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## Winston Prouty seeks to build 300 affordable housing units

Chloe Learey is on a mission to build desperately needed housing on its campus for the health of the community. The financing for it? That hasn't been easy.

By Ellen Pratt  
*The Commons*

BRATTLEBORO—Chloe Learey, executive director of the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in West Brattleboro, has a vision to build 300 units of diverse housing on the center's 180-acre campus. Guided by the belief that an inclusive community is ultimately

healthier for everyone, Learey's goal is to provide housing that is affordable to many people with different needs.

"I imagine a neighborhood where you don't say, 'Oh, there's the poor people's building. There's the old people's building,'" Learey said. "We're trying to build a neighborhood that reflects our community, where

■ SEE WINSTON PROUTY, A2

## Rockingham considers merging three fire departments

A comprehensive study presents three options and reveals overwhelming local support for consolidation among firefighters and residents alike

By Robert F. Smith  
*The Commons*

ROCKINGHAM—The study by a Wyoming EMS consulting firm has recommended that three fire departments — Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, and Rockingham — be consolidated into one with one town-wide fire district.

AP Triton presented the results of a feasibility study of the three local fire departments at a special joint board meeting of the Selectboard and the village trustees of Bellows Falls and Saxtons River.

The Bellows Falls Fire Department employs a fire chief and on-call firefighters, while both village fire departments are all-volunteer.

The Rockingham Volunteer Fire Department is a non-profit organization with no official connection to the town of Rockingham.

Each department has its own fire station, and the need to replace the station in Saxtons River has long been under discussion.

### Three paths forward

John Stouffer, project manager for AP Triton, presented the group's findings at the meeting via Zoom.

The 194-page final report included the results of confidential online surveys of fire department staff and elected town officials as well as personal interviews and detailed descriptions

of the town's various firefighting facilities.

Stouffer asserted at the beginning of the presentation that the study was unbiased, undertaken without preconceived notions, and based on science, national standards, local standards, and best practices.

■ SEE FIRE DEPTS. STUDY, A3

## A wealth-tax bill roared to victory in the House. Then it died in the Senate. What happened?

A bill championed by Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, the Ways and Means chair from Brattleboro, would have aggressively funded more housing

By Joyce Marcel  
*The Commons*

BRATTLEBORO—If there can be an obituary for a piece of legislation, then this is it: H.829, we hardly knew ye.

H.829 was enthusiastically passed by the Vermont House of Representatives, 97-42 but was killed in the Senate.

From the beginning of the legislative session, H.829 was spoken about reverently by its supporters in Windham County. Its intent was to increase affordable housing in a number of ways by investing \$900 million over the next 10 years.

But where would the money come from? According to the person who formulated the plan — House Ways and

Means chair

Emilie Kornheiser,

the Ways and Means chair from Brattleboro,

would have aggressively funded more housing

aggressively funded more housing

aggressively funded more housing

aggressively funded more housing

■ SEE H.829, A4



House Ways & Means Committee Chair Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro, was the architect of H.829.

RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO

## Longtime Brattleboro rep. won't seek re-election

After 12 years in the House, Toleno says financial pressures make it difficult to continue to serve

By Joyce Marcel  
*The Commons*

BRATTLEBORO — After serving 12 years in the Legislature, Rep. Tristan Toleno, D-Brattleboro, is retiring from state politics and ramping up his career as an organizational consultant.

Toleno, 52, said he feels the need to return to full-time work and build up some wealth and stability before retirement.

"It's a personal decision to prioritize my family and future security," he told *The Commons*. "I spent most of my whole adult working life in food service. I loved that career. But it wasn't the kind of career that set me up well for retirement security."

Lawmakers earn \$811 per week during the weeks that the Legislature is in session, which is normally January through May. They get a mileage reimbursement and a per-diem stipend of



Rep. Tristan Toleno, D-Brattleboro

\$69 per day for meals and \$134 per night for lodging. They receive no benefits.

Toleno said that in the 12 years he served as representative, he was able to work for only part of the year.

"Were we in a different financial position, it'd be easier to commit to staying in Montpelier," he said.

And Toleno has spent some of his time there trying to change that.

"It's one of the reasons why I've supported efforts to change legislative compensation and benefits," he said. "I think we end up hurting a lot of people, especially if they're younger than retirement age."

Serving in the Legislature often "comes at the sacrifice of career and family. And that just doesn't make any sense," Toleno said.

"It doesn't help Vermont get the best people in Montpelier who represent the full range of Vermonters and their lived experiences," he added.

### Going full-time

Toleno, a longtime restaurateur in the Brattleboro area, has been

■ SEE TOLENO, A4

## Goodnow eyes Toleno's House seat

Attorney hopes to bring to Montpelier 'knowledge and energy' from his Brattleboro Selectboard

BRATTLEBORO—A former Selectboard member has announced that he will be running for state representative for District 9 (formerly District 3).

Ian Goodnow will seek the Democratic Party nomination for the seat after having served on the board for the past four years, the last two as chair. He stepped down from the board at the end of his term in March.

He is a practicing attorney at Costello, Valente & Gentry P.C., also of Brattleboro.

This week, incumbent Rep. Tristan Toleno (D-Brattleboro) announced he is not seeking re-election after serving District 9 for the past 12 years (*story, this issue*).

Toleno has formally endorsed Goodnow, stating in a



Ian Goodnow

news release that "Ian's leadership on the Selectboard showed me that he is humble and curious, that he knows how to

■ SEE GOODNOW, A7

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**Winston Prouty**

FROM SECTION FRONT

anybody can live and it's not segregated."

Learey has spent the past year and a half focused on realizing this dream. She's gotten buy-in from the Prouty board of directors, the town of Brattleboro, and community members.

Secretaries of multiple state agencies and federal staffers participated in a funders' site tour, and the campus was included in Brattleboro's state-recognized neighborhood development area in order to fast-track permitting.

Site constraints have been mapped and evaluated; wetlands, flagged.

Now Learey is looking for financing. That part hasn't been easy.

**Building workforce housing is challenging**

Learey and others in the housing field acknowledge that traditional financing mechanisms don't necessarily work for a project like this one, where a nonprofit without much development experience plans to build hundreds of mixed-income housing units.

She looked into using low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) as one funding stream. The federal LIHTC program provides up to 70% of development costs and is the largest single resource available for the development of affordable rental housing in the U.S.

The Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) administers the program in Vermont.

But LIHTC isn't necessarily a good fit for projects such as Learey's, said Seth Leonard, managing director of community development at VHFA.

"LIHTC works really well in developments where the majority of units in a building are program-eligible, that target household incomes below 60% of area median income," Leonard said. "Putting little sprinkles of that funding into different buildings is not something the program does well."

Additionally, these tax credits are typically awarded to affordable housing developers with experience in the program and who are very efficient in this line of business, Leonard said.

Windham & Windsor Housing Trust and other regional housing groups are examples of experienced nonprofits that use these tax credits to build affordable

housing around the state.

While there are some "first-time LIHTC developers" in Vermont, Leonard said that it can be challenging to take on a project as a first-timer.

Sometimes project developers team up with more experienced housing developers to access the LIHTC program, but that can involve selling the portion of the property that relies on LIHTC and giving up control of the project.

**Vermont lacks incentives to build workforce housing**

Josh Hanford, director of intergovernmental relations at the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) and a former commissioner of the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development, believes Vermont needs incentives to build more "missing middle" workforce housing like that proposed for the Winston Prouty campus.

The majority of low-cost funding such as grants and tax credits goes to the development of capital "A" affordable housing, where Hanford says the most pressing need is.

"And that's not bad," he adds. But the result is that large-scale, sophisticated developers capable of building workforce housing have been driven out of the state because they can't make their projects in Vermont work.

Hanford thinks one solution would be project-based tax-increment financing (TIF), which would serve smaller regions than the current TIF program serves.

He says that with project-based TIF, Winston Prouty could finance the necessary upgrades to water, sewer, and roads that would entice a developer to take on the project, which would then bring in additional tax revenue to the state.

**'We're just a little quirky'**

Learey is undaunted by the challenges she faces.

"We're just a little quirky," she said.

People might wonder why a small nonprofit that supports kids and families might want to build housing, but Learey argues that housing helps kids and families by providing stability that is essential to child development.

And it helps the community,



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Chloe Learey, Executive Director of the Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro.

which, according to the town's 2021 Housing Action Plan, has a "pressing need" for more than 500 housing units.

"We have this asset [of 180 acres]. And it's our responsibility to be part of the solution," Learey said.

She thinks that the addition of 300 mixed-income housing units will help stabilize the local housing market, known for its scarce and expensive options.

Learey has scaled back the original plan for the campus in order to bring down the project budget. Using modular construction and a row-house design of fourplexes, construction costs are currently estimated to average \$263,000 per unit.

The total cost for the housing component of the project would be less than \$100 million.

Learey is now looking at a financing model that would include traditional debt and private equity. She thinks "impact investment" — whereby investors accept a lower rate of return in exchange for helping to create beneficial social or environmental effects — would be a good fit for the project.

Learey pointed to the

development of middle-market, workforce housing in St. Johnsbury by the Northern Forest Center as an example of this type of financing.

Using impact investment funds, as well as private gifts and grants and a \$500,000 low-interest loan from State Treasurer Mike Peciak's "10% for Vermont" fund, the center is developing 10 apartments and two commercial spaces in a 1906 building downtown.

"We're big fans of that approach," said Leonard, and according to him the VHFA has been prioritizing projects that have been able to access low-interest debt and attract private capital.

**A model from Middlebury?**

Learey wonders whether large, local employers could also help fund the project.

She cited Middlebury College's 2022 purchase of 35 acres for the development of a mix of housing ranging from affordable to market-rate. In between will be workforce housing units, available to those who meet the income requirements of \$50,000 to

\$80,000 per year for a two-person household.

While the college is partnering in developing the project, tenants will not have to be employees of the college to qualify for the workforce housing units.

"We think that trying to find creative ways of leveraging private investments for this project could potentially be a positive model for the rest of the state," said Leonard. "I think the work they're doing to try to activate that type of capital is something that we should applaud from an ingenuity standpoint."

Meanwhile, Learey perseveres. "I will talk to anybody who is doing this type of development or has thought about doing it," she said. "I don't know how many people I've spoken to over the past year and a half trying to find out how to make it work."

She's come to accept that "no one is going to save us," but says that's OK.

"Maybe it's better," she said. "This is our community, and we can figure it out."

A commentary from Learey appears in this week's Voices section.

**Estey Organ Museum opens May 18**

BRATTLEBORO — Exquisitely crafted instruments, made in Brattleboro. That's what visitors can see, hear, and even play when they visit the Estey Organ Museum (EOM) this season.

A new exhibit has been created by Board member Rev. Craig L. Cowing, retired clergy from Rocky Hill, Connecticut. This special display highlights patterns made and used by Estey employees for cutting out elements of organ cases and for chip-carved decorations on cases.

The museum's collection includes some 80 pieces spanning circa 1875 to 1900. Although not complete, the collection illustrates

changes in cabinet styles during this period.

An essential aspect of the Museum's mission is to collect, preserve, and interpret the physical and cultural heritage of the Estey Organ Company (1846-1960), one of the world's largest organ manufacturers. The museum, housed in the Company's main engine house, displays 20 instruments dating as far back as the mid-1800s. Museum volunteers periodically offer organs and organ parts to "re-home."

Estey is unique in that anyone who visits is turned into an instant musician. Museum hosts tell all visitors — adults and children alike — "please touch: sit down

and play! Make the reed and pipe organs come alive again." Visitors can even walk through a pipe organ to see how the mechanism works.

In addition to the organs, the museum has a significant collection of music sheets, instructional books for amateur organists, catalogs, trade cards, and advertising materials published by the company.

A series of photographs of company employees at work taken by renowned documentary photographer Clemens Kalischer in the 1950s graces one of the walls of the media room. This is where visitors can also watch an introductory video about the Company, produced with assistance from project consultant and EOM board member Sally Seymour and narrated by EOM president Dennis Waring.

The museum, 108 Birge Street (off Canal Street), will be open Saturday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m., May 18 through Oct. 12. Admission is free to members and \$5 for nonmembers. Guests are urged to allow at least half an hour for their visit — there is a lot to see.

Special off-hour visits can sometimes be accommodated for those unable to visit during regular open hours. Contact the museum at [info@esteyorganmuseum.org](mailto:info@esteyorganmuseum.org), preferably at least two weeks in advance.

For further information about the museum and Estey Organ Company, visit [esteyorganmuseum.org](http://esteyorganmuseum.org).

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ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

Rockingham's fire equipment is currently housed at the town's highway department.



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

The Saxtons River fire station is precariously perched near the river and is the oldest of the three fire stations in Rockingham.



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

The Bellows Falls fire station is also home to the village's police department.

## Fire Depts. study

He said AP Triton understood that some of the conclusions would be controversial, and "some people are not going to like our recommendations."

Consolidation of the three fire departments has been a controversial topic of discussion in recent years and has not so far led to any change.

Stouffer outlined three scenarios explored by the study: (A) leave things as they are, (B) develop "interlocal agreements" among the fire departments, or (C) consolidate to establish one fire district.

### Existing facilities present varying challenges

The three departments have a combined total of 68 staff members — 24 in Bellows Falls, 25 in Rockingham and 19 in Saxtons River.

Together, they cover 42 square miles — 20.5 square miles each for Rockingham and Saxtons River, and 1.2 square miles for Bellows Falls. The total population of the area is 4,832, nearly 60% of whom live in Bellows Falls.

Of the 38 respondents to the 17-question confidential survey, 35% were firefighters and 25% were elected officials.

Stouffer said that "the big question" on the survey asked whether the respondent would "support a potential consolidation of two or more of the three fire departments."

A large majority — 84% of those surveyed — said they would, depending on the details.

Only 10% said they would not support any consolidation or that they felt consolidation is unnecessary.

If only two departments were to be consolidated, the majority of those surveyed said they would choose Saxtons River and Rockingham.

The feasibility study also looked at the condition of the three fire stations. The one in Bellows Falls was found to be in the best condition, but would "still need work to improve safety issues."

The Saxtons River Fire Station — the oldest of the three — is in a flood plain and was rated as being in poor condition, with a second floor "in danger of collapse."

The study stated clearly that an "alternative location should be found immediately."

### Support for consolidation is strong

The average number of calls per year that the fire stations collectively received was found to be roughly 650, with the majority coming from Bellows Falls and Rockingham.

Emergency medical events represented the vast majority of those calls, accounting for 66% of the service demand on the departments. Fires accounted for only 8%, with an equal percentage of false alarms.

The study said that strategy B — developing interlocal agreements among the existing fire departments — would be most effective under a single fire chief, with a combined team to handle

all clerical and similar work for the departments.

The study said that this would be the next step toward consolidation. The departments would remain independent entities for legal and tax purpose but would share an organizational structure and chain of command.

Stouffer said that taking this route for a couple of years might be the best way to test whether full consolidation would work.

With regard to full consolidation and the establishment of a fire district, Stouffer said the most important first step would be to determine the level of interest and support among citizens.

Citing survey respondents' 84% support for this strategy, Stouffer added, "Nearly all the people we spoke to supported consolidation."

He also made clear that consolidation would not mean getting rid of volunteer firefighters. "Volunteers are worth their weight in gold," Stouffer said. "You don't have the funding for

an all-career fire department, and you don't need to."

### Changes would take time

If a new fire district is eventually established, the study encouraged all the current volunteer firefighters to join the new district.

But before anything can happen, several steps need to be taken, including filing petitions with various boards, holding public meetings, winning Selectboard approval, and developing fire district bylaws, rules, and regulations.

All of that will take some time.

Rockingham Town Manager Scott Pickup said the next step for the study is for the "Fire Equipment Committee to dig into the findings and recommendations and report back to the tri-board meeting on June 25."

The full Triton study can be found at [bit.ly/764-fire\\_dept\\_study](http://bit.ly/764-fire_dept_study).

FROM SECTION FRONT

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The Town of Brattleboro & Parks Department is accepting sealed bids for the removal of approximately 24 trees from the area south of the Nelson Withington Skating Facility, 61 Memorial Park Drive, Brattleboro, VT.

For more information regarding this project, please contact the Recreation & Parks Department office at 802-254-5808.

Sealed bids should be sent to the Town Manager's Office, 230 Main Street, Suite 208, Brattleboro, VT 05301, and must be received by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday June 12, 2024.

The Town of Brattleboro reserves the right to refuse any and all bids and accept the bid that best serves the interest of the Town.

#### Notice of Bid

The Town of Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department is accepting sealed bids for roof replacement at the Nelson Withington Skating Facility. The facility is a pre-engineered metal building with an entry canopy and locker room addition. The pre-engineered metal roof currently has deteriorated metal roofing with no insulation or membrane. The roof assembly of the entry canopy and locker room addition consists of wood roof rafters, roof sheathing, and standing-seam metal roof panels. The objectives of this project are to replace these roof assemblies with new materials and components that will provide the facility with an improved envelope.

There will be a Walk-Thru on Wednesday May 16 at 11:30 AM at the Nelson Withington Skating Facility 61 Memorial Park Drive Brattleboro, VT 05301

For more information regarding this project, please contact the Recreation & Parks Department Office at 802-254-5808.

Sealed bids should be sent to the Town Manager's Office, 230 Main Street, Suite 208, Brattleboro, VT 05301, and must be received by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, 6/5/24.

The Town of Brattleboro reserves the right to refuse any and all bids and accept the bid that best serves the interest of the Town.

### STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT  
Windham Unit  
In re ESTATE of: Alexander Kelley

PROBATE DIVISION  
Docket No.: 23-PR-07323

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Alexander Kelley, late of Putney, Vermont.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: May 3, 2024  
Dawn Benware, Administrator  
160 Parker Road  
Putney, VT 05346  
802-380-9247  
dwnkspwn69@yahoo.com

Name of Publication: The Commons  
Publication Date: May 8, 2024  
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Windham County  
Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301

### STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT  
Windham Unit  
In re ESTATE of: Joyce Garfield

PROBATE DIVISION  
Docket No.: 24-PR-01754

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Joyce Garfield (Decedent)  
late of Brattleboro, Vermont (Decedent's town of residence)

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: April 30, 2024  
Sherry Donovan, Executor  
c/o Phillips, Dunn, Shriver & Carroll  
147 Western Ave. Brattleboro, VT 05301  
802-257-7244

Name of Publication: The Commons  
Publication Date: May 8, 2024  
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Windham Unit  
Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT 05301

### STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT  
Windham Unit  
In re ESTATE of: Gerald Burrell

PROBATE DIVISION  
Docket No.: 24-PR-01330

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Gerald Burrell, late of Westminster West, Vermont.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: May 2, 2024  
Heather Wennerholm, Administrator  
15 Woodbine Street  
Norwalk, CT 06853  
516-641-4814

Name of Publication: The Commons  
Publication Date: May 8, 2024  
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Windham Unit  
Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301  
heatherwennerholm@gmail.com

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#### The Town of Hinsdale seeks a Program and Welfare Director

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Submit resume with a minimum of 3 references to Kathryn Lynch, Town Administrator, Town of Hinsdale, PO Box 13, 11 Main Street, Hinsdale, NH 03451. Resumes can be dropped off at Selectmen's Office at the Town Hall. Deadline: Until position is filled. EOE. townadmin@hinsdalenh.org.

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## H.829

Means Committee Chair Emilie Kornheiser (D-Brattleboro) — funds would be raised through new taxes on the wealthy.

Windham County housing activists enthusiastically applauded the bill.

Chris Donnelly, director of community relations for Champlain Housing Trust, worked with lawmakers to “put forward a 10-year plan to work ourselves out of the housing/homeless[ness] quagmire we are in,” said housing activist Fred Bruenig of Brattleboro.

The bill then passed “with a wide margin,” and was sent to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs, chaired by Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale (D-Chittenden-Southeast).

Bruenig said Ram Hinsdale “put it ‘on the wall,’ meaning that it would not be even discussed or debated,” and said that the Legislature “could not commit future Legislatures” to such expenditures.

The means of funding the program was also at issue, Bruenig said, including the creation of “a new tax bracket for earners making more than \$500,000, plus a higher property transfer tax on houses selling for more than \$750,000.”

“I think there’s just a little aversion to [an] increase in taxes this year, for a couple of reasons,” Donnelly told *The Commons*.

“The Senate feels like Vermonters are a little bit in shock around property tax increases for the education funds. And I think that has played into a sense of feeling that this is just a lot of increasing taxes, even though H.829 would only affect a small number of people,” he added.

Donnelly alluded to “fear that the governor would veto the bill” and that if he did, there wouldn’t be sufficient votes to override it.

“The Senate is just a little bit reluctant to move forward with a proposal that they may not be able to ultimately succeed with,” he said. “And that’s my view.”

Kornheiser said that new revenue sources would be needed in

order to build affordable housing and get homeless people out of the expensive, taxpayer-funded motels they have been staying in — some of them since the pandemic.

“The motels are not not a permanent solution,” Kornheiser told *The Commons*.

“The motel programs are a big cost to the state that could be prevented if we were investing in more permanent housing solutions. [...] There are a lot of people who are paying way more for housing than they want to, or are stuck in housing that’s bigger than they need, and they would move if there were other options.”

H.829 would have increased the tax rate on marginal income over \$500,000 to 11.75% — a 34.3% increase from the current rate of 8.75%.

“[U.S. Sen.] Bernie Sanders talks about making sure that the wealthy are paying their fair share, and there are proposals all over the country to add a new top tax bracket,” Kornheiser said. “I’ve worked with my committee and my colleagues in the House to do it.”

The tax bracket change was expected to raise over \$74 million annually in state revenue, and would have affected only the top 1.1% of Vermont taxpayers.

H.829 also would have lowered the transfer tax paid on the first \$200,000 in the sale of principal residences, which would have constituted an approximately \$900 tax break for anyone buying a home for less than \$750,000.

At the other extreme, the transfer tax collected on the value of a property sold for more than \$750,000 would have been adjusted from 1.25% to 3.65%.

*Vermont Business Magazine* reported that the median sale price of homes in the state in 2023 was \$325,000, “ranging from a median home sale price of \$185,000 in Essex County to \$460,500 in Chittenden County.” The article estimated that if H.829 were law, “approximately 93 percent of homebuyers in 2023 would have received a tax break.”



RANDOLPH T. HOLMUT/COMMONS FILE PHOTO  
**State Rep. Kesha Ram Hinsdale, D-Chittenden-Southeast, chairs the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs, where H.829 ended up in limbo.**

Housing and homelessness advocates praised the bill, citing the urgent need for affordable housing across the state, the problem of skyrocketing income and wealth inequality, and the strong public support for increasing taxes on the wealthiest Vermont residents.

Oddly enough, some of Vermont’s wealthiest people also endorsed H.829, including ice cream magnates Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield and Putney Student Travel’s Jeff Shumlin.

More than 30 of them signed an open letter to the Legislature, which was posted on the website of Fair Share for Vermont, a nonprofit organization devoted to increasing taxes on Vermont’s wealthiest residents ([fairsharevt.org/wealthy-letter](http://fairsharevt.org/wealthy-letter)).

“We see an acute housing crisis, chronic underfunding of state services, and a need for immediate investments in our infrastructure and environmental protection,” the letter reads. “As Vermonters who have economically prospered in our state, we believe in contributing our fair share to build a state that works for all people who live here.”

The letter goes on to assert that Vermonters take care of their neighbors and form close relationships that transcend economic circumstances.

“Public investment, funded through tax revenue, is necessary to amplify these community efforts and fund programs that strengthen our communities,” they wrote.

Even *The New York Times* noted the potential of this bill. Kornheiser gave an interview to the paper about her plan to raise the income bracket for the wealthiest 1%.

“The package of bills is part of a broader push across the country by progressive groups who hope that the political moment has arrived to shake up the tax system to address income inequality,” the *Times* reported.

Another Vermont advocate for H.829 was Lt. Gov. David Zuckerman, who wrote a passionate op-ed piece for *VTDigger* accusing the governor of trying to gut Act 250 — the state’s land use planning law — to help

“profiteering developers.”

“Now is the time to make your voice heard,” Zuckerman said. “Do you think we should irreversibly alter the landscape of Vermont for investors and real estate developers to make massive profits?”

“Or do you think we should take a balanced approach and increase our development in our town and village centers, create more walkable communities and invest more resources in affordable housing for everyday Vermonters?”

### Responses to H.829

In a rebuttal to Zuckerman’s piece, Emerson Lynn, editor of the *St. Albans Messenger*, wrote, “Painting one side as evil and the other as virtuous promotes the divisiveness that keeps progress at bay.”

He went on to say that housing can be affordable only if it can be done on a large-enough scale to make materials, labor, and other costs more affordable.

“As a state, we can’t afford to forever bear the individual burden of higher and higher taxes to subsidize the huge gap between the housing stock we have and the housing stock we need,” Lynn wrote.

“We also have the relatively certain prospect of a large — 17% — property tax coming our way. It seems a less than prudent time to push additional costs on Vermonters.”

Although it was probably a given that Republican Gov. Phil Scott would veto the bill, the Legislature has a veto-proof majority of Democrats and Progressives. With political will, it could have overridden a veto.

But the Senate chose not to poke the bear, instead deciding to amend Act 250 to lower the property tax, which is threatening to come in at double-digit percentage increases this year due to higher school budgets.

Kornheiser said a number of bills related to zoning “have all been rolled into one bill” but the creation of a new income bracket “was taken out at some point, and the property transfer tax has changed.”

She added that “a very small

## Toleno

FROM SECTION FRONT

working part-time for Global Round Table Leadership, a virtual training company and leadership consultant based in Keene, New Hampshire, that “supports group vitality, business model innovation, and creative collaboration,” according to its website ([globalroundtableleadership.com](http://globalroundtableleadership.com)), through coaching, webinars, and training.

He will begin working there full time as soon as the Legislature adjourns.

“I’ve been working for them for about five years,” Toleno said, noting that its founder, Lori Hanou, “is somebody I worked with when I was working part-time at the Marlboro Graduate Center in the MBA program. So I work with a bunch of people who are connected to the Marlboro College graduate community.”

“I really love what we’re doing,” he said. “We’re about re-centering humanity in the workplace and working with teams on how to learn together to share power and leadership.”

### Supporting the process

Toleno has spent the past four years on the House Committee on Appropriations, which takes up most of his time.

“You typically don’t have a lot of time to do any major policy work outside of the committee,” Toleno said.

For four years previously, he served in caucus leadership as the House assistant majority leader, also known as the whip, traditionally in charge of tabulating how individual party members will vote on legislation.

“And in that role, we also don’t sponsor legislation,” Toleno said. “We support the process and the members and the vote counts.”

Toleno is proud that he was able, even before moving into a leadership role, to sponsor a bill that has since passed into Vermont law: providing paid sick leave to every worker in the state.

“No matter what size company they work for, over time, they accrue paid sick leave,” he said. The law allows for up

to five days, which can also be used to care for sick family members.

“That did not exist before as a universal benefit,” Toleno said, and said he was “very proud of the fact that when we passed it, we passed it in a way that made it a universal benefit. [...] It applies to part-timers as well — in almost all cases.”

He also takes pride in the quiet work he does behind the scenes.

Noting that his strength has been in “relational work,” Toleno said that he’s “been trying to support more long-term things, things-that-we-need-to-change policy, rather than just the incrementalism that often happens because we only have two-year terms.”

Though he says he’s “very passionate” about the issue of term limits — he does not think the Legislature needs them — he concedes that the issue may be “somewhat invisible to people who aren’t in the building and in the weeds, like we are when we’re here.”

### ‘It’s the right time for me to move on’

Toleno said he will miss many things about the job, especially the people — those he’s worked with in Montpelier and those in his district.

He has endorsed former Brattleboro Selectboard Chair Ian Goodnow, who announced his candidacy on May 6 (*story, this issue*).

“I love the pace and the complexity of the policy work and the puzzle of trying to figure out how to do coalition building and get things done,” Toleno said.

“It’s really an amazing thing to be a part of a small group of people that has this much responsibility and opportunity to change people’s lives,” he continued.

Toleno expects to go through a grieving period when he leaves Montpelier, but knows “it’s the right time for me to move on.”

He added that he is grateful to the community for the “incredible gift” of serving them for so long.

“I hope I lived up to it,” he said.

## Brattleboro Savings & Loan ‘Shred Day’ set for May 18

BRATTLEBORO — Brattleboro Savings & Loan (BS&L) presents its annual “Shred Day” on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to noon at their main branch at 221 Main St.

This is a free event in which the public is encouraged to bring their confidential and sensitive papers from this past year — such as old bank statements and canceled or unused checks — that need to be disposed of securely. Individuals can bring up to five boxes to be shredded.

BS&L offers this service to help Vermonters prevent joining the 42 million Americans each year who fall prey to identity theft.

In addition to the precautionary reasoning for Shred Day, the company who provides the mobile shred truck, SecurShred, will recycle all the paper. At last year’s event,

8,000 pounds of paper were shredded. The shredded paper was later recycled and turned into tissues and other paper products by a U.S. paper mill.

Each year at the end of Shred Day, SecurShred gives the bank a check for the recycled paper, which the bank then donates to a local charity. While Shred Day is provided as a free service to the community, BS&L welcomes donations to add to the funds donated by SecurShred.

BS&L will add all proceeds from this event, as well as other events throughout this coming year, to their Commitment to Community scholarship. This scholarship is offered to local high school seniors who make the community better and brighter. For information, contact Cassie Kelley at [ckelley@brattbank.com](mailto:ckelley@brattbank.com).

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# MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

## Obituaries



**Jo A. (Seppala) Bailey, 74**, of Vernon. Died April 24, 2024, surrounded by her loving family. Jo was born on Oct. 16, 1949 to the late William and Violet (Wojchick) Seppala. She graduated from St. Michael's School in Brattleboro in 1967. She married Philip F. Bailey in Brattleboro on Feb. 8, 1969. She worked for many years in Brattleboro at local businesses which included The Book Press and Dunham Shoe Company, and owned and operated PJ's Chocolates. She also worked at Friendly's restaurant for more than 20 years. Jo enjoyed spending time with her family as often as she could. She loved going camping with her husband in northern Vermont and watching her favorite cows across the water. She enjoyed playing Bingo with her parents and siblings. She is survived by her husband, her sister Judy (Seppala) and husband Stuart Monroe, brother Thomas and wife Linda Seppala, sister Barbara (Seppala) and husband Thomas Simeon. She also leaves behind her four children; son Steven Bailey, daughter Holly Bailey and partner Rick Mears, son William and his wife Dawn Bailey, and daughter Tabitha Weeks and partner Tim Lepisto; grandchildren Rebecca, Darren, Rikki, Hunter, Dylan, Connor, Jacob, Maxwell, Mya, Kaylyn, Dakota, Hannah, and Rachael; and great-grandchildren Devine, Louise, and Shepherd. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Family and friends are invited to St. Michael's Catholic Church in Brattleboro for funeral services on May 11, at 11 a.m., with a reception to follow.

**Teena Marie (Coty) Barnes, 62**, formerly of Brattleboro. Died at home in Lancaster, New Hampshire, where she was a resident for the past 2½ years. Teena was born in Brattleboro on April 22, 1962, the eldest daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret (Folsom) Coty. Teena was very close to her mother "Peggy" over the years. She also leaves her only and very loving sister, Meg Robinson and her husband, Rick, of North Strafford, New Hampshire. Teena was always a hard worker and spent many years with CTM Brochure. She later worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Bellows Falls. She was an all-around beautiful person and a loving mother to her only child, a daughter shared with the love of her life, Richard Moore. Leah Melanie Moore was their pride and joy and Leah and Richard will miss Teena every day. Teena also leaves her only grandchild, Brook Hanson, whom she loved with all her heart. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: The family will hold a Celebration of Life for Teena at the Kiwanis Shelter in Bernardston, Massachusetts, on Saturday, May 18. Anyone who was a friend of Teena is welcome to come and share their memories. Condolences may be sent to 91 Guilford Center Rd., Apt. 201, Guilford, VT 05301.



**Peter Ginter, 63**, of Townshend. Died at home on April 16, 2024. He was born on Independence Day, 1960, in Bogota, New Jersey, to Albrecht and Eleanor Ginter. He grew up in Warren, New Jersey and Outer Cape Cod. He was a solid man in both spirit and form. He knew who he was and gave freely of himself knowing that life was more about giving than getting. He valued his community, and above all else, the integrity of his family. He provided comfort and safety to everyone he came in contact with, particularly the young and the old. He accepted others for who they were and found joy in the smallest of human nuance, including his own, and ran with it. His passion was riding his KTM 1290. He loved the gym — the lifting, the camaraderie, the inspiration and the mentorship. He loved feeding people, sitting in quiet companionship with his dogs, and nature.



More than anything, he loved his wife and three children and demonstrated it in everything he did. Never one to embellish a story, he possessed an over-active imagination that he expressed through humor. Laughing was like breathing to Peter. Not a day went by where he couldn't find something hysterically funny to ruminate over. He laughed with others, all alone, in his sleep. Peter worked hard — "gotta answer the bell," he would say — and played hard, and loved hard. He gave his all to everything he did; especially to his family. He was the greatest father a kid could have; present, consistent, and accepting and the greatest husband any woman could wish for. He was always willing to grow, to evolve and to be a better partner. Peter was an inspiration to his children until his last breath. He was fearless and lived and died on his terms in the home he loved, with his wife, three children and two dogs. He was a comfort to his family until the end, departing with a smile and the words, "I love you guys. I'll see you down the road." He was predeceased by his parents, Albrecht and Eleanor; and his sisters, Ellen Bissonnette and Diane Charmont. Peter is survived by his wife Donna; his sons Peter, Otto, and Eric, and his wife Nadia Borysyk; his daughter, Callie and her partner Cory Harris, and his dogs, Louie and Oona. He also leaves behind his brother, Eric Ginter and his wife Jeri and his sister, Dale Tracey, and many nieces and nephews. He holds Nick Lovergine, Johnny White, Bettina Berg and Chris Harlow in his heart for the gift of authentic friendship. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of his life is planned for June at a date and time to be announced.

**Jane E. LaBreck, 86**, of Vernon. Died on April 16, 2024 at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital after battling lung cancer, with other complications. Jane was born on July 30, 1937, in Houlton, Maine, to the late Bernard & Grace (Sligar) Schools. She enjoyed spending time with family and friends. She loved to play cribbage and Bingo; in her younger years, she was a bowler. She is survived by her son, Peter LaBreck of Vermont, her daughter Dina (Maurice) LeClair of Hinsdale, New Hampshire, a sister, Anna Grover of Wiscasset, Maine; grandchildren Laura, Denise, Kenneth, Christopher, Heather, Peter II, Kesia, and Cassie; great grandchildren Colby, Rachael, Courtney, Justin, Theresa, Brandon, Dylan, Lyndsay, Amanda, Melinda, Lexi, D'Artagnan, Kenny II, Mila, Jacqlyn, Jennifer, Michael, Morgan; great-great-grandchildren Vanessa, Bryson, Bailey, Layla, Aubry, Matthew, Riley, Eliana, Ava, Nathalie, Amelia; and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by sisters Louise, Theresa, Madeline, and Edith; and brothers Gerald, Lewis, Philip, William, Donald, Gary, and Stephen. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of life will be held on July 13, 2024, at American Legion Post 5 in Brattleboro from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Michael Roy Cross, 76**, of Putney. Died April 21, 2024. A full obituary will appear in a future edition of *The Commons*. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: There will be a celebration of his life on Saturday, May 11, at All Souls Church at the West Village Meeting House in West Brattleboro, beginning at 1:30 p.m. All are welcome.

**Oliver M. "Sam" Prentice III, 69**, of Townshend. Died peacefully at his home, surrounded by his family, on April 18, 2024. The full obituary including service information will be published in a future edition. To offer condolences to Sam's family, visit [atamaniuk.com](http://atamaniuk.com).

**Jean J. Turner, 83**, of Marlboro. Died April 30, 2024, at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital,



following an extended period of declining health. Jean was born in Marlboro on June 2, 1940, the daughter of Leon and Shirley (Snow) Johnson. She was raised and educated in Marlboro and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School with the Class of 1958. She was employed at the former Appropriate Technology in Brattleboro, which she retired from as manager following more than 20 years of faithful service with the company. Previously, Jean had worked for Hogback Enterprises, employed in the Hogback Mountain Gift Shop. In conjunction with her full-time work, she was a devoted homemaker, with her life centered around her family. Jean enjoyed going fishing, knitting, and baking, especially with her grandchildren present. She was known for her delicious pies and other delicacies. On September 2, 1959, in Brattleboro, at a small wedding ceremony for family and close friends, she married William L. Turner. Her husband of 36 years predeceased her in 1995. Survivors include one son, William L. Turner Jr. of Marlboro; three daughters, Diane Ditto (Gary) of Kensington, Maryland, Linda Peters (Norman) of Marlboro, and Donna Turner and husband Robert Rocha of Warner Robins, Georgia; one brother, David Johnson of Marlboro; and 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Additionally, she leaves many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews. Jean was predeceased by one brother, Victor Johnson, and four sisters, Joyce Boyd, Eunice Varga, Carol Johnson, and Dorothy Bourn. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In keeping with her final wishes, there are no formal funeral services scheduled. Graveside committal services will be held at a later date during the summer in King Cemetery in Marlboro.



Donations to the Marlboro Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 69, Marlboro, VT 05344. To offer condolences, visit [atamaniuk.com](http://atamaniuk.com).

• A memorial service, followed by a Celebration of Life, for **Norman Bartlett** will be held on Saturday, May 11, at 11 a.m., at Next Stage Arts, 13 Kimball Hill, Putney. Mr. Bartlett, 82, of Putney, died on March 13, 2024.

## Services



• A Celebration of Life for **André V. "Andy" Dufresne** will be held on Saturday, May 18, from noon to 2 p.m., at American Legion Post 29 in Claremont, New Hampshire. A luncheon will be provided. A funeral mass will be held on Saturday, June 29, at 10 a.m., at St. Norbert's Catholic Church in Hardwick, Vermont, followed by a reception at St. Norbert's Julian Room. In lieu of flowers, the family requests a memorial gift be made in his memory to Disabled American Veterans, 215 North Main St., White River Junction, VT 05001. Mr. Dufresne died on March 9, 2024.



• Graveside services for **Jean B. McAuliffe** of Brattleboro will be held on Saturday, May 18, at noon, at St. Michael's Cemetery, White Birch Avenue, Brattleboro. A Celebration of Life will follow at American Legion Post 5, 32 Linden St., Brattleboro, at 1 p.m. For more information, visit [phaneuf.net](http://phaneuf.net).



• A memorial service, followed by a Celebration of Life, for **Norman Bartlett** will be held on Saturday, May 11, at 11 a.m., at Next Stage Arts, 13 Kimball Hill, Putney. Mr. Bartlett, 82, of Putney, died on March 13, 2024.

## Green Mountain Conservancy receives \$285,879 for Marlboro forest project

MARLBORO—The Green Mountain Conservancy (GMC) has been granted \$285,879 by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board toward the purchase and conservation of the Old Oaks Headwaters Preserve, 200 acres of forested land in Marlboro.

In a news release, GMC said it "is working to raise the rest of the funds from several foundations and the greater Marlboro community, which has used and appreciated this land for generations. This land will be conserved in perpetuity with easements co-held by the Vermont River

Conservancy and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board."

The preserve is part of the largely unfragmented 3,000+ acre Harrisville Forest block that provides migration corridors for many species, and is part of the headwaters for the Green River.

"The forest and wetlands, including a series of iconic beaver ponds, hold great ecological and recreational value, providing clean water and climate resilience for human and nonhuman species alike," the GMC said. "Older forests like this one sequester and store significant carbon,

contributing to natural climate solutions. Biodiversity within this mixed northern hardwoods forest includes natural communities like Red Spruce-Cinnamon Fern Swamp and species such as bobcat, beaver, and porcupine."

The land is being sold to GMC by members of the Hendricks family, descendants of Walter and Flora Hendricks, who started Marlboro College.

A significant portion of the Marlboro Town Trail between the Potash Hill campus (the former Marlboro College campus) and Marlboro Town Center is in this preserve, and it will continue

to be available for hiking and skiing. Access will be from a small parking area off Moss Hollow Road, on Potash Hill land. An existing trail will connect to the Town Trail.

Those who wish to donate to the project may send checks to: Green Mountain Conservancy, P.O. Box 517, Marlboro, VT 05344. You can donate online at [greenmountainconservancy.org/donate](http://greenmountainconservancy.org/donate). For more information, contact the GMC at [info@greenmountainconservancy.org](mailto:info@greenmountainconservancy.org) or 802-257-0012.

should wear long sleeves and pants and tall rubber boots if possible, and tick repellent. Park along Barbers Park Road, which is just east of the field trip site; do not park along Route 121 (Saxtons River Road) because it has no shoulder.

If you have questions, contact RCC member Peter Bergstrom at 802-444-1860 or [rockinghamvtenergy@gmail.com](mailto:rockinghamvtenergy@gmail.com).

## Field trip looks at effectiveness of post-Irene replanting effort

ROCKINGHAM—A field trip led by members of the Rockingham Conservation Commission (RCC) will discuss invasive plants and restoration management on Saturday, May 11, from 10 a.m. to noon, at 409 Saxtons River Rd.

The Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District worked with the RCC and local volunteers, including Americorps members, in May 2016 to plant several hundred native trees along

the Saxtons River in Rockingham.

The site was a FEMA buyout, a 3.4 acre parcel that had three mobile homes on it before it was flooded during Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. FEMA wanted to prevent rebuilding on a flood-prone site, so they bought the land from the owners and gave it to the town, with the stipulation that nothing be built there.

Some of the volunteers had lost their houses during Irene. The planting was done to improve

wildlife habitat, help stabilize the soil in future flooding of the site, and help discourage the growth of invasive Japanese knotweed. This field trip, led by RCC members who were part of the 2016 effort, will revisit the site to see how the trees and knotweed have changed since the planting, and explain the dynamics of riparian restoration.

The site has poison ivy, a brook, and some dense brush with thorns, so participants

## 'Lydia's Friends' host Geranium Festival Fundraiser for Lydia Taft Pratt Library

WEST DUMMERSTON—Lydia's Friends, the organization that supports the Lydia Taft Pratt Library, will host its annual Geranium Festival, Silent Auction, and Book Sale fundraiser on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Dummerston Community Center, 150 West St., rain or shine.

Lydia Taft Pratt Library Director Dena Marger said in a news release that "it is vital to the success of a small-town library like ours that we have the support and advocacy that comes

from having a friends group like Lydia's Friends working with us. We are incredibly grateful to have them."

According to Dummerston resident Catherine O'Callaghan, who leads Lydia's Friends, this year's event is held in the memory of two devoted friends of the library who died last November: Lisa Blake and Susan A. K. Kern.

"Lisa Blake was a long-time volunteer with Lydia's Friends and Susan A. K. Kern served for many years as chair of the board of trustees for the library," she

said. "In honoring these two women, we recognize their contributions and hope to inspire others to follow their example and serve and support our local library."

Geraniums for the event are being supplied by Dummerston's Walker Farm. Area craftspeople, artisans, and businesses have generously donated art, crafts, and gift certificates to the silent auction. Organizers say the book sale is sure to include some treasures.

A local musical duo, Hazelnuts, will perform from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Refreshments and activities

will be provided for the whole family. A tent will prevent both people and flowers from succumbing to the elements, whether they be rain or sun. Proceeds from this year's Geranium Festival will help the library provide a museum and event pass program for community use.

The Lydia Taft Pratt Library was established as Dummerston's municipal library in 1914. For more information, contact the library at 802-258-9878 or [dummerstonvtlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:dummerstonvtlibrary@gmail.com), or O'Callaghan at 802-380-7935.

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](mailto: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.

**Be Sure To Check Our Full Program Schedule @ [brattleborotv.org](http://brattleborotv.org)**

**bc tv LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**  
May 6-12  
CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

<b>Here We Are - Tucker Barrett, Stringed Instrument Designer:</b> Mon 8p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 9a, Thurs 1:15p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 12:15p, Sun 3:45p	<b>Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 5/7/24:</b> Tues 6:15 (LIVE), Thurs 1p, Fri 8:30p, Sun 8a
<b>The World Fusion Show - Ep 177 - Christiane Karam:</b> Mon 5:30p, Tues 1p, Wed 9p, Thurs 9:30a, Fri 5p, Sat 6p, Sun 6a	<b>Landmark College Spring 2024 Commencement:</b> Sat 10a (LIVE)
<b>Sunflower Court - This Week in "Sunflower's Ct.":</b> Mon 6:30p, Wed 6:20a, Fri 6:55p, Sat 12:55p	<b>Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 4/26/24:</b> Mon 6:30p, Tues 7:30a, Wed 12p
<b>Heart Rose Club presents Cousin Greg 3/8/24:</b> Mon 8:35p, Tues 9a, Wed 5a, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 6a, Sat 9:15p, Sun 9:30a	<b>Brattleboro Planning Commission Mtg. 5/6/24:</b> Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 12p
<b>Landmark College Presents Cyrus Shaoul, Ph.D. - What is "Artificial Intelligence?":</b> Mon 1p, Tues 8p, Wed 10:45a, Thurs 1:55p, Fri 10a, Sat 8p, Sun 12:30p	<b>Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 5/6/24:</b> Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:30p
<b>Why Shared Housing is a Good Choice:</b> Mon 6:55p, Wed 6:25a, Thurs 6:55p, Sat 5:55p	<b>River Valleys Unified School District Board Mtg. 5/6/24:</b> Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p
<b>RivTheSkid - Golf Is Peaceful:</b> 9:25p, Wed 11:55a, Thurs 7:55a, Sat 5:45p, Sun 7:40p	<b>Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 5/7/24:</b> Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 2:30p
<b>Sunflower Court - Talking To Myself:</b> Mon 2p, Tues 6:55p, Wed 6:55p, Thurs 7:45a, Sun 4:25p	<b>Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board Mtg. 5/8/24:</b> Fri 6p, Sat 7a, Sun 12p
<b>Perspectives on Trauma - Part 6: Cindy Hodge:</b> Mon 7:30a, Tues 1:30p, Wed 9:30p, Thurs 9a, Fri 5:30p, Sat 6:30p, Sun 6:30a	<b>River Valleys Unified School District Public Information Mtg. 4/22/24:</b> Mon 9a, Wed 7:45a, Sun 6p
<b>Energy Week with George Harvey &amp; Tom Finnell:</b> Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	<b>Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 4/30/24:</b> Mon 3p
<b>Vermont Update - Weekly Episode:</b> Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	<b>Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 5/1/24:</b> Mon 5:30a
<b>News Block: Reformer News Break:</b> Mon-Fri 12p & 6p <b>BUHS-TV News:</b> Mon-Fri 12:15p & 6:35p	<b>Putney Selectboard Mtg. 5/1/24:</b> Mon 12p
<b>St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service:</b> Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	<b>Community Forum - Public Mtg. for Proposed Flood Resiliency Projects on Sand Hill Road:</b> Tues 12:30p, Wed 9:30a, Sat 6:30p, Sun 2:30p
<b>Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service:</b> Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p	<b>Brattleboro Housing Partnership Board Mtg. 4/22/24:</b> Tues 5p, Fri 5p, Sat 6a
<b>Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service:</b> Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a	<b>Town Matters - Weekly Episode:</b> Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p
<b>St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass:</b> Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p, Sat 4p (LIVE)	<b>The David Pakman Show:</b> Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

**Note: Schedule subject to change.**  
View full schedule and watch online at [brattleborotv.org](http://brattleborotv.org)

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

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Long experience has taught me that people who do not like geraniums have something morally unsound about them. Sooner or later you will find them out; you will discover that they drink, or steal books, or speak sharply to cats. Never trust a man or a woman who is not passionately devoted to geraniums.

—BEVERLEY NICHOLS



# 'America 250' town hall series looks at homeless encampments

BRATTLEBORO—As the U.S. Supreme Court deliberates on whether towns have the constitutional authority to ban homeless encampments on public property, a Town Hall gathering organized under the auspices of a new 'America 250' initiative invites the public to share points of view on this topic in a carefully constructed civil debate led by "Constitutional Wrangler" Meg Mott.

The Town Hall poses the question: 'Is it Unconstitutional to Ban Homeless Encampments?' It will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 15, at Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St., and is free and open to everyone.

The case before the Supreme Court puts the rights of people to sleep in public spaces against the responsibilities of cities to maintain public safety. One of the legal questions is whether a city can punish someone for their status, not their behavior. The case has sweeping implications for Vermont, which has the second-highest rate of homelessness after California.

The event is the first in a series of Town Halls convened by the Windham World Affairs Council and Brooks Memorial Library to stimulate public dialogue leading up to the statewide and national America 250 semiquincentennial anniversary of the founding of the United States.

The series focuses on the founding ideals in the Declaration of Independence — equality, liberty, safety, and happiness — and how those ideals can guide us in strengthening our democracy at a time when the urge to demonize our opponents is on the rise.

"At the heart of the 1776 declaration is a bold assumption: The people have the capacity to form a government that, in the words of the declaration, 'seems

most likely to affect [our] Safety and Happiness,'" Mott said in a news release. "'Most likely' is an important element; self-government is a dynamic process. We have to talk with each other as we determine how best to affect our need for safety, our desire for freedom and our responsibility to fellow citizens."

Mott holds a doctorate in philosophy focusing on political science and government.

"Dr. Mott skillfully employs creative ways to stoke civic dialog," said WWAC Board Member Lissa Weinmann. "Town Halls on a variety of topics held in different venues through 2026 will help develop citizens' capacity to suss-out solutions through robust deliberation among those with divergent points of view."

Background materials for the Town Hall discussions can be found at the WWAC website under "News and Events/ America 250." Anyone interested in participating in this America 250 effort or joining WWAC or serving on the WWAC board are welcome and encouraged to contact [windhamworldaffairsCouncil@gmail.com](mailto:windhamworldaffairsCouncil@gmail.com) or to call Administrative Director Susan Healy at 781-422-9485.



Meg Mott moderates the Putney Annual Town Meeting in 2023. RANDOLPH T. HOLMUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO



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## Goodnow

FROM SECTION FRONT

listen and engage with all different perspectives, and that his care and commitment to Brattleboro are unmatched."

Goodnow, in a separate news release, said that his tenure on the Selectboard has "given me many insights about the strengths and struggles that face our community. It has taught me that I have a deep passion and love for public service."

"I hope to continue to serve Brattleboro by bringing that knowledge and energy to Montpelier," he said.

His board term spanned the pandemic and post-pandemic years, a time he called "a dynamic and difficult time for Brattleboro and Vermont."

Goodnow said that he has seen that "the housing crisis, wide economic disparity, and a stagnating workforce are intertwined challenges that Brattleboro is facing."

He said his campaign objective "is to knock on every door in District 9," and to speak to as many of his neighbors as possible.

Goodnow will have a campaign launch party on Thursday, May 30, at 6 p.m., at Midnight's Bar, 2 High St.

Contact Goodnow at [iangoodnowvt@gmail.com](mailto:iangoodnowvt@gmail.com). A campaign website, [iangoodnow.com](http://iangoodnow.com), is under construction ([iangoodnowvt@gmail.com](mailto:iangoodnowvt@gmail.com)).

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## AROUND THE TOWNS

Area hospitals seek  
input for annual  
needs assessment

Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, the Brattleboro Retreat, and Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital are seeking public input to assess the health needs of our community.

Every three years, these organizations conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) to learn more about the health concerns and needs of the communities they serve. Based on the information gathered, each healthcare facility will develop an implementation plan to address these needs.

A community survey is for residents and those who receive health care in Windham County and is ready for input at [tinyurl.com/WindhamCHNA](https://tinyurl.com/WindhamCHNA). The link is open until May 27.

The survey can also be accessed via a QR code on the organizations' websites and Facebook pages and on posters at the three facilities and throughout the county. It is available translated into Dari, Pashto, Spanish, and Tigrinya via the same link and QR code. All answers are anonymous.

These health care organizations also seek input from representatives of groups serving Windham County residents and via focus groups. The Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Agency of Human Services are also participating in the process.

The CHNA process is required for nonprofit hospitals by the federal government every three years. Results of the survey will be publicly available by year's end, and implementation plans will follow.

First Manitou healing  
walk is May 10

WILLIAMSVILLE — The Manitou Project will hold its first Healing Walk of the season on Friday, May 10, rain or

shine, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The walk will be led by Fred Taylor and will include poems or other readings and chances to share about the experience. Healing walks will be held every second and fourth Friday of each month until October.

The Manitou Project seeks to foster community with Nature on its 235 acre land preserve in Williamsville, located at 300 Sunset Lake Rd. Directions: go 1.4 miles up Sunset Lake Road from Williamsville Village, sign on right. Or approximately 5.6 miles over the top of Sunset Lake Road from Route 9 in West Brattleboro. Meet at the parking lot at 4 p.m. For information, contact Fred at 802-254-2675.

Stamp Out Hunger  
food drive is May 11

BRATTLEBORO — The annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, always set for the second Saturday in May, is a single-day food drive throughout the United States.

The drive is organized by the National Association of Letter Carriers and supported by other postal unions and the U.S. Postal Service. According to local organizer Viv Woodland, this drive is intentionally set opposite from the winter holidays in the calendar. May is a time when a boost in food donations is needed at local pantries, especially as families prepare to have kids home from school for the summer.

On Saturday, May 11, letter carriers in Brattleboro, Putney, Guilford, Vernon, and Dummerston will be joining carriers across the nation in collecting food to fill local pantries. Neighbors are asked to leave a bag of nonperishable food items by their mailbox.

Letter carriers will pick up the food as they deliver the mail, making it easy to participate.

Woodland said that "canned goods, including fish and meat; nut butters; dry rice, beans, pasta, cereals, and oatmeal; and bottled juice are all great donation items. Please avoid glass containers. Checks for monetary donations, made out to either Vermont Foodbank or the local food shelf of your choice, will also be accepted." For more information, visit [bit.ly/764-food](https://bit.ly/764-food).

Tri-Town Collectors  
host coin and  
collectables show

BRATTLEBORO — The Tri-Town Collectors Club and other local dealers will hold a coin, paper currency, comic book, Pokémon and sport card, and postcard show on Saturday, May 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Express on Chickering Drive.

Show organizer Joe Fuller says many dealers and collectors from the area will be meeting up for a daylong series of hobby activities packed with all types of collectibles from vintage to the modern eras, including a presentation of vintage baseball cards. There is no admission charge. For more information, contact 802-379-2353 or [Pepsijoseph@yahoo.com](mailto:Pepsijoseph@yahoo.com).

Putney Farmers'  
Market opens on  
Mother's Day

PUTNEY — The Putney Farmers' Market, located across from the Putney Food Co-op, opens for the season on Mother's Day, May 12, from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a free Shiatsu massage for all moms.

The market will have beautiful gifts for Mom, hot lunch and coffee, and freshly pressed drinks. Farmers will bring pastured meats, organic eggs, fresh local fruits and veggies, and Vermont maple, cheese, and dairy products.

Mother's Day Brunch  
in Guilford

GUILFORD — Broad Brook Grange will present its 24th annual Mother's Day Brunch on Sunday, May 12, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Broad Brook Community Center.

The all-you-can-eat brunch features eggs and the signature item: omelettes, any style, made to order. Also on the menu are pancakes, French toast, sausage, bacon and home fries, with Guilford maple syrup. Treats include home-baked coffee cakes and other baked goods, fresh fruit salad, and bread for toasting. A selection of juices will be

available, along with coffee, teas, and milk.

No reservations are necessary for the meal, which is priced at \$15 for adults; \$12 for seniors, and \$5 for ages 2-12. Kids under two enter free. Cash or check welcome.

Broad Brook Community Center is at 3940 Guilford Center Rd., 4 miles west of the Guilford Country Store. The Center is now fully ADA-compliant, with handicapped parking spaces, ramp access to the dining room, and accessible restrooms. For more information, call 802-257-1961.

Putney Friends  
Meeting seeks peace  
and healing in  
Palestine and Israel

PUTNEY — Putney Friends Meeting is hosting two upcoming gatherings to watch livestreams of Israeli-Palestinian joint ceremonies presented by Combatants for Peace, a grassroots movement of Israelis and Palestinians working together to end the occupation and bring peace, equality, and freedom to their homelands.

On Sunday, May 12, at 1:30 p.m., at the meetinghouse on Route 5, they will gather to watch the 19th Israeli-Palestinian Joint Memorial Day Ceremony. On Wednesday, May 15, at 1 p.m., there will be another gathering to watch the Joint Nakba Remembrance Ceremony. After the live streams, there will be time to share reflections.

According to a statement from American Friends of Combatants for Peace: "We are at a pivotal moment in history. As polarization, injustice, and violence mount, both ceremonies invite us to choose the path of reconciliation, nonviolence, and collective liberation."

"While acknowledging power disparities and while not equating narratives, we grieve together to remind ourselves and society that occupation, oppression, and bloodshed are not inevitable. We have the power to collectively heal, transform, and take actions for a future where all can live in safety, dignity, and freedom."

"During this time of unimaginable suffering and devastation, we are raising our voices louder than ever to call for an end to the historic and present violence and to demand a political solution that can bring liberation and hope to all. Please join us."

Find out more about the May 12 event at [bit.ly/764-memorial](https://bit.ly/764-memorial) and the May 15 event at [bit.ly/764-ceremony](https://bit.ly/764-ceremony).

Scott Farm Crêpe  
Night is May 15

DUMMERSTON — Scott Farm Orchard on Kipling Road will host the first of its monthly Crêpe Nights on Wednesday, May 15, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

These seasonal gatherings, held the second Wednesday of the month, May through September, are times to celebrate the harvest; good, simple food; and community in a stunning setting — picnic style. Outdoor and indoor tables and chairs are provided, as well as a sprawling grassy hillside ripe for picnic blankets, folding lawn chairs, and bare feet.

Local music adds to the ambiance.

Each month is co-hosted by a different local nonprofit who benefits from the evening's proceeds. This month, the event supports Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing. For more information, visit [scottfarmvermont.com/crepe-night](https://scottfarmvermont.com/crepe-night).

Vernon Community  
Market seeks vendors

VERNON — The Vernon Community Market, a program of the Vernon Recreation Department, is seeking vendors for its 2024 summer season, which will open Thursday, June 6. It will continue the first and third Thursdays of each month, June through Sept. 19. It will be closed for the Fourth of July holiday.

The market's hours will be from 4:30 to 7 p.m. at the Vernon Rec Area, 607 Pond Rd. The market will feature J & B's Curbside Café, handmade crafts, farm goods, baked goods, flowers, and more.

For more information on registering to be a vendor at the market, contact the Vernon Recreation Department at [recreation@vernonvt.org](mailto:recreation@vernonvt.org), 802-254-9251, or [vernoncommunitymarket@gmail.com](mailto:vernoncommunitymarket@gmail.com).

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## GOT AN OPINION?

(Of course you do! You're from Windham County!)



Got something on your mind? Send contributions to our Letters from Readers section (500 words or fewer strongly recommended) to [voices@commonsnews.org](mailto:voices@commonsnews.org); the deadline is Friday to be considered for next week's paper. When space is an issue, we give priority to words that have not yet appeared elsewhere.



# A sacred art form, with ‘outer, inner, and secret meanings’

River Gallery School brings Lama Tenzin Yignyen to Brattleboro to create — and subsequently dismantle — a sand mandala

By Annie Landenberger  
The Commons

While a mandala may seem pure art, this configuration of images and symbols guides focus — and thus aids meditation — in certain Eastern spiritual practices.

Mandalas appear ubiquitously in nature; they’re created in sundry materials, and they’re rendered in paints and other media on various surfaces.

One manifestation is the sand mandala, which is created — and destroyed — over time and ritually. Originating in India, the techniques of sand mandala painting were taught by Buddha Shakyamuni in the sixth century BCE; its creation is now incorporated into Tibetan Buddhist practice.

According to the Asia Society ([asiasociety.org](http://asiasociety.org)), all of these aesthetic gems “have outer, inner, and secret meanings.”

“On the outer level they represent the world in its divine form; on the inner level they represent a map by which the ordinary human mind is transformed into enlightened mind; and on the secret level they depict the primordial perfect balance of the subtle energies of the body and the clear-light dimension of the mind,” the nonprofit organization writes.

All can witness the mandala creation process through Friday morning this week at 118 Elliot in Brattleboro, as River Gallery School (RGS) hosts Lama Tenzin Yignyen for “Creating Avalokiteshvara, the Sand Mandala of Compassion.”

Visitors are encouraged to stop by between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 8 and Thursday, May 9 to witness the creation.

On Wednesday night, a community talk from 6 to 7:30 p.m. will provide an opportunity to engage with Lama Tenzin and learn more about the spiritual significance of the mandala. On Friday, May 10 at 10:30 a.m. the public is

invited to partake in the dismantling of the mandala.

All events, including the Wednesday night talk, are free.

## Design in sand made from rocks

To make the mandala, explains RGS Executive Director Kimberly Carmody, Lama Tenzin uses Indian sand “made from rocks [...] gathered from rivers and waterfalls and then crushed down to a fine white sand, which is cleaned and dyed many colors.”

“Then the sand is formed into ancient designs with the use of a special metal funnel and rod,” she continues. “Some mandalas are made in just one day; others take months to complete.”

The sand isn’t fastened to the table in a permanent way — it’s not meant to be saved, she says.

In Friday’s dismantling ceremony Lama Tenzin invites participants to help sweep up the sand, which is scooped into a vase, brought to the nearest body of water, and returned to the Earth.

“This process embodies impermanence and challenges many people’s ideas of ownership which are shaped by our capitalist society,” Carmody says. “Additionally, reuniting the blessed sand with the Earth highlights sustainability and stewardship.”

## A sacred art form

The Venerable Lama Tenzin Yignyen, an ordained Tibetan Buddhist monk, holds a degree of Master of Sutra and Tantra studies from the Namgyal Monastery of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India.

He has taught Tibetan Buddhism, art, and language at Namgyal branch monastery in Ithaca, New York, since 2021 and has created sand mandalas in museums and art galleries, and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities throughout North America, from Honolulu to Canada.

■ SEE MANDALA, B3



Musicians perform a Summer Bandwagon concert for an audience at the Retreat Farm. This year’s lineup features 20 performances weekly through October.

## Next Stage’s Bandwagon Series, born out of the pandemic, brings performers from around the world to perform in family-friendly outdoor concerts in Windham County

By Annie Landenberger  
The Commons

PUTNEY—Twenty shows — one per week — strikingly diverse and all outdoors. That’s what the Next Stage Bandwagon Series offers again this summer.

Next Stage Arts Project Executive Director Keith Marks promises this summer’s offerings will surpass last year’s record-breaker program for attendance and reach.

A Covid-driven idea, the Bandwagon Series began as a way to keep the Putney-based producing venue going during the pandemic shutdown, by providing a way to bring people of all ages together safely for

music and dancing on fields and in parks throughout Windham County.

Named for the signature mobile stage designed by architect Chip Greenberg of Putney, constructed by him and Nick Kyle of Westminster West and owned by Patrick Noyes of Putney, Marks says, “We kept [the series] going because the community response has been tremendous.”

The Bandwagon Series endures “because it’s a real community event,” he says, with Next Stage believing “that broad access is essential for audience development and community engagement.”

“We made kids’ [admission] free from the very beginning, which made it accessible to younger families,” Marks continues. “And a kids’ play space is offered,

featuring Imagination Playground blocks.”

Over the years, Next Stage has made free access available to more people “through individual contributions and support from several sponsors.”

“We donate tickets to all 17 public libraries in the county,” Marks says. “Now we’ve expanded to the [Putney Foodshelf] and a number of different organizations, and this year we’ll be donating more passes to organizations like The Root and Women’s Freedom Center.”

“The other reason it endures is because we really focus on joy,” Marks reflects. People want to dance and be outdoors in beautiful weather and enjoy what Vermont offers.

■ SEE BANDWAGON SERIES, B4

# Musician sings of complex characters, distinct places

‘I like the tightrope walk of playing solo,’ says Margaret Glaspy, who performs in Brattleboro on Friday, May 10

By Victoria Chertok  
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO— Singer-songwriter Margaret Glaspy is having a moment in the spotlight.

Her new EP *The Sun Doesn’t Think* was released on April 26, less than a year after her critically acclaimed album *Echo the Diamond* emerged to garner national attention from *The New York Times*, NPR, *The New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone*, and many others.

“While I was on tour for *Echo the Diamond*, I was writing

this EP,” says Glaspy, who will perform “Margaret Glaspy: Unplugged” at the Stone Church this Friday, May 10.

“I was inspired by just being around audiences and experiencing their charisma and their stories,” she said in a recent phone call with *The Commons*. “It made me want to bring more music to them and release records closer to their inception.”

So in March, Glaspy hit the studio with her acoustic guitar to create her third full-length album, “played new songs in front of a microphone, and *The Sun Doesn’t Think* was born in a couple of days,” she says.

“The simplicity of making this [EP] reminded me of why I make music,” she adds.

*The Sun Doesn’t Think* was recorded, produced, and written by Glaspy, was engineered by Mark Goodell at his studio Joe’s Garage, and draws inspiration from musicians Tom Waits and Kim Gordon, as well as from author Neil Gaiman’s “dark but fantastical and surrealist places.”

“I wrote a majority of this record when I was on tour for my last record,” she says. “I always felt like it would be nice to release things closer to when they are written.”

■ SEE GLASPY, B3



Singer-songwriter Margaret Glaspy will perform at the Stone Church in Brattleboro on Friday.

Publication of this week’s Calendar is underwritten by BERKLEY & VELLER GREENWOOD COUNTRY REALTORS • [www.berkleyveller.com](http://www.berkleyveller.com)



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# arts & community CALENDAR

**THURSDAY**

9

**Music**

**PUTNEY Carsie Blanton plus Milton:** Carsie is a songwriter with hooks, chutzpah, and revolutionary optimism. Inspired by artist-activists i.e. Nina Simone and Woody Guthrie, her catalog careens through American popular song from folk and swing to pop-punk protest anthems. Her unique mix of hook-driven pop sensibility, political satire, and heartfelt authenticity has brought her a small menagerie of viral hits.

► 7 p.m.  
► \$25 in advance, \$30 at door, \$10 livestream. Advance tickets: [www.nextstagearts.org](http://www.nextstagearts.org).  
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: More information: 802-387-0102.

**BRATTLEBORO Music Appreciation Salons Conclude with Dinner and Pops Salon!** Join host Moby Pearson and enjoy an audio, visual, and edible feast! This will be a special evening of favorites from across the centuries and the world. Dinner is included, with all receipts going to Groundworks Collaborative. Participants will hear select recordings of short works from 16 composers ranging from Handel to Shostakovich to Dinicu (who?!).  
► 6:30 p.m.  
► Fee is \$35 per person, \$60 per pair for this special event.  
► Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Information: Call 802-257-4523 or email [info@bmcvt.org](mailto:info@bmcvt.org) to register.

**Kids and families**

**BRATTLEBORO Sing & Dance with Robin:** For ages 0-5 and their caregivers. This class is an enriching musical experience for toddlers and preschoolers, designed to support healthy cognitive, physical, and social development. Children will sing, clap, stomp, dance, and play along with the curriculum of traditional and modern folk songs. Parents will be encouraged to fully sing and participate with their child in the class.  
► 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Community Meeting Room.  
► Free.  
► Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; [brookslibraryvt.org](http://brookslibraryvt.org).

**Community building**

**BRATTLEBORO Meal and Movie: "Entertaining Angels, the Dorothy Day Story"**: Skyberry: Brattleboro's House of Hospitality for unsheltered children and families hosts this simple meal and inspiring movie:  
► 6-8 p.m. in the undercroft. Trailer: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kvd\\_GXZ44](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kvd_GXZ44).  
► Free.  
► St. Michaels Episcopal Church, Putney Rd. and Bradley Ave. Information: [RSVP:houseskyberry@gmail.com](mailto:RSVP:houseskyberry@gmail.com).

**Visual arts and shows**

**BRATTLEBORO Curator Tour: "In Nature's Grasp"**: "In Nature's Grasp" explores the concept of the Sublime through the lens of 11 contemporary artists who take inspiration from the natural world. Join curators Michael Abrams and Sarah Freeman, as well as several of the artists, for a discussion and walkthrough of the exhibition.  
► 7 p.m.  
► Free.  
► Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: For accessibility questions and requests, email [office@brattleboromuseum.org](mailto:office@brattleboromuseum.org) or call 802-257-0124 x101.

**Ideas and education**

**NEWFARE Presentation: Reverend Dr. Donnie Anderson; "My Experiences as a Transgender Woman"**: Dr. Donnie Anderson is an ordained minister whose credentials are recognized by the United Methodist Church, United Church of Christ, and American Baptist Churches USA. She is a pastor, educator, counselor, social activist who offers an inside track on the transgender experience: what it means to decide and act upon the fact of one's identity - and to live it openly and proudly.  
► 6:30 p.m.  
► Free.  
► Moore Free Library, 23 West St. Information: More information, contact the library: 802-365-7948 or [moorefreeslibrary@gmail.com](mailto:moorefreeslibrary@gmail.com).

**FRIDAY**

10

**Music**

**BRATTLEBORO Sarasa Ensemble Concludes its 25th Anniversary Season with "Birds of a Feather"**: With a flourishing send-off in

**FRIDAY CONT.**

the finale of its 25th anniversary year, Sarasa Ensemble presents "Birds of a Feather" with works by Rosenmüller, Reincken, Westhoff, Schmelzer, Scheidt, and Bach - with his sparkling harpsichord Concerto in E Major.  
► Sarasa Ensemble is a collective group of international instrumentalists/vocalists who perform classical music of outstanding quality, spanning 17th-21st centuries, on both period and modern instruments, and bring this music to diverse communities. Through the ensemble's outreach program in adolescent detention facilities, it's dedicated to bridging cultural, aesthetic, economic barriers - providing incarcerated teenagers with opportunities for growth, self-expression, enrichment through music.  
► \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door.  
► Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Information: Tickets/more information: [mctvt.org](http://mctvt.org), 802-257-4523, email [info@bmcvt.org](mailto:info@bmcvt.org).

**Recreation**

**BRATTLEBORO Teen Game Night:** Play games with host: Teen Advisory Board! We'll have a selection of board and card games to play with as well as a Jack Box Party Pack set up. Feel free to bring your own games as well.  
► 7-10 p.m. We're on the 2nd floor and spread out between the rooms. Pizza and snacks provided!  
► Free.  
► Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; [brookslibraryvt.org](http://brookslibraryvt.org).

**The written word**

**PUTNEY Sundog Poetry and Green Writers Press: Evening of Poetry w/ Julia C. Alter, Pablo Medina, Rage Hezekiah, Ben Aleshire:** On Julia C. Alter's debut collection, Bianca Stone, VT's new poet laureate and author of the Vermont Book Award winning collection, "What is Otherwise Infinite," writes of Alter's debut poetry collection: "'Good poetry manages to hold space for our most contradictory selves. And in this, we learn a little how to live.. I'm refreshed by the fierce anti-sentimentality. It is her dervish vision that holds us, reckoning with painful truths about love and relation...'  
► 7:30 p.m.  
► Free. Suggested \$10 donation to support the arts in southern Vermont.  
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; [nextstagearts.org](http://nextstagearts.org).

**Community building**

**GUILFORD Skillsare - Help Heal Our Earth Through Bodydynamics!** Elissha Poulin: "There are many ways to work with biodynamics. It can be really quick and easy or very deep and methodical. This is a quick review of how to approach biodynamics. I'm not an expert, but I know this is a very valuable way that we can contribute to the health of our Earth and ourselves and I have some knowledge to share to help people to be comfortable with starting this practice."  
► 6 p.m. "Not just for farmers and gardeners, this can be for anybody who wants to share in this beautiful practice of healing, for any piece of the earth small or large."  
► Free.  
► Broad Brook Community Center/Grange, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-451-0405; [broadbrookcommunitycenter.org](http://broadbrookcommunitycenter.org).

**SATURDAY**

11

**Farmers' markets**

**BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Farmers Market:** Come buy glorious local produce, support area craftspeople, and try out a wide selection of international foods.  
► 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. every Saturday (near Memorial Park).  
► Brattleboro Farmers Market, 570 Western Ave., Rt. 9, near Memorial Park. Information: 802-490-4371; [brattleborofarmersmarket.com](http://brattleborofarmersmarket.com).

**Kids and families**

**BRATTLEBORO Tri Town Collectors Club & other local dealers hold Coin, Paper \$\$, Comic Book, Pokemon and Sport Cards/Postcard Show:** Many dealers and collectors from the area meet up with daylong series of hobby activities packed with collectibles from vintage to the modern eras. In addition to the usual offerings of coins, currency, sports/post cards, Stamps, Pokemon and more, there will be a presentation of vintage baseball cards. Joe Fuller is the organizer.  
► 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
► No admission charge.  
► Holiday Inn Express, 100 Chickering Dr. Information: For more information, contact Joe Fuller: 802-379-2353 or email: [Pepsjoseph@yahoo.com](mailto:Pepsjoseph@yahoo.com).

**GREENFIELD Guilford Recreation Commission: Celebrate Spring & Wake Up the Earth:** Activities, parade (we encourage costumes - think Spring), bring your baskets for hunting dinosaur eggs (we're looking for donations of treats for the eggs - email for info on where

**SATURDAY CONT.**

to drop:), we'll have fairy house building and other activities. Bring a picnic and linger with neighbors. We'll make noise and parade to the Playscape to close out the event.  
► 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome.  
► 10 Forward Venue, 10 Fiske Avenue. Information: More information, call Mary at 617-293-8002.

**Community building**

**GUILFORD Coffee with Coffey - Sara Coffey, State Representative Windham-1/ Vernon & Guilford:** Join me for my monthly Coffee with Coffey hour. Share updates, plans, your priorities and get answers to any questions you have about any issues we are debating in Montpelier. This is a great way to connect with neighbors and discuss issues you care about.  
► 10 - 11 a.m.  
► Free.  
► Broad Brook Community Center/Grange, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-451-0405; [broadbrookcommunitycenter.org](http://broadbrookcommunitycenter.org).

**BRATTLEBORO BioBlitz at Brattleboro Watershed Forest:**

Come out to help us learn more about the forest's biodiversity and determine how it is recovering (or not) from last winter's (2022-23) timber harvests. A BioBlitz is a crowdsourced community science effort to record as many species within a designated location/time period as possible. Everyone works together scientists, families, students, teachers, other community members - to get a snapshot of biodiversity.  
► 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Co-hosted by Brattleboro Conservation Commission and Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center. Bring yourself (and a friend!), water, smartphone with iNaturalist app installed. If you have binoculars or a macro lens for your phone, bring that too!  
► Free.  
► Yankee Dog, 94 Vernon St. Information: Meet at Yankee Dog / MamaSezz parking lot.

**Tag sales, auctions, bazaars**

**WEST DUMMERSTON Multi-Family Tag Sale:** This is a benefit for the Center's playground fund.  
► 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
► Admission is free.  
► Dummerston Community Center, 166 West St. Information: 802-254-2703.

**Visual arts and shows**

**Discover the Stars: Edward Holland's "Celestial Sea" - Art Talk: Edward Holland and Mara Williams** 12 Zodiac-Inspired Masterpieces (Zoom/Facebook Live): Brattleboro Museum and Art Center: Stargazing and Zodiac systems have played a role in human imagination for millennia, and artist Edward Holland continues that tradition with this exhibition. This exhibit is currently on view in person since 5/5. Holland joins curator Mara Williams for an online discussion of his work on 5/11/24.  
► 5/11: 7 p.m. Online discussion.  
► Online discussion is free of charge.  
► Online. Information: Register [brattleboromuseum.org/2024/02/28/art-talk-edward-holland-and-mara-williams/](http://brattleboromuseum.org/2024/02/28/art-talk-edward-holland-and-mara-williams/).

**Celebrations and festivals**

**MONTAGUE Música Franklin's 6th Annual Fun Fest:** Festival featuring music, entertainment, crafts for the whole family!  
► 12:30-1:15 p.m.: The Afro-Semitic Experience; 1-4 p.m.: Balloon Ben; 1:15-2 p.m.: Expandable Brass Band; 2-2:45 p.m.: Música Franklin students; 2:45-3:15 p.m.: Turners Falls Music Dept.; 3:15-4 p.m.: RapOet w/ special guests the Bap Pack. Rain location: Greenfield Middle School.  
► Supported by Massachusetts Cultural Council, New England Foundation for the Arts, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, River Culture, Franklin First Credit Union, Greenfield Savings Bank, Greenfield Cooperative Bank.  
► Free.  
► Unity Park, 56 First Street. Information: Full schedule and details: [musicafranklin.org/fun-fest](http://musicafranklin.org/fun-fest).

**SUNDAY**

12

**Music**

**BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Women's Chorus: Mother's Day Concert:** Singing songs by composers from the African diaspora, featuring Samirah Evans as soloist.  
► 3 p.m. Arrive early to the Latchis to check in at the table with your name.  
► Tickets: \$15-\$30 sliding scale per person (you choose amount). At door you can use cash, check, or credit card.  
► Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St. Information: 802-254-1109; [latchisarts.org](http://latchisarts.org).

**Kids and families**

**BELLOWS FALLS Wild Goose Players: "Zoe and the Seed Garden" Book Launch and Mother's Day Tea Party:** This new book for children teaches and celebrates the magic of seed saving. It's illustrated by author Lorna McMaster with 16 needle felted wood panels on exhibition at the



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the Theatre Adventure Wednesday Troupe will present an original adaptation of Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" on May 15-17.

## Theatre Adventure Wednesday Troupe presents 'Alice In Wonderland'

WEST BRATTLEBORO—Theatre Adventure's Wednesday Troupe presents *Alice In Wonderland* Wednesday through Friday, May 15-17, with three performances at the West Village Meeting House, 29 South St. Organizers say the Theatre Adventure Wednesday Troupe "features a wonderfully diverse cast with great breadth of self-expression." They will present an original adaptation of Lewis Carroll's tale that "inspires imaginative thinking, creative problem-solving, and a delight

in the unexpected." Carroll wrote *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1865. More than 150 years later, Alice's adventures with an assortment of zany characters still sparks imaginations and tickles literary senses. Theatre Adventure, which is celebrating its 20th year, is a caring and creative community, offering year-round hybrid programming to youth and adults with disabilities. The West Village Meeting House is a wheelchair-accessible venue. ASL Interpretation

is provided for all performances. Tickets available at [theatreadventure.org/tickets](http://theatreadventure.org/tickets) or at the door on the day of the performance. Your ticket will grant you access to a livestream link that can be watched online at the time of the event or at your convenience. The May 15 show is sold out, but tickets are still available for the in-person May 16 show at 10:30 a.m., and for the in-person and livestreamed show on May 17 at 10:30 a.m. All tickets are sold on a sliding scale, beginning at \$15.

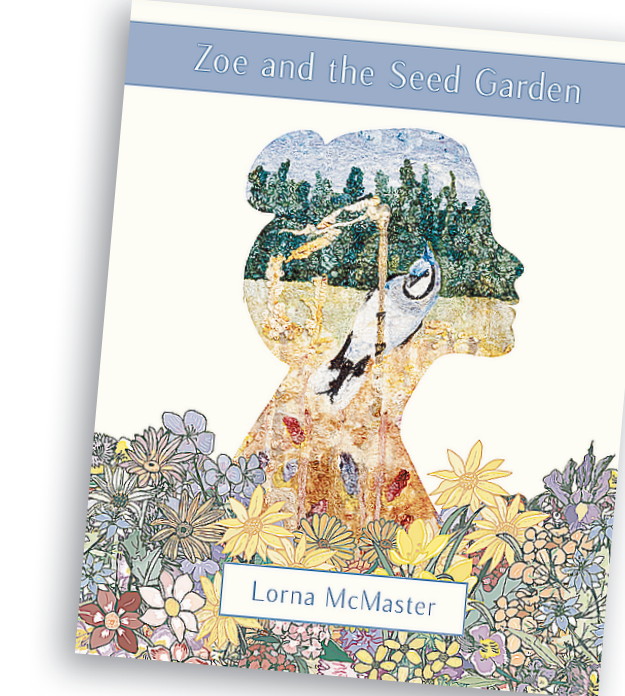
## Seed advocate will sign new children's book

BELLOWS FALLS—Heartfelt Seeds and Wild Goose Players will host a book signing and Mother's Day tea party to celebrate Lorna McMaster's *Zoe and the Seed Garden* on Sunday, May 12, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Wild Goose Players, 7 Westminster St.

Illustrated by the author with 16 needle felted wool panels, this 14-chapter book for children follows Zoe on her visits to Auntie's seed farm, where she embarks on a journey of learning to find hope for the future through the art of seed saving.

McMaster was "unexpectedly awoken to the global seed crisis" while listening to a keynote address by India's eco-activist, Vandana Shiva. "Even though I had been a full-time organic farmer for decades," she says, "I was ignorant of the fact that from 1970 to 1980, the corporate consolidation of the global seed industry resulted in a 93% extinction of the varieties of open-pollinated food plants that still existed when I was a child." The original 24-by-36-inch panels comprise the exhibit "Stewarding a Seed Collection," on display at Shelburne Museum for the 2024 season.

McMaster is a fiber artist and seed grower. She is a retired organic farmer, shepherd, and teacher. While she currently lives in Maritime Canada, for years she bred sheep, dyed fleeces, and needle felted in Spofford, New Hampshire, where she and her



Lorna McMaster's new title: *Zoe and the Seed Garden*.

husband also raised organic vegetables and flowers for sale at the Keene and Bellows Falls farmers markets. This book release and signing is a free, family-friendly tea party, featuring herb teas and treats from the pages of *Zoe's*

story. Participants can meet the author, listen to McMaster reading at 3 p.m., and take home free seeds from Auntie's seed garden. Learn more about McMaster's seed advocacy work at [heartfeltseed.com](http://heartfeltseed.com).

Shelburne Museum for the 2024 season), this 14-chapter book for children follows Zoe on her visits to Auntie's seed farm, where she embarks on her own journey of discovering how she can find hope for the future by learning the art of seed saving.  
► 2-4 p.m. Author reading: 3 p.m. "Join us for herb teas/treats from the pages of Zoe's story. Meet the author and purchase signed first edition of 'Zoe and the Seed Garden'. Take home free seeds from Auntie's Seed Garden and learn more about our seed advocacy efforts at [www.heartfeltseed.com](http://www.heartfeltseed.com)."  
► Free.  
► Wildgoose Players, 7 Westminster Street. Information: [dstern@wildgooseplayers.com](mailto:dstern@wildgooseplayers.com).

about health justice to share with others? Light refreshments will be served.  
► 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. in Meeting Room. Participants are encouraged to share experiences with the healthcare system. Local health resources and free blood pressure screenings available.  
► Free.  
► Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: [RSVP:workerscenter.org/2024springtour](mailto:RSVP:workerscenter.org/2024springtour) to let hosts know you're coming and to get updates.

**TUESDAY**

14

**The written word**

**BELLOWS FALLS Silent Book Club arranged by Heather Willis-Doxseed and Rockingham Library:** Spend time reading a book of one's choosing silently and then have the option to mingle and chat about books. First Silent Book Club meeting will be held at Pizza Palace, 111 Rockingham St. in Bellows Falls, VT.  
► 6:45 p.m. Subsequent Silent Book Club meetings will meet up on 2nd Tuesday of each month at a different venue around town where readers can purchase a snack/beverage if desired.  
► Free and open to the public.  
► Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: If interested, share contact info with Rockingham

**TUESDAY CONT.**

Library: 802-463-4270, [programming@rockinghamlibrary.org](http://programming@rockinghamlibrary.org), or stop by.

**Well-being**

**BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic:** Primary medical treatment for patients ages 18 to 64 in our community who do not have health insurance or who cannot afford their high deductibles or co-insurance.  
► 5 - 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays.  
► Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic, 191 Clark Ave. Information: 802-251-8484; [brattleborowalkinclinic.com](http://brattleborowalkinclinic.com).

**Community building**

**PUTNEY Where Is Away? with Windham Solid Waste Management District Outreach Coordinator:** Ever wonder where the trash truck takes your discarded materials? What happens to your various recyclables? Did you know food scraps that you dropped off at the WSWMD transfer station get turned into a finished product on-site to be used locally? This is a great opportunity to bring your burning questions to the forefront and learn from WSWMD's Alex as well as from each other about the waste system. Every region has a different system - get to know yours a little bit better!  
► 6:30 p.m.  
► Free.  
► Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407; [putneylibrary.org/events](http://putneylibrary.org/events).

**MONDAY**

13

**Well-being**

**BELLOWS FALLS Health Justice Jam with the Vermont Workers' Center:** Discussion about how we can work together for a system in which everyone is able to enjoy the human right to healthcare. Is your healthcare unaffordable? Do you have barriers to getting the care you need? Have you been cut off of Medicaid or are you at risk of losing it? Are you dealing with medical debt? Do you have ideas





Tibetan monk Lama Tenzin Yignyen will complete a sand mandala this week at 118 Elliot in Brattleboro. COURTESY PHOTO

## Mandala

FROM SECTION FRONT

Currently living in Geneva, New York, Lama Tenzin has been a visiting professor for Tibetan Buddhism at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, where he has been teaching Buddhist studies and the art of sand mandalas for over 40 years.

"The mandala is a reflection or expression of our inner self — our inner positive qualities," he explains in a RGS press release. "It presents us with opportunities to cherish those qualities and a means to rid ourselves of negative qualities, so [that] we may be happy and peaceful."

Lama Tenzin says that the message of the Mandala "includes all the important elements that can make us a happy and caring person. The construction is considered as a blessing for the area and for the people who live where it is constructed."

This sacred art form, he says, "symbolizes love, compassion, generosity, wisdom, and appreciation, and serves as a profound testament to the beauty and interconnectedness of all beings."

Carmody explains that "creating the mandala is a meditation based in gratitude for humanity and the Earth."

"The messages of love, compassion, generosity, appreciation and wisdom which the symbols in the mandala represent, foster a very special atmosphere," she says.

"The intrinsic nature of the mandala is about how to bring joy and peace into one's life," Carmody adds. "This kind of atmosphere fosters friendships, personal connections, and community bonds."

Asked why it's important to offer witness to this creative process here in Brattleboro and now, Carmody explains that this event is part of a "five-year initiative

to support mental health, wellness, and social cohesion in Brattleboro."

Thus, Lama Tenzin Yignyen will make a sand mandala here each year through 2028.

### A message of joy, equanimity

Bringing Lama Tenzin to Brattleboro, Carmody continues, "is manifesting our belief in a world where creativity and its expression are important parts of life, and where society values the arts and the diversity of cultures and experiences they represent."

Every year, RGS "will do focused outreach to distinct communities in the area. This year our focus is on bringing children to meet Lama Tenzin and see the mandala," she says.

"As Lama Tenzin shares the ancient art of sand mandalas with Vermonters, his message of how to bring joy and equanimity into our own hearts will help people navigate our increasingly complex world," Carmody says.

She says the benefits of Lama Tenzin returning to the same community each year "are numerous."

"It provides an opportunity for visitors to connect with one another and with Lama Tenzin to build meaningful relationships and memories over time, which nurtures community," she says.

More than 400 area school children will have visited the Mandala and met Lama Tenzin through the course of the week, through the nonprofit's Art in Schools residency program, which connects RGS teaching artists with Oak Grove School in Brattleboro, Guilford Central School, and Newbrook Elementary in Newfane.

"We are providing funding to bus students from these three

## Glasp

She was able to release the new EP "one month after I made it," she says. "It's interesting and cathartic to do this in real time."

### A musical life

Glasp, who is based in New York City, grew up in Red Bluff, California, with lots of diverse music in her life from an early age.

She didn't have formal guitar lessons but picked it up quickly. She began writing songs at age 15.

"I've always been surrounded by talented musicians. My brother was an incredible guitar player. I was getting that influence at home. My family was very musical: my dad played guitar, and my mom played, too," she says. "My early music influences were jazz from my Dad and lots of singer-songwriters from my mom, like Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, James Taylor, and Cat Stevens," Glasp says.

"I loved the community. I met Julian [Lage], who is my husband now, when I was at Berklee. The level of musicianship was impressive," she says.

"I came from a very small town in California, so it felt like landing on Mars — coming to Boston with so many musicians and so many people," she adds with a laugh.

As Glasp got older, she adored Dylan, Ray Charles, Joni Mitchell, and Elliot Smith, and she's a big fan of Björk.

She primarily played fiddle for years and then switched to guitar.

local schools to see the sand mandala and meet Lama Tenzin," Carmody says.

Students at all of these schools also received a lesson and had the opportunity to make their own small sand mandala, she noted.

"Additionally, students from Green Street School and Inspire School, and the Ethiopian Community Development Center (ECDC) have signed up to bring groups of students to this event," Carmody says.

On Friday at 10:30 a.m., the public is welcome to partake in the destruction of the mandala that's been in creation since Monday and thus partake in recognition of impermanence, of the ephemeral nature of existence.

The closing ceremony will incorporate a walk from 118 Elliot through town to Whetstone pathway, where Lama Tenzin, Carmody explains, "will return the sand to the Earth by offering it to the brook."

"I often write songs on only acoustic guitar," says Glasp. "I cover them on my electric guitar." She says that playing acoustic guitar for an audience "feels a little vulnerable."

"I like the tightrope walk of playing solo," she says. "It's a fun challenge for me, and I'm excited to do it."

She has been fascinated with writing songs in different environments, like the countryside in California or a lonesome city at night.

"The songs came out of those environments," she says. "Some are autobiographical and some are not."

She credits the work of Tom Waits and Bob Dylan for inspiring her to create characters who invite you into other worlds.

Of her song "Would You Be My Man?" she says, "It's the most character-driven one on the EP that was written from the perspective of a heroine character."

She describes that protagonist as "a little bit complex."

"I feel very connected to it," Glasp says. "It's a special one. I

enjoyed writing that song."

Running the distance

In addition to her music, "I'm a hobbyist distance runner and do ultra-marathons, which are about 30 miles," Glasp says.

"I love the scene. It's been a really nice thing to be engaged in and something that I can throw myself into. I usually keep it to 5 miles on tour," she adds.

"My mom was a runner; she ran a lot when I was growing up, and my sister was always an athlete so I grew up around women running," Glasp says. I always felt like it was something I would just do."

Rolling Stone has called her "one of the most relatable songwriters now."

How does that feel to Glasp? "Oh, gosh, it feels great," she says. "I will try and live up to it!"

"Margaret Glasp: Unplugged" will take place at the Stone Church, 210 Main St., Brattleboro on Friday, May 10. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the show begins at 8 p.m. For more information and tickets (\$35-\$40), visit [stonechurchvt.com](http://stonechurchvt.com).

Ryan Lerman, singer, songwriter, and bassist, best known as the founder of Scary Pockets, will open the show.

For more information on Glasp, visit [margaretglasp.com](http://margaretglasp.com). ([margaretglasp.com](http://margaretglasp.com))

FROM SECTION FRONT

Destroying the mandala recognizes impermanence

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## NOW PLAYING at the MOVIES

LATCHIS THEATRE  
latchis.com | 802.246.1500

MAY 10 - 16  
**KINGDOM OF THE PLANET OF THE APES** PG-13  
FRIDAY 4:15 / 6:35 / 9:10  
SATURDAY 2:15 / 6:35 / 9:10  
SUNDAY 2:15 & 6:35  
MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 6:35

**STAR WARS EP. 1 - THE PHANTOM MENACE** PG  
FRIDAY 4:15 & 7:00  
SAT. & SUN. 1:45 & 7:00  
MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 7:00

**THE FALL GUY** PG-13  
FRIDAY 4:15 / 6:45 / 9:05  
SATURDAY 2:00 / 6:45 / 9:05  
SUNDAY 2:00 & 6:45  
MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 6:45

**CHALLENGERS** R  
FRIDAY 4:15 / 6:35 / 9:00  
SATURDAY 6:35 / 9:00  
SUNDAY 6:35  
MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 6:35

**HOUGHTON SANITARY SERVICE INC.**  
Commercial & Residential Septic Pumping  
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The largest, most well stocked fabric showroom + quilt shop in the region!  
55 Ralston St, Keene, NH • (603) 352-8683  
Open Mon. - Sat. 9:30am - 4pm • Closed Sunday  
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**Mother's Day Brunch at Brattleboro Legion Post 5**  
May 12th from 10am-1pm  
\$15 - All you can eat buffet (including Jacque's famous hash), Mimosas, and Bloody Marys!  
\$8 for kids 12 and under.  
Every mom will be entered to win Mother's Day Prizes!  
Reservations encouraged! 802-558-8235  
Reservations = 2 entries to win prizes!

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

**Remember Mother's Day**

**Vermont's Largest Farm Stand Garden Center & Nursery**  
Fresh pies and award winning cider donuts made daily!  
Visit us: Exit 5 off I-91  
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802-722-3395 • [allenbrothersfarms.com](http://allenbrothersfarms.com)  
Open 7 days a week: Mon-Sat 6 a.m.-8 p.m. • Sun 7 a.m.-8 p.m.

**Ideas and education**  
**PUTNEY Thomas C. Hubka: "Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England" (In-Person/Online):** Thomas Hubka is a noted vernacular architecture historian who will talk about his seminal book.  
► 7 p.m. Event is offered by The Landmark Trust, hosted by Next Stage Arts, supported in part by Vermont Humanities.  
► Free.  
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: No registration required to attend in person at Next Stage. Livestream: [landmarktrustusa.org/events..](http://landmarktrustusa.org/events..)

**WEDNESDAY 15**

**Community building**  
**PUTNEY Putney Friends Peace & Justice Committee hosts Community Gathering to watch Livestreams of Israeli-Palestinian joint Ceremonies:** Presented by Combatants for Peace, a grassroots movement of Israelis and Palestinians working together to end the occupation and bring peace, equality and freedom to their homeland.  
► 1:30 p.m. (Also see 5/15). For a link to view live streams on your own, go to Israeli-Palestinian Memorial Day Ceremony ([www.afcp.org/2024-joint-memorial-day-ceremony](http://www.afcp.org/2024-joint-memorial-day-ceremony)) or Nakba Remembrance Ceremony ([www.afcp.org/2024-joint-nakba-remembrance-ceremony](http://www.afcp.org/2024-joint-nakba-remembrance-ceremony)) and click on "Register to Attend Online".  
► Free.  
► Putney Friends Meeting House, 17 Bellows Falls Rd. Information: For more information about the local gatherings, contact [clerk@putneyfriendsmeeting.org](mailto:clerk@putneyfriendsmeeting.org).  
**BRATTLEBORO "Are Bans of Encampments of Unhoused People Unconstitutional?" - A Town Hall Exploration with Meg Mott:** This first "America 250" Town Hall encourages divergent points of view on homeless encampments. Sponsored by

Windham World Affairs Council, Vermont Humanities, and Compassionate Brattleboro as part of the 250th Commemoration of the United States.  
► 6:30 - 8 p.m. "America 250"  
► (Note: Friends of the Library Annual Meeting precedes Meg Mott's discussion and is open to the public: 4:30 p.m.-6 p.m.).  
► Free.  
► Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; [brookslibraryvt.org](http://brookslibraryvt.org).

**DUMMERSTON Crêpe Night at Scott Farm - Co-hosted today by Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing:** Crêpe Nights are seasonal monthly gatherings, 2nd Wednesday through September. These are times to celebrate the harvest, good simple food, and community in a stunning setting - picnic style. Outdoor and indoor tables and chairs provided as well as a sprawling grassy hillside ripe for picnic blankets, folding lawn chairs, bare feet. Enjoy savory supper crêpe (galette), sweet dessert crêpe, side salad. Drinks available for purchase at the bar.  
► 5:30-7:30 p.m. Each month is co-hosted by a different local non-profit benefiting from evening's proceeds. Local music adds to the ambiance - good food, good company, good vibes. Upcoming Crêpe Nights: 6/12: Theatre Adventure; 7/10: VT Insight Meditation Center; 8/14: Brattleboro Concert Choir; 9/11: Brattleboro Women's Chorus.  
► Tickets: \$20 adults, \$10 children.  
► Scott Farm, 707 Kipling Rd. Information: 802-254-6868; [scottfarmvermont.com](http://scottfarmvermont.com).

**Ideas and education**  
**Indivisible announces "Powering Progress: Persuasion to Power - Using Words that Win" (Zoom):** Indivisible: "Anat Shenker-Osorio is a great source of education on messaging in the ecosystem. She will give expert guidance on 'mobisuasion' - the art of mobilization and persuasion. Learn how to navigate messaging around hot-button topics and specific issues from one of the best in the biz. And bonus: We'll also be joined for some remarks by our very own Leah Greenberg."  
► 8 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).  
► Free.  
► Zoom. Information: Register: [tinyurl.com/847pehks](http://tinyurl.com/847pehks).



## 'The Last Laugh' to screen with live music on May 10

BRATTLEBORO—*The Last Laugh*, a 1924 German silent film drama about a hotel doorman demoted to washroom attendant, will be screened with live music on Friday, May 10, at 8 p.m., at Epsilon Spires, 190 Main St.

The screening will feature live accompaniment on the venue's Estey pipe organ by Jeff Rapsis, a New Hampshire-based silent film musician.

The story of *The Last Laugh*, regarded as one of German director F. W. Murnau's best pictures, is told entirely in visual terms, without the use of title cards. The film, a character study that chronicles the mental breakdown of an aging man who loses his position of authority, is also noted for its revolutionary use of camera movement.

Playing the lead role is Swiss/German actor Emil Jannings, widely recognized as one of the most versatile actors of early cinema. Jannings would later move to Hollywood, where he earned the first-ever Best Actor Oscar at the inaugural Academy Awards for his towering performances in *The Last Command* (1928) and *The Patriot* (1928).

Critics and film writers regard *The Last Laugh* as a landmark of early cinema.

"*The Last Laugh* is a masterpiece of psychological study, perhaps the best-ever portrayal of what goes through one man's mind under varying situations [...] It is absolutely mind-boggling to see Emil Jannings age at least 10

or 15 years right in front of our eyes in the course of a couple of minutes," wrote author Robert K. Klepper in *Silent Films* (2005).

Critic David Kehr of the *Chicago Reader* described *The Last Laugh* as "the 1924 film in which F. W. Murnau freed his camera from its stationary tripod and took it on a flight of imagination and expression that changed the way movies were made."

The film's director of cinematography, Karl Freund, set new standards, setting up the camera to move through corridors and "see" action through a character's-eye view.

Freund's long career later included work in television in the 1950s in Hollywood, when he developed the "three camera" system for *I Love Lucy*, which became the standard format for shooting situation comedies.

*The Last Laugh* will be accompanied by live music by Rapsis, who performs at venues across the region and beyond.

"Films such as *The Last Laugh* were created to be shown on the big screen and in the theater as a communal experience," Rapsis said. "With an audience and live music, they still come to life in the way their makers intended them to."

Admission is \$20 per person. Tickets may be purchased in advance at [epsilonspires.org](http://epsilonspires.org) or at the door. For more info on the music, visit [jeffrapsis.com](http://jeffrapsis.com).



Carsie Blanton

COURTESY PHOTO

## Next Stage presents Carsie Blanton plus Milton on May 9

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts Project and Twilight Music present singer-songwriter Carsie Blanton and her Handsome Band, plus fellow singer-songwriter Milton at Next Stage, 15 Kimball Hill, on Thursday, May 9, at 7 p.m.

Blanton has been described as a songwriter with "hooks,chutzpah, and revolutionary optimism," say organizers in a news release. Inspired by artist-activists including Nina Simone and Woody Guthrie, her catalog includes American popular song from folk and swing to pop-punk protest anthems.

Her "unique mix of hook-driven pop sensibility, political satire, and heartfelt authenticity has brought her a small menagerie of viral hits," including "Rich People," "Shit List," and 2020's tribute to John Prine, "Fishin' with You." Her latest album, *After the Revolution*, produced by Grammy-winner Tyler Chester, was released in March.

Blanton's live shows, solo or with her Handsome Band, explore the political as well as the burlesque.

Milton is known for his "lyric craft, distinctive voice, and soulful songs steeped in classic rhythm & blues, pop, jazz, folk and country music," say organizers.

Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, and \$10 for access to the livestream. Advance tickets are available at [nextstagearts.org](http://nextstagearts.org). Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar. For information, call 802-387-0102.

## Sarasa Ensemble ends 25th year with 'Birds of a Feather'

BRATTLEBORO—For the finale of its 25th anniversary year, Sarasa Ensemble presents "Birds of a Feather," with works by Rosenmüller, Reincken, Westhoff, Schmelzer, Scheidt, and J. S. Bach's Harpsichord Concerto in E major.

The concert is set for Friday, May 10, at 7 p.m., at the Brattleboro Music Center.

The Sarasa Ensemble is a collective group of international instrumentalists and vocalists who perform classical music spanning the 17th to the 21st centuries on both period and modern instruments for diverse communities. Through the ensemble's outreach program in adolescent detention facilities, it is dedicated to bridging cultural, aesthetic, and economic

barriers and providing incarcerated teenagers with opportunities for growth, self-expression, and enrichment through music.

Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door, available at [bmcvt.org](http://bmcvt.org) or 802-257-4523. For more information, call the BMC or email [info@bmcvt.org](mailto:info@bmcvt.org).

## Bandwagon Series

FROM SECTION FRONT

And, he adds, "we keep it fresh."

"Every week is a different style from a different country, a different culture," Marks says.

Because the outdoor setting can accommodate more attendees, Next Stage can book artists that it otherwise wouldn't be able to afford in its indoor performance space on Kimball Hill.

"We are really curating with a strong eye toward ethnic and cultural diversity," Marks says. "We're bringing in top-quality talent."

### A diverse musical lineup

The Bandwagon opens Saturday, May 18, and runs through Thursday, Oct. 10, "featuring artists from around the world," a Next Stage press release notes. "It's like staging a festival every weekend with an emphasis on Vermont-made brands" that sponsor diversity in their programming.

Band selection is the purview of Marks with Barry Stockwell,

production director at Next Stage.

"It's a team effort between me and Barry [...]. I have a healthy network of musicians and presenters that I am in communication with. Different artists come in different ways."

The following descriptions of this year's lineup come from Next Stage publicity materials, peppered with Marks' remarks.

• **Saturday, May 18:** Mehrnam Rastegari on a Persian stringed instrument joins forces with Habbina Habbina. "Greek wedding band surf party music," says Marks.

• **Saturday, May 25:** Yasser Tejada, Dominican jazz guitarist and composer, offers danceable Caribbean music.

• **Saturday, June 1:** Midwood, contemporary klezmer/rock celebration of freedom and the Jewish tradition of wandering and migration.

• **Saturday, June 8:** Bristol Lightning. An Odyssey of American Music. Bluegrass band fronted by popular and widely heard Grammy-winning cellist Dave Eggar, who has performed at Next Stage.

• **Saturday, June 15:** Combo Daguerre, noted psychedelic French ensemble gypsy music.

• **Saturday, July 6:** Bondeko plays a mix of Roma melodies, Cumbia rhythms, Malinke sing-alongs, and Balkan tempos, peppered with waltzes. This band is, Marks says, "immigrants from five different countries" — all working construction.

• **Saturday, July 13:** Villalobos Brothers, one of the foremost contemporary Mexican ensembles in the world, with a unique fusion of Mexican folk, jazz, and classical music performed by three brothers, all virtuosic violinists.

• **Saturday, July 20:** Pahua,

the rising star of Mexican electronic folk, whose band plays electronic Latin fusion and dance music.

• **Saturday, July 27:** Bombay Rickey, a five-piece band, offers a unique sound evocative of 1960s movie soundscapes. The group plays both covers and original music that borrow equally from the worlds of surf rock, cumbia, spaghetti western, and Bollywood, balanced with operatic vocals. Co-presented with New England Center for Circus Arts, "this is like a grab-bag mix party — every song is different," Marks says.

• **Saturday, Aug. 3:** Glen David Andrews Band returns with a combination of funk, R&B, jazz, gospel, and zydeco; "a joyful, communal noise that prompts even the most casual listeners to lose their inhibitions, whoop, holler, and shake their booty." This New Orleans street beat music is co-presented with the Vermont Jazz Center.

• **Friday, Aug. 9:** Slavic Soul Party! With Balkan brass, funk grooves, Roma accordion, and jazz, this 10-piece Balkan brass band has played the Bandwagon before — "the largest show we've had," says Marks.

• **Saturday, Aug. 17:** Myra Flynn is a Vermont-based Vermont Public broadcast journalist with a side career in original indie soul and funk.

• **Saturday, Aug. 24:** Soles of Duende. Three women from three distinct cultural backgrounds dance the rhythms of tap, flamenco, and Kathak dance to the music of an instrumental trio.

• **Saturday, Aug. 31:** Frank London's Klezmer Brass Allstars offer high-energy Eastern European party music led by London, one of the world's leading klezmer trumpeters.

• **Saturday, Sept. 7:** Rev. Vince Anderson and His Love Choir, a self-described "dirty gospel" musician.

• **Sunday, Sept. 15:** La Sonora Mazurén, a septet that, as described on the group's Bandcamp page, "combines the flavours of popular Latin American music with the tropical sounds of raw Bogotá, creating a ceremony in which dance and festivity take control of the audience, transporting it to the golden years of tropicalia."

• **Saturday, Sept. 21:** Cyro Baptista, a Brazilian-born percussionist in jazz and world music, has played with Paul Simon, Sting, and Phish. This is his group's first U.S. tour.

• **Sunday, Sept. 29:** Yemen Blues Ravid Kahalani is part Prince, part James Brown, and his music reaches into Moroccan gnawa, Nigerian afrobeat, ecstatic jazz, and global soul. Kahalani offers "traditional Yemenite music in a new spin," says Marks.

• **Sunday, Oct. 6:** Jacob Jolliff Band is Americana and bluegrass. This contemporary mandolinist and his band are co-presented with Twilight Music.

• **Thursday, Oct. 10:** OneBeat, a global music exchange will present a showcase of global music. "OneBeat is a nonprofit," Marks

explains, "funded by the State Department, bringing 20 musicians together from around the world."

### Trusting the curators

"The most important thing I have," Marks says, "is the community's trust in [our] curation." He notes that they seem to "hit the mark more than we miss it, and that has created trust."

Bandwagon audiences come from throughout the region, primarily from Putney, Dummerston, and Westminster West at the core and then from ever-widening circles beyond to Keene, Greenfield, Bellows Falls, and Wilmington, says Marks.

This year's focus is on local audience development and local business support. Thus, a limited advertising budget will be spent concentrated in local press.

"We want to be sure our dollars are being spent locally; it's the right time for doing that: We need to count on the local audiences," to support local businesses, to spend as locally as possible, he says.

"The cost for everything has gone up," he said. "Our tickets are \$20; if you go to Northampton, tickets are \$35 to \$45. We are so mindful of keeping this accessible, though. We want to be an organization for the whole community, so we need to do the dance," juggling costs of insurance, maintenance, repairs, programming, and public relations, all with a staff of four.

"We try to pull on every lever possible," Marks explains. Marks, 44, moved with his wife and two children nearly five years ago from Florida, where he was a journalist, to take the position at Next Stage, which had launched a nationwide search.

He'd lived and worked in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East; he holds a master's degree in teaching and just finished a second master's in nonprofit leadership.

A musician and a trained massage therapist as well, he's studied improvisational theater performance; he's had a record label and a booking company, and he's been a tour manager over his 30-year involvement in the arts.

His background as an eclectic generalist serves Marks well as he further hones his business savvy to navigate the arts production and marketing scene in southern Vermont, and to collaborate with others therein.

"I think of administration as my art," he says.

*Tickets for the Bandwagon '24 series can be purchased at [nextstagearts.org/bandwagon-24](http://nextstagearts.org/bandwagon-24). Series passes — yielding savings of 37-47% — are available there, too. Locations of each concert are listed on the website: note that in case of rain, the backup venue is the Next Stage space at 15 Kimball Hill in Putney.*

**T**here's nothing better than live music. It's raw energy, and raw energy feeds the soul.  
—DHANI JONES

### GOT AN OPINION?

(Of course you do! You're from Windham County!)



Got something on your mind? Send contributions to our Letters from Readers section (500 words or fewer strongly recommended) to [voices@commonsnews.org](mailto:voices@commonsnews.org); the deadline is Friday to be considered for next week's paper. When space is an issue, we give priority to words that have not yet appeared elsewhere.

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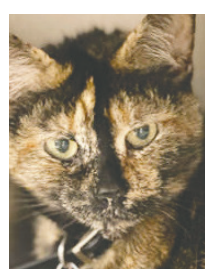
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VIEWPOINT

# Stepping up and pulling together



In 1943, a real-life “Rosie the Riveter” operates a hand drill at Vultee-Nashville, Tennessee, working on an A-31 Vengeance dive bomber.

Wise representatives from the entire range of the political spectrum are sounding the alarm. Once again, we must pull together as though we were under attack, because we are.

**I**T CHOKED ME UP to hear that the Congressional Gold Medal has been awarded collectively to all Rosie the Riveters. They emerged at a time when we as a country needed to pull together, set aside our differences and prejudices for the common good.

These days, unanimous support for anything in our divided society is a minor miracle, yet our deeply dysfunctional Congress has agreed to honor these extraordinary women who stepped up when their country needed them.

Our country needs us again. This time the attack has taken a different form, but it is at least as serious as the attack on Pearl Harbor or 9/11.

It is a slow, steady attack on individuals, on institutions public and private, and on democracy itself.

**FRIC SPRUYT** is a property owner and property manager in Brattleboro and a member of the town’s energy committee.

It’s perpetrated through the internet by enemies foreign and domestic, using scams, cyberattacks, and social media. A sign of its effectiveness is the degree to which it has been welcomed by many who consider themselves “freedom-loving patriots.”

I AM NOT TRYING to say that things were great in the 1940s and 1950s — just that the trend was quite positive then.

We are still being led by imperfect leaders. Our founding fathers were slave-holding Christians who

■ SEE STEPPING UP, C2

VIEWPOINT

# Using our collective wisdom to take on the housing market

At Winston Prouty, we view our property as a community asset. We need the community to help us with our plan to build urgently needed housing.

**T**HE RECENT “Voices Live: A Conversation on Homelessness” at the Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro could have taken place in any town in Vermont, and many of the same issues would have been raised.

There is not enough housing, and people are struggling with poverty, mental health issues, food insecurity, and substance abuse that can be derailing.

Who is responsible for addressing these challenges?

The answer is “us” — we are all responsible for doing whatever we can, big or small, to contribute to a thriving community. No one is going to come save us.

That is not to say that we don’t need help — assistance might come from the government (town, state, federal), philanthropy, businesses, and nonprofits. However, it is up to us to harness our collective wisdom and resources, identify possible solutions, and proactively seek support to implement them.

THE HOUSING CRISIS is a great example of a challenge that requires our collective action to solve. Brattleboro needed 500 units of housing to meet demand three years ago, and we get further behind as each year passes.

**CHLOE LEAREY**, a speaker on the panel at the Voices Live forum, is the executive director of Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro. She serves as the steering committee chair of the Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance, as well as on the boards of the Vermont Community Loan Fund and Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

We need all the solutions and all the types of housing: accessory dwelling units, rehabilitated apartments, infill development, and multi-family new construction by public, nonprofit, and private developers.

Our housing ecosystem is failing, and building a healthy housing continuum is essential to changing course away from economic decline. If we don’t, it is entirely possible that someone else will come in and “save us” in a way that leaves us little voice and control over building the kind of community we want.

Housing is the keystone we need to get in place so that we can tackle all the other issues.

Sociologist Matthew Desmond, in his book *Evicted*,

■ SEE HOUSING, C2

VIEWPOINT

# Crushing your right to a living river

FirstLight Power has the support of Massachusetts state agencies in its bid for a new 50-year federal license to run Northfield Mountain — a facility that consumes more energy than it produces and destroys millions of fish before they can get to Vermont and New Hampshire



RAWER DUANE/US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

**D**EAR VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE: Thank you for not suing us here in the Commonwealth.

In 1798 — 226 years ago — we deprived you of migratory fish and a thriving Connecticut River when we built the first dam at Turners Falls to entirely block New England’s Great River.

Instantly, your sustaining bounties of spring shad disappeared, along with smaller runs of herring, sea lamprey, eel, and salmon. And that’s been the unending norm at fishing and village sites like Vernon, Brattleboro, Hinsdale, Chesterfield, Putney, Bellows Falls, and Walpole.

The dams, diversions, failed fish ladders, and the river-crippling pumped storage station licensed here in the ensuing centuries have continued massively robbing the river of life in the 20-mile corridor shared by Windham, Cheshire,

and Franklin counties to this day. We’ve failed to share the Connecticut’s common wealth.

Back in 1872, a landmark U.S. Supreme Court finding in *Holyoke Company v. Lyman* ruled dam owners must provide up- and downstream fish passage as a public trust. Yet you got no fish.

Worse, in 1968, Massachusetts granted Western Mass Electric Co. rights to build a giant river-vacuuming contraption: the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Station (NMPS).

It came on line in 1973 in the face of the Clean Water Act, and it has been regularly

FirstLight reports that 14.9 million eggs and larvae of American shad — a vulnerable migratory species — were “entrained” (swallowed) by Northfield Mountain’s processes in 2016. That results in 1.07 million fewer juvenile shad in the river, by one federal agency’s measure.

choking the Connecticut to a dead stop and erasing thousands of years of its natural history by reversing and inhaling miles of its ancient flow. All this, while killing, by the millions, the fish and aquatic creatures it sucks in.

■ SEE NORTHFIELD, C2



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## LETTERS FROM READERS

**'Peace' activist got personal**

This afternoon at the Co-op, when I greeted a fellow with whom, for years, I have enjoyed mutually friendly encounters, I got ambushed. Without prelude or preliminaries, he accused me of hating Palestinians.

Blind-sided, confused, offended, I wanted an explanation.

"I read what you wrote in the paper," he said.

"I suggest that you read more carefully," I replied.

Writing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I knew, would be like walking across a minefield. In an opinion piece, I discussed suppression by a former editor of our local daily of stories about Jews and Palestinians protecting each other, in favor of stories that got people's blood boiling.

And I expressed my opinion about local "peace" activists who, from the safety of Vermont, throw kerosene on the fire — *Hey, let's you and him fight!*

I remember the peace movement of my youth, nonviolence, and I do not recognize what passes for a peace movement in Brattleboro: cheerleaders for violence.

The fellow at the Co-op turned away from me, discussion over.

I purchased some fresh vegetables, and when I went to pay

he was at the front end. I walked up to him and quietly said, "If you have something to say to me, I would be happy to discuss it. But don't lay a fart and walk away."

"I'm sorry," he said, "I was being sarcastic."

"Perhaps some time we could get together and have a discussion, like two human beings?" I said.

"No," he replied, "These things cannot be discussed."

"Well," I said, "at least you and I are not at war?" He agreed.

I had not expected a de-escalation. I was pleased, but still not satisfied. I very much want to ask him: "If you and I cannot discuss things in Brattleboro, then what hope is there for Israelis and Palestinians?"

Steven K-Brooks  
Brattleboro

**False equivalency between the occupied and the occupiers**

RE: "War of the words" [Letters, Apr. 17]:

John Ungerleider has built a career at SIT and elsewhere around the false equivalency that the people of Israel and Palestine could achieve peace if they would come together to talk as coequal partners.

This normalization paints the Israeli occupation of Palestine

as a benevolent and paternalistic system that would somehow evolve into peace if everyone could just sit in a circle, play guitars, and talk.

It requires the occupied — who have been displaced and dispossessed for more than 75 years — to make even more concessions to their occupier.

Israel's Zionist project — one of the last strongholds of western colonialism — is the basis for an apartheid system of military laws that deprive Palestinians of human and civil rights and elevate the expansionist claims of Israeli Jews to the land of Palestine.

Meanwhile, Palestinians are walled off into shrinking territory while the military protects extremist settlers who steal even more land and shoot Palestinians harvesting their crops.

Israel has imprisoned hundreds of Palestinians; bulldozed their homes; and denied them their rights, legal protections, and the freedom to live on or work their land.

It's well past time for the world to call this settler colonial project what it is.

If Mr. Ungerleider dislikes these words, I invite him to help us change the facts. That has nothing to do with antisemitism and everything to with justice.

Kate Cesa  
Brattleboro

**We just want a permanent ceasefire, now**

RE: "Jewish Voices for Peace parrots Hamas" [Letters, March 13]:

Steven K-Brooks responded to my letter defending the integrity of Jewish Voice for Peace by alleging that the organization "parrots Hamas."

He contends that the comparison I made to Mandela's peaceful transition away from apartheid in South Africa was wrong.

And he dismissed my reference to the Torah, which advocates "no truth, no justice, no peace." I cited the Torah as a guide to understanding the International Court of Justice's ruling that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza.

What K-Brooks does not appear to know is that, like Hamas, the African National Congress (ANC) and Mandela were labeled as terrorists until he led the country out of apartheid into peace.

The former "terrorist" was elected president and went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize. As in Israel, the U.S. sided with Afrikaner apartheid to the end.

K-Brooks doubts that I have ever studied the Torah. I doubt that he has either. But I did spend 30 years teaching in a predominantly Jewish school. A number of my students were

Israeli.

Today, many of my friends are anti-Zionist American Jews who strongly oppose the Israeli genocide. Some have engaged in civil disobedience, including several months ago in New York City when protesters blocked the Holland Tunnel and several bridges.

My takeaway from the horrific attacks on Gaza is that the supporters of Israel, there and here, have been reduced to defending the indefensible.

It is not that we critics are bent on "delegitimizing Israel," as they claim. Israel is doing a pretty good job of delegitimizing itself, with the whole world watching.

We just want a permanent ceasefire, now.

So the question becomes: How can we explain the aberrant psychology of those who still defend the Israeli genocide?

Tom Segev is a respected Israeli New Historian — a group of people who have challenged traditional narratives about the history of Israel — whose father was killed in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

Segev wrote that in order to understand Israeli politics, one must see the two kinds of Holocaust fears.

First, many Israelis have genuine fears. But second, there are many who cynically manipulate Holocaust fears for political purposes. In Hebrew this is known

ashasbara — propaganda.

When the American historian Norman Finkelstein wrote *The Holocaust Industry*, an effort to explain this sort of manipulation, he was fired from his teaching position at DePaul University in Chicago. American Zionists have power.

*The Commons* in Brattleboro has done an exceptional job providing a forum for free speech on the conflict in Gaza. People have had the opportunity to exhaustively air the facts, and assert their values.

But in closing, I would like to add one issue that has not been reported.

In 2006 there was a legislative election held throughout Palestine, in the West Bank as well as Gaza, in which candidates from Hamas defeated those from the governing party in Ramallah, the Palestinian Authority.

Former president Jimmy Carter was there to monitor the election and certify that it was conducted democratically and fairly.

It was not that the voters loved Hamas, but that they were sick of the corruption of the Palestinian Authority, which they saw as collaborating with Israel's oppressive military occupation. Carter said he hoped Hamas would be given a chance to govern.

What followed has been underreported, to say the least.

## ■ Northfield

Thanks for your forbearance. Unfortunately, it seems you'll be needing more.

LAST MAY, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife here signed a relicensing deal promising their full support of FirstLight Power's bid for a new federal license to run Northfield Mountain for another half-century.

The chaos and killing will continue — sorry.

Northfield is a giant, net-power-loss appliance, wholly dependent on and plugged into the grid to run suctioning turbines via the cheap, bulk megawatts FirstLight purchases. The river's miseries remain shackled to that buy-low/resell-high electricity resale model.

NMPS originally ran off the over-bloat of night juice produced by a newly completed Vermont Yankee nuclear plant.

But VY closed in 2014, leaving Northfield as primarily a gas guzzler, run on power from the grid that comes from the climate-killing natural gas that's the main source of today's electricity.

SHOCKINGLY, Northfield's profound lethal impacts on dozens of fish species in the 20-mile basin between the Vernon and Turners Falls dams remain largely uninvestigated.

A U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service study report in 2017 documents a fraction of that chaos and killing.

FirstLight's consultants had estimated that 14.9 million eggs and larvae of American shad — a vulnerable migratory species — were "entrained" (swallowed) by Northfield in 2016.

They contend that this mass evisceration resulted in losses of only 2,200 juvenile shad to the river system. However, the USFWS, applying a long-established study standard in its calculations, estimated river losses of 1.07 million juvenile shad for that season.

That's just for one species in this shared reach. Preposterously, no one has calculated Northfield's direct slaughter of juvenile and adult fish across the river's wide array of species.

IF YOU'RE following the money, in 2019 FirstLight reported \$158 million in Northfield profits, from a machine they'd re-registered into a Delaware tax shelter six months prior.

Parent-owned since 2016 by the Canadian government's global capital giant Public Sector Pension Investments (PSP), Northfield's suck and flush runs like an electric toilet — one that, by FirstLight's own admission, fully wastes 34% more energy than it later reproduces at peak resale profits.

It plugs in and slurps massive, hours-long slugs of river, pulling flows a mile uphill to its mountaintop reservoir "tank." That now-lifeless torrent is held, then the effluent is flushed through turbines to make resale electricity.

The water returns to its "bowl," the Connecticut River, which FirstLight describes as its "lower reservoir."

FirstLight pitches this resale juice as "clean" and "carbon free," though Northfield's lethality has been beefed-up as a gas-gulping climate killer since VY closed.

With its 34% waste, its all-it-can-eat aquatic buffet, and its apocalyptically reversing miles of flow, Northfield Mountain comprises this ecosystem's deadliest long-term outrage.

Thus, when you hear FirstLight claiming they can power up to 1 million homes for several hours, remember they've already burned through the virgin energy of 1.34 million homes — and a river — to do so.

And, once done, they must start consuming all over again.

NORTHFIELD'S ORIGINAL FERC license expired in 2018, two years after PSP bought it. Since then, the company has realized and reinvested hundreds of millions in distant places far from this Valley, including New York, New Jersey, western Pennsylvania, Québec, and Ontario. FirstLight even opened its own \$97 million lending bank a year ago.

Last spring, when the Commonwealth signed that FirstLight agreement, the state pledged to fully support the six-years-late, 50-year Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license renewal bid — including a promise in writing to defend Northfield Mountain's river depredations against all federal and state Clean Water Act challenges.

The unprecedented state commitment to a foreign-owned entity here is now dependent on the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection issuing FirstLight a Water Quality Certificate under section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act to run Northfield Mountain on this interstate waterway, given its impacts.

The facility cannot be relicensed by FERC without that certificate.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service are also collaborating. They signed the same FirstLight terms that will continue to suction, kill, reverse, and store yet more of the river.

Thus, it should be unsurprising that in FirstLight's FERC license proposal, you'll wait until at least 2034 before they build lifts to pass fish at Turners Falls — further slow-dancing fish passage that you, as residents of Vermont and New Hampshire, have been entitled to since 1872.

Of course, if the Commonwealth sanctions a new 50 years of pumped storage in this shared reach, the embedded catch-22 will still remain.

Once spawning-run shad finally pass Turners Falls, heading your way, Northfield will be waiting — and ready — to eat the vulnerable, newly-spawned young as it continues to suction

in miles of flow, upstream and down.

AS THE Band-Aid solution for this river's grievous open wound, FirstLight has proposed seasonally deploying a 900-foot defective net just upstream of Northfield's intake, instead of installing permanently anchored, replaceable screens.

Like the nets previously deployed for hatchery-derived salmon fry, these will clog with debris and repeatedly tear and fail in a river where flood surges and uprooted trees are increasingly common.

Those nets will be useless for pencil-thin baby shad — while their ¾-inch mesh will literally guarantee death rides for hundreds of millions of developing eggs, larvae, and young-of-the-year fish, spring through fall.

Sadly, the critical losses will again be yours.

This entrainment sacrifices the return of adult spawning-run shad and herring from the Atlantic to the open waters of New Hampshire and Vermont four and five years later. Fifty-one years after Northfield became a fish abattoir, FirstLight has decided that you must wait until 2032 before they'll even begin testing their red-herring net fix.

Back in 1967, Massachusetts, along with federal and state fish agencies, signed the "New England Cooperative Fisheries Restoration Agreement for the Connecticut River." It committed to restoring your full share of fish — with a key goal of passing 850,000 American shad beyond Turners Falls Dam and 750,000 passing Vernon Dam toward Bellows Falls.

But it warned of "fragmentary data" available for the proposed Northfield plant, posing "definite limitations to an anomalous fish restoration program" due to "the physical loss of eggs, larvae, and young fish of both anadromous and resident species, and an orientation problem for both upstream and downstream migrants attributed to pumping large volumes of water."

The Connecticut River's first successful fish lift had been installed at Holyoke Dam in 1955. Its simple design was passing hundreds of thousands of shad up to Turners Falls Dam by 1976, yet Co-op leaders here turned elsewhere for solutions.

They instead constructed three scaled-down ladders at Turners Falls, modeled on giant ladders on the Columbia River that passed huge runs of several salmon species, plus introduced shad.

Completed in 1980, the ladders here forced all migrants out of the river and into the alien flows of a 2-mile power canal to pass the dam. Confused and exhausted, your runs were basically barred and blocked here again.

After 44 years, out of the hundreds of thousands of shad arriving at Turners Falls annually, the average passage success rate is 5 fish in 100.

The Commonwealth

FROM SECTION FRONT

again had licensed the crushing of Vermont's and New Hampshire's right to a living river.

HARDLY INDISPENSABLE to the day-to-day running of the power grid, no one noticed when Northfield shut down at the end of summer last year — and stayed offline through this January. A boatload of virgin energy got conserved, and its apocalyptic ecosystem-killing and flow-reversals ceased.

The bloated, bulk grid run by ISO-New England, a long-time cheerleading collaborator in Northfield's waste and killing, ran without a hiccup. And no one in New England spent their holidays shivering in candlelight.

The previous time Northfield was offline was for more than half a year, from May to November of 2010, when its tunnels got choked with the tons of accumulated muck and effluent that FirstLight was trying to flush from its reservoir.

After attempting to conceal the disaster, the EPA ordered FirstLight to "cease and desist" in its massive, ongoing Clean Water Act violations for dumping 40 to 50 truckloads of pollutants directly into the Connecticut for over 90 straight days.

Correspondingly, that spring, the always-dismal fish passage at Turners Falls experienced a mini-surge — skyrocketing 600% above the decade's limping averages — on a Connecticut River free of Northfield's daily assault.

NORTHFIELD is a monument to ecosystem destruction, a contraption built and dependent on daily waste and overkill, profiting internationally at the public and the river's expense here.

It's now up to the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection to sanction and issue a new Water Quality (401 WQ) Certificate allowing FERC to relicense a new half-century of investor reward via this deadliest, most-alien, river-reversing appliance ever employed on the Connecticut River.

And it came online in Massachusetts a year after the federal Clean Water Act became law.

In a meeting this March 26, FirstLight and its state collaborators Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, plus engineers from an outfit called Inter-Fluve, met behind closed doors here with our Department of Environmental Protection to smooth out any unforeseen bumps in the company's 50-year river deal.

Alas, even as a deeply impacted "neighboring jurisdiction" under the CWA, you were not invited.

It's as if you have no rights here. We haven't shared a living river. Again, apologies. And thank you for not suing us.

## ■ Stepping up

FROM SECTION FRONT

declared that all "men" were created equal — a radical idea for its time that eventually led to slave emancipation and women's suffrage.

The founding fathers warned against enemies from within as well as those from outside our borders. They warned equally against allowing religion too much influence over government and government too much influence over religion, in order to protect the sanctity of both.

They, however, could not possibly have imagined how today's technology could supercharge alliances between our enemies and bring out the worst instincts of people whose socialization happened largely online.

WISE REPRESENTATIVES from the entire range of the political spectrum are sounding the alarm. Once again, we must pull together as though we were under attack, because we are.

The preservation of democracy needs to be our first priority. It can be messy and

unpredictable, but it's not rigid. We get regular opportunities to fix our mistakes.

We need only look at all those who have tried some version of autocracy, and are still trying it, to realize that things could be much worse. Despite our imperfect execution of self-governance, it's the one thing that truly has made us great.

Our grand experiment has inspired other nations around the world to follow suit. If and when we revive our Democracy, we can then return to the wonderfully messy and relatively peaceful process of sorting out how to govern ourselves.

To paraphrase Winston Churchill, "Democracy is the worst form of government ... except for all the others."

It has been 250 years since we freed ourselves from the reins of a monarchy that ruled and taxed us without our input. The lessons of that period of our history have never been more relevant.

So vote — as though your right to vote depended on it.

## ■ Housing

FROM SECTION FRONT

asks the question "Do we believe that the right to a decent home is part of what it means to be an American?" He goes on to point out that the "inalienable rights" that are the founding principles of the United States — life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — all require a stable home, and that "without stable shelter, everything else falls apart."

Some might argue that people go unhoused because of their own choices and circumstances. Certainly, individual vulnerabilities contribute to people losing their housing, but systemic issues play a large role.

People create systems, and we can change them. Gregg Colburn and Clayton Aldern, in their book *Homelessness Is a Housing Problem*, offer an example by demonstrating that housing market conditions more than individual behavior drive rates of homelessness.

Fortunately, we can impact our housing market conditions, and hopefully we will do it in a way that reflects our intentions to build a community that works for us all.

WHEN PEOPLE ASK why Winston Prouty, a nonprofit that works with children and families, is pursuing housing development on our campus, we say we have a responsibility to do what we can to contribute to solutions.

We view this land as a community asset, and our goal is to steward it in a way that benefits the community.

When there was a need for an overflow shelter in Brattleboro, Winston Prouty provided the space.

When the Winter Farmers' Market needed a place, we provided the space.

When there was a need to house Afghan refugees, we provided the space.

When the deadline for the motel housing program loomed and there was a need to house

families without a home, we provided the space.

For the past two years, we have been trying to address the housing shortage in our area. We envision building a neighborhood where anyone can live, a diversity of ages, incomes, and family structures in housing that is affordable in a variety of ways for many types of people.

The project will be phased, and our goal is to get 100 to 150 units online in the next two years.

We're not talking about single-family homes on little lots. We're talking about fourplexes, condos, and apartment buildings, with the possibility of rental and ownership. The whole continuum must be robust.

ONE THING is very clear:

Winston Prouty is not a housing developer. In the same way that we've been stewarding this property, we're going to lead this process by marshaling the resources required to get it done.

Our primary need right now is to attract flexible financial resources from people and entities that are interested in investing in our community through this project.

Some funding streams that typically support housing development come with constraints — for instance, in the form of income limitations on who can live somewhere or desired rates of return that impact a willingness to invest.

This is where you have a role: Do you know of an investment fund or other creative ways to invest in the project?

We have an opportunity to impact the housing shortage in Windham County. Please send me an email ([chloe@WinstonProuty.org](mailto:chloe@WinstonProuty.org)), or call me at 802-257-7852 with your suggestions.

We can't afford to wait.



In 2007, U.S. general Keith Dayton worked as a "security coordinator" with Hamas...

Thomas Hill Putney

Opposing genocide is standing for humanity against injustice

Several recent commentaries in The Commons about the situation in Gaza are deeply problematic.

It is deeply offensive to present Jewish opinion about the events in Gaza as monolithic.

In fact, there are countless Jewish individuals Jewish-led groups who oppose the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

The mainstream press calling what's happening in Gaza a "war" is propagandistic to its core.

The Israeli government's actions in Gaza violate a multitude of long-established international laws.

The killing of tens of thousands of civilians, the destruction of critical infrastructure, and the forced migration and growing famine of millions are in direct violation of the Israeli government's obligations under international law.

The idea that opposing this ongoing genocide puts people on the wrong side of history is outrageous and is gradually falling apart as governments and institutions across the globe voice their opposition to the slaughter.

Of course, the U.S. government is again on the wrong side of history. Air-dropping a pittance of food to the starving masses in Gaza while approving ever more shipments of deadly weapons to Israel is beyond hypocritical.

Opposing genocide is not anti-Semitic; it is standing for humanity against injustice.

Henry Zacchini Brattleboro

The need for nuance

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

I want to commend Tim Wessel for his sincere attempt to address Hamas's terrorist attack in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2024.

Wessel tried to make that clear. He also tried to make clear that Hamas shouldn't be left off the hook, either.

Make no mistake: Hamas knew exactly what it was doing. Its attacks were meticulously organized.

Hussein Ibish of the Arab Gulf States Institute wrote in The Atlantic on Oct. 13, 2023, that in carrying out the attack, Hamas [...] "hopes to seize control of the Palestinian national movement from its secular Fatah rivals," as well as block the normalization of diplomatic relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

"Such a deal poses a danger to Hamas," Ibish wrote, "because the benefits of its 'significant Palestinian component' would have accrued to Fatah in the West Bank, at Hamas's expense."

Hamas knew Israel would respond with disproportionate aggression. It also knew tens of thousands of Gazans would die and 2 million more would suffer.

Hamas's actions were a cynical means of self-preservation, goading Israel into a trap that it should not have responded to.

There's integrity in signs that say things like, "Pro-Palestine, Anti-Hamas," "Pro-Peace, Anti-Hamas," or "Anti-Netanyahu, Anti-Hamas, Pro-Mideast Peace."

You can be against the Israeli occupation and its indiscriminate overpowering response and you can still criticize Hamas and be pro-Palestine.

Christian Avard Unity, N.H.

Short-term rentals, short-term gains

RE: "Crushing the housing crisis" [Voices Live! Forum, Apr. 10]:

I see as a huge problem the number of apartments and houses being used as short-term vacation rentals instead of by "real Vermonters" who need places to live.

I read of a wealthy young couple who had purchased more

than a dozen properties here in Vermont — all for their own Airbnb profits.

I'm not sure how to cap Airbnb offerings here, but in my own little town of 3,000 people, there are nearly a thousand Airbnb spaces.

Some of these are just spare bedrooms, but a good amount are entire houses or apartments that have been taken off the market for people living and working in Vermont and made available only to vacationers.

There are loads of homeowners making obscene amount of money at the expense of locals who need to find housing.

But the cost to locals is bigger than it should be.

Holly Bartel Bellows Falls

Another choice for end-of-life autonomy

RE: "A matter of choice" [News, Apr. 17]:

As a physician and a hospice volunteer, I read with interest the recent article highlighting

a person who chose to end their life with a prescribed medication.

It was most surprising to me, however, that the article did not mention another option for people at the final stage of life.

Certainly, very few people would choose to end their life in prolonged pain and suffering, and thankfully there are multiple other options at present.

People who feel it is their time to leave this world can also choose to stop eating and drinking. It is gentle, essentially without discomfort, and allows nature to take its course while family members attend at home, with medical supervision available.

I am surprised and disappointed that the article in The Commons did not mention this choice that those who are close to the end of life currently have.

Burt Tepfer Putney

Killing Windham Elementary

RE: "Windham school lawsuit moves ahead, but most claims dismissed" [News, May 1]:

How to murder a school: Trash talk it and undermine board members; repeatedly vote to close it.

Persuade parents to withdraw their students; drive out dedicated, talented staff.

Sue it.

Jean Anne Kiewel Brattleboro

Teachers missed out on once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

The recent eclipse that Vermonters were able to experience was beyond breathtaking.

My husband and I enjoyed the 2017 eclipse together with friends. This year, we were looking forward to enjoying totality or getting as close to it as possible and sharing it with our daughter, who was born in 2019.

We made it up to St. Johnsbury and waited in anticipation. The darkness, the

silence, and the temperature drop during totality — followed by the cheers and applause — was simply amazing and memorable.

The only thing missing from this experience this time was my husband, who was stuck at school for the entire day, until 4 p.m.

Students were given a half day due to "safety concerns," but staff were required to stay until 4, per their contract. No teacher workshops were planned. It was the first day of the quarter so there was not even any homework to grade.

Less than a month ago, my husband and his colleagues worked a full day and then stayed until 7 p.m. for parent-teacher conferences.

The eclipse was perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, undoubtedly an educational experience to share with students. I don't understand why superintendent Mark Speno felt the need to keep the staff at work, especially if there was "a safety concern" serious enough to release students early.

Amy Moore Brattleboro

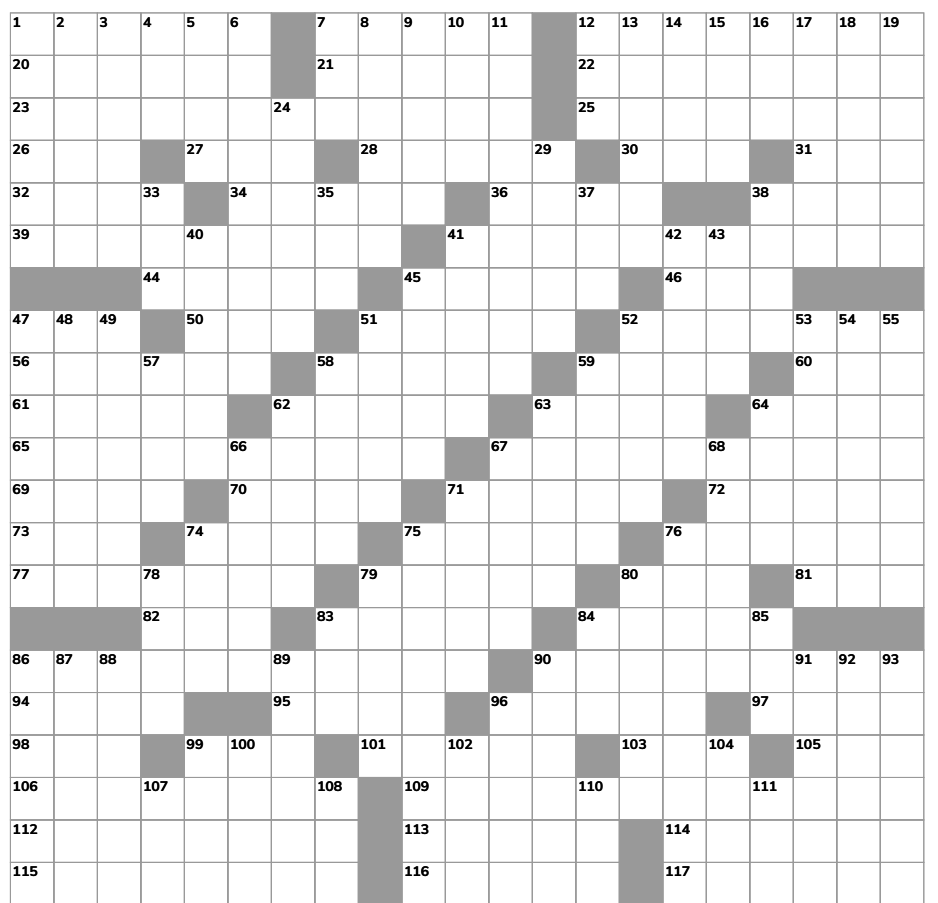
BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"One Up Front"

Across

- 1. Goddess of wisdom
7. Motrin alternative
12. Heart diagnostics
20. Sourdoughs, say
21. See 107-Down
22. Sarcastic agreement
23. Guarantee The Answer can't make a basket?
25. Have in mind
26. Letters before a pseudonym
27. Stan
28. "Today" weatherman
30. Nintendo's Super \_\_
31. Carol contraction
32. Shell-shocked GI's diagnosis
34. Parking app alternative
36. "Friends" friend
38. Home of the Blue Devils
39. Wallop a legend?
41. Only carrying an Apple tablet?
44. Bops on the head
45. Sawbones
46. The Reds of English soccer, on scoreboards
47. Billie Eilish, to Finneas
50. Perp's patterns, for short
51. Utter nonsense
52. Batter's grip enhancer
56. Hair dryer brand
58. Pixar film that takes place in space
59. Wash up
60. Before, once
61. Some kind of a nut
62. It's just for openers
63. Indonesian island
64. Deficiency
65. Food brand for a songbird?
67. Volunteer's words said to author Wouk?
69. Where moshers mosh
70. "Pain at the good fortune of others," per Aristotle
71. Runs smoothly
72. Tolkien ringbearer
73. Kona-to-Hilo dir.
74. "Mic with a slash" setting
75. Fencing maneuver
76. Pickle brand
77. High-elevation trees of the Pacific Northwest
79. Sinus of Valsalva locale
80. That lady there
81. Hairy cattle
82. Greeting in Brasilia
83. Runs in neutral
84. Meted (out)
86. Olympian blood for a group of fish?
90. Caption for a groggy self-portrait?
94. Deposited, as eggs
95. Rock's 100 gecs and Sparks, e.g.
96. Pharma dept.
97. Bride's coverage
98. A-to-Z
99. Guac ingredient
101. Dimpled body part
103. "Let You Love Me" singer Rita
105. Org. that makes you take off belts and shoes
106. Advance activity
109. Leader's phrase, and an alternate title for this puzzle
112. Without rhyme or reason
113. Actress Rapp
114. Nice woman?
115. Bathtime playthings
116. Server's equipment
117. Got the word out?



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Down

- 1. "Li'l Abner" cartoonist
2. Grew fond of
3. Arizona lake
4. Apple picker
5. Blaster brand
6. Turkey portion?
7. Exist
8. "The Cello" director
9. Lynn Bousman
10. Golf-cap feature
11. "Could have been worse"
12. Chief official?
13. Check out
14. Smooth jazz saxophonist who uses his last initial
15. Yielded
16. "I won't cut it"
17. Swollen head?
18. Prepare to play
19. Horse-drawn vehicle
20. Had a feeling
21. Crew alternatives
22. Riveting woman
23. Jaime Harrison's org.
24. Legal agreements between a site and its users: Abbr.
25. [Other examples omitted]
26. Grungy bar
27. See 99-Down
28. Wobbly dessert
29. Oscar winner Colman
30. Tuning fork part
31. Paper producers
32. Playfully run
33. Poison in "The Princess Bride"
34. Exhibited derision
35. Mild, as weather
36. Hides, as cards
37. Pot cover-up, in Britain
38. Maine national park
39. Rap on the door again
40. Creative pursuits
41. Make, as a wicker basket
42. David of "Curb Your Enthusiasm"
43. Some people can't take them

Down

- 63. "Even Napoleon had his Watergate" speaker
64. Lebanese bread
66. Like the nervous system
67. Is sore
68. 11-Down, e.g.
71. Kitchen implement
74. Venus de \_\_
75. Preppy top
76. Cycling arena
78. Victuals
79. Improvised
80. Barbecue selection
83. Hosp. area for acute conditions
84. Horse color
85. Shareholder's income: Abbr.
86. Try to hit, as mosquitos
87. Beckon from afar
88. Swank on screen

- 89. Abstainer's comment
90. Sharpshooter Annie
91. Colorful fish
92. Returnee's question
93. On a high
96. Isabella, por ejemplo
99. With 40-Down, Latin dating phrase
100. Life, to Luis
102. Decorative pitcher
104. At a distance
107. Seize suddenly
108. MLB execs
110. \_\_ États-Unis
111. Muckraker Tarbell

Last issue's solution

"Year-End Bonus"



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COLUMN | Sports Roundup

# Bears, Rebels open Ultimate Disc season

Last week saw the season openers for the two local schools offering Ultimate Disc as a varsity sport this year — Brattleboro and Leland & Gray.

On April 29, Leland & Gray lost to Burr & Burton, 15-1, while Brattleboro rallied to beat Mill River, 12-10, on May 2.

The Rebels and the Bears then faced each other in Townshend on May 3, and the Bears came away with a 12-7 win.

These two schools share a common bond. While the bigger schools in Vermont have enough students to have both boys' and girls' varsity teams, Brattleboro and Leland & Gray are co-ed and try to hold their own against the all-male teams.

The Bears and Rebels also have mutual respect for each other as the trailblazers in high school Ultimate Disc in Vermont. It hasn't been easy, but it takes a certain type of person to play a sport that has no officials and minimal coaching and counts on cooperation, creativity, and fair play to run smoothly.

Rebels coach Eric Emerson said he "kind of fell into" coaching the team this year when the position suddenly became open. He admits he is "brand new to the sport," but is impressed by the spirit of his players.

Bears coach Nate Blunk agreed with Emerson, citing the "depth of leadership and great knowledge of the game" of Rebels senior handlers Trevor Hazelton and Jackson Fillion in addition to how they guided their teammates.

Blunk has lots of players on his squad, and despite about 10 of them not making the trip to Townshend, he had scoring power on hand as Colby Bristol scored five goals to lead the Bears.

Trevor and Drew Hazelton had the Rebels' only goals as the Bears built up an 8-2 lead before intermission. Trailing 11-3 with 15 minutes to play, the Rebels made a game of it with a flurry of goals by Fillion and freshman receiver/handler Miles Seiz before time expired.

"We played great in the second half," said Emerson, adding that they played hard and didn't give up. "That's pretty characteristic of these kids."

The Bears and Rebels will play each other twice more this season; on May 13 in Brattleboro and May 31 in Townshend. Both teams are filled with good athletes who embody the ethos of Ultimate — that you can be aggressive and intense during the game and share snacks and hang out with your opponents after the game.

## Softball

• Bellows Falls is playing like a team that expects another shot at a Division III state title. They showed that last week with a pair of wins over two upper division schools.

On May 2 in Westminster, the Terriers came back to beat Division I Burr & Burton, 8-4. Trailing 2-0 with two outs in their half of the third inning, BF scored seven runs to take the lead to stay.

Riley Haskell started it all with a walk, Izzy Stoodley followed with a single to right, and Jaclyn Fletcher then cleared the bases with a towering three-run homer over the left field fence. Natalie Noyes kept it going when she reached on an error, Emma Thompson walked, and both came home on a two-run double by Aliya Farmer. Grace Hayes followed with an RBI double and ultimately scored on a passed ball to make it 7-2.



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

Stoodley was the winning pitcher, allowing four runs on six hits with 11 strikeouts over seven innings. She also went 3-for-4 at the plate.

The next day in Westminster, Stoodley was the heroine, as she drove in the winning runs in the bottom of the eighth to give BF a 3-2 win over a top Division II team, Otter Valley.

The Otters broke a 1-1 tie in the top of the eighth with a run-scoring hit by Ady Humiston before Stoodley's two-run hit in the bottom half of the inning ended the contest. BF ended the week at 5-2 with the No. 2 ranking in Division III at the midpoint of the season.

• Brattleboro is still searching for its first win. On April 30 at Sawyer Field, the Bears lost to Springfield, 7-5.

• Proctor scored seven runs in the first and seven more runs in the third in a 20-4 win in five innings over visiting Twin Valley on May 3. Two days earlier, the Wildcats lost 26-7 to Leland & Gray.

• The win over Twin Valley, together with a 13-2 home loss to West Rutland on April 29, gives Leland & Gray a 4-2 record for the season.

## Baseball

• Brattleboro got its first two wins of the season last week. On April 30 at Tenney Field, Jayke Glidden pitched the game of his life. After giving up a hit in the first inning, he proceeded to strike out 15 Windsor batters as the Bears steamrolled the Yellowjackets, 26-0, in five innings. Brattleboro feasted on Windsor pitching, scoring 13 runs in the second inning to start the rout.

Along with a 14-0 victory over Northampton, Massachusetts, under the Tenney Field lights on May 3, the Bears improved to 2-4.

• Bellows Falls lost to Burr & Burton, 9-1, on May 2 at Hadley Field, and then suffered an agonizing 5-4 loss to visiting Otter Valley on May 3. The Otters took a 4-0 lead, but then gave up three runs to the Terriers on errors. The game was tied 4-4 in the bottom of the sixth inning. BF was poised to take the lead, as they had the bases loaded with two outs, but Otters reliever Jacob Warrell came and got the final out.

Wyatt Cone then scored what was ultimately the winning run for the Otters in the seventh inning. He walked, got to second on a passed ball, went to third on a ground out and then came home on a wild pitch. The two losses dropped Bellows Falls to 4-3 on the season.

• Leland & Gray clobbered visiting Stratton Mountain School, 21-1, on May 4. Along with an 8-7 loss to Arlington in extra innings on April 29 and a 15-4 road win in five innings over Twin Valley on May 1, the Rebels ended the week at 3-5.

• Twin Valley had a rough week with a 20-1 loss to Mill River on April 29 and a 19-2 road loss on May 3 to fall to 0-4 on the season.

## Lacrosse

• The Brattleboro boys got their first win of the season on April 29 with an 8-1 victory



Leland & Gray's Trevor Hazelton, right, soars to make a catch during the first half of an Ultimate Disc game against Brattleboro on May 3 in Townshend.

over Stratton Mountain School. James Fagley led the Bears with three goals and an assist, Cam Cruz and Alex Dick both had a goal and an assist, and Gabe Belleci-Jeppesen, Will Miskovich, and defenseman Sam Madow each added a goal.

• The Brattleboro girls battled Mount Anthony and the elements in an 18-11 loss to the Patriots in Bennington on April 30. The game was held up for nearly 75 minutes due to a weather delay. Maren Sawyer made nine saves for the Bears, while Sophie Albright scored four goals and Abby Henry added three more goals.

## Unified basketball

• Brattleboro stayed undefeated as the Bears edged Otter Valley, 46-41, on April 29. Brattleboro's Austin Pinette led all scorers with 16 points. Teammates Ashley Cleveland and Caden Russell added six points each, while Josh Starkey, Tyler Bolduc, and Alexx LaBounty had four points each, and Shaeleigh Willard, Bobby Petrie, and J White had two points each.

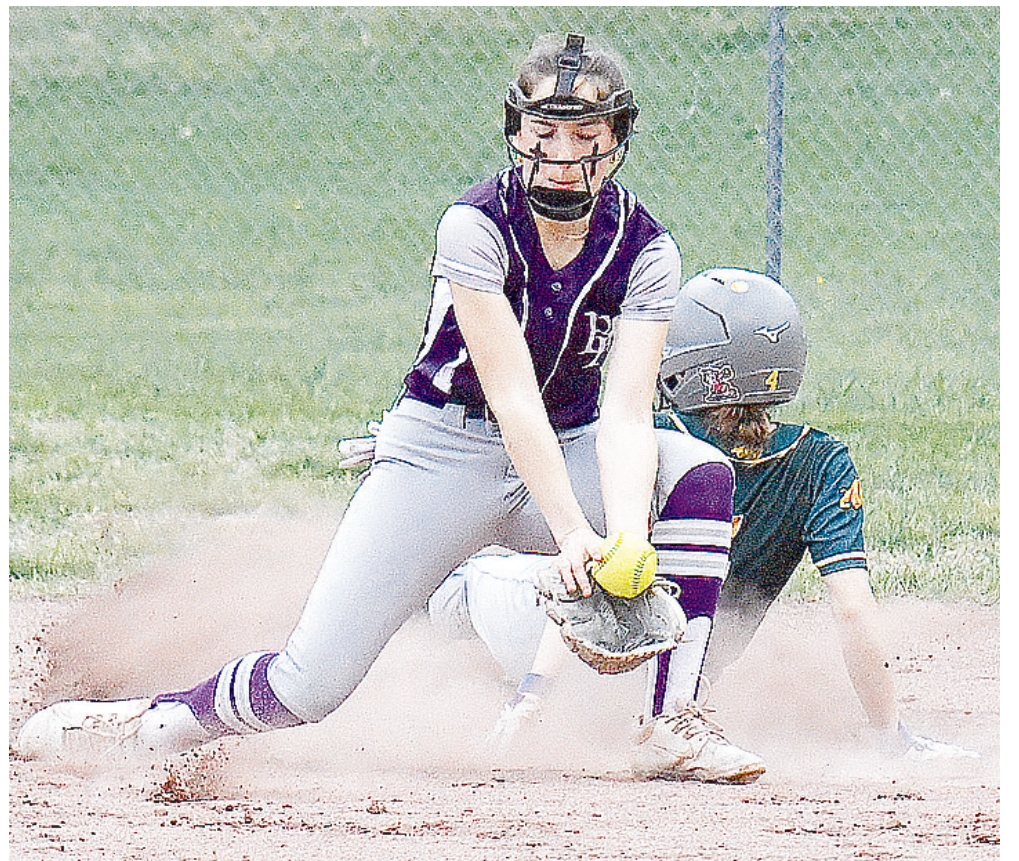
• Twin Valley played the Springfield Cosmos to a 40-40 tie on May 2. It was the strongest effort of the debut season for the Wildcats Unified squad. Springfield had a 10-4 lead over the visiting Wildcats at the end of the first quarter, but Twin Valley went on a 10-0 run in the second quarter to take a 26-22 lead at the half.

Twin Valley held a 34-28 lead over the Cosmos heading into the fourth quarter, but Springfield rallied and tied the game at 38-all heading into the final two minutes, and the teams traded baskets to end the game in a draw. Every Wildcat scored at least one basket, with Brady Lackey and Thomas and John-Michael Richard as the standouts for 0-4-1 Twin Valley.

## Tennis

• The undefeated Brattleboro boys edged Mount Anthony, 4-3, at the BUHS courts on April 29. The Bears got wins from the No. 2 doubles team of Jackson Pals and Elias Frazier Olsen, and from Nate Kim, Leo Bodett, and Ben Berg in singles play.

The Bears kept rolling with a 6-1 road win over Rutland on



Bellows Falls shortstop Emma Spaulding fields a throw while Burr & Burton baserunner Malaya Greene slides safely to complete a successful stolen base attempt in the first inning of their softball game on May 2 in Westminster.

May 1. Berg and Thomas Hyde and Pals and Eben Wagner swept the doubles matches, while Kim, Malo Renault, Mark Richards, and Dorian Paquette were the singles winners.

• The Brattleboro girls lost to Mount Anthony, 6-1, in Bennington on April 29, and were shut out by Rutland, 7-0, at the BUHS courts on May 1. The Bears then took a 5-2 decision over Mount St. Joseph at the BUHS courts on May 3 to improve their record to 2-3.

• The Bellows Falls girls eked out a 4-3 road win over Mount St. Joseph on April 29.

## Learn to row with the BOC

• Are you interested in learning to row? RowBOC is taking applications for its Learn-to-Row Clinic which begins on June 8. RowBOC is a program of the Brattleboro Outing Club, and has been offering a 10-session rowing clinic every year since 2008.

Participants will learn the basics of rowing, as well as how to

get in and out of a boat safely, launch and land from the dock, stop, turn the boat around, row forward and backward, and experience the joy of mastering a challenging skill in the shallow and calm waters of the West River under the supportive instruction of RowBOC Master Rowers.

For more information, go to [brattleborooutingclub.org-rowing-clinics-lessons](http://brattleborooutingclub.org-rowing-clinics-lessons) or email [rowboc@gmail.com](mailto:rowboc@gmail.com). Space is limited and the clinic usually fills up.

## Senior bowling roundup

• The first week of the spring/summer season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on May 2 saw Half Normal (5-0) debut in first place. There's a three-way tie for second between High Rollers, Three Musketeers, and Spare Change (all 4-1), followed by Fab Four (3-2), Slo Movers (2-3), Stayin' Alive and Split Happens (both 1-4), and Misguided (0-5).

Roberta Parsons had the women's high handicap game (241) and series (662), while Marty Adams had the men's high handicap game (279) and Robert Rigby had the high handicap series (689). Half Normal had the high team handicap game (864) and series (2,438).

Rigby had the men's high scratch series (668) with games of 235, 233, and 200. Chuck Adams had a 615 series with games of 246 and 207. John Walker had a 596 series with games of 216, 200, and 180, while Marty Adams had a 545 series with a 228 game. Duane Schillemat had a 526 series, Milt Sherman and Gary Montgomery both had a 520 series, Skip Shine had a 514 series with a 189 game, and Wayne Randall rolled a 195 game.

Carol Gloski had the women's high scratch series (439), with a pair of 160 games, while Shirley Aiken had the high scratch game (163). Nancy Dalzell and Parsons each had a 162 game.

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