strong paid family leave bill would fill a critical need for Vermonters. Taking care of an ill loved one means that a caretaker must

occasionally prioritize care over work. And not being paid for the time away could put a strain on anyone's budget. Having to weigh the welfare of a child or a parent — or of oneself — against a day's income can be difficult. And, at a time when employees are desperately needed in almost every industry, losing workers

because of their need to care for someone in their family puts a strain on employers, who have to hire and train replacements. The governor has vetoed Democratic-backed paid family leave plans before. In 2020, he vetoed one that was to be funded by a \$29 million mandatory payroll

■ SEE FAMILY LEAVE, A2

Brought to you only with the enthusiastic support of our READERS, DONORS, ADVERTISERS, and VOLUNTEERS

Celebrating our 20th anniversary in 2024!

The Commons

FREE

— thanks to hundreds of readers who chip in because they believe that a community thrives when everyone has access to news. If you appreciate this community resource and can afford to chip in, please join us now! donate.commonnews.org

Brattleboro, Vermont • Wednesday, January 24, 2024 • Vol. XIX, No. 4 • Issue No. 749

commonnews.org

YOUR AWARD-WINNING, INDEPENDENT, NONPROFIT SOURCE OF NEWS AND VIEWS

Brattleboro prepares town budget for RTM approval

Selectboard proposes \$23 million for FY25; budget will recommend \$1.38 million of ARPA money for 13 projects

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—The Selectboard has approved a proposed \$22,993,830 million fiscal 2025 operating and capital budget as well as plans to spend the town's remaining \$1.38 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money.

The budget proposed for the Annual Representative Town Meeting (RTM) on Saturday, March 23 represents a 4.3% increase (\$955,000) over this year's budget.

Town Manager John Potter noted in his budget memo that numerous neighboring towns are seeing 7.4% increases overall.

That's a \$727,000 total increase in property taxes, as Potter told the board on Jan. 16 — an increase of \$60 per \$100,000 of valuation, or about an annual \$110 increase for a median-valued home in town.

Potter writes in his budget memo that the recommended budget would allow the town to:

- Continue or slightly increase service levels in all departments consistent with this fiscal year.

- Shift service delivery for the EMS program from a hybrid public/private model to a fully public one at a projected five-year savings of \$1.7 million over the best alternative.

- Address capacity needs in public works, the Town Clerk's office, and the library and establish an in-house information technology capability.

- Absorb personnel cost increases consistent with approved collective bargaining agreements, including compression and equity adjustments at the managerial level, promoting successful recruitment and retention of valued employees.

- Address \$1.8 million in critical capital replacement needs

consistent with long-term capital plans.

- Account for enterprise fund risk management expenditures appropriately at an estimated \$116,000 savings to the taxpayer.

- Incorporate projections of sustained increasing local-use-tax returns at a \$98,000 savings to the taxpayer.

Taxpayers will see some savings in the proposed budget, including \$48,404 for the community marketing initiative — marketing money for the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance and Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce that will now come from a revolving loan fund to help cover a new position — and \$1,000 for the West River Watershed Alliance, now defunct.

The Human Services Committee saved \$73,000 by not spending all of the more than \$400,000 that was allocated to it.

However, salary costs are higher. A Dec. 15 memo notes the \$104,000 in department head salary increases stem from "compensation from collective bargaining contracts, cost of living

■ SEE FY25 BUDGET, A6



ELIZABETH UNGERLEIDER SPECIAL TO THE COMMONS

Organizers of Homelessness Awareness Day in Brattleboro on Jan. 18 planted 648 small flags on the lawn of the Municipal Center as a visual reminder of the extent of the need for housing and related services in Windham County.

'Homelessness is not acceptable. It is a crisis. It is a tragedy. And it is preventable.'

Vermonters in Brattleboro and throughout the state acknowledge those without homes — and grieve those who died in 2023

By Ellen Pratt
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—On a 25-degree afternoon, about 60 people — some without hats, gloves, or boots — held a candlelight vigil in Pliny Park to acknowledge and

grieve the 19 unhoused local people who died last year.

It was Homelessness Awareness Day on Jan. 18, and Vermonters across the state were renewing their commitment to end homelessness.

"In 2023 almost 8,000 Vermonters experienced homelessness, including 2,000

children," event organizer Fred Breunig told the gathering. "Over the past year, local service providers supported 648 people experiencing homelessness, including 140 children and 42 people over the age of 65."

"Homelessness is not acceptable," said Breunig, a member of the Housing

■ SEE VIGIL, A2

Family BUSINESS

As Soundview Vermont's machines go quiet, members of the Stockwell family recall how their relatives built their lives and a community around the Putney Paper Mill — from maintaining the machinery to owning the company

By Fran Lynggaard Hansen
The Commons

PUTNEY—Barry Stockwell remembers his father, Raymond Stockwell, returning from work in the Putney Paper Mill in the 1960s.

Each day, Raymond, a supervisor in charge of maintenance, would "grab a little whisk broom he kept on the top of the refrigerator and whisk the paper off the top of his hat. Then he'd sit down in a kitchen chair to unwind and tell us about his day," he reminisced.

Until its current owner, Soundview Vermont, closed the paper mill at the

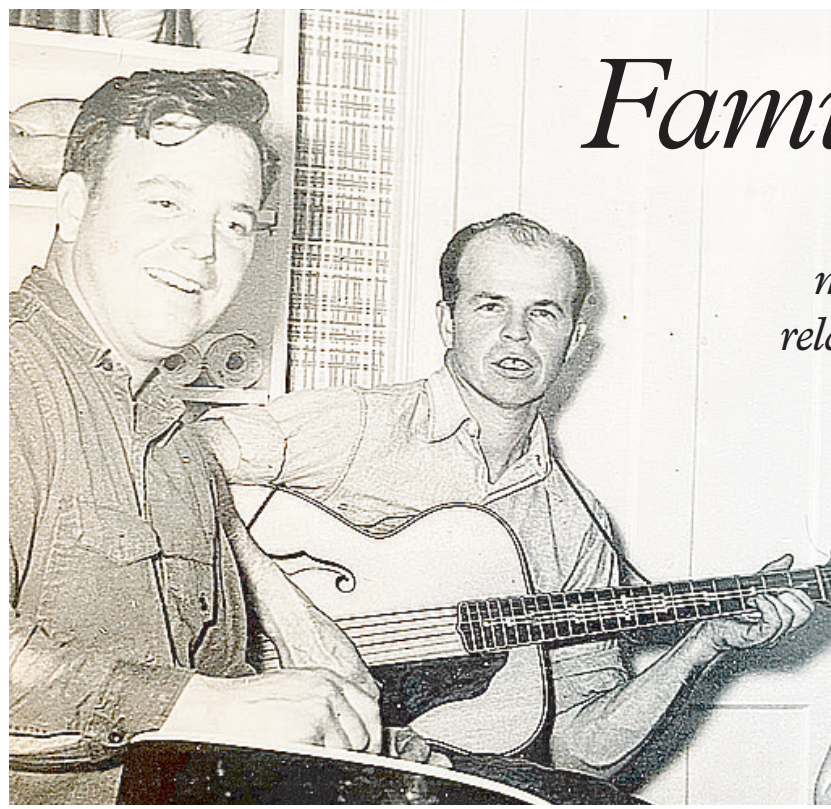
center of town abruptly on Jan. 16, leaving 127 people without work, workers made paper and paper products there for more than 150 years.

The history of the Stockwell family is intertwined with the history of the mill.

Earl Stockwell — Barry Stockwell's uncle and Raymond Stockwell's brother — married the former Shirley Kazmierczak, whose father, Wojciech Kazmierczak, ran a thriving company that he had built from what was an abandoned, burned-out mill in 1938.

Earl and Shirley Stockwell, a bookkeeper, ran the company until they sold it

■ SEE PAPER MILL, A5



COURTESY OF SUZY STOCKWELL

Brothers Raymond and Earl Stockwell worked together in the Putney Paper Co. mill, which was the center of the family's lives for decades. Earl and his wife, Shirley, took over the business from Shirley's father, and in turn, their children worked there as well.

PAID ADVERTISING • To place your ad, call 888-511-5150 or email ads@commonnews.org

DRYER VENT CLEANING
Installation & Repair
603-762-3433
durlingcleaning.com

WINTER CLEARANCE ON NOW!
THE SHOE TREE
Main St. Brattleboro
802-254-8515

Green River Bridge Inn
Friday Dinner
Sunday Brunch
www.GRBInn.com
802-490-2632

BRADLEY HOUSE RESIDENTIAL CARE
SICK OF SHOVELING?
LET US DO IT FOR YOU!
ROOMS & RESPITE AVAILABLE
802-254-5524

WINTER FARMERS' MARKET
Saturdays 10-2
Open every week thru March
60 Austine Dr.
Lots of convenient parking!

VT STATE INSPECTIONS
No appt. needed during business hrs.
GOUIN SERVICES
802-257-1800
500 Guilford Street
Brattleboro

Tuxedo & Suit Rentals
For weddings, proms & more
Vermont Artisan Designs
106 Main St. Brattleboro
802-257-7044

Celebrating 750 issues of The Commons!
This is your chance to get your very own "I read The Commons" sticker!
Visit commonnews.org and look for the ad to enter - the first 75 people get a sticker!

PSKST STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301
PERMIT NO. 24

VERMONT INDEPENDENT MEDIA
P.O. Box 1212, Brattleboro, VT 05302
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Become a member and receive The Commons in the mail.
Your membership supports our journalism and lets us make this newspaper available for all, in print and online.
Join today at <https://donate.commonnews.org>.

The Commons

A publication of
Vermont Independent Media

139 Main St. (Hooker-Dunham Bldg.)
#601A – Newsroom
#604 – Business and Advertising
P.O. Box 1212, Brattleboro, VT 05302
888-511-5150 • fax 802-246-1319
commonsnews.org
office hours by appointment

Jeff Potter
Editor-in-Chief

Kate O'Connor
Executive Director

EDITORIAL

NEWSROOM
Randolph T. Holhut, *News Editor*
Elizabeth Julia Stoumen,
Calendar and Proofreading
Heather Taylor, *Copy Editor*

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Virginia Ray, Joyce Marcel,
Olga Peters, Fran Lynggaard Hansen,
Robert Smith, Megan Applegate,
Annie Landenberger,
Dot Grover-Read, Victoria Chertok,
Deborah Lee Luskin, Elaine Cliff,
Kevin O'Connor, Alyssa Grosso,
Thelma O'Brien

EDITORIAL VOLUNTEERS
Lee Stookey, Karen Criabari,
Connie Evans, Kim Noble,
Janet Wallstein, Elizabeth Troutsdel,
Wendy S. Collins, *Proofreaders*
Taryn Heon, *Editorial Assistant/Voices*
David Shaw, *Photographer*

OPERATIONS

CREATIVE MARKETING SERVICES
Amanda Harwood,
Marketing and Office Manager
Lori Pinsonault, *Nancy Gauthier,*
Advertising Sales

INTERNS AND APPRENTICES
Elias Vary, *Social Media*

DISTRIBUTION STAFF
Grace Hedderman, Dan Lydon,
Bill Wilmot

OPERATIONS VOLUNTEERS
Spoon Agave, Karen Axelrod,
Karina Huber, *Phone Wagner,*
Jon King, *Phillip Coolbeth,*
Distributors
Alison Bundy, *Membership*

STAFF OFFSPRING
Owen Harwood, Olivia Harwood

CONSULTANTS
Agatha, Caslon, Ely, Ghivashel,
Mookie, Rocky, Valentino

Deadline for the
January 31 issue

Friday, January 26



VIM'S MISSION
Recognizing that a vigorous exchange of ideas and information allows democracy to function and is the lifeblood of a community, Vermont Independent Media:
• creates a forum for community participation,
• promotes local independent journalism,
• fosters civic engagement by building media skills through publication of *The Commons* and *commonsnews.org*, and through the Media Mentoring Project.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Heather Ahrenholz, Barry Aleshnick, Lynn Barrett, Michael Bosworth, Don Cook, Randolph T. Holhut (ex officio), Phayvanh Luekhamhan, Steve Mundahl, Kate O'Connor (ex officio), Jeff Potter (ex officio), Stuart Strothman

ABOUT THIS NEWSPAPER

The Commons is a nonprofit community newspaper published since 2006 by Vermont Independent Media, Inc., a nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.

The newspaper is free, but it is supported by readers like you through tax-deductible donations, through advertising support, and through support of charitable foundations.

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

SUBMITTING NEWS AND TIPS
We welcome story ideas and news tips. Please contact the newsroom at news@commonsnews.org or at (802) 246-6397.

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

We especially invite responses to material that appears in the paper.

We do not publish unsigned or anonymous letters, and we only very rarely withhold names for other pieces. When space is an issue, our priority is to run contributions that have not yet appeared in other publications.

Please check with the editor before writing essays or other original submissions of substance. Email: voices@commonsnews.org.

Editorials represent the collective voice of *The Commons* and are written by the editors or by members of the Vermont Independent Media Board of Directors.

The views expressed in our *Voices* section are those of individual contributors. Bylined commentaries by members of the Vermont Independent Media board of directors represent their individual opinions; as an organization, we are committed to providing a forum for the entire community.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Vermont Independent Media is legally prohibited from endorsing political candidates.

ADVERTISING
Your advertising directly supports a better newspaper. The open display advertising rate is \$16.50 per column inch, and *The Commons* offers discounts. To place your ad, contact lori@commonsnews.org or nancy@commonsnews.org.

Advertising files can be saved as PDF (press-ready setting), as TIFF (600 pixels per inch), or printed as black-and-white hard copy.

We can design your ad, and you should not hesitate to ask us to do so. We love helping our clients.

DISTRIBUTION
The Commons distributes 8,050 copies per issue to 250 drops in almost every Windham County town, as well as in neighboring towns in Windsor County (Vt.), Cheshire County (N.H.) and Franklin County (Mass.). Please get in touch (circulation@commonsnews.org) if you would like us to consider adding your business.

Without our volunteers, this newspaper would exist only in our imaginations.

Special thanks to:
Simi and Mark Berman,
Diana Bingham,
Jim Maxwell, Rob Bertsche,
Barbara Evans;

Cameron Cobane, Shannon Ward, and Hooker-Dunham Theater & Gallery;
Clay Turnbull and NEC;
Brendan Emmett Quigley
and Jon Pahlke

In memoriam:
Alan O. Dann, Judy Gorman,
Mia Gannon

Vigil

FROM SECTION FRONT

Coalition of Southeast Vermont, an organization focusing on housing and homelessness in the region. “It is a crisis. It is a tragedy. And it is preventable.”

Event organizers planted 648 small flags on the lawn of the Municipal Center as a visual reminder of the extent of the need for housing and related services.

“As you contemplate the display, please remember that each flag represents a person with a face and a name,” Breunig said. “They each have a story, and hopes and fears, sadness and discouragements.”

‘I’m not sleeping on a bench tonight’

Lisa Marie, a homeless advocate, told a bit of her story to the crowd.

“I have been homeless for almost 2½ years,” she said. “I’m lucky because I get to live in a hotel. The hotels are not awesome. But every day, I have to keep reminding myself. No matter how scary it is, how dangerous, it’s a roof over my head. And I am not sleeping on a bench tonight.”

Vermont is a “shelter first” state, which means that people experiencing homelessness must first attempt to access local shelters before applying for the state’s emergency motel program.

Groundworks Collaborative, which runs a 34-bed shelter in Brattleboro, has been “at capacity” with about a five-person wait list each night, according to Groundworks’ Director of Shelters Karli Schrade, who said that she could think of at least 10 to 15 people who sometimes sleep outside.

Schrade noted that it is difficult to identify unsheltered people who may not want to be seen. “We’re not entirely sure how many people are unsheltered,” she said.

All but one region of the state have described availability in hotels as either “none” or “extremely limited” as of Jan. 18, according to the Department of Children and Families’ Economic Services Division, which runs the motel program.

As of Dec. 26, 206 households were sheltering in Brattleboro-area motels.

Small gestures help

“What sucks is there’s a lot of hate towards us,” said Lisa Marie at the vigil. “And what people don’t understand is that it could be you tomorrow. It could be your brother, your sister, your daughter, a cousin, a next-door neighbor.”

Even small gestures can have impact, she said.

“Any little thing, whether it’s a smile, a ‘hello, how are you doing?’ can keep somebody alive for that day,” Lisa Marie said. “Even if it’s a cup of coffee on a frigid day. You don’t have to give money. Give a laundry card, a blanket, mittens, just a conversation.”

“A lot of my friends have died this year,” she said. “Most all of them could have been prevented.”

Kenny G., a local “street

minister,” spoke at the vigil about his many friends who have died from overdoses.

“I carry four Narcan [an over-the-counter opioid overdose treatment] with me at all times,” he said. “It’s not difficult to obtain. It’s easy to use, and you’re not going to get sued for using it. You’ll save someone’s life.”

Schrade said that local service providers identified 19 unsheltered people who died this year. However, because not all unsheltered people access services, she believes that it is likely that more than 19 people experiencing homelessness died in the region last year.

And it is also impossible to generalize the extent to which homelessness can be blamed for their demise, though it can’t help but be a contributing factor in a lot of cases.

“A lot of the causes [of death] are unknown to us,” Schrade said. “We support a lot of people who are navigating really complex medical needs, and their ability to maintain interventions for their health is certainly significantly less [than others’ ability] because of systemic barriers.”

Connecting where people feel the most comfortable

In February, Groundworks will launch an outreach program to provide community-based services specifically for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

“Our 4½-person team will be out connecting with people where they feel most comfortable,” Schrade said. “If people are ready to access support for substance use treatment or mental health treatment or health care, then we will support them in doing that. But if they’re not interested in any of that, then we will find things that they have needs for and we will support them.”

Schrade has worked at Groundworks for six years and described it as “an experience unlike any experience I’ve ever had.”

“The drop-in center is a very, very special place,” she said. “There’s this appreciation for us showing up and for being consistent and for being genuine and for asking questions and being curious and really seeing people as people experiencing homelessness, not homeless people.”

Housing is the issue right now

“There’s a lot of anger and frustration directed towards individuals,” said Josh Davis, executive director of Southeast Vermont Community Action and former executive director of Groundworks, in an interview with *The Commons*.

“When folks see people on the street asking for money or camping in the woods, the focus becomes about the people as opposed to the system that creates the conditions that folks without housing experience,” Davis said.

“It’s not about fixing people without housing,” he added. “It’s about fixing the system around housing.”

Davis said that “time and again, when we direct resources where they’re needed most, it makes a huge impact and a huge difference.”

Describing homelessness as “a policy choice,” he said that to “really turn the tide on homelessness, it takes political will and it takes action in places like the Statehouse.”

But Davis spoke hopefully.

“I’m seeing housing at the forefront of so many discussions now,” he said. “People really get the housing crunch that we’re in. We’re seeing policy action being directed toward housing, we’re seeing resources being allocated for housing. And that goes across the board, not just for folks experiencing homelessness, but housing in general, across all incomes in the state.”

“It feels like housing is the issue right now. And rightfully so,” Davis said.

What homelessness is like

Words from those who are living without shelter

BRATTLEBORO—*The Commons* is grateful to the people experiencing homelessness who have shared their stories with the newspaper over the past six months.

Following are excerpts from these interviews. Names have been changed to protect their privacy.

‘It’s not fun being homeless’

Joe is 70 years old and stays at the Quality Inn in Brattleboro. He had been paying for a room at the West Village Motel in West Brattleboro for 5½ years but had to leave when the building was sold. “The new owner’s gonna put up condos,” he said. So he called the state’s emergency housing line at 800-775-0506, “and they got me in here,” he said.

“I was in the Air Force seven years, three months, and six days,” Joe reported. He thinks he may be offered VA housing in Bradford. But that’s several hours away in Orange County, and he doesn’t want to move that far. He’s lived in Brattleboro since he was 9 years old.

He says he could pay for a room at the Quality Inn, except that his debit card was stolen and he was “wiped out completely.”

“And I can’t prosecute her because she OD’d and died,” he said of the person he identified as the thief.

Speaking of living at the Quality Inn, “Mostly people are good. The problem is nobody ever has any cigarettes!” Joe said.

“It’s not fun being homeless,” he added. “It’s hard to get help.”

A housing Catch-22

When they spoke to *The Commons* in late summer, Jane and Jeff had been bouncing between the Quality Inn and a local campground for months. They both worked but couldn’t afford rents in the area.

“We’re stuck in this Catch-22,” Jane said. “We don’t make enough for a regular apartment, but we make too much to qualify for subsidized housing. So what are we supposed to do?”

The couple had a plan: They hoped that when the cold weather arrived, they’d become eligible for emergency motel shelter under the state’s “adverse weather” policy. Then they could save “as much as possible” to be able to afford an apartment.

“It’s hard to save when you’re camping,” Jane said. “We have to pay for storage for our stuff and pay for the campsite every week. We have to buy food every day because ice only lasts a day.”

The couple did get a motel room when winter arrived.

“We’re just trying to do the right thing,” Jane said in a follow-up interview. “We don’t hang out with anybody. We’re just keeping our heads down. Saving, saving, saving, only buying necessities. Honestly, we go to bed hungry all the time,” she said.

The Commons recently learned that Jane and Jeff moved into an apartment in Brattleboro late last year.

You can’t get a job without an ID

Mark panhandled on Putney Road for months.

“People are definitely willing to help,” he said. “And then there’s other people that just assume nobody wants to work. And that’s not always the situation,” he said.

“It’s not like there’s work everywhere all the time for people,” Mark noted. “And when there is, they don’t want to hire somebody off the street with no ID.”

Mark doesn’t have an ID and said that without a car he can’t get to the Department of Motor Vehicles to get one. He intermittently picked up carpentry work that paid under the table and was saving for a motel room to be near his 2-year-old son

and his partner.

Asked about conditions at the motel for his family, he said, “I don’t think they’re safe. But I don’t think they’re unsafe, if that makes sense.”

Still, he was concerned. “I don’t think anyone’s going to harm them, but it’s definitely not the best place for them to be,” Mark said.

‘It ain’t easy to live in the hotel, that’s for sure’

When *The Commons* interviewed Megan this summer, she and her three children had been living in a motel for almost a year and a half. She buys groceries at Hannaford on Putney Road and cooks rice and chicken on the small electric hotplate in the room.

Megan’s search for an apartment has been frustrating.

“Everywhere you go, you just keep getting denied and denied and denied,” she said. “If it’s not because your kids are biracial, it’s because you don’t have enough income. But it’s called ‘low income.’ So how much more income do you need to get approved?”

Megan was feeling hopeful after she received a Section 8 voucher, which qualified her for low-income housing. But she still hadn’t found an apartment.

“I don’t know why they’re giving out Section 8 left and right, because there’s no apartments,” she said.

Asked about her plan for April 1, when the state’s pandemic-era motel housing program is slated to end, Megan said that “they said that when April comes, if we didn’t find an apartment, they’ll give us a tent or I can sleep in the car.”

Dreaming of the day when she will find an apartment, Megan said, “I’ll be the happiest person in the world.

“You know how fast I’ll pack?” she said. “I don’t care how little it is. As long as I can sleep. If it’s got light and I can cook, I’m fine.

“It ain’t easy to live in the hotel, that’s for sure.”

FROM SECTION FRONT

Family leave

tax that would fall on workers or employers.

“For years, Vermonters have made it clear they don’t want, nor can they afford, new broad-based taxes,” the governor said in his message explaining the veto.

In 2018, he vetoed an even more robust plan with the same funding mechanism.

His new plan is actually an insurance program.

The benefits “provide partial income replacement for workers who need to take care of a family member with a serious health condition, bond with a new child, tend to their own serious health condition, care for a military service member’s serious injury or illness, or address certain needs related to a family member’s covered active military duty or call to active duty,” the press release said.

Contributions to the plan can be “fully paid by the employer, split between the employer and employees, or fully paid for by the employees as a voluntary benefit,” according to the press release.

The options can run from six to 26 weeks per 12-month period and offer covered employees 60% to 70% of their wages, with additional options available.

The first phase of the program was implemented for state employees in July 2023.

Is it enough?
According to Kornheiser, the governor’s bill does not come close to providing necessary assistance for workers.

“The administration has been sort of planning this for a while,” Kornheiser said. “Originally it was going to be a partnership with New Hampshire. But the partnership didn’t work out. And so New Hampshire launched maybe a year earlier than the Scott administration.

“And the Scott administration has been doing it for state employees through The Hartford for about six months now. But the

coverage has been unbelievably low. All the national research on voluntary programs like this point to really low wage coverage.”

The people who need these benefits, Kornheiser said — even the lowest-paid state employees — probably cannot afford to take it.

“So they might have the benefit, technically, if they’re lucky,” Kornheiser said. “But it’s not enough coverage to be able to afford to take time off. So we don’t see any of the benefits that a family medical leave program has, about people’s ability to stay connected to their employer, about the possibility to care for themselves, about people’s ability to stay financially viable while they’re caring for loved ones.”

States that have offered the kinds of plan the governor is offering have found that they just don’t work, Kornheiser said.

“None of the benefits that we see of a strong family medical leave program have proven out in states that have had these kinds of voluntary programs,” she said.

The family leave bill Kornheiser wrote — the one now in the Senate — allows for 90% wage coverage that would, after taxes, be equal to a worker’s salary, compared to the 60% to 70% of a weekly paycheck that The Hartford offers.

Offering wage coverage so low that it does not help the worker might be a political move rather than a policy one, Kornheiser said.

“I think it’s political compromises to keep the program less expensive,” she said. “In states that are voluntary with low wage coverage and are privately administered, like we’re seeing in Vermont or New Hampshire, it seems to me to just be the government essentially prioritizing one private sector corporation and giving them an advantage in the market over others. I don’t really see what else is happening.”

Vermont workers and their employers already have the ability to sign up for a voluntary low-wage coverage program with insurance carriers such as Aflac anytime they want, she pointed out.

“So it’s not clear to me what actually the benefits are of the state setting up something like that,” Kornheiser said. “There’s no guarantee of coverage. There’s no guarantee of accountability if the issue that you’re seeking coverage for is rejected.”

Furthermore, “it’s not a high-enough level of wage replacement to actually cause any financial

stability or create financial stability for people,” she continued.

Any coverage is better than none, however, Kornheiser said.

“I’m glad that state employees have that program right now,” she said. “I think it’s great. They all have it. They didn’t have it before. I know someone who took the opportunity to use it and it allowed them to take care of themselves to some level, but only for a short period of time.”

In the meantime, “I think we need to keep on working for a universal and robust program,” Kornheiser said.

AARP jumps in

A new player in the game, AARP Vermont, is ramping up its advocacy for the Senate legislation. The position of the organization, which advocates for the interests of people age 50 and older, is that the governor’s new initiative is insufficient.

Instead, it is gearing up to pressure the Legislature to pass the paid family leave bill.

“Right now, 73% of Vermont workers are one family or medical emergency away from losing their pay — and for some, even their job,” the organization says on its website (bit.ly/749-aarp). “Our communities are stronger when Vermonters can count on paid family and medical leave.”

It describes the Senate bill as one “allowing most public- and private-sector workers to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for an illness or to care for a family member with a serious health condition.”

The governor “has begun setting up an alternative paid leave program, through an administrative directive, that would be voluntary for employers and offer less time off at lower pay,” the website said. “AARP Vermont needs help lobbying lawmakers to pass the legislation.”

The Legislature will keep working on the bill, Kornheiser said.

“When I talk to people in Vermont about it, it’s a real combination of folks who have worked white collar jobs most of their life and have always had this benefit,” she said. “They don’t realize how many people don’t have it.”

Meanwhile, “there are folks who have never had it, and don’t even realize that it’s possible,” Kornheiser said. “So it is going to take a lot of community conversations to realize that something could actually change.”

AMERICAN LEGION
POST #5
32 Linden St. Brattleboro
802-257-1872

JAN. 29 - FEB. 2
LUNCH SPECIALS \$9.50

Mon. - Chicken Parm
Tue. - Taco Bowl
Wed. - Lasagna
Thu. - Open Faced Turkey Sandwich
Fri. - Fish Salad
Burgers, salads, apps and take out available

FRIDAY DINNER
Fish Fry 5-7pm

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
www.brattleboropost5.org

NUTS 'n' BOLTS

JEWETT PLUMBING & HEATING
SERVING THE BRATTLEBORO AREA WITH RELIABLE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
• BATHROOM & KITCHEN REMODELING
• COMPLETE HEATING SYSTEMS
• WATER PUMPS & SYSTEMS
802-254-4963
1090 WESTERN AVENUE
WEST BRATTLEBORO

Steve's SEPTIC SERVICE
Septic Tank Pumping
& Portable Toilet Rentals
802-257-1619
Vernon, VT • stevesssepticpumping.com

Transcribing, Editing and Proofreading Services
Accurate, Confidential,
Fast Turn-Around, Fair Pricing
Elizabeth:
elizabethjulia88@aol.com
802-257-7475

‘No one snowflake starts the avalanche’

This newspaper is brought to you by the membership and financial support of hundreds of readers just like you.

You think your one membership doesn’t matter? Let us stop you right there.

It really, really does.

The more readers who join, the more good things we can do for our community with an avalanche of resources.

Member dues already add more than \$50,000 to our budget every single year, most from basic-level members.

It really is that simple.

And we could not be more grateful.

Return this form, or visit

commonsnews.networkforgood.com

For more information, to give a gift by phone, or to learn about volunteering with *The Commons*, contact us at 802-246-6397 or info@commonsnews.org. Your gift is tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Yes! I want to support fearless, independent journalism with my donation to *The Commons* and Vermont Independent Media.

Enclosed is my gift for
 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 Other (\$_____)

I would like to enroll in Vermont Independent Media’s Sustaining Giving Program! Please make a monthly gift on my credit card of \$_____ for _____ months

Please list my gift as anonymous

MY NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TOWN/CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Gift method: Check. Credit card

_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|
NUMBER

_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|
3-DIGIT CODE EXP. MM/YY

CARDHOLDER’S SIGNATURE



P.O. Box 1212, Brattleboro, VT 05302
Please make checks payable to Vermont Independent Media.
VIM is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible.

MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

College news

• **Sydney Henry** of Brattleboro, **Ava Cutler** of Brattleboro, **Christina Czechel** of Londonderry, and **Abigail Towle** of Newfare were all named to the Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts.

• **Jaden Conkling** of Brattleboro was named to the Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester at Nazareth University in Rochester, New York.

Obituaries



• **Norton "Norty" Garber, 84**, of Westminster West. Died at home of pancreatic cancer on Jan. 13, 2024. Born in 1937 in Cleveland, Ohio, Norty graduated from Harvard College, and, after earning his medical degree from the New York University School of Medicine, went on to do post-graduate work at the Yale Department of Psychiatry and the Yale Child Study Center. He trained as well at the Western New England Psychoanalytic Institute. Music was integral to Norty's life. He was a gifted, classically trained violinist. In the early 1960s, he became intrigued, inspired and, ultimately, profoundly influenced by the work of the avant-garde musician John Cage. As the era progressed, he embraced experimental music in all its aspects, including amplification and the use of electronic devices, and devoted himself to making music that was original, unorthodox, interdisciplinary, and freely improvisational. In 1964, Norton Garber married Barbara Rosen, a visual artist studying at the New York Studio School. Their marriage signaled the beginning of a long creative collaboration. They settled first in New Haven, where their daughter, Rachel, was born. When Norty finished his formal training, the Garbers decided to leave New Haven and move to southern Vermont. Norty then proceeded to set up a clinical practice and soon, in Brattleboro, working under the aegis of the Winston-Prouty Center, he started the Children and Parents Project, a therapeutic pre-school-through-first-grade program designed to identify and

help special needs children from low-income families before they were mainstreamed into local schools. He also became a consultant at Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, Massachusetts, where, for 10 years, he evaluated the neurodevelopment of children and assessed the effectiveness of treatments. He served, too, over the next 25 years, as a psychiatric consultant for the Putney and Greenwood schools. Two years after coming to Vermont, the Garbers bought and renovated an old barn in Westminster West. The multi-level structure was spacious enough to accommodate a painting studio and a music studio, replete with an eclectic assortment of instruments and electronic equipment. Working separately and together, the couple catalyzed each other's work, collaborating on a series of multimedia installations for galleries in Vermont, New York, and Boston. When Norty retired in 2006 from clinical work with children, he dedicated his time to music, playing regularly with a rotating group of local musicians. These improvisational collaborations, which he called "grown-ups at play," remained at the heart of his artistic work as it evolved and he branched out from playing free-form music to working with pure sound and video. The Garbers shared an insatiable appetite for art in all its forms, and went frequently to New York, where they would spend a few days going to museums, galleries, and concerts. Norty's last video installations, *Ways to Strength and Beauty, The Person You are Trying to Reach, and The Closet*, elicited this comment by the digital artist Michel Moyses: "Norton combines contemporary techniques of media installations and performance through sensibilities that engage—as all good work does—the heart and mind in delightful, mysterious and profound ways." Norty is survived by his wife, Barbara; their daughter, Rachel; Rachel's husband, Leo Burd; and their two sons, Noah and Gabriel. He will be missed by a wide array of loving relatives and close family friends. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** Donations in Norty's name can be made to Brattleboro Area Hospice, 191 Canal St., Brattleboro, VT 05301.

• **Robert W. "Bob" Perkins, 91**, of Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Died Dec. 29, 2023 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts, following a brief illness. Mr. Perkins was born in Chester, Vermont on June 14,



1932, the son of Carroll Alton and Mildred Elizabeth (Duby) Perkins. He was raised and educated in Bellows Falls, graduating from Bellows Falls High School, Class of 1948. He went on to proudly serve his country in the Army during the Korean War and was honorably discharged at the rank of sergeant on July 17, 1952. Bob worked as a printer at The Book Press in Brattleboro, retiring in 1977 following many years of faithful service with the company. Active civically, he was co-founder of Boy Scout Troop 496 in Hinsdale, where he also served as troop leader. Bob was active with the Boy Scouts for well over 60 years and thoroughly enjoyed working with the youth in Hinsdale. Bob was a life member of both American Legion Post 5 in Brattleboro and Hinsdale VFW Post 4234, and was a 32nd Degree Mason, Brattleboro Lodge #102, F&AM. Of his hobbies and interests, he built and flew radio-controlled airplanes, enjoyed square dancing with his wife, both of whom were active members of the Green Mountain Squares Club, enjoyed the outdoors, and cherished time spent with his family. On April 4, 1953, at First Baptist Church in Bellows Falls, he married Wilma Dudley, who predeceased him. Survivors include a son, Donald Perkins of Erving, Massachusetts; a daughter, Donna Serviss of Vernon; a sister, Jeanne Ann Bedi of Springfield, Vermont; and eight grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by two daughters, Diane Dempsey and Debbie Andrews; a sister, Pauline Chartier; and three brothers, Carroll, James, and Hugh Perkins. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** A memorial gathering will be held Saturday, February 3rd from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at VFW Post 1034 in Brattleboro. A short memorial service in his honor will be conducted by Boy Scout Troop 496, starting at 11:30 a.m. He will be laid to rest beside his beloved wife in Pine Grove Cemetery in Hinsdale. Donations to the Boy Scouts, Hinsdale Troop 496, in care of Hinsdale Lions Club, Robert Perkins Memorial, P.O. Box 32, Hinsdale, NH 03451. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.



• **Dwight Alan Slayton Jr., 32**, of Brattleboro. Died on Jan. 9, 2024. He was a loving son and father. Dwight is survived by his father, Dwight Slayton Sr., and wife Connie; sisters Christina and Jennifer; and his children, Jakobe, Cadence, Cameron, and Callie, who were his world. He was predeceased by his mother, Debbie Slayton (Cram), and his daughter Aubree. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** A celebration of his life was held on Jan. 21 at the American Legion in Brandon, Vermont.

• **Russell J. Smith, 66**, of Jamaica. Died on Dec. 15, 2023 at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire, following a brief illness. He was born on Sept. 7, 1957 in Townshend, the son of Raymond and Irene Smith. He was a graduate of Leland & Gray Union High School, and served in the Vermont National Guard. Russell was an avid hunter, trapper, and fisherman. He loved overnight camping trips on Mount Tabor and Stratton Mountain, and enjoyed spending time boating, shrimping, and fishing in North Carolina with his Aunt Ginny and Uncle Knot. Russell was a true homesteader, building his log cabin from trees he harvested from his property. He was also a talented houndsman, training his dogs to tree bears. Russell was predeceased by his parents and siblings Ramona Coleman, Rhonda Brown, and Norman and Romaine Smith. He is survived by brothers Pete (Pat) Smith and Raymond (Debbie) Smith, all of South Londonderry, along with numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** A celebration of his life will be held on Saturday, Jan. 27, at 2 p.m., at Jamaica Community Church. All are welcome to share memories; light snacks and beverages will be served. Donations to Grace Cottage Hospital, P.O. Box 1, Townshend, VT 05353.

• **Jane P. Stevens, 93**, of Londonderry. Died Dec. 30, 2023 at Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend. Jane was born in Jamaica on April 5, 1930, the daughter of the late Clifton J. and Beulah (Duperrault) Stone. She was a homemaker who enjoyed bowling, jigsaw puzzles, Bingo, listening to honky-tonk music, and was an avid Boston Red Sox Fan. She is survived by her brother, James C. Stone; daughters

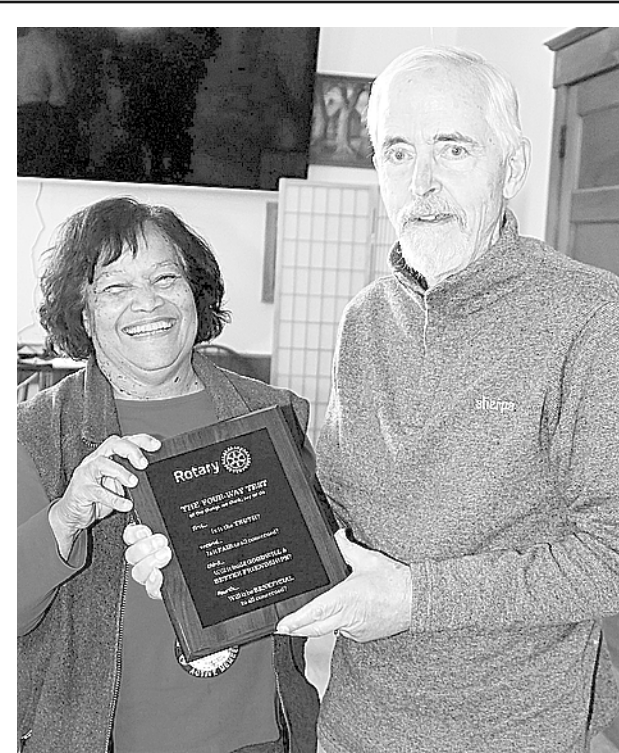
Joyce (Foster) Dority and Alice Kelleher; son Michael Stevens; stepdaughters Lydia Hart, Susan Marcotte, Elizabeth Cole, and Carol Briggs; grandchildren Scott Foster, Kevin Kelleher II, Jonathan Kelleher, and McKenzie Stevens; and many step-grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Raymond W. Stevens; her son, John H. Stevens; sisters Doris Merrow and Jeanette Waite; grandson Glenn Foster; great-grandchildren Logan Foster and Alyson Foster; and her companion of 36 years, Kenneth V. Tifft. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** Interment will take place in the spring at Danby-Scottsville Cemetery in Danby, Vermont. Donations to the Londonderry Rescue Squad in care of Brewster-Shea Funeral Services, P.O. Box 885, Manchester Center, VT 05255. To send condolences, visit sheafuneralhomes.com.

• **Jeremy E. "Miah" Thomas, 49**, of Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Died unexpectedly at his home on Jan. 12, 2024.

Jeremy was born in Brattleboro on July 19, 1974, the son of the late Eugene Paul and Virginia (McCauley) Thomas. He attended Hinsdale public schools and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School with the Class of 1992. At the time of his death, Jeremy was a receiving clerk for Against the Grain Gourmet in Brattleboro. Previously, he had worked at United Natural Foods, Inc. in Chesterfield, New Hampshire for 16 years. Jeremy was a former communicant at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Hinsdale, where he was a member of the Knights of Columbus. He enjoyed spectator sports and was an avid Miami Dolphins fan. He also worked at Boston Red Sox. Most importantly, Jeremy was a faithful and devoted husband and loving father and grandfather whose life centered around his family. On Sept. 18, 2010, in Hinsdale, at the Gazebo, during a wedding ceremony for family and close friends, he married Jennifer Snow, who survives. Besides his wife, he leaves his three children, Matthew C.E. Thomas of Enfield, New Hampshire, Michelle Little (Jesse) of Brattleboro, and Rebecca Thomas of Wear, New Hampshire; grandchildren Hayden and Autumn; and siblings Jeffrey Thomas (Beverly) of Brookline, Jon Thomas (Patricia) of Apache Junction, Arizona, June Forrett (Martin) of Dummerston, and Jaclyn Flagg (Robert) of Hinsdale. Additionally, he is survived by several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** Graveside services will be held in the springtime in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Hinsdale when the cemetery reopens. Donations to the Hinsdale Volunteer Fire Department, 13 Depot St., Hinsdale, NH 03451. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Tracie (Goodrich) Tiller, 60**, died on Jan. 7, 2024. Born in Hartford, Connecticut on March 19, 1963, she grew up in Jamaica, Vermont. She was predeceased by her father Harvey Goodrich and mother Marie (Nadeau) Goodrich, as well as several aunts and uncles. She is survived by her husband, William Tiller; siblings April Goodrich, Tammie Goodrich, Robin (Goodrich) Dawson, and Kirk Goodrich; stepsons Billy and TJ Tiller, her son Colby Goodrich and daughter Lauren Tiller; as well as several grandchildren, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. Before having children of her own, Tracie did a fair amount of babysitting/nanny work for a family in Long Island, as well as some restaurant work. Later, she volunteered at Parks Place in Bellows Falls, was a part of AmeriCorps/VISTA, and worked for Our Place Drop In Center. She later went on to be self-employed, where she had multiple clients she cleaned for, but primarily worked with a lovely woman where she assisted with cooking, cleaning, gardening, and running errands. She enjoyed being creative and enjoyed hobbies such as sewing, quilting, painting, and woodworking. Tracie was a free spirit and will be missed deeply by everyone she was close with. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** A celebration of life will be held when the weather gets warmer so it can be held outdoors.

• **Avis L. Warren, 91**, of Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Died Jan. 13, 2024, with her two daughters by her side, at Maplewood Nursing Home in Westmoreland, New Hampshire, where she had been a resident since July. Avis was born in Springfield, Vermont on July 18, 1932, the daughter



Cheri Ann Brodhurst, left, of the Brattleboro Rotary Club, bestowed the "Norm Kuebler Four-Way Test Award" upon Robert "Woody" Woodworth at the club's weekly meeting on Jan. 18.

Robert 'Woody' Woodworth wins Rotary's 'Norm Kuebler Four-Way Test Award'

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Rotary Club bestowed the "Norm Kuebler Four-Way Test Award" upon Robert "Woody" Woodworth at the club's weekly meeting on Jan. 18 at the Heart Rose Club. The award honors the late Norm Kuebler, who was a past president of the club, a local businessman and a longtime community volunteer. Kuebler died unexpectedly at the age of 63 in April 2010. Kuebler was a strong proponent of Rotary International's code of ethics, called the "Four-Way Test," which asks, "Of the things we think, say, or do: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?"

In this spirit, the Brattleboro Rotary Club recognizes a local business or person who best exemplifies these values.

"Woody volunteers widely, using his business expertise for the benefit of people in our community," said Rotarian Cheri Ann Brodhurst, as she presented the award. "His most recent contribution was to provide cleaning of, and repairs to, bicycles for the newest

members of our—immigrants from Afghanistan."

"Locally, he has lent his business and leadership skills to a variety of the institutions that make civil society work." Brodhurst continued, "He chaired the boards of Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, the BUHS School Committee, and the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce. He served on the BMH Quality and Patient Safety committee, Youth Services Diversion board, and the Windham County Regional Career Center board. For 31 years, as owner of Burrow's Specialized Sports, he was active in providing opportunities for youth to fulfill their community service requirements, as well as generously supporting local charities with gift certificates and advertising. He in every way, meets the 4-way test."

The Brattleboro Rotary Club, founded in 1950, is an active community service club of 70+ members who engage in community and human service projects both locally and internationally.



of Frank and Margaret (Hunter) Wilson. She was raised in Bellows Falls, where she attended public schools. She had been employed as a store clerk at Walmart in Hinsdale for several years and, previously, worked at the former SuperPlace grocery store on Putney Road in Brattleboro. She enjoyed knitting, reading, watching her favorite television shows, and was a lover of dogs. She was the owner of three precious dogs; two poodles and a collie. For many years, Avis went to Village Pizza on Putney Road, eating there so often that the staff became like a second family to her and called her "Mama." Avis was first married to Donald Walsh and, later, married Harry Warren, who predeceased her in 2007. Survivors include two daughters, Linda Austin (Mitchell) of Fountain Inn, South Carolina, and Donice Bissonnette (Kevin) of Brattleboro; and three grandchildren, Kyle Hickey, Brian Austin, and Kelly Asensio. Additionally, she leaves several nieces and nephews. Avis was predeceased by two brothers, Donald and Francis Wilson. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** In keeping with Avis's final wishes, there are no formal funeral services. She will be laid to rest later in the springtime in Meetinghouse Hill Cemetery. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.



• **Richard Dennis "Dick" White, 80**, of Spofford, New Hampshire. Died peacefully, with his loving wife Beth by his side, on Jan. 4, 2024 at Applewood Rehabilitation Center in Keene, New Hampshire. Dick was born on May 10, 1943 in Flushing, New York to George Stanley and Louise (Fitchett) White, five minutes before his twin sister, Margaret. He attended elementary school in Jacksonville, Vermont, high school at Hampton Dubose Academy in Florida, and Wheaton College in Chicago. He later received an M.Ed. from Keene State College. While he was at Wheaton, he was a member of Army ROTC and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He served at

Fort McClellan in Alabama and Fort Jackson in South Carolina as the Post Chemical Officer. After he received his honorable discharge, he returned to Brattleboro and taught science from 1967 to 2005 at Brattleboro Area Middle School. Dick was a man with many varied interests. He was an avid reader and collected signed copies of Archer Mayor's books. He was a meticulous woodworker and made many fine pieces of furniture, as well as a fairy house for his grand-niece and a battery-powered Bugatti replica race car for his step-grandsons. His many collections included antique tin toys and candy dishes, ships in bottles, and various whimsies and miniatures that he artfully displayed in his den. Dick loved to travel, and was fortunate to go to Suriname with Earth Watch while at BAMS, where he ate monkey for the first and last time. He visited England, St. Barts, Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, and Italy; cruised to Bermuda and the Caribbean, and took a river cruise from Zurich to Paris. Cape Cod and Maine were his favorite state-side destinations. Dick was predeceased by a stepdaughter, Jenna Mauthe (Ron). He is survived by his wife of 22 years, Beth; twin sister Margaret Wocell Kingsley, niece Lynne Erhardt (Scott), nephew Chris Wocell (Connie), grand-nephew Spencer Erhardt, grand-nieces Madison Erhardt and Kathryn Wocell, stepson Brad De Boer, and step-grandsons Callum and Tyler De Boer and Ethan and Joshua Mauthe. **MEMORIAL INFORMATION:** In keeping with Dick's wishes, there will be no services. Donations to the Alzheimers Association, MA/NH Chapter, 309 Waverley Oaks Rd., Waltham, MA 02452 or Hospice at HCS, 312 Marlboro St., Keene, NH 03431.

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

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides in-person and drop-off service in Brattleboro

BRATTLEBORO—Beginning Feb. 1 and continuing through April 11, AARP Foundation is providing free tax assistance and preparation through its Tax-Aide program.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is the nation's largest volunteer-based free tax preparation service. Volunteers are trained and IRS-certified every year to ensure they understand the latest changes to the U.S. Tax Code.

Tax-Aide will have two sites in Brattleboro available again this year. The Brattleboro Senior Center, 207 Main St., will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursdays, beginning Feb. 1. Call 802-257-7570 to schedule an appointment. Brattleboro VFW Post 1034, 40 Black Mountain Rd., will be open 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays, beginning Feb. 5. Call 802-451-6858 to schedule

an appointment.

Tax-Aide has two options for providing taxpayer assistance with filing Federal and Vermont Income tax returns this year. You can use Tax-Aide's traditional in-person service, in which taxes are prepared and filed by IRS-certified tax counselors, or use the drop-off service, where you interact with IRS-certified Tax-Aide volunteers in two short, in-person meetings to exchange documents.

Assistance will also be available for filing Vermont Homestead Declaration, Property Tax Credit, and Renter Credit claims.

For more information about AARP Foundation Tax-Aide, including services available and which documents you need to file your taxes, visit aarpfoundation.org/taxaide or call 1-888-AARP NOW (1-888-227-7669).

Scholarships available for Vermont women

BELLOWS FALLS—The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Vermont (GFVC-VT) announces the availability of scholarships for Vermont women, beyond the traditional high-school-to-college-age track, seeking to further their education or training or to upgrade their skills in preparation for entering or advancing in the workplace.

Applicants must submit a specific plan for their education or training. Applications are due to Betty Haggerty, 16 Taylor St., Bellows Falls, VT 05101, by March 15; her contact information is also included on the application.

The scholarships range from \$500 to \$1,500. GFVC-VT has been awarding this financial aid, which is funded through contributions from the state federated clubs and from individuals, for

30 years.

The scholarship is named for late Barbara Jean Barker, of Poultney, who served as GFVC-VT President from 1992 to 1994, and who was instrumental in establishing the program. Women receiving the awards over the years have come from a wide range of Vermont towns.

Applications for the scholarship can be obtained from Betty Haggerty, hubett@hotmail.com, and Beverley Pallmerine, President, GFVC-VT, bpallmerine@gmail.com. They are also available through Community College of Vermont and Vermont Technical College sites around the state. Information is also available through the VSAC booklet of financial aid.

The scholarships will be awarded at the state federation's annual meeting in April.

Brattleboro Books

Since 1988

Temporary home to the area's best USED books. **25,000 USED BOOKS**

Buying books by appt. **802-257-7777**

OPEN THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY 11AM - 5PM SUNDAY 11AM - 4PM

36 Elliot St, Brattleboro brattbooks@gmail.com

Paper mill

and retired in 1984.

Their daughter (and Barry's cousin) Suzy Stockwell agrees that the paper mill was the focus of their families' lives.

In addition to Earl and Raymond Stockwell, another brother, Bill, a mechanical engineer, also worked for the company and developed and installed the company's first pollution control system. Barry's mother, Beverly Bryant Stockwell, also worked at the mill as a bookkeeper.

"Both my parents and their extended families were committed to the paper business and to their employees," Suzy Stockwell said. "The center of our family evolved around the mill. Sunday dinners were for the family to get together as the machines were shut down Sunday mornings at 7 so that the maintenance shift could work on [them]."

Putney Paper Mill operated there for nearly five decades, the longest tenure of any of the building's owners.

Barry Stockwell remembers how the experience of working at the mill made paper makers out his father and uncles.

"Occasionally we would go to a restaurant to eat, and one of the first things my dad would do is to take apart the paper napkin and hold it up to the light to see the quality of the paper," he said. "He was a paper maker, that's for sure."

Dedication to the work ran in the family.

"My mother was dedicated to my grandfather and to the running of the mill," said Suzy Stockwell of her mother, Shirley Stockwell, and her grandfather, Wojciech Kazmierczak. "She never graduated from high school, even though she was a straight A student at Hinsdale High School, because in 1938 my grandfather needed her at the mill, so she moved to Putney instead of staying to finish her education."

Like many men his age in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Earl Stockwell didn't graduate from high school, either. Instead, he enlisted in the service and therefore couldn't graduate locally with his class. All three Stockwell brothers joined the Army Air Force during World War II.

Lessons learned from a hard life

The cousins believe that the way their family ran the mill had a lot to do with their parents' East Putney upbringing.

The three boys and four Stockwell girls lived on land purchased by their grandfather; there, they pieced together a living during the Great Depression by growing vegetables, maple sugaring, and selling a few animals here and there.

"The Stockwell kids grew up poor," Suzy Stockwell said. "My father used to talk about how all his siblings grew up on the farm. If Earl went out and shot a squirrel after school, that was meat in the vegetable pie."

For Barry's father, Raymond, that meant a childhood education in how to make things work.

"He grew up learning to fix things with whatever tools and materials they had," Barry Stockwell said. "He could fix whatever was broken, a skill he used all his life at the mill working maintenance."

For the mill owner, his brother Earl, that meant helping others find work. Earl Stockwell was known for hiring anyone who needed a job and wanted to be sure no one else experienced the hunger he experienced as a child.

"Growing up poor gave my dad a unique perspective. He knew what it was like not to know where your next meal was coming from. He hired workers for the mill based on their needs, not his," Suzy Stockwell recalled. "Things were different then, and he always found a job for anyone who asked."

She noted that the plant hired people who couldn't find a job anywhere else.

"Any kid who wanted a summer job, my dad would give them work. Some kids swept the floor, or he found places for them to help somewhere in the mill," she said.

She noted that all the Stockwells wanted to help the families in Putney.

"Earl gave back to the community in many ways. And there are certain levels of skills in a mill," Suzy Stockwell said. "Some jobs don't require as much skill as others," she said.

One boy in town with some developmental disabilities spent his time riding around, collecting bottles. Earl was concerned that he'd get hit by a car or get hurt. Shirley, during one of the Sunday family dinners, wondered if a place could be found for him at the mill.

A job was offered to him on the third shift working on a machine. Shirley was concerned that he'd

be picked on, so Earl asked some of the guys to look out for him.

"A paper mill can be a tough place," said Suzy, "and eventually one of the men who ran a machine roughed the young man up. My mother marched down from the bookkeeping office to the back of the mill. There she was, this little 5-foot-2-inch woman, standing in front of this huge man. She told him that if he ever did that again, he could pack his bags and come up to her office for a final paycheck."

And that, she said, is how things were run.

"My parents valued the people who worked for them," Suzy Stockwell said.

Noticing that some of their employees had trouble managing their personal finances, Shirley went to the Putney Credit Union and helped create programs for their workers.

"She designed Christmas and Vacation Clubs so that our employees could have money taken out of their paychecks to save for their upcoming expenses," she said.

Changing times

In 1984, Earl and Shirley Stockwell sold the mill. Because of a non-compete clause in the contract, Suzy Stockwell and her two siblings, Nancy and John — who also worked at the mill, of course — all left the business when their parents sold out.

Barry Stockwell's mother and father stayed on with the new owners.

"People in town have mixed feelings about the mill," he said. "Always have, always will."

Stockwell was referring not only to the long history of paper making on the site, but also to the inherent issues in mill work and, more recently, the number of times the paper mill has been closed due to its history of changing hands.

"A paper mill isn't a nice place to work," he said. "The noise was just deafening with all the machines running. In the days when my dad worked there, there wasn't any ear protection and

FROM SECTION FRONT

no OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] regulations."

In the summer, he said, "it was incredibly hot inside, and the floor was always wet and slippery. There were also chemicals. My dad got burned often, though thankfully never badly."

Both Stockwells note the amount of dedication their parents gave to the company — in part, because it was a family-run business, but also because historically, companies valued workers in ways that in today's market doesn't always honor. While the safety of mill work has improved greatly, benefits like retirement funds sometimes don't exist.

Raymond Stockwell worked for the mill for 37 years. With Earl, he also designed and built the lower mill, which Shirley would always call "Raymond's Mill," Barry Stockwell said.

There, Raymond was the supervisor of the building and was on call around the clock during the mill's three shifts. When a machine would go offline, he was responsible for fixing it and getting the mill back online.

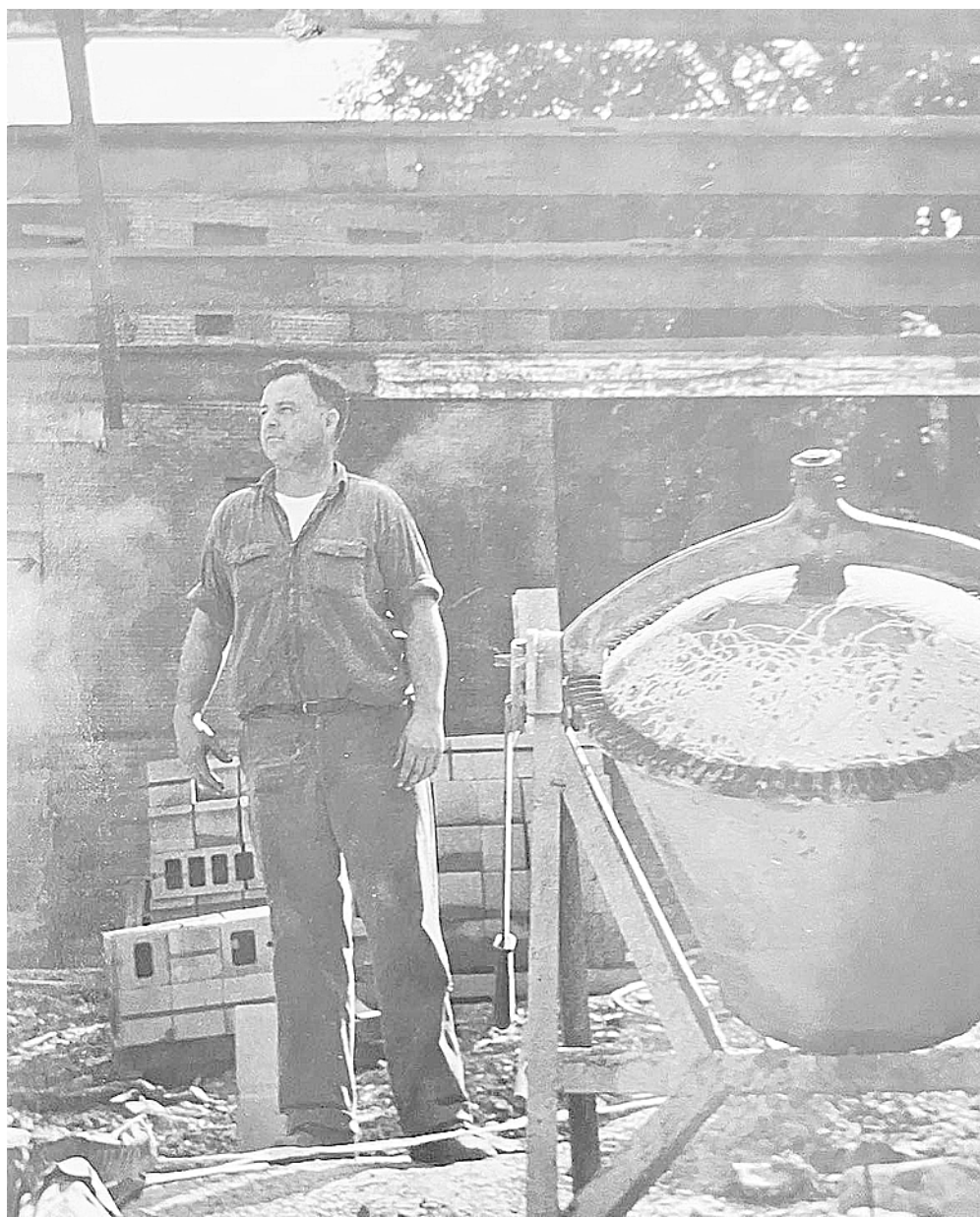
"He'd go down and be gone for a few hours to fix whatever was broken, then he'd get up and do it again the next day. It was a tough job," said Barry.

Working in the mill all those years affected Raymond's health greatly, his son said.

"There was always the danger and the noise. His hearing suffered and there was a lot of stress and anxiety being responsible for so much, but he toughed it out," Barry Stockwell said.

Then, in 1985, just about a year after the sale, the mill was suddenly closed, and all the employees were laid off. After 37 years of dedication to the paper mill, they said goodbye to one another. Raymond Stockwell retired.

However, within six days, the plant resumed operations, and most, but not all, of the employees were welcomed back to work, with across-the-board 5% pay cuts. Some speculated that the new owners were motivated to close so that they could pare the



COURTESY OF SUZY STOCKWELL

Earl Stockwell, who, with wife Shirley, owned and operated the Putney Paper Mill, is shown here during construction in 1960 of a building to accommodate a Yankee dryer, a machine used in the manufacturing of machine glazed and tissue paper. He worked with his brother Raymond, the mill supervisor responsible for around-the-clock maintenance of the machinery, to design the building.

employee list of those who earned higher salaries.

"To my dad, it felt like a forced retirement," Barry Stockwell said. "That was his baby down there — he built the building and maintained it for much of his life. He was bitter about that. It really hurt."

Suzy Stockwell understands. "I think once you have an employee you have determined

is dedicated to the company, it makes sense to want them to stay with you because of the amount of knowledge they have and the experience they keep," she said.

"If you let go of the people who have worked for an organization the longest, who do you have to train the new employees?" she continued. "That's how we always ran our business."

Suzi Stockwell said that she will be curious to hear more of the story behind the current closure, which company management attributed to a spike in the cost of powering the mill.

"Back in the late 1970s and early 1980s, my father was complaining about the energy costs," she said. "At that point, our monthly electric bill was between \$100,000 and \$125,000 a month. It was one of our biggest expenses. The mill is full of electric motors and is a big consumer of electricity."

She said those numbers did not include the power for the converting plant on Kathana Meadow Road.

"It costs money to make paper," she said.



COURTESY OF SUZY STOCKWELL

Shirley Stockwell, in her early 20s, was the daughter of Wojciech Kazmierczak, who bought the mill in its burned-out and dormant state from the town of Putney and built the business into a major regional employer.



Join our vegetable CSA!

21 weeks of fresh & locally grown produce

www.milkweedfarmvt.com

Aqua-Aid Systems
WATER CONDITIONING & FILTRATION

Solving hard water, iron, blue staining, radon and arsenic problems in the Windham County area since 1984.

- Water Conditioning
- Free On-Site Water Analysis & Estimate
- Iron and Manganese Removal
- Radon & Arsenic Removal
- Systems Maintenance
- Home Supplies Delivery


Worried About Your Water?

We Service All Makes And Models Locally Owned & Operated Since 1984

Hellenbrand
What's In Your Water?™


ON SITE, NO CHARGE, TESTING AND ESTIMATES

800-252-8484



**916 West River Rd,
Brattleboro, VT
802-254-2232
wchs4pets.org**



WILL YOU ADOPT ME?



Hi, I'm **Draper**. I came in as a stray so not much is known about my history. Although I only have one eye, I would do best as an indoor/outdoor cat as I have spent most of my life outside in a barn. I would do best as an only cat. But I do get along well with cat-savvy dogs. I would also do great with kids!

Ad graciously sponsored by:

GUILFORD SOUND
guilfordsound.com
802-254-4511
info@guilfordsound.com

Filmmakers share a journey from hate

Youth and adults team up to host showing in Brattleboro of 'The Cure for Hate,' which chronicles a former neo-Nazi's work against extremism

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—On Sunday, Jan. 28 — a day after International Holocaust Remembrance Day — the creators of *The Cure for Hate: Bearing Witness to Auschwitz* will bring the 85-minute documentary, released last month, to the Latchis for a screening and discussion.

The film features former neo-Nazi Tony McAleer and depicts, according to a media release, his "journey from a troubled teen drawn into white supremacist ideology to a man trying to make amends for his hate-filled past."

McAleer, the film's subject, spent 15 years in the white supremacist and neo-Nazi movements, moving from a rank-and-file skinhead to leadership in the White Aryan Resistance. The spine of the film is McAleer's pilgrimage to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest extermination camp run by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust.

The Windham World Affairs Council (WWAC), in partnership with Brattleboro Union High School's PeaceJam, joins the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community and the Latchis Theater in bringing the film to the region.

WWAC Administrator Susan Healy and the film's maker, Peter Hutchison, grew up together in Oneonta, New York. Knowing the *Cure for Hate* creators are touring the country with the film — supported by a U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant — Healy contacted Hutchison, who was able to tag the Brattleboro stop onto the filmmakers' itinerary.

The Cure for Hate exposes conditions that nurtured the rise of fascism in 1930s Europe — notably, under a democratically elected German government — while mining the horrors of the Holocaust and the persistence of white supremacist/neo-Nazi ideology today.

An award-winning filmmaker, a bestselling author, an educator, and an activist, Hutchison adds: "The program sheds unique light upon the present-day social conditions that lead young men to join violent extremist groups and, more generally, [to] stoke the fires

of polarization and 'othering.'" Narratives like that of McAleer, who was instrumental in ushering in the internet as a tool for recruitment and propaganda are "a powerful tool, [one that] can play a crucial role in helping to turn the tide of racism and intolerance," explains Hutchison.

To which McAleer adds, "In this time of rising anti-Semitism, this film serves as both a memory and a warning of what hate can lead to if left unchecked."

Healy adds that a 2018 *New York Times* survey found that 66% of U.S. millennials could not say what Auschwitz was, "giving credence to the importance of using the [Jan. 28 event] to demonstrate where hate left unchecked can lead."

"The point of the film," she says, "is to use the facts of history to counter the normalizing of hate" that has proliferated through dangerous language in voices of hate and disinformation amplified through the media — conventional and social.

Comparisons and contrasts

Understanding that there could be pushback given the current situation in Gaza, Healy explains that the event was planned before the conflict ensued there in October.

At the same time, she stresses the danger of seeing the current situation in Gaza in black and white.

Countering disinformation and the disinterest in history are essential, she adds, and using the Holocaust as a way to teach what can happen when polarization and othering take over is the focus of filmmaker Hutchison's work.

In response to concerns that the event could become politicized as favoring Israel vis-à-vis the Gaza crisis, WWAC board member Clare Gillis says, "This is a film that discusses the horrors of the Holocaust and the persistence of white supremacist/neo-Nazi ideas today, not a film which supports the actions of Israel today in prosecuting its war in Gaza.

"It is not to be understood as pro-Israel [...], but rather as anti-genocide and anti-extremism," she continued.

"The concerns about diverting attention from the humanitarian disaster in Gaza largely of [Israel Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's making are valid," said Rev. Canon Nicholas Porter, president and founding executive director of Jerusalem

Peacebuilders, a program with local ties.

"The reason to show the film is not about privileging Jewish suffering," he said. "It is about calling to mind that the same moral outrage and compassion that we feel when remembering the horrors of the Auschwitz death camp is why we speak out against the current horrors of Gaza. Remembering Auschwitz gives moral clarity to the current siege of Gaza."

Antisemitism 'alive and well'

Rabbi Amita Jarmon of the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community stresses that it is important "to understand that antisemitism is alive and well" and that many in her congregation have experienced it.

The film, she underscores, is about white nationalism and not about "anti-Israelism" — two different concerns, says Jarmon, adding that the focus of her work with her congregation is on communicating the beauty, joy, and

wisdom of Judaism.

Jarmon is quick to add that while her grandparents were born in the United States, some in her congregation have direct ties to Holocaust survivors and thus this film is essential and timely.

"I'm hoping this event will be well-attended," she said, adding that she is eager to learn from McAleer's experience and trajectory.

The film is cosponsored by PeaceJam, an active program of the WWAC at Brattleboro Union High School. Sam Stine, BUHS academic support teacher and PeaceJam advisor, described the program as "an international organization that connects students with the work of Nobel Peace Laureates to inspire peace in our local and global communities through action."

This is PeaceJam's second year at BUHS and, in that time, Stine said the group led two successful initiatives — a community bike drive and a holiday fundraiser for the Women's Freedom Center in Brattleboro.

"The PeaceJam students are exceptional young people who are inspired by leaders of peace and are becoming leaders of peace themselves," Stine continued. "They are dedicated to studying past and current events in the pursuit of taking action towards a more peaceful future."

Current events "warrant a truthful investigation of history, and PeaceJam aims to do just that through their studies and their initiatives that they develop and implement," Stine said.

The Latchis screening will be followed by a question-and-answer session with McAleer and Hutchison.

McAleer, described in the event's publicity as "a sought-after expert in the field of violent extremism" and a consultant to government and law enforcement, is author of *The Cure for Hate: A Former White Supremacist's Journey from Violent Extremism to Radical Compassion*. He is featured in another award-winning documentary, *Healing from Hate: Battle for the Soul of a Nation*.

Hutchison's canon also includes the films *Requiem for the American Dream* featuring Noam Chomsky and *Devil Put the Coal in the Ground*, a holistic look at the ravages of extractive industry and corporate power in West Virginia.

BUHS students will see a screening of the film at the high school and will pose questions to McAleer and Hutchison at a forum at the high school the next day.

The screening of The Cure for Hate: Bearing Witness to Auschwitz on Sunday, Jan. 28 starts at 5 p.m. in Theatre 1 at the Latchis, 50 Main St., Brattleboro. A \$10 donation is suggested, but no one will be turned away for a lack of funds.

To secure seats and/or donate to support PeaceJam and WWAC, visit eventbrite.com. For more information on the work and programs of the WWAC, visit windhamworldaffairsCouncil.org.

FY25 budget

adjustments, scheduled step increases for newer employees, and, in some cases, increase in pay to reflect new assignments and responsibilities."

As described by the job board website Indeed, salary compression "happens when differences in compensation among employees don't reflect their experience, skills or responsibilities." It can happen when economic pressure and employment law drive up wages for new hires faster than existing employees' pay rises.

Also noted is "external competitiveness and the value of keeping a department head in Brattleboro rather than seeing them leave for a higher salary."

The final proposed budget includes salaries for new positions of assistant town clerk (\$6,255), IT coordinator (\$59,982), and Brooks Memorial Library outreach and programming specialist (\$41,847).

An additional \$30,000 has been allocated for the promotion of a current highway department employee to supervisor.

In hopes of having another social worker in the community (one now works as a police liaison through Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of Vermont), also included for the first time in the proposed budget is \$45,000 for counseling

services and \$22,000 to pay the social worker.

Reactions to the budget

Board member Elizabeth McLoughlin commended Potter and town staff members "for taking a sharp pencil" to the general budget, noting that numbers have been reduced significantly since the board's December discussion about it and subsequent public input.

"I think it does a lot of good things for a lot of people in this town, and we can look forward to the implementation of the plans that are in here and hold our heads up and think this is the right thing to do," said Board Vice-Chair Franz Reichsmann.

Chair Ian Goodnow commended the Human Services Committee for making "smart" allocations of its money and thus coming in under budget.

"I'm looking forward to proposing this to RTM and defending it rigorously," he said.

Former board member Kate O'Connor was not as glowing in her assessment.

"It's not going to come as a surprise to you that I am not celebrating this budget," she said, adding the 4.3% budget increase is "sort of celebrated as being great compared to the 7.4% increases in a handful of other towns. What you haven't looked at is comparing this tax rate to what's been going on traditionally in the town of Brattleboro."

O'Connor noted that, in 2023, town staff members looked at eight years of tax rate increases and this, if approved, would rank as the second highest increase in that time.

"This 4.3% increase is higher than seven of those eight years," she said, noting one year saw a 4.2% increase and the other six

were at 3% or less.

"This is not by necessity. We're not having some big flood or something that we have to spend a lot of money on. This is because of the choices you folks are making, the choices of things you're putting in the budget, and choices of things you're not taking out," she said, noting particularly the \$104,000 salary increases for department heads "for the people who are already at the highest pay in town government."

"I don't think this is anything to celebrate," O'Connor said.

ARPA money allocated

The board agreed to a budget that spends American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money — not other municipal funds — for the following:

- \$120,000 for a trail connections scoping study for the Whetstone Pathway to do added research to understand ownership, costs, and environmental constraints to complete a long-deferred plan to extend the pathway from downtown to Living Memorial Park.
- \$300,000 for walk/bike action plan matching funds to implement projects.
- \$50,000 to design intersection improvements for the intersection at Guilford Street and Western Avenue.
- \$300,000 to replace the dispatch console.
- \$55,000 to replace the Central Fire Station HVAC controls.
- \$50,000 for construction of the intersection of Green and High streets.
- \$150,000 to relocate the salt/sand shed at the Department of Public Works.
- \$75,000 to repair the Brannen Street retaining wall.
- \$165,000 to rehabilitate the Brattleboro Transportation

Center, to make the space usable and free of water.

• \$22,000 to upgrade and repair the six bus shelters in poorest condition.

• \$30,000 to engage community discussion, define a program, find a site, and develop site-specific construction drawings and cost estimates for town pickleball courts.

Discussion included taking a look at the basketball court at Living Memorial Park and at the two town tennis courts for a more immediate solution to providing space for townspeople to play pickleball, a notion estimated to require about \$15,000 of the \$30,000 allocation.

• \$63,000 for sidewalk repair. Board member Daniel Quipp said when the ARPA money first came to the town, it "seemed like a massive amount of money that could be transformative," but that in reality, he is not so sure.

"I think this puts into motion quite a lot of good preparatory work needed in order to help future Selectboards continue to make Brattleboro a great place to live," said Quipp, adding he has "made peace" with the list but was "pretty disappointed" that public restrooms, identified as a public survey high priority, were "not supported" by being on it.

Board member Elizabeth McLoughlin, however, noted that ARPA funding has already been allocated to pay for three new ambulances and other startup costs associated with the new municipal fire/EMS model that will start in July.

"I'm very happy with how this has panned out [...] or sugared out," McLoughlin said, noting she feels the list acknowledges input from the community and addresses town needs.

LATCHIS PUB
UNDERGROUND LOUNGE
Dine In Live Music
Online Ordering for Take Out / Delivery.
Free delivery in downtown area!
latchispub.com

Members 1st members1cu.com
CREDIT UNION
Small Credit Union. Big Heart.
10 Browne Crt.
P.O. Box 8245
N. Brattleboro, VT 05304
Tel: (802) 257-5131
Fax: (802) 257-5837

INVEST IN FUTURE GENERATIONS

ISA
Integrated Solar Applications
802-257-7493
isasolar.com
Renewable Energy Experts
Solar • Heat Pumps • Batteries • Geothermal
Specializing in Net Zero Homes

NABCEP CERTIFIED
MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

In Loving Memory of Herb Meyers of Guilford Vermont



The annual Northern Roots Festival returns to the Brattleboro Music Center on Jan. 27 and 28.

Northern Roots Festival returns Jan. 27-28

BRATTLEBORO—The 17th annual Northern Roots Festival once again offers daytime workshops, a Saturday evening concert, and Sunday pub sessions to delight lovers of traditional northern musical traditions, which this year include Irish, English, French Canadian, Scandinavian, and New England.

Organizers say this cornerstone of the traditional music calendar in New England begins Saturday, Jan. 27, from noon to 5 p.m., as the Brattleboro Music Center hosts workshops on a

variety of topics.

Attendees can learn more about everything from Fiddle styles and harmony singing to Irish set dancing and tunes from around the Northern Hemisphere. There will also be a special session introducing participants to the materials in the Tony Barrand Library, a selection of which is currently on display at the BMC.

On Saturday evening at the BMC, a 7:30 p.m. concert will feature the Irish music and dance of Eight Feet Tall (Rebecca Gowan, Dan

Accardi, Armand Aromin, Jackie O’Riley); the Scandinavian stylings of Triga (Eric Boodman, Anna Breger, Yaniv Yacoby); and local performers Jake Grieco and Cedar Stanistreet, Amanda Witman, and Traddleboro 2024 (Laurel Swift, Lissa Schneckenburger, Liana Moskowitz).

The Festival continues on Sunday, Jan. 28, with sessions including a Pub Sing, a French-Canadian Session, and an Irish Session, all hosted downtown at the River Garden Marketplace from 1 to 5:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$35 Adult Day, \$25 Adult Evening, and \$50 Adult Combo (for day workshops and evening concert). Youth tickets are \$10 Day, \$10 Evening, and \$15 Combo. Sunday sessions are by donation. Concert seats are limited, and advance purchase is strongly advised.

To reserve your tickets now, go online at bmcvt.org, call the BMC at 802-257-4523 or email info@bmcvt.org.

COLUMN | Creative Conversations

‘I think Pink Floyd is very healing music, very therapeutic music’

Pink Floyd fans ‘are still listening to and drawn to their extensive catalog’ after 50 years, says Geoffrey Williams of Echoes of Floyd, which performs in Brattleboro on Jan. 26

Brattleboro
AFTER MORE THAN 50 years, more than two dozen albums released, and more than 250 million albums sold, British psychedelic phenomenon Pink Floyd continues to attract a legion of fans all across the globe.

With its universal themes and timeless messages — not to mention the incredible light shows during the band’s performances — Pink Floyd’s music still resonates with band members, fans, and audiences.

“Pink Floyd’s music in general can be soothing and therapeutic. Some of it can be dark and cynical, but much of it is still very hopeful and inspiring,” says Geoffrey Williams, guitarist and vocalist of Echoes of Floyd, a New England tribute band that will perform at the Stone Church on Friday, Jan. 26.

Williams says that the band will play side A of the first record of *The Wall* as well as many deep cuts and other audience favorites.

In addition to Williams on guitar, sax, sound effects, and vocals, Echoes of Floyd includes Mark Grover on bass; Seth MacLean on guitar, lap steel, synth, and vocals; Matt Desreuisseau on keyboards and synth; Rick Mutti on drums; and Melanie Barthel as a lighting designer.

All band members live in New Hampshire except for Mutti and Desreuisseau, who



Echoes of Floyd will perform at Stone Church on Friday, Jan. 26.



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

live in Massachusetts.

Pink Floyd started in England in 1965. Its debut record — *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* — was released in 1967.

“They were one of the pioneers of the British psychedelic

sound and were coming up as the Beatles were very big. They started from rhythm and blues roots, copying the Black American artists of the time,” explains Williams.

“There were other influences

which seeped in and of course mind altering chemicals were involved,” he says.

When not working full time as a senior operator in the bottling room at New Chapter, a dietary supplement manufacturing company in Brattleboro, Williams, 42, of Nelson, New Hampshire, who founded Echoes of Floyd with his bandmates, also plays with Wolfman Jack and Tumbledown Shack — N.H. He also provides lead

guitar and vocal harmonies for Keene singer/songwriter Jess Hutchins.

The Commons reached Williams recently by phone in between gigs to talk about the lasting impact of Pink Floyd, his favorite albums, and why he thinks there is still such a big following for the original band’s music.

Here’s an excerpt of their conversation.

VICTORIA CHERTOK: I heard you’ve been performing in Echoes of Floyd for five years now. How did the band start?

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS: We started in the summer of 2018, and it’s a funny story about how we began.

Some of our members are also in the band Winterland [which plays primarily music

■ SEE ECHOES OF FLOYD, B3

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



Buyer demand is still soaring!

Get in touch today for tips on getting your home ready for the market.

Let Us Help You Reach Your Real Estate Dreams!



Brattleboro: 802-254-6400 • Dover: 802-464-8900 • www.berkleyveller.com

arts & community CALENDAR

FRIDAY FRIDAY CONT. SATURDAY CONT. SUNDAY CONT.

FRIDAY

26

Performing arts

SAXTONS RIVER "Originals & Traditionals" Open Mic at Main Street Arts: "Calling all songwriters, fiddle players, poets, stand-up comics, slam storytellers, all creatives with something to share. Whether you're a veteran performer or a first timer at the mic, you are invited to Originals & Traditionals

Open Mic Night." Program hosted by Putnam Smith - described as an old-world troubadour fresh from the 19th century. Yet this rootsy multi-instrumentalist songwriter is a storyteller for the modern age."

► 7-9 p.m. 4th Friday of each month. Sign-ups start 6:30 p.m. All ages welcome. Program hosted by Putnam Smith who says: "This monthly event is about community, gathering with fellow artists/arts appreciators, meeting up with old friends, meeting someone new." Come to share, listen, find inspiration! More about Smith, visit putnam-smith.com. Adult beverages by donation.

► Free.

► Main Street Arts, 37 Main St. Information: 802-869-2960; mainstreetarts.org.

Music

BRATTLEBORO CD Release Party - "FACE the MUSIC": Dan DeWalt, piano; Wim Auer, bass; Tim Gilmore, drums. New original music.

► 7:30-10 p.m. CDs will be offered for sale.

► No cover charge.

► Latchis Pub & Latchis Underground, 6 Flat St. Information: 802-380-1369.

► Free.

► Brattleboro Food Co-op Community Room, 7 Canal St. Information: To sign up, visit BFC.coop/events.

Kids and families

W. MARLBORO Southern VT Natural History Museum hosts "Magic: The Gathering Tournament" at new Pool Nature Center Facility: Winners will bring home prizes including original art from special guest Jeff Menges, one of MTG's first edition artists! Opportunities to meet Museum education animals will be available during breaks.

► Space is limited for this card draft tournament, so register now. Drinks and snacks available for purchase.

► Admission: \$15.

► Southern Vermont Natural History Museum, 7599 VT Route 9. Information: programs@vermontmuseum.org, (802) 464-0048.

Songs: Andy Davis shares his original songs and tunes, written in a traditional and participatory style. Each song contains a chorus or refrain and is drawn from local history, personal experience and heartfelt memory. They speak of life in New England, interesting characters, dear friends and family, philosophical musings - occasional political or environmental commentary. Join us for a cozy afternoon concert, with drinks and homemade baked goods at the break.

► 2:30 p.m.

► Donation required at the door.

► Brattleboro House Concerts. Information: Reservations required: Email BrattleboroHouseConcerts@gmail.com to attend. Address/details will be sent to you.

email: akinkhabwala@brattleborodevelopment.com.

Ideas and education

BRATTLEBORO Mammals of Winter: In the Classroom and the Field: "The Long and Low": Join Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center naturalist Patti Smith to learn about lives of wildlife using tracking/field observation skills. Each session covers group of winter-active mammals. Begin in farmhouse with photos, videos, artifacts - then drive to field site to look for tracks/signs and develop skills to read them. Meet the Mustelid clan: Long and short-tailed weasels, mink, otter, fisher - ever-active carnivores with distinctive ways of moving who create interesting trails.

► 12:30 - 4 p.m. Additional session dates: 2/10, 3/9, 3/30.

► \$30 per session, \$20 BEEC members. All four sessions: \$90/\$60.

► Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, 1221 Bonnyvale Rd. Information: To learn more and register, visit beec.org or email patti@beec.org.



DICK'S LOCK REPAIR

Richard S. Frost
802-254-8533
802-451-6989

Residential - Commercial
Bonded & Insured

www.dickslockvt.com
356 S. Main St. Brattleboro, VT 05301

There's No Place Like Home!

Keep those home fires burning, and everything else working too, with a low cost loan from Green Mountain Home Repair.

\$2500 GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO QUALIFY!

- Health & safety issues
- Structural problems
- Failing mechanical systems
- Energy efficiency upgrades
- Interior & exterior modifications for elderly or disabled

Windham & Windsor (802) 254-4604 NMLS# 187229

Washington, Orange, and Lamoille (802) 477-1343 NMLS# 1216130

www.HomeMattersHere.org




SATURDAY

27

Music

WILLIAMSVILLE Rockin' The River: Three Duos and One Night of Hand-made Music: Benefit for Williamsville Hall with members of Demolition String Band, The Cucumbers, Bard Owl. Elena Skye and Boo Reiners, Jon Fried and Deena Shoskes, Annie Landenberger and T. Breeze Verdant are seasoned performers and creators who are coming together to swap songs and stories for a memorable winter's evening of music.

► 7 p.m.

► By donation - \$15 suggested. No one will be turned away.

► Williamsville Hall, Dover Rd. Information: williamsvillehall.com.

Arts and crafts

BRATTLEBORO Workshop: Creating Cardboard Sculptures: Create whimsical cardboard sculptures based on deep-sea creatures with artist Art Costa.

► 2 p.m.

► Admission: \$35 / \$20 for BMAC Members.

► Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: Registration required: brattleboromuseum.org/2023/10/20/workshop-creating-cardboard-sculptures/.

Community building

BRATTLEBORO Journey to Vermont Story Potluck (hosted by the Welcoming Communities): An initiative of Brattleboro Development Credit Association, this event is an opportunity for immigrants, new and established, to come and connect with their community. Participants are encouraged to bring something meaningful to share - be it a story, recipe, food item, or object. Light refreshments from Shital's Indian Vegetarian provided.

► 12 noon-1:30 p.m. Plus, for those interested in contributing their experiences to the Finding Vermont Ethnography Project, interviews will be conducted after event and each participant will receive \$50 gift card in appreciation. "Finding Vermont" is a collaborative, community-driven research project focused on understanding immigrant experiences in Windham County.

► Free.

► Brattleboro Community TV, 230 Main St., 3rd fl. Information: For more information or questions,

MONDAY

29

Music

BRATTLEBORO Rock Voices brings a New Season: If you are looking for an amazing singing experience this spring, think about joining Rock Voices - the community chorus that sings only rock music. The choir will sing songs by the Monkees, The Band, Crosby/Stills/Nash, Boston, Fleetwood Mac, Jimmy Buffet, Kacey Musgraves, Selena Gomez, more.

► 7-9 p.m. Brattleboro rehearsals on Monday nights starting 1/29. Final performances will be in late April. There are no auditions and you don't need to know how to read music (but it helps if you can carry a tune!).

► Free.

► Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill, #222. Information: More information: rockvoices.com.

New Job Opportunity at sandglass THEATER

Sandglass Theater in Putney, Vermont is hiring a **Managing Director** to support this active international puppet company.

Full job description at www.sandglasstheater.org

Please send a cover letter, resume, and two references to info@sandglasstheater.org. Sandglass Theater is an equal opportunity employer.

SCAN HERE for job description



ALLARD LUMBER CO.

LOOKING TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

Truck Driver with 1 year experience. \$25/hr.

Trim Saw Operator \$18/hr. and Lumber Handler \$16.50/hr.

Full time with Benefits. Call Jeannette for more info. 802-254-3349



HELP WANTED

ads@commonsnews.org • 888-511-5150

WINSTON PROUTY Center for Child and Family Development

CURRENT JOB OPENINGS

Afternoon Assistant Teacher Early Interventionist/ Developmental Educator

Great benefits, collaborative team, beautiful workplace, and competitive pay.

Learn more today!
www.winstonprouty.org

The Winston Prouty Center in Brattleboro has been providing inclusive education and family support to promote the success of children and families since 1969.




WINDHAM SOUTHEAST SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD

The Windham Southeast School District Board is seeking someone to serve as a Note-taker/Recorder at its school board meetings.

The position requires attendance at all meetings of the WSESD Board, providing a record of the meeting's details, and preparation of draft minutes for the Board Clerk's review. \$45/hour.

Mo Hart • Executive Assistant • WSESD
53 Green Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301
mhart@wsesdvt.org

Garden Path Elder Living

Do you love working with elders? We would love to work with you!

We are a Level III Residential Care facility with a home-like atmosphere and great benefits (we are not a nursing home).

Join our care team and begin your rewarding career in eldercare today!

We provide a sign-on bonus and paid training in a supportive, caring environment.

To learn more and to apply for a position, please visit our website at www.gardenpathelderliving.org.



TUESDAY

30

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic: Primary medical treatment for patients ages 18 to 64 in our community who do not have health insurance or who cannot afford their high deductibles or co-insurance.

► 5 - 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays.

► Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic, 191 Clark Ave. Information: 802-251-8484; brattleborowalkinclinic.com.

To submit your event: calendar@commonsnews.org

Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday

Echoes of Floyd

from the Grateful Dead]. They had been asked to play a party. But most of the members weren't available, so most of us who now make up Echoes filled in for that party — and we had such a good time doing it and hit it off so well we decided to keep it going.

Since there are so many Grateful Dead bands, we said, Why don't we do a Pink Floyd band?

A few of us still play Grateful Dead on a regular basis in other projects.

V.C.: How do you choose your set lists?

G.W.: So far, we do something off of every album from 1967 to 1983. We do a handful of albums in their entirety, including *The Dark Side of the Moon*, *Wish You Were Here*, and *Animals*.

We play a different set list every time and think of ways to sequence the songs together to eliminate downtime and to make it an entertaining time for everyone.

V.C.: What can the audience expect at the Stone Church on Friday night?

G.W.: This time we will be debuting side A of the first record of *The Wall* album. That will be a small portion of the

show, and we will mix it up with a varied playlist of hits, deep cuts, and fan favorites.

V.C.: Why do you think Pink Floyd's music is still so popular?

G.W.: I think Pink Floyd is very healing music, very therapeutic music. Not everyone can bring themselves up from being down by immediately jumping to happy, dance-y party music. Sometimes people need to start more grounded to lift themselves up.

V.C.: There are universal themes in all of the albums that Pink Floyd produced. Wasn't the album *Animals* kind of an homage to George Orwell's book *Animal Farm*?

G.W.: Loosely, yes. The *Animals* album talks about certain archetypes in society [by] having the dogs represent the cutthroat business types, as in "a dog-eat-dog world" — people who are only out for themselves and stab you in the back.

The pigs are the heartless rulers, and the sheep represent the mindless common folk who blindly follow.

V.C.: Which themes emerged in Pink Floyd's music?

G.W.: You look at *The Dark*

Side of the Moon — which was a concept album — with an overarching theme of things that can drive one mad, and it talks about time and growing old, money and finance, war and death.

On *Wish You Were Here*, there is a theme of absence, longing, and missing someone; these are all things that people can relate to.

V.C.: What are the original band members up to these days?

G.W.: Roger "Syd" Barrett left the band in 1968 and died in 2006. Syd was replaced by David Gilmour, who is rumored to be releasing a new album soon.

Keyboardist Rick Wright died in 2008 of lung cancer. Roger Waters was the bass player until 1985, when he left the band, and they carried on without him. He is still alive and still tours.

Nick Mason, their drummer, is still alive, and he has a band that is active that focuses only on early Pink Floyd catalog, before *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

V.C.: Do you have a favorite Pink Floyd album?

G.W.: I've gone back and forth, but *Wish You Were Here* is my favorite album. I like the long instrumental passages.

The first solos I learned to play were "Wish You Were Here" and "Shine on You Crazy Diamond."

V.C.: What has Pink Floyd meant to you personally?

G.W.: *Wish You Were Here* — that is the one for me that has been profound. It's been able to lift me up out of a dark, depressed state multiple times.

V.C.: How did you get introduced to Pink Floyd?

G.W.: I got turned onto Pink Floyd because of my dad. A lot of the music that I listened to growing up is from the 1960s and '70s. My parents would listen to vinyl and radio.

V.C.: Did you study music when you were a child?

G.W.: I took piano lessons when I was 9 years old and played alto sax in Keene Middle School and Keene High School. I was also in the Keene High jazz band. I started playing the guitar at age 14 and started having bands of my own from age 15 on.

I was listening to Grateful Dead and Pink Floyd a lot. I have broadened my horizons over the years, but those two bands have stuck with me.

I have played a lot of classical guitar and have a cumulative

FROM SECTION FRONT

eight years of formal instruction. I have studied jazz, but that has largely eluded me. I've also played bass and guitar in metal bands.

V.C.: How do you approach playing Pink Floyd's music?

G.W.: As far as approaching Pink Floyd's music, we look to the album recording first, but in many cases where multiple musicians are used and with multiple layers, compromises have to be made. We look to live versions to see how they would do it with four or five musicians on stage.

We try to make a seamless and unique live performance every time. You have to remember that live performances are never perfect.

V.C.: You've played at the Stone Church several times. What do you like about playing there?

G.W.: It's kind of funny that many of the venues we play at are former churches converted to music halls. The Stone Church is one of the first ones we've played and it's one of our favorites because of the acoustics and ambiance of the room, with the high ceilings and open floor, which lends itself to what we do very well. It's one of my favorite venues.

Echoes of Floyd returns to The Stone Church, 210 Main St., Brattleboro, on Friday, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. This will be ashore for all ages.

For tickets and more information, visit stonechurchvt.com/#/events.

For more information about *Echoes of Floyd*, visit [facebook.com/echoesfloydband](https://www.facebook.com/echoesfloydband).

NOW PLAYING at the MOVIES

LATCHIS THEATRE

latchis.com | 802.246.1500

JAN. 26 - FEB. 1

AMERICAN FICTION		R
FRIDAY	4:15 / 6:50 / 9	
SATURDAY	2 / 6:50 / 9	
SUNDAY	2 & 6:50	
MON.-THUR.	4:15 & 6:40	

POOR THINGS		R
FRIDAY	4:15 / 6:40 / 9:15	
SATURDAY	1:45 / 6:40 / 9:15	
SUNDAY	1:45 & 6:40	
MON.-THUR.	4:15 & 6	

MEAN GIRLS		PG-13
FRIDAY	4:15 / 6:45 / 9	
SATURDAY	2 / 6:45 / 9	
SUNDAY	2 & 6:45	
MON.-THUR.	4:15 & 6:45	

THE BOY AND THE HERON		PG-13
FRIDAY	4:15 / 7 / 9:15	
SATURDAY	4:30 / 7 / 9:15	
SUNDAY	1:45 & 7	
MON.-THUR.	4:15 & 7	

OFF THE BEATEN PATH SERIES	
MAESTRO	
SATURDAY & SUNDAY AT 4PM	
MOVIES FOR KIDS	
PEE WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE	
SATURDAY & SUNDAY AT 11AM	
MET LIVE IN HD	
CARMEN - SATURDAY AT 3PM	

Cellista brings her theatrical stage poem and aerial cello performance to NECCA

BRATTLEBORO—*Elégie*, the theatrical stage poem and the accompanying album by Cellista, comes out on Saturday, March 23.

On Thursday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m., Cellista presents a workshop/recital of *Elégie* at New England Center for Circus Arts' (NECCA) "Big Studio" at the Cotton Mill, Room A-354. Tickets are \$10 general admission, \$5 for working artists and youths under 12, and are available at necenterforcircusarts.org/about/cellista-solo-show-excerpts.

In signature Cellista style, organizers say, *Elégie* "defies standard categorization." The one-hour stage poem follows the story of *Elégie*, a blackbird who shape shifts into human form and back. In her journey she finds serenity.

"I am a performer who doesn't believe in the stage," the artist said in a news release. "I am about bringing people together. The separation a stage creates between the artist and the audience is counterproductive to that goal."

The one-woman show she'll present on Thursday, Jan. 25, combines static trapeze, haunting cello melodies, and cinematic visuals. The workshop features exclusive excerpts from the upcoming stage poem and concludes with a powerful performance of Cellista's critically acclaimed multimedia operetta *Pariah*, which explores themes of exile, displacement, and identity. Cellista invites members of the community to offer suggestions and feedback during her workshop presentation of *Elégie*.

In preparation for the aerial work featured in the live staging of this work, Cellista trained intensively at NECCA.

"At NECCA, I have my community of circus friends; I train nearly 35 hours a week. I work with Elsie Smith to grow my static trapeze foundation," Cellista explained. "The circus arts have helped me develop a healthier relationship with my body. It's the first time in my life I have cared about what I put into my body, about getting rest, and finally learning to cherish this vessel."

"Cellista is a unique artist," says Elsie Smith, co-founder of NECCA and Nimble Arts. "From music to circus to visual art and



COURTESY PHOTO

Cellista will perform "Elégie," a theatrical stage poem, on Jan. 25 at NECCA.

the crafted word, *Elégie* is a full-package experience, a feast for the audience."

Kennedy Kabasares adds "Freya's physicality in the air deftly mirrors what her character is going through in her mind and heart." Organizers describe the work as "inherently and unapologetically feminist."

"I can't think of anything more radical than creating something on your own and declaring: My story matters," says Cellista, who directed and performs the piece. Choreography is by Kennedy Kabasares, Joel Baker, and

Cellista. The film was edited by Jennifer Gigantino, with cinematography by Bryan Gibel.

Cellista is a former chapter governor of the Recording Academy (Grammys) and a former San Jose arts commissioner. She received a masters in business from the Berkeley College of Music in 2020. She is the founding artistic director of House of Cellista, a micro-center for the arts that advocates for and offers subsidized housing to working artists in Longmont, Colorado.

Creative Aging artistic program starts at Main Street Arts in February

SAXTONS RIVER—Main Street Arts (MSA) will offer a Creative Aging program beginning in February for seniors in the Greater Rockingham area. There will be three sessions featuring diverse artistic opportunities taught in-person by local teachers.

The first session, from Tuesday, Feb. 6, to March 26, will include "An Expressive Arts Exploration" with Susan-Marie Beauchemin, from 10 a.m. to noon, and "Make a Family Heirloom" with Annabelini Questifari, from 1 to 3 p.m. There will be an optional lunch from noon to 1 p.m. There is a one-time \$10 registration fee. Classes and lunch are free. Register at mainstreetarts.org.

Future class offerings include "Start an Art Journal" by Susan Rosano, "Memory Book Boxes" with Amber Paris, "Make Your Own Mosaic Jewelry Pendant" with Susan Rosano, and "Cyanotype Photography" with Evie Lovett. The program will culminate in an event on Saturday, June 8, from 1 to 3 p.m.

"I hope to transform negative ideas about aging in our culture into positive beliefs about the strength, wisdom, and contributions of senior citizens to their communities by documenting their personal histories through visual arts and storytelling," said instructor Rosano in a

news release. "Once the art and storytelling projects are finished, the results will be exhibited at a public venue so that the public can acknowledge these stories and appreciate the wisdom and history contained within."

The Creative Aging program is a collaboration between MSA and Senior Solutions, the agency on aging located in Springfield. Funding for the program and lunches is provided by Senior Solutions along with a grant from the Vermont Arts Council.

"When we piloted MSA's Creative Aging program last year, many participants were surprised at how creative they could be. There's research showing that creativity actually increases with age — contrary to the idea that you can't teach an old dog new tricks," said Susan Still, chair of the MSA board. "Our new mission statement focuses on the social-emotional well-being for community members of all ages. This program achieves this by expressing creativity and making social connections for seniors, which is good for your health."

Thom Simmons, nutrition/wellness director at Senior Solutions, agrees. "Creative Aging recognizes senior aging as an integral part of healthy aging. Humans have an innate desire for expression and creation.



COURTESY PHOTO

Participants in Annabelini Questifari's Make a Family Heirloom will be able to make a heirloom as part of the Creative Aging program at Main Street Arts in Saxtons River.

Arts projects help us communicate the human experience in fun, meaningful, and impactful ways.

"Sharing our creative work is a great way to connect with others and build new connections. The arts can also help people achieve a sense of purpose and personal growth and can have a positive impact on social, emotional, mental, and physical health," he continued.

Lovett said she is excited about the collaboration between the participants and herself. "I can share a visual language — cyanotype-making, photography, collage — that can be a platform for older adults to excavate a richly lived life for meaning and imagery

and learn skills in the process. I believe we can all be artists; we are all artists.

"I take delight in supporting the unfolding of crushed artistic attempts earlier in life and banishing the phrase 'I'm not an artist' from the room," she continued. "Working in community gives us the opportunity to build our artmaking skills while seeing ourselves as threads in a communal tapestry."

MSA is ADA accessible with a concrete, covered ramp to the front door near an accessible parking space. For full class descriptions and to register, visit mainstreetarts.org or email info@mainstreetarts.org.

Stewart Property Management

**ABBOTT BLOCK
BRATTLEBORO, VT**

*We are accepting applications 1 BR and 2 BR
apartments that are currently available!*

Rent for 1 bedroom is \$675 per month.
Rent for 2 bedroom is \$775 per month.

Rent includes heat, hot water, snow and trash removal.
Off street parking and laundry on site.

For more information call 802-251-0123
or complete an application at
www.stewartproperty.net

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

**LOCAL
PROGRAM
HIGHLIGHTS**

Jan. 22-28

CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

<p>Here We Are - Kevin O'Keefe, Circus Minimus: Mon 8p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 10:55a, Thurs 1:15p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 12:15p, Sun 5:15p</p> <p>The World Fusion Show - Ep# 170 - Brian Shanker Adler: Mon 9p, Tues 11a, Wed 11:30a, Thurs 12:30p, Fri 5:30p, Sat 8p, Sun 6:30a</p> <p>Brattleboro Reformer Presents Windham County Got Talent 1/25/24: Thurs 6:30p (LIVE)</p> <p>Around Town With Maria - Jonas Fricke's Friends Remember Him 12/12/23: Mon 6a, Tues 12:30p, Wed 9p, Thurs 4:30p, Fri 10a, Sat 2p, Sun 9:30a</p> <p>Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce - Annual Members Meeting 1/16/24: Mon 7:25a & 5:25p, Tues 8p, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 1:55p, Fri 11:25a, Sat 3:25p, Sun 5:55p</p> <p>Thorn in my Side - WINTER ROMANCE! December 29th, 2022: Mon 3:30p, Wed 9a, Thurs 10a, Fri 12:30p, Sat 6p, Sun 4p</p> <p>Around Town With Maria - Demonstration in Support of Gaza 12/23/23: Mon 12:30p, Tues 9a, Wed 4p, Thurs 9:45p, Fri 4p, Sat 10:30a, Sun 6:30p</p> <p>At BMAC - Artist Talk: Aurora Robson: Mon 10a, Tues 8:35p, Wed 12:30p, Thurs 2:30p, Fri 6:45a, Sat 8:30p, Sun 1:45p</p> <p>Couch Potato Productions - Soggy Po' Boys at the West River Park 10/8/23: Mon 1:45p, Fri 2:15p, Sun 8p</p> <p>Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p</p> <p>Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p</p> <p>News Block: WTSA News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p BUHS-TV News: Mon-Fri 12:15p & 6:35p</p> <p>St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a</p> <p>Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 5p</p> <p>Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a</p> <p>St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass: Sat 4p (LIVE), Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8:30p</p>	<p>Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg. 1/18/24: Mon 6:15p, Tues 10p, Wed 12p</p> <p>Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 1/18/24: Mon 8:45p, Tues 6:30a, Wed 2:30p</p> <p>Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 1/22/24: Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 12p</p> <p>Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 1/22/24: Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:30p</p> <p>Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 1/23/24: Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p</p> <p>Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 1/23/24: Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 2:30p</p> <p>Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 1/23/24: Sat 6p, Sun 8:30a</p> <p>Windham Central Supervisory Union Board and Exec. Comm. Mtg. 1/24/24: Sat 8:30p, Sun 6a</p> <p>Putney Selectboard Mtg. 1/24/24: Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p</p> <p>Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 1/24/24: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p</p> <p>Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 1/16/24: Sun 8p</p> <p>Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board Mtg. 1/8/24: Tues 6a, Sat 5:10p</p> <p>Marlboro Elementary School Board Budget Mtg. 1/11/24: Tues 4:25p</p> <p>Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 1/16/24: Mon 10a</p> <p>Town Matters - Weekly Episode: Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p</p> <p>The David Pakman Show: Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p</p>
--	--

Note - Schedule subject to change.

View full schedule and watch online at brattleborotv.org

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

Brattleboro Community Television - 257-0888

BMAC presents online talk with artists Fawn Krieger, David B. Smith on Feb. 1

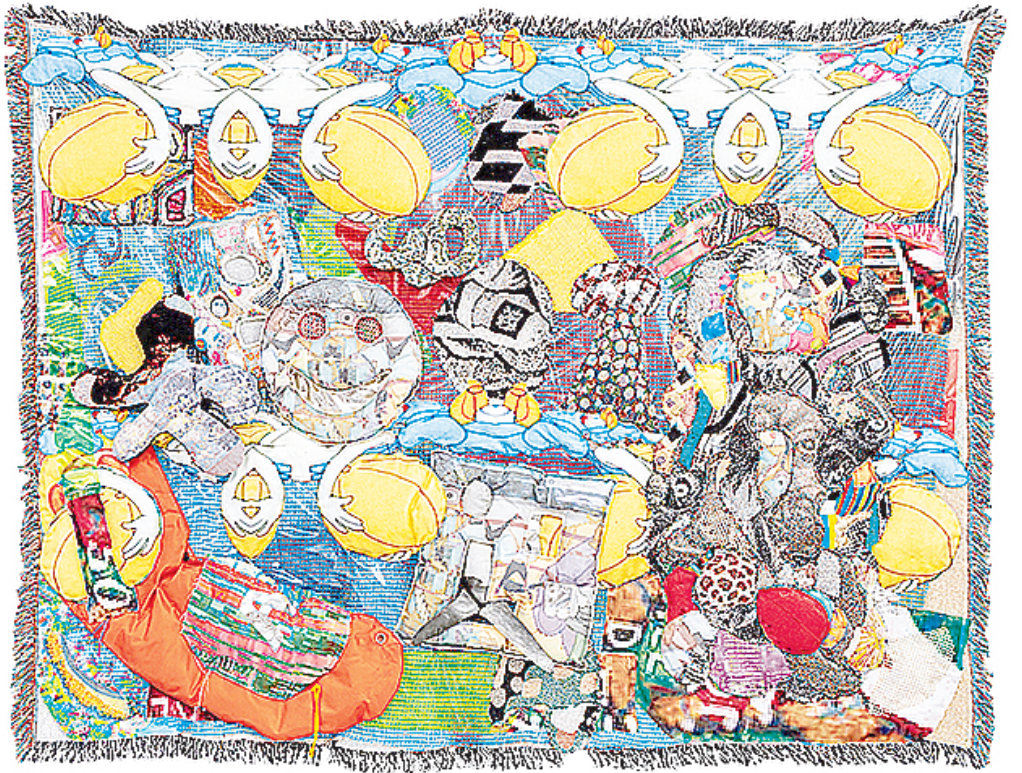
BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Museum and Art Center (BMAC) invites the public to join artists Fawn Krieger and David B. Smith on Zoom Thursday, Feb. 1, at 7 p.m. for a discussion of their work, which is on view at the museum in the exhibit “Home Bodies” through March 9.

Krieger, a ceramic artist, and Smith, a textile artist, share a creative approach: They layer and collapse physical materials and shapes to expand the possibilities of their respective media.

According to Sarah Freeman, BMAC’s director of exhibitions, “the work in ‘Home Bodies’ draws us in with its playful use of materials. Both artists create visual languages that are experimental and improvised yet also soothing as a result of their repetitive and meditative nature.”

Krieger’s ceramic forms are pressed into concrete that she says “appears to ooze like mud squishing up between bare toes.” Her work often takes on characteristics of an archaeological site, where layers of earth are scraped away to reveal shapes that resemble vessels, domestic artifacts, furniture, even a decadent TV dinner.

Organizers describe Smith’s fiber works as possessing a “comforting softness, even as their bright colors and energetic



Artists Fawn Krieger and David B. Smith layer and collapse physical materials and shapes.

patterns and textures keep the eye moving restlessly.” Smith incorporates printed and woven imagery that lends his work a narrative quality, “filling the viewer with curiosity about the stories he is telling.”

The two artists conceived “Home Bodies” during the

pandemic when the concept of “home” took on numerous, often contradictory, meanings. Homes became places of isolation, refuge, entrapment, and reinvention. Krieger and Smith consider the idea of home as a place of care and freedom, a place to dream and create. To them, home can be a person’s body and imagination as well as the surrounding physical environment.

In the Zoom discussion, the artists will discuss why they are

drawn to the idea of accumulation in their work, why they develop and layer pattern and form. Their work is purposely crowded, filled with life and its chaos and clamor. Yet both artists also drill down to the human need to sometimes be quiet and still, to pare back. Krieger and Smith find home outside and inside themselves, and their work explores that contradiction.

Krieger’s work has been exhibited at The Kitchen, Brandeis

University’s Rose Art Museum, and Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, and has been featured in publications such as *The New York Times*, and *Artforum*. She is a 2019 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award Fellow. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Parsons School of Design and her master’s from Bard College’s Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts.

Smith’s work has appeared

in group exhibitions at MoMA PS1 and International Center of Photography, and in solo shows at venues such as SUNY Cortland and Halsey McKay Gallery. He was awarded an NYSCA/NYFA Fellowship in Craft/Sculpture and has held numerous artist residencies.

Admission to the event is free and will be moderated by curator Wendy Vogel. To register to watch on Zoom, visit brattleboromuseum.org. A recording will be made available after the event.

HOUGHTON SANITARY SERVICE INC.

SEPTIC TANK SERVICE CLEANING
Commercial & Residential Septic Pumping

Portable Toilet Rentals also available

Family Owned for 50 years

Call 802-254-9221

Guilford Ctr. Rd. Guilford, VT

The Oyster Bar

OYSTERS - CLAMS - SHRIMP - FISH
COCKTAILS - WINE - BEER

OPEN WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY • 3PM - 10PM

34 ELLIOT ST. BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301
802-257-3333

Art Classes + Workshops

Gift Certificates
Adult + Children + Teen
Studio, Printmaking, Painting, Art Camp and more!

RIVER GALLERY SCHOOL OF ART

rivergalleryschool.org Register online or call 802-257-1577

Primary Care with Compassion & Convenience

New Patients Welcome
On-site Lab, X-ray, CT scanner, & Pharmacy

GraceCottage
FAMILY HEALTH & HOSPITAL

185 Grafton Rd, Townshend, VT
gracecottage.org • 802-365-4331

Something Sweet for Valentine's Day

Special section for advertisers in the February 7th issue of **The Commons**

Promote your local offerings that would make great gifts for Valentine's Day!

2x4 color ad (3.4" wide by 4" tall) print + web ad combo

\$149

Plus a FREE AD in our newsletter. (\$35 value)

Reserve ad space by Friday, Feb. 2nd!

Contact Lori or Nancy: 1-888-511-5150
lori@commonsnews.org
nancy@commonsnews.org

EVERYONE'S BOOKS
for social justice & the earth

Working for a better world since **1984**

We are OPEN!
9:30-5:30 Mon.-Sat.; 11-5 Sun.

25 ELLIOT STREET
BRATTLEBORO, VT
802.254.8160

ORDER BOOKS ONLINE OR BY EMAIL
WWW.EVERYONESBKS.COM
INFO@EVERYONESBKS.COM

Guilford Center Stage announces offerings for 2024 season

GUILFORD—Guilford Center Stage will stage two productions, in the spring and fall of 2024, at Broad Brook Community Center in Guilford. These will be the 12th and 13th shows since the group was founded in 2015, and both feature the work of Vermont playwrights.

On the first weekend in May, Hardwick playwright Marc Considine’s *Love Lost Diaries* will be staged, directed by Julie Holland of Guilford. Considine is a science teacher at Hazen Union School in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom. He is coach of the school’s ambitious Drama Club. It was for his student actors that Considine wrote this play, which

was the ensemble’s entry in a regional drama festival in the late 1980s.

Director Holland has appeared or stage-managed 10 of the theater group’s productions. She says, “*Love Lost Diaries* is a bit-sweet story of a lifelong marriage that could have been so much more loving than it was, if only the couple had communicated their feelings to each other.” The couple’s history is revealed through diaries discovered by a group of high school students.

Auditions for *Love Lost Diaries* will be Saturday, Feb. 10, from 1 to 4 p.m., and Monday, Feb. 12, from 5 to 8 p.m., upstairs at the Broad Brook Community Center in Guilford. The facility is fully accessible, with an elevator to the upstairs.

On Oct. 25–27, Guilford Center Stage will present its first revival of a previous production: *Broad Brook Anthology*, by Guilford poet Verandah Porche. The work is a play for voices, consisting of recollections by Guilford elders, collected by Porche in collaborative writing sessions from 2006 to 2009, and first presented as part of the Guilford 250th anniversary in 2011. Guilford Center Stage gave the second performances in 2018.

Directed by Michael Fox Kennedy of Brattleboro, the play features projected photographs by Jeff Woodward, and music by Don McLean, accompanying readings by a half-dozen actors. Porche has added some new material for this production.

Guilford Center Stage has a mission to present place-based theater, with plays connected to the Grange hall, to Guilford, and to Vermont, and has performed plays by Vermont playwrights Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Michael Nethercott, Charles Henry, John Carroll, and Sinclair Lewis.

The company is a project of Broad Brook Grange, which is a partner of the newly-renovated Broad Brook Community Center. Last season, the first after a hiatus during the pandemic and building renovation, featured the classic Thornton Wilder play, *Our Town*, and Michael Nethercott’s *Haunts of the Season*.

For more information, visit broadbrookcommunitycenter.org or [facebook.com/GuilfordCenterStage](https://www.facebook.com/GuilfordCenterStage).



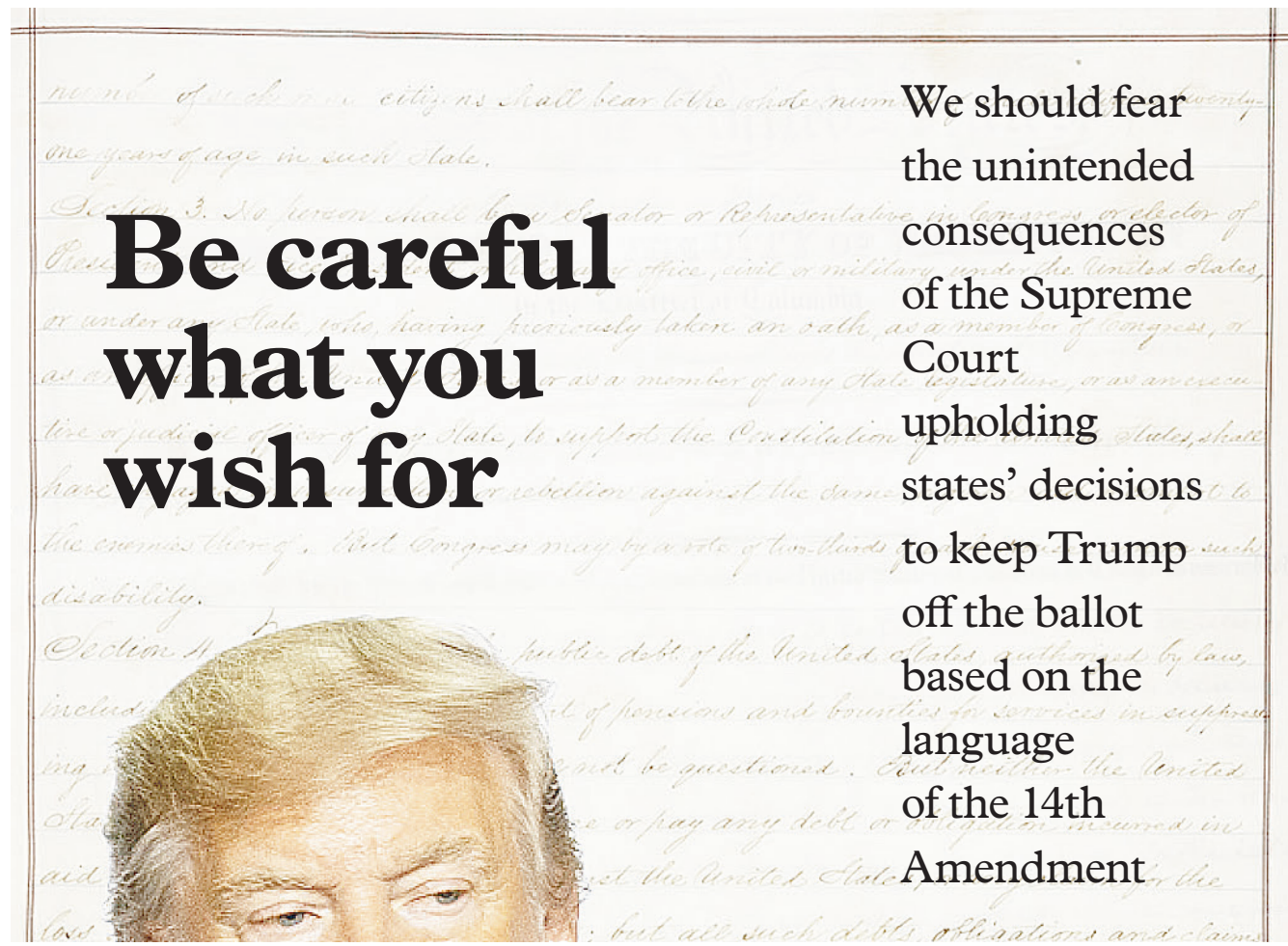
At Brattleboro Hearing Center, your hearing healthcare is our top priority. Our Doctors of audiology keep up with the latest technology and our research-driven practices provide the best possible outcomes in the treatment of hearing loss. We’re proud to offer personalized, patient-centered care.

Brattleboro Office: 802-254-3922
Swansey Office: 603-354-3325 | Greenfield, MA: 413-773-5119

We look forward to hearing from you!
www.BrattleboroHearing.com



VIEWPOINT



Be careful what you wish for

Marlboro

APERSISTENT QUESTION has found its way into the discourse over the last few years: Is the United States a republic or a democracy? The question typically comes in the context of an argument over voting rights, gerrymandering, or overturning the 2020 election. Liberal complaints about assaults on democracy are greeted by some right-wing wiseguy with “the U.S. isn’t a democracy, you know, it’s a republic.”

The simplest response to this diversion is that the U.S. is both: a constitutional republic and a democracy, in which power resides in the people. In that light, the either/or argument seems irrelevant as well as tedious.

But now comes an issue that makes the distinction between democracy and republic both very real and absolutely relevant.

Should Donald Trump be barred from the presidential ballot under the 14th Amendment’s insurrection clause, or should the people be allowed to vote for the candidate of their choice?

IN DECIDING what to do about Trump, should we prioritize the (small-r) republican value of the rule of law? The Constitution explicitly states those who have engaged in an insurrection in violation

RICK HOLMES is retired and living in Marlboro after a long career in journalism and opinion-writing, mostly at the MetroWest Daily News in Framingham, Mass., where he served as opinion editor.

of their oath of office cannot be a candidate for federal office, and in a republic, the Constitution reigns supreme.

Or should we prioritize the (small-d) democratic value and let the people decide? Keeping opposite candidates off the ballot is a tactic of authoritarian regimes like Russia and Iran, which often cloak their decisions in legal language. Here, the authority to choose leaders resides in the electorate, or it has until now.

I like Lincoln’s definition of democracy: a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” Democracy is not either/or. It’s a continuum defined by how close an institution or action is to the people.

A referendum in which voters make specific policy decisions is more democratic than electing representatives to make policy decisions. The House, where each member represents roughly the same number of constituents, is more democratic than the Senate, which is structured to tilt power

We should fear the unintended consequences of the Supreme Court upholding states’ decisions to keep Trump off the ballot based on the language of the 14th Amendment

toward smaller states with fewer voters.

The Supreme Court, which is neither elected nor accountable to voters — and is explicitly bound by the law, not public opinion — is the least democratic of the branches.

Yet it’s the Supreme Court that is poised to rule on whether Trump is disqualified from serving again as president.

If the Court keeps Trump off the ballot, you can call it constitutional. You can call it accountability under the rule of law. You can call it justice. But you can’t call it democratic.

THERE IS A more democratic alternative, clearly specified in the 14th Amendment, that empowers Congress, by a two-thirds vote, to grant amnesty from the insurrection restriction. The fact that Congressional leaders of both parties are ignoring this option is one sign that this issue is a partisan exercise, not a contest of principles.

That’s why we must consider the political consequences of keeping Trump off the ballot, not just the legal case against him.

If the Supreme Court disqualifies Trump, it would pour gasoline on our politics at an especially combustible moment.

■ SEE CONSTITUTION, C2

VIEWPOINT

A matter of equity

The tobacco industry’s attempt to co-opt proven harm-reduction strategies or to supposedly support those in recovery is faulty on many levels

Brattleboro

IRECENTLY TURNED DOWN a deal with the devil. Two lobbyists with Altria, a big tobacco company, reached out to me because of my work with Vermont’s recovery and harm-reduction community.

They tried to convince me that flavored tobacco products serve as a “coping mechanism” for people in recovery and compared these products with proven harm-reduction approaches like “needle exchange.”

However, their products are the leading cause of death for nearly a half million people in our country each year.

ROBIN RIESKE, a certified prevention specialist and community substance-prevention consultant, has worked in the field of substance use for over 35 years.

AS A HUGE PROPONENT of harm-reduction strategies that are proven to save lives (syringe support, naloxone, wound care, Suboxone, etc.), I find it hard to see how flavored tobacco products reduce harm. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), flavored tobacco products are more addictive than regular tobacco products, and those using menthol products also have a much more difficult time quitting tobacco.

This approach is so typical of an industry that asserts the rights of adult users, while spending billions yearly targeting our youth, Black, and LGBTQ communities with candy-flavored products.

This attempt to co-opt proven harm-reduction strategies or to supposedly support those in recovery is faulty on many levels.

There is no evidence that mango-flavored e-cigarettes, for example, provide any added value for those adults wanting to quit or use less.

And it is absolutely true these products have driven the increase in youth vaping use that will likely contribute to decades of increased tobacco use.

This is not about prohibition. Tobacco-flavored products would still be available. This is about recognizing the role the industry has played in creating a culture of use and addiction among targeted populations for decades.

I BELIEVE THAT ending the sale of flavored tobacco, including menthol (which is the flavor of choice of nearly 80% of Black smokers) will increase health equity for all. The tobacco industry has historically targeted the Black and LGBTQ communities with flavored tobacco products.

And this marketing works. Our Vermont Department of Health Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicates that, more than their heterosexual, white, non-Hispanic peers, BIPOC and LGBTQ youth in our state are more likely to use these flavored tobacco products. They are also more likely to suffer the lifelong consequences of tobacco addiction.

The Vermont Legislature is considering S.18, “An act relating to banning flavored tobacco products and e-liquids.” Passing laws to

■ SEE TOBACCO INDUSTRY, C2

LETTERS FROM READERS

Letter values fear of antisemitism ‘above Palestinian lives that have been taken by Israel’s genocide’

RE: “Letters ‘feel like attack on the history, memory, and safety of Jewish people’” [Letters, Jan. 10]:

As Windham County Jews — some of us members of the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community (BAJC), and all of us belonging to Jewish Voice for Peace Vermont/New Hampshire — we were saddened and upset to read this letter from BAJC.

It was so disappointing because it values fear of antisemitism more highly than it does the very real 23,000 Palestinian lives that have been taken by Israel’s genocide. We, too, want the war to stop, no caveats.

The letter represents a saddening white fragility in our relatively safe community. To hear “from the river to the sea” as an antisemitic “threat of annihilation” is uncomfortably

similar to the way some white people feel threatened by hearing “Black Lives Matter.”

Asserting that “Israel became [the Jews’] only refuge” after the Holocaust ignores that the opposite happened for the people of Palestine, 750,000 of whom were violently expelled from their homes by Jewish militias.

Palestinians have a word for that event: the *Nakba*, or Catastrophe. In Hebrew, we have a special word for the Holocaust: the *Shoah*, or Calamity. The cognitive distortion required to avoid these parallels is astounding.

In this context, we recognize “from the river to the sea” as an expression of Palestinian freedom and belonging to the land that Israel has claimed solely for Jewish occupation.

As Jews, we must face the fact that what happened to us is being done again, this time in our name. We stand unequivocally with Palestinians against their genocide. Never again, for anyone.

We urge other Jews to examine the sources of their fear and find safety in solidarity with people committed to a liberated Palestine for all who live there. None of us are free until all of us are free. Join us.

JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE
Brattleboro
Southern Vermont crew: Matt Dricker, Abby Mnookin, Elijah Summers, Naomi Ullian, Rebecca Speisman, Alex Fischer, Leo Moskowitz, Dayna Locitzer, Laura Stamas, Maya Faerstein-Weiss, Sonia Silbert, Ali Jacobs

‘These nicotine laden pacifiers are wrecking our kids’ lives’

My son is addicted to vaping. He started when friends introduced him to a flavored vape product in high school when he was 17 and is now struggling to quit at 24. He’s part of Vermont’s youth tobacco addiction crisis that demands action — on two fronts.

We can immediately remove

the enticement for these products to youth by eliminating the sale of flavored tobacco. It’s ridiculous to think that flavors like Sour Patch, Fluffernutter, and Gummy Chews are geared to adults. They are marketed to kids, and it’s working.

A quarter of Vermont’s high schools seniors are vaping, and the problem has now seeped into middle schools.

When my son started, each Juul pod provided 500 puffs, the equivalent to a pack of cigarettes. Now, there are products on the market, in the same flavors and colors as taffy, that deliver 4,000 puffs per product. These disposable vapes are now hip for kids, with many calling them “dispos.”

Tobacco shouldn’t be appealing. It shouldn’t be hip. It shouldn’t be flavored. These nicotine laden pacifiers are wrecking our kids’ lives.

It’s a myth that these products are safe. My son was literally in DTs (delirium tremens, a severe withdrawal symptom) when we went on a family

vacation to look at colleges in California. He had physical withdrawal symptoms from the lack of nicotine his body was craving.

Which brings me to my second request.

Vermont legislators should pass S.18, a bill that if enacted into law would prevent the sale of flavored products to prevent kids from getting hooked on the first place. But they also need to do more to help students like my son who are already addicted.

Even in high school, he said to us, “I shouldn’t be doing this, but I can’t stop.” We wanted help for him, but never got it. Instead, he was punished for his addiction time and time again.

He was let go from the National Honor Society; was suspended from baseball; received no support, no counseling. To determine whether punishing kids for their addiction works, you only have to look at my son — still vaping, seven years later. Taking away the things kids enjoy and

removing them from school does not prevent addiction; rather, it likely makes it worse.


I urge Vermont legislators to act quickly this year to finally pass this legislation — this issue has been before the Legislature for many years. In the meantime, more and more Vermont kids have become addicted.

And lawmakers need to do a thorough job. Prevent the sale of *all* flavored tobacco products. Remove menthol cigarette sales as well. We know kids will jump to whatever appealing product is available. And get kids the help they need to quit. Put funding into the Tobacco Control Program that is directed at kids, both prevention and treatment.

Vermont kids need this help. They are worth every cent we put into this effort.

Karren Meyer
Newfane


More letters, C2



Great opportunity for starting or expanding your investment portfolio.

Good rental income and affordable property.
Nice location.
Good parking for tenants and private porches for unit 1 and for unit 2.
Minimal yard maintenance.
Fully rented.

EXCLUSIVE: \$145,000



Ask for Sue
802-257-7979 x 2
255 Western Ave, Brattleboro, VT
www.bellvillerealty.com

VIEWPOINT

Refugee housing supports economic growth for everyone

State funding for temporary housing for refugees on the World Learning campus is more than a humanitarian gesture. It's also a strategic economic measure.

Brattleboro
As *The Commons* noted in its Jan. 10 front-page story by Joyce Marcel ["Vermonters ask: Where have all the workers gone?"], southern Vermont faces a serious labor shortage and a rapidly aging population that is compounded by a tight housing market. State-supported transitional housing for incoming refugees addresses these issues head-on. Welcoming these new Vermonters is not just a humanitarian effort, it's also a strategic economic measure. Since January 2022, World

GREGORY LESCH
is executive director of the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce.

Learning, the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC), and the Brattleboro Development Credit Corps (BDCC) have teamed up with southern Vermont communities to bring more than 290 refugees to this region. In just a few short years, their impact on our communities has been significant. World Learning's Brattleboro

campus, which also hosts the School for International Training, offers a welcoming environment for refugees, fostering community engagement and cultural exchange. State funding for this initiative is an investment in our community's future, aligning with Vermont's broader goals of economic development and population growth. It represents a strategic investment in our community, promising a substantial return for our region, both economically and socially. As of November 2023, 90% of the refugees who came to

this region have chosen to settle here permanently, with 98% of them securing permanent housing within four months. Employment rates are also impressive: 83% of employable refugees have found jobs with more than 49 local businesses, contributing over \$3.7 million in taxable wages, boosting our local economy and helping combat workforce shortages. This increase in taxable wages translates to enhanced public services and infrastructure, benefiting all Vermonters. The cycle of economic growth is further fueled as these new Vermonters spend their earnings locally, boosting retail, housing, and service sectors.

Tobacco industry

FROM SECTION FRONT

promote health is not uncommon. When smoke-free indoor laws were passed, we saw a significant reduction in tobacco use for the first time. Policy change often goes hand in hand with education, providing support and addressing social determinants of health.

I hope that the Vermont Legislature will see this bill as an opportunity to prevent youth addiction and reduce health inequity in our state. As one colleague in the field said, "even in countries that have decriminalized heroin, you won't find candy-flavored heroin on the market."

community, attractive to both new residents and businesses. The ripple effect of this decision extends beyond the immediate benefits to refugees; it signals a commitment to growth, diversity, and economic innovation. Furthermore, the successful integration of refugees can serve as a model for other communities, positioning Vermont as a leader in addressing global challenges through local solutions. This leadership can attract additional federal funding, private investments, and philanthropic contributions, further enhancing our community's development. The return on investment from state funding of refugee housing is not limited to economic metrics. The social and cultural enrichment that comes with a more diverse population fosters a richer, more vibrant community life.

community development. Let's seize this opportunity to demonstrate that in Brattleboro, and indeed all of Vermont, recognize the intrinsic value and potential of every individual who seeks to call our state home.

Constitution

FROM SECTION FRONT

Team Trump would denounce the weaponization of the 14th Amendment and retaliate in kind. Already, Republican secretaries of state are threatening to bar Joe Biden from the ballot. I wouldn't be surprised if some pushed for the amendment's repeal. Trump and his supporters would be enraged. There would be violence, at levels we haven't seen since the heyday of the Ku Klux Klan. Voters, who don't tend to be Constitutional purists, would resent the court's interference and buy into Trump's victim narrative. A defiant Trump might keep campaigning, winning

GOP primaries wherever officials leave him on the ballot, right up to what could be a crazy convention. If he's forced to withdraw, other Republican candidates would compete to lead the radical Trumpists, attacking the courts and promising pardons for all insurrectionists. Riding a wave of resentment of the court's power grab, the Republican nominee would be a heavy favorite in November. IT MIGHT BE BETTER for everyone if the Supreme Court finds a way to sidestep the question, allowing Trump on the ballot while preserving the 14th Amendment's

insurrection clause. A unanimous decision might go down easier, but the Supreme Court's credibility, already hanging by a thread, will take a hit however the justices rule. Popular support for the Constitution and the law will suffer as well. In other words, be careful what you wish for. I detest Trump. I lie awake nights worrying about what a second Trump term might bring. But I have a bad feeling about this 14th Amendment challenge. I fear it will leave America both a weaker republic and a more fragile democracy.

By PROVIDING a stable foundation through access to transitional housing for refugees as they transition into our community, the state is investing in a more dynamic, diverse, and economically robust southern Vermont. The World Learning and SIT campus, with its history of educational excellence and global engagement, offers the ideal setting for such a project, promoting not simply a shelter but also a place of learning, cross-cultural exchange, and greater community integration. This initiative aligns seamlessly with Vermont's broader goals of stimulating economic development and reversing population decline. By welcoming refugees, we position ourselves as a forward-thinking, inclusive

As Gov. SCOTT said in his recent State of the State address, incoming refugees are "contributing to our communities, workforce, and economy, while pursuing the American dream." State funding for temporary housing for refugees on the World Learning campus is more than a humanitarian gesture; it is a strategic investment in the future of southern Vermont. By supporting this initiative, we can stimulate economic growth, address labor shortages, enrich our cultural landscape, and set an example of inclusive

MORE LETTERS

Kornheiser's support of overdose prevention centers 'appalling'

Emilie Kornheiser, state representative of the Windham-7 district, is up in Montpelier promoting making Brattleboro the illegal drug use hub of southwestern New England. She wants to continue the enable the use of illicit drugs by establishing a come-one-come-all shooting gallery in our town. Kornheiser has never shown any interest in what is best for the hard-working, law-abiding, taxpaying members of this community. What she is pushing is appalling.

Dan Jeffries
Brattleboro

Editor's note: On Jan. 10, Kornheiser, as chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means, recommended passage of an act relating to a harm-reduction criminal justice response to drug use. The bill, which calls for \$1 million for a pilot program for overdose prevention centers, passed the House on Jan. 11 and is now in the hands of the state Senate's Committee on Health and Welfare.

On Lester Dunklee's legacy and importance to Brattleboro

Another icon and era in Vermont has passed with the retirement of Lester Dunklee and the closing of the R.F. Dunklee Machine Shop on Flat Street in Brattleboro. Two marvelous articles in the *Brattleboro Reformer* and *The Commons* perfectly captured the legacy of Lester, the family, and the shop — and their importance in our history. Now Lester will not have to attend his own funeral, as he will know what will be said in his eulogies! And he deserves every word.

Tim Kipp
Brattleboro

Can we get Groundworks more recurring donations?

Having moved back to Brattleboro recently, I am feeling helpless about the serious homelessness crisis. I know I am not alone in this. In talking with Libby Bennett, director of development and communications at Groundworks Collaborative, she explained that Groundworks — which includes the Foodworks food shelf program and many more services — is only funded by government grants for roughly 65%, and the other 35% comes from fundraising with some small grants, occasionally. Although we live in a generous community that will designate Groundworks as the recipient of some of their events, 35% sounds like a lot to raise. On Groundworks' user friendly website — GroundworksVT.org — you can not only donate but set up recurring monthly donations. Wouldn't it be great if we could increase their monthly donations significantly so they know they have more funds they can count on? Even a small amount adds up. I would like to encourage as many of you that are motivated to sign up and see if we can reach 100 new monthly contributors.

Patricia Burleson
Brattleboro

PUBLIC NOTICES

Important Annual Notice Regarding Herbicide Use in the Maintenance of Electric Utility Rights-of-Way

The Vermont Public Utility Commission has set forth rules under PUC Rule 3.600 pertaining to the use of herbicides in the maintenance of electric utility rights-of-way (ROW). Each spring, herbicide applications may begin on or after April 1st. These rules afford you important rights and duties. Vermont electric utilities maintain electric line rights-of-way with several methods, including the selective use of herbicides on trees and brush. They also encourage low-growing shrubs and trees which will crowd tall-growing species and, thus, minimize the use of herbicides. Methods of herbicide applications may include stump, stem injection, basal, soil, and foliar. **Only electric utility rights-of-way that have tall-growing tree species with the potential of threatening the electric utility system are treated.**

If you reside on or own property in Vermont within 1000' of an electric utility right-of-way:

- Sign up to receive written notification** from your local electric utility of plans to apply herbicide on any ROW within 1000' of your property or the property where you reside. Check nearby poles for tags identifying the utility and/or pole number, complete the form below and submit it to your local electric utility by mail before February 15th, 2024 to be added to the notification list. If determined to be qualified, you will receive notification from the utility at least 30 days prior to scheduled herbicide application.
- You are responsible to make your local electric utility aware** of the location of any potentially affected water supply, and of any other environmentally sensitive area where herbicide application ought to be avoided.
- Watch and listen for public service announcements** in newspapers and radio ads noting upcoming herbicide applications.
- Check with your local electric utility** regarding the vegetation management cycle near your particular line.
- You have the right** to request, in writing, that the utility refrain from applying herbicides in the process of clearing the right-of-way, and the utility may offer alternatives such as herbicide stump treatment or herbicide stem injections.
- You have the right** to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever at no cost to you if the type of lines in the right-of-way are **distribution lines**, bringing electric service directly to individual customers.
- You have the right** to refuse, in writing, the use of herbicides whatsoever by paying a \$30 administration fee if the type of lines in the right-of-way are **transmission lines** or **sub-transmission lines**, bringing electricity to or between substations.

For more details, or to ask additional questions, please contact your local electric utility, or one of the following:

(leave blank for local electric co. mailing address and phone)	Agency of Agriculture Public Health & Ag. Resource Mgmt 116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602 1-802-828-2431	Department of Public Service Consumer Affairs & Public Information 112 State St., Montpelier, VT 05620 1-800-622-4496
--	---	--

Based on the information above, if you believe you qualify to be notified in advance of pending herbicide applications in the rights-of-way, mail the request below to your local electric company before February 15th, 2024.

Resident/Property Owner Request to be Added to Herbicide Treatment Notification Mailing List			
Name	Town/City of Affected Property		
Street Address	Home Phone Number		
Town	Work Phone Number		
State	Zip Code	O.K. to use work number? (circle one)	Yes No
Electric Utility Account Number		Best time to contact you	
Affected Property: Year-Round Residence Summer Residence Commercial Property Water Supply Organic Farm Land Other (Circle all that apply)			
Line/Pole Identification: Utility Initials		Pole Numbers	
Please fill out this request completely to help us determine if you qualify for herbicide treatment notification. MAIL THIS REQUEST TO YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITY AT THE ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE BEFORE FEBRUARY 15TH, 2024			

AROUND THE TOWNS

Windham County NRCDC hosts Conservation Coffee Chat

DUMMERSTON — The public is invited to attend the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCDC) at their annual conservation coffee chat on Friday, Jan. 26, from 10 a.m. to noon at The Bunker Farm on Bunker Road. Participants can learn about locally led conservation efforts and the local working group, as well as discuss how federal dollars should be invested in Windham County to support the restoration and protection of our natural resources. Warm drinks and snacks will be available.

The district will give a brief presentation about the process used to determine federal spending through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Services and offer a quick overview of the Windham district's programming and options for support for land stewards.

This is the kick-off event for the 2024 Resource Concern Survey. The results of this survey are used by the local working group to make critical decisions about conservation funding each year. Paper copies of the survey will be on hand at the chat. To register for this event, email the district at windhamcountynrcdc@gmail.com or call 802-689-3024.

For those unable to attend the in-person event, an online version will be offered on Monday, Jan. 29, at 6 p.m. Register for the online session at bit.ly/749-NRDC.

Share your ideas, concerns about aging in Windham County

TOWNSHEND — Valley Cares Assisted Living will be

hosting a Windham County Aging Collaborative Listening Session in the dining room at Valley Cares, 461 Grafton Rd., on Saturday, Jan. 27, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

There will be a short presentation after which individuals will be invited to share both their ideas and concerns about issues related to aging to include housing, chronic care, transportation, socialization, and nutrition and food systems.

Windham Aging Collaborative consists of organizations who care about older Vermonters in Windham County. As the second-oldest aging county in the state, Windham County's aging population is projected to increase significantly in the years ahead.

This Collaborative consists of leaders and experts in health care, and it is working with the Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living to address the needs of an aging population for our county and for the State Plan.

Input from local community members is welcome. Space is limited. RSVP to Danielle St. Lawrence at 802-365-7190 or dstlawrence@valleycares.org.

Potluck focuses on stories of migrants in Vermont

BRATTLEBORO — On Sunday, Jan. 28, from noon to 1:30 p.m. the Southern Vermont Welcoming Communities Initiative of the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) hosts a "Journey to Vermont Story Potluck" at the studios of Brattleboro Community Television at the Municipal Center, 230 Main St.

This event is an opportunity for immigrants, new and established, to come and connect with their community. Participants are

encouraged to bring something that is meaningful to share — a story, recipe, food item, or object. Light refreshments from Shital's Indian Vegetarian will be provided.

Additionally, individuals interested in contributing their experiences to the Finding Vermont Ethnography Project can sign up to be interviewed during the potluck. Those interviewed will be eligible for a \$50 gift card as a token of appreciation.

Finding Vermont is an ethnographic interview project as a part of the Southern Vermont Welcoming Communities Initiative (welcomingcommunitiesvt.com), whose mission, according to their website, is "to make the Windham County region more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive for BIPOC community members, immigrants, first- and second-generation Americans,

asylum-seekers, and foreign-born workers."

This event will be the first public program of the Project. To learn more about the potluck, visit bit.ly/749-potluck or email akinkhabwala@brattleborodevelopment.com.

Rock Voices begins a new season

BRATTLEBORO — An experience is available this spring for those who wish to sing: They can join Rock Voices — the community chorus that sings only rock music. There are no auditions and singers don't need to know how to read music.

This spring, the choir will be performing songs recorded by the Monkees; The Band; Crosby, Stills, and Nash; Boston; Fleetwood Mac; Jimmy Buffett; Kacey Musgraves; Selena Gomez, and more. Final performances

will be in late April.

Brattleboro rehearsals are Monday nights, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Vermont Jazz Center in the Cotton Mill building, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. The first rehearsal will be Monday, Jan. 29. Go to torock-voices.com for more information.

Rabies shot clinics offered in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Ashley Pinger, animal control officer for the Windham County Sheriff's Department, will host a series of rabies clinics at the Town Office, 1523 Middle Rd. Each clinic will be held from 9 to 10 a.m. on Fridays, Feb. 2 and 16, and March 15 and 29.

The veterinarian is Dr. Paul Kotas from Free Range Veterinary Services. The fee for the rabies vaccine is \$22, payable to the veterinarian. Dog owners will be required to provide proof

of prior rabies vaccinations. Dog registrations for 2024 will be available for purchase during these clinics. Contact the Town Office at 802-257-1496 for more information.

Pick up your copy of RFPL's 'February Read'

BELLOWS FALLS — Pick up a copy of *Norwegian Wood* by Haruki Murakami at the Rockingham Free Public Library to join a discussion of the book on Thursday, March 7, at 6 p.m.

This coming-of-age love story set in 1960s Japan captures the huge expectation of youth while evoking a keen sense of poignancy. For more information, email programming@rockinghamlibrary.org, call the library (802) 463-4270, or stop by the library at 65 Westminster St.

School boards appeal for candidates

'Dedicated' community members urged to run for open seats on Windham Southeast, Vernon school district boards

BRATTLEBORO — The Windham Southeast School District (WSESD) and the Vernon School District (VSD) are asking community members to consider running for open seats on those school boards "to make a meaningful impact on local education."

The WSESD Board is comprised of 10 members from Brattleboro, Dummerston, Guilford, and Putney, with each board member governing the schools in all four towns.

The VSD Board is comprised of five members and governs the Vernon School.

There are open seats on both WSESD and VSD Boards that need residents of each town as follows:

- *Brattleboro*: One one-year term and two three-year terms.
- *Guilford*: One three-year term.
- *Putney*: One three-year term.
- *Vernon*: One two-year term and one three-year term.

A joint press release about the vacancies notes that board members "play a vital role in shaping the policies and direction of local schools. By joining the board, you can contribute to a positive and effective learning environment for students."

Highlights of that work include "community advocacy representing member town residents, liaising between the communities and school district to

ensure diverse perspectives are considered and transparency is evident in decision-making, and supporting student success by contributing to develop and implement policies that support student achievement, well-being, and success both academically and personally."

If you wish to throw your hat in the ring to serve, you can get petitions from your local town clerk. They require at least 30 valid signatures from residents who are registered voters of your town.

Once you have the signatures, submit your petitions and file for candidacy by Monday, Jan. 29.

Voters will elect board members on Town Meeting Day, Tuesday, March 5.

For more information, contact Kelly Young, Windham Southeast School District chair, kyoung@wsestdvt.org; Walter Breau, Vernon School District chair, wbreau@wsestdvt.org; Hilary Francis, Brattleboro town clerk, townclerk@brattleboro.gov; Jonathan Johnson, Putney town clerk, Putneytc@putneyvt.org; Danielle Latulippe, Guilford town clerk, townclerk@guilfordvt.gov; or Tim Arsenault, Vernon town clerk, clerk@vernonvt.org.

For information about registering to vote or changing registration, visit olvr.vermont.gov. To request a ballot, visit mvp.vermont.gov.

PUBLIC NOTICES

My mother said I must always be intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy. That some people, unable to go to school, were more educated and more intelligent than college professors.

—MAYA ANGELOU

Town of Dummerston Selectboard

The Dummerston Selectboard will hold a public hearing for proposed Zoning Bylaw revisions that address solar screening and air strips on February 7, 2024 from 7:00pm to 7:30pm at the Dummerston town office, 1523 Middle Rd., East Dummerston, VT 05346.

Across

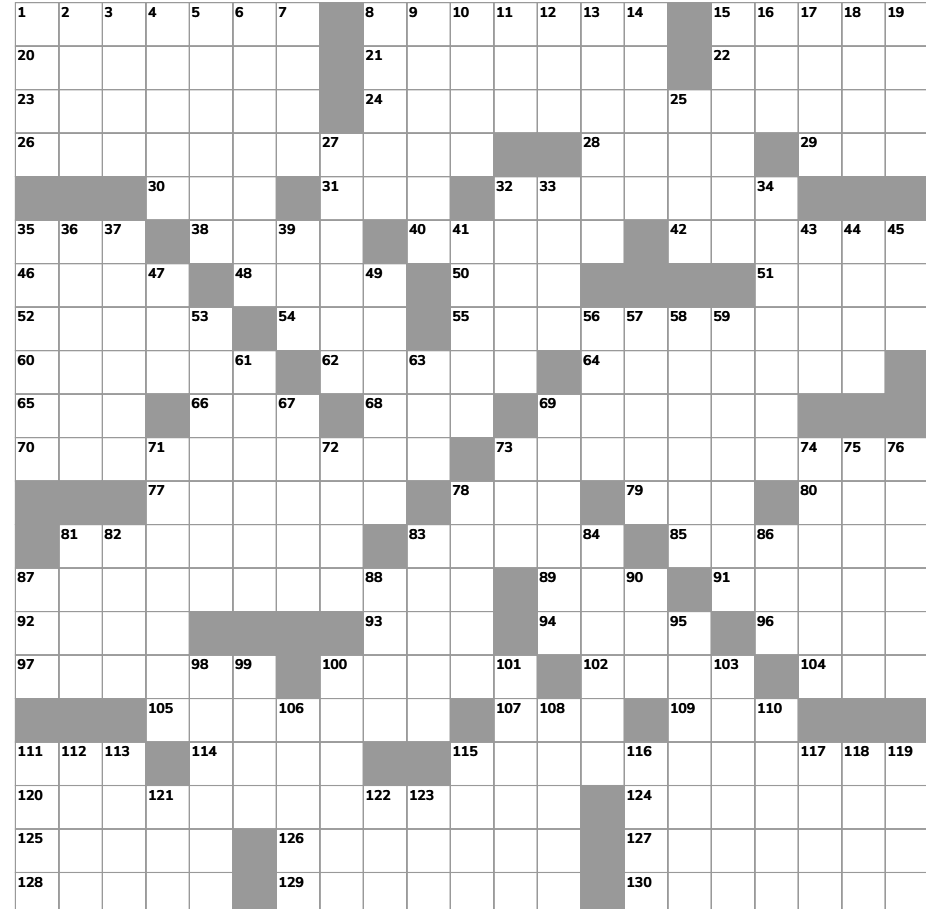
- Warm drink with wagyu beef
- "Spaceballs" star
- Academy founder
- Geological disaster bordering Kazakhstan
- Inferior imitator
- Delivery doc
- Moderately sweet, as champagne
- Batman's quip?
- Become part of the idiom?
- Scraped (out)
- Court matter
- Animated graphical meme medium
- Bit of wear and tear
- Old car sticker
- Way of the East
- Tire swing's spot
- Old hat
- "I Dreamed a Dream" musical, for short
- Scatter Fitzgerald
- Spun a yarn
- ___ pro nobis
- Torch for the porch
- Japanese dog
- Spelling ___ (New York Times app)
- Desire to consume Eggos?
- Those who know it all
- Not wild
- Wife of Aeneas
- Ivy Leaguer of New Haven
- Gentle affair
- Uneaten scrap
- Japanese mat
- Baseball field with an overextended third base?
- Gag vendor?
- Fill full of love
- Wood-cutting tool
- Jedi with a crossguard lightsaber
- Historical time
- Intestinal woe
- Metal fastener
- Has a hunch
- "Ghostbusters" secretary's chompers?
- Turkey serving
- Nada
- Lenovo rival
- Energetic spirit
- Puts into words
- Sharpness in taste
- Sunday services
- Corn holders
- Very pleased with oneself
- Sourdough starter?
- Driveway material
- Little piggy
- Aerie purchase
- Storm's heading
- Peacock's pride
- Wobbly piano composition?
- Thrills among the boundaries?
- Teases hard
- Pickling liquid
- Friendly
- "Little Gidding" poet
- ___ bath
- In the middle of
- Runs naked

Down

- Muslim pilgrimage
- ___ Boo! (Halloween-themed cookies)
- Best-selling author Hoag
- Broken arm holder
- Tear into
- Stay in shape
- A pop
- Tablelands
- Masterworks
- Ready to eat
- The "a" of "a/s/l"
- Negating word
- "Psst! This way!"
- Goes after
- French pooch
- Pres. with a ranch
- Thickening agent
- "He's not my ___"
- Small bills
- Authentic
- Sevastopol scratch
- Electrical unit whose symbol is F
- Angela's successor as chancellor
- Nation on the Baltic
- Banded (together)
- Sodium, e.g.
- Singer Rodrigo
- Unruly crowd
- Namely
- 5x5 New York Times crossword
- Retailer of Poäng chairs
- Female sib
- Gulped down
- Route around the construction area
- Justice Scalia
- ___ jacket
- Some other time
- Shakes
- 1956 Literature Nobelist Juan Ramón ___
- Warren's house
- "The proper task of life," per Nietzsche
- Fess up to
- Sauna supplies
- Comic actress McCarthy
- Trader ___ (Corona Light knockoff)
- Place for cookies
- Lisa who was the first to dunk in the WNBA
- Puts up
- Rubbing problems
- Chowderhead
- Hombre's home
- Cross to bear
- Uplifting piece?
- Marten relative
- Pen part
- Fool around with the band
- Bad behavior
- Place to get swole
- Get by
- Regard highly
- Trade punches
- Veiled dancer in a Strauss opera
- "Fifty Shades of Grey" protagonist Anastasia
- Produce provider
- Muslim head covering
- Elizabeth who plays Scarlet Witch
- Turning point?
- Goes back out
- Put into piles
- HOMES lake
- Agree
- Decides (to)
- Atlas section
- Snatched
- Colony members
- Chain letters?
- Turned on
- Bar material

BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"Jab Stand"



©2023

Last issue's solution

"Of Sound Body"



PUBLICATION OF THE COMMONS CROSSWORD IS UNDERWRITTEN BY

BRATTLEBORO TIRE

Locally owned for over 46 years!

TIRES & ALL UNDER CAR SERVICE

802-254-5411

558 Putney Rd.

RARE OPENING!

Looking for a qualified individual. Top pay & benefits!

IT WILL GET COLD AND SNOW THIS WINTER... BE READY!

Get your snow tires installed soon!

OIL CHANGE \$74.95

FULL SYNTHETIC UP TO 5 QTS.

INCLUDES 30 POINT COURTESY CHECK

Fluids • Belts • Hoses • Steering • Brakes

Lights & Much More Upon Request

*(\$3.00 disposal fee) most cars. Special diesel oil & filter extra.

Call for an appointment!

VT State Inspections • Courtesy cars or rides available at no cost

COLUMN | *Sports Roundup*

After five losses in a row, BF boys try to break out of their slump

We're heading into the final three weeks of the high school basketball season in Vermont. It's the time when teams learn whether they have what it takes to succeed in the playoffs.

The Bellows Falls Terriers have aspirations for a long run in the Division III boys' basketball tournament, but they have lost five straight games to finish last week with a 5-7 record. They hadn't won since a 68-53 victory over Twin Valley on Jan. 4.

In BF's defense, they are playing a tougher schedule this season and are facing more Division I and II teams than in the past. For BF coach Evan Chadwick, it's a schedule designed to toughen up his team for the postseason. But this strategy can also lead to some lopsided losses.

On Jan. 20 at Holland Gymnasium, the Terriers faced the Hartford Hurricanes, currently the top-ranked team in Division II. The result was a 82-32 rout, as the depth and talent of the Hurricanes were just too much for BF to handle.

Hartford, which improved to 11-1 with the victory, put the game away early. They opened with a 7-2 run in the first two minutes and finished the first quarter with a 26-12 lead. By halftime, it was 44-20. By the end of the third quarter, it was 64-25.

The keys to Hartford's win were making 11 three-pointers — including four by Noah Danieli, three by Kole Folton, and two by Christian Holton — and going 11-for-14 from the free throw line. All 10 of Hartford's players scored at least one basket with Danieli leading the way with 16 points, followed by Folton with 14 points and Brody Tyburski with 12 points.

Only five players scored for BF. Jaxon Clark had 16 points, Colby Dearborn had eight, Cole Moore added five, Eli Albee scored two, and Jesse Darrell made one free throw, the only one in six trips to the line for the Terriers. BF made only three three-pointers — two from Clark and another from Moore.

Three days earlier, on Jan. 17, the Terriers lost to the Rivendell Raptors, 76-69. Despite a career-high 34 points by Dearborn, BF came up short as Rivendell converted all their free throws in the final minute of the game to win it.

Dearborn and Clark, who finished with 14 points, combined



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.

for 30 of the Terriers' 40 points in the first half, but the Raptors ended up with a 41-40 lead at the break.

Going two weeks without a victory is frustrating, but there still is time for the Terriers to get it together for the playoffs.

Boys' basketball

• Brattleboro finished strong in a 56-45 win over Mount St. Joseph in Rutland on Jan. 20. The win ended a three-game losing streak for the 4-8 Bears. The quartet of John Satterfield (13 points), Jack Cady (12 points), and Keagan Systo and Jonathan Haskins (11 points each) all had a hand in a closing 9-1 run for the Bears in the fourth quarter.

The victory over MSJ took some of the sting out of a 68-65 overtime loss to Windsor on Jan. 18 at the BUHS gym. Cady hit a three-pointer with two seconds left in regulation to send the game into overtime, but Windsor's Cory Lockwood scored five of his game-high 20 points in OT to win it. Cady finished with 17 points, Jackson Emery added 16, and Satterfield chipped in 13.

• Green Mountain rolled over Leland & Gray with a 96-33 win on Jan. 17 in Chester. Austin Kubisek led GM with 22 points, Caleb Merrow followed with 16, and Tanner Swisher added 15 as the hosts took a 52-13 lead by halftime.

Cody Hescoco had 19 points for the Rebels, with 12 of them coming in the fourth quarter. Ely White scored 11 points, including a pair of three-pointers.

• Twin Valley topped Springfield, 48-35, in Whitingham on Jan. 15. Brayden Brown had 15 points and five steals for the Wildcats, while Noah Dornburgh added 12 points.

The Wildcats then lost to Woodstock, 61-47, on Jan. 17 in Whitingham. Dornburgh led the Wildcats with seven three-pointers for a game-high 21 points, while Brown added 11 points.

Twin Valley finished the week at 7-5 after a 64-56 road win

over Long Trail on Jan. 20.

Girls' basketball

• The top team in Division III, the Windsor Yellowjackets, defeated the visiting Brattleboro Bears, 47-36, on Jan. 15. Sophia Lockwood led Windsor with 18 points, while Sydney Perry had 15 points and 13 rebounds. Reese Croutworst led the Bears with eight points.

The Bears ran into another hot team on Jan. 19 as Rutland beat Brattleboro, 56-37. Sophomore point guard Anna Moser scored 30 points to lead Rutland, while Abby Henry and Mallory Newton led the visiting Bears with 10 and eight points, respectively. Brattleboro ended the week at 4-5.

• Twin Valley fell to 0-10 on the season after a 68-20 road loss to Long Trail School on Jan. 17, and a 51-13 loss at home to Bellows Falls on Jan. 20. Along with a 45-42 win over Rivendell on Jan. 19, Bellows Falls improved to 7-2 on the season.

• Leland & Gray lost to White River Valley, 67-49, in Townshend on Jan. 19 to fall to 4-8.

Ice hockey

• The Brattleboro boys won their second straight game on Jan. 20 with a 3-0 victory over Stowe at Withington Rink.

Rylan Ernst, Alex Dick, and Rowan Lonergan were the goal scorers for the 4-5-2 Bears as goaltender James Fagley made 24 saves to clinch Brattleboro's first shutout victory of the season. The Bears host Lyndon Institute this Saturday at 4:45 p.m.

• The Brattleboro girls fell to 0-11 after a 9-1 loss at Rice on Jan. 20. The Bears started out playing competitively, but Rice blew the game open with seven goals over an 11-minute span of the second period.

Emery Rasco had three goals and an assist to lead Rice, as goaltender Tayton Barrett made 11 saves for the win. Alex Gregory had the lone goal for the Bears, who will travel to Manchester to face Burr & Burton on Jan. 24.

Snowmaking begins on Harris Hill

• Last week's cold temperatures gave the Harris Hill Ski Jump snowmaking team a chance to begin making snow in preparation for the 102nd edition of Brattleboro's signature winter event on Feb. 17 and 18.

Given the vagaries of Vermont winters in the age of climate change, snowmaking



Hartford's Christian Hathorn (4) pulls down a rebound in front of Bellows Falls defender Jesse Darrell during first half boys' basketball action on Jan. 20 at Holland Gymnasium. Looking on are Jaxon Clark of Bellows Falls (12) and Hartford's Ayodele Lowe (12).

has become critically important to making sure the hill on Cedar Street is ready for competitors by stockpiling man-made snow in case the real stuff is unavailable.

"With our new fan gun, we were successful in making snow during last year's 'snow drought' and getting the jump in great shape for the weekend, and we anticipate doing the same this year," Jason Evans, head of snowmaking, said in a news release. "Our new fan gun can make everything we need."

Evans said the snowmakers will take advantage of cold weather "as often as we can leading up to the Jump weekend. Sometimes, it may only be one or two days; it really just depends on the temperatures and the humidity. But our team is geared up to give it all we have during the various windows of opportunity over the next month. Locals will see the snow stockpile continue to grow at the base of the jump."

Full details on the Harris Hill Ski Jump weekend — including purchasing tickets — can be found online at harrishillskijump.com.

Girls on the Run Vermont seeks volunteer coaches

• Girls on the Run Vermont (GOTRV), a physical activity-based, positive youth development program for students in grades 3-8, needs coaches to help lead its spring 2024 program.

According to organizers, the 10-week program "incorporates movement into its curriculum to empower participants to develop critical life skills, build

confidence, cultivate positive connections with peers, manage their emotions, and stand up for themselves and others."

Volunteer coaches utilize a curriculum to engage teams of girls in fun, interactive lessons. The spring season begins the week of March 18. Teams meet twice a week for 90 minutes and the program culminates with all teams participating in one of two noncompetitive, celebratory 5K events in Essex and Manchester.

Coaches do not need to be runners. GOTRV provides training so volunteers have all the tools needed to help create a great experience for all participants. All volunteer coaches must complete a background check. GOTRV welcomes high school students to volunteer as junior coaches. Visit gotrv.org/coach for full details or email info@girlsontherunvermont.org.

Schools in Windham County that are still in need of coaches include Academy, Green Street, and Oak Grove schools in Brattleboro, Central Elementary in Bellows Falls, Dover Elementary, Dummerston Elementary, Flood Brook Union School in Londonderry, Grafton Elementary, The Grammar School in Putney, Guilford Central School, Hilltop Montessori in Brattleboro, Jamaica Village School, Leland & Gray in Townshend, NewBrook Elementary in Newfane, Saxtons River Elementary, St. Michael's School in Brattleboro, Townshend Elementary, Twin Valley Elementary in Wilmington, Vernon Elementary, and Wardsboro Elementary.

Participant registration opens on Wednesday, Feb. 28, for Southern teams attending the Manchester 5K. Join them for a virtual Q&A session on Thursday, Jan. 25, at 6:30 p.m. More information about the Jan. 25 session and GOTRV can be found at gotrv.org.

Senior bowling roundup

• Week 3 of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on Jan. 18 saw Good Times (13-2) remain in first place. Stepping Stones II and High Rollers (11-4) are tied for second, followed by Stayin' Alive (9-6), Four Seasons (7-8), Slow Movers and Hairiers (both 4-11), and Four Pins (1-14).

Diane Cooke had the women's high handicap game (262) and series (674). Milt Sherman had the men's high handicap game (251), while Gary Montgomery had the high handicap series (654). Harriers had the high team handicap game (873), while High Rollers had the high team series (2,456).

Warren Corriveau Sr. had the men's high scratch series (579) with games of 204, 192, and 183. Peter Deyo had a 559 series with a 226 game, John Walker had a 561 series with a 213 game, Montgomery had a 558 series with games of 212 and 195, and Sherman had a 539 series with a 222 game. Marty Adams had a 186 game.

Diane Cooke had the women's high scratch series (488) and game (200). Notable games included Debbie Kolpa (172), Pat Bentrup (170), Carol Gloski (164), and Nancy Dalzell (162).

Brattleboro goalie James Fagley made 24 saves to earn his first shutout of the season in a 3-0 win over Stowe on Jan. 20 at Withington Rink.



Extra visible and surprisingly affordable

Get your business front and center with an ad on a section cover like this one!

You know it works, because you're reading this right now.

Call 802-246-6397 or email ads@commonsnews.org.