# Celebrating our 20th anniversary in 2024! The

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**BRATTLEBORO** 

# **Town Meeting** boosts measures for climate change

Annual Representative Town Meeting also bumps up human services allocations for next year in a \$23 million town budget

By Virginia Ray

BRATTLEBORO— Representative Town Meeting members went through several hours of discussion regarding non-binding resolutions after members increased the fiscal year 2025 budget by \$70,000 for climate change concerns and passed a total budget of \$23,063,830 — a 4.3% increase over this year's by a 65-41 vote.

The budget is predicated on \$17,701,970 being raised in

property taxes.

Members gathered at the Brattleboro Union High School gymnasium on March 23. A quorum, defined as 50% of all potential RTM members plus one for this purpose, was set at 77. Despite inclement weather, there were 87 representatives present at the start of the meeting.

RTM members needed to approve, by Australian ballot, borrowing money to build a secondary water storage tank at the Pleasant Valley Reservoir for an

■ SEE BRATTLEBORO ARTM, A3

# WSESD voters, citing student needs, pass \$65.8M budget

Bottom line: hold legislators accountable for a difficult funding formula and last-minute decisions at the ballot box in November

By Virginia Ray The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—After about 80 minutes of discussion, 242, or 1.7%, of Windham Southeast School District (WSESD) voters agreed to a \$65,846,891 budget for fiscal year 2025 at its annual meeting

on March 19. The breakdown of voters in attendance at Brattleboro Union High School was: 120, or 1.3% of eligible voters, from Brattleboro; 35, or 2.2%, from Dummerston; 49, or 2.8%, from Guilford; and 38, or 1.9%, from Putney.

Moderator Steven Brown quickly dispatched articles electing him as moderator, Frank Rucker as treasurer, and Mo Hart as board clerk, and agreeing to pay school board members \$7,000 each annually and the chair \$9,000 annually.

### 11th-hour legislative changes wreak **budget** havoc

Shaun Murphy, board member and Finance Committee chair, explained that education taxes are based on several factors: the "yield" set by the legislature in May; the weighted student average; a common level of appraisal (CLA); and individual school district expenses. The state dictates all but the yield, which the

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

Become a member and receive The Commons in the mail. Join today at http://donate.commonsnews.org. legislature determines annually. The budget represents a 3%

increase from this year and includes a 16% increase in healthcare costs and a 4% increase in salaries. The budget plans for level staffing with 435 staff members, and enrollment has slightly declined, primarily from students opting out of the district through school choice.

CLA is a method of ensuring that each town pays its fair share of education property tax to the state education fund even if its

grand list is not at 100% of fair ■ SEE WSESD ANNUAL MEETING, A3 COLUMN

Reporter's Notebook

# Becky Chan, a former area resident and Brattleboro Union High School graduate, finds connection through the art of storytelling — on this night, about her journey from Putney



Becky Chan, a BUHS graduate and former Putney resident, takes the stage at The Moth Mainstage Event in Tarrytown, New York, this past Saturday, where she presented her story of immigration and 22 years as an FBI agent.

Tarrytown, N.Y. ECKY CHAN sits casually with us, her friends, chatting about our youth in Brattleboro. Fellow graduates of Brattleboro Union High School class of 1976, we have traveled to Tarrytown, N.Y., to see Chan perform in "The Moth in Terrytown," a Moth

to the FBI to

'The Moth'

Mainstage event.
Chan, who now lives in Seattle, has invited us to see her live on stage tonight during her short return to the East Coast.

She shows no signs of stage fright or nervousness, and before she takes the stage it's difficult to imagine that she's about to deliver a 12-minute story

**FRAN** HANSEN, a Brattleboro native with deep connections to local history and to people everywhere, is

about her life as an immigrant, having moved from Hong Kong to Putney when she was 15. This personal history then leads to a 22-year career as an FBI agent, and the way these two stories fit together mesmerizes the audience into

a Commons reporter and columnist.

stunned silence. The Moth — a nonprofit organization "dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling," according to its promotional materials — claims to have "presented over 50,000 true, personal stories, told live, without notes to standing-room-only audiences and via radio, around the globe" over its 27year run.

Listeners to public radio may be familiar with the nationally syndicated-Moth Radio Hour, a weekly program of stories like Chan's recorded at events like this one. Each year, people download more than 1 million episodes of the weekly Moth Podcast.

Appearing at a live event can be a long process for storytellers, and it can

■ SEE 'THE MOTH', A5

### WINTER The LION i n

After nearly a half century in the U.S. Senate, Patrick Leahy is enjoying his retirement years

By Joyce Marcel

BRATTLEBORO—Some

people call him St. Patrick. Former U.S. Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, along with his wife, Marcelle, are beloved by many in

Vermont for many reasons. First, for their accessibility, and second, for their clear and obvious love of Vermont. Third, for being on the right side of most of the issues Vermonters care about. Fourth, for their wit, charm, warmth and grace. And fifth, for Sen. Leahy's record of ensuring that Vermont would get its slice

of the federal-funding pie. When Leahy went to mer Senate colleague is running

Washington in 1975, he was Vermont's first-ever Democratic senator. He was the most junior in status but only the second-youngest member of the Senate — the youngest was a whippersnapper from Delaware named Joe Biden.

By the time he retired in 2023, Leahy was the longest-serving member of Congress to have served solely as a senator. He was also twice president pro tempore of the U.S. Senate — meaning he was two heartbeats away from being president of the United States from 2012 to 2015 and again

from 2021 to 2023. While the 83-year-old Leahy enjoys his retirement, his for-



Sen. Patrick Leahy visited the Retreat Farm in Brattleboro in 2021 to announce \$3 million of federal funding to create a food center at the historic site.

for a second term as president. That explains why Leahy was in Washington for President Biden's State of the Union speech on March 7, and maybe why Marcelle was invited by Jill Biden from Jill Biden when she came

with a few current and former Senate spouses while they were in town.

"Marcelle got the biggest hug

to have lunch at the White House in," Leahy said. "That was nice. I had a chance to chat a little bit with the president. 'Hey, do you remember that time in Vermont...?' We were laughing ■ SEE **LEAHY**, A2

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terial that appears in the paper.
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# **■** Leahy

The Commons had a chance to talk to Leahy recently following several years of health challenges for both him and his wife of nearly 62 years, Marcelle.

In 2022, the family had planned a trip to Ireland following Leahy's announcement that he would be retiring.

"And literally hours before we made our way up the stairs to pack, I smashed my right hip and spent a month in the hospital," Leahy said. "And we never got to go.

Then the country of Vietnam was planning a special parliamentary honor for Leahy.

"I was supposed to go to Vietnam," he said. "They were meaning to honor me because of the work I've done over the years because of the Leahy Fund for War Victims, for those who have mostly been injured by U.S. weapons. Even though they have an airplane doctor on board and everything else, there was the possibility of a blood clot so I didn't go.

He's recovered from those health issues, and he says he's

"I kind of go on long walks most days," he said. "I usually take a cane if it's rough terrain. But most of the time I just carry it in my hand. I love going to a grocery store just walking down Church Street and seeing people I haven't seen for years.

Also doing better is Marcelle, a registered nurse. Leahy said she has now finished with chemo. "We're really fortunate to have time," he said.

### **Bringing home** the bacon

Leahy's many years of being chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee earned him his "St. Patrick" nickname. Leahy was not shy about getting federal money flowing back to Vermont.
"Thanks to the restoration of

earmarks in the congressional appropriations process — and the outsize influence of Vermont's senior U.S. senator," VTDigger reported in September 2022, "Vermont is seeing disproportionately high federal funding per capita for projects through-

out the state. The \$1.5 trillion federal appropriations omnibus bill passed by Congress that year was the first time in more than a decade that lawmakers were able to request funding for specific projects in their states, commonly known my name on it," he told WCAX.

FROM SECTION FRONT

as earmarks.

"As chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Leahy has significant influence over federal spending and often secures outsize sums for his home state. The return of earmarks was no exception," VTDigger reported.

"According to an analysis conducted by CQ Roll Call sourced from data compiled by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Vermont saw the secondhighest per capita earmarked dollars from March's budget omnibus: \$321 per person, totaling \$207.2 million for the state. (Alaska topped the list at \$339)

It has been estimated that Leahy has shoveled billions of federal dollars into the state, and that may explain why so many things in Vermont have his name attached to them.

There's the Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport. There's the Patrick and Marcelle Leahy Fund for Vermont, established at the Vermont Community Foundation with \$500,000 from

his remaining campaign funds. Leahy diverted \$30 million to support academic excellence at the University of Vermont, and an additional \$50 million for other Vermont issues; the university named a building after him and established the Leahy Center for Rural Partnerships.

UVM isn't the only center of higher education to benefit from Leahy's generosity.

"As one of his last acts as a U.S. Senator, Leahy secured a \$6.5 million appropriation through the 2023 Omnibus Appropriation Bill for St. Michael's — one of the largest grants in the College's history," wrote Vermont Business Magazine.

Leahy is a graduate of St. Michael's College, which now has the Patrick '61 and Marcelle Leahy Center for the Environment. Champlain College has the Leahy Center for Digital Forensics & Cybersecurity. The Senator Patrick Leahy School of Cybersecurity and Advanced Computing is at Norwich University. There's a street off the Church Street Marketplace in Burlington called Leahy Way. UVM's new research ship, the R/V Marcelle Melosira, is named after Marcelle.

You get the idea. The Senator says he gets teased about having his name on so many buildings, but "there are an awful lot of buildings that don't have

# Former student settles complaint over alleged racist bullying

A Vermont Human Rights Commission complaint filed against Twin Valley School District alleged that the only Black student at Twin Valley Middle High School faced continued racist bullying, while school leadership failed to take action

By Ethan Weinstein VtDigger

A former Twin Valley student, who is Black, has settled a complaint with the district that alleges school officials didn't do enough to address racist bullying she faced at the district's middle and high schools, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Vermont, which is represent-

In a 2021 complaint to the Vermont Human Rights Commission, the ACLU wrote that the student, referred to as "C.B.," was a 10th grader at Twin Valley Middle High School and its only Black student. The complaint alleged that Twin Valley students used racist slurs against C.B., directed the Nazi salute at her and threatened her with violence.

As a result of the alleged harassment, C.B. "did not participate in school sports, her grades declined, and she developed anxiety and depression,"

student "was forced to transfer schools," the organization said, as the school "did nothing to

protect C.B.

'School administrators have a responsibility to protect students' rights to an education free of discrimination, and we hope this case reminds schools of that responsibility," said Lia Ernst, legal director of the ACLU of Vermont, in a written

A lawyer for Twin Valley School District did not respond to an email seeking comment. Twin Valley Middle High School is in Whitingham and is part of the Windham Southwest Supervisory Union.

A March 2023 settlement between Twin Valley and the federal government similarly found that Twin Valley did not sufficiently respond to racial harassment "that created a hostile environment for Black

As part of the federal settlement, the district agreed to

according to the ACLU. The administer schoolwide culture and climate assessments, and to provide professional development in harassment prevention for staff and students.

According to the ACLU, Twin Valley paid C.B. an "undisclosed sum" for damages and legal fees.

The settlement, according to its language, is not a "finding of discrimination" or a "determination of the merits of the complaint.'

"Though the harms that I experienced can't be undone, I am relieved that Twin Valley is being held accountable and working to change the way it addresses racially motivated bullying and harassment," C.B. said in a written statement as part of the ACLU's press release.

"I hope that state policymakers and school officials will learn from my experience, so that other students do not have to face the same hostile environment that I did," she said.

"What I like are the projects that employ and keep people here in Vermont."

## **Senator Shutterbug**

As most everyone knows, Leahy has had a lifelong passion for photography. He's taken a camera everywhere he's been in his extraordinary life, and galleries in Vermont and Washington, D.C. have exhibited his photographs, which feature everyone from Leonid Brezhnev to Yo Yo Ma and Nelson Mandela.

Leahy explained how the photography thing began.

'Sen. Howard Baker, one of the key Republicans, was going down to a meeting with President Ford and he said, 'Why don't you come along with me?' And I said, 'I'm too new.' But Baker said, 'Come along, you'll get a kick out of it.' So I came. The president was very pleasant. Now, Sen. Baker is an avid photographer. He had a small pocket camera — it was all film at that time.

"I said, 'I love photography. Maybe I should be a Republican so I can bring a camera.' He laughed and said, 'Bring a camera. You're a senator. Just don't use flash.

"And that was that. I got nice private pictures of every president. Presidents would say, 'Patrick, got your camera with you? Take a picture of this.'

"And I'd say, 'OK,'" Leahy concluded.

"You know, I was born blind in one eye," he observed. "But with photography, you only need

### **Leahys will visit SIT** for anniversary

On April 5, the School for International Training (SIT) will hold a half-day 60th anniversary event on the Brattleboro campus featuring the Leahys as special guests.

Before leaving the U.S. Senate, Leahy submitted a statement recognizing the global impact that World Learning, SIT, and the Experiment in International Living have had over nine decades.

In the statement, Leahy said, "As the first stop in Vermont for newcomers from Afghanistan, Ukraine, and elsewhere, World Learning and SIT bring together staff, faculty, alumni and neighbors to offer language, cultural orientation, and friendship in a program that is a national model for effective refugee integration." Leahy said he is looking

forward to coming down to Brattleboro.

"I'll be down your way in spring," he said. "The nice thing about doing things like that in Vermont is that you don't have to get on an airplane.'

# Windham Meeting House project awarded \$75,000 for renovations

W I N D H A M — T h e Preservation Trust of Vermont (PTV) has announced a Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization grant of \$75,000 to the Windham Meeting House for accessibility improvements and exterior painting.

Constructed in 1802, the Windham Meeting House has been the focus of community life for over 220 years. Use has declined over the years, but the Town, in partnership with the Friends of the Meeting House, has been working to engage the community in planning and new

programming.
Brunch and Brainstorm sessions helped the Meeting House Committee identify priorities, which focused on preserving the building, expanding its use, and upgrading the kitchen to allow for more shared experiences. The Bruhn grant funding will address ADA and code compliance issues, allowing the Meeting House to once again serve as the center of community and collaboration in Windham.

"We congratulate the community champions who are leading this work and thank Senator [Bernie] Sanders, Senator [Peter] Welch, and Congresswoman [Becca] Balint for their support of this wonderful program. We would also like to acknowledge former Senator [Patrick] Leahy, for his work in establishing this important national program and proposing that it be named after his good friend and former PTV president, the late Paul Bruhn,' said current PTV president, Ben Doyle, in a news release. The Windham Meeting House

project and the Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant program are supported by the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The program supports the preservation and restoration of buildings and community gathering spaces of economic and social significance in rural communities with fewer than 7,500 residents.



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# **■** Brattleboro ARTM

FROM SECTION FRONT

balance to the Global Warming

Solutions account. Moderator

David Gartenstein found the

amendment was not related to the

article as warned, but his ruling

was appealed by District 9 mem-

it was being decided what to do

with the excess fund balance, it

would be acceptable to change

could be changed, but not the ob-

jective, without having publicly

the moderator thinks it's a good

agreed with Gartenstein, saying

the article was warned for a par-

ticular purpose. He added that if

the moderator's decision was sus-

tained but the article was voted

down, the money would remain

Gartenstein's ruling was sus-

tained in a standing vote and the

body returned to the original

question of transferring \$268,862

for street paving and capital im-

provement projects, until District

7 member George Carvill moved

to amend the article to \$135,000.

in half with the intent of then

meeting with the Selectboard

about other ways to spend the

money and have it on the annual

Tyler noted that a recent road-

way assessment recommends

spending \$700,000 annually to

maintain the current level of re-

pair, adding it would cost more

than \$1 million to actually im-

we're getting to these roads every

20, 30 years," he said. "Bottom

line is I don't think we have

enough money now. We're trying

for capital road projects passed

in a standing vote by a landslide.

Ultimately, using the \$268,862

A lengthy discussion en-

sued before voters approved the

District 9 member Kate

O'Connor said this was the first

time she would vote against a

budget, "because I think this is

She called the proposed

\$104,693 in salary increases for

department heads — ranging from 7.6 to 16.7% increases —

people who live in our commu-

nity," she said, adding that 27%

of the town population is "living in poverty" and that those on Social Security are only see-

ing an increase of 3.2%, or \$108

per year.
"To me, this is a moral issue,"

the total salary increase repre-

sents less than 0.5% of the to-

ployees who are not in a union re-

ceived 4% cost of living (COLA)

increases, totaling \$38,666 of

the total salary increase. He also

noted three other elements affect-

ing the overall increase: regular

step increases (\$17,584); "com-

pression" issues of people lower than department heads being paid

more due to union contract struc-

tures (\$24,559); and the fact that

some department heads have new responsibilities (\$23,883). When asked why the large

increase should happen now,

Goodnow replied, "because it really should have been done

sue and we're catching up," he

said, adding that the board looked

at similar salaries in "a number

of other towns" as well as num-

bers from the Vermont League of

Cities and Towns in trying to of-

fer competitive pay and benefits

to retain the knowledge and his-

tory folks have by keeping them

Agave recalled that in the late

1990s, the town manager earned

\$61,000 annually. But he said

that, given time, "I don't consider

this excessive over the long range.

My concern is more [to] do all we

can to make sure the working stiff

in town gets their share, [and] can

District 9 member Robert

Oeser then moved to reduce the

budget by \$2 million, the amount

of ARPA money in the board's

discretion to disperse. That no-

tion was defeated by a notable

District 9 member Django

Grace then proposed increas-

ing the budget by \$70,000, ask-

ing the board to allot that to the

Global Warming Solutions Fund,

a \$70,000 annually replenishing

fund that promotes the sustain-

ability and resiliency of town

operations. The balance in that

fund as of December 2023 was

margin in a standing vote.

climate concerns

**Increase for** 

"We've been deferring this is-

Goodnow responded that

He noted that all town em-

"I think we need to look at the

\$22,305,158 general budget.

to do the best we can."

The budget

wrong.'

"out of touch."

O'Connor said.

tal budget.

sooner."

working here.

also make a living.

"At our current funding levels,

RTM warning next year.

Carvill said he cut the amount

Gartenstein noted the amount

"It's not a question whether

Town Counsel Bob Fisher

Heller maintained that because

ber Oscar Heller.

that use on the floor.

warned that objective.

or bad idea," he said.

in the fund.

estimated \$1.62 million at 0% interest. They did so by a vote

Funding already exists in the utility budget to pay off the bond in several years, but the town also has the option to take up to 20 years.

Public Works Director Dan Tyler said that since the money is already in the budget, the project will not affect water rates. Only town water users will repay the debt.

A 3-million-gallon water storage tank currently stands at Pleasant Valley Reservoir next to the treatment facility to provide water at high-demand times. All of West Brattleboro to the downtown area is served by the tank.

A recent inspection by scuba divers identified maintenance that needs to be addressed, which would necessitate draining the tank and taking it offline. Typically, this would be done using a temporary storage tank, but that requires costly site preparation. Town officials looked into alternatives and found that a more cost-effective solution is to install a secondary, permanent water tank

Thus this article proposes a 400,000 gallon tank to be installed next to the bigger one. "We're limited by space, but it's designed to do what we need it to do," Tyler said.

### First few articles handled quickly

With no discussion, voters appeared to unanimously approve, in a standing/voice vote, spending \$131,698.86 through special assessments on property within the Mountain Home Park Special Benefit Assessment Tax District to pay debt service on capital improvements to water and sewer lines serving the Mountain Home and Deepwood Mobile Home parks.

Voters also approved spending \$80,000 through special assessments on properties within the Downtown Improvement District to pay for the work of the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance (DBA). This is an annually recurring article on the warning.

Asked if there was an overlap in the community marketing initiative and DBA funding, Selectboard Chair Ian Goodnow said the board allocated \$160,000 from the revolving loan fund after a request from the DBA to move in a different direction and contract with a consultant to access grants and other money to invest in the downtown as a pi-

lot program. Spending \$367,810 to support 38 human service programs and facilities for residents was supported by voters after discussion. That figure represents 1.73% of the total budget. The committee that decides how to allocate money can spend up to 2%. The tax impact per \$100,000 of valuation would be \$31.40.
"Brattleboro is not a phil-

anthropic organization," said District 9 member Steve Heim, arguing that the article, and the practice of the town directing funds to charities, take away agency from residents who might have other priorities.

District 8 member Mary Casey said part of the request has to do with the grant procedures that nonprofits have to go through to apply for money elsewhere. "I hear what you're saying; it's just that grant system," Casey said.

We put this money toward these uses because we care about the people who live in our town. [...] This is a moral obligation that we are fulfilling," said District 8 member Spoon Agave.

Compensation for Selectboard members was approved at \$10,000 annually for the chair and \$8,000/each for board members, which is the current rate.

The request for voters to transfer \$268,862 from the Unassigned General Fund balance for street paving and capital road improvement projects (non-operating capital costs) saw lengthy discussion and was amended at one point to put the money in the Global Warming Solutions account. But first, District 9 member Kevin O'Brien asked how the money is spent.

Generally speaking, said Goodnow, such transfers of "leftover funds that aren't budgeted for" are invested in capital improvement projects.

The board always keeps 10% of any leftover money in the fund for emergency spending, said Vice-Chair Franz Reichsman.

District 8 member Arthur Davis said he was happy to hear that the town is looking at road improvement projects in a "holistic way that is not just

Goodnow noted that the board put \$290,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money toward

of the unassigned general fund

a bike path master plan. O'Brien moved to amend the article to transfer the full amount

# **■ WSESD** annual meeting

Murphy explained that because the CLA is related to the real estate market and the Vermont real estate market is in a volatile state of high prices, tax rates are expected to rise by a projected 10.4% in Brattleboro, 9.6% in Dummerston, 13.4% in Guilford, and 12.6% in Putney.

Households earning \$128,000 or less in annual income are eligible for tax bill income-sensitivity provisions.

Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Business Administrator Frank Rucker told the meeting that although Act 127 was introduced to address equity and funding in public schools here, legislators rescinded the important 5% tax rate cap on Feb. 22 — well after most school boards had voted on budget proposals.

That exposed the boardapproved budget to dramatic increases in taxes, and the board and administration thought that was not fiscally responsible," Rucker said, adding that the "unique part" of this budget cycle was "the degree to which there is uncertainty at this time of year.

In order to address the unknowns and provide what the board believes is a responsible budget both for student needs and taxpayers' ability to pay, Rucker and the Finance Committee plan to add \$1.25 million from surplus money to the revenue side of the budget, and potentially institute spend-

member towns closer to a 4% tax rate increase.

The plan includes moving \$600,000 of interest from health reimbursement account reserve money, \$150,000 of interest on government treasury bills, and \$200,000 of revenue from the state that came as part of the 2015 education reform law, Act 46.

## **Keeping kids first**

Rucker, noting that many school budgets have failed to pass across the state due to the legislative unknowns, said the budget includes staffing allocation, investment in training, and other supports that have had a 'substantial impact on kids' and that administrators wanted to retain in the budget.

When questioned about 15 positions providing academic, social, and emotional support with Esser money — pandemicera federal funds — Rucker said money was invested in school buildings to create safer air quality as well as in providing more support for students, who needed it after being out of school for a year.

"The framework was, What's best for kids?" added Superintendent Mark Speno, noting that all positions were evaluated and the 15 remaining are considered necessary to support students moving forward.

The district also has about \$10 million in capital plans for the future.

About 70 minutes into the meeting, Dick DeGray of ing freezes to get most district Brattleboro moved to reduce

the budget by \$3 million, a motion that ultimately failed.

DeGray said a lot of people in Brattleboro "are struggling deeply" and he believed a tax rate increase below 4% wouldn't be a bad thing."

"I believe we should do this now and this would be the prudent thing to do for the taxpayers of our district," DeGray

Former board member Jaci Reynolds, also of Brattleboro, says she would enjoy lowering the tax rate, but that would mean a lot of needed student support would go away.

It's unfortunate if the tax rate is a complicated issue, but it's more unfortunate if our kids don't have things they need," Reynolds said, adding that principals on the front lines were consulted and had come to these conclusions. "Any opportunity for tax savings feels good except if it's going to have a negative impact on our kids."

Isaac Freitas-Eagan of Guilford, who grew up in the district and now teaches here, said, "It should be more obvious that investing in schools is the right thing to do with taxpayers' money.

Martha Noyes, a teacher outside the district who is a homeowner and longtime resident here, said she sees the struggle from both points of view but that it is "being a good role model" to "admit times are tough and budgets are tight and we would be acting fairly and appropriately if we tighten the budget, as we do in our homes."

FROM SECTION FRONT

"You know better than we do that this budget is just horrendous to understand, former board member Jodi Normandeau said to Rucker, adding that she would support the budget request but hopes there can be more dialogue in the future about items she believes can be cut.

Discussion about problems in schools and school culture prompted outgoing board member Robin Morgan to invite folks to attend meetings, and to note that two students sit on the school board.
"One thing that definitely

will not improve school culture is cutting the budget," Morgan

Carmen Winchester, also a teacher, pointed out that the Legislature had put the district in this difficult position, and said the board has been responsible in crafting a proposed budget that reflects the needs.

"If you're angry about the money, pay attention and vote in November, and point your emotions toward your state legislature," Winchester said.

Lisa Ford of Guilford agreed, saying voters should hold legislators accountable at the polls.

"This is a very responsible budget; a 3% increase is really not a lot," she said. "That it impacts taxpayers is unfortunate, as it's due to a flawed education funding formula. It's not our school board; they're doing the best they can."

\$74,821.

Grace said his four years on the town Energy Committee have shown him that earmarking the money for climate change solutions is the "greatest step" the town has taken in this realm "in the 18 years I've been alive and living in this town, but I think we need more.'

and we need to do more as a community to face the crisis that we're in," said District 9 member Sonia Silbert.

Town meeting members cannot direct how money is implemented, only whether to increase or decrease the bottom line.

Selectboard member Daniel Quipp noted he felt assumptions were being made that all other dollars spent in town were ignorant of climate change impacts. That's not so, he said, citing a more efficient water-treatment facility and road work projects.

"This \$70,000 is wildly insufficient," Quipp said, but added he has "no problem" being advised to put the money into the Global Warming Solutions Fund. He added that when the board is advised by voters, members take that advice and act on it.

When challenged that some community input about how to use the ARPA money was not acted on, Quipp concurred, saying there "were a couple of items" on the community surveys that the board didn't fund with ARPA money, but that were funded from other sources, and in fact with more money than was available through ARPA.

He also encouraged constituents to meet with the board in the fall, not just on RTM Day, to voice priorities and concerns.

"It's really hard to have a big impact on the budget on this day," Quipp said, urging members to "please" work with the board during the budget drafting process.

### After lunch and non-binding resolutions

Fewer voters returned after a one-hour lunch break, but enough were present to supply a quorum.

After lunch, a motion to direct the Selectboard to allocate up to 1.4% in funding for human services next year was successfully amended to 2%.

Two percent was approved by RTM for this year, but the Human Services Committee ended up allocating somewhat less after saying members assiduously reviewed all requests.

Committee member Sarah Turbow of District 9 said there

"continue to be huge needs for human services in the community that are not yet being met," and proposed the 2% directive.

District 9 member Zeke King then amended the amendment to 2.3% of the FY25 budget, in hopes of adding more programs. That failed.

The 1.4% equaled \$322,893, "This is a drop in the bucket the 2% amount equaled \$461,276, and the 2.3% equaled \$530,468.

Quipp said people often attend RTM and look to the board "for answers to really big social problems." He said it's disappointing that even the amount being spent isn't enough and questioned "how impactful" even this amount of money can be in the face of such large issues.

A non-binding resolution calling for Rep. Becca Balint, D-Vt, to support halting U.S. arms sales to Israel until a permanent ceasefire is achieved in Gaza was clearly supported.

Many in attendance at the RTM also wore keffiyehs, the traditional square cotton scarves symbolizing Palestinians' connections to their land.

District 7 member Isaac Evans-Frantz made the motion and said elected officials have an "obligation to speak up in the face of war crimes that the U.S. is funding.

He noted Balint "has rightly called for a ceasefire in Gaza" and said that "to avoid the perception of complicity, she must commit to opposing any additional funds for weapons for the genocidal war in Gaza.'

District 9 member Tim Wessel said the resolution "only benefitted one party and one party only, and that's Hamas."

A resolution was also passed asking the Legislature to provide education and information about commissioning ranked choice elections by the end of the next biennium. District 9 representative Fric Spruyt moved originally to implement the change by the end of the next biennium.

"At a minimum, this would make us a good role model,' he said.

A partly tongue-in-cheek motion to deliberately introduce controversial warning articles to increase RTM attendance brought a laugh, but was amended to ask the board to do what a committee had suggested several years ago: enhance RTM access to offer virtual attendance as well as free lunch and childcare.

■ Kate O'Connor, referenced in this report, is executive director of Vermont Independent Media, the nonprofit organization that publishes The Commons.

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The Brattleboro office of HireAbility (formerly Vocational Rehabilitation) has a part-time opening for a Career Training and Education Coach to join our Team.

The CTE Coach will provide time-limited on-site support for participants with disabilities in two settings: education/training settings and/or on the job site. This position may provide support prior to, during and/or after a participant's work schedule. This position may provide tutoring or coaching at workshops, training programs or classes to help the participant become independent and successful.

To apply for this position, please go to the State of Vermont Dept. of Human Resources website at www.humanresources.vermont.gov. For further information about the position please contact Alicia White, Regional Manager, Alicia.L.White@vermont.gov. Application deadline date: 3/31/24



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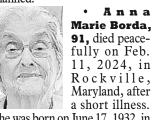
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## **MILESTONES**

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

## **Obituaries**

· Linda Carter Capen **Avery, 70,** of Brattleboro. Died peacefully on June 30, 2023 in Vernon at the home of her son. Todd. Linda was born in Catskill, New York on May 9, 1953, the daughter of Alice and Charles Porter. She was a graduate of Brattleboro Union High School, Class of 1971, and married Scott Capen in January 1975. They had two children, Amy and Todd. They divorced in 1997. Linda married Lee Avery Jr. in October 2007. He predeceased her in December 2021. Linda had several jobs over the years. She worked at Basketville in Putney, and was a seamstress for Humane Trophies in Brattleboro and a dishwasher at Vernon Elementary School. In 1990, she started as a night stocker for the convenience stores run by Fleming Oil Company. By the time she retired, she was the manager of several stores. Linda is survived by her daughter Amy (Wayne) and their children Brittney, Sage, and Jayden; and her son Todd (Tiffany) and their children KerryAnne, Michael, Bethany, and Montana. In addition to her parents and her two husbands, Linda was predeceased by her brother, Larry. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: No services are planned. Anna



a short illness. She was born on June 17, 1932, in Tarrytown, New York, the daughter of Adelinda and Anthony John Tucci. She grew up in Tarrytown and graduated from Washington Irving High School. She then attended the Spence School for Girls in New York City. Anna Marie was known for her bright smile and her kind heart. She was a devoted wife to her husband, Timothy Borda, and a loving mother to her five children. She was also a proud grandmother to her 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Anna Marie held a variety of administrative roles throughout her career, including the County Trust Mortgage Division, Master Department Store, Brewster High School, and World Learning. She was also an active member of St. Brigid's Kitchen at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Brattleboro. Anna Marie will be remembered for her love of family, her laughter, and her commitment to helping others. She is survived by her children, Owen Borda, Christopher (Patricia) Borda, David (Andrea) Borda, Mary (Anthony) Miller, and Wendy (Lorraine Cotter) Toney; her sister, Linda Jane (Tucci) McCloskey; and her brother, Anthony Tucci. She was predeceased by her husband and her parents. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial gathering will be held on July 6, at 10 a.m., with a Eucharistic celebration at 11 a.m., at St. Michael's Catholic Church, with interment to follow in St. Michael's Cemetery. Donations to St. Brigid's Kitchen online or at 38 Walnut St., Brattleboro, VT 05301 or to Raphael House, 1515 Dunster Rd., Rockville, MD 20854. To offer condolences, visit

**Carroll Chase** II, 36, of Alstead, New Hampshire, beloved son of Carol Davis

Mackey and Glen Chase Sr., died on Feb. 16, 2024. With a height of 6-foot-2 and a boot size of 12, his premature birth weight of 3 pounds, 13 1/2 ounces on March 7, 1977 was certainly disguised. He attended St. Joseph School in Keene, New Hampshire, and then Keene High School. Known for his long beard, kind heart, quick wit, infectious smile and generosity, Glen left a lasting impact on everyone he met. His generous nature shone through offering quarters at the grocery store to spend in the vending machine, buying flowers or plants for strangers wholooked sad, or for someone he felt went out of their way to help him, fixing a brake line in a snowstorm in the middle of the night so a friend could get to work the next morning, to bringing doughnuts to one of his favorite police officers. Glen loved to babysit his friend's children, allowing them to jump on the bed, polish his nails, braid his hair or teaching them to shoot. He had an eye for antiques, art. and junk. Once bought, he just couldn't part with the item even though he couldn't find a use for the new possession. Glen loved his cat Holstein and would leave a door aiar for him to roam in and out, unfortunately resulting in the loss of his possessions which, most of the time, he didn't notice. Glen's talents consisted of welding, painting, construction, wood cutting, and making people laugh. His real passion was motorcycles — riding, buying parts, and building from scratch for himself and his friends. He was still in search for his Harley-Davidson Knucklehead that we are told is in a shop for engine repair. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of his life will take place at the Alstead Town Hall on April 21, from 1 to 4 p.m. Please



bring stories and pictures to share.

· Doris W.

Hallock, 95,

of Hinsdale,

New Hampshire.

Died peacefully,

surrounded by

her loving family, on March 18, 2024, at Rockingham County Nursing Home in Brentwood, New Hampshire. She was born on Feb. 6, 1929, in Hinsdale, daughter of the late Marcus G. Worden and Ethel Mae (Flanders) Worden in the very house next door to where she would spend most of her life. Doris received her education in the Hinsdale schools, ultimately graduating as valedictorian from Hinsdale High School in 1947. Just a week later, on June 23, 1947, she embarked on a remarkable journey with the

Holstein Association, the world's largest dairy cattle breed organization. Starting at a humble wage of 17 cents per hour, Doris dedicated herself to the role of executive administrative assistant for an astonishing 58 years to the day, retiring on June 23, 2005. Her dedication and pride in her work were evident, as she forged lifelong friendships and made significant contributions to the organization. Following her retirement, she volphaneuf.net. unteered at Hinsdale Elementary

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.

# **PUBLIC** NOTICES

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**Public Hearing Notice** 

Notice is hereby given that the Brattleboro Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on 4.17.2024 at 7:00 PM in the Selectboard Meeting Room. Municipal Center, 230 Main St., Brattleboro, VT; the meeting will also be held on Zoom. Meeting ID: 881 4045 1917 Passcode: 190450.

2023-146 MWF Industries; RR District; Site Plan Approval for the construction of 4 dwellings and a 3,600 sq. ft. garage/storage/office building with site improvements, at 680 West River Rd; TMP #70317.000; 2024-16 William Austin & Joan Rockwell Revocable Trust; RN 5400 District; request for approval to Subdivide existing .29-acre parcel at 238/240 Fairview Street to create a new .12-acre parcel to be fronted on Winter Street; TMP # 315406.000; 2024-27 Town of Brattleboro: RN 3600 District: request for Site Plan Approval to Construct a 72' x 80' sand/salt storage shed with concrete block foundation and fabric cover at 166 Fairground Rd; TMP # 355138.010; 2024-31 Casella Waste Management, LLC; ID District; request for Site Plan, Dimensional Waiver and Flood Hazard Approval to demolish transfer and storage building and construct replacement with crushing pit area, relocate existing scales, create staging area for semi-trailers & install sign at 413, 427 & 437 Vernon Rd; TMP #360003.000, 360004.000 & 360011.200; 2024-32 Town of Brattleboro; WF District; request for Site Plan & Local Act 250 Approval to demolish 2 maintenance buildings and replace with larger building; replace lighting at upper softball field; expand and improve Kiwanis Shelter parking lot at Living Memorial Park; TMP # 110215.000

Pursuant to 24 VSA §§ 4464(a)(1)(C) and 4471(a), participation in this local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal. NOTE: Meetings are open to the public. For specific accommodations please call the Planning Services Department at 802-251-8154. Application materials are available at https://brattleboro.gov/development-review-board. Additional materials may be submitted up to the time of the meeting and will be uploaded to the above address.

School for several years. On July 1, 1950, Doris married Martin L. "Marty" Hallock, and together they raised their beloved daughter, Susan. They purchased the parcel of land adjacent to Doris' parents, where they built their family home. Over the years, Doris and Marty enjoyed square dancing, vacationing at Spofford Lake, and the pleasure of getting together regularly with lifelong friends and family members to have potluck suppers and play cards. Doris held a deep affection for her hometown, actively participating in various community organizations, including being a life member of both the Hinsdale Historical Society and Wantastiquet Grange No. 133. She was also a devoted member of the Women's Fellowship for the First Congregational Church. In 2018, Doris made the decision to leave the family home and enter Langdon Place, an assisted living facility in Exeter, New Hampshire to be near her family. In 2021, she moved to the Rockingham County Nursing Home, where she was visited by family members on a daily basis, to drop off a morning cup of coffee and a maple doughnut (her favorite) or to play a good game of cribbage. Beyond her professional and community endeavors, Doris found joy in simple pleasures. An avid gardener and knitter, she found solace and fulfillment in these pursuits. She also enjoyed the camaraderie of playing Bingo but, above all, her family held her heart. Doris treasured every moment spent with her devoted daughter, Susan; her sonin-law, George Kimball; and her cherished grandchildren, Hannah and her wife Melissa Kimball. and Oliviah Kimball and her fiancé Jacob Smart. The arrival of her great-granddaughter, Molly Hallock-Lee Kimball, two years ago brought immense happiness to Doris in her new role as "Gigi." The four-generation photos will be treasured for years to come. Doris was preceded in death by her husband of 45 years; her sister, Viola W. Knapp; and her brothers, Homer C. and Richard H. Worden. Though they have gone before her, their memories live on in the hearts of those who loved them. Doris leaves behind a legacy of love, dedication, and community spirit. Her kindness, generosity, and unwavering devotion to her family and town will be fondly remembered and deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. MEMORIAL INFOR-MATION: Services were held on March 25 at First Congregational Church in Hinsdale, followed by burial in Pine Grove Cemetery in Hinsdale. Donations to the

• James P. Johnson, a native of Walpole, New Hampshire, died peacefully in his sleep at his apartment in Bellows Falls on March 13, 2024. He attended school in Walpole and was a graduate of Walpole High School, Class of 1952. After graduation, he enlisted in the Army and served in Korea, attaining the rank of sergeant and earning an honorable discharge. Proud of his service, he was a longtime member of American Legion Pierce-Lawton Post 37 in Bellows Falls. On Sept. 7, 1956, he married Jane McGuirk of North Walpole and lived in Dover, New Hampshire, while he attended the University of New Hampshire's Thompson School of Agriculture. They moved to Wendell, New Hamsphire, and he worked for his sister, Ann, and her husband, Ollie, at Kathan Gardens in Newport, New Hampshire. They returned to Walpole in 1959 and he was employed by his father "Jack" Johnson at R.N. Johnson, Inc., a John Deere dealership

Hinsdale Historical Society, P.O.

Box 194, Hinsdale, NH 03451.

that his father founded in 1929. In 1964, Jim founded the company's lawn and garden division, which he managed until his retirement in 1985. In his retirement, he farmed on a small scale, raising beef cattle and hay. He loved going to farm-related auctions and, over the years, built a vast cast iron tractor seat collection, a collection of one-cylinder antique engines and a massive collection of farm antiques and memorabilia. He also regularly bought and sold vintage two-cylinder John Deere tractors and implements. In 2000, he founded Abenaki Springs Farm, an organic vegetable operation in Walpole. During this time, he became a tireless advocate in the Non-GMO movement. He even had his car doors lettered and his license plate changed to promote the movement. Not being a fan of New England winters, he traveled to warmer climates throughout his later years. The first few winters were to New Zealand and then mostly to Florida. He wrote interesting letters about his excursions and made many friends. Jim is survived by his former wife, Jane and their three children, Linda McCullock of East Dummerston, Alan Johnson and his wife, Lynnette, of Walpole, and Steven Johnson and his wife, Lily of Russell, New York. Additionally, he is survived by eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, and his sister, Jane Broadrick of Concord, New Hampshire. MEMORIAL IN-FORMATION: There are no calling hours or services. Burial will

be private.

J. "Vinny" Latronica, 84, of Brattleboro. Died March 17, 2024, at Brattleboro Memorial

Vincent

Hospital following a period of declining health. Vinny was born in the Richmond Hill section of Queens, New York on Nov. 1939, the son of Joseph and Minnie (Grasso) Latronica. He was raised and educated in Queens and Manhattan, graduating from the New York School of Printing in 1957. He worked his entire career in the printing industry and earned his Master Printers certificate. Locally, Vinny was employed at the former American Stratford Company and the Book Press, both of Brattleboro, and managed the printing department at C&S Wholesale Grocers, which he retired from following many vears of faithful service. A lifelong Catholic, he was a communicant of St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church. Of his leisure time activities, he enjoyed puzzles, collecting Lionel trains, and spectator sports (he was an avid Green Bay Packers fan). He also cherished time spent with his family. On May 14, 1967, at St. Bonaventure's Roman Catholic Church in Jamaica, New York, he married Barbara A. Glembocki, who survives. Besides his faithful and devoted wife of 56 years, he leaves one son, Anthony V. Latronica of Brattleboro; a daughter, Anna N. Borgatti and husband Joseph, Jr. of Brattleboro; a brother, Thomas Latronica of New York; and a granddaughter, Ava K. Borgatti of Brattleboro. Additionally, he is survived by several nieces and nephews. MEMORIAL INFORMA-TION: In keeping with his final wishes, no formal funeral services are scheduled. He will be laid to rest in St. Michael's Cemetery in Brattleboro. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302. To offer condolences,

visit atamaniuk.com. • Robert Russell "Bob" O'Brien, 79, of Jamaica. Died

osing people you love affects you. It is buried ■ inside of you and becomes this big, deep hole of ache. It doesn't magically go away, even when you stop officially mourning.

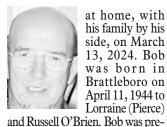


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deceased by his mother, Lorraine Stark; his older brother Roland, and his sister Sharon. He is survived by his loving wife of 57 years, Norma; his sons Sean and Bruce of Jamaica and Paul Feige of Florida; his brother Clinton O'Brien (Kelly) of Weathersfield; seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; brother-inlaw David (Helen) in Sandbank, Scotland; and many nieces and nephews in the U.S, and Scotland. Bob graduated from Leland & Gray Seminary in 1962 and then joined the Navy as a pipefitter on submarine tenders. He met his wife Norma while he was stationed at Holy Loch, Scotland. Bob had been a member of the Jamaica Volunteer Fire Department since high school. He held many positions, including Fire Chief, and in later years, was known as Lexa's driver of the rescue vehicle. No one could beat him to the fire house when an alarm went off. He was committed to the community, serving on the Selectboard, school board, the Windham Solid Waste Management District board, the historical society and the TV Club. For many years, he and friends maintained an ice rink at Jamaica School for the enjoyment of the children in town. Bob was a caretaker at Stratton West condo association since 1971; he also owned and operated a dump truck and backhoe on many local jobs. His favorite job was working with his sons paving, and enjoyed the company of the paving crew and truck drivers for over 20 years. He will be so missed by his family and friends. MEMORIAL IN-FORMATION: There will be a gathering at the Jamaica Cemetery on Saturday, April 6, at noon, followed by a celebration of Bob's life at the Jamaica Firehouse. Donations to Jamaica Fire and Rescue, 4017 VT-30, Jamaica, VT 05343; Rescue Inc., P.O. Box 593, Brattleboro, VT 05302; or Grace Cottage Hospital, 185 Grafton Rd., Townshend, VT 05353.



K i m (McCandless) Patterson, 65, of Westminster. Died on March 17, 2024 in Lebanon, New

Hampshire. She was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on Oct. 12, 1958. She had been married to Edward Berger for 16 years, who predeceased her. She later married James Patterson in 2006, who survives. She is also survived by her three children, Jennifer (Berger) Buckley, and Nathaniel and Ariel Berger; an adopted son, Jed; grandchildren Joslynn and Jayden Wright, Andrew and Alexander Berger, and Hesten, Trever, and Rosajean Allison; and siblings Kelly Wunsch and Scott McCandless. She was predeceased by her parents, Georgia (Berger) Schantz and Dean McCandless Sr., stepfather Maynard E. Berger, siblings Dean McCandless Jr. and Lori (McCandless) Costello, grandson Richard C. Allison, and nephew Jacon Wunsch. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: There are no calling hours or services planned at



 Abraham Schuster, 93, of West Dover. Died at his home on March 18, 2024. Abe struggled with diabetes, Alzheimer's,

and Parkinson's, but never complained. He kept his sense of humor and remained the strong, loving spirit many people admired. Born in Nyack, New York, to Oscar and Goldie Schuster, Abe was an Eagle Scout, beloved husband, father, uncle, foster-dad, athlete, coach, teacher, and mentor. He was a champion wrestler in high school and college. Although small in stature, Abe was nicknamed the "Mighty Molecule," and inducted into two Halls of Fame in New York. After two years in the Army, including time as a medic in Korea, Abe went to Penn State and earned an M.Ed. while also interning as assistant wrestling coach for Penn State's national championship team. He returned to Spring Valley to marry Faith Purisch in 1954. Beginning his long career as a teacher, Abe worked summers running the waterfront and water safety instruction at Camp Hill, Town & Country, and Ramaquois day camps, where he taught thousands of kids to swim. Abe's "real" job was physical education teacher and coach (soccer, track and field, and wrestling). Abe served as chair of the Physical Education Department at Pomona Junior High School (PJHS), where he was recruited before the school

opened. Twenty years later, Abe retired at age 55, after surviving breast cancer. Faith, who also taught at PJHS for twenty years, retired too. Together, they set out to fulfill their dream — moving to Vermont near the Mount Snow ski area, where they could ski weekdays and avoid weekend crowds. When they weren't skiing, they supported the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community, which they treasured. Abe always had a smile, wisdom or encouragement to offer. He will be missed by everyone who knew him, most especially his wife of nearly 70 years; his sons Steven, David, and Jeremy; four nephews and their families, and the Jewish community. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: None provided.



· Philip H. Steckler III, 79, died Jan. 26, 2024, in Newmarket, New Hampshire. with his wife and three children by

his side. Phil is remembered for his warmth, positivity, and legacy of broad-reaching community impact. Phil was born in Wilmington, Delaware, on Dec. 9, 1944, to Lois (Riegelman) and Philip H. Steckler, Jr. He grew up in Scarsdale, New York, and graduated from Principia Upper School in Clayton, Missouri. He earned his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Vermont and master's degree in economics from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Phil's early career in Vermont included teaching math and economics at Mount Anthony Union High School in Bennington before moving to Brattleboro in 1971 and managing the regional office of Berkley & Veller Real Estate. Phil became a principal of Country Business, Inc. in 1976, where he spent the remainder of his career assessing, brokering, and stewarding businesses throughout New England. Phil was deeply engaged in economic, cultural, educational, and sport activities in the community. He contributed to advisory roles, on boards and committees, and as trustee for numerous regional organizations, among them: Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce; Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation; Brattleboro Rotary Club; Brattleboro Outing Club; Latchis Arts; New England Business Brokers Association; Pure Water for the World; and Vermont Chamber of Commerce. Phil's leadership in the community was recognized by the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce in 2007 as Persons of the Year together with his wife Marcia. He received the Paul Harris Fellowship Award from the Brattleboro Rotary Club in 2008 for exemplifying "service above self." In recent years he served as treasurer of the board for Marlboro College, and as mentor for local entrepreneurs through the Seacoast (NH) Chapter of SCORE. Phil was a lifelong Christian Scientist. As a member of the Christian Science Branch Church in Brattleboro for over 40 years, Phil served in numerous capacities, among them Sunday School teacher, First Reader, board officer, and other committee roles. Following his relocation to Newmarket in 2020, Phil attended services as a member of the Christian Science Church in Dover, New Hampshire. Phil loved to participate in competitive sports, coaching high school football and alpine skiing while in Bennington and eventually coaching both youth and adult ice hockey teams in Brattleboro. For many years, Phil was one of the top tennis players in southern Vermont. He also enjoyed playing on the Brattleboro Reformer softball team, and he rarely missed a Tuesday night session of ice hockey at Withington Rink. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Phil helped to organize the Brattleboro Outing Club's Washington's Birthday X-C Ski Race. Some of Phil's other favorite outdoor activities included sailing, fishing, kayaking, rowing, golf, and walking his beloved Labrador Retrievers in the woods. Phil is survived by his wife of 54 years, Marcia (Schenk) of Newmarket; daughter Erica and her spouse

P. Bradley Rosen of Lincoln,

Massachusetts; sons David

Steckler of Brattleboro, and Peter

and his spouse Erin Aeschliman

Steckler of Brentwood, New

Hampshire; and grandchildren

Collin, Asher, Brenner, Nel, Tait,

Anna, and Amalia. MEMORIAL

INFORMATION: A celebration of

Phil's life will be held on Saturday,

May 18, from 2 to 4 p.m., at

the Brattleboro Country Club.

Contributions in his memory

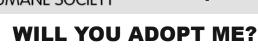
may be made to Youth Services,

32 Walnut St., Brattleboro, VT

05301, or to a charity of choice.

Arrangements are being handled

by the Cremation Society of New





Hi I'm Sophie! I am the sweetest gal looking for a new home. I love attention and can be in any home, even with kids, other cats, and respectful dogs. If you are interested in adopting me, come meet me today!

# ■ 'The Moth'

take even longer for the audio of the story to get on the radio.

CHAN'S PUBLIC SPEAKING story begins when she lived in Washington, D.C. While working for the FBI, she was a member of Toastmasters International, a nonprofit group that helps participants gain speaking and presentation skills through a network of world-

"When I first got to Quantico [...] the room was filled with all these people who were so important," Chan remembers. "I had to introduce myself, and I felt so shy and intimidated. I went to Toastmasters to practice public speaking [and] to feel more comfortable talking about

Chan notes that she was one of only three people in that room in Quantico for whom English was not their first language. Chan was only the second Chinese American woman to be hired in the FBI's 116vear history.

She has traveled extensively, both for the FBI and for personal pleasure, visiting friends in many countries. She speaks Cantonese, Mandarin and English, and had opportunity to use all three during her time with the bureau.

Chan's curious personality has encouraged her to speak with people of all ages, religions, and cultures. Though she's still a bit shy, she's the kind of person who is easy to converse with. People are naturally drawn to her.

Storytelling is like traveling the world. I love diversity, getting out, meeting new people, and living through another person's life by seeing it through their eyes," she says with a broad smile. "At Moth Mainstage events, the audience can travel through another person's story. You hear from people you would likely not have the opportunity to meet otherwise.

Eventually, Chan found her entry point to The Moth by attending its Story Slams. At these live events, anyone can put their name in a hat and, if drawn, take the stage and tell a five-minute story — or not. No one has to volunteer, and most of the audience is simply there to enjoy the show. She attended six Story Slam events and was picked to present four times.

At Story Slam, the Moth staff randomly picks volunteers who become judges. After each presentation, each judge holds up a card indicating a score from 0 to 10.

"It's pretty nerve-wracking to go to an event and not know whether you'll be telling a story or not, and then getting judged, but it taught me a lot and it was exhilarating," says a smiling

Chan remembers one of the first stories she shared. It involved her junior year at BUHS and the American Legion's Girls State Auxiliary event.

Girl's State, a week-long, invitation-only program, aims to develop leadership skills in high school seniors. According to the Auxiliary's online literature, "The focus of the program is Vermont town, county, and state government. Delegates are elected and appointed to offices within the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches of government, which culminates in a mock State Legislature."

Chan, a well-liked leader and athlete in her class, was among the five chosen by faculty to represent BUHS at the event a high honor. However, when the American Legion Auxiliary discovered that Chan was not a U.S. citizen — she had not yet lived in the United States long enough to be eligible to apply for citizenship — her offer was rescinded.

On April 11, 1975, the Brattleboro Reformer reported that "in one day, 500 of her friends and teachers at Brattleboro Union High School, where Ms. Chan is a iunior, signed petitions saying that she should go and receive the 'citizenship training' at the convention before she decides to become a full-fledged American. Among the signatures on the petition are the names of the other four nominated and elected representatives to the convention from

An uproar in Brattleboro ensued over the following weeks, inspiring letters to the editor in the Reformer and, later that month, an editorial by theneditor Norman Runnion. The other four chosen delegates refused to attend without her.

Eventually the decision was reversed, and Chan was allowed to attend Girl's State.

"That was an important time in my life," she remembers.

"My friends stood up for me, the community stood up for me, and I felt supported in my new country. I was an immigrant; I didn't expect that to happen.

It's a good story to share."
Another way to pitch a story is by calling a designed phone number, which will give the caller one minute to leave a recording to catch the ear of the staff. If chosen, they might be invited to tell their story at a Mainstage Event, as Chan had in New York City the previous

Chan's presentation in Tarrytown was her fourth Mainstage event. She has also been invited to present in Seattle; Jackson Hole, Wyoming; and New York City.

Her biography in the event program gives the audience a glimmer of her voice:

"Becky Chan retired in Seattle after 22 years with the FBI. An avid gardener, she volunteers, forages the wild, and hones her story telling skill as a freelance writer for the [Northwest] Asian Weekly, a community newspaper. Becky emigrated from Hong Kong to the U.S. with her family in 1971 and settled in Putney, VT where she learned to square dance, skinny dip, and make pizza out of Velveeta cheese, Chef Boyardee sauce, and English muffins. It's only after working in NYC she realized what real pizza is.

"A graduate of Brattleboro Union High School, she was the 1976 440-yard dash Vermont State Champ. Becky also ran track at North Carolina State University, 'alongside' Joan Benoit Samuelson, the 1984 Olympic Gold Medalist in the marathon. Joan has no recollection of ever running with Becky.'

THE TARRYTOWN EVENT is about to begin. The other storytellers for the evening come to join Chan and her friends before they head into the green room backstage. Chan introduces them to her friends.

Dave Kalema is a Ugandan American filmmaker. Cleyvis Natera is an author. Jameer Pond is a video director. Mindy Raf is a solo artist, stand-up comedian, and songwriter.

Chan's friends are struck by the bond among these five people, who appear to know each other well but actually met only days before.

In fact, allthe Moth staff and storytellers appear outgoing, confident, and extraordinarily friendly, not only with one another, but with Chan's friends as well. These storytellers fancy meeting new people with backgrounds unlike their own.

The lights blink, and the stars of the evening scurry away as the audience, which packs all 843 seats of the Tarrytown Music Hall, sits down. It's a gorgeous venue. Built in 1885, the Rockefellers, the Vanderbilts, and the societal elite once filled this room. Chan and the other storytellers will walk a stage where Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, and Dave Brubeck variously performed jazz, and Woodrow Wilson and Teddy Roosevelt held events for their respective presidential campaigns.

But on this night, one at a time, each storyteller will craft a tale that will keep the audience fully engrossed.

"Everybody has a story, an experience to share," Chan says to her friends before the curtain goes up. "It's up to us to bring a diverse community of storytellers together to allow the audience to experience lives different from our own.

She disappears backstage. A single violinist stands in the spotlight, playing a solo rendition of the Moth theme music. Then host Amber Wallin, a Los Angeles–based comedian and filmmaker, warms up the audience and educates us about how long storytellers are allowed to speak and other rules for the evening.

The theme for the event is "A Point of Beauty," which also happens to be the name of the latest Moth anthology in book

As each storyteller arrives onstage, the host reads their answer to the prompt, "Tell us about a time when you couldn't look away." Answers range from the sight of a nude male beach in Hawaii to the magic of a grandmother's hands seasoning food.

Four storytellers thrill us with tales of basketball, hiphop, a sick child, and a father grappling with his polyamorous lesbian daughter's relationships.

And then Chan, the final presenter of the evening, takes the stage. Dressed in black and full to the brim with humor and wisdom, Chan, the senior storyteller on tonight's stage, weaves

FROM SECTION FRONT

an astonishing story about bringing Cheng Chui Ping, a Chinese woman who ran a human smuggling operation, to justice.

"Sister Ping" — or "the Snakehead," as she was also known — was arrested for bringing over 3,000 Chinese people into the United States illegally, which earned her over \$40 million in the process.

Chan manages to weave her childhood in Hong Kong, her immigrant story from Putney, her education at BUHS, and the capture of a notorious smuggler into a story that keeps the audience moving from laughter to tears to awe. When it's over, the applause is thunderous.

She has told a version of this story all four times at Moth Mainstage, adding information, changing the format, tweaking the words and the humorous lines each time she does.

Kate Tellers, director for the evening's presentation of Moth Mainstage, is a huge fan.

'Becky has lived hundreds of stories in her life, and I want to hear them all," she says enthusiastically.

"I appreciate that she can find humor in a situation so close to her own identity. She steps confidently out of her comfort zone at each event, and manages to quickly connect with the audience, and through them, with people across the country."

Tellers goes on to explain that Moth storytellers can "tour" only until they reach the holy grail of storytelling — being recorded for The Moth Radio Hour. At that point, they must stop touring. She pictures Chan touring for some time.

"This woman is filled with interesting stories," Tellers says. "I want to hear them all."

For her part, Chan enjoys the challenge of storytelling, and her connection with the other presenters and her audience.

But there is one more reason she keeps going.

"I have this sense of responsibility, especially now, to educate people about the immigrant experience," says Chan with conviction.

"One way to do that is to share my personal stories of living, working, and becoming an American citizen, and then working for the FBI," she continues. "How can people understand what that is like if I don't share my own story?"

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT



her friends head to The Moth event. From left: Becky Chan, Fran Lynggaard Hansen, Ann Turner Tripp, and





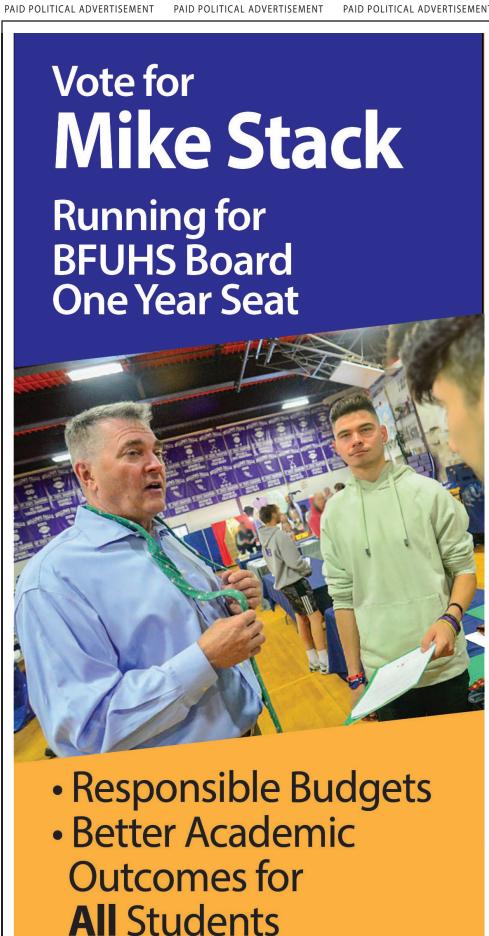
Register in person at the Gibson Aiken Center 207 Main Street, Brattleboro. Call 802-254-5808. Monday - Friday: 9am - Noon / 1pm - 4:30pm

To register online, scan the QR code, or visit brattleboro.gov/recreation-and-parks









# **COLUMN** | Deeper Dive

# Don't miss the solar eclipse on April 8

Vermonters will have a prime seat for this rare celestial event — and experience perspective-altering awe

o you have Monday, April 8, circled in red on your calendar? Just in case you are someone who isn't excited about the upcoming total solar eclipse, I want to make sure you know why you should be. If you have seen lunar eclipses and partial solar eclipses, you might think April 8 will be similar. Consider this: the sun is so bright that even a 90% eclipse could go unnoticed if you weren't watching for it.

That is not the case with a total solar eclipse.

I first became aware of how different this experience might be when I read Annie Dillard's essay "Total Eclipse." Dillard is a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer best known for her poetic and keen observations of the natural world. Here is her description of the light just before totality:

"The sun was going, and the world was wrong. The grasses were wrong; they were platinum. Their every detail of stem, head, and blade shone lightless and artificially distinct as an art photographer's platinum print. This color has never been seen on Earth. The hues were metallic; their finish was matte.'

I was intrigued, but because Annie Dillard can find the majestic in the mundane, I have begun looking for accounts by ordinary mortals as well. All recount a similar feeling of otherworldliness and awe.

Here are the recommendations I have gleaned.

First, get yourself to the zone of totality. In Vermont, the southern reach of that 70-milewide band runs just below Middlebury, Barre, and St.

**PATTI SMITH** is a wildlife rehabilitator and naturalist at the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center in West Brattleboro. The Commons' Deeper Dive column gives artists, arts organizations and other nonprofits elbow room to write in first person and/or be unabashedly opinionated, passionate, and analytical about their own creative work and events.

the middle of the band, the longer totality lasts. At the southern limit, it will last for just two minutes. You can add another minute and a half by driving a bit farther north.

From Brattleboro, you can drive straight up Interstate 91 for 2.5 hours to the Canadian border town of Newport. You'll want to choose a spot with a big view of the sky. The Vermont eclipse will begin (depending on your longitude) near 2:15 p.m., with totality achieved at 3:30 p.m. The moon's shadow will depart an hour later.

Veteran eclipse chasers' advice to first-timers is to just soak it in. Don't try to take photos. Totality is short and rare. There are, however, a few things worth watching for.

The strangeness begins several minutes before totality, when it begins to darken noticeably and only the very edge of the sun illuminates the Earth; look for the phenomenon Dillard describes. Shifts in the light spectrum and within our eves result in the world taking on a silvery cast. Certain features, especially shadows, take on an uncanny crispness.

At the moment of totality, you can remove eclipse glasses and feast your eyes. The mountains along the edge of the moon will flash with sunlight in a phenomenon called Bailey's Beads. The sun's corona will form a silvery band around the black disc of the moon and may Johnsbury. The closer you are to appear as silky strands reaching into space. If the sun ejects plasma, the Diamond King effect will be seen.

The sky will darken to an indigo blue, and the planets and brightest stars will appear. With the sun and the planets arrayed along the same arc, Earthings will have a glimpse of the order of our solar system. On April 8, Uranus and Jupiter will be above the sun; Venus, Saturn, and Mars will be below it.

There is a 60% chance that skies will be cloudy on April 8. I will plan to head to the zone of totality anyway, just to see the

sky grow dark in midafternoon. If you're thinking you'll just wait for the next total solar eclipse to come to Vermont, you'll have to wait until 2106.

It's True that the eclipse will last only a few minutes, but how often do we have opportunities to experience perspective-altering awe?



MICHAEL ZEILER/GREATAMERICANECLIPSE.COM

Here's another reason to go see the eclipse — intense shared experiences have been shown to build feelings of trust and camaraderie.

Maybe, if all of America sees the eclipse together? It's worth a try.

If you want to learn more eclipse science and celebrate the solar system, the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center will be hosting "Summoning the Eclipse" on Saturday, April 6 from 1 to 3 p.m.

You can register for this

family-friendly event at beec. org or by calling 802-257-5785. Admission includes eclipse glasses, an essential part of eclipse-watching gear.

# AROUND THE TOWNS

## Rec. Dept. hosts annual Egg Hunt

BRATTLEBORO — The Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department will present their annual free Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30, at the lower softball field at Living Memorial Park. In case of mud or rain, the alternate location will be inside the Nelson Withington Skating Facility.

Egg hunts will start promptly at 9:30 a.m. (for ages 4 and under) and 9:45 a.m. (for ages 5 and older). There will be six stuffed animal prizes for each age group. Each child needs to have a basket or container to collect the eggs. For more information, call 802-254-5808.

## **Spring Fling at** Whitingham Free **Public Library**

IACKSONVILLE — Spring is in the air at the Whitingham Free Public Library at the Municipal Center on Route 100. Join them on Saturday, March 30, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, for a Spring Fling Party.

Kids and parents/caregivers can enjoy crafts, activities, stories, and fun snacks. Call 802-368-7506 to register.

## Rabies clinic in Newfane

NEWFANE — Dr. Miles Powers will be holding a rabies clinic at NewBrook Fire Station on Saturday, March 30, from 10 a.m. to noon. Rabies vaccinations for dogs and cats are \$15,

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distemper shots are \$25, and the cost for both is \$35. If you would like to get other vaccinations at this time, call Powers at 802-348-

7918 to make arrangements. The Townshend Town Clerk will be at the clinic as well, so that town's residents can register their dogs. Dog licenses are due on April 1. For more information on licenses for Townshend dogs, call 802-365-7300, ext. 1.

## **Easter Treasure Hunt at Guilford Community Park**

GUILFORD —The Guilford Community Church is sponsoring a free Easter Treasure Hunt at the new Guilford Community Park on March 30, at 3 p.m., for children ages 3–13, rain or shine.

According to organizers, the Easter Bunny will be hiding treasures of toys and treats throughout the Guilford Community Park, with children then hunting for them among the tulips, under the new timber-built pavilion, around the Labyrinth, in the grass, and on the children's play equipment. In case of inclement weather, the hunt will move into the church's Zeller Hall under

the sanctuary. Parents are asked to pre-register their children by before noon on March 29 at bit.ly/758-hunt, so there will be enough toys for all participating. Each treasure hunter will receive an individualized clue based on age prior to the noncompetitive hunt. Children do not need to bring baskets or containers and do not need to be residents of Guilford.

members1cu.com

N. Brattleboro, VT 05304

Tel: (802) 257-5131

Fax: (802) 257-5837

10 Browne Crt.

P.O. Box 8245

Light refreshments will be available for sale to help support the church's youth and family programs, which include Sunday school classes and an interfaith youth group with community service projects and trips for teens. For more information, email guilfordchurch@gmail.com or call Church Administrator Debra Zagaeski at 802-257-0994.

## Sugar-on-snow dinner served at **Evening Star Grange**

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange, 1008 East-West Rd., will host a Maple Sugar on Snow Dinner on Saturday, March 30. The menu features baked ham with homemade baked beans, and homemade potato salad and cole slaw, with maple sugar on snow for dessert.

There will be two seatings, at 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$7 for children 5–11. Reservations are required, and no takeout meals will be available. Call 802-254-1138 to reserve a seat.

### **Creative writing** workshop focuses on eclipse

BRATTLEBORO — Eclipses have meant many things to many people throughout history from end-times omens to cosmic messages. Writers are invited to unleash their creativity under the shadow of the upcoming solar eclipse on April 2, at 7 p.m., in the Community Meeting Room of Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St.

Acclaimed author GennaRose Nethercott will lead a world tour through eclipse folklore, myths, and superstitions. Participants will then re-imagine these old stories to create new ones of their own in a free generative workshop; walk in with a blank page, and walk out with new writing. This is open to all levels of writing experience, ages 14 and up. Register in advance at info@ brookslibraryvt.org, or in person

## Estate planning talk offered in Guilford

GUILFORD — Guilford Cares will host Jonathan D. Secrest, an attorney with the Brattleboro law firm of Secrest & Darrow, who will present an overview on estate planning, including the most important issues to consider and the biggest mistakes to avoid, on Thursday, April 4, at 1 p.m., at the Broad Brook Community

Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Topics will include wills and trusts, lessening the burden on your heirs, providing for minor children or those with special needs, families with children from prior marriages, protecting assets in the event of a nursing home stay, and avoiding or reducing estate taxes. He said he looks forward to questions, and hopes to make these important matters clear, understandable, and even interesting.

During his career, Secrest has worked as an attorney for the federal government, argued before the Vermont Supreme Court, and testified before the Vermont Legislature on improvements to the state's probate laws which he helped draft. He has drafted complex wills and trusts, including special needs trusts, advised clients on business succession issues, and counseled clients regarding elder law and Medicaid planning.

For further information, contact Guilford Cares at 802-579-1350 or guilfordcaresvt@gmail.

### **Applications now** open for Crosby-**Gannett Fund**

BRATTLEBORO — Funding is now available for Vermont organizations in the Brattleboro area through the Crosby-Gannett Fund grant program at the Vermont Community Foundation. The purpose of the Crosby-Gannett Fund is to support endeavors that contribute to the betterment and vitality of the Brattleboro area.

The Crosby-Gannett Fund evolved its giving strategy last year and will now award a grant to one applicant annually. The grant term will be active for three years, and the grantee will receive \$7,500 per year, totaling \$22,500 over the three-year period.

The goal of this model is to provide reliable capacity-building support to creative ideas and community-based organizations that will enable meaningful improvement in the Brattleboro area. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30. Visit vermontcf.org/ crosby-gannett to learn more and apply.



RID VANDIA DAA

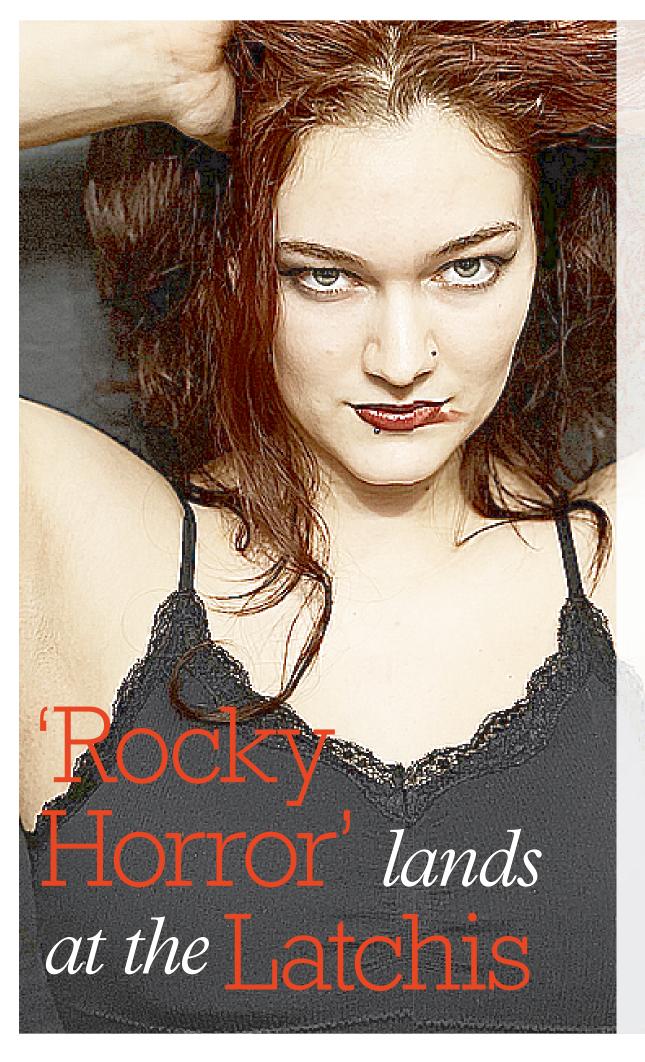


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Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Brattleboro will have its own monthly screening of the cult classic, with toptier shadow cast

By Annie Landenberger

The Commons

RATTLEBORO—Raise your hand if you're ready to do the time warp again! Thanks to a collaboration between Kinetic Theory Theatre (KTT) and the Latchis Theater, you can soon bellow this iconic tune from Rocky Horror Picture Show (RHPS) — en masse and in Brattleboro. Complete with shadow cast and all its quirky culture, RHPS will soon be a monthly feature on the area arts scene.

RHPS mania first swept the country nearly 50 years ago, and it endures today. A 1975 independent musical comedy horror film based on the 1973 stage musical production The Rocky Horror Show, RHPS is, according to Wikipedia, "a tribute to the science fiction and horror B movies of the 1930s through the early 1960s."

As encapsulated in The Rough Guide to Film, "A young couple, Brad and Janet, enter the alternative universe of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, a transvestite from the planet of Transexual in the galaxy of Transylvania, who has created the perfect man, Rocky Horror, with the help of his twisted assistants."

Though the film never got traction in standard 2, 7, or 9 p.m.–type showings, it took off as an after-hours cult darling — soon to become a

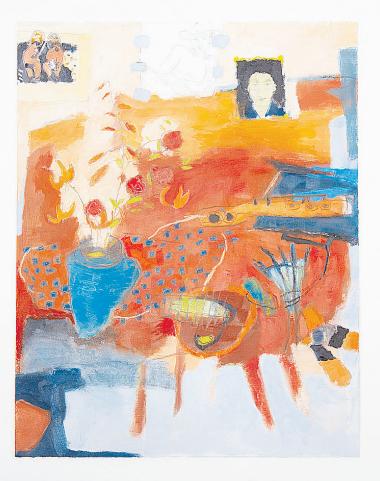
Film critic Roger Ebert, describing Rocky Horror as "not so much a movie as more of a long-running social phenomenon," wrote that "inside the theater, the fans put on a better show than anything on the screen."

"They knew the film by heart, chanted all of the lines in unison, sang

■ SEE ROCKY HORROR, B3

page B1

Camille Echeverri as "Magenta" in the Ones From The Vaults shadow cast production of *The* Rocky Horror Picture Show.



# 'Spring Group 2024' exhibit opens at MGFA

Giddings Fine Arts, 183 Main St., invites everyone to visit a large group exhibit of new and recent work, "Spring Group Saturday, March 30, from 5 to 7 p.m.

The exhibition will continue through May 12 and features a diverse selection of paintings, prints, glass, and sculpture by Amy Arbus, Josh Bernbaum, Matt Brown, Rona Lee Cohen, Mutsu Crispin, Jim Giddings, Jon Gregg, Karen Kamenetzy, Lisa Mackie, Petria Mitchell, Gene Parulis, Lauren Pollaro, Jessie

BRATTLEBORO-Mitchell- Pollock, Torin Porter, Todd Reuben, David Rohn, Joseph Salerno, Tim Segar, Larry Simons, and Jen Violette.

"Fascinated by how two-dimen-2024," opening with an artist reception sional art can change the way we see our world," Brown says he produces woodblock prints utilizing the Japanese hanga method, employing a handheld barren (rather than a printing press), water and ground pigments, one hand-carved block for each color.

> For 25 years, glassblower Bernbaum has been heating, blowing, shaping, carving, or sandblasting glass to create his signature vessels, while Giddings presents watercolor paintings of water, viewed as purely abstract or totally realistic.

Photographer Parulis says his digitally manipulated, dye-infused aluminum prints represent his attempt to depict

the power, wonder, and mystery of nature and his felt response to it.

Reuben, exhibiting for the first time at Mitchell-Giddings, produces one-of-akind, highly polished, abstract stainless steel sculpture, sometimes plated with 24-karat gold.

Lee Cohen, from Bakersfield, "responds to our kinetic world with simplicity and humor," say organizers. She paints varied and familiar objects into "paintings of particular completeness and quiet."

Salerno, from Johnson, revisits places multiple times in order to document over time the shifts in color, light, and atmosphere.

For more information about the exhibit, visit mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com, or call 802-251-8290.

"Red Table, Turquoise Vase," by Rona Lee Cohen.

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



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# arts & community CALENDAR

**THURSDAY** 

**SATURDAY** 

**BRATTLEBORO** Chamber Concert

Series: Castle of Our Skins

Portrait concert features the

Explores "Love and Justice":

music of Adolphus Hailstork and

includes such works as Deep River

Rhapsody for String Quartet, Who

Viola and Piano, String Quartet No.

2, Variations on Swing Low Sweet

Chariot, and Summer. Life. Song.

Performers include Matthew Vera

and Mina Lavcheva, violin; Ashleigh

Gordon, viola; Jing Li, cello; Sarah

Bob, piano; and Brianna Robinson,

▶ 6:15 p.m.: Community members

Adolphus Hailstork at a pre-concert

talk. Seats for this free talk are first-

come, first-served. 7 p.m. Concert:

cultural curiosity, Castle of our Skins

is a concert and educational series

artistry through music. From class-

exploration into Black heritage and

culture, spotliahtina both unsuna

and celebrated figures of past and

► Brattleboro Music Center, 72

Blanche Moyse Way. Information:

Buy tickets: tinyurl.com/mr2zd4uw.

Party at Whitingham Free Public

enjoy, crafts, activities, stories and

Whitingham Free Public Library,

Library: Kiddos and parents will

**Kids and families** 

JACKSONVILLE Spring Fling

10:30 a.m. - 12 noon.

Register: 802-368-7506.

2948 VT Rte. 100. Information:

**GUILFORD** Easter Treasure Hunt

at Guilford Community Park: The

sures" of toys and treats throughout

Easter Bunny will be hiding "trea-

the Park with children (ages 3-13)

then hunting for them among the

tulips, under the new timber-built

pavilion, around the Labyrinth, in

the grass and on the children's play

equipment. Light refreshments will

be available for sale to help support

the church's youth and family

programs, which include Sunday

school classes and an interfaith

projects and trips for teens.

LOCAL

**PROGRAM** 

HIGHLIGHTS

Brattleboro Selectboard Re-Org Mtg. 3/26/24: Tues 6:15p (LIVE,) Fri 5p, Sat 11a

Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 3/21/24: Mon 6:15p, Wed 12p

Brattleboro Representative Town Meeting 2024: Thurs 10a, Sat 8:30p, Sun 6p

Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board Mtg. 3/25/24: Wed 6p, Thurs 7:30a, Fri 12p

Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 3/25/24: Wed 8:30p, Thurs 5a, Fri 2:30p

Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 3/25/24: Thurs 9:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 12p

Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 3/26/24: Thurs 7p, Fri 8a, Sat 2:30p

Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 3/26/24: Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p

West River Education District Annual Mtg. 3/26/24: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p

Windham Central Supervisory Union Bd. And Exec. Comm. Mtg. 3/27/24: Sat 6p, Sun 8:30a

Vernon Town Meeting 2024: Tues 9:55a

Jamaica Town Meeting 2024: Tues 3p

Guilford Town Meeting 2024: Wed 5a

Windham Town Meeting 2024: Tues 6:45p

Town Matters – Weekly Episode: Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p

The David Pakman Show: Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

CHANNEL 1079

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

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

youth group with community service

present.

fun snacks!

rooms to concert halls, we invite

Born out of the desire to foster

dedicated to celebrating Black

are invited to meet composer

is Sylvia, Sanctum Rhapsody for

**Kids and families** Music

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

- 10:30 11:30 a.m. in the Community Meeting Room on Thursdays. For ages 0-5 and their caregivers. Free.
- Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

**Community building BELLOWS FALLS Restoration Plans** for Miss Bellows Falls Diner - Public Meeting: In early 2023, community organization Rockingham For Progress reached out to Preservation Trust of VT, Windham Regional Commission, Brattleboro Area Development Corp. They helped RFP develop plan for a community supported enterprise, whereby a nonprofit purchases the building, oversees renovations, then leases it to a qualified operator. Business stays on tax rolls, new operator is provided viable operation unencumbered by debt, Bellows Falls keeps

- ▶ 7 p.m. upstairs. Raphael Roser (Austin Design Cooperative Brattleboro) will talk about the new kitchen, ADA-compliant bathrooms, additional seating and more planned for diner. Rockingham For Progress invites interested persons to follow their story at www.RockinghamForProgress.org or on their Facebook page.
- ► Free. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463-4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.

To submit your event: calendar@ commonsnews.org

5 p.m. Friday

bc tv

March 25-31

CHANNEL 1078

Here We Are – Simon Renault, Scott Farm, General Manager: Mon 8p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 12:40p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 7a, Sat 5:15p, Sun 9p

The World Fusion Show – Ep 174 – John Hughes: Mon 5:30p & 9p, Tues 4:30p, Wed 9a Thurs 10:30a, Fri 6:30a, Sat 12:30p, Sun 9:35p

Landmark College Presents – Katherine Aquino, Ph.D. -Feeling Included: Mon 3:30p, Tues 9a, Wed 11a, Thurs 5p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 4p

BCTV Open Studio – Women's Freedom Center 3/19/24: Mon 10a, Tues 12:45p, Wed 9p, Thurs 9a, Fri 2p, Sat 8p, Sun 1:15p

Vermont Independent Media Presents Voices Live – Housing Conversation w/Rep. Becca Balint 3/18/24: Mon 6a, Tues 8p, Fri 10a, Sat 2p, Sun 5:20p

Couch Potatoe Productions – Media & Creation – A Duet of Sound & Color 1/21/24: Wed 3:30p, Thurs 5:45a, Fri 12:45p, Sat 5:45p

Keeping Up with Senior Solutions & American Legion Lunch for Veterans 3/1/24: Tues 1:50p, Wed 6:20a, Thurs 1:20p, Fri 3:05p, Sat 12:20p, Sun 6:50p

Community Conversations on Compassion – Compassion for (Non-Humans) Animals 3/6/24: Tues 10a, Wed 4:30p, Sun 7p

Keeping Up with Senior Solutions – Ep 32 – Main Street Arts, Community Lunches, & Outreach 2/22/24: Mon 11a, Tues 3:45p, Wed 9:25a, Sun 8:25p

Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p

Vermontitude – Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p

News Block: Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri

12:05p & 6:05p **BUHS-TV News**: Mon-Fri 12:20p & 6:40p

St. Michael's Episcopal Church – Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11:45a

Trinity Lutheran Church – Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p

Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a

St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass: Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p, Sat 4p, Sun 10:30a (LIVE)

Deadline:

SATURDAY CONT.

▶ 3-5 p.m. In case of inclement weather, hunt moves to Zeller Hall under sanctuary. Parents are asked to pre-register their children before 12 noon on 3/29 so there'll be enough toys for all participating. Each treasure hunter receives an individualized clue based on age prior to non-competitive hunt. Children do not need to bring baskets/containers or be Guilford residents.

Free.Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr. off Rte. 5. To register, on-line link is https://tinyurl.com/ fp9hucuw More information: Email guilfordchurch@gmail.com Or call Church Administrator Debra Zagaeski at 802-257-0994.

**Community building BRATTLEBORO** Vermonters March in Solidarity with Ukraine (announcement from Ralph Meima): Participants are urged to bring flags and signs, though some may be provided. Dress and equip appropriately for the weather conditions.

- ▶ 8 a.m. March starts at Brattle-Street - crosses the 119 Bridge to are encouraged to join March at any point. Marchers retrace their to Co-op parking lot by 10:30-11:00 a.m. Marchers gather in the Brattleboro Co-op Café: socializing, announcements, networking. Coffee/ tea/refreshments available for is only for shoppers - there is ample
- boro short walk from Co-op. ► Donations are encouraged to our NGO partner US-based NGO Blu/Yellow USA. https://foblueyel-

**Ideas and education** 

**BRATTLEBORO** Mammals of Winter - In the Classroom & the Field: The Corpulent Clan: Learn about the group of short-legged, wide-bodied mammals that remain active all winter: the opossum, porcupine, beaver, and muskrat, with skunks and raccoons included as part-time participants in the winter world. An indoor session will cover the natural history of these species, and identification of their tracks and sign. We will caravan to a field site in Marlboro to visit a beaver wetland

- ► 12:30 4 p.m. \$30, \$20 BEEC members.
- ► Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, 1221 Bonnyvale Rd. Information: 802-257-5785; beec.org. **BRATTLEBORO** Feed Your Friends

on Special Diets: Free Class for **Adults:** It can be tricky to navigate making dinner for your friends dietary needs. Come learn more low FODMAPS), and master some recipes for dinner and a treat!

- is recommended.
- register.

et food be thy medicine be thy food.

of Vermonters struggling with

food and housing indsecurity.:

Filmmaker Mary O'Brian looks at

insecurity. It's deeply troubling

to know VT has 2nd highest rate

1 in 3 VTers struggle to put food

on the table. Through stories of

working families, homeless living

friends/neighbors accessing food

in temporary hotel/motel program,

shelves/soup kitchens, "Just Getting

By" explores day-to-day challenges and incredible spirit and resilience

▶ 7 p.m. These challenges are big

for a little state and O'Brien does

not deliver any easy answers. But

this film may inspire a courageous

recommitment to the difficult work

\$15 at door requested but dona-

tions of any amount are welcome.

Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St.

com/watch?v=R2Vv65vyzLU More

info: kingdomcounty.org or email

**MONDAY** 

The written word

Reading Group with Norman

**Paradis:** Toward the start of the

startup in CA found itself in nos-

treatment of cancer and autoim-

were a once in a generation story

of medical innovation. "For Blood

and Money" offers an understated

narrative of this landmark discovery.

Nuanced prose doesn't detract from

the remarkable tale of innovation.

ambition, dynamic figures behind

▶ 6:30 p.m. "For Blood and Money

offers an understated narrative of

story of a new group of drugs that's

Reading group meets weekly,

delving into book chapter by chap-

ter. Participants are encouraged

to lead discussions on specific

chapters, bring unique perspec-

tives, questions, and insights. We'll  $\,$ 

endeavor to make discussion inter-

esting and understandable to those

biopharmaceutical. Occasionally

we'll read and discuss background

materials to better understand the

► Putney Public Library, 55 Main

St. Information: Putney Public

Library cardholders can reserve

a copy of the book by emailing

Gaza: Writings Born of Fire"

► Brooks Memorial Library,

224 Main St. Information: More

information. call Michael N. Landis

270 pages in length.

▶ Free.

**BRATTLEBORO** Brattleboro Great

7-9 p.m. in the Mezzanine Read-

ing Room. Book is approximately

Books Group will discuss "Light in

request@putneylibrary.org.

► Through Monday, June 17.

book.

Free.

with no background in medical/

a landmark discovery. This is the

impacted thousands of lives..

this pivotal breakthrough.

21st century, a biopharmaceutical

session of a breakthrough drug for

mune disease. Events followed that

**PUTNEY** "For Blood and Money"

Preview, go to: www.youtube.

bobrien@pshift.com

of low-income VTers.

ahead.

of homeless people in the US and

VTers struggling with food/ housing

**SUNDAY** 

Film and video BRATTLEBORO "Just Getting By": Documentary about the lives

- boro Food Co-op parking lot, 2 Main Hinsdale, NH and ascends the Wantastiquet Mountain Trail. Supporters steps from Mt. Wantastiquet, return purchase. The Co-op is not affiliated with the march. Note: Co-op parking municipal parking in central Brattle-
- lowukraineusa.org/.
- ▶ Brattleboro Food Co-op, 2 Main St. Information: 802-257-0236; brattleborofoodcoop.coop.

and porcupine den sites.

when so many people have different about diets your friends might be on (such as GF, keto, vegetarian, vegan,

- ► 10:30-11:45 a.m. or 1:30-2:45 p.m. Space is limited so registration
- ► Brattleboro Food Co-op Community Room, 7 Canal St. Information: Register: BFC.coop/events/to

medicine and —HIPPOCRATES

MONDAY CONT.

at (802) 257-1851 or email him at emagicmtman@gmail.com..

**Kids and families** 

**PUTNEY Putney Public Library Hosts Peeps Diorama Contest:** Brightly colored marshmallow treats are again on shelves and ready to star in a diorama about your favorite book! Diorama must be based on a book or have a literary theme. All characters must be played by PEEPS candy, but any shaped Peep is allowed. A winner from each category will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Everyone's Books in Brattleboro!

Open Mon.-Fri. 10:30 a.m.-6.p.m,

- Saturdays 10.a.m.-1.p.m. Dioramas must be brought to the Library during the week of April 1st-April 6 during normal library hours. Use standard-sized shoe box for your diorama. Open to all ages (separate categories for children, adults, families). Limit food items (besides PEEPS) in your diorama. One entry per person. Entries become property of the library and used for public display you can pick up your diorama between April 16-April 23, but any left behind will be disposed of and be in good taste. One ballot per library card. Pick up entry form at library or print out it out: http:// putneylibrary.org/ peeps-diorama -contest/. Even if you are not a resident of Putney, you can enter or join a family team - only current Putney Library cardholders may vote. All entries must be submitted with entry form and be in good taste. Entries become property of the library and used for public display. Pick up your diorama between 4/16 through 4/23 - any left behind will be
- disposed of. Through Saturday, April 6. This program is free and open to the public.
- Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407; putneylibrary.org/events.

## **TUESDAY**

The written word PUTNEY "Breaking Silence: A Literary Journey with Women who Spoke Truth to Power": Elayne

Clift offers a presentation on women writers who were courageous enough to tell truth about their lives. 'What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life?" Poet Muriel Rukeyser famously asked more than 50 years ago. Her answer? "The world would split apart."

- 6:30 p.m. Presentation in honor of International Women's Day offers historical review of women writers who told the truth about their lives created social change through courageous writing in various genres. Their works changed women's lives at home, marketplace, academia, institutions, government. It's an opportunity to learn from selected women writers who affected social history and progress in ways that affect us all through truth telling diaries, essays, autobiographies, poems, short stories that helped shape a more enlightened world with respect to gender, race, class,
- caste. ▶ Free.
- ► Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407: putneylibrary.org/events.

BRATTLEBORO Eclipse Folklore

as Inspiration: Free Creative Writing Workshop with GennaRose **Nethercott:** Eclipses have meant many things to many throughout history - from end times omens

TUESDAY CONT.

to cosmic messages. Writers are invited to unleash their creativity under the shadow of the upcoming solar eclipse. Acclaimed author GennaRose Nethercott will lead a world tour through eclipse folklore, superstitions, myths. Participants will then re-imagine these old stories to create new ones of their own in a generative workshop; walk in with a blank page, and walk out with new writing!

- ▶ 7 p.m. in the Community Room. Open to all levels of writing experience, ages 14 and up. Thanks to the Friends of Brooks Memorial Library, this program is free, open to the public, accessible to people in wheelchairs.
- ▶ Free.
- ► Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. More information: www. brookslibraryvt.org, 802-254-5290 Register in advance by emailing: info@brookslibraryvt.org or do so in person at the library.

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- $\it 8484; brattleborowalkinclinic.com.$ 

WEDNESDAY

Music

**BRATTLEBORO** First Wednesday Funk Night at The Stone Church: Hammond organist and left-handed hassist Kris Yunker hosts a monthly funky, danceable night of live music. Each show features a different band of musicians who make it an upbeat

- and joyful experience. ▶ 7 p.m. doors open, 8 p.m. music begins. (Also May 1, June 5, August 7 at 8 p.m.).
- ▶ \$10 to \$20 (advance tickets discounted).
- ► The Stone Church in Brattleboro, 210 Main St. Information: Tickets: StoneChurchVT.com or at door.

Well-being BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Zen

Center hosts a weekly Meditation and Recovery Meeting: These weekly meetings are for people looking to support their sobriety and recovery from alcohol and other substance use disorders. The hourlong meeting consists of meditation, discussion and support for recovery and is led by people in recovery. We welcome 12-step participants along with anyone wanting to practice in recovery whether in a recovery

- program or not. ▶ 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. Meeting is confidential, welcoming and open to those with years of meditation practice as well as those who've never tried it, but are curious how simple meditation and warm community could support their recovery and well-being. Come to share or just listen, and to sit and just be. Åll are welcome. Brattleboro Zen Center is located around back and upstairs. Free parking and entrance behind church. The Zendo is on the top floor.
- Donations welcome. ► Centre Congregational Church,
- 193 Main St. 802-254-4730; centrechurch@centrechurchvt.org.

# Violinist Johnny Gandelsman presents 'This Is America: Part III' at Next Stage Arts Wednesday, April 3, at 7 p.m. Part a wide array of American or

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, presents violinist and former member of Silkroad Ensemble Johnny Gandelsman, performing Part III of This Is America, a collection of works written in response to the turbulent and disconnected time of the early pandemic and the murder of George Floyd in 2020. The anthology of compositions

will be performed at Next Stage as part of Gandelsman's year-long residency at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth on II of the series was performed at Next Stage in February, "to a deeply appreciative audience," Next Stage staff report.

"Johnny's upcoming show [...] is not just a performance, says Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, in a news release, "it's a journey into the heart of his latest project, This Is America. Johnny brings a wealth of cultural influences to the stage."

In 2020, Gandelsman invited

U.S.-based composers to reflect on the current state of society in a personal and intimate way. Over the course of a year-long residency at the Hopkins Center, Gandelsman performed the anthology and expanded the project with three new Hopkins Centercommissioned pieces.

Part III of the series will include a new work by composer Gabriel Kahane, performed by Gandelsman as part of his anthology. Kahane will be in residence

to shed light on his new work.

This concert is presented and commissioned by the Hopkins Center in collaboration with Next Stage Arts. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, and \$10 for access to the livestream. Advance tickets are available at nextstagearts.org. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. For more information, call 802-387-0102.

# Next Stage presents Espirales Project on March 29

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, presents Cuban quintet Espirales Project on Friday, March 29, at 7:30 p.m.

Newly emerging on the Cuban music scene in 2023, the Espirales Project brings together five graduates of Cuba's Instituto Superior de Arte performing across several genres — Cuban, jazz, world, and chamber music.

Tania Haase, Olivia Rodrìguez, Alejandro Aguiar, Jesús Estrada, and Rodrigo Garcia have led or contributed nationally and

internationally to projects across through co-presenting internathese styles, performing at Cuba's International Jazz Plaza Festival and the Habana Clásica concert music festival. They are also teachers who have designed a development program on Cuban music and culture.

"We love collaboration with regional friends like the Vermont Jazz Center and the Brattleboro Music Center, so this is an incredible opportunity for our region to exhibit how the power of collaboration supports our region

tional artists," Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, said in a news release.

The group is led by pianist Rodrigo Garcia Ameneiro. Although his career is still in its early stages, his achievements include the award for best composition at the Stanford Jazz Workshop 2016, first place in the international Vivo competition (2018), the Grand Prize at the Rocky Mountain Music Competition (2021), and together

with his wife and Espirales violinist Tania Haase, special prize in the international Grand Prize Virtuoso Amsterdam (2019).

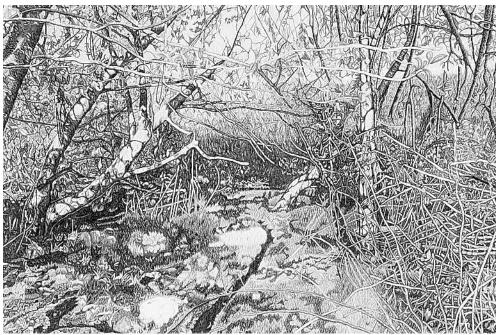
This concert is co-presented with the Vermont Jazz Center. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, and \$10 for access to the livestream. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. Advance tickets are available at **nextstagearts.org**. For information, call 802-387-0102.

# Note: Schedule subject to change. View full schedule and watch online at

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

**Brattleboro Community Television – 257-0888** 

brattleboroTV.org



"A Quiet Place" by Joshua Dallaire.

# HCRS to host art show

BRATTLEBORO—Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), southeastern Vermont's nonprofit community mentalhealth agency, will host its fifth multidisciplinary art exhibition to be held at the 118 Elliot Gallery throughout the month of April.

The opening reception is scheduled for Friday, April 5, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., featuring live musical performances and light refreshments to enhance the vibrant atmosphere.

Showcasing the diverse tal-

community, both seasoned professionals and emerging talents, both people receiving services and their staff, event organizers promise a celebration of creativity and resilience, "offering a glimpse into the rich tapestry of artistic expression nurtured by the nonprofit agency," they say.

HCRS cordially invites the community to join them at the opening reception. Additionally, the public is encouraged to explore the artwork during designated open hours at 118 Elliot: ents of artists within the HCRS Fridays (April 12, 19, and 26) 4

to 7 p.m., Saturdays (April 6, 13, 20, and 27) noon to 4 p.m., and Sundays (April 7, 14, 21, and 28) noon to 4 p.m.

The organization's dedicated staff, Jonathan Mattoon and Nickie Godin, spearheaded the annual exhibition, extending their passion for art wellness to those they support, say organizers.

"More people are beginning to recognize the connection between art, healing, and public health," Mattoon said in a news release. "Our show is an excellent opportunity for the community to view

there and we want all those peo-

ple to come on," as a KTT media

release describes it, "this strange

journey as [The Ones From the

Vaults] bring the characters to life

and perform this outrageous mu-

sical live in front of the screen."

"It's sort of underground

.. libertine," Abrams offers.

"Audience are encouraged to

come dressed up in costume and

we'll have prop kits for sale, so

you'll get your [own collection of]

things to throw and we'll prompt

Even the media release beck-

ons: "Become a part of the ex-

perience. Don't dream it, be it!"

cast members reflect on the

Jogl comments: "The thing I love the most about *Rocky Horror*"

is the escape from judgement and

grids of expected behavior. Right

and wrong, good and bad, pride

and shame are flipped on their

head. In real life, I always feel like

I'm either too much or too little.

The joint venture between

Latchis Theatre runs the first Saturday of every month, start-

ing April 6, at the Latchis upstairs

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SUNDAY 11AM - 4PM

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brattbooks@gmail.com

<u>≡</u>MERICAN

elizabethjulia88@aol.com;

Elizabeth:

802-257-7475

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ballroom theatre.

Services

to let that go for a little bit!"

In KTT's press materials,

you when to do that.'

# Putney Library hosts Peeps diorama contest

for the Putney Public Library's annual Peeps Diorama Contest.

The brightly colored marshmallow treats are on the shelves and ready to star in a diorama about a favorite book. Entry forms are available at the library or online at bit.ly/758**peeps**. This program is free.

Dioramas must be brought to the Library between Monday, April 1, and Saturday, April 6, during normal library hours (Monday to Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.).

Here are the rules:

• Even if you are not a resident of the town of Putney, you can still enter or join a family team, but only current Putney Library cardholders may vote (one ballot per library card).

• Dioramas should be crafted from a standard-sized shoebox.

• The diorama must be based on a book or have a literary theme. All characters must be played by Peeps candy, but any shaped Peep is allowed.

the creative expressions made by our staff and the individuals we serve across our agency.'

Founded in 1967, HCRS is a nonprofit community mental health agency serving Vermonters in Windham and Windsor counties. HCRS serves more than

PUTNEY—It's time again Entrants are asked to limit the use of food items (besides Peeps) in their diorama.

• The contest is open to all ages, with separate categories for children, adults, and families; one entry per person. All entries must be submitted with an entry form.

• Entries become the property of the library and will be used for public display. Dioramas may be picked up during the week of Tuesday, April 16–23. Any dioramas not retrieved will be disposed of.

 All entries must be in good taste. The Library reserves the right to omit any entries it feels are not appropriate for public viewing.

Voting and display of all entries will take place in person at the library from Monday, April 8, through Saturday, April 13. Winners will be announced and awards given on Tuesday, April 16, at 5 p.m.

A winner from each category will receive a \$25 gift certificate to Everyone's Books in Brattleboro.

4,000 individuals every year through its mental health, substance use, and developmental disabilities programs. Visit hcrs. org for more information.

# **NOW PLAYING** at the

latchis.com | 802.246.1500

MARCH 29 - APRIL 4 GODZILLA X KONG: **NEW EMPIRE** 

4:15 / 6:40 / 9 2:15 / 6:40 / 9 SUNDAY MON.-THUR 2:15 & 6:40 4:15 & 6:40

**GHOSTBUSTERS:** FROZEN EMPIRE PG-

4:15 / 7 / 9:10 2 / 7 / 9:10 1:45 & 7 SATURDAY SUNDAY MON.-THUR

DUNE: PART 2 PG-13 FRIDAY SAT. & SUN. MON.-THUR 2 & 6:45 4 & 7

KUNG FU PANDA 4 P FRIDAY 4:15 / 6:45 / 8:50 SATURDAY 2:15 / 6:45 / 8:50 SUNDAY TUE.-THUR. 2:15 4:15 & 6:45



# Rocky Horror

along with the songs, did dances on stage, added their own unprintable additions to the screenplay, and went through a lot of props like toilet paper and water pistols," he said.

Ebert described it as "a strange exhibitor-audience relationship, because the regulars were essentially buying tickets so they could attend their own show.

The longest-running theatrical release in film history, RHPS has seen countless shadow-casts act-— shadowing — in front of the projection and heartily welcoming audience participation.

The Latchis Theater screens RHPS annually at Halloween, but Stephanie Abrams, founding director of KTT, said it was a wonder that Brattleboro didn't have its own monthly RHPS roundup.

Abrams, a mime for 30 years and a circus performer for 27, moved to Brattleboro last June with her partner, Patrick Branstetter, who's originally from Bethel. An alumnus of the everpopular, rocking, and stomping performance art group Blue Man Group, Branstetter wanted to return to his native state. He now owns Old Timey Piano Craft on Cotton Mill Hill, where he rebuilds pianos.

Abrams' KTT is a theater and school she founded in Los Angeles, specializing in the teaching and producing of mime and physical theater. That operation folded in the pandemic but lives on in Brattleboro, where Abrams works with private clients both virtually and in person, and runs workshops at circus schools around the country.

"I teach pre-professional and professional artists how to incorporate storytelling into their circus work," she said. Circus Smirkus engaged Abrams to direct its 2023 summer tour, which facilitated her introduction to Vermont. She'd taught at New England Center for Circus Arts for a short stint, but decided not to return last fall, and instead to pursue her work coaching mime and contortion.

Moving to the area has been, Abrams admits, "a major culture shock. I've lived in cities my whole life; this is the most rural I've ever lived.

She regularly enjoys a city hit, though. "I love the train proximity: I can just get on the train here and arrive at [New York City's] Penn Station" when she visits her daughter, a college freshman, and cultivates connections for engagements, she says.

When she moved to Brattleboro, Abrams recalls, "I swore that I wasn't going to produce shows. I'd produced a lot erations of *Rocky Horror* fans out

in the head of a poet.

of shows — tons of shows — in Los Angeles. But I got here and felt like there wasn't work here I was excited about doing: I try to push boundaries. [...] I felt like [RHPS] needed to happen.

"I knew about the Latchis. I heard they do Rocky Horror but only once a year and with no live performance. I'd never heard of running the film with no live cast." She got in touch with Latchis Executive Director Jon Potter, and he immediately bought in, Abrams reports, stressing his commitment to supporting local artists and engaging a high-quality troupe.

Soon Abrams assembled what was dubbed The Ones From the Vaults, a 13-member shadow cast troupe comprised of area performers — some upand-coming and others professional: Darcy Biddle, Francesca Bonfiglio, Aubrey Clinedinst, Camille Echeverri, Anneken Jogl, Henry Koski, Rin Lepard, Elliot McGary-Walters, Nathan Olson, Katie Russo, Esther Van and it's so nice and freeing to get de Lagemaat, and the awardwinning Abrams herself.

As it happens, most are circus Kinetic Theory Theatre and the performers and "that makes a unique group, for sure," Abrams says, but the cast will change over time as some circus folks move on and other performers step up

"I joined a Rocky Horror shadow cast myself when I was only 14 years old," Abrams explains, "and it truly shaped who I became as a performer.

"I had seen the movie and was a fan," she continues. "I was drawn to the aesthetic because I'm a goth kid at heart and love all things sort of dark and weird, so already it pulled me in, but it also just showed me as a young performer that you can do things on stage and on film that are not what everybody else is doing. The RHPS cast I joined became a family — it gave kids in my community a place to be ourselves."

She adds that, in theater, people are taught "to say 'yes,' and so it is." In the RHPS shadow world, if a cast member wants to insert a new movement, a good joke, a twist, it's a "yes.

"Shadow casting started off as a fan response," says Abrams, "and now there's a huge fandom," the culture of which embraces LGBTQ+ communities, among many others.

"[It's] a welcoming space for everyone. We want people from all walks of life to come and see

and experience it," she says.
"I know that there are folks here who saw the movie originally in the '70s — there are three gen-

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"The film starts at 11 p.m.," Abrams adds, "but we want to encourage people to get there early—at 10—because the preshow is part of the whole experience. It's not just about going to see a movie.'

Audiences are encouraged to get a pub drink if they wish, tune up their "Time Warp," check out the finery, purchase a prop kit, and grab a seat to hold onto for the imminent dynamic dive into otherworldly action.

Though Dr. Frank-N-Furter says, "It's not easy having a good time! Even smiling makes my face ache," organizers would bet Brattleboro can prove him wrong.

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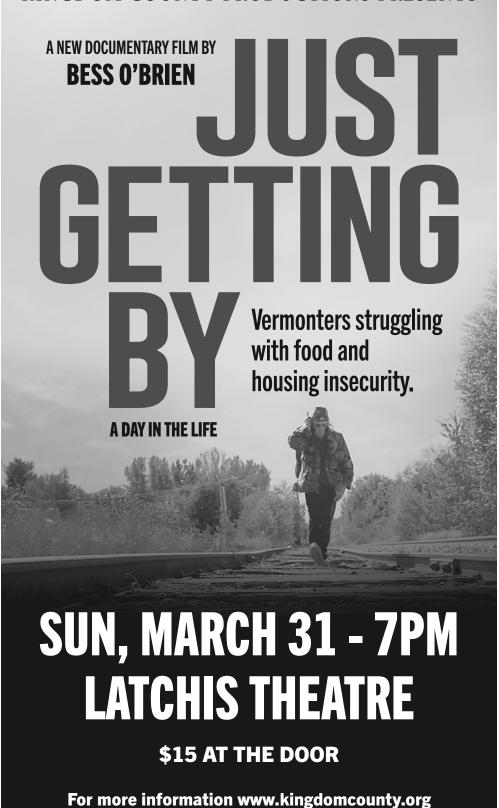
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# Documentary film on Vermonters struggling with food, housing insecurity comes to Brattleboro

Getting By, a new documentary film by Bess O'Brien focused on Vermonters struggling with food and housing insecurity will tour Vermont from March 22-April 12th. The movie will play the Latchis Theatre on Sunday,

March 31, at 7 p.m.

The film is described as "a sweeping and yet intimate look at the lives of Vermonters who are struggling with food and housing insecurity. Vermont has the second-highest rate of homeless people in the United States, right after California. One third of Vermonters struggle to put food on the table. These are big issues for a small state. Just Getting By focuses on these issues in the lives of everyday people."

Just Getting By tells the stories of working families who are homeless and accessing food

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people who are living in temporary hotel/motel programs. In addition, the film focuses on New Americans grappling with the cost of living in America, Native people creating innovative farming practices, and folks on the ground providing services to their fellow Vermonters in need. It explores the challenges and incredible resiliency that lowincome Vermonters bear witness

The film was shot during 2022– 23 by director O'Brien and cinematographer Patrick Kennedy.

"We wanted to capture the day-to-day lives of Vermonters who were living paycheck to paycheck and who were struggling to keep food on the table and a roof over their head," O'Brien said in a news release. "We also wanted to show the incredible resiliency

**JURORS** 

BRATTLEBORO—fust shelves and soup kitchens and and courage of folks who have very little and still manage to get up every day and strive for a better life.

> She said their hope is by touring the film across the state, they can raise consciousness about pressing issues of food and housing insecurity.

> The movie is produced by Kingdom County Productions. There will be a Q & A session after the screening of the movie with O'Brien, folks from the movie, and audience members.

> Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at the door. For more information, visit kingdomcounty. org or email O'Brien at bobrien@ pshift.com.



Colby Lynch is one of the people featured in Vermont filmmaker Bess O'Brien's new documentary "Just Getting By."

# BMC Chamber Series presents 'Castle of Our Skins: Love and Justice' on March 30

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Music Center's Chamber Series presents "Castle of Our Skins: Love and Justice" on Saturday, March 30.

This portrait concert, set for 7 p.m. at the BMC, features the music of Adolphus Hailstork, and includes such works as Deep River rhapsody for string quartet, "Who Is Sylvia?" Sanctum rhapsody for viola and piano, String Quartet No. 2, Variations on "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "Summer. Life. Song."

Hailstork has written numerous works for chorus, solo voice, piano, organ, various chamber ensembles, band, orchestra, and opera. Among his early compositions are "Celebration," recorded by the Detroit Symphony in 1976; "Out of the Depths" (1977), and "American Guernica" (1983), and two band works which won national competitions.

"Consort Piece" (1995), commissioned by the Norfolk (Virginia) Chamber Ensemble was awarded first prize by the University of Delaware Festival of Contemporary Music.

We're excited to return to the BMC and not only highlight the music of one of our favorite composers, but literally bring him along for the ride," artistic director and violist of Castle of our Skins Ashleigh Gordon said in a news release. "Adolphus is

spirit and truly inviting energy to be around."

Community members are invited to meet the composer at a pre-concert talk with Adolphus Hailstork at 6:15 p.m. at the BMC. Seats for this free talk are first-come, first-served.

In addition to Gordon on viola, performers include Matthew Vera and Mina Lavcheva, violin; Jing Li, cello; Sarah Bob, piano; and Brianna Robinson, soprano.

Born out of the desire to fosa prolific composer with a joyful ter cultural curiosity, Castle of

our Skins is a concert and educational series dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music. From classrooms to concert halls, Castle of our Skins invites exploration into Black heritage and culture, spotlighting both unsung and celebrated figures of past and present.

Tickets are \$20 (or \$25 at the door) and are available online on the BMC website at **bmcvt.org**, by calling 802-257-4523, or by emailing info@bmcvt.org.

# Solebello, Berardo co-headline concert at Stage 33 Live

BELLOWS FALLS—Carolann "song-length fictions that mine changes that experience brings Solebello and Marc Douglas Berardo will co-headline a concert at Stage 33 Live, 33 Bridge St., on Sunday, April 7, at 7 p.m.

Solebello is a performing song-writer from New York City, best known as a founding member of Americana trio Red Molly. She now tours as a solo troubadour and with modern folk foursome

No Fuss and Feathers. "Her smooth, pitch-perfect voice, compelling lyrics, and warm yet accomplished acoustic guitar work nod to rural folk traditions while an urban sense of rhythm and sophisticated phrasing plant her firmly in the present," organizers wrote in a news release. "She's won a pile of songwriting awards, and is currently working on her sixth solo album.'

Solebello has a history with Bellows Falls, having been a three-time performer at the Roots On The River festival plus appearances at fabled local venues Oona's and Boccelli's.

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deep feelings and real-life lessons and situations, and delivers them with an engaging onstage presence and deft storytelling," organizers said. "His sharply drawn, award-winning songportraits cast a net on unusual and beguiling characters — circus retirees, ex-pats in Florida rum bars, union ironworkers, old poets, aimless New York City debutantes, near-death car crashes, hard-nosed fishermen, and the to everyone."

He has shared bills with heavyweights like The Doobie Brothers, NRBQ, New Riders of the Purple Sage, and Cheryl Wheeler.

Tickets are \$20 in advance through stage33live.com or at the door. Advance tickets guarantee entry. All ticket proceeds go to the performers. Seating is limited, and the event will be re-

# BMAC hosts art talk with Samira Abbassy on April 3

BRATTLEBORO—The psychic phenomena with physi-Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) invites the public to explore the idea of the human body as a spiritual, psychological, and biological vehicle during an online conversation with artist Samira Abbassy and BMAC Director of Exhibitions Sarah Freeman on Wednesday, April

3, at 7 p.m. Abbassy will discuss her work currently on view at the museum in the exhibit "Out of Body," which Freeman describes as "a connection between the physical and the intangible," and "a collection of objects that feels precious and mysterious, yet also domestic

and very human.' Abbassy, who was born in Iran and grew up in London, says she finds inspiration in the concept of faith healing, or remote psychic healing. In her paintings, drawings, and sculpture, she references imagery from 11thto 17th-century Islamic medical and anatomical manuscripts, as well as 15th-century European alchemical symbols that combine

cal realities These primary sources "transcend the corporeal and hint at attempts to locate the soul," Abbassy says. "The body becomes a vehicle of psychological metaphors, portraying embodied conflicts and dilemmas."

Among the images that emerge in Abbassy's BMAC exhibit is a disembodied hand reaching into a wound — an idea adapted from the Gospel of Thomas, in which the doubting disciple probes Christ's wound with his hand, seeking proof of the spirit of divinity.

Abbassy also references medieval Christian reliquaries — "peculiar artifacts," she calls them
— that present the human remains of holy saints as a way of encouraging faith. Mortal specimens like hair, bones, teeth, and body fluids are also part of sacred traditions such as Santeria, Voodoo, and Animism. The piece titled "Medical Reliquaries" goes so far as to include Abbassy's own blood, extracted during a surgical procedure. The overall effect, Freeman says, is that of "an altar of sorts."

Even Abbassy's artmaking process is imbued with spirituality. "The act of creation requires a suspension of participation in the physical plane in order to receive suggestions from the unconscious," Abbassy explains. "I make my work in full participation with the *mysterium tremendum* also known as the "numinous" — where I can safely confront my

demons, my gods, and the liminal

Abbassy graduated from Canterbury College of Art, exhibited her work in London, and moved to New York in 1998, where she helped to set up the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts and the EFA Studio Center. Her work is in private and public collections worldwide, and has been featured at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The British Museum, and in numerous galleries in London, New York,

and Dubai. The talk will take place on Zoom, and admission is free. Register at brattleboromuseum. org to receive the Zoom link. For accessibility questions and requests, email office@ brattleboromuseum.org or call 802-257-0124, ext. 101.





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Wednesday, March 27, 2024 page C1

## RESPONSE

# Let's look the entire truth in the eye

'The October attack is but the latest act of horrific violence that has rocked Palestine and Israel. Conflict has been the ongoing reality in Palestine ever since the Zionist project to give Jews a homeland at the expense of the Palestinian inhabitants became aggressively active 100 or so years ago.'

Newfane IM Wessel's Viewpoint chastising Vermonters who are advocating for a ceasefire in Palestine was grounded in half-truths and speculative musings. The most astonishing error was the statement that "this war" started on Oct. 7, 2023. The October attack is but the latest act of horrific violence that has rocked Palestine and Israel. Conflict has been the ongoing reality in Palestine ever since the Zionist project to give Jews a homeland at the expense of the Palestinian inhabitants became aggressively active 100 or so

Starting in 1931, Zionist militias and later the Israeli Defense Forces planned and conducted massacres in Palestinian towns and villages.

The extent of the violence was debated and lamented in 1948 by Israeli leaders at the time, but the prevailing view aligned with one expressed by Yitzhak Shamir in 1943, before he became prime

"Neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat. We are very far from having any moral qualms as far as our national war goes. We have before us the command of the Torah, whose morality surpasses that of any other body of laws in the world: 'Ye shall blot them out to the last man."

In 1982, as many as 3,500 Muslim Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon were murdered, raped, and tortured by Israel's Lebanese Christian Phalangist proxies under the watch of Ariel Sharon, who, while castigated by Israeli leaders at the time, went on to become a major political player and prime minister.

Even when Palestine was not under direct military assault, the reality of the occupation was not merely one of lost land and inconvenience. Between 2008 and Oct. 7, 2023, over 5,000 Palestinians were killed by air- and surface-launched explosives and live ammunition. In that same time period, 319 Israelis were killed by Palestinians.

In addition, a steady stream of kidnappings (euphemistically called "detentions"), torture, and water and land deprivation — plus control over Palestinian rights to marry, work, worship, and thrive — have kept occupied Palestine under a tight lid of oppression and misery, enduring for multiple generations of people trying to stay

WESSEL THINKS that Palestinians who have remained in Israel since 1948 are accorded full

DAN DEWALT, a frequent contributor to these pages and one of the founders of this newspaper, writes that if he didn't love his country, he "wouldn't spend so much time trying to get it to live up to its purported princi-ples."This piece is in response to "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20].

rights of citizenship. In reality, a plethora of laws favor Jewish land ownership, building permits, and religious/cultural rights at the expense of the

Just as Barack Obama's presidency did not signify the end of racism in the United States, neither do the rights of "Arab-Israelis" (a construct used by authorities and parroted by the media to deny the existence of the Palestinians' status as a people) indicate any equality of rights in Israel.

Wessel implies that the genesis of the word 'genocide" means that it refers exclusively to the violence perpetrated against the Jews by the Nazis. Native Americans, Armenians, and Tutsis are just three examples of how men in power are more than willing to engage in genocide in order to meet their goals.

He questions the use of "genocide" by referencing the population growth in Gaza over the past 25 years. Nobody accused the Israelis of genocide until this latest indiscriminate and allencompassing revenge that is their response to the Hamas attack.

Even the U.S. judge at the International Court of Justice voted in accord with the overwhelming ruling that South Africa's claim that Israel is committing genocide has more than enough legal merit to continue to the next phase of the tribunal proceedings.

Wessel Characterizes those who speak out in support of Palestine as being played by the propaganda machine of Hamas. This is a little rich, considering that his talking points are part and parcel of the rhetoric generated by AIPAC, which is one of the most powerful pro-Israel propaganda machines influencing U.S. politics today.

He also doesn't realize that "ceasefire" intrinsically refers to *all* firing — in this case, both Israeli and Palestinian. He doesn't realize that not a single supporter of Palestinians supports rape.

We abhor and condemn all rape — be it by Hamas or Israeli soldiers, as in the ongoing sexual assault of Palestinian women prisoners — as a horrible tactic used by combatants (including Americans) around the world.



A march in Brattleboro earlier in March drew 150 in a global call for ceasefire.

Wessel thinks that we don't bother to understand the history underlying this conflict.

In fact, we are constantly deepening our learning and understanding of the true nature of the history and today's realities in Palestine precisely so that we can correct the one-sided, partial story propagated daily by Israel's apologists.

Indeed, on Sunday afternoons during the month of April, Southern Vermont for Palestine will be offering a series of films and discussions at the Latchis Theater about the true nature of life

in Palestine. These events — available to all, with or without a donation to defray costs — seek to enlighten rather than embitter.

Some actions are so egregious that they can be defended only by attacking the credibility or intentions of those who criticize them. Sadly, that seems to be the case here.

We would do better to look the entire truth in the eye, to understand how it has come to be, what our own nation's complicity is, and what we can do about it.

# RESPONSE

# We mean the words we are saying

We are ashamed that our tax dollars are being used to kill instead of create a world where all life can thrive.

BrattleboroWANT TO acknowledge that many people (Tim Wessel included) are projecting their fears, skewed perspectives, and beliefs rooted in (white/colonial) dominance culture onto a movement whose ultimate goal is the collective liberation of all (oppressed) people.

For those of us calling for a ceasefire, for a free Palestine, for collective liberation, and for self determination — we mean the words we are

We are not calling for the death of a people - and we certainly are not, with the support of U.S. taxpayer dollars, actively extinguishing thousands upon thousands of innocent human lives and causing unimaginable humanitarian and environmental destruction while celebrating our efforts. We are ashamed that our tax dollars are being used to kill instead of create a world where all life can thrive.

The movement for Palestine is supported by and inclusive of anti-Zionist Jews, including many of our community members here in Brattleboro, who have been advocating for a free Palestine for decades — certainly well before Oct. 7 — based on the historical understanding that Palestinians have faced forced

HANNAH SORILA aims to align intention and impact in global education and education abroad. She strives to challenge the field of global education to become more ethical, decolonial, sustainable, and accessible. This piece is in response to "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20].

displacement, ethnic cleansing, and an apartheid system on the land that their people lived on for generations before the settler colonial state of Israel was invented.

They further understand that safety for Jews derives from making common cause with other historically oppressed communities, not from creating a fortress on stolen land exclusively for

The problem is not with Judaism, but rather with Zionism — and the two are not the same, which is why critiquing Zionism is not the same thing as antisemitism.

We stand against the oppression of any human being, because our fight is for the collective liberation of all human beings from all systems of oppression, including (but not limited to)

Islamophobia and antisemitism.

I ENCOURAGE all folks, but especially those who align with Tim's dangerous perspective, to slow down and consider: What if I am wrong? What if I am wrong for supporting Palestinians as they stand up against Israel's genocidal actions and occupation? What if I am wrong for supporting the genocide of Palestinians who are standing up for liberation from Israeli occupation?

As I witness the complete annihilation of 32,512 Palestinians — more than 13,642 of whom are children (based on the number of Palestinians killed by Israel in Gaza since Oct. 7, as of March 23, 2024) — I ask: Am I wrong for calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and end to the genocide?

As I witness the displacement of more than 1.5 million Palestinians, while also acknowledging the 750,000 Palestinians displaced during the 1948 Nakba, am I wrong for calling on Israel to end their ethnic cleansing of Palestinians?

As I witness the forced starvation and dehydration and the intentional destruction of hospitals and other essential infrastructure and services, am I wrong for calling for an end to the siege and blockade, and for immediate,

unrestricted humanitarian aid?

As I witness the kidnapping, detention, torture, and killing of Palestinians in the West Bank, am I wrong to call for an end to the settler colonial Israeli occupation and apartheid system?

And finally, as I consider that these statistics barely scratch the surface of the absolute devastation that every Palestinian is facing right now each of whom has and has had stolen dreams and fears and hopes and breath that fills their lungs — am I wrong for seeing them in their humanity, and for standing beside them as they fight for liberation and self-determination in their sacred homeland?

Look around you. Look around the world. The U.S. has been nearly alone in its unconditional support of this genocide, whereas a majority of the world — as well as a majority of Americans — support an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

Join the movement for liberation at sovt4palestine.org; we are advocating for a better world for you, too, whether you join us or

Palestine will be free within our lifetime.



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# LETTERS FROM READERS

'If we do not stand with Palestinians, we do not stand with anyone, least of all ourselves'

RE: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

Tim Wessel asks readers to "think for a few moments about your Jewish friends. Ask them how they've been since Oct. 7.'

As some of Tim's Jewish neighbors in Windham County, allow us to answer this question:

We are horrified, heartbroken, fiercely angry, and unwilling to stand aside while the state of Israel uses the Hamas attacks of Oct. 7 as a pretext for the murder of 32,000 Palestinians in Gaza, including 13,000 children, 125 journalists and 170 United Nations aid workers.

The Israeli bombing and ground invasion has injured an additional 75,000 Gazans. Over 55% of the buildings in Gaza have been destroyed, resulting in the internal displacement of 1.7 million people, or 75% of the population.

As a direct result, the U.N. estimates that 1.1 million Gazans are facing catastrophic levels of food insecurity. At Phase 5, this is the largest proportion of any population in food security crisis ever recorded by the Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Phase Classification.

These numbers are on such a scale as to numb our human need to personify tragedy. We recognize the risk in citing them, knowing that they may fatigue an all-too-stretched capacity to hold life equally sacred. Yet this capacity never stopped containing our grief for the 1,200 Israelis murdered and 130 Israelis taken hostage and held in Gaza by Hamas on Oct. 7.

The accounting of Israeli loss on that day allows each victim's name and portrait to be printed on individual flyers and held in the hand of a single person. We have seen their names and faces, mourn their deaths, and hope for their safe return home.

We have not yet seen the faces of all of the Palestinian victims in Gaza, because we cannot even account for the many thousands that remain buried under the rubble of Gaza's cities: the ruins of schools, mosques, libraries, hospitals, cafés, apartment buildings, sanitation plants, and

Tim Wessel "question[s] the moral compass" of those who march in solidarity with Palestinians. The moral compass we question is when people witness the scale of destruction of life and culture in Gaza over the past five months, yet continue to describe Israel's actions as "selfdefense." Instead, we recognize Israel's intentional and overwhelming desecration of Gaza as callous, indiscriminate, unprecedented, genocidal and an act of ethnic cleansing.

As Jews, we refuse to allow Israel or Zionists to claim to act in our name. We refuse to allow the manipulation of our generational Holocaust trauma to propel a militarized, violent displacement and oppression of Palestinians that began decades before Oct. 7 — decades before even the rise of Nazi Germany.

We refuse to be silent when Zionists describe Hamas as a "death cult" while Israeli soldiers murder Gazans as they gather for a delivery of food aid, Israel shuts off supply and access to clean water, and Israeli ministers call to "wipe Gaza off the face of the earth.

As Jews living in Vermont, we are scared — not by a reflexive, future-imagined fear of our neighbors repeating Jewish historical trauma, as Tim Wessel believes, but by the actual, current, and ongoing genocide of Palestinians upon whom Israel has perpetuated a new trauma mirroring our own, which will reverberate across future generations.

We understand that Jewish safety is inseparable from the safety of Palestinians, that Jewish liberation is inexorably bound with liberation of all people, and that peace and healing can exist only in opposition to oppression and violence. This is why we say to Israel: "Not in our name." This is why we vow: "Never again, for anyone."

If we do not stand with Palestinians, we do not stand with anyone, least of all

We know on which side of history we stand.

Matt Dricker Brattleboro

Matt Dricker submitted this letter, which is co-signed by Casey Parles, Jane Katz Field, John Field, Leo Moskowitz, Liz Harris, Lucy Johnston, Maya Faerstein-Weiss, Naomi Ullian, Rebecca Speisman, Steve Wangh, and Abby Mnookin.

# As if by fiat, Wessel's got the truth (and God) on his side

E: "Few signs of support. RE: rew signed.
Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

Both the ignorance and arrogance of Tim Wessel's cold, completely one-sided, pro-Israeli op-ed are simply breathtaking.

Here's one egregious example, particularly of the latter: "I don't believe the [pro-Palestinian] protestors fully understand the politics. I say that many haven't studied the history, and most have been taken in by an advanced, Hamas propaganda machine [...]"

You "say"? You also say that Hamas started the war. Is that some kind of joke? It's obvious you nothing of the real history of the region, yet, as if by fiat, you've got the truth (and God) on your side.

In this windy, half-page screed there is not one word of empathy for the terrible suffering, including mass-starvation, of the indigenous, Palestinian population. Not one!

Rather, kibbitzing on the

sidelines, Wessel knows way more than all the 200-plus protestors who recently marched on Main street in solidarity with tens of thousands of victims of Israeli genocide.

The International Court of Justice knows it's a criminal outrage. The whole world knows it. Even Biden and Schumer are finally expressing publicly their revulsion at the extent of Israel's unrelenting viciousness.

But Wessel knows better than all of them!

So, I'd like to ask him a question: Just where the hell do you

My advice is to stick to local politics and things you might actually know something about.

**Richard Evers** Brattleboro

### Writer 'betrays the memory of oppressed people everywhere who died'fighting for their rights'

**R**E: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

I just finished reading Tim Wessel's absurd Viewpoint, and I am aghast. He bemoans the lack of condemnation of Hamas at protests here in Brattleboro. Now, what can that be likened

Back when slavery was still a thing here in the United States, occasionally there would be slave revolts. Sometimes these revolts would end in the death of a vicious slave owner.

So when abolitionists protest slavery, I guess they also ought to condemn the enslaved for daring to raise a hand against their enslaver, according to Mr. Wessel's "logic."

When a woman is raped and that woman manages to get hold of a gun and blow away her attacker, I would also guess that that woman deserves to be imprisoned for murder.

Is that how things are supposed to go, Mr. Wessel? Do you get my drift? Can you even imagine victim-blaming to be wrong?

There have been many lies perpetrated about Oct. 7 that Mr. Wessel seems to cling to. Most serious observers of those events now dismiss out of hand the lie about 40 babies being beheaded.

There is no evidence that Hamas is responsible for massive numbers of civilian deaths, never mind for a charge of intentional genocide. Mostly, they destroyed legitimate military targets and some armed civilians who were former military. It may well be the case that some innocent civilians were killed, but many of those deaths can be blamed directly on Israeli forces who took no care to distinguish civilians. An honest person should admire the lack of civilian casualties compared to what Israel is doing in Gaza today.

Mr. Wessel not only seeks to perpetuate lies about Oct. 7, but he also is wrong about the status of Israel as a liberal democracy.

Whenever anyone states that the 20% of Arabs in Israel proper are equal to Jews, that is a lie. While certain Arab Israeli civilians may well be privileged, the vast majority are subject to ruthless discrimination and

oppression. Their housing choices are much more limited. Their communities are deprived of public services compared to Jewish communities. They are discriminated against in employment. If they drive, they have special license plate that identifies them as Arab, which makes it easier for the authorities to harass them.

or expression in Israel, not even for Jews. There may be more respect for LGBT rights there, but Israel's crimes cannot be pinkwashed away.

Mr. Wessel's clear implication is that critics of Israel may be antisemitic if we reject Israel's right to "self-defense." Actually, Israel's right of "self-defense" is illegal under international law, and the way this "self-defense" is being carried out is absurd.

Because Israel is in effect occupying Gaza, due to its brutal blockade and control of air, sea, and land entrances, any notion of self-defense does not apply.

By contrast, Hamas has every right to resist by attacking Israel. Also, as Mr. Wessel helpfully pointed out, its forces are in underground tunnels below Gaza civilians; therefore, Israel knows good and well that by destroying civilian housing and infrastructure, they're not touching enemy forces. Israel is fully culpable of genocide in its illegal targeting of civilians, because it is too cowardly to attack Hamas forces head-on.

In the end, Mr. Wessel shamelessly responds to Jewish bullying tactics and would bully his own people on the behalf of Jews. By blaming the victim, in this case Palestinians, he also betrays his own Irish ancestors who lost their lives fighting the British. He betrays the memory of oppressed people everywhere who died fighting for their rights.

In the end, he is not nearly as progressive as he would like to

**Edward C. Morris** 

# We must all take a stand against what Israel is doing

RE: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

There is one significant issue that Tim Wessel did not address in his recent letter (where he wrote that "if you are on the streets demanding that Israel lay down arms and you are not asking the same of Hamas, you are siding with terrorists, and I question your moral compass"). This issue is also not generally addressed in other discussions about Palestine and Israel, so I'd like to do so here:

I don't like fighting, and I wish people wouldn't do it — but they do. That, unfortunately, is human nature. I do not go out and protest every time people fight, not even if they fight viciously and cruelly. As much as I dislike it, it is silly to protest human na-

ture itself. But there is a huge difference between people who fight each other while living freely and one person or group keeping another in captivity and then torturing and destroying them.

Fighting may be a sad fact of human nature, but keeping people in captivity and torturing and destroying them is not. It is a perversion of anything and everything natural. While most of us dislike fighting, even more of us feel outright moral revulsion at cruel, torturous, and murderous behavior.

When anyone crosses the line from fighting to keeping people captive, we can expect those in captivity to lash out with extreme, violent rage the moment they see an opportunity to do so. This, too, is human nature. We would all act similarly if forced to stay in harsh enough conditions of captivity.

Israel has crossed this line in Gaza. This is why so many people protest Israel and not Palestine. It is not because we think that Israel is innately bad There is no freedom of speech or because we hate Jews — I

myself am a Jew.

It is also not because we think that all Palestinians are innocent, peace-loving people. We know that many of them willingly support, participate in, and provoke an ongoing fight with Israel. Even when they have not been held captive in Gaza, they (like many Israelis) have often fought viciously and cruelly.

The protests against Israel are not about "good" people versus "bad" people; they are about Israel crossing that line and arousing moral revulsion.

But shouldn't Israel be allowed to defend itself? Yes, it should but it is morally obligated to do so without committing further war crimes.

Of course, it seems expedient to gather all our adversaries, place them in captivity, and eliminate them. But as moral beings, we must never succumb to this expediency. It may be tempting, we might feel justified in doing it, and it may make us feel safe but still, we must not do it.

If we are attacked, we might have to fight, unfortunately, but keeping people captive and then exterminating them is horrific, and we must never cross that

We cannot protest every fight going on in this world, but we must all take a stand against what Israel is engaged in now — just as many stood up against this same horrifically immoral behavior when it was inflicted on Jews during the Holocaust.

This form of captivity is always wrong, no matter who does it, no matter why they do it, and **Brattleboro** no matter who they do it to.

Greg Sellei Wilmington

### No signs of logic. Figuratively.

RE: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

Tim Wessel believes he's cleverly posed a gotcha-question when he asks, "Can it be 'genocide' when the population of Gaza has essentially tripled in the last 25 years?"

Yes. Yes, it can. Would Wessel argue that the Holocaust wasn't a genocide if it was found that the Jewish population in Germany increased prior to the Holocaust? Of course he wouldn't. Population growth has nothing to do with

the crimes against humanity inflicted on a people. The U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to mem-

bers of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.'

The Convention identifies the intention and actions of the perpetrators as the criteria for determining whether a genocide is occurring - regardless of population growth in the decades preceding a genocide.

Similar arguments about Palestinian population growth have been used to justify Israel's continuous, decades-long slaughter of Palestinians — what some Israeli officials have euphemistically referred to as "mowing the grass.

Wessel's commentary is a grim reminder that dehumanizing and racist thinking is alive

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and well. Accusations of genocide are a serious matter — as should be apparent from the meticulous arguments brought before the International Court of Justice and the Court's careful deliberations.

So when people like Wessel trot out farcical arguments, it cheapens the conversation.

**Aidan Smith** Washington, D.C.

# 'Our opposition is part of a growing worldwide condemnation of Israel's behavior'

E: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

By way of taking to task Tim Wessel for criticizing those of us who are righteously standing up against Israel's genocidal assault upon the people of Gaza, I offer the following.

People need to remember that our opposition is part of a growing worldwide condemnation of Israel's behavior as an outlaw state, including the United Nation's International Court of Justice finding this past January that Israel was "plausibly" perpetuating genocide in Gaza, and thus ordering its government to "take measures within its power" to prevent genocidal acts. Not surprisingly, Israel has ignored

This was stated more decisively recently by the U.N.'s Human Rights Council, which on March 25 published "Anatomy of a Genocide." This draft report found that "the overwhelming nature and scale of Israel's assault on Gaza and the destructive conditions of life it has inflicted reveal an intent to physically destroy Palestinians as a group.

Israel, the report says, "has de facto treated an entire protected group and its life-sustaining infrastructure as 'terrorist' or 'terrorist-supporting,' thus transforming everything and everyone into either a target or collateral damage, hence killable or destroyable. In this way, no Palestinian in Gaza is safe by definition."

Thus, the U.N.'s HRC concluded that it found "reasonable grounds to believe" that Israel is committing genocide.

Interestingly, on the very same day this draft report was published, Israel's faithful enabler, the Biden administration, reversed its previous practice of vetoing similar resolutions by abstaining from and thus allowing to otherwise unanimously pass the U.N. Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan, leading to a lasting sustainable ceasefire, to the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages taken captive during the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack on Israel, and to ensuring access to humanitarian relief.

In addition to some undiplomatic language, Israel's response to the Security Council resolution was to inform the U.N. it would no longer allow its United Nations Relief and Works Agency convoys to carry food into northern Gaza, where Palestinians are starving to death.

Finally — and despite his misguided criticism of people opposing Israel's genocide, especially as a "right to self-defense" — Mr. Wessel is well-advised to express concern on how such censure can be used to or interpreted as an attack on Jews.

As I have recently written elsewhere, those of us who challenge Israel's immoral and illegal conduct have an equal responsibility to be sensitive to this concern, and to publicly stand up with and

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for our Jewish neighbors against all expressions of anti-Semitism. **Tim Stevenson** 

## Only one side of this ongoing tragedy is armed with my tax dollars

E: "Few signs of support. Literally." [Viewpoint, March 20]:

Dear Tim Wessel: Your recent article about antiwar protests ["Few Signs of Support. Literally,"] begs for a response. Let me begin by simply saying: I share your anguish at the horror unfolding in Israel and Gaza, and at the intense reactions this violence has evoked among so many heart-weary people here in Vermont.

However, as a Jewish American whose parents lived in Jerusalem for 10 years — my father was a member of the Zionist Youth Movement in Hitler's Germany, and my mother often stood in Jerusalem with the Women in Black to protest the mistreatment of Arabs in the Occupied Territories — I was deeply disturbed to read your assertion that "most of the protesters [do not] fully understand the politics of the Middle East.'

And as someone who has lived in both Israel and the West Bank, I am wounded by your assumption that, because you've "become friends with many Jews throughout Windham County," you can speak for all of us "who have family and friends in

But setting aside these — and the many other — discomforts provoked by your article, I'd like simply to respond to the central question that seems to animate your entire piece: "Why do I not see any signs condemning Hamas or insisting on the return of hostages?"

For me, there's a pretty straightforward answer:

Though there have been terrible depredations on both sides of this ongoing tragedy, there is only one side being armed with my tax dollars.

So, as an American, if I do not protest what Israel is doing, it is Palestinians in whose suffering I am complicit.

Steve Wangh Brattleboro

## 'A three-page, 2,500-plus-word article quoting at length from a single source is not a news story'

E: "'We felt like we have to see for ourselves what's going on" [News, March 13]: I am dismayed that The

Commons chose to commission the biased, inaccurate reporting in Joyce Marcel's front-page article about Rep. Becca Balint's recent trip to Israel.

A three-page, 2,500-plusword article quoting at length from a single source is not a news story. Balint has a proven history in Brattleboro publications of communicating to the public coherently in her own words, and I would have preferred that she had been allowed to do so, however much I may disagree with her on this issue.

Even the headline itself is misleading: "We felt like we have to see for ourselves what's going on': Balint joins five House colleagues in fact-finding visit to Israel and Gaza.'

As a basic point of geography, Balint did not, in fact, visit Gaza. She met with people who had resided in "the Gaza envelope": a 7-km-wide band of land that "envelops" the Gaza Strip. The ongoing, daily horrors happening in Gaza right now cannot be witnessed from visiting adjacent land that has now been a vacant, closed military zone for months.

Most residents of Gaza are refugees or descendants of refugees displaced from villages in the "Gaza envelope" and southern Israel by violent Israeli militias during the 1948 Nakba. Israelis residing in the "Gaza envelope" were strategically settled there to prevent the return of those refugees.

From the Nakba until today, many of the kibbutzim in the "Gaza envelope" face toward Gaza proper with tanks. Focusing on many kibbutz residents' relatively liberal views by referring to them as "peaceniks" obscures their functional role in perpetuating this ongoing

Likewise, Marcel seems unfamiliar with the basic facts of Oct. 7. She conflates and confuses what happened at the rave site (the one site in the "Gaza envelope" that Balint visited) with events that took place across the area of incursion, and denies the objectively military nature of many of the targets attacked by al-Qassam Brigades, in particular those that they "planned" (quoting Marcel) to attack.

This is not to minimize the violence committed by militants (not just from Hamas) on Oct.

7, but if you're writing a news story, facts matter.

Marcel writes, "[T]he legislators talked to people on all sides of the conflict," but the trip was organized and paid for by J Street, a plainly pro-Israel, pro-Zionist, U.S.-based lobbying organization, a fact which receives precisely zero mention.

"All sides" suggests that we're not just limiting our focus to "Israelis vs. Palestinians." Indeed, some effort is made to distinguish between different positions within the Israeli polity. Palestinians, however, are simply cast as victims with no political agency: victims, furthermore, of certain right-wing settlers, rather than victims of the Israeli state or a Palestinian Authority imposed upon them since Oslothe far-more-common scenario.

This article is not news reporting. It reads like a campaign ad, written — unfortunately for the candidate — by someone lacking a strong command of the subject matter.

I expect The Commons, as our local source of independent media, to do better.

**Fhar Miess** Brattleboro

# Aghast at heavy bias in Balint story

E: "'We felt like we have to see for ourselves what's going on" [News, March 13]:
I am aghast that *The Commons* 

printed Joyce Marcel's article about Rep. Becca Balint's recent trip to Israel as a front-page news story. To give a few examples of how this reporting was heavily

• Balint was the only person quoted.

· Balint and the House delegation traveled with a Zionist lobbyist group, J Street, which was never even mentioned.

• Despite the subtitle of the article, Balint did not visit Gaza; the House delegation visited the "Gaza envelope," which is outside of Gaza itself and where Palestinians are suffering unspeakable horrors everyday.

· Having conversations with Palestinians in the West Bank is not equivalent to "talk[ing] to people on all sides of the conflict."

· Israel's violent history, from the 1948 Nakba through the ongoing occupation and apartheid, was not sufficiently addressed.

· Marcel makes several unsubstantiated claims about the Oct.

I rely on The Commons as a local, independent news source. Moving forward, I hope this type of "reporting" will no longer go to print.

> Abby Mnookin Brattleboro

### We've had huge mobilizations. You don't know because the news media won't cover them.

E: "Will someone organize a huge march to protest this slaughter that is happening in front of our eyes?" [Letters, March 13]:

I appreciate that Arlene Distler is supportive of the movement for Palestinian liberation and wants to see wider and more vibrant protests, but I think she's pointing her finger at the wrong culprit.

We have had huge mobilizations in Washington, D.C. over the past few months for Palestine. There was one in early November with tens of thousands of people and one in January with 400,000 people. They have been incredible!

Plus, there have been amazing actions across the country: Pro-Palestine activists completely shut down San Francisco International Airport in early March with the message "Stop the World for Gaza.'

We have shut down Grand Central Station, bridges in and out of New York City, highways in and out of D.C., and more.

Many of these actions were organized by young people especially the Palestinian Youth Movement and Jewish Voice for Peace, of which I'm a member.

So why haven't you heard about this?

As I said, you're pointing your finger at the wrong culprit. While our organizing could always be better, more strategic, and more inclusive, the blackout of stories from our major new outlets has been disgusting.

We had 400,000 people in the streets of D.C. on Jan. 13 more than half again the size of the 1963 March on Washington that Arlene Distler wants us to replicate and the largest Palestine protest in the history of the U.S. — and The New York Times didn't even mention it.

The Times and other socalled "liberal" media — like *The Washington Post* and NPR — have not reported on these events. Reporters have even left their jobs at the *Times* in protest of its one-sided coverage of this

## VIEWPOINT

# A matter of respect

Princess Catherine was forced to disclose her cancer. She owed nobody an explanation.

BrattleboroHEN I SAW the video announcing that Catherine, princess of Wales, had cancer, I wasn't at all surprised. I had a feeling since I heard the words "abdominal surgery."

What I have been surprised about in the last several weeks was the vicious speculation around her whereabouts. Has

breast cancer survivor on March 10.

**MELISSA SWIM** 

completed 13 years as a

she died? Is that a body double? William is having an affair? Are they divorcing? Wasshe 'Epsteined"?

No, she's a 41-year-old

So please stop complaining that young people aren't doing the hard and often scary work of organizing mass mobilizations or direct actions. Start complaining that your news sources aren't covering these stories — and follow these organizations on social media or through independent media and amplify them to your own network.

Start complaining that our government isn't listening to the massive numbers of activists out on the street — and call them daily to tell them to stop the genocide.

There is so much that all of us can do in this movement — on and off the streets — and I hope we can all find a way to speak up for a true peace and lasting justice.

70

8. Not prepared

until 2015

12. Top

9. The sun, for one

10. Supermarket chain

11. Nobel-winning author Alice

13. Philatelist's collectible

14. What Gallaudet classes

are taught in: Abbr.

16. School in Strasbourg

17. Cordoned (off)

21. Temper\_

28. Starting on

15. Tech devices, collectively

18. "Ginger Pye" author Eleanor

27. "What \_\_, chopped liver?"

112

119

Sonia Silbert Brattleboro

mother of three small kids who just got a life-changing diagnosis and was trying to heal and protect her kids.

The public and the media, with their rabid speculation, forced the princess to do this. She didn't owe an explanation about a private health matter to the public, no matter who she is.

And sadder even is that she will not be left alone now — the publicity will ramp up and the disrespect for her struggle will continue.

As a person who actually received some of the worst treatment during my cancer journey from my employers (who didn't know what the heck they were doing with a sick person who needed some understanding, and who knew I was the subject of gossip in my absence) and a certain "family" member (who

13

expressed their concern to anyone who would listen but whom I barely heard from), I will tell you something.

Don't make the absolute hardest thing a person is going through harder.

Respect boundaries, show compassion, help where you can, and understand how jarring a critical diagnosis such as cancer is to a person's life. It's awful at any age — but let me tell you, when you are young and with children, it is even more tragic and terrifying. (I was 36.)

Be kind. Be respectful. Be a helper. Mind your business — and, if your actions aren't to help a struggling person, rethink them.

I wish Princess Catherine a full recovery. Princess or not, she's a person and she deserves some respect.

105 106

107

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# **JOON PAHK**

# THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"Eat Your Fill"

### Across

- 1. "Sorry, the connection cut out for a bit"
- 9. Pastry often served with chutney
- 15. People's Sexiest Man
- Alive of 1993 and 1999 Cuisine with collards,
- corn bread, and cobbler 20. Mocks
- 21. Customary Tuesday fare "Giant" or "silky" insectivore
- 23. Temper
- 24. Espouse "That didn't \_\_ well"
- Tympanic membrane "Lust, Caution" director
- 29. Unholy lunch meat? What flowers ride
- into battle? Medium for traffic and news \_\_ cloud (comet-
- forming region) "Whoa!
- 42. Vengeful Gallic spirits?
- 50. Toothpaste tube inits. 51. Fitting
- 52. Llama's wild cousin 53. Casa \_\_ (Boston domestic
- violence shelter) Stellar explosion
- Wally the Green Monster and Lucky the Leprechaun 57. Mean: Abbr
- 58. Parmesan that's been surgically transplanted?
- 62. TV's "Science Guy" 66. Google Sheets alternative
- 67. Target of 87-Down's vaccine 68. Squishy bone, say
- 71. Plant-based preserver of leftovers? 79. Goal attachment
- 80. Pay channel owned by HBO
- 81. Antagonistic manner, informally 82. Language family
- including Swahili 85. Women's Media Center co-founder Gloria
- Musical grp. conducted by Andris Nelsons
- Turn on, as a timer 90. Call dibs on soup?
- 92. Solemnity 94. Delight
- 95. Alma mater of Sonia Sotomayor
- 97. Carry a torch fashionably? Non-kosher means
- of access? 108. Boy with wax wings
- 109. Florida fruits
- "Sherlock" actress Stubbs 112. "Not another word!"
- 113. Kigali's country 114. Food put inside another food, as in this puzzle's theme answers
- 119. Rack up
- 120. "That's an improvement" 121. Where Korea and Japan are
- 122. Meeting, casually 123. Avaricious
- 124. Spill-resistant?

# Down

- 1. Designer Mizrahi 2. Sound heard in "cute" but not "cut"
- 3. Exterior 4. Chateau \_\_ Michelle (winery) 5. Rapper Snow \_\_ Product
- So far 7. Resource in Catan

and get

10% OFF

- 30. For example 31. Actress Stone 32. Release, as an album 33. "Stop right there!"
- "\_\_ (A Pirate's Life for Me)" 37. Helpful 39. Spend time together,
- informally
- 40. Scent
- 41. The floor, in a
- children's game 43. Test of speed
- 44. Seth's son 45. Nick Mohammed's
- "Ted Lasso" role 46. Includes on an email
- 47. "Persepolis" country 48. A deadly sin
- 49. Wise herb? 52. "This is so frustrating!"
- 55. Several Connective tissue in
- the knee: Abbr. 59. Readme file extension
- \_\_-friendly Actress Susan
- 62. Short cut 63. Unwell
- 64. Bit of makeup? 65. Choir's place
- 67. Gaming convention series "Power Lunch" network
- 69. Get well

- 70. Sicilian volcano 71. Menu with full screen mode
- 72. Oklanoma city 73. Bit of makeup?

101 102 103

113

120

104

121

114 115 116 117 118

96. Tailless primate

100. Vehicle in a shed

102. "Inferno" poet

105. Semblance

118. Distant

106. Certain navel

103. Over

101. Do some stumping

107. Annoy persistently

110. Numan or Oldman

\_\_ chi ch'uan

113. 2018 documentary about

a Supreme Court justice

99. Grandmas

97. 12-point typesetting units

98. Start of Caesar's boast

- 74. Filing material 75. Scottish cap
- 76. Give the heave-ho 77. Light bulb, metaphorically
- 78. "Sounds like a plan"
- 80. Corp. exec in charge
- of computing
- 83. Fierce and determined
- 84. Pair from Mötley Crüe?
- \_\_ butter (moisturizer) \_ Rabbit (folktale trickster)
- 87. Virologist Jonas
- 88. Rink shape
- 92. Made up, like lips
- 91. Roger Rabbit frames?

## 116. Battleship letters 117. Consumer protection agcy.

# Last issue's solution

"Writing Reassignments" M I D S T C U R S E G R A B A S E A T U N I T S A K I T A P A P A R E L L I S A M U E L P E P Y S S T A R T E D U P ENETAOS LTDORFFRMS G E O R G E S A N D D O J O Y A R D E A R P A G E D M O O R A M A M A R G A R E T M E A D S H Y P S H A W E M E R Y C S I C A V E P O L E S S P I R E L E T S P E C I A L G A S E S S C E N E R Y L O C K S T E P Y O W Z A A S T A I M A T O T E D M E A L S NORMANMAILER ALS

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### COLUMN Sports Roundup





Brattleboro's Reese Croutworst (1) and Laura Kamel of Bellows Falls (10) were both selected to their respective Southern Vermont League girls' basketball All-Star teams.

Brattleboro's Willow Sharma was selected to the Southern Vermont League's boys' Nordic skiing All-Star team.

# SVL announces all-star teams for Nordic, basketball

he Southern Vermont League (SVL) recently announced their all-star teams for basketball and Nordic skiing for the 2023-24 season, and several of our local athletes were honored.

 Selected to the A Division girls' basketball first team was Brattleboro's Reese Croutworst. Teammates Kaitlyn Pattison and Abigail Henry received honorable mention.

C Division girls' first team selections included Leland & Gray's Maggie Parker and Laura Kamel and Abby Nystrom of Bellows Falls. Receiving honorable mention were Nola Sciacca of Bellows Falls, Karen Vargas of Green Mountain, and Mary Sanderson of Leland & Gray.

• Brattleboro's Johnathan Haskins was a first team selection in A Division boys' basketball. Jack Cady received honorable mention.

Green Mountain's Tanner Swisher and Twin Valley's Brayden Brown were named to the C Division first team. Honorable mentions went to Caleb Merrow of Green Mountain and Noah Dornburgh of Twin Valley.

 Brattleboro's Willow Sharma and Gabriele Jeppesen-Bellici were selected as first-team SVL all-stars in boys' Nordic skiing. Teammate Oliver Herrick was a second-team selection.

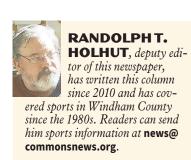
Katherine Normandeau and Maeve Bald were Brattleboro's two first-team selections to the girls' Nordic squad. Teammate Maayan Coleman was named to the second team.

### **Special Olympics** hosts Winter Games in Wilmington

• Special Olympics Vermont hosted the 2024 Winter Games on March 15 at the Hermitage Club in Wilmington. More than 125 delegates, including athletes and coaches from eight local programs, trained and competed in alpine skiing and snowboarding.

This was Special Olympics Vermont's first Winter Games since 2019. The delegations that competed included Addison, Central Vermont, Chittenden, Adaptive Sports at Mount Snow, Northshire, Randolph, Rutland, and Smugglers' Notch Adaptive.

With 23 athletes, the Adaptive Sports at Mount Snow team had the largest contingent, including athletes from Twin Valley High School and Brattleboro Union High School. Leah Autumn Blowers finished third in the Snowboarding Novice giant slalom, slalom, and Super G, while Bryce Brogan was first in Alpine Novice



giant slalom, slalom, and Super G, and Brady Pike Lackey was first in slalom and Super G and second in giant

In Alpine Intermediate competition, Kayli Nicholson was first in slalom and second in giant slalom, while Emma Davis was third in slalom and Super G, and fifth in giant slalom. Cort Freeman was first in giant slalom, second in Super G, and third in slalom; Kelsey Griffin was second in giant slalom, fourth in Super G, and sixth in slalom; and Trevor Morris-Boyd was third in giant slalom and Super G, and fourth in slalom.

Dylan Keitz was first in giant slalom, second in slalom, and third in Super G, while Margaret Elise Straus was first in giant slalom and Super G and fourth in slalom and Lauren Strol was fourth in giant slalom and fifth in slalom. Owen Sundberg was first in slalom and Super G and second in giant slalom, and Thomas Young was first in Super G, second in slalom and fourth in giant slalom.

The Alpine Advanced competition saw Brendan Mulcahy finish first in Super G and second in slalom and giant slalom, while Bobby Petrie was third in Super G and giant slalom and fourth in slalom. Ryan Krug was fourth in Super G, fifth in giant slalom, and sixth in slalom. Christopher Straus was first in slalom and third in Super G and giant slalom, while Nathaniel Joseph Straus was fifth in slalom and Super G and sixth in giant slalom, and Ryan Weisberg was second in giant slalom and fourth in slalom and Super G.

A lack of snow forced the cancellation of the cross-country skiing and snowshoeing competition at Rikert Outdoor Center in Ripton on March 9.

## The last sporting goods store in town?

• When I started working in Brattleboro 35 years ago, the thing I liked about it was how much it reminded me of what Northampton, Mass., was like when I was growing up in the 1960s and 1970s. Even though the late 1980s and early 1990s were the last gasp for many of the traditional retail stores on Main Street in Brattleboro, there were still enough of them left to remind me of what Northampton was like when I was a youth, before the malls and shopping plazas opened and decimated that downtown.

The process took a little longer in Brattleboro, but the big box stores and online retailers have pretty much finished off the traditional retail store. The decision by Sam's to close its flagship Main Street store was pretty much the coda for the old downtown Brattleboro.

But Peter "Fish" Case apparently didn't get the memo that operating an independent retail store is a tough way to make a living in the digital age. Last fall, Case took over Burrows Sports on Main Street after Robert "Woody" Woodworth decided it was time to retire. As an avid triathlete, Case was a loyal Burrows customer, and a natural to be the caretaker of the store that was founded by Pliny Burrows in 1935.

While Burrows is one of two bicycle shops in downtown Brattleboro, Case said in an email that his store will ideally "be taking up the slack from the void left by Sam's once it closes. We will likely start with more clothing and then expand into other sports."

Sam's was the last store in town where you could get a baseball glove, a tennis racquet, or camping gear. While Burrows won't be selling everything that Sam's did, Case said he hopes his store can give people "a local option for their sporting needs. It is something we're going to try to achieve while staying loyal to our current customer base.

With help from Julia Chase, the store's longtime general manager, and mechanic Joe Mardeusz, Case is learning the ropes of running a Main Street business.

"I felt like the shop has done well, even after a nonexistent winter," Case said. "But I was informed by Julia that the winter was not good. But now with the transition into cycling and bike season along with all the racquet sports, I'm eager to see what this season brings. We have a large selection of e-bikes coming in that will work for a wide variety of folks, so I'm excited.'

## Hall of Fame honors go to Baker, Coffey, Natowich

• The Vermont Principals' Association recently announced its Hall of Game Class of 2024. Among

the 10 members who will be inducted in May is Jenna (Coffey) Wilson, of Victor, New York, who was a standout three-sport athlete at Bellows Falls

Union High School from 1999-2002. Coffey led her basketball team to back-to-back Division II state championships in 2000 and 2001, with a combined record of 41-4. In 2002, she guided her team to the Division I runner-up title.

During her high school track & field career, she won nine individual state titles in four years. Coffey won the Division II 100 meter dash state title all four years of her career and then added State titles in the 100 meter hurdles and 200 meter dash in 2000, 2001

Coffey led her track and field team to two Division II team titles, in 2001 and 2002. Her track & field accomplishments earned her a full athletic scholarship to the University of Vermont, where she was team captain in 2005 and 2006.

The VPA Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place on Friday, May 10, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center in Montpelier.

 Two Brattleboro sports legends were among the 12 newest inductees to the Vermont Sports Hall of Fame - five-time Vermont Men's Amateur golf champion Shawn Baker and longtime BUHS football and baseball coach Andy Natowich.

After winning the state's high school title in 1981, Baker won a record five Vermont State Amateur golf championships in a seven-year span from 1983 to 1989. He also was a three-time NCAA Division II All-American for Central Connecticut State (1983, 1984, and 1985), where he finished as high as third in the national championship as an individual.

Now a PGA professional on Long Island, Baker's pro career included an appearance at the 2005 Barclays Classic and qualifying for the 2015 Senior PGA Championship.

A longtime football and baseball coach winning multiple state championships in both sports, Natowich spent his entire high school coaching career in Brattleboro and was one of the top coaches of his era in southern Vermont.

Natowich led Brattleboro to three state football titles (1950, 1957 and 1965) and three baseball titles (1951, 1956 and 1961). His record in football was 113-53-3 and, in 24 baseball seasons, he was 201-158. He came to Brattleboro in 1945 after being a football all-American at Holy Cross

and a brief stint with Washington in the NFL. The BUHS football field is named in his honor.

Baker and Natowich will be formally inducted on Saturday, April 27, during a ceremony and dinner at the Delta Marriott Burlington Hotel in South Burlington.

# **Super Fun Bike Day** coming soon

• The Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department will host a Super Fun Bike Day at Living Memorial Park on Saturday, April 20, in cooperation with the Brattleboro Kiwanis Club, Brattleboro Fire & EMS and the Brattleboro Police Department.

This program will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and feature a helmet-fitting session, safety information, a bike rodeo and more. If you are in need of a new helmet, they will be available for free for kids and adults, courtesy of the Kiwanis club.

In the event of rain, the event will be held in the Nelson E. Withington Skating Facility. For more information, call the Rec. Dept. at 802-254-5808.

# Senior bowling roundup

• Week 12 of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on March 21 saw first place High Rollers (38-22) have a 0-5 week, while Stayin' Alive (36-24) and Stepping Stones II (35-25) went 4-1 and 5-0, respectively, to move closer to the top of the standings. Four Seasons (32-28), is in fourth, followed by Good Times (26-34), Hairiers (23-37), Four Pins (22-38), and Slow Movers (16-44).

Debbie Rittenhour had the women's high handicap game (244) and series (687) while John Walker had the men's high handicap game (257) and series (745). Four Seasons had the high team handicap game (926) and series

Walker had the men's high scratch series (712) with games of 246, 237 and 229. Robert Rigby had a 568 series with games of 209 and 202. Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 565 series with a 212 game, Gary Montgomery had a 543 series with a 193 game, and Marty Adams had a 505 series with a 211 game. Peter Deyo had a 195 game and

Skip Shine had a 191 game. Carol Gloski had the women's high scratch series (512) with games of 178 and 174. Sandy Ladd had a 177 game, Debbie Kolpa had a 174 game and Vikki Butynski rolled a 173.

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