

An END to POWER OUTAGES?

Green Mountain Power President Mari McClure sees a future where Vermont homeowners no longer need to worry about losing electricity during extreme weather

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—If a tree falls in a forest, does it make a sound? In southern Vermont, a more important question would be: Does it cause a power outage?

Just think about the biggest weather events that hit southern Vermont this year — the March storm

that left up to 4 feet of heavy wet snow in some towns and the massive rainstorm in July that delivered a month's worth of rain in a day and caused serious flash flooding.

In between were wild swings in temperature that ranged from a killing frost in May that took out much of the state's apple crop to the many days this summer that topped 90 degrees.

Even by the normal standards of wildly erratic

Vermont weather, it's been a hard year. And the immediate future promises more of the same.

With most of its power lines exposed, Green Mountain Power (GMP) runs approximately 77% of the power in the state, serving approximately 270,000 customers in 202 municipalities spanning 7,500 square miles. So keeping the power flowing in all kinds of weather is at the top of GMP's priorities.

That is why GMP is transitioning from a traditional utility into a technology company under the leadership of its president and CEO, Mari (pronounced "Mary") McClure.

"For over 100 years, we were an electric distribution utility," McClure said during a September interview at GMP's Brattleboro district office. "For the past decade or so, we were an energy

■ SEE POWER GRID, A5

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Paper mill oil leak pollutes nearby waters

Authorities have recovered more than 80% of the estimated 15,000 gallons of No. 2 heating oil from tank at Soundview

By Ethan Weinstein
ViDigger

PUTNEY—An estimated 15,000 gallons of heating oil spilled from a tank at the Soundview Paper Company mill on Nov. 2, much of it entering Sacketts Brook, which flows into the Connecticut River.

Authorities have thus far recovered more than 12,000 gallons of the sludgy No. 2 heating oil, according to Mike Nucci, an environmental analyst with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

spill team.

He said he expected authorities to discover more of the missing oil when they excavate the ground underneath the oil tank.

Crews from the Putney Fire Department and Vermont HAZMAT Team responded to the spill, which the *Brattleboro Reformer* first reported, and installed spill booms to prevent the flow of oil and to absorb it.

"Everything we were trying to do at that point was to contain the spill," Nucci said. New Hampshire's Department of

■ SEE TEXTVARIABLE, A3

Leland & Gray program rolls along bike path to learning

Nine students in Project Bike Tech combine practical, mechanical skills in new project-based learning initiative

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

TOWNSHEND—Connecting kids and bicycles is part of a new educational initiative at Leland & Gray Union High School.

Nine students in grades 9 through 11 are enrolled in Project Bike Tech (PBT) and Bike Tech in School, a bicycle education program similar to auto shop, but for bicycles.

"I'm over the moon," says lead teacher Kevin Burke, who is also the school's snowboard coach and a lifelong biking enthusiast. "I'm super excited."

He says "it's just really exciting to be able to teach something I've been passionate about my whole life. Just like when you're in a professional group, and you go out to a conference and start to

meet those who are like-minded."

"In spite of the age difference, the fact that we're all passionate about bikes makes it so awesome," Burke says. "And it makes it so easy to teach."

■ SEE TEXTVARIABLE, A4

Remembering a ROSIE

Margaret Tidd, who joined millions of women in the workforce as part of the World War II labor effort, is honored with the rededication of a garden and monument in her memory

By Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—The only registered Rosie the Riveter Memorial Garden in the state now has a more prominent location at Hetty Green Park, where it honors the memory of Margaret Clapper Tidd, a Rosie who lived in Bellows Falls from the time she graduated from high school until her death in 2019.

A brief history and dedication of the Rosie the Riveter Memorial, in its new location at the park on School Street, was given by historian David Deacon on Oct. 14.

The memorial was moved from its original location at Riverfront Park, where it was installed in Tidd's memory in 2019.

Rosie the Riveter was an allegorical icon symbolizing the women who took

■ SEE HONORING A ROSIE, A2



COURTESY PHOTO

Margaret Tidd at age 18.



Villagers who have picked ramon seeds — also known as Maya nut or breadnut — from the forest floor. While many call them nuts, technically they are seeds.

A tall order

A southern Vermont trade consultant has worked to help bring to market a nut that indigenous people in Guatemala have used for 2,000 years — a process with formidable complications and, for impoverished workers, a promise of sustainable reward

By Fran Lynggaard Hansen
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Ian Diamondstone was on his phone speaking with a key player representing a major natural beverage company when a realization hit the logistics and trade consultant.

The Brattleboro native, who operates an international trade

consulting practice from Putney, realized that there, around the company's conference table discussing the ramón nut — "a tree seed that people in Central America have been using for thousands of years" — sat a flock of specialists representing the gamut of U.S. businesses, from finances and logistics to sales and science. Also there were some

■ SEE RAMÓN NUT, A7

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

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

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

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

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

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The views expressed in our Voices section are those of individual contributors. Bylined commentaries by members of the Vermont Independent Media board of directors represent their individual opinions; as an organization, we are committed to providing a forum for the entire community. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, Vermont Independent Media is legally prohibited from endorsing political candidates.

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

A rededication ceremony for the Rosie the Riveter Memorial Garden was held recently at Hetty Green Park in Bellows Falls.



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

Honoring a Rosie

over factory and shipyard jobs, construction work, and other positions during World War II, filling the abrupt shortage in the labor market left when the men entered military service.

World War II was truly a total war, where entire national populations were asked to respond, doing everything from recycling metals and other materials; growing “victory gardens” to aid with food supplies; rationing food, fuels, and other materials needed for the war effort; and turning manufacturing and factories into supplying materials for the war effort.

Deacon said that, in addition to the war’s battle front and home front, there was also the vital factory front. While 15 million men and 350,000 women went to war as part of the military, one-third of the factory-front workforce were women.

In the military, Deacon said, the women served mainly as nurses, telegraph and telephone operators, and in other non-combatant positions. Many were also trained as pilots, delivering planes

to the battle fronts as they rolled off the factory assembly lines.

Of the millions of women working on the factory front in traditionally male jobs, 65% were women over age 35, and many had children. While the sacrifice these women and their families made was great — childcare centers were virtually unheard of at the time — these women took great pride in the work they did making munitions, building airplanes, Jeeps, and hundreds of other items essential for the war effort.

The Rosie the Riveter character came from a 1943 song written by John Jacob Loeb and Redd Evans.

One enduring rendition of Rosie the Riveter, with the motto “We Can Do It,” was painted by poster artist J. Howard Miller to boost morale and productivity of the female employees of Westinghouse. The symbol, in her overalls and bandana, became so iconic and such a source of pride that it is still used consistently in advertising and is still a popular Halloween costume,

some 80 years later.

In recent years, as a result of a grassroots effort to encourage the creation of memorial Rosie the Riveter rose gardens across the nation, 107 such gardens have emerged, including the one in Bellows Falls honoring Tidd, who came to Bellows Falls to work in a clothing factory after she graduated from high school in 1944.

Son Michael Tidd and daughter Ellen Jones wanted to honor their mother with a Rosie the Riveter engraved stone and rose garden, part of an effort to remember the efforts of women of her generation and their contribution to the war effort.

The memorial and garden in the state was rededicated a week prior to what would have been Tidd’s 97th birthday. Born on Oct. 23, 1926, she died at age 92 on April 17, 2019.

Margaret Tidd, one of Vermont’s Rosies

The former Margaret Clapper grew up in a large family in Bristol, Vermont, and was a member of Bristol High School’s

girls’ basketball team, which won the state championship in 1944.

Moving to Bellows Falls following her graduation, Tidd found work with the Lecuyer Brothers, who owned what became known as The Model Press building on Rockingham Street, directly across the street from the Miss Bellows Falls Diner.

The building, which housed H.A. Manning’s business directory printing company and a dress factory on an upper floor, burned down completely in 1977.

During the war, the Lecuyer brothers secured a government contract to supply thousands of sleeping hammocks with mosquito netting for soldiers fighting in the Pacific. Filling this contract necessitated adding dozens of employees, and Tidd was one of them.

Jones is unsure about her mother’s actual position at the plant, doubting that it would have been working as a seamstress, as she never knew her mother to sew in her entire life.

Tidd seldom talked about her life during the war years, Jones

observed. When she found out that her mother had been a Rosie during the war, she asked her why she’d never talked about it.

“It’s not anyone’s damn business,” her mother told her.

Despite that, Tidd took great pride in being recognized for that war effort work at the end of her life. She had been in the American Legion Auxiliary for over 50 years and was well known every year for her efforts selling poppies on Veterans Day to honor those who served in the military.

In addition to her factory work, Tidd was also a volunteer aircraft spotter during the war. Springfield’s machine shops produced a massive amount of materiel for the war effort, to such an extent that it was known to have been listed as a main target if enemy planes ever got close enough to do bombing raids on the U.S. mainland.

So plane spotting in the area was an important work.

Cooperating with the Army Air Force, there were four observation posts arranged at 6-mile intervals in the region, including one at Kurt Hattin Homes in Westminster, one in Athens, and one near Grafton. Tidd volunteered at another on Ski Bowl Road between Bellows Falls and Saxtons River.

The last was moved during the war to Pine Hill behind the St. Charles Church in the center of Bellows Falls. Volunteers worked in three-hour shifts 24 hours a day, reporting any sightings to a central command post in Albany, New York. The Bellows Falls location made it far more convenient for volunteers like Tidd to perform their service.

After the war

Following World War II, Tidd married Jim Tidd in 1946 and started a family in 1947. Around this time they purchased a home on Front Street, where she lived for over 70 years until her death.

A fender-bender incident while she was learning to drive discouraged Tidd, and she never learned to drive or got a license. She lived within walking distance of various clothing stores in the village where she worked, ending her working career at the former Sam’s Army and Navy Store in Bellows Falls.

Family members said Tidd enjoyed her family and friends during her long life. Her daughter said that she remained in excellent health up until a short illness that led to her death.

Her niece, Suzanne Barrow, who helped create a Facebook page about Tidd’s being recognized for her work as a Rosie, said, “We’re very proud of what my aunt did and what the other Rosies did.”

The organizers of the ceremony, in a statement about the event, said that it was in memory of all the women who have served their country.

“Placing the stone next to the Lady Liberty statue in Hetty Green Park is a tribute to all of those women,” they wrote. “The four rose bushes are planted in honor of all the ‘Rosie the Riveters’ and commemorate the important role women continue to play in this country.”

Anyone with family members from Vermont who served as Rosies during World War II and would like to have them added officially to that group can contact the Rosie the Riveter organization at bit.ly/739-rosie.

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AROUND THE TOWNS

Former owner tells diner tales at RFPL

BELLOWS FALLS — Charlie Jarras, former owner of Miss Bellows Falls Diner and host of *Travels with Charlie* on FACT-TV, offers an evening of stories and anecdotes from employees and customers alike on Thursday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m., at the Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St.

In just over five months, reviving, restoring, and rejuvenating the Miss Bellows Falls Diner, built 80 years ago and shuttered since the pandemic, has gone from a mere idea to a fast-moving project. Project organizers now invite interested citizens to continue the conversation.

In early 2023, community organization Rockingham For Progress (RFP) reached out to the Preservation Trust of Vermont, Windham Regional Commission, and the Brattleboro Area Development Corporation. These groups helped RFP develop a plan for a community-supported enterprise, whereby a nonprofit purchases the building, oversees renovations, and then leases it to a qualified operator. The business stays on the tax rolls, the new operator is provided a viable operation unencumbered by debt, and Bellows Falls keeps its diner.

The Rockingham Free Public Library, the Historic Preservation Office of the town of Rockingham, and RFP join together in a series of conversations about the diner's past and its future with free events at the library. It is hoped that by the beginning of 2024, restoration work will be underway, and by May of 2025, the diner's 81st anniversary of arriving in Bellows Falls, the diner will reopen.

Rockingham For Progress invites interested persons to follow their story at rockinghamforprogress.org or on their Facebook page.

Vernon Historians present program of historical photographs

VERNON — On Sunday, Nov. 12, at 2 p.m., the Vernon Historians will present a program of photographic images at Vernon Union Church illustrating the history of the area around the church along Fort Bridgman Road that was once known as

Vernon Center.

The slides show buildings and the surrounding area, including the Whithead Building, which served many functions in town until the 1950s, the "Tea House," Central Park, and the Central Park train stop, Bushnell's Museum, the ferry to New Hampshire, the original Vernon Union Church before a fire destroyed it, and many other interesting scenes of that part of town.

The Historians have collected many photographs of Vernon that they want to share, along with brief stories about the places and people they depict and the part they played in Vernon's history. Everyone is welcome, admission is free, and refreshments will be served. Vernon Union Church is located at 2631 Fort Bridgman Rd. The program will immediately follow a brief annual business meeting of the Vernon Historians membership.

Interfaith Youth Group meets for fellowship and service on Nov. 12

BRATTLEBORO — The Brattleboro Interfaith Youth Group is seeking young people ages 13–18 to join its monthly Service & Fellowship meeting on Sunday, Nov. 12, from 5 to 7:30 p.m., at Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St.

At this gathering the group will enjoy the fellowship of a spaghetti supper (vegetarian and gluten-free options provided on request), perform a Service Project to benefit Carry Me Home (a refugee clothing and home supply shop at Centre), followed by a game of hide-n-seek called Sardines. According to organizers, this is an ideal time for any interested youth to check it out and bring a friend.

The goal of this group, explain organizers, is to build leadership skills and friendships among young people who care and want to make a difference in their communities. Past groups have tackled community service projects, social justice issues, learned about different faith traditions, canoed and camped together, held overnight "Lock-Ins" locally, attended youth leadership conferences, and explored New York City's diversity and rich traditions.

In the past decade, youth in the Brattleboro Interfaith Youth Group have taken an annual

service trip to places as diverse as New Orleans, Kenya, St. Croix, El Salvador, and the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, with the group fundraising to support each venture and to ensure its affordability. Affiliation with a congregation is not expected, though various local faith communities are involved in supporting this group. For information, contact Nanci Leitch at 802-258-8348 or email nanci.leitch@gmail.com.

'Accidental American' by Shin and Jim Freedman discussed at Brooks Library

BRATTLEBORO — Readers and adventurers are invited to join Jim and Shin Freedman on Tuesday, Nov. 14, at 7 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room at Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St., as they present *Accidental American*, their compilation of essays and tales, drawing from the authors' extensive travels as seasoned explorers, educators, and consultants.

Readers can learn of journeys through cities like Beijing, Boston, Brattleboro, Holliston, Seoul, Shanghai, and numerous other locales around the globe.

As described in a news release, *Accidental American* is "a celebration of love, inquisitiveness, and the profound sense of amazement inspired by the remarkable individuals encountered by Shin and Jim during their odyssey. Their reflections on the invaluable lessons gleaned from these encounters and how these experiences enriched their lives imbue these stories with a truly distinctive and captivating quality that beckons readers to immerse themselves in this exceptional narrative."

Books will be available for sale and signing. The event is free and open to the public. The venue is accessible to people in wheelchairs. For more information, call 802-254-5290 or visit brookslibraryvt.org.

Grange serves turkey dinner on Nov. 15

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions will present their annual Turkey Dinner on Wednesday, Nov. 15, with takeout meals available between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., and an in-house meal served at noon.

Oil spill

Environmental Services installed a harbor boom, he said, to prevent more oil from escaping Sacketts Brook into the Connecticut River.

"This one was just a bad set of circumstances," Nucci said, and, "given the location of the tank and the volume" of oil, much larger than the residential basement heating oil spills that make up more of his work.

He suspected that the environmental impact may be limited to vegetation damaged or killed along Sacketts Brook. He said he has not observed impacted wildlife.

Nucci said it was too early to tell whether anyone was at fault for the spill, which he believes was caused by a fitting or coupling that broke. An investigation is possible, he added, and the state's work could continue for "a few months to a few years."

While Sacketts Brook, where

authorities say oil first entered the water, is Vermont property, the Connecticut River, into which the brook flows, is in New Hampshire.

Andrew Madison, an investigator in oil remediation and compliance for New Hampshire's Department of Environmental Services, said he had observed an oil sheen on the Connecticut River over the weekend, but the sheen was not visible on Monday.

"It looks bad, but it's actually very thin," Madison said of the sheen. "Once it gets to sheen, [the oil] is so thin, it's about one-hundredth the thickness of a human hair."

Madison said that, while he'll continue to monitor the river daily, he had not observed any wildlife impacts, such as fish kills or birds coated in oil.

Kathy Urffer, Vermont river steward at the Connecticut River Conservancy, said Sacketts

FROM SECTION FRONT

Brook "has a lot of pressure on it," in terms of manmade environmental impact.

The paper mill's wastewater discharge pipe runs underneath the brook, discharging into the Connecticut River. According to Urffer, recreationists have complained about the smell and appearance of the discharge, and the paper company is required to look into potential chemical or biological reactions in the pipe as part of its state discharge permit.

Urffer said she planned to stay in communication with state officials to stay up to date on the spill.

"Our natural resources do recover," she said. "It's not going to be a catastrophic loss."

The operations director for the mill, a subsidiary of Marcal Paper, did not respond to an email with questions about the spill.

This will be their only meal in November.

The menu for this meal will be turkey with gravy, dressing, mashed potatoes, corn pudding, and winter squash, with pumpkin upside-down pie for dessert. Reservations are requested so they know how much food to prepare. Meal requests can be made by calling the Grange at 802-254-1138 with name, phone number, the number of meals needed, and whether eating in or taking away. A donation of \$3 for those 60 and older and \$4 for the younger set is suggested.

Trio Amphion Baroque presents the history of the sonata

BRATTLEBORO — Trio Amphion Baroque will present a chamber music concert, "The History of the Sonata," on Saturday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m., at The Brooks House Atrium, 132 Main St.

Trio Amphion Baroque is a group consisting of Jesse Lepkoff on baroque flute and recorder, Reinmar Seidler on cello, and Gregory Hayes on harpsichord and organ. All are performers specializing in the style of baroque music through historical instruments and techniques.

The concert surveys the progression from the first named

sonata composition early in the 17th century to the pre-classical style from late in the 18th century. Music by Cima, Purcell, Corelli, Leclair, Telemann, and Lanzetti will be featured.

Admission is \$20 in advance through Eventbrite at bit.ly/739-trio or \$25 at the door. For more information, call 802-254-2273.

Silent auction benefits NewBrook Fire and Rescue

NEWFANE — The 21st Annual Silent Auction to benefit NewBrook Fire and Rescue will go live Saturday, Nov. 25, through Monday, Dec. 6. This year's auction will be dedicated to the current fundraising effort to help pay for the new fire truck that has been ordered to replace aging equipment.

The auction has received tremendous community support over the years, and the committee is confident this year will be no different. However, in addition to the new/gently used/vintage/collectable household items, furniture and furnishings; gift certificates for goods and services; gift baskets; holiday items; specialty foods/beverages; art; crafts; the committee is seeking unique, creative donations to make this year's event as special as the need it is helping.

Organizers say donations such as a weekend/weekly vacation home stay, stays at area inns/bed and breakfasts, a pair of tickets to a regional sporting event, or gift certificates for local classes or venues would go a long way to help the auction and NewBrook Fire Department's efforts.

For more information or to arrange a pick-up/drop-off, contact Samantha Wilson: 802-258-0614; Lauri Miner 802-365-4194; Angela Litchfield 802-579-3143; or Ruth Daigneault 802-258-1898; or email newbrookfiresilentauction@gmail.com.

Input sought for proposed new Townshend gazebo

TOWNSHEND — Residents are asked to add their ideas and opinions to a town poll on the gazebo design that is running through Dec. 1.

The public can cast votes for their design at the Town Hall, weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. (closed Thursdays). If you have questions, feel free to contact Selectboard Assistant Connie Holt at 802-221-2051 or cholt@townshendvt.gov, or Town Clerk Ellenka Wilson at 802-365-7300, ext. 1, or townclerk@townshendvt.gov.

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The Brattleboro office of HireAbility (formerly Vocational Rehabilitation) has an opening for a skilled **Vocational Counselor** to join our highly innovative team of professionals with the mission of helping Vermonters with disabilities to gain and maintain employment and to access career training and education opportunities. Job duties include assessment, guidance and counseling, case management, documentation and collaboration with many community providers.

The position is posted on the State of VT Department of Human Resources website. Deadline to apply is 11/2/23. For questions or further information about this position, please contact Leo Schiff, Sr. Vocational Counselor at 802-798-9163, leo.schiff@vermont.gov.



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Patrick Clish and Nick Vachon, two participants at Leland & Gray's Bike Tech in School program, at their benches.

Bike Tech in School

FROM SECTION FRONT

The nationally acclaimed organization and program uses bicycle education to teach core academic subjects while simultaneously instilling a lifelong enthusiasm for bicycles and their role in promoting sustainable transportation and healthy living.

Local resident and bike enthusiast Dave Cohen helped organize an Oct. 27 open house about the program. He and some friends rode bikes to the event from Brattleboro, and students offered demonstrations and tours of the shop.

With its unique curriculum and hands-on approach, the PBT program aims to equip students with essential skills and foster their connections to the bicycle community.

"We are thrilled to partner with Project Bike Tech to bring this innovative program to our students," says Burke. "Bicycles are more than just a means of transportation; they represent a gateway to learning, personal growth, and career exploration. Through this program, we aim to inspire our students, broaden their horizons, and empower them to embrace the bicycle lifestyle."

Leland & Gray did a school-wide survey last spring when school officials learned of the program, then narrowed it down to those who would be available for the full year, which this program requires.

"Most of them are already in bike culture," Burke says. "They've been riding and building and breaking down bikes for years. It's really awesome having them in this inaugural excursion because they're passionate, and their passion is already exuding out to other students who had no clue."

The class meets for 80 minutes four days per week. Each of 10 work stations in the classroom/shop has its own new bike and set of tools. Students dismantle the bikes and learn as they go.

"All the bikes are the same, so they're learning using the same references," says Burke, who is also bringing in bikes from those piled in back of his house. He's used them when teaching an applied technology course in which the students also document the process.

Now that he's put the word out, others are bringing in more bikes, "so the kids are deconstructing them, too, and understanding new, small discoveries along the way," Burke says.

Sophomore Colin Dunleavy-Mercier says he wanted to take the class because he already works a lot with bikes and does a lot of mechanical work on cars, lawnmowers, and four-wheelers as well, "so taking the class as a starting mechanic for bikes is really helpful."

"This was a great opportunity to learn more, and it also gives me the opportunity to start my own shop maybe some day," he says. "We take all the bikes apart to just the frame, and we have to make sure it's all working properly. We go through the entire bike. It's really fun."

Dunleavy-Mercier says most of his friend group is in the class with him.

"We all come to class together," he says.

For first-year student Patrick Clish, the class is a chance to connect with his late grandfather, for whom he is named.

"I've never been interested in learning about how bikes work but, this past summer, my grandfather died and he gifted me his



An apprehensive Carson Gordon works on his bike.

discounted rate, has been paid through the operating budget.

"We had some surplus money at the end of the last fiscal year, so we put that toward it, and we had some left this fiscal year for a program that came in under what was budgeted, so that's how we were able to cobble together enough money to make it work," says Superintendent Robert "Bob" Thibault.

Thibault called PBT a "fantastic opportunity for kids. Having a small school in rural Vermont that's begun to lean toward a project-based program to engage students and prepare them for life after high school, the bike program really fits in so well."

Leland & Gray "can partner with repair shops in the community and find opportunities for future employment," he continued. "We're just so excited about what it can bring for kids."

The program was first being discussed with students last spring, when Thibault was the school's principal. He said that when those conversations happened, "The kids would say, 'What? Wait. You mean I get to work with bikes? That's so cool! So yes, it does engage them.'"

In the program, students not only delve into the world of bicycle mechanics but also gain proficiency in subjects such as geometry and city planning. The end goal is to provide them with a well-rounded education that combines theoretical knowledge and practical application.

"Our hope is that we'll be able to achieve all of that," Burke says. "I've already introduced the concept of trail building, and that means you have to reach out to your community and find out who's in charge of trails, who owns the land, and what kind of things do you want to do."

The program

The Bike Tech in School program offers a credited elective that uses bicycle mechanics as a platform to teach Common Core and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) elements.

Burke is now working with other teachers and the school curriculum coordinator to integrate math and science standards into the course. He expects that to start in earnest in the next semester.

"Because this is brand new to us, we're treading lightly, getting to know the curriculum and the students," he says.

The school applied for grant funding with its usual request for various program money to the Stratton Foundation. However, says Burke, because PBT didn't come to school officials in time to "fully develop the ask," the money was not forthcoming this year.

The needed one-time \$65,000 setup cost to participate, which is

a discounted rate, has been paid through the operating budget.

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He says that's "part of community building and road use and how bicycles are seen on the road, because Vermont roads are interesting."

"And with Brattleboro making huge strides over the past 10 years to get bike lanes and include biking as part of their planning, it's huge," Burke adds.

In addition to rebuilding each component of a bicycle individually, students do have tests, particularly around the proper way to use tools and the few chemicals required (WD-40 and chain degreaser) to test that students understand proper ventilation and safety practices.

Upon successful completion of

the course, students will receive certificates of completion attesting to their knowledge of bicycle mechanics, credentials that they can show to future employers.

Program history

Project Bike Tech's proprietary curriculum is classified under the Transportation Sector of Career Technical Education as an "Introduction to Systems Diagnostics, Service and Repair."

The company also incorporates career-building skills and techniques as a component of its class. It is hoped students leave the course "knowing the basics of portfolio building, resume writing, and interview tactics."

PBT, based in Colorado, celebrated its 15-year anniversary in 2022.

The program got its start at the Bicycle Trip bike shop in Santa Cruz, California by shop owner/founder Berri Michel, who worked with a team from her shop to build the grassroots program.

The curriculum was created and developed by PBT and industry partners to give students a base in bicycle mechanics.

Additional modules were introduced to encompass the career preparation portion of the class, which develops a student's professional skills, whether they pursue a career in the cycling industry or any other field.

The PBT program is now a thriving program throughout the Bay Area in California and is spreading nationwide.

"We envisioned it being similar to how the auto industry spearheaded the creation of high school auto shop programs back in the 1930s," Michel says. "So we set out to create new generations [who are] passionate and knowledgeable about bikes. And it's such a fun way to learn."

Over the years, PBT has had a successful impact on more than 3,000 students.

"Whether graduates directly enter the workforce or continue to college, they become aware of how core academic principles can be applied in real world situations, how cycling can lead to a healthy and green lifestyle, and how to properly present themselves as a prospective employee, regardless of where they pursue a career," the organization says on its website.

For more information about Project Bike Tech, visit projectbiketech.org.

Power grid

transformation company, offering new products and services on the edges of our traditional business.”

Now, McClure said, “we are fast becoming a technology company, which means technology is now a critical part of what we do and how we deliver for Vermonters.”

The future is a two-way energy delivery system that lets homes store excess electric capacity and lets it flow back out of the house and into the larger grid during peak demand. It'll also be 100% carbon-free, and supported by a series of customers' small-scale self-contained grids, independent yet interconnected for strength and resilience.

“Our customers will be both consumers and producers, and we will connect it all together to maximize value and minimize cost,” McClure said. “Technology will be at the heart of what we do.”

Dealing with a changing climate

“Climate change used to be hard to talk about,” said McClure. “Now everybody sees it all around. And what's really more important is, what are we going to do about it? I've been at this organization just going onto 14 years. And there's no doubt that we've seen climate change happen over time here. And particularly in the last five years.”

In prior years, “if it was an extreme weather event, it wasn't very often,” she continued. “And then it would exit the state, giving us and others opportunity to go out and fix the lines.”

Now, McClure said, “the storms are coming in and they don't necessarily leave right away.”

“And so we are having to deal with much more extreme and much more frequent weather,” she said, pointing to the March storm in southern Vermont, particularly in Windham County.

“It was wet. Wet snow is very heavy. It sits on the trees. It sits on the lines. It knocks over things. So this past winter, in the southern part of the state [...], we've never seen anything like that heavy wet snow. It was like cement was falling from the sky.”

“So we're out restoring the power lines, and our crews are coming up on 4 feet of snow. How are we even going to get to this infrastructure when it's in the middle of a field?”

Climate change is the reason McClure and GMP have come up with a different strategy. First and most obviously, GMP is seeking to bury the power lines whenever and wherever it can.

“Historically, the cost of 'undergrounding' our lines was astronomical,” McClure said. “I mean, compared to the cost of the overhead lines. You just couldn't justify it from a cost perspective.”

That's changed, with “better and cheaper” technology, which “allows for much longer spans under the ground than there used to be,” she said.

The biggest transformation, and the one in which Vermont is leading the nation, is helping customers become energy producers as well as energy consumers.

“This is about battery storage,” McClure said. “It's tying the electric vehicles into the grid. This is where you really get customers having energy independence and resilience at the same time.”

How might this world look 10 years from now? “Imagine a world where you're in a small town like Dummerston and you have an outage,” she said. “But you have an electric vehicle. And that vehicle keeps your house lit up while the grid gets fixed.”

The microgrid

A microgrid is essentially a small electric grid that can operate independently from the larger grid during outages.

“It allows those customers within it to stay powered up even when the larger grid is damaged by severe weather,” McClure said.

In the simplest example of a microgrid, Green Mountain Power is already deploying the Tesla Powerwall, a program that captures solar power and banks it for later use, either by the individual customer or for GMP's needs during peak power demand.

“Instead of a big, centralized grid, we will have a decentralized grid. You, as a customer, will now have a two-way relationship with the grid,” McClure said.

That will be possible because “we will have generation assets on the distribution system,” she said. “The generators are in people's driveways, in people's basements, and on people's roofs.”

“All over the state, we're able to generate and distribute the power right where it's needed in communities,” McClure said. “Storage was a big game changer for this model. We were never able to store electricity, except in the kind of little batteries that you put in your Walkman. But we

now can store electricity for much longer periods of time. That was a game changer.”

Individual customers with such systems are able to generate and store their own electricity. “So when the greater grid goes down, we'd have these microgrids all over the state,” McClure said. “And customers would stay powered up while we fix the grid.”

The future lies in many microgrids at the home level and at the community level, with solar farms serving clusters of customers with renewable power. But that future might be a hard sell. It is difficult enough to get a permit to build an apartment house in some towns. How do you sell them on a large solar field, for example?

“The first thing we have to do is go to towns, communicate with them, tell them what we want to do,” McClure said. “We have to respond to their concerns. We have to establish trust. And then we have to deliver. And that's how we'll do it.”

In 2021, GMP pioneered the community microgrid in Pantton, a small town on Lake Champlain in Addison County — the first in the nation.

“We started there,” McClure said. “We got to know the town, we got to know what its [residents'] needs were. And we figured out a plan on how to deliver a much more resilient community.”

The plan was a solar farm, 4.9 megawatts in size, with a large storage facility attached to it.

“It's a distribution circuit — the poles and wires that deliver energy to local homes and businesses — that can disconnect from the greater grid during a storm, and still keep customers connected using solar power and batteries alone,” McClure said. “No fossil fuel is involved at any point.”

The microgrid started with about 50 customers. “That is still true today, but it can expand to include hundreds more in town,” she said.

In the event of storm damage or a prolonged grid outage, the Pantton microgrid enables backup power from the batteries and solar panels to flow to a network of customers served by the traditional grid. The concept is called “islanding.”

In Pantton, the solar panels are on a tracker system, which means they “follow the sun and can stretch the battery backup power for days, if necessary,” McClure said.

This plan is replicable. “It is the foundation for our Resiliency Zone projects that are helping communities across the state stay connected, even in severe storms,” McClure said.

One variation on the microgrid idea is the “resilient neighborhood” concept in South Burlington. Here, GMP is partnering with the property development company O'Brien Brothers to build an all-electric, fully storm-resilient 155-home development on land the O'Brien Brothers own.

“I'm really excited about this,” McClure said. “They approached us, I think, first to talk about this idea around a zero-carbon home. So we've been working with them for years to figure this out. This neighborhood is exactly everything that I've just described. And we want to bring it to other parts of the state as well.”

There will be low-income housing, market-rate housing, multi-use buildings, and duplexes.

“It's really a neat community they're putting together there,” McClure said. “That neighborhood will be completely resilient. There will be solar on the roofs and storage in the homes, and it will all be connected to the grid. Electric vehicle charging will already be in the homes, also connected to the grid. So for example, if a major storm hits that area of the state, those customers are powered up with the solar and the storage while we fix the grid.”

Again, the power will flow two ways.

“Say it's a super hot summer day with no weather threat,” McClure said. “If we have a high demand for electricity elsewhere, we'd be able to tap into the stored energy in those homes to lower costs for the greater grid.”

In that scenario, the customers — who already would be getting a financial incentive for having the battery — would be selling unused power back to GMP.

“You'll have storage in the basements, and then we'll have our own big storage units, as well,” McClure said.

The power plant in your driveway

“Electric vehicles are one of the key strategies to us,” McClure said. “They basically help all of Vermont to become one big microgrid.”

Much of Vermont is old housing stock, with perhaps only a small 60-amp or 100-amp power panel.

FROM SECTION FRONT

“How can we possibly ask those people to electrify?” McClure said. “They don't have enough amps in their panel. What are they going to do to replace their panel? It's expensive. Maybe they can't afford that. It has to become a part of our business.”

The electric car, then, becomes part of the microgrid of the future.

“All manufacturers are going to make those vehicles,” McClure said. “So our virtual power plant is sitting in your driveway. It has to get hooked in to your house in such a way that it keeps your house in power as well as helping the greater grid.”

The technology to charge an electric vehicle at home — such as the Ford F-150 Lightning truck that McClure drives — is expensive. GMP is working to change this.

“Right now, if you want to hook up your house or the panel in your home to your vehicle, particularly one like a Lightning, you essentially have to put a substation in your garage,” McClure said. “Number one, it's really expensive, which most Vermonters are not going to be able to afford or not going to want to do anyway. And second, it's so much equipment.”

GMP is working to “figure out a way through innovations with these folks, to bring this in a much more simplified way,” says McClure, who promises that “it's coming. I see it happening within the next five years.”

To illustrate her point, McClure told a story about last Christmas Eve, when she was working late due to a storm and the resultant power outages.

“I drove up the driveway and my spouse, Amanda, knew I was on my way home,” McClure said. “So she had all the holiday lights on as I came through. It was just this beacon of light and I thought, ‘My God, all my neighbors will think I have some special connections, when it's really just my truck sitting there.’”

That, she said, is when “I had a glimpse into what this is going to be like for Vermonters — and particularly rural Vermonters — in central and southern Vermont, who need it the most.”

One complaint people have about electric vehicles is the difficulty of charging them away from home. Drivers are concerned about the distance they can get on their charge in between stations.

GMP is planning to install many more charging stations around the state, McClure said, and the company plans to offer fast charging “within 20 minutes of every Vermont, off the highways and in rural parts of the state.”

“We've got 15 offices all throughout the state, and we're bringing fast charging to all of those,” she said. “Our fleet can use them, and so can our customers.”

Eventually, gas stations will understand that they should be offering electric charging as well as gas.

“Some of the best places to charge are rest areas, because you can go in and sit down,” McClure said, noting that charging a vehicle “takes a little longer than filling your tank with gas.”

“But over the next five years, that's going to get faster and faster,” she said. “So you'll see gas stations switch to it. Eventually, I mean, they have to.”

The cost of power

If consumers buy into an all-electric future, doesn't it mean that GMP will make more money? Not really, McClure said, because in the end it will mean less cost for electricity, not more.

“What we are proposing is going to result in lower energy costs for the consumer,” McClure said. “You electrify your home. You've got an electric car. You've got electric heat. You've got storage. Maybe you have solar, or maybe you might not need it. Imagine



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Green Mountain Power president Mari McClure talked about a future without power outages in Vermont during a recent interview in Brattleboro.

so many Vermonters having all that!”

This scenario will lower “a ton of our operational costs,” she said. “We don't have to respond to storms, so you won't see that storm surcharge anymore. The way we deliver power completely changes the system.”

For McClure, “it has to lower costs, first and foremost. I couldn't do this job otherwise. I wouldn't feel pure about it.”

McClure's house is completely electric. “So, if you look at my electric bill, of course it's gone up,” she said. “I'm using more electricity. But I don't ever stop at a gas station. I might pull up and get a coffee or something, but I don't have to get out in the cold and pump gas. And my gas bill is completely eliminated.”

“We used to be on heating oil. The guy who delivered it was a wonderful person. I loved him. It was so sad, the last day he left. Because I got rid of my oil tank. I'm only on heat pumps now. And my heating oil bill was not only astronomical, it was riding a commodity wave. Whatever the cost of oil was, it was the cost of oil. So I don't have that anymore.”

The point is that heating oil, cordwood, and gasoline will disappear from Vermonters' monthly expenses.

“Your biggest expense is your transportation,” McClure said. “When you switch that over, you're going to save. So while your electric bill might go up, I'm not profiting. That is lowering costs for everybody else in the state and lowering costs for the grid.”

Put another way: “If you go electric, I want the energy bill in your house to be lower than how you currently live,” she explained. “That is the most important thing we can talk to Vermonters about. The more people switch to electric, the more and more the cost goes down.”

McClure says that she's after a 100% renewable clean future for Vermont that is affordable.

“The programs we're designing both bring resilience to your home and lower costs for the system, or we don't do them,” she said. “That's the key. And we've got to show, as part of our filings with regulators, how energy costs come down for folks with the electrification. I don't want Vermonters to think that once they go electric, we're just going to jack up their rates.”

Microgrids, according to McClure, can protect Vermonters from outside pressures. The war in Ukraine, for just one example,

affected the price of gas.

“I want to get Vermont to a place where those energy costs come down,” she said. “The most important thing for me is, how do I get Vermont resilient? How do we, as we roll out this distributed future, play a part in bringing those customers and getting them into the decentralized grid — with storage in particular, and their electric vehicles in particular?”

“It's a real concern that we share, and we've got to deal with as a state,” McClure said.

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

bc tv LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nov. 6-12

CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

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Here We Are - Mariam Diallo, BUHS Student: Mon 8p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 9a, Thurs 1:20p & 9:15p, Sat 12:15p, Sun 5:15p	Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 11/7/23: Tues 6:05p (LIVE), Thurs 1p, Sat 5p, Sun 6a & 8p
The World Fusion Show - Ep# 164 - Glen Velez: Mon 11a, Tues 4:30p, Wed 1:30p, Thurs 12:30p, Sat 11:30a & 6:30p, Sun 9:30p	Windham Elementary School Board Special Mtg. 10/24/23: Mon 7:45a, Wed 10:45a, Thurs 12:45p, Fri 11:40a
BCTV Annuals - Producer Awards Night 2023: Wed 6p (LIVE)	River Valleys Unified School District Board Special Mtg. 10/30/23: Mon 8:55a, Tues 4:30p
Couch Potato Productions - Gilfeather Turnip Festival 10/21/23: Mon 5:15p, Tues 3:45p, Wed 9p, Thurs 9:45p	Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 11/6/23: Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 12p
BHS/BUHS Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony 10/28/23: Mon 6a, Tues 8p, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 1:45p, Fri 12:30p, Sat 9p	Brattleboro Planning Commission Mtg. 11/6/23: Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:30p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - Difficult Discussions - Catherine Newman & Laura Zigman: Mon 10a, Wed 12:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 9:30p, Sat 6a & 8p, Sun 4p	River Valleys Unified School District Board Mtg. 11/6/23: Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - Missing - Angie Kim & Jean Kwok: Mon 3:25p, Tues 12:45p, Thurs 4p, Fri 10a, Sun 5:45p	Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 11/7/23: Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 2:30p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - Alternate Worlds - Kelly Link & Holly Black: Mon 8:30p, Tues 9a, Wed 9:40p, Thurs 9a, Fri 2:30p, Sat 5p, Sun 6a	Putney Selectboard Public Hearing on Approved Draft of the 2023 Town Plan 11/8/23: Fri 6p, Sat 8:30, Sun 12p
Windham Regional Commission presents Preserving Guilford's Character 11/2/23: Fri 3:30p, Sat 9a, Sun 12:30p & 7p	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board Mtg. 11/8/23: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p
Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Fennell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg. 10/26/23: Mon 9:45p, Tues 1:40p, Wed 11:55a
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 11/7/23: Wed 11a
News Block: WTSa News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p, Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p, BUHS-TV News: Mon-Fri 12:15p & 6:35p	Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 10/23/23: Wed 9a, Sat 11a
St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 10/23/23: Mon 6a, Tues 2:45p, Thurs 11a, Sat 9p
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p	Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 10/24/23: Wed 8a, Fri 5p
Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a	Town Matters - Weekly Episode: Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p
St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass: Sat 4p (LIVE), Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p	The David Pakman Show: Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

Note: Schedule subject to change.

View full schedule and watch online at **brattleborotv.org**

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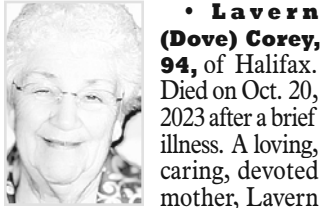
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MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

Obituaries

• **Robert W. Anderson, 80**, of Brattleboro. Died in the comfort of his home on Oct. 24, 2023. Robert was born Jan. 21, 1943 to Victor and Laura Anderson of Spencer, Wisconsin. He was a strong and dedicated individual who loved his family and had a passion for the outdoors. Robert was known for his hardworking nature and his love for farming, which he pursued for over 40 years. In 1986, he and his family moved to Brattleboro, Vermont, where he then went on to spend 22 years working for Fibermark until he retired. In his free time, Robert enjoyed various hobbies, including bowling, hunting, fishing, making maple syrup, working outdoors, playing cards, working with his hands, and following sports, especially watching his grandchildren play sports, which brought him great joy. Robert will be deeply missed by his loving wife, Anna (Becker) Anderson with whom he celebrated their 50th anniversary this past July; his children, Carl (April) Anderson of Hinsdale, New Hampshire, Michael Anderson, and Lori (Matthew) Bishop of Brattleboro; and grandchildren Alexis and Chase Anderson of Hinsdale and Hunter and Lily Bishop of Brattleboro. He was predeceased by his father Victor, mother Laura Newman Anderson, sister Lenore Calhoun, and grandson John Bishop. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: There will be a celebration of his life on Sunday, Nov. 12, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Heart Rose Club, 11 Green St., Brattleboro.



• **Lavern (Dove) Corey, 94**, of Halifax. Died on Oct. 20, 2023 after a brief illness. A loving, caring, devoted mother, Lavern

was born in Plattsburg, New York on July 20, 1929 to John Harold and Jeanette (Chamberlin) Dove, the second oldest of nine children. She moved to Vermont when she was 15 years old. It was while she lived in Brattleboro that she met the love of her life, Alfred Loren Corey. They married on April 21, 1946. In 1952, they moved to Halifax to raise their growing family. Lavern and Alfred would go on to have six children: Alfred, Susan, Dennis, Diana, and Patricia. Sadly, their oldest child, a girl, died shortly after she was born. The Coreys were married for almost 44 years when Alfred died of cancer on Feb. 2, 1990. Lavern was a strong woman and would go on to do what she did best — be a devoted mother to her family. Her house was filled with the smell of a good cup of coffee, memories, laughter, and family and friends gathered around her kitchen table. Lavern was a woman of many talents. She would make and decorate many of her children and grandchildren's wedding and birthday cakes. She was an excellent seamstress, crafting many of the costumes for school, church, and Halifax community functions and, of course, she always did the same for her family. Lavern was a magnificent cook. She made the most amazing potato salad. Her family and friends would say that not a soul could come close to making it as delicious as she did. She also enjoyed canning. This year, she canned pickled beets, bread and butter pickles, tomato relish (a hit amongst the family) and her one-of-a-kind, mouthwatering spaghetti sauce. In 1984, at the age of 53, Lavern set out and accomplished earning her high school diploma. Her family was extremely proud of her. Lavern took pride in the many hats she wore in the town of Halifax. She

was actively involved in and served as an officer in many of the town's organizations including the PTC, Community Club, Grange, the Historical Society, and Ladies Aide and Auxiliary. One of her many accomplishments, aside from raising a family, was being the president of the Historical Society. She was instrumental in the repairs of many of the town's buildings and preserving their rich history. She would go on to serve as chairman of the Old Home Day events in Halifax. Her efforts were noted by many and during her time the celebration was always a great success. She was also influential in the many activities and gatherings of the Halifax Community Church. Some of the positions she held were not always easy, she served as delinquent tax collector for over 30 years, second constable, an auditor and justice of the peace. Although some of these jobs were not appreciated, she served her town with pride spanning a total of 44 years. In addition to her husband, Lavern Corey was predeceased by her daughter Susan Carroll (Corey); grandchildren Loren Alan Corey and Julie Ann Hale; brothers Harold and Norman Dove; and sisters June Gray and Mona Momaney. She is survived by her sons, Alfred (Butch) and his wife Barbara Corey, and Dennis Corey and his wife Hendrika (Henny) Whalen, both of Halifax; her daughters Diana and her husband Norman Hale of Halifax, and Patricia Kingsley and her companion Mark Hawley of Whitingham; brothers Gordon Dove of Alabama and Wayne Dove of Virginia; and a sister, Thelma Caldwell of Massachusetts. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews. Lavern's family tree spans five generations with 17 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, and eight great-great grandchildren who all meant the world to her. She meant the world to her family and friends and will be deeply missed. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Services for Lavern will be held at the West Halifax Bible Church on Saturday, Nov. 18, at 11 a.m., followed by a graveside service for family only. Donations to St. Jude Children's Hospital (stjude.org).



• **Richard Robert Emond, 71**, of Brattleboro. Died Oct. 26, 2023 at Dartmouth-Hitchcock

Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire, following a lengthy period of declining health. With his three sisters by his side, he courageously decided to discontinue life support. Born on Feb. 11, 1952, Richard was the son of Robert R. J. Emond and Catherine (Whitney) Emond. He was a graduate of Brattleboro Union High School, Class of 1970 and enlisted in the United States Air Force following graduation. His employment career began at age 11, pumping gas at Saveway on Canal Street. He was a truck driver for Smead Lumber Company, enjoyed driving the town bus, worked at Vermont Circuits as an electroplater for 27 years, and was a skilled painter with SNS Painting. Richard's love of motorcycles and riding began as a little boy when he heard then saw two Indian motorcycles on the dirt road that passed the family's West Brattleboro home. His passion for riding filled his life with adventure, his heart with happiness, and a sense of profound freedom. He was a PADI-certified scuba diver with the Connecticut River Valley Underwater Rescue Team and assisted in many rescues. A man of faith, he was a lifetime member of Cornerstone Motorcycle Ministry, proudly

serving as road captain and sergeant-at-arms. Richard loved fishing, hunting, boating, vintage cars, the coast, and his family. Survivors include a daughter, April M. Emond of Washington state; granddaughter Christina Morse, also of Washington; sisters Barbara E. Simonds of Winslow, Maine, Margaret E. Fogg and her husband Timothy of Putney, and Theresa M. Emond of Brattleboro; and several cousins, nieces, and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents, his brother-in-law, Philip P. Simonds, a niece, and a nephew. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In keeping with Richard's wishes, he will make his final ride, escorted by motorcycles, and be laid to rest with his parents in the family lot at Meeting House Hill Cemetery in the spring of 2024. A celebration of life will follow, to be announced in the spring. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT. 05302 or to Rescue, Inc., P.O. Box 593, Brattleboro, VT 05302. To send condolences to the family, visit atamaniuk.com.



• **David Arland 'Dave' Harris, 86**, of Vernon. Died unexpectedly on Oct. 26, 2023, after being taken ill on Guilford

Center Road. A lifelong resident of the area, he was born in Newfane on Nov. 16, 1936, the son of Arland George and Hulda Prouty (Goodell) Harris. He was raised and educated in Newfane, where he attended public schools. A veteran of the Korean War, he proudly served his country in the Marine Corps, entering active service on March 8, 1954 and was honorably discharged on March 7, 1957. Dave was the owner of Harris Basket Inc. in Vernon, which he established in 1965, manufacturing baskets for almost 40 years up until the company closed in 2004. Following retirement, he worked part-time as a courier/driver for Bond Auto Parts in Brattleboro. Prior to starting his own business, Dave had been employed as a supervisor for Basketville in Putney. Dave was known for his dedicated and strong work ethic. For many years, Dave was an active member of the Vernon Volunteer Fire Department. He also held membership in the Vernon Trail Breakers Snowmobile Club. Dave enjoyed the outdoors, including hunting, camping, snowmobiling, and time shared with his family. He had a unique and wonderful sense of humor and loved to share a good joke or two. On Feb. 22, 1958, at the United Church of Ludlow, Vermont, he was married to Mildred Pierce, who survives. Besides his faithful and devoted wife of 65 years, he leaves one son, Kenneth Harris of Dummerston; two daughters, Kathy Wehner of Dummerston and Kim Fletcher of Vernon; one brother, Dennis Harris, and a sister, June Lawrence, both of Vernon. Additionally, he is survived by seven grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a daughter, Kandi Harris, and a sister, Shirley Hurd. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside committal services with military honors were conducted on Nov. 4 in North Cemetery in Vernon. Donations to The Wounded Warrior Project, 370 7th Avenue, Suite 1802, New York, NY 10001, woundedwarriorproject.org. To share condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Margaret J. Kennedy, 73**, of Chester. Died suddenly on Oct. 25, 2023 at her home, after a period of declining health. She

Project Feed the Thousands marks three decades of 'neighbors helping neighbors'

BRATTLEBORO—Project Feed the Thousands has begun its 30th annual campaign against hunger in our communities.

Organizers said in a news release that they will work to make this year's campaign "the most successful ever in its 30-year history" and said they are "undeterred by rampant inflation and other economic factors that make food insecurity a prolific, incessant, and persistent concern for countless individuals and families in our area."

Project Feed is a community-wide food drive collecting cash and non-perishable food items through the end of the year. This year's goal is to raise \$130,000 in cash, as well as to collect enough provisions to provide 330,000 healthy and nutritious meals.

What started as a modest campaign in 1994, founded by George Haynes, former president of the Brattleboro Savings & Loan, and Larry Smith, then of WTSA Radio, Project Feed has grown into a major annual fundraiser that continually strives to fill a need that relentlessly increases year after year.

The campaign supports nine area food shelves: Foodworks (Groundworks' food shelf), St. Brigid's Kitchen, and Loaves & Fishes Community Kitchen, all in Brattleboro; Guilford

Cares Food Pantry; Bread of Life Food Pantry in Vernon; Hinsdale Food Pantry; Our Place Drop In Center in Bellows Falls; Putney Food Shelf; and Townshend Community Food Shelf.

Project Feed Co-chair Kelli Corbeil said these food shelves "are struggling to feed the thousands of people who depend on them for nutritious meals. Medical bills, prices rising faster than wages, fixed incomes, mental health challenges and substance use disorders that disrupt lives — there are as many reasons for hunger as there are people who aren't getting enough to eat. Our mission is to help alleviate some of these concerns for so many of our friends and neighbors."

Representatives from our area food shelves report that the need has doubled since April, coinciding with the conclusion of the Everyone Eats program and a great reduction in SNAP benefits.

Every dollar raised in the campaign goes to those who need it, as has been the case for the food drive's entire history.

Corbeil stressed that there are no administrative costs and that every dollar raised is put to good use. An all-volunteer group donates countless hours, and 802 Credit Union staff "handle

almost all of our administrative functions, including our mailings and our accounting."

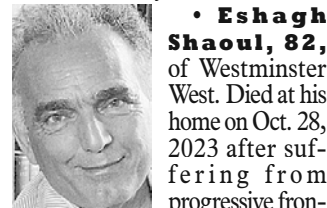
Chris Thayer, Southern Facility Branch Director for the Vermont Foodbank in Brattleboro and a member of the Project Feed board, said that cash contributions "are maximized to their fullest extent when our area food shelves are able to use these funds to purchase food at the Vermont Foodbank at a greatly reduced rate, enabling them to stretch every dollar and help even more people."

While cash is critical, food contributions are always welcome. Market 32, Hannaford, the Brattleboro Food Co-op, River Bend Farm Market in Townshend, Putney Food Co-op, and Lisai's Market in Bellows Falls, along with many other locations, will serve as collection points.

"We simply want every one, every time, to pick up extra item every single time they shop," Corbeil said.

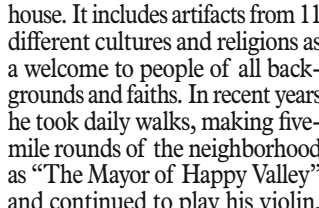
Tax-deductible donations may be sent to Project Feed the Thousands, in care of 802 Credit Union, P.O. Box 8366, Brattleboro VT 05304. You can also donate at projectfeedthethousands.org or gofundme.com/f/project-feed-the-thousands-2023.

was the daughter and youngest child of J. Emerson and Claire Moynihan Kennedy of Bellows Falls, where Margaret grew up and attended school. As an adult, she worked primarily in the non-profit human services sector with institutions such as Southeastern Vermont Community Action and 99 Atkinson Street. She also served as a caregiver for the elderly and disabled. For a period of time in the 1980s, Margaret was married to Carl Burns of Chester. Margaret was known for her sense of humor and quick, acerbic wit. She was an avid reader and intellectually curious. Margaret was a stylish dresser and could create "a look" from almost nothing, and her home decor reflected her quirky sense of style. She had many friends and acquaintances and seemed to know everyone in town. She was a good kid. Margaret is predeceased by her parents and her brother Kevin of Granby, Massachusetts. She leaves her sister Susan Kennedy of West Hartford, Connecticut, brother Mark Kennedy (Sue Kibbe) of Walpole, New Hampshire, and her sister-in-law Cynthia Fontaine Kennedy of Granby, as well as numerous nephews and nieces. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral Mass was held on Nov. 4 at St. Peter's Church in North Walpole, followed by burial at St. Charles Cemetery in Westminster. Donations to the American Diabetes Association or Kurn Hattin Homes for Children in Westminster, Vermont.



• **Eshagh Shaoul, 82**, of Westminster West. Died at his home on Oct. 28, 2023 after suffering from progressive frontotemporal dementia. He was born in Tehran, Iran in 1941, the fourth of seven children. He grew up in Sarechal, the Jewish ghetto there. At a young age, he showed musical aptitude, and his first music teacher sent him to study with a violin master, Abolhassan Sabah. He became a lifelong violinist, bringing joy to all who heard him. In 1959, at age 18, Eshagh left Iran for America. He studied English and then earned Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. degrees in international political economy at George Washington University. As the first of his family to arrive in the United States, he was responsible for his family's subsequent immigration. First, he brought his older brother to the United States for lifesaving heart surgery; then his two other brothers, his two sisters and his mother out of Iran to New York, where they all settled. He left a life of academia in 1972 to begin a career as a financial executive. Shaoul's 24 years at Chase Manhattan Bank as a credit risk executive and country manager included 12 years of living and working

overseas. When the family was living in Hong Kong, Singapore, The Ivory Coast and Tokyo, his wife, Rosalyn, taught and his children attended international schools. Shaoul was an active member of the Chase Alumni Association and instrumental in organizing a 2018 gathering that drew 28 alumni who had served in Japan. After returning to New York in 1990 and taking early retirement from Chase in 1995, Shaoul worked for 10 years at AIG in New York, managing credit risk for their international portfolio. Throughout his financial career, he never forgot to play his violin, always carrying it with him wherever he went around the world. In 1987, during their time in Japan, the Shaouls bought their home in Westminster West. After using it for weekends and vacations, they retired there full-time in 2014. Once settled in Westminster West as a full-time "flatlander," Shaoul led the Windham World Affairs Council as chair for five years, recruiting speakers to present on topics of significance to the community. On the rocky ledge that their home was built on, Eshagh created an indoor "Japanese Garden." On the empty mudflat they found in front of the home, he landscaped lawns and created a botanical oasis featuring burning bush and Japanese maple. As he became increasingly concerned with interfaith harmony and peaceful coexistence in the world, Shaoul created a installation known as the "Temple of Love" on the hill behind the house. It includes artifacts from 11 different cultures and religions as a welcome to people of all backgrounds and faiths. In recent years he took daily walks, making five-mile rounds of the neighborhood as "The Mayor of Happy Valley" and continued to play his violin. He played Persian classical music, gypsy music and a variety of pieces of his choice, including *Kol Nidre* and *Ave Maria*. As this exertion recently became difficult, then impossible, he enjoyed being surrounded by his family and listening to music in the midst of his gardens. Over his life Eshagh made thousands of friendships with people from all walks of life in Vermont, and around the world. He was a beloved and generous mentor, an intellectual, a diplomat, and a peacemaker. He valued family above all. His family and friends will miss him mightily and will treasure and be inspired by all the memories, especially how he made the impossible become the possible. Among his survivors are Rosalyn, his wife of 59 years; their children, Josef, Cyrus, and Sara; and five grandchildren. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral was held on Oct. 31 in Westminster West Cemetery. A memorial will be held in New York City at a later date.



• **Mary E. Tyler, 94**, of Dummerston. Died peacefully with her family by her side on Nov. 2, 2023, following a period of declining health. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral Mass will be celebrated Saturday, Nov. 11, at 11 a.m., at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Brattleboro. A complete obituary will appear in a future edition of *The Commons*. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Stephen Peter Skibniowsky, 74**, of Vernon. Died Sept. 28, 2023 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts, following a brief illness. He was born in Brattleboro on Dec. 26, 1948, the son of Peter and Beverly (Johnson) Skibniowsky Jr. Raised in Vernon, Steve attended Vernon Elementary School and Brattleboro Junior High School, and graduated from Northfield Mount Hermon, Class of 1966. He went on to earn his B.S. in biology and chemistry from Keene State College in 1970. Steve was employed at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant as its environmental specialist for radiological effluents. His career as VY's chemist spanned 42 years. He retired from his position in 2017. He initially was hired by Vermont Yankee as a security guard at the facility after working as a police officer for the Brattleboro Police Department for several years. Following his retirement, he served on the decommission advisory panel at Vermont Yankee. Steve enjoyed horses, boating, puttering around his property, and cars, of which he was the proud owner of two Jaguars. He loved his community and served on Vernon's Planning Commission of which he was past chairman. Steve also served on the Vernon Selectboard. In 1978, at the Memorial Chapel at Mount Hermon, he was married to Jane Katherine Gogel, who predeceased him on August 26, 2012. Survivors include one sister, Sharon Skibniowsky Zamora, and a brother, David Skibniowsky and his wife Lori, both of Vernon; three nephews, and several great nieces and great nephews. He was predeceased by his parents, and a brother, Peter Skibniowsky III. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In keeping with his final wishes, there are no formal funeral services planned. His cremated remains will be buried next to his beloved wife in the Skibniowsky family lot in Tyler Cemetery on Pond Road. Donation to the Vernon Historians, Inc., 4201 Fort Bridgman Rd., Vernon, VT 05354; or to the Preservation of the Governor Hunt House, in care of Preservation Trust of Vermont, 90 Main St., Suite 304, Montpelier, VT 05602. To offer condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.



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

Love thy neighbor

- thy immigrant neighbor
- thy black neighbor
- thy atheist neighbor
- thy religious neighbor
- thy depressed neighbor
- thy asian neighbor
- thy lgbtqia neighbor
- thy disabled neighbor
- thy indigenous neighbor
- thy conservative neighbor
- thy elderly neighbor
- thy homeless neighbor
- thy latino neighbor
- thy addicted neighbor
- thy progressive neighbor
- thy incarcerated neighbor
- thy _____ neighbor

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The war against hunger is truly mankind's war of liberation.

— JOHN F. KENNEDY

Ramón nut

FROM SECTION FRONT

highly skilled organic ingredient industry specialists.

“Everyone was there,” remembers Diamondstone, a Brattleboro native, noting that the product under discussion had been in use indigenously for thousands of years.

That was when Diamondstone realized that his clients “had everyone at the table except a field agent like me, because they had no idea what it is like in the field.”

The meeting made him think about his career trajectory.

All he was thinking about, Diamondstone said, was “the time 20 years ago when I was sitting with a tribe of indigenous people in a mountainous village wondering, ‘What am I doing here? What’s next?’”

On his first trip to rural Guatemala, he was out in the tiny villages of the jungle, assigned to meet with coffee growers and cardamom producers.

“I get to this little settlement, and I see handmade wooden rakes, people working the fields with a tiller instead of having an animal like a bull or a cow pull it for them,” he recalled.

“Then, suddenly, people started appearing from jungle paths with huge bags weighing 120 pounds on their shoulders, barefoot,” Diamondstone said. “Everything is in the indigenous language and translated into Spanish for me.”

Some of the people lived in the mountains and produced one or two bags of coffee a year — all a part of this coffee project of which he was now in charge. As more and more people came out of the forests they gathered, sitting in a circle, with Diamondstone sitting at the front of the room.

“They would say, ‘My name is this or that,’ then they would name their village and say, ‘God has brought us all together, and for this we are grateful.’”

Diamondstone began to realize how far away these people had walked to get to this meeting. The translator, knowing that the people’s knowledge of the rest of the world was limited to their own sphere of influence, could use only a few Spanish words to explain what was being said.

“At one point, the translator told me that the person who was speaking said, ‘I know that you have come from very far away to help us. I have seen the great iron birds fly over us so that you can come to share our endeavors,’” he said.

“I couldn’t believe it,” Diamondstone continued. “It was such an honor to be speaking with the tribes of people who have had this way of life for thousands of years.”

The long path to Guatemala

Diamondstone began his career in logistics and sales with ForesTrade, a multinational company based in Brattleboro which imported certified organic products like coffee, spices, and essential oils for sale in western countries. These commodities came from South and Central America and from Indonesia.

When the company went into receivership, Diamondstone was asked to be the field agent in Guatemala.

Since then, he’s worked for a maple syrup producer for a few years in Putney, while growing his own business, New Forest Organics, which he began in January 2011.

“I sell to major tea companies; they need me to verify the ingredients for their tea. I have found a small niche for certified organic specialty spices.”

Verification is the process of revisiting the supply chain every year to meet safety standards from the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture as well as certifying that a product is organic and has been tested for heavy metals, moisture content, and microbes like bacteria (including E. coli and salmonella), yeasts, and molds. This ensures that the product is safe to enter the international market and meets international standards.

Only about one project in 10 will come to fruition, in part because standards need to be so high. And, without proper equipment and education of prospective suppliers in the field in the specifics of the processes and equipment they’d need to use, many spices won’t pass the test.

Guatemala is by far the world’s largest exporter of cardamom, the most expensive spice after vanilla and saffron. The country exported approximately 35,000 tons in the last year, about three-quarters of all world exports, according to the USDA. It sells for \$20,000 per ton, most of which is sold to India and the Middle East.

“Sometimes even the best-prepared companies find that their cost is higher than the sale the product will bear on the international market,” says Diamondstone. “Of course, there is a financial bottom line — if you

can’t make money, you can’t pay people — but the social, environmental and the religious aspects are very important as well.”

Economic shifts, and a new working class in need

After the country’s civil war, which lasted from 1960 to 1996, thousands of displaced families were respectively given one or more parcels of land by the government, depending on the number of male descendants. (If the family had four sons, they would receive five parcels.)

The bigger families that had more land began to make lots of money — but at a cost to their culture.

“These very poor indigenous farmers were suddenly making lots of money with the sales of their cardamom,” Diamondstone explained. “And then the Pepsi-Cola truck started making its way to these tiny villages.”

Indigenous people who usually serve hibiscus tea “were suddenly serving Pepsi to their guests,” he continued. “The women who used to prepare all their meals cooking over an open fire began buying the white bread that the bread truck brought. In its place was obesity, diabetes, rotten teeth, and the loss of thousands of years of culture.”

Diamondstone explained that banana leaves used to be used for the packaging of food, but now locals use plastic bags because they don’t break down, creating difficulties with a plastic product that can’t be recycled as easily as a banana leaf.

“Now these wealthy families hire 90 seasonal workers a year. They all sleep in the little buildings and on the ground. The women cook all day, as part of the pay is feeding the workers who go out into the dense jungle where there are poisonous snakes and spiders, picking cardamom cherries.”

Those workers, he said, emerge from the jungle “after working 12, 14, sometimes 18 hours a day with 220-pound sacks on their back, for which they are paid \$8.”

Diamondstone noted that there are also excellent organic corporations worldwide that have good philosophies and pay a fair market price for the products they purchase from the villages. They will help the local people by building community centers and schools and by providing books. Many have built safe havens for women and girls that include prenatal care.

But there are also unscrupulous companies that take advantage of the people in the villages, he charged.

He also identified some non-profit NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that start with lots of money. They build factories to dry and process the spices, and they educate people in how to make a living with the spices found in their area.

But just as quickly, the money can dry up, and suddenly the NGO is gone before the process is complete, leaving families with nothing more than they had when the process began.

“These people have had their hopes raised and dashed so many times. It doesn’t have to be this way. With all that I’ve seen, I am truly committed to try to make the world a better place, where there is fairness and social justice.”

A little nut with a big future

Diamondstone has been working in a small community called Big Turtle River, a tiny village. After the civil war, the people established themselves in a redistricting.

“The people are very poor indigenous villagers who have suffered so much for so long. During the war they were chased through the jungle by people with machine guns,” he said. “Helicopters with huge bags of gasoline were dropped on them from the air. Their villages were burned, and many were killed or suffered with burns themselves.”

For the last 15 years, Diamondstone has been working with a local woman there to identify a buyer for the ramón nut, which local tribes have eaten for thousands of years.

Ramón nuts can be ground to flour to make tortillas or roasted and brewed as a beverage. They are high in protein, and potassium, and they are full of nutrition. They contain no fats or oils, and they never turn rancid.

The nuts are hard, like acorns, and they store well. For thousands of years, people collected them in homemade baskets and hid them in caves to be used during times of war or famine.

15 years of working comes to fruition

Diamondstone began to work with this wild-harvested forest seed more than 15 years ago, when he worked for ForesTrade. “I approached power bar



Ian Diamondstone (second from left) stands with local villagers in Honduras. His ramón seed project will include two countries, between 100 and 200 villages and hundreds of people.

companies — energy bars — but it was a food ingredient that had never been on the market, and I couldn’t find permanent markets for the ramón nut,” he said.

Now that’s changed.

“One way to save the rainforest is to find a market for these communities’ ramón nuts,” he said. “There is environmental impact and social impact for the people. I personally don’t have the money or the resources to make it my primary interest or focus, but now I have this huge group of people who would benefit if I can find them a market.”

And that is what the phone call with the conference room was all about.

Diamondstone has taken a contract for 30 tons of ramón nut to be delivered by Dec. 31, even though he is aware of the difficulties.

“Big business finally came to me; 15 years of working has finally come to fruition!” he said. “There I was on the phone, this company calling me out of the blue.”

“I think I have a buyer, and it’s long-term income for these villages for six to nine months of the year,” Diamondstone noted, with joy in his voice.

He goes on to explain the impact that a new product can make for the people who live there.

“Thousands of Central American families will have families who don’t have to leave to find work in other countries,” Diamondstone explained.

“So often now, the father [of a household] disappears to go north or go over the border, most of the time, illegally,” he continued.

Out of the thousands of men who leave, he said, “only about 36 to 40 will make it to the U.S. and bring the money home to live the life they can only see on their cell phones. Many never return, and their families will never know what happened to them.”

Diamondstone said the money from the sale of the ramón nuts “will provide enough for their children to be able to pay the \$3 for a pencil and a notebook, something they don’t have now, allowing them to attend school. Most of these people are so poor they are living day to day. A little money can help them buy a pig or a cow, so they have new opportunities and have no need to leave their village.”

“Bringing a nut that has been used for 2,000 years to a place where it can be industrial is a tall order,” he continued.

To make it happen, he needs to find drying tables and arrange for transportation. To offer the ramón nut in the U.S. and European Union markets “requires] the strictest standards in the world,” he said.

And that would mean coming up with massive infrastructure, “like hundreds of covered drying tables, trainings, central processing facilities, transportation, and all manner of logistics.”

“Each community will produce small amounts which have to be weighed and brought to a central location for blending and finishing for a consistent product,” he said.

“From there we will need a truck that runs, someone trained to be sure the product is dry

enough, and a team of people that aren’t making enough money to do all this, but who will volunteer so that their community can thrive,” he continued.

It’s a labor of love. His hope and excitement show on his face and in his voice.

“My true goal is that when I die, I want to go knowing that I will have empowered 1,000 people to do this themselves,” Diamondstone said.

“It’s not about owning a corporation; it’s about helping others to do what they should be doing themselves,” he said. “I’ve devoted most of my career years to this industry, and here is this one product that I will be able to see from the beginning to fruition.”

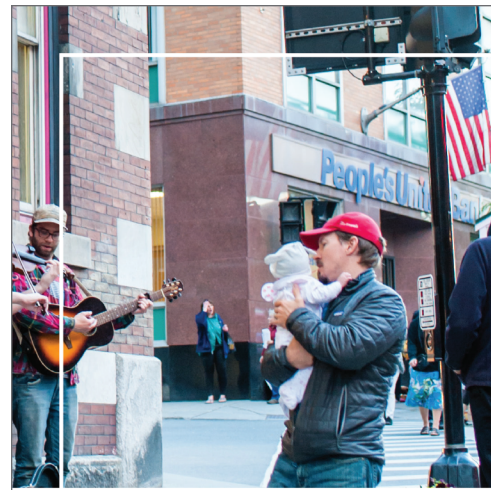
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The Commons

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‘Everyone’s struggle is the same’

‘You can take the boy out of the country, but you can’t take the country out of the boy,’ says David Koechner, who will perform a comedy show at the Bellows Falls Opera House.

By Victoria Chertok
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—U.S. actor and comedian David Koechner brings his brand of stand-up comedy to the Bellows Falls Opera House on Sunday, Nov. 12. “It’s a power-packed 90 minutes,” says Koechner, 61, on a recent afternoon phone call from his home in Los Angeles. This is Koechner’s first show back in Vermont since 2015, when he played the role of Pete Parker in the short film *The Parker Tribe*. The semiautobiographical film, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival, was written and directed by Jane Baker of Brattleboro, where it shot for eight days.

He won Best Actor at the 2015 New York Television Festival for his portrayal of Pete, whose character is based on Baker’s father, Joe. Koechner is in continued conversations about a *Parker Tribe* feature based on the short.

Years later, the actor remembers “the excitement everybody had” about the film, calling it “truly a labor of love.”

“I read the script, and it really touched me. I knew that whoever the person was who wrote this was a very good person,” Koechner says, calling Baker “a friend and a dedicated artist and a lovely person.”

An alumnus of Chicago’s The Second City theater, Koechner got his first break as a cast member on *Saturday Night Live* and is an instantly recognizable face in Hollywood, having appeared in varied and extensive roles in more than 200 films and television shows.

He currently co-hosts A&E’s

America’s Top Dog, plays Bill Lewis on *The Goldbergs*, and recently appeared on *Bless This Mess*, *Superior Donuts*, and *Twin Peaks*.

Koechner also voices characters on *American Dad*, *F Is for Family*, and *The Epic Tales of Captain Underpants*.

In film, recent projects include *Then Came You*, *Braking for Whales A Week Away*, *Vicious Fun*, and *National Champions*.

His film credits include *Waiting, Out Cold*, *Talladega Nights*, *Get Smart*, *Extract*, *Thank You for Smoking*, *A Haunted House*, *Scouts Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse*, *Priceless*, *Krampus*, and the dark, twisted, award-winning thriller, *Cheap Thrills*.

But most audiences know Koechner as Champ Kind from the film *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* or Todd Packer on NBC’s *The Office*.

Those characters couldn’t be any more different from the real David Koechner.

“It’s ironic that I’m playing those characters, since they are 100% the opposite of me,” he says.

Calling the characters of Champ and Todd “homophobic, racist, and nationalist” and “not good dudes,” he described them as “very damaged.”

“My job is to highlight the pain that comes with that,” Koechner says. “They are not even able to investigate their pain; they are in complete denial.”

In contrast, he calls himself “a kind, family man who is on the constant search of what humanity means.”

Baker agrees. When asked what it was like working with Koechner, she says, “David was a joy.”

■ SEE KOECHNER, B7

COLUMN | Arts Notebook

A hybrid of biology and human geometry

Christopher Sproat gives a tour of his museum in the woods, where he gives shape to a world that prompts us to different ways of seeing



The interior of Christopher Sproat’s Black Box museum.

COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER SPROAT

Brattleboro
BLACK BOX is hidden deep in the woods in Putney.

“Black Box” is the name of a museum built by artist Christopher Sproat. The museum contains his work, and a neighbor of his invited me. The idea of a real museum sitting in the woods — a museum that I had never heard of all the years I lived in Vermont — seemed absurd.

“Surely, it could not be a real museum,” I thought. “The artist must have a big ego and calls it a museum when it was probably a shack.” I could not have been more wrong.



TONI ORTNER is a poet, writer, and teacher.

WE WALKED ON A narrow path cut through the woods, then uphill, until we reached a flat surface on which sat the building which was modern and black and glistened in the rain.

Sproat designed the building in every detail and selected all the materials. The surface of the entire structural insulated panel building is covered in Grand Rib roofing that is screwed in place. Solar panels on its

roof provide the electricity at Sproat’s home. The Black Box is so well insulated that it does not need to be heated in winter.

My friend had refused to tell me anything about what I would see because she wanted it to be a surprise. It was more of a shock.

I favor clean lines and modern design, and as soon as I stepped into the entrance of the museum and Sproat flicked on the lights, I was startled to see an enormous room with white walls and high ceilings from which hung giant abstract metal sculptures with mostly red, blue, and white lights. It felt as if I had

stepped into a sci-fi movie. When my eyes adjusted to the space, I was immediately drawn to one of the sculptures on the left-hand-side wall.

Sproat, whose studio is in his home on the property, said it was part of a series that reminded him of being pinned to a cross and that he loved to use shapes that were common to provide a different way of seeing.

One shape was a copper wok with a long metal spoon. Above that, another sculpture, “The Rape of Europa,” caught my eye, a figure with fluttering arms and the weight pinning her down.

■ SEE MUSEUM, B6

COLUMN | Creative Conversations

Dirt behind the daydream

Rock River Players will take on David Mamet’s ‘Glengarry Glen Ross’ — ‘one long, desperate struggle for dominance’ — with performances in Williamsville and Brattleboro

ROCK RIVER PLAYERS (RRP) revels in the eclectic. From Mary Chase’s *Harvey* offered earlier this fall to David Mamet’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Glengarry Glen Ross* [story, this issue], opening Nov. 10, is about as far a stretch as one could make in modern American theater. Players’ fare is as diverse as its Players.

According to director Bahman Mahdavi, *Glengarry Glen Ross* is “masterfully written — an unrelenting story of small-time, cutthroat real estate salesmen trying to grind out a living by pushing plots of land on reluctant buyers.”

“We enter the coarse and unforgiving world of 1980s



ANNIE LANDENBERGER is an arts writer and columnist for The Commons. She remains involved with the Rock River Players, the community theater that she founded and directed for years. She also is one half of the musical duo Bard Owl, with partner T. Breeze Verdant.

real estate sales and, in classic Mamet fashion, characters speak in speedy, fragmented bursts and bulldoze their way through one another in what is ultimately one long, desperate struggle for dominance.”

Mahdavi, with Amy Donahue, is co-artistic director of the Rock River Players which, with this production, celebrates the installation of a new lighting system made possible with the support of the

Williamsville Hall Committee and the Newfane Selectboard.

Before a recent rehearsal, I had a chance to talk with members of RRP’s company for this play: Jim Bombicino, Alan Darling, James Gelter, Phil Kramer, Jon Mack, Adrienne Major, John Moran, and John Ogorzalek. Cherie Moran is assistant director; Peter Broussard is on lights.



Phil Kramer as Moss and John Ogorzalek as Aaronow in the Rock River Players’ production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, David Mamet’s edgy drama.

ANNIE LANDENBERGER: Can somebody tell me why this play? Why now?

ADRIENNE MAJOR: I feel like this play is really important to do right now because it exposes the roots of

contemporary culture. It gives us a place where greed is good and the motivating force behind action — action without morality — becomes acceptable.

I think we need to remind ourselves that we’ve been living

in this culture that recognizes and rewards amorality for quite some time. Bringing us to the mid-’80s and surfacing this position is important: It draws a direct line to where we are today

■ SEE ‘GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS’, B8

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arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY

9

Kids and families

BRATTLEBORO 16th Annual LEGO Contest & Exhibit:

Prizes for Creativity and Craftsmanship awarded in seven age groups: pre-school, grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, adult, adult/child collaborations. Other prizes awarded at judges' discretion.

- ▶ 5 p.m. doors open.
- ▶ Through Sunday, November 12.
- ▶ Free admission (courtesy of M&T Bank).
- ▶ Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.

Well-being

GUILFORD Tai Chi Chuan: Yan Style 24 Forms for Beginners:

Learn some of the basics of Tai Chi Chuan (also known as Tai Chi) - an ancient Chinese martial art that provides extensive health benefits. We'll practice some of the moves of the Yang style 24 form and develop balance, coordination and strength. Come enjoy the benefits of this "walking meditation!"

- ▶ 10:30 a.m. on Thursdays. Instructor Claudia Prat has been studying Tai Chi Chuan under Sifu Tzyann Hsu for almost three years and practices daily.
- ▶ Donations welcome.
- ▶ Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-451-0405; broadbrookcommunitycenter.org.

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PUTNEY Moderate Embodied Flow Yoga Classes:

Each class will focus on conscious breath work and learning to move in our bodies with patience and compassion.

- ▶ 3:30-4:30 p.m. on Thursdays 11/9, 11/16, 11/30 (no class 11/23).
- ▶ Through Thursday, November 30.
- ▶ \$10 per class in the barn.
- ▶ Putney Community Cares, 54 Kimball Hill. Information: Want to know more or ready to register, contact Ruby McAdoo at 802-387-5593 or coordinator@putneycommunitycares.org.

Community building

The State of Vermont's Creative Economy (via Zoom):

Learn about the state of VT's creative economy and how you can use data to make the case about the crucial role that the creative sector plays in our local economic systems. We'll dig into the impact of VT's historic investment in the creative sector through the Creative Futures grant program. We'll share new data from the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 survey - the most comprehensive economic impact study of the nation's nonprofit arts and culture industry.

- ▶ 11 a.m. Presenters: Susan Evans McClure, Executive Dir. at Vermont Arts Council.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Zoom. Information: Zoom link: tinyurl.com/bdefprxe.

BELLOWS FALLS Former owner of Miss Bellows Falls Diner/Host of "Travels with Charlie" on Fact-Tv, Charlie Jarras offers Stories/Anecdotes:

Hear stories/anecdotes from Miss Bellows Falls Diner employees and customers alike. It's no secret that a 32-seat

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THURSDAY CONT.

Community meals

NEWFANE Lunch at Newfane Congregational Church:

Appetizer: Ants on a Log. Followed by Green Salad, Pot Roast with Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Pumpkin Bread... and Pudding for dessert.

- ▶ 12 noon. This delicious meal is sponsored by Senior Solutions, and prepared and served by hard working volunteers from the church and community.
- ▶ \$3.50 suggested donation.
- ▶ Newfane Congregational Church, 11 Church St. Information: Questions/more information: call Winnie Dolan at 802-365-7870.

Visual arts and shows

BRATTLEBORO "Live Edge" 2023 - Drawings on Wood by Nan Salky:

Salky: "My husband and I visit local lumberyards where trees that have grown nearby have been felled and milled. We search through piles of maple, walnut, pine and cherry with the propitious combination of the artist's and woodworker's eyes. In my studio, I begin the process of becoming conversant with each piece. "The live edges that curve sensuously, the beautiful bark left intact and lines of spalting inspire a kind of dialogue with the wood."

- ▶ "The sapwood, lighter in color, that's carried water and sap to the tree's leaves and the strong central heartwood with its rich dark hues seem to speak a language of their own. I begin the 'conversation' by following natural lines in the wood, making marks spontaneously and animating shapes that have captured my imagination. My hope is to reveal something mysterious that lives within each piece."
- ▶ Through Wednesday, November 29.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Gallery in the Woods, 145 Main St. Information: More information: galleryinthewoods.com, 802-257-4777.

BRATTLEBORO Exhibition: "Becoming the Landscape":

Recent large scale paintings by artists Mary Therese Wright, Tina Olsen, Ellen Maddrey and John Loggia inaugurates a new curatorial partnership among the artists.

- ▶ Through Sunday, November 26.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Information: Gallery hours are by appointment: 118Elliot@gmail.com or 802-380-9072.

Ideas and education

VERNON Coffee & Conversation with Windham-1 Rep. Sara Coffey & State

lunch car faces a challenging future in today's competitive food-service world. What will the future bring and what should it look like for the Miss Bellows Falls?

- ▶ 7 p.m. Accessible to those with disabilities.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Rockingham For Progress invites you to follow their story at www.RockinghamForProgress.org or on their Facebook page. 802-463-4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.

Treasurer Mike Pieciak: "Saving for Retirement":

Are you or your employees concerned about how to save for your retirement or put money aside for an emergency? Join Downtown Brattleboro Alliance (DBA) a discussion Sara Coffey and Mike Pieciak to learn more about VT Saves - a new public retirement program which passed the legislature this past session and will provide tens of thousands of Vermonters access to a retirement plan. Open to DBA members and local businesses. We'll bring the coffee - you bring your questions!

- ▶ 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Hosted by A Vermont Table and the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Vernon Free Library, 567 Governor Hunt Rd. Information: 802-257-0150.

FRIDAY CONT.

PUTNEY Wild Goose Players present Claire in the Chair in the Cimetière :

Whimsical comedy about life and death and finding purpose in unlikeliest of places. When 27-year-old Claire moves into the local cemetery, she believes her 'real life' will finally begin. Twin sister arranged for everything: food, water, soap, books, clothes. All is ready for Claire's long life with the dead. But she hasn't told the local gravedigger, tombstone maker, undertaker she's not dying. Each one, it turns out, has a pressing need for her life to be shortened.

- ▶ 7:30 p.m.: Fri. and Sat. 2 p.m.: Sat. and Sun. Find out if death is ultimate punchline in this sparklingly dark comedy reminding us that in the midst of life, there is death. Or maybe it's the other way around?
- ▶ Through Sunday, November 19.
- ▶ First come, first seated. Doors open 30 minutes before the show.
- ▶ Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: Tickets: wildgooseplayers.com/tickets.

Music

BRATTLEBORO Palaver Strings' Beehive Chamber Series: Homeland :

Folk-inspired music by a diverse group of composers paying homage to their homelands: Carlos Guastavino (Argentina), Violetta Parra (Chile), Leos Janacek (Czech Republic), Bela Bartok (Hungary). Their works explore the essence of each composer's cultural-political landscape, using folk material from everyday life. ﻿Palaver Strings includes Sergio Muñoz, viola; Matthew Smith, cello; Peipei Song, piano. Concludes with Brahms' monumental "Trio in A Minor."

- ▶ 7 p.m.
- ▶ \$20 in advance, \$25 at door. Buying tickets in advance recommended (tickets not always available at door).
- ▶ Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Information: app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=bmcvct.

Pets

BRATTLEBORO "Once Upon a Time in the Wild West":

Nothing ever happens in the old west town of Horsefly Hollow. But when a mysterious newspaper arrives with fantastical stories from a neighboring town, the townspeople discover their love of storytelling and work together to create their own western fairy tale. Classic characters get a wild west twist in this original story. Directed by Shannon Ward.

- ▶ 7 p.m. Friday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday.
- ▶ Through Saturday, November 11.
- ▶ \$11 students, \$13 seniors (65 and older), \$15 adults (plus 65 cent fee per ticket).
- ▶ New England Youth Theatre, 100 Flat St. Information: 802-246-6398; neyt.org.

FRIDAY

10

Performing arts

WILLIAMSVILLE Rock River Players present David Mamet's "Glengarry Glen Ross":

"Masterfully written unrelenting story of small-time, cut-throat real estate salesmen trying to grind out a living by pushing plots of land on reluctant buyers, in a never-ending scramble for their share of the American dream." - Director, Bahman Mahdavi."

- ▶ 7 p.m. 11/10 and 11/11. 2 p.m. 11/12. Show contains adult language and portrayals of racism & sexism. Not appropriate for ages 15 and under. Hall is ADA compliant.
- ▶ Through Sunday, November 12.
- ▶ Tickets: \$12 and \$10 (students and 65+).
- ▶ Williamsville Hall, Dover Rd. Information: To purchase tickets in advance visit: rockriverplayers.org.

FRIDAY

11

Farmers' markets

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market Open for 18th Season:

Visitors will find plenty of diverse farm/local produce. This location provides convenient parking and a spacious market serving both vendors and customers. Most weeks, visitors will find over two dozen vendors offering fresh produce, syrup, local meats, eggs, cheese/other farm products, plus bread, yummy treats, great lunches, preserves, beautiful handmade gifts, plus live local music.

- ▶ 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in Crocker Hall Gym on Saturdays. SNAP/EBT shoppers can process credit and debit cards. SNAP customers can turn \$10 into \$30 each week with Crop Cash Coupons thanks to NOFA-VT with funding from USDA, and

our Boost Your Bread coupons thanks to Post Oil Solutions and VT Foodbank..

- ▶ Through Saturday, March 30, 2024.
- ▶ Winston Prouty Campus, 209 Austine Dr. Information: For more info contact 802-275-2835 or email farmersmarket@postoilolutions.org.

Kids and families

BRATTLEBORO Kids' Cooking Class: Holiday Appetizers:

Involve kids (ages 0-14 with parent or caregiver) in the holidays by having them prepare crowd-pleasing appetizers. Younger kids will make mini-kebabs and older kids will make beautiful and delicious crudité plates.

- ▶ Choose between 10:30-12 p.m. or 1-2:30 p.m.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Brattleboro Food Co-op Cooking Classroom, 7 Canal St. Information: Visit the event at BFC.coop/calendar/ to register - list kids' names, ages, dietary needs.

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO The Brattleboro Zen Center In-Person Meditation:

This group chants briefly and then sits in silence for a half hour. All are welcome to join this peaceful action, either in-person or from wherever they might be.

- ▶ 1 p.m.-1:35 p.m. on Saturdays.
- ▶ Wells Fountain, south side Windham County District Courthouse, Jct. Putney Rd. & Main St. (Rte 30).

Dance

BRATTLEBORO The Beloved Community of Brattleboro offers free Sacred Dance Workshop on Saturdays:

Class is for beginners/intermediates and open to all ages. Reverend Suzanne Andrews leads the group. Free lunch follows.

- ▶ 11:30 - 12 noon.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ The Beloved Community, 18 Town Crier Dr. Information: More information: 802-254-1234, pastorsue412@gmail.com.

Visual arts and shows

BRATTLEBORO Black Box Museum and CX Silver Gallery present the work of Christopher Sproat:

In 2008, Christopher Sproat designed/built The Black Box, a museum to house his work. "I built what could be called an electro-mythic scenario, a tableau that suggests a parallel culture - the result of the same forces/technology as in our history/current news. Historical influences range from African, Surrealism, Egyptian, Constructivist art, Art Deco. Also influential: 1930s science fiction, collections of animal trophies, dinosaurs, insects, medieval armor in museums.

- ▶ 11/11, 2-4 p.m.: Opening Reception in Gallery 2. Black Box Museum open by appointment. Sproat on Parallel Culture: "View this installation as artifacts that are not literal or abstract. Most of these objects are a hybrid of biology and human geometry. Many tell a story about the plight of living things. What humans have discovered and done to them. The sources are in our history, scientific discoveries and the story of my ongoing personal reactions to everything. What I have banished is popular culture and the monetization of everything. Every object is meant to be an invention that has virtually no relation to other art. The emphasis is on real life, a deep melancholy for our planet."
- ▶ Through Monday, March 11, 2024.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ CX Silver Gallery, 814 Western Ave. Information: CX Silver Gallery is open Thursdays to Mondays 11 a.m.-8 p.m. More info: 802.257-7998 x1, cxsilvergallery.com.

SATURDAY

11

SATURDAY

11

Farmers' markets

HINSDALE Hinsdale Indoor Farmer's Market:

feature

SUNDAY

12

Farmers' markets

HINSDALE Hinsdale Indoor Farmer's Market:

feature

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 ▶ 9 a.m.-1 p.m. *The Hinsdale Farmers Market* has been operating since 2014 and seeks to promote locally grown food and crafts while making fresh food available to our residents.
 ▶ *Hinsdale Community Center, 19 Main St. Information: Questions/comments: farmersmarketofhinsdale@gmail.com.*

The written word
WILMINGTON Poetry Reading: "Walk With Me" by Madeline May Kunin: In this collection to be published this fall, Kunin invites you to step into her world, slow down, find new serenity in older age and unexpected love. Explore nuances of everyday moments that cultivate a bittersweet appreciation for simple joys. This book is a beautifully crafted illustration of not only what it means to be a woman on the eve of 90 years of life but a feminist, politician, mother, lover, companion, a living thing in the midst of an ever-turbulent world.
 ▶ 2 p.m. *The relationship with the self is a lifelong evolution, a journey that Kunin refuses to tire. Instead, her poems illuminate the confidence and insecurities inherent to all humans, even in older age.*
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *Bartleby's Books, 17 W. Main St. Information: 802-464-5425; myvermontbookstore.com.*

Well-being
BRATTLEBORO Christian Science Lecture: "Giving Freely of Ourselves": Talk by Melanie Wahlberg, C.S. Learn how giving opens up our thought to receiving, based on Christian principles.
 ▶ 2 p.m.
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *First Church of Christ, Scientist, 57 Putney Road. Information: More information: Csbattleboro.org.*

Community building
VERNON Historians present Historic Photographic Images of Vernon: Vernon Historians present program of photos and historical information about area around Vernon Union Church - once known as Vernon Center. Projected photos show buildings/surrounding area, including the Whithead Building, which served many functions in town until the 1950s, "Tea House," Central Park, Central Park train stop, Bushnell's Museum, ferry to NH, original Vernon Union Church before fire destroyed it, many more interesting scenes of that area.
 ▶ 2 p.m. *Program follows brief annual business meeting of the Vernon Historians membership. The Historians collected many photos of Vernon that they are eager to share along with brief stories about the places and people they depict and their part in Vernon's history. Delicious refreshments will be served.*
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *Vernon Union Church, 2631 Ft. Bridgman Rd. Information: 802-257-8523.*

Arts and crafts
BRATTLEBORO Printmaking with LEGOs: Make art prints with LEGOs in a workshop at First Proof Press.
 ▶ 2 p.m.
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *Battleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.*

Ideas and education
PUTNEY JFK Assassination - "What They Told Me" with Bill Holiday (In-Person or Livestream): Holiday presents what eyewitnesses and researchers have told him about the JFK assassination. He wrote a book detailing those experiences, titled, "The JFK Assassination - What They Told Me."
 ▶ 10 a.m. - 12 noon.
 ▶ \$8 (\$15 for multiple events).
 ▶ *Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: Register: learn.uvm.edu/osher-lifelong-learning/statewide/#brattleboro.*

MONDAY
13

Instruction
BELLOWS FALLS Computer Basics Workshop (11/13 and 11/15 - 2 classes): Attendees will learn how to navigate the Windows 10 operating system, manage applications using the task manager, find and manage files and folders, save and delete files and more.
 ▶ 10:30 a.m. *Two classes: (11/15 class builds on 11/13 class).*
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463-4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.*

Community building
DUMMERSTON Canoe Brook Nature Preserve Public Information Meeting
 ▶ 7 p.m.
 ▶ *Evening Star Grange, 1008 East-West Rd. Information: 802-254-1138.*

TUESDAY
14

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.*

WEDNESDAY
15

Visual arts and shows
BRATTLEBORO Curator Michelle Samour discusses the exhibit "Paper Made," focusing on the stories behind the art: Works by artists Linda Colsh, Barbara De Pirro, Amy Genser, Virginia Green, Karen Gubitz, Barbara Hocker, Libby Raab, Jo Stealey, Marcia Vogler. Samour focuses on art-making processes and the stories behind the works in the exhibition.
 ▶ 7 p.m.
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.*

Film and video
BRATTLEBORO Architecture + Design Film Series: "Levitated Mass," Doug Pray, 2013 (In Person/Virtual): Riveting documentary explores deep questions about humans and art through the lens of the work of artist Michael Heizer, whose monumental land sculptures inspire reverence or disgust. It chronicles complicated transport/installation of a 340-ton granite boulder to be used as part of an art piece outside Los Angeles County Museum of Art.
 ▶ 6:30 p.m. (89 min.). *Film weaves dramatic story of Heizer's past/present work, ambitions of major metropolitan museum, public's wild reactions to unprecedented display of ancient-feeling modern art. Heizer aficionado Lichtenfeld leads post-film discussion.*
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ *One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Also available virtually 24-hour same day screening: adfilmseries.org; 118elliot.com.*

To submit your event: calendar@commonsnews.org
 Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday



The 1927 film "Wings" tells the story of two World War I flying aces (Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Richard Arlen) who are rivals over the same woman (silent film superstar Clara Bow).

Groundbreaking silent film 'Wings' takes flight at Epsilon Spires for Veterans Day

BRATTLEBORO—The first winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture, *Wings* (1927, 180 minutes) will be shown at Epsilon Spires on Friday, Nov. 10; doors open at 7 p.m. This screening will feature live organ accompaniment by Jeff Rapsis, a renowned New England silent film accompanist, on Epsilon Spires's historic Estey pipe organ. There will be one intermission.
Wings tells the story of two World War I flying aces (Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Richard Arlen) who are rivals over the same woman (silent film superstar Clara Bow). It was one of the biggest productions of 1927, with a \$2-million budget and aerial sequences that reportedly thrilled a public made aviation-conscious by Lindbergh's nonstop transatlantic solo flight — completed just three months before the film's premiere.
 The film was the first big assignment for 30-year-old director William Augustus Wellman, who flew with the French Foreign Legion's famed Lafayette Flying Corps at the age of 19. Wellman, who suffered a near-fatal crash that broke his back in two places, insisted on extreme realism in the

battle depictions, which led to technical innovations and effects that changed filmmaking forever and continue to mesmerize audiences today.
 Almost all the aerial dogfights and battle sequences were done practically, with trench assaults featuring thousands of U.S. Army personnel as extras, Army attack planes in aerial shots, and live explosions simulating the effects of mortars and bombshells. Stunt pilots flew planes in convincing dives that trailed smoke and but did not actually crash. As the lead actors, Rogers and Arlen had to pilot airplanes, operate cameras, and act, all at the same time.
 Released less than a decade after World War I ended, *Wings* offers a glimpse into the harrowing battles of the war and the resiliency of those who fought.
 Rapsis is a writer/editor, educator, and composer, and specializes in creating live musical scores for silent film screenings. He has accompanied silent film programs in venues throughout New England since 2007.
 He creates a set of original music in advance for each film, then improvises a score based on this material as the screening takes

place. Outside New England, he has accompanied films at the New York Public Library's "Meet the Musicmakers" series and the Kansas Silent Film Festival. Rapsis has also provided original music for several silent film DVD releases and scored the independent feature film *Dangerous Crosswinds* (2005).
 Tickets for this event are by sliding scale, \$10 to \$20, with free admission for veterans. Tickets are available for purchase at epsilonspires.org. Popcorn and refreshments are included in the ticket price.

Bartleby's hosts Madeleine May Kunin for poetry reading

WILMINGTON—Bartleby's Books will host an event at the store with Madeleine May Kunin on Sunday, Nov. 12, at 2 p.m. Kunin will read from her new book of poetry, *Walk with Me*, published this fall.
 In this collection, Kunin invites the audience to step into her world, to slow down, and find new serenity and unexpected love in older age. Kunin explores the nuances of everyday moments that cultivate a bittersweet appreciation for simple joys. *Walk With Me* is "a beautifully crafted illustration of not only what it means to be a woman on the eve of 90 years of life, but also a feminist, a politician, a mother, a lover, a companion, and a living thing in the midst of an ever-turbulent world," according to the publisher's website.
 Kunin's poetry "illuminates the confidence and insecurities inherent to all humans, even in older age. The images woven throughout this collection are tender and warm, giving the reader an outlet to appreciate what it means to be alive through each stanza, over and over again."
 In addition to serving three terms as Vermont's governor, Kunin has written several books, including another book of poems — *Red Kite, Blue Sky* — and two memoirs — *Coming of Age: My Journey to the Eighties*, and *Living a Political Life: One of America's First Women Governors Tells Her Story*.
 The event is free. To reserve a copy of *Walk with Me*, contact



JULIA KUNIN (COURTESY PHOTO VTDIGGER FILE) Madeleine Kunin

Bartleby's at 802-464-5425. Bartleby's Books is located at 17 West Main St. in downtown Wilmington and is open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, myvermontbookstore.com.

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FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY'S PG-13
 FRIDAY 4 / 6:45 / 9
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 SUNDAY 1:45 & 7:30
 MON.-THUR. 4 & 6:45

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 FRIDAY 7 PM
 SATURDAY 3 & 7 PM
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 MON.-THUR. 7 PM

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STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION
Windham Unit Docket No.: 23-PR-06009
In re ESTATE of: John Chard

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: John Chard (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: October 20, 2023 c/o Amelia W. L. Darrow, Esq.
Kathleen Iger, Executor 209 Austine Drive
Name of Publication: The Commons Brattleboro, VT 05031
Publication Date: November 8, 2023 802-251-6598
adarow@secrestdarrow.com

Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Windham Probate
Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT 05301

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION
Windham Unit Docket No.: 23-PR-06406
In re ESTATE of: Raymond J. Durand, aka Raymond John Durand

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the creditors of Raymond J. Durand, aka Raymond John Durand, late of Grafton, 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: November 2, 2023 c/o Dakin & Benelli, P.C.
Eugene Durand, Administrator PO Box 499
Chester, VT 05143
Name of Publication: The Commons 802-875-4000
Publication Date: November 8, 2023

Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Windham Unit, Probate Division
Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301

REQUEST FOR BIDS

Windham Solid Waste Management District
327 Old Ferry Rd, Brattleboro, VT 05301
Compost Aeration and Heat Recovery Project
Sitework, Concrete, Fabric Building,
Aeration and Compost System and Electrical

Project Overview: Windham Solid Waste Management District (WSWMD) seeks General Contractor bids for a new Compost Aeration and Heat Recovery Facility to be installed at 327 Old Ferry Road in Brattleboro, VT. This project is funded by the USDA Community Facilities program. All requirements by the USDA Community Facilities are outlined in the provided bid package. There will be a 5% Bid Bond required. There is a 100% Performance and Payment Bond requirement.

Scope of Services: Provide all labor, materials, tools and equipment for a complete project per the plans and specifications provided by Steve Horton at stevnhorton@gmail.com. All inquiries, questions and clarifications must be directed to Steve Horton-Project Manager; stevnhorton@gmail.com. Addenda information shall be shared, as necessary, to all participants.

Bid Instructions: Bids are due no later than November 30, 2023 at 2:00 PM. Bids may be mailed or hand delivered to; Bob Spencer, Executive Director, WSWMD 327 Old Ferry Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

Probable Schedule:

- RFB issued on October 27th, 2023.
- Mandatory Walk Through November 13th at 2:00PM
- All questions to be received no later than end of day November 21st, 2023.
- Bids due November 30th, 2023 by 2:00 PM.
- Recommendation to Board the first meeting following low qualified bidder selection.
- Notice of Award immediately following Board approval.
- Order materials immediately after Notice of Award December, 2023.
- Commence work in spring of 2024.

Expiration of Bid: By submitting a bid the applicant offers to enter into the Contract, the form and content of which shall be agreed upon by both parties. The applicant's proposal shall not be revocable for thirty (60) days following the response deadline indicated above.

Reservation of Rights:

- WSWMD reserves the right to waive any defects in the offer of any vendor, to reject any or all offers, and to request additional information from any and all vendors.
- In the event that an agreement cannot be reached with the firm initially chosen for contract, WSWMD may enter into contract negotiations with other qualified firms that submitted acceptable proposals or bids, rather than redoing the bid process for the project.
- Negotiate with another firm to include further services not identified in this RFB.

BMAC offers guided tour of 'Paper Made' exhibit on Nov. 15

BRATTLEBORO—Join curator and artist Michelle Samour on Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m., for a tour of "Paper Made," a juried exhibit at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) that challenges assumptions about how paper can be used to make art. The exhibit, presented in partnership with *Fiber Art Now*, is on view through Feb. 11, 2024.

The exhibit demonstrates that paper is not only a surface for drawn or printed images, it is also a material that tells its own story. As Samour once wrote about her own work, "paper is the field for discovery." That holds true for the artists featured in "Paper Made," all of whom have manipulated handmade and machine-made paper in diverse ways.

Amy Genser rolls paper into hundreds of multi-layered forms to interpret the colors of the setting sun in "Summer Sundown." Barbara Hocker's depiction of water in "Shore to Shore" takes the form of a stream emerging from the spine of a book; translucent waves of paper suggest rushing water.

In "par hasard," Linda Colsh also depicts water, with tracings of creek stones on stitched and stained coffee filters. Barbara De Pirro's "Blossom" evokes a different image from nature through circles of painted paper. Each reveal textured worlds that accumulate and open into a floral form. Marcia Vogler's quilted "Time Traveler's Coat," which takes the form of a kimono, speaks to time travel and cultural intersections.

In the garment "Love My Sugar Daddy," Virginia Green uses U.S. currency to comment on the female body, desire, and commodity. Weaving together strands of paper and raffia, Libby Raab comments on disintegration and decay in "Good Times." Karen Gubitz weaves paper into geometric forms to highlight ideas of accumulation and urban life in her piece, "Urban." Jo Stealey's "Dusters" evokes the labor and ritual embedded both in the process of making the paper and in its final sculptural form.

Organizers say all the works in "Paper Made" provide opportunities to consider how paper can transcend function and express thoughtful and unique visual narratives.

Samour, the curator, is a multimedia artist with an interest in papermaking and works on paper.



Michelle Samour

COURTESY PHOTO

Her practice explores the connections between science, technology, and the natural world, and the sociopolitical repercussions of redefining borders and boundaries. She has been an artist-in-residence at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, and PRINT Press at the University

of Northern Texas. Her work has been exhibited at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Fuller Craft Museum, and Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard University, among other institutions. She lives in North Bennington and is professor emerita of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts

at Tufts University, where she taught historical and contemporary approaches to working with handmade paper and pulp. Admission to the tour is free. Registration is optional, and walk-ins are welcome. Register at brattleboromuseum.org or by calling 802-257-0124, ext. 101.

Outburst Arts returns to MSA for second year

SAXTONS RIVER—Outburst Arts, a free monthly teen arts night at Main Street Arts (MSA), will be held on the first Friday of the month, from 7 to 9 p.m. Teens from the greater Rockingham area are invited to make art, craft, listen to music, eat snacks, and spend time with new and old friends.

"As the youth services librarian at the Rockingham Free Public Library, one of my goals is to create welcoming spaces where youth can express themselves and make connections," said Sam Howard in a news release. "Main Street Arts and I worked together to start the program [last year]. Outburst Arts is designed to be

a youth-led place."

This will be the second year the program will be offered at MSA, with a few changes. Outburst Arts continues through the end of the school year. All the art created can be submitted to an end of year exhibit at MSA and will include vocal, written, and art pieces.

Neil Allen is the director of Greater Falls Connections in Bellows Falls and the adult lead for the program. He says, "this is a good opportunity for the teens to meet other teens who are interested in the arts, create positive life experiences, and, hopefully, find trusted adults they can connect with outside of the usual places like school, sports, or church. These are all important aspects of substance use prevention and part of why I wanted to be part of this program."

"Adults are there to make sure the program runs, and the teens are the ones directing things," Allen continued. "There is the saying from the disabled community: 'Nothing for us without us,' and those of us in prevention believe this as well. This is the best way to allow the teens to be seen and heard. I'm excited to see what the teens want to do and work with the youth leadership group to make this a creative, fun program for them."

MSA is located at 35 Main Street in Saxtons River. The site has a ramp, elevator, and accessible bathrooms. For more information, contact Allen at neilpierceallen@gmail.com or 603-558-8549.

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Kristina Meima (left), who plays Blaire, and PJ Mead, who plays Claire.

COURTESY PHOTO

Wild Goose Players present Claire in the Chair in the Cimetière at Next Stage

PUTNEY—Wild Goose Players will present *Claire in the Chair in the Cimetière*, a new play written by Sean Hurley and directed by David Stern at Next Stage Arts in Putney, 15 Kimball Hill, on Fridays through Sundays, Nov. 10-12 and 17-19.

As described in a news release, this play is "a whimsical comedy about life and death and finding one's purpose in the unlikely of places." 27-year-old Claire, a twin, moves into the local cemetery, where she believes her real life will finally begin and she will be less of a burden to her sister.

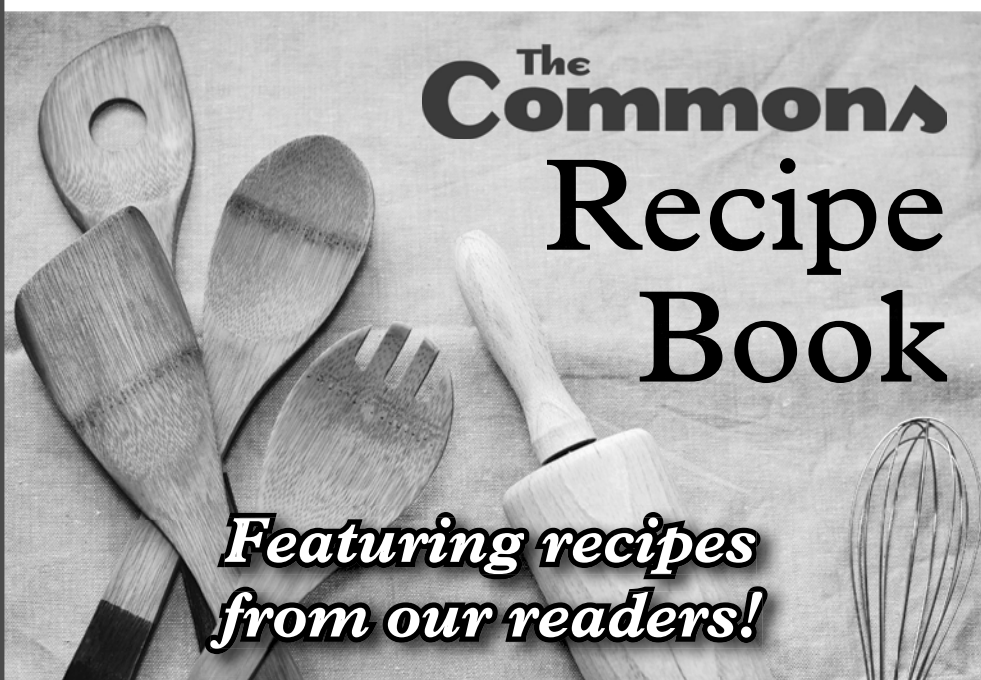
Everything has been prepared for Claire's long life with the dead. Her twin sister, Blaire, has arranged for food, water, soap,

books, and clothes. Except ... Claire hasn't told the local gravedigger, tombstone maker, and undertaker that she's not dying; each one of whom, it turns out, has a pressing need for Claire's life to be as short as possible.

Find out if death is the ultimate punchline in this comedy promoters describe as "sparkingly dark," taking place in a "Roald-Dahl/Edward-Gorey-esque world." In the midst of life, they say, "there is death. Or maybe it's the other way around?"

For tickets, visit wildgooseplayers.com/tickets. Admission is \$20 and show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.

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Leland & Gray Players rehearse *Mean Girls*.

In Leland & Gray theater, a room of collaborators

A new director, Doran ‘Dory’ Hamm — along with his new team of longtime youth theater collaborators — leads the Leland & Gray Players in a production of ‘Mean Girls: The Musical’

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

TOWNSHEND—When the Leland and Gray (L&G) Players, the theater program at Leland & Gray Union Middle/High School, was left without direction at the end of the summer, the administration hustled:

“It was very funny, actually,” recalls Doran “Dory” Hamm, 38, the newly appointed Players’ director. “The previous theater director left relatively quickly, so they put out a call.”

The three “main people who applied were us three,” Hamm said, referencing himself and the other two people in a Zoom interview with *The Commons*: Shannon Ward, 32, and Ben Stockman, 38.

“I think [Leland & Gray] went with me because I had the most availability,” surmises Hamm, who was asked by the hiring team if he might want to work with the other two candidates.

“They said the names, and I was like, ‘Are you joking?’” he says.

Stockman adds: “We’d just finished touring a show together in July 2023,” Vermont Suitcase Company’s *The Feeble Fantastical*, an adaptation of Molière’s *The Hypochondriac*.

“The three of us have known each other for years and years and have worked together for a long time,” Ward interjects.

Adds Hamm: “We’re pals, colleagues; we’ve remained friends through the years. We were in the same theater

company; we’ve all worked together as teachers. We go way back.”

All Brattleboro Union High School (BUHS) alumni, Hamm, Stockman, and Ward devoured the programs at New England Youth Theatre (NEYT), where they learned the many tasks and talents involved in mounting a theatrical production.

All three studied theater in college and, in Stockman’s case, in graduate school.

Regarding collaborating, Hamm adds, “I’d much rather work with others — with friends I know and trust — and get paid less than work by myself.”

‘They had an actual budget for us’

Employing a traditional production model with the L&G Players, Hamm is director in charge of shaping the play, and clearly vested in the overall health of the program. Cassidy Majer, a fellow NEYT/BUHS alumna, assists. Stockman (with the help of a student crew) is technical director in charge of sets, costumes, props, sound, and lights. Ward is on board as producer tending to publicity, production logistics, and the front-of-house duties.

Jeremy Kellett, L&G’s choral director, is music director, and Sarah Gance, L&G’s high school counselor and a dance teacher, assists with choreography and movement.

Of L&G’s support of the Players, Hamm adds that “they had an actual budget for us, which is not the case everywhere.”

Leland & Gray, he says, is dedicated “to making sure that their theater program has the support needed to make it one of quality for the students,” even though, he acknowledges, the program’s scene shop, intended for construction of props, sets, and costumes, has been reassigned to another program, one that is not related to the performing arts.

The November musical, *Mean Girls*, with book by Tina Fey, was chosen by last year’s Players, Hamm explains. “Obviously they chose the musical because they relate to it,” he says.

As described in the L&G Players’ media release, Cady Heron, the play’s protagonist, “may have grown up on an African savanna, but nothing prepared her for the wild and vicious ways of her strange new home: suburban Illinois.”

“How will this naive newbie rise to the top of the popularity pecking order? By taking on ‘The Plastics,’ a trio of lionized frenemies led by the charming but ruthless Regina George. But when Cady devises a plan to end Regina’s reign, she learns the hard way that you can’t cross a queen bee without getting stung.”

The seminal message, says Hamm, is not to be mean as teenagers, “‘cause it’s easy to be, and you have to work a little harder to not be mean.”

“I made that kind of the heart of the rehearsal process,” he says, urging that the kids give space for each other to work without fear of being shut down.

“No one can feel like if they do something on stage and it doesn’t turn out how they want it to be that they’ll be made fun of. That kills creativity,” he adds.

“Overall, it’s a very simple concept, but it’s so well written that in rehearsal, when we were talking about one of the characters, the new kid in the school, one Player said, ‘That’s absolutely how it feels to be a new kid in the school. You walk through the halls, and everyone’s staring at you like you have two heads.’”

Being hired so late in the game, the team had to hustle to catch up with auditions and rehearsals. Even so, says Hamm, “I don’t believe in the stress model. I think capitalism instills that in everything we do, and I’ve been working so much with the kids” to avoid that.

The Players’ modus operandi under Hamm et al. is: “You avoid [the stress-driven path] by doing the work collectively.”

Hamm and collaborators all believe in giving student players agency in the creative process: As Ward says, “an important thing that’s on display in this process is that all of us really value letting the kids have ownership over their work,” in all facets of production, including technical.

“We went in for an initial tech meeting,” Ward recalls, and the Players’ seasoned crew gave the new team a tour while sharing essential information about lights, sound, and all the technical aspects “they knew so much about.”

“It was incredible,” she adds. “Current students were part of the interview process, so I think L&G really values that ownership, and we do, too. We’re trying to foster that.”

“We are all collaborators in the room,” Stockman adds, underscoring his team’s

commitment to inclusivity and student empowerment.

Return of ‘Hats Off!’ cabaret

Plans for the remainder of the Players’ season include participation in the State One-Act Play Festival, Hamm reports, and a revival of *Hats Off!*, a cabaret-style show the Players conceived and coined two decades ago.

Reinstating its original context and concept, Hamm says the Players “would still choose what they want to do, but it’ll be performed from within the context of a set time and space.”

“The arts are so important in schools,” says L&G Principal Dana Aquardo.

In general, the arts “allow students to explore the human experience and express their own inner human experiences,” he adds.

And, in particular, “We are so grateful Dory is here,” Aquardo adds. “I have only heard positive things from students.”

Performances of Mean Girls: The Musical at Dutton Gymnasium at Leland & Gray Union Middle and High School, 2042VT-30, are Nov. 9, 10, and 11; Thursday and Friday at 7 p.m., and Saturday at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are cash only at the door; \$10 for general admission, and \$8 students and seniors.

Theatre Adventure presents its fall production, ‘Belonging’

WEST BRATTLEBORO—Theatre Adventure invites everyone to its fall production, *Belonging*, at the West Village Meeting House, 29 South St., on Wednesday, Nov. 8, and Thursday, Nov. 9, at 10:30 a.m., and Friday, Nov. 10, at 7 p.m. The Nov. 10 show will be livestreamed.

The Thursday Troupe has been learning and discovering more about themselves as individuals and in relationship with others and has been working with visiting artist Nettie Lu Lane, who is guiding them in the “Red Nose Clown” discipline.

Lane guided students with these phrases: “Breathe. Look at the audience. Connect. Give back to the audience. Follow your impulse. Trust yourself. Focus on being rather than doing. Your red nose is the smallest mask in the world,” according to organizers.

And now, after two months of exploration and play, they have a show to share, one they say is about believing in oneself and giving back to the audience.

“Characters will improvise with physicality and surprises. Imagine the theater is our living room and you are our friends coming over for

tea. We look forward to joviality, laughter, and poignant moments of connection. Witness the courage, open hearts, joy, and generosity that will create a dynamic circle — a heartbeat of connection — between the performers and audience,” states the news release.

ASL Interpretation is provided for all performances. The West Village Meeting House is a wheelchair-accessible venue, and Theatre Adventure’s Disabilities Specialist is happy to discuss accessibility or accommodation questions.

Theatre Adventure is a non-profit organization offering year-round inclusive theater arts programming, providing a caring and creative community for artists with disabilities to claim the stage with distinction.

Tickets will be sold on a sliding scale starting at \$12, online and at the door an hour before each show. For more information, go to theatretheadventure.org/tickets.

School groups are invited to purchase group tickets at a reduced rate. For all questions and inquiries, email info@theatretheadventure.org or call or text 802-380-0458.

Museum

The wall surfaces were filled with wood sculptures that looked as though they were metal, with huge ones suspended by wire overhead. I normally walk quickly through art exhibits. I stopped at each one and asked Sproat what it meant.

He graciously explained the process by which he constructed each piece and revealed what was happening in his life at that time or the story behind it. His favorite color is black. The sculptures were all painted black, with some featuring contrasting parts of natural wood.

In materials for a retrospective exhibit, Sproat suggests viewing his work “as artifacts that are not literal or abstract.”

“Most of these objects are a hybrid of biology and human geometry. Many tell a story about the plight of living things. What humans have discovered. And done to them.”

CHRISTOPHER SPROAT has lived in Vermont since 1983, but previously spent 30 years in Boston. Then he and his wife, Mary Bachmann, also had a loft in Soho. He has also designed lighting, furniture, and huge public art projects.

After Sproat found himself without a studio after he lost his work and archives in a 1976 fire in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, he started using black shapes painted on walls to give his work physicality.

When I asked him if he was good in math, he admitted that

he was lousy but seemed to have a natural geometric ability, since his three-dimensional pieces are so complicated with so many angles.

Two huge — and funny — black-and-white geometric drawings of him and Bachmann hang on an end wall. A gray whale hung overhead. In the center of the room were a few pieces of furniture he designed for millionaires: a white table and chairs, whose forms melded into one another smoothly with an incredible sense of peace and harmony and a bench, which reminded me of a Viking ship with a bird at its prow.

At the end of our private tour, Sproat led us into a smaller room that held Bachmann’s photographs of women deaconesses, then up a thick carpeted flight of stairs to see her photos of nature.

CHRIS SPROAT WAS BORN with a heart problem and was a blue baby. Perhaps he was even dyslexic, he says. He was a slender, quiet, artistic child.

His parents could not have been more loving and protective. They watched each of his interests as they developed and always provided just what he needed, he remembers.

His grandfather bought him sets of blocks, and he built high towers with lights inside. The young Sproat used to lie in bed watching the lights, then adjusting them to the precise angles to illuminate each tower.

“Unlocking the Black Box,” a retrospective of Christopher Sproat’s work, opens Friday, Nov. 10 and will run until March 11, 2024 at the C.X. Silver Gallery (cxsilvergallery.com), owned by husband-and-wife team Adam Silver and Cai Xi, at 814 Western Ave. in West Brattleboro. The exhibit, presented in partnership with the Black Box Museum, will be on film. An opening reception takes place Saturday, Nov. 11, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the gallery.

The Black Box, at 475 Holland Hill Rd. in Putney, is open by appointment. Contact Sproat at 212-966-4917 or chrissproat@aol.com.

You can view more of Sproat’s work at christophersproat.com. For more about the exhibit, visit bit.ly/739-cxsilver.

As a small child, he was once knocked straight across his bed-room when he stuck a knife into a wall socket. He became fascinated with the power of electricity.

His sculptures did not always contain light, but hearing him describe that experience made me wonder if his sculptures needed that kind of power — if they needed light and not just form.

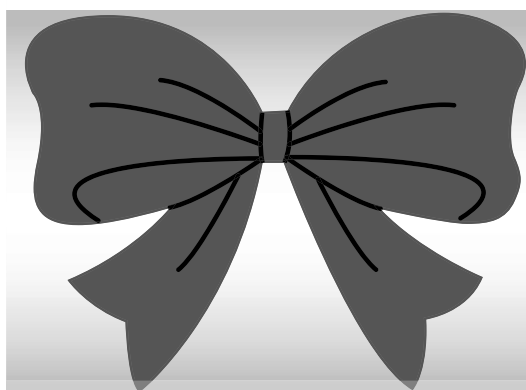
SPROAT SHOWED ME a sculpture of a fire fish, now considered an invasive species due to climate change. His recent work is an expression of his grief over the extent of climate change and how we are destroying the Earth by the continued use of gas and oil.

He has a deep love of animals

and nature and reads articles in *Discover* and other science magazines. He is always amazed at the complexity and beauty of nature and how it always takes care of itself. He goes out each night to feed scraps to the fox and other critters, including bears and hedgehogs, summoning them by banging on a tin can.

Sproat fears for the end of humans as a species. He says he thought the insects would survive longer than the human species, but observes that they are dying, too.

I wondered if he might wish to open his museum to the public for a fee. He prefers to live quietly and do his work, he says, but anyone is welcome to visit the Black Box.



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Koechner

"I adore David, and the thing I want people to know about him that is very contrary to his comedic persona is that he is the kindest, most sensitive man and a great father, like mine," the actor/director says. "He encourages you to stay in the game, especially when you think it might not work out."

"I've been so fortunate to have wide-ranging projects and genres that I can participate in," Koechner says.

"Any day in show business is a good day, and any day you're on set is an impossibly great day," he adds. "When it happens, you'd better well be grateful!"

Small-town life

Growing up in Tipton, Missouri, a town of 2,000 people, in a large family, Koechner says he played all of the usual sports and acted in two high school plays per year as a junior and senior.

He says he learned a lot growing up in a small town.

"I was left to my own devices," Koechner says. "You've got interesting characters around you, a large family, and a very small town of mostly farmers."

"There's that old saying — that you can take the boy out of the country but you can't take the country out of the boy," he says with a laugh. "By the time I got to Chicago, that is where my education began — when I got to work with uber-talented people."

He realized he wanted to pursue acting and comedy early.

"It struck me at age 13, when *Saturday Night Live* came on in 1975. I was starting to watch Monty Python, Abbott and Costello, the Marx Brothers, and those early *Saturday Night Live* shows."

"I knew that is what I was going to go do," Koechner says. "It was that clear."

Human foibles

When asked if any subject matter is off limits in his stand-up routine, Koechner replies, "I don't do politics in my show. I'm not known as a political comic. That would be someone like Bill Maher or Jon Stewart — they do stuff with the headlines. My material is more based on the human foibles and the struggle we all go

through."

He adds that the United States "is so divided, you don't help yourself or those gathered to offer something that is so upsetting."

"I have a certain brand," Koechner continues. "I'm trying to create a lens that everyone is looking through that has messaging that we are all in this together. Everyone's struggle is the same, and there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

What is it about stand-up comedy that Koechner likes?

"The actual night of the show, you're getting that communion with the audience," he replies. "It's only going to happen one time. There will never be exactly the same assembly of persons in that room."

The performing artist says that he's "always flattered that people are coming to see me" in what he calls "a pretty-high-octane show."

"That better be my job as a stand-up," Koechner says. "I talk about taking my daughters on a manatee excursion in southern Florida which didn't turn out that well. Or that man with the one leg who I met."

His kids are an integral part of his set.

"I have five children, so I don't have a choice," Koechner says. "That certainly informs what happens to my life. My job is to connect that struggle by all of us as parents or all of us as children."

About the role of a dad raising five children, he says, "Every human has to program their own software, as they should. It's so hard to do. Your job is to witness the discovery of who your child is. But we can't help but getting our hands all over it."

'A massive amount of effort'

Brian Joy of Cider Productions and PK's Pub in Bellows Falls is responsible for bringing Koechner to the Bellows Falls Opera House.

"Bringing a name like David Koechner to town — who is so well known for some absolutely hysterical roles on TV and in movies — is really exciting," Joy says in an email to *The Commons*.

"I really hope people will come out and keep supporting live

FROM SECTION FRONT

entertainment and music," Joy continues. "It takes a massive amount of effort to put on shows like this, and the only way we can keep doing it is to keep packing theaters."

"You don't have to go to Boston or New York or Foxwoods or anywhere else. It's right here in Bellows Falls," he says.

David Koechner will perform at the Bellows Falls Opera House, 7 Village Square, Bellows Falls, on Sunday, Nov. 12 at 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m.

"Rob Maher is my feature act and will start off," Koechner adds. "He does half an hour, then we do eight minutes together of banter, and then I do my set. He's really good! Rob kills it!"

There are four tiers of ticket pricing: \$65, \$55, \$50, \$45, including balcony seats. For more information and to buy tickets, visit bellowsfallsopera.com.

For more information on Koechner, visit davidkoechner.com.

David Koechner is flanked by Jane Baker, left, and Paula Pell, right, during the 2015 filming of *The Parker Tribe*, Baker's autobiographical film.



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■ 'Glengarry Glen Ross'

FROM SECTION FRONT

JAMES GELTER: There are a lot of classic plays that are like "oh, that poor downtrodden white man" or "that hero of a white man," and those stories don't particularly appeal to me these days.

But a show like this — [one] that asks, "How f—d up are these white guys?" — is still very much something that is relevant and through which I can help contribute to the current conversation.

JON MACK: I think it's an important piece to do. We can't forget the violence and the level of desperation that the greed-oriented culture we live in produces. I think depicting that is worth doing.

To have, as an actor, a piece that has this kind of substance and is brilliantly crafted and really gives an actor an opportunity to be a person — a full-fledged, [three-dimensional, tortured or torturing] person, not a caricature — I find really exciting.

PHIL KRAMER: These characters we're portraying — their voices are living inside many of us. Sometimes they're hidden behind masks of propriety and honor, but I believe a lot of people's deep-down motivations in society are represented by these less-than-desirable characters.

CHERI MORAN (to Kramer): One of your lines is: "What is this? Courtesy class?"

JIM BOMBICINO: As an actor, it's just a tremendous challenge to do this piece: It's the kind of thing you do where you don't even care if people will come. You do it because you feel like it needs to be done.

As a play, it's like a dope slap to humanity. It's like, "Wake up, people! This could have been ... was ... is real. Appreciate what you have — with the right attitude — and appreciate humanity in what we do."

JOHN MORAN: The play is sad, in a sense. There's a touch of *Death of a Salesman* in the character of Levene. He's attempting to live a life and take care of his daughter. I think all of them have bought into a system that is screwing them in the process. And the characters are all trying to do their best in a system that is not based on

human values.

ALAN DARLING: Part of it's desperation. I see more businesses than you can imagine in my work. [*Darling is a private executive search consultant.*] I worked for one guy who's as sleazy as these people, but I've never seen this level of sleaze in the real world. There are a couple parts [in the play] that are just hilarious. Some people won't think of this as a comedy, but if people aren't breaking up when they hear some of this stuff....

LANDENBERGER: I guess it goes without saying that this is a big murky slice of Americana. The play wouldn't fly in a socialist country, I don't imagine, except as an exemplar. What about its essential American flavor?

GELTER: One tagline for the original production was "exposing the dark side of the American Dream." Which it does — in two ways: it's the salesman falsely selling the American Dream to dupes but also [the salesmen] are doing that in pursuit of the American Dream themselves — this is the system that will allow them to do that.

BAHMAN MAHDAVI: I moved to the U.S. when I was 30 and I have always, always been fascinated by American culture. When I was growing up I loved American music, movies, Americans' attitude toward life. The way they go through life — at least the way I perceived it — there was something very relaxed and straightforward, as opposed to the British, whose education I grew up in, which was more contrived, stiffer.

For me, *The Front Page* [which Mahdavi directed in fall 2022 for RRP] was a quintessential American story; this is another one. Not that there aren't scams elsewhere in the world, not that there aren't ass—s anywhere in the world, but this flavor, this sauce, only exists in America.

LANDENBERGER: It's said that David Mamet would ride the city buses of Chicago recording random snippets of dialogue as a study in verisimilitude. What's challenging — beside all the f-words — about the play's language?



Jim Bombicino (Williamson) and Jon Mack (Levene).

MACK: Among other things, it does capture the way people talk.

People don't end their sentences, they cut each other off — it feels real, and he definitely has captured that. The challenge is he's very repetitive, which is tricky for an actor.

GELTER: The script is dedicated to [20th century playwright] Harold Pinter. Mamet is drawing this fine line between the absurdism of Pinter's language and this sense of it feeling real and natural. [...] There's a precision to the language like you get in Dickens or Shakespeare, but it's much harder to memorize.

BOMBICINO: And none of these characters are really listening to each other. I think that's why there is so much talking over each other. How many times do we say "hold it a second" or "wait, wait, wait"?

GELTER: I haven't done any contemporary theater in really long time; I've just been doing old-school classics. That's like performing classical music, and this is like performing jazz — it requires the same level of attention to detail and really working in sync with the rest of the band but the music itself is very different.

JOHN OGORZALEK: Then, not only do you cut off people in the middle of sentences, in every other line you cut off people in the middle of a word. It's a challenge. That's the reason I did it.

DARLING: John's part barely has a full sentence without an interruption....

CHERI MORAN: But his one full sentence does end the play.

MAHDAVI: If I may: I consider Mamet to be one of the greatest writers. Period. Not

"of the 20th century," not "alive today." He's a fantastic writer who will be remembered for many centuries. This is the second play of his I'm directing; I've read all of his plays and prose, seen all his movies. I'll probably leave it at that and move on to something else.

LANDENBERGER: Pinter?

MAHDAVI: Probably.

LANDENBERGER: And in closing...

MAHDAVI: ... I just want to express my deepest gratitude to the amazing cast for trusting me on this adventure, for all their incredible hard work, dedication, passion, and talent.

Performances of *Glengarry Glen Ross* take place Friday and Saturday, Nov. 10 and 11, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Nov. 12, at 2 p.m., at Williamsville Hall on Dover Road in Williamsville, and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 17

and 18, at 7 p.m., at the Hooker-Dunham Theater, 139 Main St., Brattleboro.

The Williamsville Hall is accessible. Tickets are \$12 (\$10 for students and seniors). To purchase tickets in advance, visit rockriverplayers.org.

The show contains adult language and portrayals of racism and sexism. The Rock River Players warn that it's not appropriate for those younger than 16 years old.

NXT Gallery presents paintings by Sarah H. Paulson

PUTNEY—NXT Gallery, 15 Kimball Hill, hosts the opening reception of "Dragon Land," an exhibition by artist and acupuncturist Sarah H. Paulson. The event will take place on Sunday, Nov. 19, from 4 to 6 p.m.

"My art practice is performative," Paulson says in a news release. "I believe that performance, in its sacred form, has the capacity to bring the human being closest to what it means to be human. This sentiment is at the heart of all my work, including

my drawings and paintings."

Paulson says "Dragon Land" presents inner worlds, creatures, and dynamic communication through her paintings. The unique aspect of this series is the canvas itself: a collaborative creation, involving artists, dancers, writers, and musicians who dipped their feet in pigment and contributed to the foundation of these artworks. Natural earth-based inks, crafted from a variety of organic sources, serve as the primary medium for this series.

"It is my hope that these landscapes can speak to the viewer in a language that transcends the spoken word," Paulson explains. "Art teaches me with every brushstroke and every gesture."

NXT Gallery is open during events at Next Stage and by appointment with the artist or by contacting Next Stage at info@nextstagearts.org or 802-451-0053. The exhibit will continue through Feb. 11.

Palaver Strings returns to BMC with 'Homeland' on Nov. 10

BRATTLEBORO—Palaver Strings' Beehive Chamber Series returns to the Brattleboro Music Center (BMC) Friday, Nov. 10, with a program entitled "Homeland."

The 7 p.m. concert will explore folk-inspired music by diverse composers paying homage to their homelands: Carlos Guastavino (Argentina), Violetta Parra (Chile), Leoš Janáček (Czech Republic), and Béla Bartók (Hungary). Their works explore the essence of their cultural-political

landscape, using folk material from everyday life.

The musical journey concludes with Brahms' Trio in A minor, which he composed after visiting his friend, clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, in Meiningen, Germany.

Palaver Strings includes Sergio Muñoz, viola; Matthew Smith, cello; and Peipei Song, piano.

Tickets are \$20 general admission or \$25 at the door. Contact bmcvt.org, 802-257-4523, or info@bmcvt.org.

Sarasa Ensemble offers anniversary program at BMC

BRATTLEBORO—Sarasa Ensemble presents "Tendrils of the Soul," a special anniversary program that demonstrates the depth and power of the First Viennese School masters Friday, Nov. 17, at the Brattleboro Music Center.

The 7 p.m. concert will feature Beethoven's "Cavatina" from his String Quartet No. 13, Haydn's String Quartet in C major, Op. 54 No. 2, and Schubert's String Quintet in C major.

Performers are Zenas Hsu, Amy Galluzzo, violins; Marka Gustavsson, viola; and Timothy Merton and Jennifer Morsches, cellos.

The Sarasa Ensemble is a collective group of international instrumentalists and vocalists who perform classical music of outstanding quality, spanning the 17th to the 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 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 general admission or \$25 at the door. For more info, contact 802-257-4523, info@bmcvt.org, or visit bmcvt.org.

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Hi, my name is **Lilo!** I have lived with other small dogs and may be able to again with a proper intro. Cats would be new to me, so a nice and slow intro would be beneficial if you have any. I am pretty nervous at first, so a home with older kids would be ideal if you have any. Please stop by and make my dreams come true.

Hi, my name is **Stitch!** I am a sweet loving boy. I am pretty nervous when meeting new people, but once I get to know you I will be in your lap at no time. I have lived with other dogs before and I may be able to live with them again. If you have kids they should be older and respectful. Please come and meet with me, I know I won't be here for long.

Hey everybody! I'm **Hans**, and check out my awesome paws! I'm a super sweet guy who's just down on his luck. All I really want is a home of my very own with people who love me. Is that so much to ask? I'm not a fan of other cats. Dogs would be new to me, so a slow intro would be best. Young kids would be too much for me. Come in and meet me today, I don't want to wait any longer!

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VIEWPOINT

Who are the people of modern Israel?

'Instead of utilizing Israel's infrastructure for the benefit of the people of Gaza, Hamas was determined to fulfill the clearly stated goal of destroying Israel and killing all Jews — jihad'

SINCE THE Iranian-sponsored Hamas devastation wrought on Oct. 7 — a Jewish Sabbath Day as well as what should have been the joyous holiday of Simchat Torah — I have struggled to share the horror and sadness I feel. But I know when people don't respond to unjust and cruel behavior, they are complicit.

To those who call for peace and harmony for all people, without going back to Biblical times, I want to remind you who the people of modern Israel are.

Some are the descendants of parents or grandparents escaping from violence, murder, and confiscation of possessions fueled by the pogroms sponsored by antisemitic leaders in Eastern European Countries in the late 1900s and early 20th century.

Some Israelis are Holocaust survivors. Must I remind us of the systematic slaughter perpetrated by the Nazis? Determined to eradicate the world of Jews, whole families were rounded up, tortured, homes and property seized.

Some Israelis are the children who miraculously survived and escaped the gas chambers of concentration camps. Those who were saved were sheltered from the Nazis by caring individuals willing to risk their lives to save Jewish children and families.

In 1948, when the state of Israel was established by the United Nations, some six million Jewish families living in Muslim lands for centuries were ousted from their homes. They were forced from Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Yemen, Algeria. Some were penniless. Very few or no Jews live in those countries today. Many of these people settled in Israel.

MARLENE WEIN is an educator and advocate for families of children with mental health needs.

Some Israelis are immigrants from Great Britain and North America who have a deep devotion to the history and religion of the Jewish people.

I HAVE SYMPATHY for those Palestinians today who feel they have been displaced from their land. It might make sense for them to question the historical decision of the Arab countries in 1948 to not accept the United Nations' partition of Palestine into one country for Jewish people and one for Muslims and Arabs — two states side by side, both having access to the holy sites of Jerusalem.

Instead of rejoicing, as the Jewish people did, and working side by side for the betterment of both, leading Arab countries waged war.

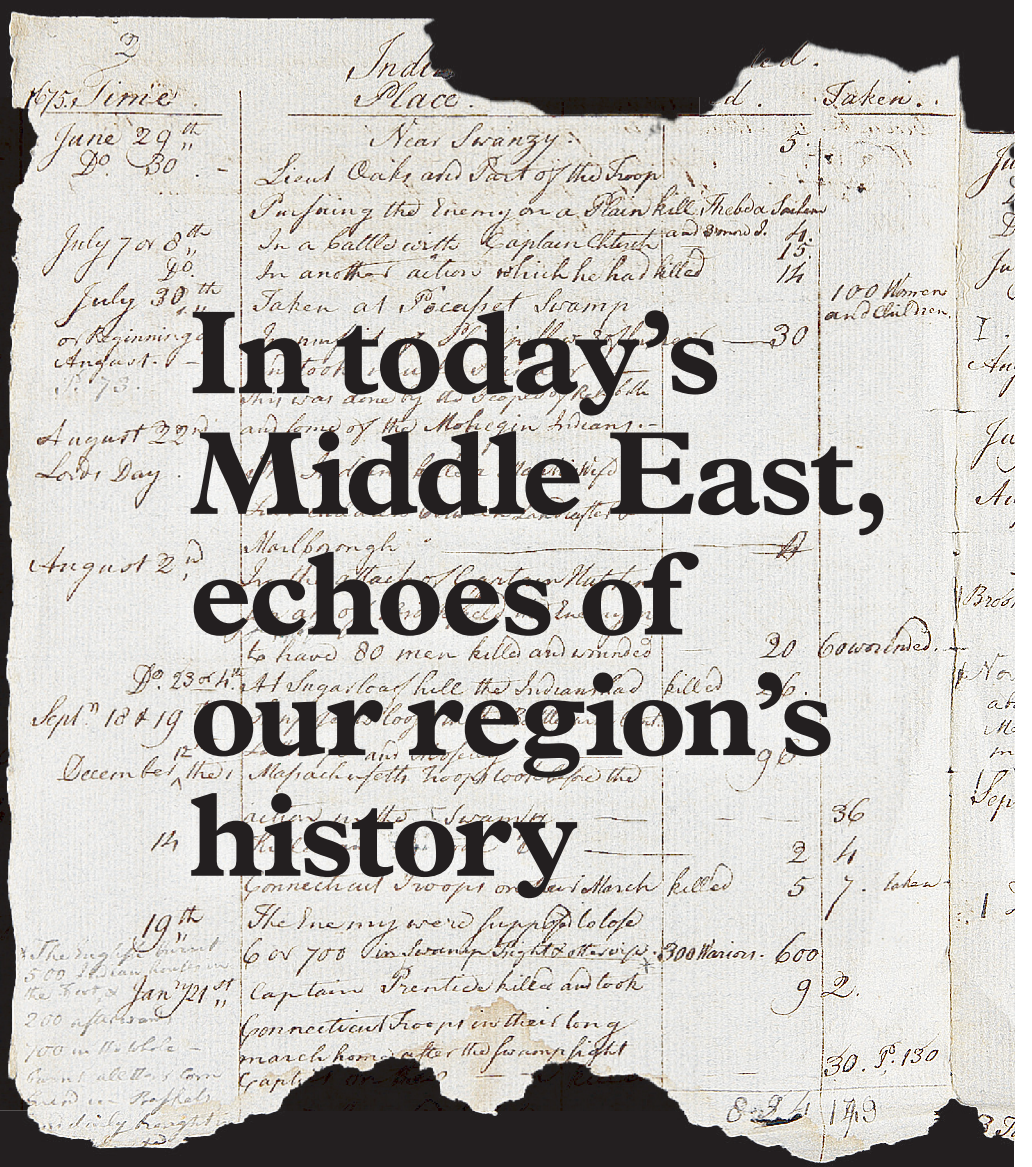
Some well-meaning folks claim that the root cause of violence between the Israelis and Palestinians is the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. However, in 2005, Ariel Sharon, the 11th prime minister of Israel, ordered the evacuation of all Israelis from Gaza.

Jake Wallis Simons, writer for the *Jewish Chronicle* and The Telegraph, reminds readers:

"Almost two decades ago, in a moonshot for peace, Israel withdrew from the Strip, dragging Jews from their homes and handing their neighbors the keys. Gaza had been relatively prosperous. There were kibbutzim and businesses, as well as a glorious beach. The underground aquifer held enough water for all its inhabitants. There

■ SEE ISRAEL, C2

VIEWPOINT



In King Philip's War, Indigenous peoples fought back violently after colonists more viciously stripped them of their land and their rights to its use

MY KNOWLEDGE of the Israel/Hamas situation is superficial at best. While I know some about the history and some about the current situation, I have never studied it in any depth.

My own DNA has no Jewish or Palestinian percentages. Over 18 years ago I did marry into a secular Jewish family, and I have certainly come to know their stories of escape from Nazi Germany and Nazi Austria in the late 1930s.

Regarding the history of violent conflict in general, I know much

MICHAEL BOSWORTH is a longtime community volunteer, a writer, and a poet. He serves as interim treasurer for Vermont Independent Media, the nonprofit that publishes this newspaper.

more about the early English colonists and their Native American counterparts in what is today New England, particularly southeastern New England.

I have that deeper understanding because for five years or more I have been researching the one-eighth of me who is a Bosworth. I have reached a point where the parallels between that 17th-century colonial/

Indigenous dynamic and today's Middle East situation have become more and more striking.

In this comparison, I do not at all mean to equate the Native Americans to Hamas, but rather to the general Palestinian population.

MY FAMILY WERE Puritans who arrived in the Boston area in 1634,

■ SEE KING PHILIP'S WAR, C2

An account of loss of lives and damages during King Philip's War, by Benjamin Trumbull, historian.

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VIEWPOINT

The destructive power of words

Lies have contributed to and continue to fuel the savage violence being perpetrated upon the doomed people of Gaza (and the West Bank)

THERE HAS BEEN such an incredible amount of violence, destruction and, yes, murder (as I write, over 8,500 and counting) in Gaza since the Hamas attack — not to mention over the many previous decades — I think one has to be either numb or willfully blind not to be shocked and cry out "No! Not in our name!" the way over 400 arrested protesters, including members of Jewish Voice for Peace, did at

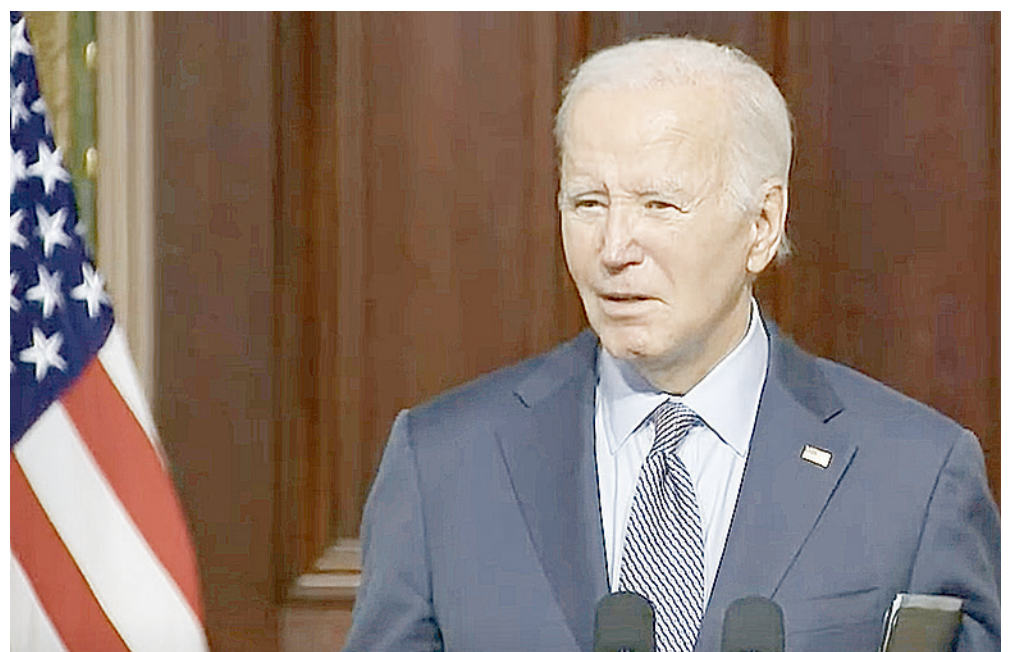
RICHARD EVERS describes himself as "of Jewish heritage but not of faith or belief."

Grand Central Station in New York City just recently. Many around the world are now calling it genocide.

But I want here to focus upon another kind of destructive power: the power of words, specifically some of the lies that have contributed to and continue to fuel the savage violence being perpetrated upon the

doomed people of Gaza (and the West Bank).

One outright, egregious lie, told within a day of the Hamas revenge strike, came from none other than the president of the United States when he told reporters and the nation, "I never really thought that I would see, have confirmed, pictures of terrorists beheading children."



"I never really thought that I would see, have confirmed, pictures of terrorists beheading children," President Biden said on Oct. 11. No such reports have been confirmed.

Turns out, Joe Biden, in fact, didn't have to experience the pain of viewing such pictures after all. Why? Because, in fact, he never saw them; they didn't exist. He made it up!

And Netanyahu did the same damned thing.

From Jerusalem, CNN reported: "The Israeli government has not confirmed the specific claim that Hamas

attackers cut off the heads of babies during their shock attack on Saturday, an Israeli official told CNN, contradicting a previous public statement by the

■ SEE DESTRUCTIVE WORDS, C2



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

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



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■ Destructive words

FROM SECTION FRONT

Prime Minister's office.

"There have been cases of Hamas militants carrying out beheadings and other ISIS-style atrocities. However, we cannot confirm if the victims were men or women, soldiers or civilians, adults or children," the official said.

Seriously? The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) couldn't tell the difference between men and women, adults, and children? Wasn't the attack violent enough without having to claim wild untruths about beheaded babies?

Well, forget Netanyahu. He's still facing criminal charges, and has demonstrated he will do almost anything to stay in power. Hardly a reliable source of truth.

But Biden? The president and "leader of the free world," a man with an awesome responsibility to project moral authority? Lying through his teeth? To what end?

One can only marvel at the chutzpah of the White House press office (as reported by *The Washington Post*): "A White House spokesperson later clarified that 'U.S. officials and the president have not seen pictures or confirmed such reports independently' the Post reported." Clarified? Clarified? He lied, OK?

SADLY, FROM Johnson to Nixon to G. W. Bush to Trump, here in the U.S. we're so dazed, confused, and used to presidents lying that we now just sort of take it for granted, don't we? Biden consciously and deliberately chose Israel over truth.

Another lie, less public and more personal, came recently from a more ordinary person. Yet — despite all the articles and op-eds I've read in recent weeks about the conflict — it still somehow shocked me.

Steve Inskeep, of NPR's *Morning Edition*, on Oct. 30, interviewed a woman member of one of the kibbutzes that Hamas attacked and from which hostages were kidnapped. She described how her parents had come from Poland as Holocaust survivors, but that she was born in Israel. She told Inskeep, "They want our land." Her land! Depends on whom you ask, but I think that's a lie.

Her parents, along with tens of thousands of other Jews had fled Europe — where the most terrible tsunami of human violence in human history had just taken place — to British-mandated Palestine, from which Jews had largely dispersed millennia ago, and was now inhabited mainly by Palestinian Arabs, living mostly in small villages where they and their families had dwelt for generations, tending flocks and olive groves, among other land-based pursuits.

And no matter how Zionists and their allies spin the history, the fact is that in 1948 — when Israel was declared a state by fiat by the U.S. and the European victors in Washington and London — approximately three-quarters of a million indigenous Arabs were either expelled or forced to flee their native villages in a terrible wave of violence (the Nakba, meaning "Catastrophe"), which ironically echoed the horror and expulsion of the Jews in Europe, resulting in most of them ending up as refugees in Gaza and the West Bank, where they've lived a blighted existence ever since.

It's impossible, of course, to recount the complexity of that history in a few sentences.

Neighboring Arab states contributed greatly to the plight of the Palestinians, and Palestinian leaders at the time rejected what they thought were humiliating offers of co-existence with intruders from afar, backed by the world's most powerful, imperialist countries (and the USSR, I believe), but what I've very briefly summarized is not a lie.

I'VE NEVER LIVED in Israel, but I've seen pictures of at least some of the Zionist settlements that look for all the world like suburbs in New York or New Jersey.

And I have read stories about venerated, old, life-sustaining Arab olive groves being cut down, bulldozed and destroyed by zealots to make way for these essentially gated communities often devoid of the deep connection to the land that existed amongst the indigenous, tribal people.

That's hardly the whole story, but it is a very important part of it, and people in the U.S. whose taxes are paying for the death-dealing planes, bombs, and tanks — and, yes, the U.N. condemned settlements themselves — ought to be aware of it.

But they're *not* going to hear it from Joe Biden, nor, sadly, from either Sen. Peter Welch or Rep. Becca Balint — two smart, well-informed people who, I think it's safe to say, fully understand Israel's longstanding subjugation of Palestinians but apparently choose to put their re-election ahead of honestly acknowledging that truth.

And let's face it: Retribution for anything less than full-throated support for Israel is a political fact of life in the United States.

These past few weeks, I have been reading Robin Wall Kimmerer's beautiful book, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, which explores the complementary importance of ecological, scientific understanding and Native American, land-based spirituality.

In a chapter on ecological restoration of degraded land (think: cars, housing sprawl, containment walls, uprooted olive groves, etc.), she quotes from a 1994 statement from the Indigenous Environmental Network:

"Cultural survival depends on healthy land and a healthy, responsible relationship between humans and the land.... Ecological restoration is inseparable from cultural and spiritual restoration, and is inseparable from spiritual responsibilities of care-giving and world-renewal."

WHICH LEADS ME to a very important, if not sacred, Hebrew concept and value, *tikkun*, which Wikipedia defines as "mending the world."

Can anyone tell me how the Zionist project — driving hundreds of thousands of indigenous people from the land of their parents and grandparents, and now bombing them to smithereens — has in any way mended the world? One could certainly argue quite the opposite.

I believe it's also worth noting that many thousands of Jews here in the U.S. — who came of age in the '50s and '60s, when Israel was a young, fragile, but very optimistic and determined nation — as part of their religious upbringing and training, were inculcated with the myth that the transformation of British-mandated Palestine into Israel was both a God-given right and justified because

■ King Philip's War

FROM SECTION FRONT

lived in Hingham and Hull, Massachusetts, and then moved to what is today Bristol, Rhode Island in the early 1680s.

If you know your New England colonial history, you realize the symbolic significance of Bristol. Before it was ever Bristol, the peninsula, the surrounding plain, and the high point called "Montaup" ("lookout point") by the Natives and "Mt. Hope" by the colonists was the home base for the Pokanoket tribe of the Wampanoag Nation.

As such, it doubled as Massasoit Ousamequin's center of operations in leading the Wampanoag. This is the same Massasoit who befriended the Pilgrims and helped them survive their earliest years in Plymouth. After his death in 1661 the leadership passed down first to his older son, Wamsutta (Alexander), and then to his younger son, Metacom (King Philip).

From 1620 until 1675, the colonists gradually whittled away at the Natives' land holdings in southeastern Massachusetts. Sometimes this occurred through above-board negotiations, but this also occurred through power imbalances and otherwise unfair transactions. Moreover, the Natives often thought they were agreeing to share the land, not to lose control of it.

By 1675 the colonists had taken control of a great majority of the land in southeastern Massachusetts, sometimes with Massasoit's, Wamsutta's, and Metacom's willing cooperation, but sometimes because their hands were tied.

Metacom, in particular, grew increasingly angry at this, and increasingly frustrated at the practice of the colonists to fence in some of these previously free lands and/or to let their cattle roam at will. Also, he was increasingly disturbed that colonial proselytizers like John Eliot were working hard to convert heretofore seasonally migratory Natives into sedentary Christians.

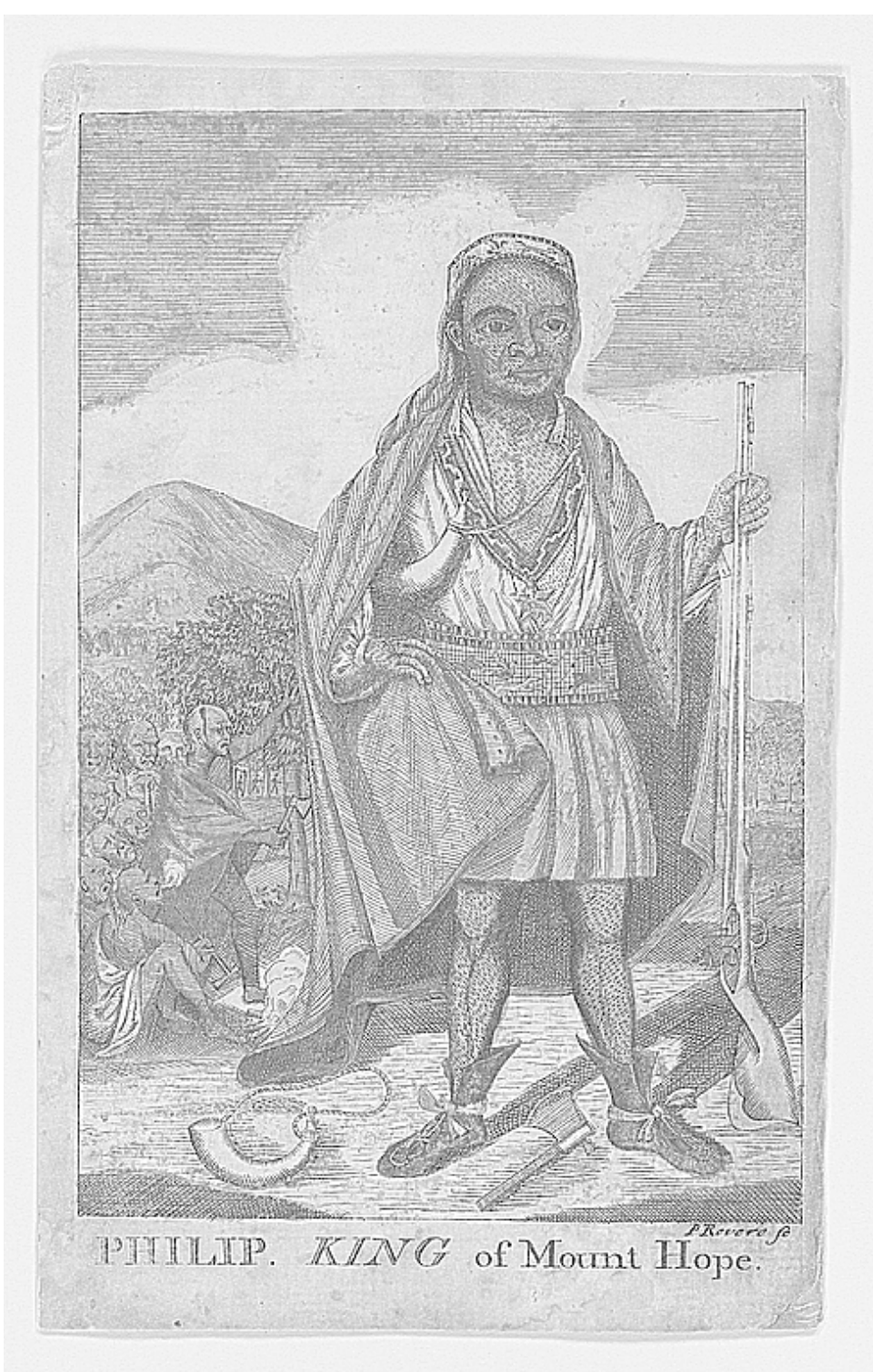
So Metacom talked to some of the other Native leaders about the possibility of a rebellion.

The colonial leaders tried to head this off but were unable to do so before it broke out into open warfare in June of 1675.

King Philip's War to this day is considered the deadliest war per capita ever fought by Americans or their precursor colonial ancestors. Deadlier than the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, either World War, or the Vietnam War.

Though many colonial towns were attacked and destroyed by this rebellion, after 14 months the colonists did win the war, so to speak, at least in southern New England.

Through their actions, however, the Native American coalition (primarily the Wampanoag, Narragansett, and Nipmuc, with some help from the more northerly Abenaki) did force the colonists to draw back much closer for a time to the ocean, back to Boston and Plymouth, and nearby towns, plus a few in the Connecticut River Valley.



YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

"Philip, King of Mount Hope," by the American engraver and silversmith Paul Revere.

At one point in the hostilities, Metacom tried to recruit the Mohawks into the coalition. They refused to join, a decision that could well have affected the outcome of the war.

KING PHILIP'S WAR represents the frustration of Indigenous peoples fighting back after seeing more and more of their previously assumed rights — to move seasonally to fish, hunt, gather, plant — taken away from them, either legally or through the actions of the incoming burgeoning, land-hungry European population.

Bottom line: The whole situation was over control of land, which is a clear parallel to the current Middle East situation.

Some of the Natives' attacks were vicious, including deliberate killing of innocents. This record, however, pales in comparison to tactics the colonial militias sometimes used.

This included a massacre in December of 1675 in southwestern Rhode Island — the Great Swamp Fight or Great Swamp Massacre — in which several hundred Narragansett warriors, women, children, and elders were slaughtered,

including through burning of their wigwams while they were still in them.

This included a daybreak massacre in May of 1676 at Peskeomskut (today's Turners Falls, Massachusetts) at a wigwam village devoid of warriors at the time, where hundreds of women, children, and elders were shot to death or opted to jump into the falls, thus drowning to death.

Metacom went on the run during the summer of 1676, returning in August to the peninsula of today's Bristol, Rhode Island, his former center of power. An Indigenous man allied with the colonists killed him there, and his head was later put on a pike for display in Plymouth.

After the war, Mt. Hope peninsula may have been the most coveted piece of undeveloped real estate in southern New England. The English assumed it was now vacant of Indigenous peoples, which the research of Massasoit descendant Deborah Spears Moorehead directly contests.

By 1680, however, Plymouth Colony was petitioning King Charles II back in England to give this land to the colony as a means for it to pay

off its war debts. The king did so, and the colony then sold it to four investors from Boston, who subdivided it into lots for the first households of English settlers (including Bosworths). The land was taken away from the Natives.

IN THE SPAN OF just a few recent days, I have been reviewing this history, and the parallels to the Israel/Palestinian situation have struck me.

To me, the situation in the Mideast calls for a two-state solution. It calls for the Palestinians (not, however, Hamas) to be given land rights and some of the land back, instead of having those assets slowly but steadily be taken away and grow ever smaller and more constrained, more apartheid-like.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government must commit to doing so; otherwise, I cannot support him or his government.

I hope Vermont's U.S. representative, Becca Balint, while wrestling with her own Jewish roots, will contemplate historical antecedents and take them into consideration.

it matched "A people without land to a land without people."

But that turns out to be perhaps the biggest lie of all.

On the radio program *Democracy Now!*, I listened on Oct. 24 to an interview with Rami Khouri, a Palestinian-American journalist and historian who's been observing and writing about the conflict for 50-plus years.

He said something startling that I'd never heard before and bears repeating: that if you ask any 10-year-old kid in Gaza where he's from, he won't tell you "Gaza," but he'll say the name of the village his family was expelled from 75 years ago.

In other words, the family has kept that memory alive down through the generations, and in many instances, Khouri noted, it still has the keys to their former home!

An astounding statement that shines light on a truth that, especially here in U.S., needs to be told.

■ Israel

FROM SECTION FRONT

was a power station and the potential for much solar energy. There was an airport."

Instead of utilizing Israel's infrastructure for the benefit of the people of Gaza, Hamas was determined to fulfill the clearly stated goal of destroying Israel and killing all Jews — jihad. Donated water pipes were used to build rockets. Underground tunnels were constructed to invade Israel and store goods and weapons.

Israeli leaders were hoping that economic benefit for the people of Gaza would help eradicate the threat of terror. With the border tightened to prevent threats from terrorists, thousands of Gazans were able to find employment in Israel. The Israeli military could certainly conclude that this was how Hamas gathered intelligence carried out on Oct. 7.

According to Colonel Richard Kemp, former commander of British troops in Afghanistan,

Iraq, the Balkans, and Northern Ireland, wrote on his website: "Any and all Israeli security control measures over Judea and Samaria (The West Bank) and Gaza have been imposed in response to incessant Palestinian Arab aggression."

"Hamas terrorists have the least possible claim to have carried out their brutality from 'stifling occupation'. Israel unilaterally left the Gaza Strip in 2005, effectively ceding it to complete Palestinian control. Immediately when Hamas took over, they used the territory as a base for attack on Israel, compelling the [Israel Defense Forces], and Egypt, to impose a partial blockade to try to prevent weapons entering Gaza as well as attacks being launched from there."

I FIND DEEP SADNESS in finally agreeing with the words of Israel's fourth prime minister, Golda Meir: "We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children. There will be peace in the Middle East only when the Arabs love their children more than they hate Israel."

On Oct. 28, Colonel Richard Kemp shared on his website: "Hamas exists solely to destroy the State of Israel. This is laid down in its founding charter,

cleansing or subjugating Jews in every part of the land 'from the river to the sea'.

"They know they can't defeat the IDF by military means, so their entire strategy is to work towards Israel's delegitimation, vilification and isolation in the world, using the lives of their own people as weapons of war. We must not let them win."

ONE MORE LETTER

What else will stop killing of civilians?

In the Israel/Hamas war, a ceasefire may not be the final answer, but surely it has to be the first step — now!

We urge Rep. Becca Balint to immediately sign the Ceasefire Now House resolution. What else will stop the killing of innocent civilians?

And we wish Sens. Sanders and Welch would introduce, and promote, a similar resolution in the Senate. It is disappointing that our Vermont delegation has been totally silent on this issue.

Lee and Byron Stookey
Brattleboro

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COLUMN

Grace Cottage needs a new building — now

Plans for the hospital's new primary care clinic were submitted in April to the Green Mountain Care Board, which has yet to issue a Certificate of Need

Williamsville

RECENTLY PARTICIPATED in the Townshend Community Conversation about “Vermont’s healthcare system to support hospital transformation.” For two hours, residents of rural Windham County testified to the extraordinary way medical services are delivered at Grace Cottage Family Health and Hospital.

It was a remarkable expression of gratitude and pride for an institution that delivers essential health care services to the rural community it serves. And for good reason.

People can access a lot of primary care in Townshend, including pediatrics, adult medicine, gerontology, hospice, mental health, and substance abuse treatment. Wraparound services include laboratory, imaging, occupational and physical therapy, emergency care, in-patient care, social services, and end-of-life hospice care.

There’s a pharmacy where patients can pick up prescriptions without adding an extra 40 miles to fetch medicine at the cost of an hour’s time and two gallons of gas. For many in our rural hilltowns, transportation



DEBORAH LEE LUSKIN, one of this newspaper’s original columnists, blogs at deborahleelusk.com.

is a barrier to accessing health care.

I live in Newfane and have been going to Grace Cottage for primary care since 1984. I gave birth in the old hospital, brought my kids for casts, stitches, and wellness care, and I sat vigil for my father in the Hospice Suite, where he was able to die as he wished, with no heroic measures.

Grace Cottage provides family medicine from cradle to grave.

FOR 16 YEARS, I managed a private family practice in Townshend and learned firsthand how, when primary care is accessible, welcoming, and within the community it serves, it’s a bargain compared to the cost of after-the-fact intervention — not just financially, but also in quality of life.

Health care is a service; it’s

the financing of health care that’s become an industry.

By concentrating on delivering excellent primary care that attracts patients, practitioners, and staff, Grace Cottage has outgrown its clinical space. It’s now up to the Green Mountain Care Board to allow Grace Cottage to build a new clinic building to meet a growing 21st-century demand for primary care.

The hospital building and emergency department have been recently expanded to meet this increasing demand, but the clinics are in two 19th-century buildings that have been renovated so often that all that remains of the original structures

are their uneven floors.

When practitioners need to have one of medicine’s difficult family conversations regarding a serious diagnosis with patients and family, they all cram into a small exam room that others are waiting to use. The clinic needs a conference room and more exam rooms — and a conference room as well.

Grace Cottage has 13 primary-care providers — family physicians, nurse practitioners, and physicians’ assistants — who are shoehorned three to an office, where they dictate, make phone calls, do research, and concentrate all within earshot of one another and with a complete lack of privacy.

One nurse practitioner does have her own office. The room has no window; in any other building, this would be called a closet.

NEVERTHELESS — and despite a national shortage of family physicians — family doctors and advanced practitioners want to work at Grace Cottage Family Health, and patient demand continues to increase, but there is no space to accommodate them.

The current clinic is inadequate and worn out. Plans for a new primary care clinic were submitted in April to the Green Mountain Care Board, which has yet to issue a Certificate of

Need.

While Grace Cottage is small by today’s health care standards, its size and independence allow it to be nimble and resilient, as evidenced by its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It’s a highly successful model for delivering health care in a rural area. And unlike some larger hospitals in Vermont, Grace Cottage is solvent.

At the recent Community Conversation about Healthcare Sustainability, the consultant facilitating the meeting assured us this meeting was part of a long-range data-collection process.

All well and good, but Grace Cottage Family Health needs a new building now.

LETTERS FROM READERS

We need peace in the world, from Putney to the Middle East

Putney Friends Meeting (Quakers) joins the growing chorus of those reaching out to our friends and neighbors in light of another antisemitic symbol showing up in town.

Even before the terrible war in the Middle East, a swastika was painted on the sidewalk near Putney Central School. Such a senseless act of hate hurts us all.

We grieve for the violence in Gaza, Israel, and elsewhere. We mourn every life lost, every injury, and every hateful word and symbol used to harm.

We grieve for every child growing up in a world without seeing peaceful solutions to conflict modeled by their communities. We grieve for every person leaving with fear and hate.

With xenophobic acts against both Jews and Arabs continuing to increase across the world, we stand against such acts and call for everyone, ourselves included, to look, listen, and join together to find ways for achieving true peace and justice. Every human deserves to feel safe and loved in their home and their community, and violence can never achieve that end.

We also see this as a teachable moment for all of us: to learn — or relearn — how the Nazis appropriated the swastika from other cultures and turned it into something that represents violence and hatred with their attempted genocide of the Jewish people in Europe.

In hope for all our friends, family and neighbors, we pray you will join us as we seek a way forward.

PUTNEY FRIENDS MEETING
Putney

Julia Forsythe and Francie Marbury, co-clerks

One lot or two? Or is it three?

RE: “Putney permits housing project; opponents plan to appeal” [News, March 23, 2022].

Virginia Ray’s article described how a permit for a Windham-Windsor Housing Trust project in Putney, issued by the Putney Development Review Board (DRB) on March 9, 2022, “allows the land to be subdivided into two parcels.” The reporter may have been misinformed.

The deed registered in the Putney town record for the sale to Windham-Windsor Housing Trust dated Sept. 18, 2023 describes the land as three parcels: one parcel described as Lot B, purportedly being sold to the Community Garden, a.k.a. Green Commons of Vermont, and two other parcels, described as lot 1A and lot 1B.

When I asked the town clerk if it was one lot or two, he answered it’s three lots. What quantifies lot 1A and lot 1B as separate is the fact that they are

named with one numeral indicating common ownership while calling them separate parcel 1A and parcel 1B. The other distinguishing factor is that lot 1A and lot 1B are divided by a road and the parcels are not contiguous.

The current appeal in Vermont Environmental Court is asking the court to require a land use review to determine if the density fits in the definition of affordable housing.

If the review reveals that the parcels (lots) are separated by a road and not contiguous, the developers who have purchased the land will have to redesign the development to accommodate the current zoning regulations in Putney, which would allow 11 units on the 9/10ths of an acre.

Deborah Lazar
Putney

Rave review

I have been a moviegoer all my life. When given the choice of seeing a movie or doing almost anything else, I always choose the film.

On a recent rainy Sunday, I saw the *Killers of the Flower Moon*, a film which you have to be dead not to have heard of at this point. I had read the book years ago (David Grann), and had been intrigued by the story, particularly the history of how the FBI became a real government agency. I often assess real-life events with the question, “Would this make a good movie?”

Years passed, and then I read that Martin Scorsese had chosen it for his next project. Scorsese was “working on a film based on historical events.” Tales of his wish to preserve everything truthful about the story: the detail of Native Americans of Osage blood who were weaving the same fabrics worn by their forbears, how the actors would speak the Osage language, that the living descendants would be in the film. History and truth were the ideals that would be preserved. But when?

My 3.5-hour experience in watching this film was something I have rarely felt in a movie house. Awe was my first and still-prominent feeling.

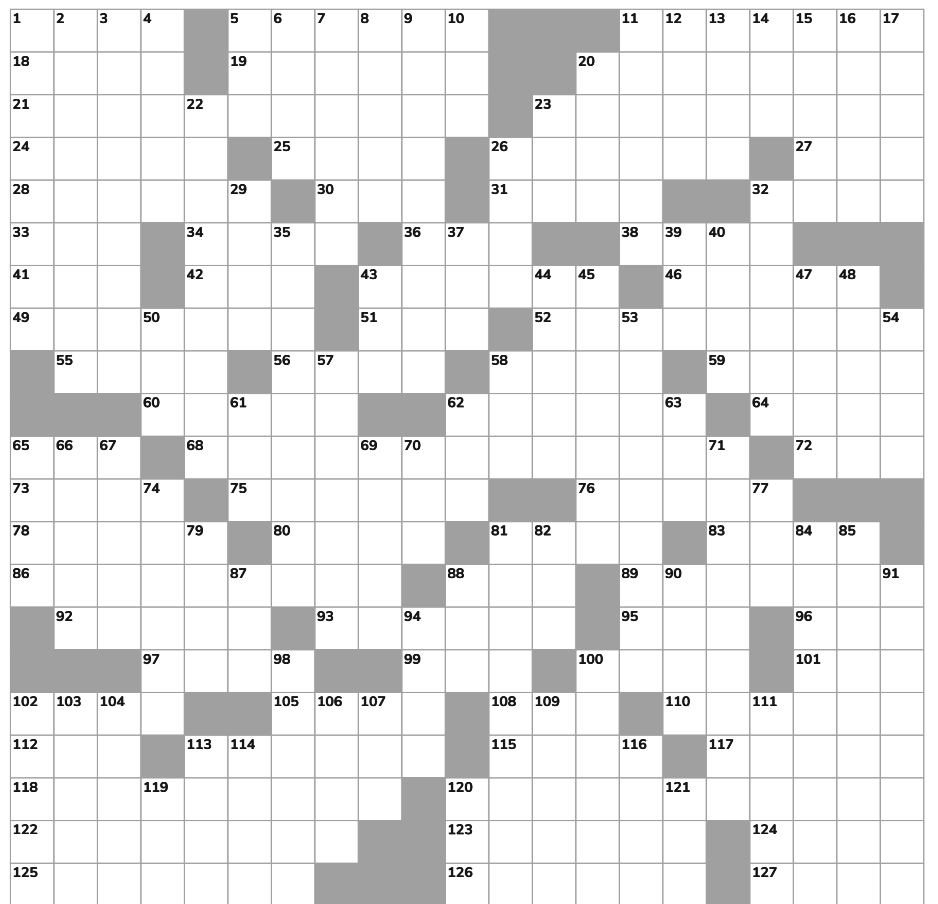
Everyone who chooses to spend this amount of time in a movie theater with others is part of a collective and selective experience. There is no break for a quick look at screens, bathroom trips, or the like. Seeing a film has a beginning and an end. One can go to a museum and spend as much time as needed to appreciate a piece of art. One can bookmark Dostoevsky whenever it gets too tiresome. Not so with moviegoing — you are in it, or you are not. It is a time-selective art form, much like theater.

My first thought when I awoke the next day was “I should see it again.” It’s another rainy day...

Ann Macdonald
Putney

Across

- Sandcastle shaper
- Breakfast place
- Extra amount
- Big name in shoe stores
- Talking bird
- Conditionally free
- Where to find soul mates?
- Firing evidence
- Bush sticker
- Bad mood
- QB ___ Lawrence
- Slump
- Most flimsy, like an excuse
- Worcester-to-Bost on dir.
- Draw to a close
- NASDAQ competitor
- Tax shelter inits.
- Bugs in the wall
- When “Blue Bloods” airs: Abbr.
- Gray wolf
- With a jelly-belly
- Blood-typing letters
- Small chicken
- Story opener
- Looking all over
- Summer coolers, for short
- “Everything’s going to be all right”
- Slash mark?
- Maverick’s first name in “Top Gun”
- Sardonic laugh
- Name that’s 80 percent vowels
- Manning of “Orange Is the New Black”
- Keith Haring works
- Arizona city
- Fingers
- Office feature
- “Pipe down!”
- Kamala’s title
- Put in a kitty
- “Fish Magic” and “Twittering Machine”
- How some stocks are sold
- Fountain splasher
- Cuban ayes
- Pumpers’ physiques
- ABC, CBS, etc.
- Computer that comes with AirDrop
- Filling breakfasts?
- Haile Selassie disciple
- Bing action
- Anthrax guitarist Scott ___
- Oreck, for short
- Outlet possibilities
- William J. Burns’s org.
- Overabundance
- Seventh of 24
- Kiln
- Thun’s river
- Schmaltzy sentimentality
- Dark and gloomy
- Decorative vase
- Gambling spot
- “Dancing Queen” group
- Henhouse
- “American Gothic” painter
- Eagle in golf (there are six hidden in this puzzle)
- USWNT goalie with the most clean sheets
- Looks after
- “Through Being Cool” band
- Lure with music



- Sticks
- First family’s home?

Down

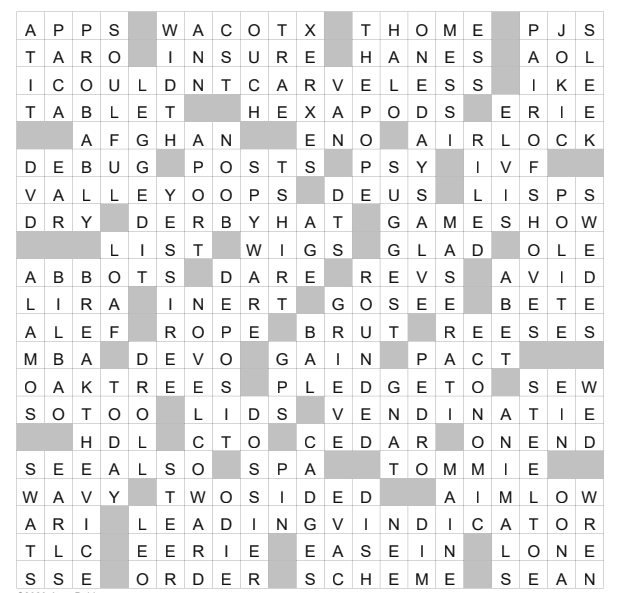
- Former incarnation
- Nuclear fission streams
- Colloquial
- “Casablanca” actor
- On the money
- Coded language?
- They’re not pretty
- Hatch formerly in D.C.
- Turnaround
- Itinerary abbr.
- Whine
- Engaged in
- Cartoonish dino’s yell
- In favor of
- No good
- Radii neighbors
- Swamp plant
- Plow team
- App with a camera icon
- Disco or grunge period
- Nincompoop
- Women’s cologne by Dana
- “We’re at capacity!”
- “Tommyrot!”
- ER staff
- Choose
- Turn on the waterworks
- Cricket prop
- Very skilled
- Punk cuts
- Makes even
- Cork crew
- ___ King Cole
- Cologne essence
- “Sure thing, man!”
- Becomes established
- Cooperstown inst.
- Tear
- Homeschooling group
- Dodici diviso quattro
- Terrible tsar

- Ward off
- Anatomical dividers
- It may be stuck in a bar
- 8-Down’s title: Abbr.
- Market bond
- Attacks, like a kitty
- La lead-in
- Quad marchers
- Lewis and Clark’s guide
- Scholz’s I
- Fully-formed
- Space next to Electric Co.
- “Funky!”
- Hosp. procedure
- Art Spiegelman graphic novel

- Test with bubble sheets
- HP rival
- Princess Kate’s mother
- Lose everything
- ___ to (must)
- Item in a quiver
- Potions professor
- Indian restaurant potato
- Towel holder
- Instruments with distinctive A’s
- One-named “Royals” singer
- Vet’s affliction
- Gone wrong?
- Poker pre-payment
- Called once
- Recipe amt.
- Parties

Last issue’s solution

“Gimme Five”



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COLUMN | *Sports Roundup*

Rebels, Wildcats fall short in state soccer finals

The Vermont Division IV state soccer championships came to Applejack Stadium in Manchester on Nov. 4, with the defending champion Leland & Gray Rebels in the girls' final taking on the top-seeded Arlington Eagles, and the undefeated Twin Valley Wildcats facing the defending champions, the Winooski Spartans, in the boys' final.

In a pair of games that showcased the four of the best soccer programs in Vermont, Arlington defeated Leland & Gray, 2-1, while Winooski kept its crown with a 1-0 win over Twin Valley.

Leland & Gray was making its third straight trip to the championship game. While the Rebels came away with a 2-1 win in their only regular season game on Sept. 12 in Townshend, the rematch at Applejack was a reversal of that result.

Abigail Emerson gave the Rebels a 1-0 lead in the ninth minute, knocking in the rebound after an initial stop of a teammate's shot by Eagles goalkeeper Sheya Wehrman.

After that, Wehrman was perfect in goal and thwarted several good scoring chances by the Rebels. However, the Rebels defense and goalkeeper Annabelle Brookes kept the Eagles from scoring until they finally broke through in the final 15 minutes of play.

Sidney Herrington got the tying goal for the Eagles during a scramble in front of the net. Taylor Wilkens then scored the game-winner with 8:57 remaining, following up the rebound of a shot by Herrington that was deflected by Brookes.

It was a tough ending for the Rebels, who finished with a 12-4-1 record. To get to the title game, Leland & Gray defeated third-seeded Rivendell, 2-1, in a semifinal game on Oct. 31 in Townshend. Emerson and Mary Sanderson were the goalscorers, and Ava LeCours and Sam Morse each picked up an assist.

The Rebels will lose Lecours, Sanderson, Amanda Fontaine, Dylan Person, and Maggie Parker to graduation, and should return a strong core of players for making another championship run in 2024.

• Over the course of this

Bellows Falls quarterback Cole Moore ran for one touchdown in a 21-20 loss in overtime to North Country in the Division II semifinals in Newport on Nov. 3.

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.

season, Winooski was not a high-scoring team. With nine shutouts heading into the championship game, it was defense that carried the Spartans.

The Spartans followed that blueprint against Twin Valley. Abdoul Lailati scored the game's lone goal in the 48th minute and prevented the Wildcats — who entered the title game having scored 84 goals — from scoring.

To get to the championship game, the Wildcats had to play through a snowstorm in Wilmington on Nov. 1 that turned Hayford Field into a winter wonderland that was not exactly conducive to play-off soccer.

But the Wildcats shook off the prematurely wintery conditions and rolled over Rivendell in the semifinal match, 7-1. Cody Magnant scored three goals and assisted on two others. Brayden Brown also scored three goals and assisted on another, while Steven Oyer had a goal and an assist. Kaelyn Lackey had four stops in goal.

Twin Valley finished with a 16-1 record, and will lose Magnant, Noah Dornburgh, Garrett Cunningham, and Garrett Ryan to graduation. The rest of this team that almost achieved perfection are expected to be back for another shot at a state soccer title in 2024.

Terriers fall to Falcons in OT

• For the second time in three weeks, the third-seeded Bellows Falls Terriers made the long trip to Newport on Nov. 3 to take on the second-seeded North Country Falcons in the Division II football semifinals.

On a cold night in the Northeast Kingdom, the Falcons needed overtime to

defeat the Terriers, 21-20, to deny Bellows Falls a fourth straight trip to the state championship game.

North Country took a 14-0 lead into halftime on touchdown runs by Haiden Boivin and Justin Young. BF cut the lead in half with a 2-yard touchdown run by running back Jesse Darrell late in the third quarter. Quarterback Cole Moore then forced overtime when he scored on a 1-yard drive with 12 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

Tied 14-14, the game went into OT. The Falcons had the ball first and, on fourth down, quarterback Watson Laffoon scored on a 1-yard plunge. The point-after kick was good for a 21-14 lead.

The Terriers then got the ball, and Darrell dashed into the end zone on BF's first play from scrimmage. Head coach Bob Lockerby then called the play that would decide the game. BF faked an extra point attempt, and tried for the two-point conversion that would win the game...if it worked.

Moore — the holder for three points — took the ball, rolled to his left and lofted a pass to Darrell in the corner of the end zone. It was a little too high for the well-defended Darrell to reach, and the incomplete pass punched North Country's ticket for a trip to Rutland this Saturday to play for the state title for the first time since 2004.

Boivin finished with 83 yards on nine carries for the 8-2 Falcons, while Young had 12 carries for 72 yards. Darrell led the 5-5 Terriers with 90 yards on 13 carries, while fellow running back Walker James — back in action after missing two games with an ankle injury — rushed for 68 yards on seven carries.

While the Terriers will lose Darrell, James, Moore, Colby Dearborn, Remy Lacroix, Curtis Green, Colby Bernier, Andrew Wilbur, Jaxon Clark, Jaxyn Lovell, and Angel Rivera to graduation, they have a large group of underclassmen who are ready to step up for the 2024 season.

Rec. Dept. offers indoor sports opportunities for adults

• With the days growing shorter and colder, the



Leland & Gray's Abigail Emerson (2) scored the Rebels' only goal in a 2-1 loss to Arlington in the Division IV girls' soccer championship on Nov. 4 at Applejack Stadium in Manchester.



Twin Valley midfielder Brayden Brown scored three goals in the Wildcats' 7-1 win over Rivendell in the Division IV boys' soccer semifinals on Nov. 1 in Wilmington.

Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department offers a variety of activities at the Gibson-Aiken Center for folks who want to stay active through the winter months.

Adult Soccer/Futsal is offered on Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Third Floor Gym. The program is intended to be inclusive of all skill levels with emphasis on learning and enjoying the game. Pickup games will be played. The fee per night is \$5 for Brattleboro residents and \$7 for non-residents. Space is limited to 18 players per night.

Pickleball is offered on Tuesday nights from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Third Floor Gym. This program is designed for adults of all abilities. This is a freelance program with no instructor. Pickup games will be played. All levels and abilities are welcome. The fee per night is \$5 for Brattleboro residents and \$7 for non-residents.

Table tennis will be offered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 6 to 8:30 p.m., sponsored by the Brattleboro Area Table Tennis Club. It is open for ping pong players of all skill levels, and they strongly encourage beginners to join. Time is spent doing warmups and practice and then competitive games are played between the players who are present. Groups of players go to a local tournament each year. There is an intra-club tournament at the end of the

year. The fee per night is \$3 for Brattleboro residents and \$5 for non-residents.

Badminton is offered on Thursdays from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the Third Floor Gym. This program is designed for adults of all abilities. This is a freelance program with no instructor. Pickup games will be played and all levels and abilities are welcome. The fee per night is \$4 for Brattleboro residents and \$6 for non-residents.

Volleyball is offered on Mondays from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Third Floor Gym. This program is designed for adults of all abilities. This is a freelance program with no instructor. Pickup games will be played and all levels and abilities are welcome. The fee per night is \$5 for Brattleboro residents and \$7 for non-residents.

For all programs, events, facility information, and more, visit brattleboro.org and click on "Sport and Recreation" tab found on the blue horizontal bar. A new drop-down menu will appear that will take you to "Recreation and Parks." If there are special needs required for these programs, let them know five days in advance by calling 802-254-5808.

Senior bowling roundup

• It's the mid-point of the fall/winter season of the

Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl, and Week 9 action on Nov. 2 saw Stepping Stones (29-16) have a 0-5 week but still stay in first place. Moving into second after a 5-0 week was Four Seasons (28-17), followed by No Splits (27-18), Four Pins (26-19), High Rollers (25-20), Dumblebor, Skippers, and Hairiers (all 24-21), and PEWJ (10-35).

Pat Bentrup had the women's high handicap game (245), while Doris Lake had the high handicap series (691). Charlie Marchant had the men's high handicap game (261) and John Walker had the high handicap series (690). Dumblebor had the high team handicap game (884) and series (2,578).

Walker had the men's high scratch series (621) with games of 224, 205, and 189. Milt Sherman had a 558 series with a 218 game, Gary Montgomery had a 544 series with a 204 game, and Marty Adams had a 542 series. Fred Ashworth and Warren Coriveau Sr. each had a 511 series with Coriveau rolling a 190 game. Marchant had a 508 series and Al Dascomb had a 193 game.

Pam Greenblott had the women's high scratch series (463) and game (175). Bentrup had a 170 game, while Deb Kolpa had a 164 game and Carol Goski had a 161 game.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/COMMONS FILE PHOTO

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