

Celebrating 17 years of publication — and counting!

The Commons

FREE

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

Brattleboro, Vermont • Wednesday, April 19, 2023 • Vol. XVIII, No. 16 • Issue No. 711

commonnews.org

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



The original sign that was in front of the Royal Diner when it was located on Main Street in Brattleboro eventually found its way to the Chelsea Royal Diner's present location in West Brattleboro.

Squeezed by inflation, staffing challenges, sheer exhaustion, and the wish to retire, the owners of the Chelsea Royal Diner in West Brattleboro call it quits, looking toward their new life on Cape Cod as they continue looking for a buyer



After years of running the Chelsea Royal together, Todd Darrah and Janet Picard are throwing in the dishtowel. They still hope for a bright future for the diner, which has been on the market since 2016.

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

WEST BRATTLEBORO—On April 7, Brattleboro's beloved Chelsea Royal Diner, having already been closed for three months, made a post on its Facebook page.

"Don't worry," the announcement said, "we will announce when we are back in action[.] I know it's hard to wait [heart emoji] we appreciate your patience."

But this past weekend, owners Todd Darrah and Janet Picard announced that the popular restaurant will not reopen again — at least not under their management.

"With heavy hearts, we unfortunately will not be reopening the iconic Chelsea Royal Diner this year," Darrah and Picard said in an email. "We were very fortunate to have been a major part of the community for 32 years, serving locals and tourists

■ SEE DINER CLOSES, A3

For new BFMS principal, a focus on 'climate and culture'

Interim Principal Henry Bailly, recently hired for the permanent role starting in the fall, hopes to bring stability to a school administration that's faced significant churn

By Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—Henry Bailly came to the Bellows Falls Middle School at the beginning of the current school year as assistant principal. He will end it as interim principal, a role he had served in since this past fall, and will start the 2023-24 school year as the school's new permanent principal.

"It's going to be an adjustment," Bailly said. "But I like to feel that I was chosen principal because of the work I was able to do this year."

Just seven weeks into the school year, Bailly became the sole interim principal with just one administrative assistant.

Though "we were short-handed for sure," he said, he believes that the year went well and that he has proved his ability to handle the principal position.

After growing up in western Massachusetts, where his mother ran a day care and his father was a bank president, Bailly went to Keene State College, graduating in 2007 with degrees in both elementary education and biological sciences.

He worked his way through college as a line cook and front-of-house staff at a Keene restaurant. There he met his future wife, Brittany, who was from the Bellows Falls area.

Bailly says that he loves Bellows Falls, where they bought a house seven years ago. The couple has been married 13 years and have a 9-year-old daughter. Bailly went directly from

college to teaching fourth grade at the Westmoreland (N.H.) Elementary School. He worked there for 15 years as a classroom teacher.

He worked with many of the same students from the early grades through middle school, as he also served as both a basketball and baseball coach at the middle school level.

"Sports was my passion growing up," Bailly said. "As both a teacher and coach, it was great to work with kids in the classroom and on the sports field. It is very cool to see kids that might have struggled in class shine at something they were great at in sports."

That experience helped Bailly discover that he had a special love for working with middle school students.

During his years at Westmoreland, he got his master's degree in educational administration, certification as a school principal, and his administrator's license, with the idea of eventually jumping from teaching into school leadership. He applied for and got the assistant principal position at BFMS in 2022.

He also has taught anatomy and physiology for seven years at the River Valley Technical Center in Springfield, particularly to nursing students. His position as an administrator has made it necessary for him to give up that teaching position, and he will also not be coaching sports.

"Right now there is just too much to do," he said.

The current school year ends

■ SEE BFMS PRINCIPAL, A5

A second chance to run her first Boston Marathon

Despite Covid and other setbacks, Nicole James of Brattleboro makes it across the finish line

By Kevin O'Connor
VtDigger.org

A year ago, Nicole James vowed that a chronic autoimmune disease wouldn't stop her from fulfilling a childhood dream of running in the world's

oldest annual race, the Boston Marathon.

Waking morning upon morning before sunrise, she trained mile upon mile for the event's 2022 Patriots Day return after a pandemic of postponements.

Then, just days before the start, James caught Covid.

Seeing the 49-year-old Brattleboro resident sidelined, friends pointed to a silver lining: James' accompanying fundraising efforts had reaped \$10,000 for Massachusetts' Tufts Medical Center.

But the money-making

marathoner wanted to earn something else: a second chance at the 26.2-mile course.

On Monday, April 17, James finally stood among 30,000 other athletes. Some 120 were fellow Vermonters, a diverse group including a Putney woman who's a three-time U.S. Paralympic medalist, a Williston mother who's 20 weeks pregnant, and a University of Vermont medical student inaugurating the marathon's new nonbinary division.

From late morning to midafternoon, James ran in pelting

■ SEE MARATHON, A2



Vermonters Nicole James trains at Brattleboro Union High School in advance of racing alongside 120 other Green Mountain State athletes in Monday's Boston Marathon.

KEVIN O'CONNOR, VTDIGGER.ORG

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

DRYER VENT CLEANING Installation & Repair 603-762-3433 durlingcleaning.com	VT STATE INSPECTIONS No appt. needed Monday-Thursday Closed Noon-1 GOUIN SERVICES 802-257-1800 500 Guilford Street	NEW SPRING SHOES AND SANDALS! THE SHOE TREE Main St. Brattleboro	Brattleboro Music Center Brattleboro Camerata <i>The Want of You</i> Sunday, April 23, at 4:00 pm bmcvt.org	BARN SALE April 14-16, 21 & 22 and April 28-30 8am - 4pm. Rain/Shine. 14 Webb Terrace Bellows Falls, VT Records/CDs/45s/Books Household items & more!	BRATTLEBORO GREAT BOOKS GROUP HORSE by Geraldine Brooks Monday, May 1st, 7-9pm Brooks Memorial Library Mezzanine History Room June 5th reading: HUCKLEBERRY FINN	Members 1st Credit Union New car rates of 2.99%* Rates for used vehicles start at 3.99%* *Annual percentage rate 10 Browne Court, Brattleboro 802-257-5131	<i>Please keep your neighbors safely warm this winter.</i> Donate to WINDHAM COUNTY HEAT FUND 63 Cedar St., Brattleboro, VT 05301 or visit BS&L Every cent goes to those in need.
Tuxedo & Suit Rentals For weddings, proms & more Vermont Artisan Designs 106 Main St. Brattleboro 802-257-7044	New Designer Spring Jewelry! Gallery in the Woods 145 Main St. Brattleboro 802-257-4777 galleryinthewoods.com	The Marina OPEN AT 11:30 Lunch & Dinner Wednesday - Sunday 28 Spring Tree Rd. Brattleboro	Brattleboro Music Center Deirdre McArdle & Deiran Manning <i>Music for Flute by Women Composers</i> Saturday, April 22, at 7:00 pm bmcvt.org	Therapeutic Online Adult Art Classes New Session in May Support, connection, and rejuvenation Sliding scale www.jessweitz.com	Essentrics with Kelly 6 Week Series Monday 1 - June 9 Mondays @ 6:30am Fridays @ 5:00 pm innerheatyogavt.com	Grace Cottage Family Health Compassion & Convenience First-time Patients Welcome! 802-365-4331	Bikes, Bikes, Bikes! Lots in stock! Burrows Specialized Sports 105 Main St. Brattleboro 802-254-9430

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

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

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

The Commons

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

Jeff Potter Kate O'Connor
 Editor-in-Chief Director of Operations

EDITORIAL

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

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

INTERNS AND APPRENTICES
 Woody Laidlaw
 University of Vermont/Community News Service

EDITORIAL VOLUNTEERS
 Leo Stookey, Karen Cribari, Connie Evans, Kim Noble, Janet Wallstein, Elizabeth Trousdell, Wendy S. Collins, Proofreaders Taryn Heon, Editorial Assistant/Voices David Shaw, Photographer

OPERATIONS

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

INTERNS AND APPRENTICES
 Chloe Rogers • Landmark College
 Kenny Pepper • Landmark College

DISTRIBUTION STAFF
 George Lawton, Dan Lydon, Bill Wilmot

OPERATIONS VOLUNTEERS
 Lucinda McGovern, Jon King, Phillip Coolbeth, Spoon Agave, Karen Axelrod, Karena Huber, Distributors Elizabeth Trousdell, Alison Bundy, Membership

STAFF OFFSPRING
 Owen Harwood, Olivia Harwood
CONSULTANTS
 Agatha, Caslon, Elsy, Ghivashel, Rocky, Valentino

Deadline for the April 26 issue
April 21

vim vermont independent media

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 Heather Ahrenholz, Barry Aleshnick, Lynn Barrett, Michael Bosworth, Michelle Frehsee, Randolph T. Holhut (ex officio), Phayvanh Luekhamhan, Jeff Potter (ex officio), Stuart Strothman

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DISTRIBUTION
The Commons distributes 7,900 copies per issue to 250 drops in almost every Windham County town, as well as in neighboring towns in Windsor County (VT), Cheshire County (N.H.) and Franklin County (Mass.). Please get in touch (circulation@commonsnews.org) if you would like us to consider adding your business.

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

Special thanks to:
 Simi and Mark Berman, Diana Bingham, Jim Maxwell, Rob Bertsche, Barbara Evans, Cameron Cobane, Shannon Ward, and Hooker-Dunham Theater & Gallery; Clay Turnbull and NEC; Brendan Emmett Quigley and Joon Pakh

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



Vermonter Nicole James visits the Boston Marathon finish line over the weekend with fellow Brattleboro-area runners (from left) Lois Sparks, Halie Lange, Nicole James, Elizabeth Bianchi, and Maxine Stent.

Marathon

rain. But crossing the finish line 3 hours, 52 minutes, and 14 seconds later, she never felt sunnier. “I am really sore,” she said, “but so excited and elated.”

‘One day, that’s going to be me’

Growing up, James discovered the event when competitors passed her grandmother’s house along the

route from the small town of Hopkinton, Massachusetts to the biggest skyscraper in New England, the 60-story John Hancock Tower.

“I was in such awe,” she recalled of the athletes. “I said to my family, ‘One day, that’s going to be me.’”

But whenever James tried to run the required qualifying time, her ulcerative colitis flared up.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, she needed to finish an entrance event within 3 hours and 45 minutes. She went on to complete the trial in 3 hours and 45 minutes — and 38 seconds.

The coronavirus canceled the marathon in 2020 and postponed it from spring to fall in 2021. When organizers promised to return to their traditional schedule in 2022, James was determined to join.

The Vermonters learned she could qualify with her time if she raised money for charity. Winning entry to the 50-member Tufts Medical Center team, she

Workshop explores social media influencer marketing phenomenon

BRATTLEBORO—The public is invited to attend a panel discussion: “Social Media Influencer Marketing — What Is it? What Are the Benefits?” The program, sponsored by Vermont Independent Media’s Media Mentoring Project, will take place on Wednesday, April 19, at 7 p.m., via Zoom.

Basically, social media influencers are social media users who have many followers, serving to spread the word about what’s good. Some say they tend to trust these third-party endorsements more than traditional advertising.

Vermont businesses who are engaged with social influencer marketing include Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Caledonia Spirits, Vergennes Laundry, Lake Champlain Chocolates, Shacksbury Cider, Canteen Creemee Company, and Ben & Jerry’s and other

food companies, along with the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing.

Panelists include professional public relations and social media marketer Rosalie Hagel Martin of Blue Whale Public Relations; social media influencers Colleen Blair and her sister Erin Torres, representing “Travel Like a Local”; and Greg Lesch, executive director of the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce who, along with the Downtown Business Alliance, oversee Brattleboro’s tourism marketing initiative.

The program will be moderated by Joyce Marcel, award-winning reporter for Vermont Business Magazine and *The Commons*. To register for the “Social Media Influencer Marketing” workshop, email ziagulazimi9@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

FROM SECTION FRONT

collected \$10,000 as she trained with five other Windham County marathoners.

Then she tested positive for Covid.

James recalls everyone teary on the phone the night before last year’s event.

“I told them, ‘You need to run your own race — run your race for me.’”

But James knew she wanted to do it herself. Contacting Tufts, she learned she could try again this year — if she continued to run and raise money.

James competed in Burlington’s Vermont City Marathon last Memorial Day weekend and the New England Green River Marathon from Marlboro, Vermont, to Greenfield, Massachusetts, in August.

Earlier this winter, James caught Covid again. But she still took in another \$10,000 while

training up to 40 miles a week for Monday’s 127th event, which marked the 10th anniversary of a deadly 2013 bombing at the finish line.

‘It’s not going to defeat me’

James ran in Boston alongside 120 other Vermonters in a field from more than 100 countries.

Three-time U.S. Paralympic medalist Alicia Dana, 54, of Putney won the women’s handcycling title for a second time with a record pace of 1 hour, 18 minutes and 15 seconds.

Emma Frappier, 33, of Williston, who previously ran the Vermont City Marathon 32 weeks pregnant, finished Boston while expecting her third child, with a time of 4:10:28.

And Kae Ravichandran, 25, of Burlington won the new 27-person nonbinary division in 2:38:57.

As for James, her Monday finish time automatically qualifies her for next year’s marathon. But for all her determination, her only announced future competition is with any perceived limitation stemming from her chronic condition.

“It’s not going to defeat me; it’s not going to knock me down,” she said. “Nothing’s going to stop me.”

Promote your **EVENT** in *The Commons*

Your ad can run in the Arts section of the paper (the same section as the calendar), and in our e-newsletter of the calendar and other events.

*** ADS START AT \$37.50 * AND YOUR EVENT WILL BE SEEN BY 20,000 READERS!**

We are offering 10% off an ad in the paper, or 15% off a print ad + digital ad in our email blast.

Call 1-888-511-5150, or email lori@commonsnews.org, or nancy@commonsnews.org

GOT AN OPINION?

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



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

Are You a Current or Former SMOKER?

If so, ask your PCP if Low-Dose Lung Cancer Screening at BMH is Right for You!



This screening is for current and past smokers between the ages of 50—80 with **20 or more Pack Years*** and no cancer symptoms.

Low-Dose Lung Cancer Screening Saves Lives!

* **Pack Years** are the number of years you’ve smoked, multiplied by the number of packs you smoked per day.

ATHENS

Bids sought for Brick Meetinghouse preservation

ATHENS—The 1817 Brick Meetinghouse in Athens is a recipient of a 2023 Historic Preservation Grant. Established in 1986, the state-funded Historic Preservation Grant Program helps municipalities and nonprofit organizations rehabilitate the historic buildings that are a vital part of Vermont’s downtowns, villages, and rural communities, as well as its iconic landscape. Since its inception, the program has provided over \$6 million to support over 600 historic community building preservation projects.

This is the second state grant award for the Athens Meetinghouse, which will enable continued progress on the needed work to preserve and bring back to life this beautiful historic landmark.

Full or partial bids are now being accepted for preservation and moisture mitigation work to occur over the upcoming year. This historic preservation project is funded in part through a matching grant from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, along with dedicated donations and fundraising through the Athens Historic Preservation Society.

All work must meet the federal Secretary of Interior standards for rehabilitation. Bid documents will be made available to qualified bidders upon request. All bids are due Monday, May 1, by 1 p.m. Interested contractors seeking more information or wishing to schedule a site visit should contact committee chair Sherry Maher at 802-275-2835 or samaher@vermontel.net.

Anyone wishing to help support this and future restoration work on this historic gem can send a tax deductible donation to the Athens Historic Preservation Society, P.O. Box 431, Townshend, VT 05353.

Diner closes

FROM SECTION FRONT

alike. We appreciate all of our dedicated staff over the years [who] were the main reason for the diner's success, along with, of course, our devoted customers. It is with much sadness that we will be disappointing so many diner and ice cream lovers, but the time has come to retire."

Darrah, 65, and Picard, 61, now spend the majority of their time in Falmouth, Massachusetts. The reason for their optimistic Facebook post was that the diner, which has been for sale for five years, had a buyer ready to take over in May.

But the deal fell through at the last minute, and Darrah and Picard decided to call it quits.

"We are perplexed why no one has taken the opportunity to take stewardship of this busy, fun, hectic, community landmark," the couple said. "Hopefully, there is someone out there."

The elegant and Deco-ish Royal Diner was built in 1939 as Worcester Lunch Car No. 736. It started its life on the corner of Main Street and Walnut Street, across from what is now Brooks Memorial Library, moving up the street in 1948 to 225 Main St.

The diner and its contents were sold at auction in 1968. According to a 1979 *Reformer* story, a buyer from New Hampshire made the purchase and reclaimed some equipment. The Worcester Lunch Car sat behind a garage on Route 9 for years.

It was moved in 1978 to Landmark Hill, and then to its present location on Route 9 in West Brattleboro in 1987.

In its long life, it has had several iterations, including time as a fine dining restaurant. It also picked up its first name, "Chelsea," from a Joni Mitchell song.

Darrah, who had already had a successful restaurant career in Wilmington, started running it in May of 1990. According to town property records, he has owned it since 1999.

"I eventually bought the property through a very generous and understanding landlady named Carol Levin, who has since passed away," Darrah said in a joint interview with Picard. "She helped me, and she was a big part of my success."

The diner certainly has been successful. On its five acres was the diner and its spacious parking lot, a barn, a small rental apartment building, an orchard, a spacious garden, and a chicken coop where the fresh eggs for the omelets came from.

Darrah used local grass-fed beef and local products like honey and maple syrup. The meals were kept affordable, and the line was sometimes out the door.

He had known Picard, a well-known artist who was running a bakery in West Townshend, for years before they became a couple.

"I made the wedding cake for his first wedding," Picard said, laughing. "The joke is that it's like the movie, *Like Water for Chocolate*. I put a hex on the cake."

Once they were a couple, in 2000, Picard began working alongside Darrah in the restaurant, although for many years she also had a painting studio in the rental house. She added a \$30,000 ice cream maker and introduced many creative ice cream flavors to the menu, chief among them a Mayan chocolate that she made with cinnamon, fresh nutmeg, and a touch of cayenne pepper.

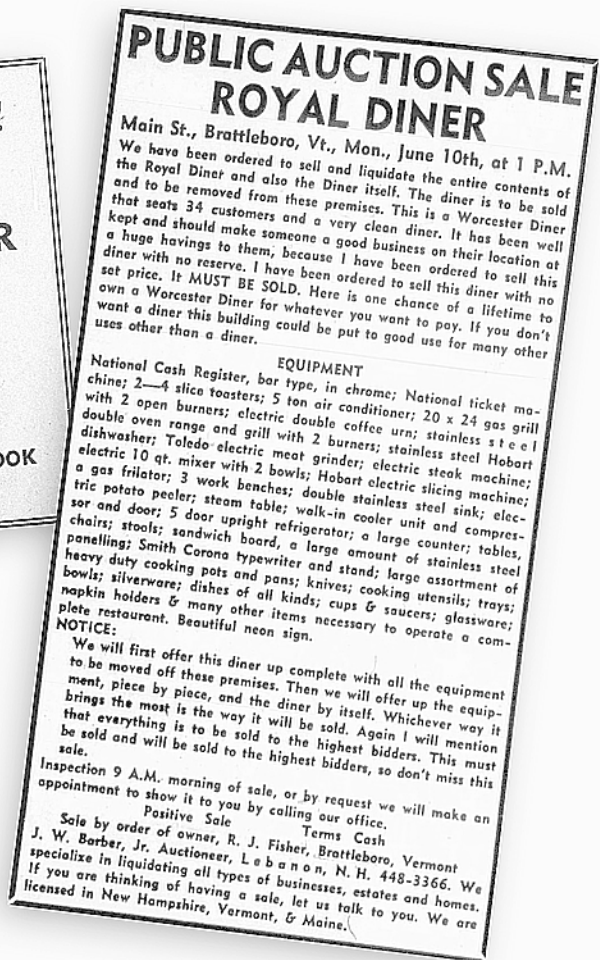
At its peak, the kitchen was serving its famous breakfasts plus lunches and dinners seven days a week, closing only for Thanksgiving and Christmas, and employing 30 people. It was like that right up until the COVID-19 pandemic shut it down.

The year before the pandemic began, the couple bought a food truck, so they were able to keep on serving food — outdoors.

"We were thinking of putting it outside with the ice cream stand, and selling burgers and dogs from there so the kitchen didn't get swamped like it used to all the time," Picard said. "And it was like a blessing in disguise, because when Covid started we couldn't open up inside. So we just ran the food truck the past three seasons, until we could open at full capacity again."



Inflection points in the Chelsea Royal's history from the pages of the *Brattleboro Daily Reformer*. At left, a front-page display ad that ran on April 11, 1939 announcing the following day's opening of the new Worcester Lunch Car. On the right is a public auction notice that ran in the newspaper's June 6, 1968 edition.



When the diner opened again, half of the seating had been removed. With fewer guests, the staff's tips diminished, and they left for other jobs.

"It wasn't worth it for them," Picard said. "And they just moved on. One of them worked there for 30 years. Some worked there for 20, 15, 10 years. And they all moved on. The staff that we have now has stayed with us. And we try to hire new cooks and we [didn't] get anyone."

"That's why we were closed a couple of days a week. And we stopped doing dinners. And then this year, we tried doing dinners on Fridays and Saturday nights, and it wasn't anything special."

In their formal statement, the couple said, "The government funding we received allowed us to operate the best we could during Covid and 2022, even with limited seating protocols in the beginning. However, having to shut down two days per week in order to not overwork our limited staff, and increase in food costs, increase in utilities, increase in wages, along with a decrease in consumer spending, and then

factoring in our ages, we are ready to let it go."

The diner was last open on Dec. 31.

"But I want to make note that it is a successful place," Picard said. "We're not closing because it's a loser. We're closing because it's run its course. I mean, if we were 20 years younger, we'd definitely reinvest in it."

For Darrah, who started working at 14 and says he spent half his life in the Chelsea Royal's kitchen, it is a bittersweet but necessary next step.

"I have no torch to pass on to my kids," Darrah said. "They have their careers, and they're moved on. One is a captain in the U.S. Army. And one is the general manager of four restaurants in the Burlington area. It's hard to lure my kids back to Brattleboro. So there's no legacy to carry on."

The couple put the diner on the market five years ago for \$900,000. That included the

dinner and everything in it, the five acres of land, the gardens, the orchard, the rental house, the chicken coop, and the barn. The land is deeded for agriculture, so a new owner could add pigs and cows to the chickens if they so desired. But the house, barn and coop have now been sold off separately.

Darrah and Picard imagined that once the diner was put on the market, it would be immediately scooped up. They still don't understand why it hasn't been. It's now on the market for \$300,000.

"It's not that expensive," Picard said. "It's \$300,000. It comes with my ice cream maker, and there's the soft serve machines, plus all the equipment, and there's new stuff from our government money," Picard said.

While they wait for a buyer, the couple are establishing a new life on the Cape.

"There's a community here, and I am a member of the art association here," Picard said. "I have been in a lot of shows and I won Best in Show in one of them. But there's a feeling a guilt about not reopening the diner. Everyone's going to be disappointed."

Darrah wants to take a year off to rethink his way through retirement.

"Janet has been fulfilling my dreams for the last 20-plus years," he said. "I want to be her partner, and help her fulfill her dream now."

"She can paint forever," Darrah said. "I can't do what I did forever."

What nicer thing can you do for somebody than make them breakfast?

—ANTHONY BOURDAIN

BRATTLEBORO

Spring water main flushing begins April 21

BRATTLEBORO—Utilities Division crews from the Department of Public Works will start spring flushing of the town water mains on Friday, April 21, at 10 p.m., and continue work through Friday, May 5.

Some daytime flushing will continue throughout the week of May 5 through May 12.

Customers are asked to check the flushing schedule closely, as flushing causes water discoloration, low water pressure, and, in some areas, periods of no water.

Water main flushing will occur during both night (10 p.m. to 6 a.m.) and day (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Schedule

— Friday, April 21 — Night: Marlboro Road area and Western Avenue from the Chelsea Royal Diner on Marlboro Road to Melrose Street and Stockwell Drive. Water will be off for several hours on Carriage Hill, Yorkshire Circle, and Hampshire Circle.

— Saturday, April 22 — Night: Western Avenue from Edward Heights to I-91. Water will be off for several hours on Signal Hill, Hillcrest Terrace, Carriage Hill, Hampshire Circle, Yorkshire Circle, Greenleaf Street, Country Hill, Green Meadow, South Street, Thayer Ridge, West Village Meeting House, New England Drive, and Brattle Street.

— Sunday, April 23 — Night: Western Avenue from I-91 to Green Street/Crosby Street/Williams Street area. Water will be off for several hours on Signal Hill, Hillcrest Terrace, Solar Hill, Greenhill Parkway, Brattle Street, and New England Drive.

— Monday, April 24 — Day: Carriage Hill. Night: Bonnyvale Road, Glen Street, Cedar Street, Spruce Street area, Greenhill Parkway, Chestnut Hill, Green Street, High Street, and School Street area.

— Tuesday, April 25 — Night:

Guilford Street, Signal Hill, Hillcrest Terrace, Maple Street, Chestnut Street, and Esteyville area.

— Wednesday, April 26 — Night: Canal Street from Fairview Street south to John Seitz Drive, Fairview Street, Ledgewood Heights, Winter Street, Fairground Road, Atwood Street, and Sunny Acres.

— Thursday, April 27 — Day: SIT Graduate Institute, Dickinson Road, Kipling Road, and Black Mountain Road. Night: Canal Street from Main Street to Fairground Road, Lexington Avenue, Belmont Avenue, Horton Place, Homestead Place, Brook and Clark Street area, Flat Street, and Elliot Street (east end).

— Friday, April 28 — Day: Oak Grove Avenue and Pine Street area. Night: Prospect Street, South Main Street, Marlboro Avenue area, Frost Street, Elliot Street (west end).

— Sunday, April 30 — Night: Washington Street area, South Main from Lawrence Street to Prospect Street.

— Monday, May 1 — Night: Cotton Mill Hill, Vernon Road, Morningside Commons.

— Tuesday, May 2 — Night: Oak Street area, Main Street area. — Wednesday, May 3 — Night: Linden Street, Route 30, Putney Road from Park Place to Vermont Veterans Memorial Bridge. Vermont Avenue and Eaton Avenue, Terrace Street, Tyler Street, Walnut Street, and Wantastiquet Drive.

— Thursday, May 4 — Night: Putney Road from Vermont Veterans Memorial Bridge to Exit 3.

— Friday, May 5 — Day: Exit 1 and Old Guilford Road to Welcome Center. Night: Putney Road north of Exit 3, Ferry Road, Glen Orne Drive.

— Friday, May 12 — Flushing of the water mains in Tri-Park Cooperative Housing and

Deepwood Park developments. Morning: Lower section to include Village Drive, Valley Road, Maplewood Drive, Edgewood Drive, Lynwood Drive, Reservoir Road, Hemlock Drive, and Woodvale and the lower part of Winding Hill Road. Afternoon: Upper section to include upper part of Winding Hill Road, Deepwood Park, Stonewall Drive, Record Drive, Autumn Hill, Windward Drive, and the rest of Lynwood Drive.

Questions can be directed to the Brattleboro Department of Public Works: 802-254-4255 or mearle@brattleboro.org.


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

PUBLIC NOTICES
The Town of Townshend is soliciting sealed bids for the purchase of a new fire truck. If your company has the ability to build such a truck, the Request for Proposals (RFP) or bid specs, are available at Townshend Town Hall, located at 2006 Rte 30, Townshend, VT. You can also call Connie Holt, Assistant to the Selectboard, at 802-221-2051.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

END of an ERA

With heavy hearts, unfortunately we will not be reopening the iconic Chelsea Royal Diner this year.



We were very fortunate to have been a major part of the community for 32 yrs serving locals and tourists alike. We appreciate all of our dedicated staff over the years whom were the main reason for the diner's success along with of course our devoted customers. It is with much sadness that we will be disappointing so many diner and ice cream lovers but the time has come to retire. Todd has spent half his life building the Chelsea's reputation with quality food and fair prices. From the apple orchard, his own garden, chickens for fresh eggs, local grass-fed beef, local produce, honey, maple syrup...the list goes on. And Janet took the ice cream stand to another level with a variety of her creative homemade ice cream flavors.

The government funding we received allowed us to operate the best we could during Covid & 2022 even with limited seating protocols in the beginning. However, having to shut down 2 days per week in order to not overwork our limited staff, an increase in food costs, increase in utilities, increase in wages, along with a decrease in consumer spending, and then factoring in our ages...we are ready to let it go.

The diner has been for sale even before Covid and is still is for sale. We are perplexed why no one has taken the opportunity to take stewardship of this busy, fun, hectic, community landmark. Hopefully, there is someone out there.

We want to thank the generations of Chelsea Royal Diner fans for supporting us for 32 years.

With much gratitude,
Todd & Janet
picardart@hotmail.com

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

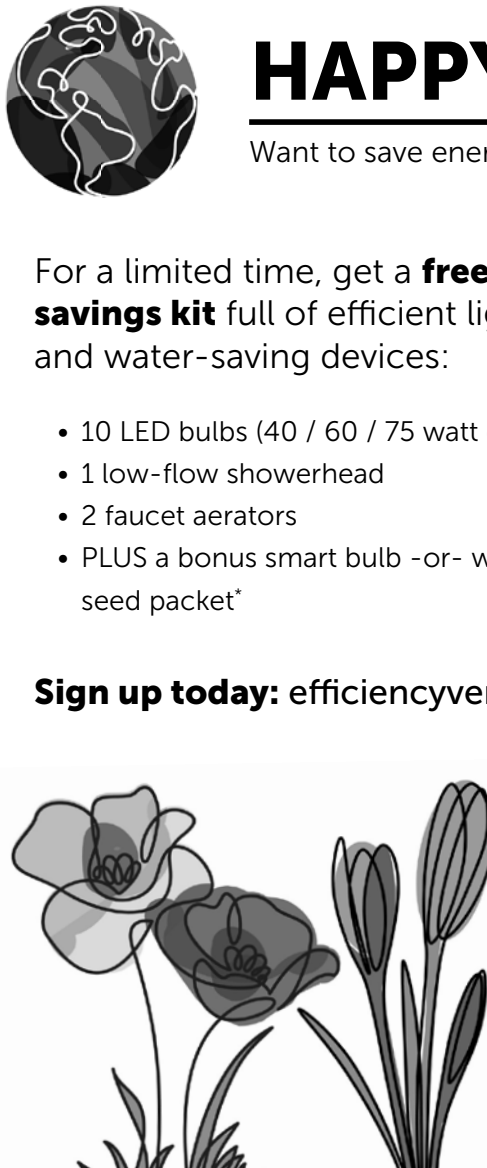
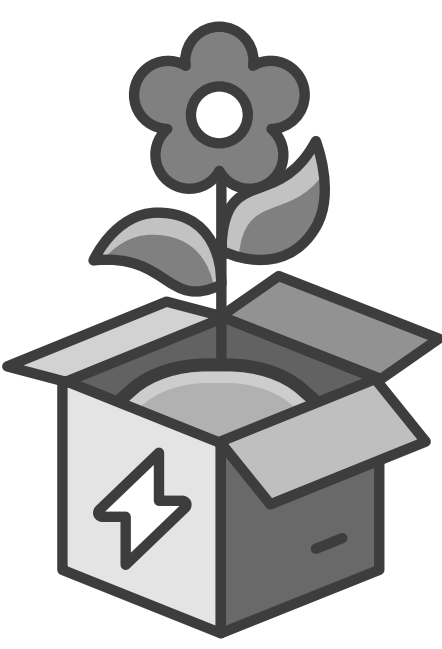
HAPPY EARTH MONTH

Want to save energy and reduce your carbon footprint at home?

For a limited time, get a **free energy savings kit** full of efficient lighting and water-saving devices:

- 10 LED bulbs (40 / 60 / 75 watt equivalents)
- 1 low-flow showerhead
- 2 faucet aerators
- PLUS a bonus smart bulb -or- wildflower seed packet*

Sign up today: efficiencyvermont.com/kits

Efficiency Vermont

1 (888) 921-5990 • efficiencyvermont.com

used to work in a fire hydrant factory. You couldn't park anywhere near the place.

—STEVEN WRIGHT

MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

College news

Community College of Vermont (CCV)-Brattleboro student **Krystal Martin** has been named a 2023 New Century Workforce Scholar and will receive a \$1,250 scholarship. Martin works full-time in finance for C&S Wholesale Grocers and is pursuing an associate degree in accounting. The scholarship is the first of its kind to support students at associate degree-granting institutions on a national scale as they plan to enter the workforce upon the completion of a degree or certificate. Scholars are selected based on their academic accomplishments, leadership, activities, and how they extend their intellectual talents beyond the classroom. More than 2,400 students were nominated from more than 1,300 college campuses across the country. Only one New Century Workforce Scholar was selected from each state.

Sydney Henry of Brattleboro, a member of the Class of 2023, has been inducted into Alpha Beta Gamma, Stonehill College's chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, the international honor society for education majors.

Transitions

Parks Place Community Resource Center in Bellows Falls has added new board members **Krista Gay**, a young lawyer from Athens, and **Kathleen Govotski**, activist with the Rotary Club of Bellows Falls and the Chamber of Commerce. Gay is a first-generation college graduate, who has returned to her roots in Vermont. She is the youngest member of the Parks Place board at 29. Govotski comes to the board with years of small business experience and family Italian and Irish traditions. As a founder of Halladay's herb business, florist shop, and the Harvest Inn, she knows the Bellows Falls

community well.

Theatre Adventure, Inc., a non-profit organization providing year-round performing arts programming for people with disabilities, welcomes two new board members, **Ora Grodsky** and **Wendy Pauloo**. Grodsky is a co-founder of Just Works Consulting, and has more than 25 years of experience consulting organizations for social change. She is currently authoring a book on transformational organizational consulting. Pauloo has worked extensively with children and families, in performing arts and social services. She was the assistant production manager at Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School, and has more than 30 years of experience teaching creative drama. She has worked as an advocate, creating a foster care program for high-risk children, and providing support services at a domestic violence shelter for women and children.

Obituaries



Dr. John Turner Chard, 90, of Brattleboro. Died on April 8, 2023 in the comfort of his home, surrounded by family. Born in 1932 in Elizabeth, New Jersey, he was the son of Roland Turner and Kathleen Cottell Chard. John was the beloved husband of the late state Sen. Nancy Chard, and a well-respected orthopedic surgeon at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital for 46 years. John graduated with an electrical engineering degree from Princeton University in the class of 1954. He then attended Cornell Medical School graduating in 1958. He completed his surgical residency program at the University of Rochester from 1958-1960. He then entered the Air Force, serving as a captain on active duty at

Incirlik Air Base in Turkey from 1959-1962, and in the Air Force Reserve through 1972. John married Nancy Inlay on Aug. 31, 1961 in Athens, Greece. They returned to Rochester in 1963 where he completed an orthopedic surgery residency at the same university from 1963-1966, leaving as Chief Resident. He was certified by the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery in 1968 and became a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons in 1969. He was founding partner of Orthopedic Associates of Brattleboro. John served as president of the Vermont State Medical Society in 1999 and in his community in many capacities including as a member of the local school board, Brattleboro Development Review Board, and was often seen at BUHS sporting events serving as the attending physician. John was a dedicated medical professional who deeply cared for his community and state. Throughout his life, John enjoyed skiing, white water canoeing, camping and gardening. John is survived by Susan Iger (sister), Jean Chard (sister-in-law), Sara Chard (daughter), Joshua Chard (son) and wife Heather Cutting Chard, Curtis Chard (son), and grandchildren Victoria Pease Nicholas Pease; John Pease; Jackson Chard; Rachel Chard; and great-grandson, Bradley Pease. He is also survived by five nieces and their families. John was preceded in death by his wife, and his brother, David Edward Chard. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A remembrance for John will be held later this spring; the exact date, time and location of the event to be determined. Family and friends are invited to express their condolences and fond memories of John. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to your favorite local healthcare charity, Windham County Humane Society, or the Vermont Land Trust. To share a memory or send messages of condolence to the family, visit atamaniuk.com.

Barbara E. "Barb" Covey, 83, of West Dummerston. Died peacefully at home, with her family by her side, on March 21, 2023. Barb was born June 4, 1939 at Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, attended Leland & Gray Seminary, and later married and moved to West Dummerston to raise her family. Barb worked at Maple Valley Ski Area for many years and held various retail sales positions throughout her life. She was a member of the American Legion Post 5 Auxiliary as well as an auxiliary member of the F.O.E. #2445, both in Brattleboro. Family was important to Barb. She loved spending time with her children, grandchildren and her great grandchildren. Younger years found Barb square dancing, playing Bingo and cards, and teaching 4-H kids to knit and crochet. She loved Hampton Beach and the yearly trips with her mom and friends. She loved to bowl and was a member of the Busy Bees bowling league for many years. She loved attending the country and western music jamborees, dancing, and having fun with her friends. Barb was predeceased by her parents, Harold & Ruth Putnam, and her two sisters, Ruth Jacobs and Roberta Stone. She is survived by her children, Deborah (Brian) Maher of Essex Junction, Robert Covey Jr. of Brattleboro, and Cynthia (Chuck) Bezonson of West Dummerston. She is also survived by her grandchildren Melissa (Phil) Butt, Josh (Jesse) Maher, Carl (Shelby) Bezonson, and Colby Bezonson, and great-grandchildren Cameron and Kyle Butt, Esmarj Maher, and Joziiah, Keegan, and Lincoln Bezonson, who will miss their "Gramma Chipmunk" but will have special memories of time spent with her. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Services are private and will be at the convenience of the family.

Michelle Renee Hamel, 56, of Brattleboro. Died April 5, 2023 at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital following an extended battle with cancer. Michelle was born in Springfield, Massachusetts on May 11, 1966, the daughter of Ronald and the late Marlene (Paquette) Labrie. She grew up in Springfield attending public schools, including Roger L. Putnam High School located in the Pine Point section of the city. While residing in Springfield, she was employed as a sales associate for Store 451. Locally, Michelle worked at the Drop-In Center in Brattleboro as the food shelf coordinator. She retired early due to a health-related disability. Michelle enjoyed crocheting and her needlework was exceptional. She also enjoyed coloring with pencils, playing cards, taking care of her house plants, and time spent with her family, especially

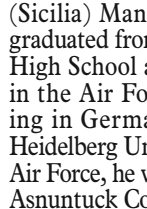
her grandchildren. On April 18, 1987, in Springfield, she was married to Allen W. Hamel, who survives. Michelle also leaves her three children, Allen "AJ" Hamel, Kaylynn Hayward (Chris), and Alyssa-Ann Hamel and her fiancé Chris Cronk, all of Brattleboro; her father of Springfield; brothers Ronald and Mark Labrie, and a sister, Robin Labrie-Consiglio, all of Springfield. Additionally, she is survived by five grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and several cousins. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial gathering to remember and celebrate her life will be held at a future date and time to be announced. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com (www.atamaniuk.com).

Geraldine "Gerry" Kunkle, 92, of Putney. Died March 23, 2023 at Vernon Green Nursing Home, following a period of declining health. Gerry was born March 5, 1931 in Binghamton, New York, the sixth of seven daughters born to her Ukrainian immigrant parents, Alexander and Fannie (Medwid) Gaidosh. Gerry overcame polio as a teenager, which contributed to her fighting spirit. With determination and compassion to help others, she became a camp counselor for other polio survivors. Gerry attended Franklin School of Science and Arts in Philadelphia, completing her certification as a radiology technician. It was there she met the love of her life, John Kunkle. They were married in Philadelphia on Feb. 9, 1952. Settling in Woodbury, New Jersey, Gerry and John raised their family while owning and operating Pitman Clinical Laboratory in Pitman, New Jersey. In 1978, Gerry and John fulfilled their desire to live in Vermont and moved to Putney. It was here that Gerry lovingly maintained their 200-year-old farmhouse and surrounding property. Her greatest joy was tending her many flower gardens and sharing plants with neighbors and friends. Every year she anxiously awaited the sound of peepers and blooming daffodils, signaling the arrival of spring. Gerry loved music and could often be found dancing to a polka at family celebrations. Gerry lived a long, full, and active life. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and loyal friend. She will be remembered for her tremendous kindness, exceptional generosity, and strong sense of justice. She is survived by her six children, Dave Kunkle of Brattleboro, Jeff Kunkle and his wife Cathy of Harrisonville, New Jersey, Wayne Kunkle and his partner Camilla Arnold of Westminster West, Jan Spanierman and her husband David of Putney, Judy Harlow of Putney, and Diane Vergara and her partner Pierre Landry of Brattleboro. In addition, she leaves 16 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. Gerry was predeceased by her husband John in 2012, and her sisters Anna, Mary, Margaret, Genevieve, Helen, and Jacqueline. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service will be held later in the spring. Donations to Putney Community Cares, the Putney Foodshelf, or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Alexander David "Alex" Nislick, 80, of Brattleboro. Died on March 18, 2023. He was born in Newark, NJ on June 8, 1942, and grew up in South Orange, N.J. After attending Columbia High School in New Jersey, he attended and graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1966 with a M.A. in theater arts. After graduation, he proudly served his country in the Army. Forty-four years ago, Alex moved to Brattleboro for a more rural lifestyle. He was the founder and owner of Nislick Upholstery. For 36 years, he was employed as a mental health worker at Brattleboro Retreat. Alex was a creative man and excelled at many things, including design for the theater, upholstery, carpentry, and canvas sail restoration. He had a passion for sailing and owned a classic wooden sailboat called Summer Song. Upon retiring he wrote, "As to where I will go, My answer to everyone is: Wherever the wind takes me." He is survived by his brother Stephen Nislick, his sister-in-law, Linda Marcus; and sons Micah Kellner, and Daniel Kellner, his wife, Sasha, and their children, Devon and Jonah. By those who knew him, Alex was described as a genuinely good human being with a spark of mischief and humor. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: None provided.

Susan B. Neathawk, 77, of Chester. Died on March 30, 2023, at Gill Nursing Home in Ludlow, following complications with Alzheimer's disease. Known as Sue, Susie, and Susan to different folks, she was born on April 15, 1945, in Bellows Falls, the fourth of five daughters of Perley C. and Ada E. (Miller) Bell. She grew up in Grafton and was a 1963 graduate of Bellows Falls High School. Susan worked at many local businesses including the lunch counter at the Grafton Store, Britt's department store in Springfield, and Mary Meyer stuffed animals in Townsend. Most of her work years were spent as a rural letter carrier out of the Chester Post Office, covering familiar territory in Athens, Grafton, and Chester. For a short time, she even worked as a welder at her father's Bellway furnace business. She was fortunate to retire at age 62, as Alzheimer's started affecting her by age 70. Susie was quiet, unassuming, and got along with everyone. She was active in her church, was a volunteer driver for the elderly, and opened her home to others in need as they got on their feet. She was a lover of dogs and cats. She was very crafty, loved DIY garden art projects and enjoyed decorating her home and yard. Quilting and sewing were regular hobbies. Much akin to her father's interests, she enjoyed riding her motorcycle, a Honda Rebel, and was a longtime active member of the Christian Motorcyclists Association. She had a large collection of sheep and lamb objects. She enjoyed thrifting, antiquing, and yard sales. She is survived by her three children, Kevin W. of Grafton, Kimberly J. of Chester, and Shane J. (Billie) of Rockingham; and her three grandchildren, Claire N. Shillington of South Hadley, Massachusetts and Brandon W. and Jared M. of Charlestown, New Hampshire. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Per her wishes, there will be no funeral

Vincent Francis "Jimmy" Maniscalchi, 86, of Putney. Died Feb. 4, 2023 at the VA Hospital in White River Junction. He was born on Feb. 10, 1936, in Thompsonville Connecticut, to the late Vincenzo and Rose (Sicilia) Maniscalchi. Vincent graduated from Enfield (Conn.) High School and then enlisted in the Air Force. While serving in Germany, he attended Heidelberg University. After the Air Force, he went on to study at Asnuntuck Community College and University of Hartford. On Oct. 20, 1962, he married his one true love, Carol (Holt) Maniscalchi. Jimmy had a well-rounded work background and will be lovingly remembered for his funny stories, his often-told jokes, and his ability to laugh at himself and spread that laughter to others. He was always celebratory at family gatherings and just as happy to be home with his wife Carol. He loved their yearly trips to the ocean in Maine. Jim took pride in his freshly cut lawn after sitting on his porch with family. Singing songs, speaking, and teaching Italian were his favorite past times. Jim was so sharp. In his final days and loved to chat about family stories of days gone by. He loved




service. Donations in her memory may be sent to the Alzheimer's Association or to Gill Nursing Home in Ludlow, Vermont.

Alane Georgia Perkins, 78, of Brattleboro. Died April 2, 2023 at home, following a long courageous battle with cancer. She was born in Norwalk, Connecticut on Dec. 25, 1944, the daughter of Aubrey Lloyd and Byllee Lloyd Gould. She was a graduate of Norwalk High School, Class of 1962, and attended the University of Connecticut. Alane began her career in finance at *Country Journal* magazine, where she spent 10 years until she partnered to start Mortgage Service Center as the vice president of loan administration. The company was eventually sold to Chittenden Bank, where she served as vice president of loan servicing until she retired to pursue her love of traveling. Alane was always looking forward to her next destination; from England, Germany, Australia, Mexico, and Italy, to the West Coast of the U.S. and several islands, just to name a few. Her thirst for adventure was endless. Alane had a true passion for gardening, and often had people drive by her home to admire her perennial gardens. Her greatest joys in life were spending time with family and friends, sitting by the ocean, going to the theater, traveling in her camper, and golfing. She always put others first and lived every moment to its fullest, making a lasting impression on all those that had the pleasure of knowing her. Alane was a pillar of strength and compassion who will never be forgotten. Alane is survived by her fiancé Ralph Halvorsen of Hampton, New Hampshire; daughters Lorin Young and her husband Colin of Brattleboro, and Kellee Enos and her companion David Barden of Raleigh, North Carolina; sisters Jean Casceillo and her husband David of Chesterfield, New Hampshire, Barbara Foreit of Norwalk, Pat Brovender of Strafford, Connecticut, and Audrey Buckner of Sun City Center, Florida; her brother Jim Lloyd and his wife Dorothy of Atlanta, Georgia; granddaughters Miranda McLoughlin of Brattleboro, Meghan Baldinelli of Keene, New Hampshire, and Colleen Young of Swanzey, New Hampshire, and four great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Irving Perkins, son Gregg Enos, and brother Donald Lloyd. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service will be held on Friday, April 21, at 3 p.m., at the Ker Phaneuf Funeral Home, 57 High St., Brattleboro, followed by a celebration of life gathering at the Brattleboro Country Club. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT, 05302.

Betty Porter, 79, of Brattleboro. Died peacefully on Good Friday, April 7, 2023. She courageously fought cancer in the last years of her life and lived far longer than the prognosis for her disease in part due to her resilience, life-affirming attitude, and being one tough bird. Born Betty Pamela Shultz on July 2, 1943, Betty grew up in the rural Florida panhandle. She would always exclaim: "I had a wonderful childhood," and reminisced about spending time playing in the fields and helping with farming in the 1940s and 1950s. Betty married and settled with her husband in Brattleboro, where she resided for over 60 years. She gave birth to a daughter, Lisa Giallella of Abilene, Texas, and then Robert Giallella of Dummerston. Betty remarried in the early 1970's and had her third child, Renée Crispe of West Brattleboro. Betty gave 100% of herself to her three children whom she loved limitlessly. She was the dearest and most loving mother a child could hope for, and her children are forever grateful for her benevolence and dedication in being an extraordinary mother to them. The values and inspiration imparted by Betty to her children carry forward with pride and thankfulness. Betty had many grandchildren who would always light up her whole world. She treasured every moment she got to spend with them. She passed on timeless wisdom and advice to them that they will never forget. Betty was a familiar friendly face at many local restaurants as a hard-working waitress for nearly 50 years in the community. Betty valued the importance of a day's work and steadfastly worked very hard her entire adult life. She gained regular customers who went to the restaurant just to see the smiling, exceptional Betty whom they came to know and love. Betty was extremely active for many years in her local church, Mountain View Seventh-Day Adventist, in Vernon. She loved to cook and faithfully participated in potlucks after services. Betty deeply appreciated her wonderful friends at the church. She forged

■ STORY CONTINUES ON FACING PAGE

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.



COMPUTER QUESTIONS?

Tired of feeling out of control?

Patient, Sympathetic Coaching
Macs • Windows
iPads • Tablets

Annamarie 802-451-1941
PatientSympatheticCoaching.com

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS!

Bellows Falls Garage
115 Rockingham Street
Bellows Falls, VT

Brand new, affordable apartments located in historical downtown Bellows Falls. Studios, One and Two Bedroom apartments are now leasing for June. Affordable rents include Heat, Hot Water and Electricity. Income Limits Apply. Must pass criminal, landlord and credit checks. This is a non-smoking property.

For more information, please contact:
Stewart Property Management, Inc.
45 Rockingham Street,
Bellows Falls VT 05101
(802) 463-9863
www.stewartproperty.net






PETS AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION

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

Call! Hi, my name is **Calli**! I came from the South to find my new home. I am young and impressionable and should be able to live with respectful dogs, cats and kids. I am a very wiggly young lady who loves people. I can be a bit shy at first, but I warm up very quickly.

Damon! Hi, my name is **Damon**. I came from the South to find my new home. I am very sweet and outgoing and loves my people. My previous life is unknown, but I may be able to live another respectful dog. Cats would be a total unknown. If you have kids they should be on the older side.

Smokey! Hi there, I'm the fabulous **Smokey**! I'm a very social boy who loves to be right in the middle of things. I am used to being primarily outdoors so I may want quite a bit of outdoor access in my new home. I don't seem to mind other cats so I may be able to have a feline friend in my new home. Dogs would be new so introductions should be gradual. I'm done waiting around for my new home so come meet me today!

Arden! Hi there, I'm the fabulous **Arden**! I'm a very sweet and special girl that has a neurological disorder that effects my balance, gait and vision. I am able to navigate my environment well most of the time and my condition doesn't seem to bother me! I love to play, talk and be in everyone's business and also like to have me-time to myself. Loud noises to sometimes startle me so a mellow home would be best. I am not always able to use my litter box so my new home should be prepared for that and ideally have minimal carpet. I have lived with another cat and done well so I probably could again as long as we get introduced properly. I might be able to live with children with sometime to adjust and if they can understand my disabilities.

Ad graciously sponsored by
Trust Company of Vermont
www.tcvermont.com
Brattleboro – Burlington
Rutland – Manchester



close relationships and touched the lives and hearts of innumerable parishioners with her friendly smile, approachable demeanor, and her kind, honest spirit. Betty unwaveringly maintained a positive, welcoming attitude which made her soothing and relaxing to be around. She would regularly greet folks with a big hug, and loved and accepted all people from all walks of life, treating everyone with dignity. She extended a selfless kindness which was inspiring to all who knew her. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A Celebration of Life service will be held Sunday, April 23, at 1 p.m., at Mountain View Seventh-day Adventist Church in Vernon. Donations to Bayada Hospice, 1222 Putney Rd., Suite 107, Brattleboro, VT 05301. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Stephen "Steve" Ritchie, 81**, of Brattleboro, died at home on March 3, 2023, surrounded by the love of his family, after a three-month struggle with cancer. Steve was born and grew up in New Jersey and, after graduating from Northwestern University, taught instrumental music in Denville New Jersey. When he and his family moved to Oregon, he taught instrumental music and was a band director in the Portland and Lake Oswego schools. After retiring to Vermont, he continued to teach part-time at St. Michael's School and the Brattleboro Music Center. A lifelong learner, Steve had many interests, from gardening to astronomy; from collecting minerals to root beers; taking extended road trips in the west with Barbara, his wife of 56 years; following the "Dinosaur Trail" in Montana; enjoying great food, whether in New York City, Santa Fe, or Atlanta; hiking and walking in beautiful places in all parts of the country, even when carrying a bear bell in Montana; going to concerts in many locations, especially when his sons and grandson were performing. He is greatly missed by his wife, Barbara; his son Gregg of Portland, Oregon; his son and daughter-in-law Brad and Maya of Atlanta, Georgia; and especially by his grandson Zane of Atlanta, with whom he shared a birthday, many interests, and a special bond. Steve is also survived by his brother Bob Ritchie and wife Susan of Florida, and by his brother-in-law Dan Vertrees and wife Judith Haworth of Oregon, and other extended family who loved him. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In accordance with his wishes, there will be no memorial service. Instead, his family suggests that you remember Steve as you take time to help a neighbor, walk with a friend, spend time with family, learn something new, and — always — be kind.

Services



• Graveside committal services for **Percy F. Powling** will be conducted Friday, April 21, at 11 a.m., in South Newfane Cemetery on Auger Hole Road, with a reception to follow at Williamsville Hall. Mr. Powling, 92, of Williamsville died on Jan. 7, 2023. To view his full obituary, visit atamaniuk.com.



• Graveside committal services with full military honors for **Raymond H. Mercier** will be conducted Saturday, April 22, at 10 a.m., in North Cemetery in Vernon. Mr. Mercier, 71, of Mercier Road in Marlboro, died January 29, 2023. To view his full obituary, visit atamaniuk.com.



• In remembrance of **Diane Allen Bassett (1940-2023)**, family and friends are invited to attend a graveside service at Meetinghouse Hill Cemetery on Orchard Street in Brattleboro on Sunday, April 30, at 1 p.m.

BFMS principal

FROM SECTION FRONT

on June 22, and the 2023-24 school year begins on Aug. 30. Bailly steps in as the official BFMS principal on July 1.

He also hopes to start the coming school year with a new assistant principal. A search committee has formed with input from students and community members. Candidate interviews start within the next few weeks.

Climate and culture

When asked what his immediate focus will be as principal, Bailly instantly responds with "improving the school's climate and culture. I want to turn that around a little bit here."

He noted that "a lot of traumatized kids come here to school, and Covid didn't help that trauma."

BFMS has 240 students, numbers that have somewhat stabilized after falling for some time.

"For some kids, coming here to school is the best part of their day," Bailly said. "Creating a good climate and culture can make a huge difference for them. That's what I want to do here."

"Students feed off the school climate, positive or negative," Bailly said.

Bailly explained that the school has had three administrative teams in as many years, on top of a number of administrative changes in previous years.

He said creating stability and a positive school culture in

the administration is a priority, noting that he already has two "great, experienced administrative assistants."

"They have lots of experience in the district," he said. "I lean on both of them quite a bit."

Suddenly finding himself in the role of a principal last fall while also short on staff made Bailly rely regularly on input from Windham Northeast Supervisory Union Superintendent Andrew Haas over the past several months. Bailly said he feels that having that good connection with the school district administrators will be an advantage for him.

"The superintendent was great," Bailly said. "I feel we've built a strong relationship. Going to him over the past several months for advice or with questions really helped me. He was always there and available to me."

Bailly said he is already planning ahead with his team, working out how they will proceed with the new school year and what changes might need to be made.

He said they are looking at using what is referred to as the "house system" to organize the students into smaller groups. Such structure gives students a sense of belonging, offers them a place for their voices will be heard, and helps fosters a strong sense of community and cooperation, he said.



ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

Bellows Falls Middle School principal Henry Bailly.

Teaching to standards

When asked how he feels about schools around the country coming under pressure from some state legislatures and some parents upset at real or contrived school and curriculum controversies, Bailly says he's not particularly concerned about that.

"There hasn't been a lot of push from administrators or

parents to change the curriculum here," he said. "We're given educational standards by the state as to what children should be taught in each grade. We have a lot of flexibility as to how the individual teacher teaches to those standards in a variety of ways."

While acknowledging that many schools are facing a lot of pressure from any number of outside forces to make changes to fit

their particular agendas, he says he hopes to avoid that here.

"School isn't a place for your personal biases," Bailly said. "I hope we can maintain that here. You may have things you feel strongly about outside of school, and that's fine. But I am not in favor of personal social agendas being pushed on a school."

Seery earns second runner up in Miss Vermont contest

Brattleboro native is Bernie Sanders' digital producer and has a long history of climate activism

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Meara Seery has placed third — second runner-up — in this year's Miss Vermont competition.

The contest was held April 16 at Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe.

"I had a great weekend," said the 2018 Brattleboro Union High School graduate, who competed with 10 other women. "It was such a fun time. The women were incredible, and I feel very lucky to get to know all of them. I'm very glad I did it."

So, are pageants anything like what we saw portrayed in films like *Miss Congeniality*, starring Sandra Bullock?

"The overall message — not to judge a book by its cover and that the women who participate are intelligent — is accurate, but overall it's a different experience," said Seery, who will hold her current local title of Miss Heart of Vermont until September.

The Brattleboro native can choose to again compete in the Miss Vermont contest in 2024.

"I'd like young women to know you can come from any background and still be successful in the Miss Vermont and Miss America organizations," said Seery. "And there isn't just one type of person that competes; there are a lot of different personalities that compete."

Uncowed by judges

Sunday's competition included

four phases: a private, 10-minute interview with the judges, talent, fitness, and evening gown.

Regarding her interview, Seery said, "I think it went super well. It's the best I've ever felt coming out of an interview."

During the Q&A, judges asked many questions about her community service, she said. They also asked her to name five breeds of cows.

"I got four," said the winner with a smile.

For her 90-second talent segment, Seery sang "Shallow" from *A Star is Born*.

In the fitness portion, contestants modeled athletic wear. The evening gown phase, said Seery, was "when you get to showcase your personal style."

Promoting social causes

As Miss Heart of Vermont, Seery will continue making appearances and working toward her community service initiative. She explained that in the Miss America organization each delegate has a community service mission. Hers is "climate change, creating healthier agriculture, neighborhoods, generations, and environments."

"You basically spend the time you're involved promoting whatever social cause you're passionate about," said Seery, who this year organized a local bottle drive that saved just about 1,000 recyclables from ending up in a landfill.

Community activism inspired by her love of the outdoors is not new for Seery, who logged more

than 600 hours of such work at BUHS. During that time, she volunteered at Green Mountain Camp for Girls and in the BUHS administrative offices, taking "pretty much any opportunity" for climate volunteerism that came her way.

At BUHS, Seery, a trumpet player, also represented Vermont in district band and district jazz band, and she successfully auditioned for the Vermont state band. She also played high school and college field hockey, captaining her teams as both a senior in BUHS and at George Washington University.

She had participated in the Strolling of the Heifers parade each year since 2005 until the final one in 2019, and attended the Governor's Institute summer programs for both art and science.

Seery is the last to be crowned queen for Brattleboro's Winter Carnival and was selected to represent the state in the Cherry Blossom Parade in Washington, D.C.

In her senior semester at George Washington University, where she was graduated magna cum laude in 2022, Seery was selected as a paid intern for U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders. She was hired after her internship and is currently works for Sanders as a digital producer, creating all his videos and graphics.

"I love my job," Seery said. "It's really great because I get to work for Vermonters every day, regardless of my title."



COURTESY PHOTO

Meara Seery

PETER HAVENS

Food Wine Spirits

32 ELLIOT ST. BRATTLEBORO, VT 05301

Open Sundays starting April 30th

New Hours: Wednesday-Sunday 5pm - Close

Reservations can be made online via RESY, or by calling 802-257-3333.

SCOTT FARM FRUIT TREE & PERENNIALS SALE

Shop our collection of heirloom apple trees as well as pears, plums, peaches, cherries, and also blueberries, grapes. We also have a beautiful array of perennials for sale.

More details at our online store: www.scottfarmvermont.com/tree-sale

All orders are placed online and must be picked up on May 6-7.

Questions? orders@scottfarmvermont.com

Get Driving

Spring Loan Sale

1% OFF

Our Current Rates*

Finance or Refinance your Car, Truck, Motorcycle, ATV, Camper, & More.

April 21 - 30, 2023

Ask us today or visit 802cu.com to apply online.

802 credit union let's connect

*Rates will vary based on your individual credit. This special does not apply to current loans held with 802 Credit Union, and is for secured, non-residential loans only. Not all applicants will qualify. Share account required. All loans receiving this special offer must close by May 31, 2023. Loan applications must be submitted by April 30, 2023. Additional terms & conditions apply. Contact us for all of the details.

Sandri ENERGY

SWITCH AND SAVE

Switch your propane to Sandri and get a \$100 account credit!

Easy to switch! FREE tank set!

*Call for details

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE WITH SANDRI:

- Low, Competitive Pricing
- Prompt Pay and Multi-Fuel User Discounts
- Same-Day Emergency Service 24/7

400 Chapman Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

Call our office today to become a customer 1.800.628.1900

PS: We answer our phones!

*Does not apply to existing accounts. Other restrictions apply. Please call for details.

AROUND THE TOWNS

Leaf collection schedule announced

BRATTLEBORO — Curbside spring leaf collection will take place on Friday, April 21, and Friday, May 5. These are the only days scheduled for curbside pickup.

All leaves and clippings must be contained in brown-paper leaf bags available for purchase at local businesses. No plastic bags or other containers will be accepted, as the materials collected will be used for compost.

The bags must be left at the curb by 7 a.m. on scheduled collection days.

Acceptable waste includes leaves, grass, clippings, garden waste, twigs, and branches no larger than 1 inch in diameter and 2 feet long. No other household trash is to be included.

Leaves, brush, and yard debris are also accepted year-round at the Windham Solid Waste Management District on Old Ferry Road. The transfer station is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Leaves may be discarded there for free; a fee is charged for brush or leaves mixed with brush.

Leaf and yard debris are collected via the curbside program twice in the spring and twice in the fall. For more information, call the Department of Public Works at 802-254-4255.

Water quality report now available

BRATTLEBORO — Brattleboro Water Department's annual Consumer Confidence Report Water Quality Report for 2022 is now available.

This report can be viewed online at brattleboro.org/ccreport and printed copies are available at the Department of Public Works, Tri-Park Co-op Office, Guilford Country Store, the Town Clerk and Treasurer's offices

(both located in the Brattleboro Municipal Center) and at the Interstate-91 Welcome Center in Guilford.

Questions about this report can be addressed to the Department of Public Works Water Treatment Division at 802-257-2320.

All Souls Church explores working together for climate action

WEST BRATTLEBORO — All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church will host a showing on Friday, April 21, of three short films about communities where people are successfully making changes which benefit the people who live in their communities, their economies, and the environment. Not only are they reducing pollution, these citizens are working with businesses and local governments to create jobs. There will be time for discussion of how similar action could happen locally.

This free event begins at 6 p.m. with a potluck supper, followed by the films and discussion, at the West Village Meeting House, 29 South Street, West Brattleboro. For those who can not attend in person, there will be an opportunity to participate via Zoom. Pre-registration is encouraged by calling the church office at 802-254-9377, e-mailing lahay@mac.com, or registering online at bit.ly/711-allsouls.

Electric vehicles showcased in Bellows Falls

BELLOWS FALLS — The Rockingham Energy Committee is planning an Electric Vehicle (EV) showcase in Bellows Falls on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hetty Green Park, on the corner of Church and School Streets (next to TD Bank). Sunday, April 23 is

the rain date, same time.

Local EV owners will bring their cars, and two local EV dealers have been invited. There will also be electric bikes and garden tools on display, and tables with information about local environmental groups. For more information, contact Peter Bergstrom at rockinghamvtenery@gmail.com or 802-444-1860.

Crock-Pot Dinner served in BF

BELLOWS FALLS — The Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls, 8 School Street, is sponsoring a Crock-Pot Dinner on Saturday, April 22, from 5 to 7 p.m. There will be a variety of homemade selections. The meal will include bread, salad, beverages, and dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available.

Admission is \$12 for adults, \$6 for children, and free for kids younger than five. The church is accessible to all. Diners are asked to enter from the back.

Dummerston Historical Society hosts quarterly meeting

DUMMERSTON — Help the Dummerston Historical Society identify Dummerston scenes in photos of long ago at their quarterly meeting on Sunday, April 23, at 2 p.m., at the Historical Society Schoolhouse in Dummerston Center.

Charlie Marchant of the Photo Committee of the Wardsboro History Group will present more than 70 images they have digitized of Dummerston glass plate negatives. The Wardsboro group hope local people will be able to identify the photos, and plan similar identification meetings for Vernon and Brattleboro in May.

The Wardsboro group, active since 1992, has transformed and preserved thousands of glass plate negatives over the years. The

images to be shown are from a collection of Thomas Johnson's family, generously gifted by his widow, Barbara Johnson, for eventual distribution to the historical societies of the three towns. This donation is a valuable addition to Dummerston's photo collection, an ongoing project of many years.

The Dummerston Historical Society is handicapped accessible and one need not be a member to attend programs or exhibits. Delicious homemade refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Gail Sorenson at gailsvt@gmail.com or 802-254-9311.

Senior meal served in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions will present their second meal for April on Wednesday, April 26, with pick-up of take-outs between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., and in-house seating at noon. The menu for this meal will be baked chicken breast with mushroom sauce or vegetarian spinach/cheese manicotti, rice pilaf, and marinated carrots with gingerbread and whipped cream for dessert.

Reservations are strongly suggested. Call 802-254-1138 and leave name, telephone number, choice of entree and whether eating in or taking out. Please make these reservations by 5:00 pm on Tuesday. A donation of \$3.00 for those 60 and older and \$4.00 for the 59-and-under-group is suggested.

Free produce distribution

PUTNEY — The Vermont Foodbank and the Putney Foodshelf co-sponsor a monthly food drop of free produce and some nonperishables on the

fourth Thursday of every month, from 9 to 9:45 a.m., on Alice Holloway Drive (in front of Putney Meadows, the white building across from the Putney Food Co-op and Putney Fire Station.)

All are welcome. Because of Covid, it is a drive-up service. Bags will be provided. The next monthly food drop is Thursday, April 27.

Garden Club welcomes new president

BRATTLEBORO — Lynne Kennedy, president of the Brattleboro Garden Club since 2020, bids farewell in her leadership role and welcomes incoming president Jill Stahl-Tyler, who has been an active member of the Club since 2004. Stahl-Tyler helped design and now maintains the website and has been involved in the club's plant sales and many other programs.

The Garden Club has partnered with other organizations in town, such as Gallery Walk, and says it hopes to continue those activities. Programs for the upcoming year include flower arranging, local garden tours, garden critiques, plus holiday wreath- and table-decorating workshops.

The club meets monthly on the second Monday at 5:30 p.m., usually at the Green Mountain Chapel community room on Western Avenue. Other meetings are held at local gardens around town. They are always looking for new members. Contact Stahl-Tyler at jill@globalcow.com, or visit brattleborogardenclub.org.

Putney Community Cares launches feasibility study for community nurse

PUTNEY — Putney Community Cares is working on

a feasibility study to determine if the Putney community would like and feels the need for a community nurse. The Community Nurse would be a free program offered by Putney Community Cares.

According to a news release, the Community Nurse "would provide nursing care delivered in the home that focuses on illness care for individuals and families in our community," with a goal of providing "treatment and education to decrease the occurrence of disease and illness and to promote healthy living."

This service would be for people of all ages who need health care assistance at home, and "blood pressure or other health clinics could also be a part of this program depending on our community needs."

Typically, individuals who are homebound are eligible for services provided by a visiting nurse, and being homebound is a requisite for receiving their care.

Once able to be out in the community on their own or with assistance, patients might no longer be considered homebound, and therefore no longer eligible for the visiting nurse. The Community Nurse program would allow for home visits for anyone in Putney who is not considered homebound.

Putney residents are encouraged to go to bit.ly/711-nurse to fill out the survey by Friday, April 28. Paper copies of the survey are at the Putney Public Library and Town Hall.

Putney Community Cares says it will consider these data in the month of May to make decisions on whether the program is a good fit for Putney. For more information, contact Ruby McAdoo at coordinator@putneycommunitycares.org or 802-387-5593.

Green Mountain Conservancy plans Earth Day activities

DUMMERSTON — The Green Mountain Conservancy is inviting everyone to participate in Earth Day activities, such as invasive species removal and hikes, at the Deer Run Nature Preserve.

Participants will join them at the Deer Run Nature Preserve Trailhead (940 Camp Arden Road) on Saturday, April 22, at 10 a.m. and choose the activity that best suits their interests and abilities. Attendees are asked to bring their lunch, snacks, and water.

On the Deer Run Nature Preserve, some well-known invasive plants must be controlled to protect the biodiversity of the Preserve. The two species highlighted this Earth Day are Japanese barberry and glossy buckthorn. Though they are both easily spread by bird-eaten berries, they grow in different places.

While Japanese barberry grows in the understory of rich forests, the glossy buckthorn grows well in poorer open sites, preferring

sunlight. Both of these species can become prolific in their preferred environments, to the point of preventing both herbaceous plants and forest tree seedlings from growing, eventually drastically lessening the biodiversity in an area as well as preventing regeneration of forest natural communities.

There are two opportunities on Earth Day to help limit the growth of invasive species at Deer Run:

— Removal (by pulling) of a patch of Japanese barberry in a moderately rich northern hardwood forest. The organizers' goal is to remove a well-established patch so that it will not continue to be a seed source that affects the surrounding high-quality forest dominated by aging Sugar Maples and White Ash. To participate in this activity, join a hike to the monument with naturalist-ecologist Dan Dubie.

— Cutting or pulling glossy buckthorn in a young forest dominated by white pine, black cherry, and blueberry. This forest is just establishing itself, and organizers hope to provide ample room and opportunity for a diversity of native plants to take hold by keeping the buckthorn at bay. GMC directors and other volunteers will be removing invasive glossy buckthorn from the trailhead.

Tools will be provided. Participants may experience a great feeling of satisfaction as

they do this work for the future of the forest.

As for options for walks and hikes, an Earth Day Meander with Mary Ellen Copeland in the Deer Run woodland is planned. Visit the lair of the porcupine, see where a bear has scratched on a power pole, learn why the forest floor is covered with pillows and cradles, and why it is not a good idea to tidy up the forest floor.

Roger Haydock, GMC's trail builder, will lead a guided hike with ample descriptions of the geology and natural features of the area. There will be time for discussion and questions.

Dubie will lead a rigorous hike to a rock structure known as "the monument." Hikers can choose to join the crew working near the monument on barberry invasive removal, take the Shoulder Trail to a magnificent view up the West River Valley, take the Ravine Trail to the meadow, or return to the trailhead.

The public is invited to hike independently or with a group of family and friends on any of the Deer Run trails. There is a large trail map at the trail head and smaller maps that can be taken with hikers.

These activities will leave plenty of time for participants to join in the Earth Day Festival on the Brattleboro Common from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, email info@greenmountainconservancy.org.

BRATTLEBORO
Brewers Festival

Visit brattleboro-brewersfestival.com for tickets and information

Saturday May 27th 12:30-4:30

Biggest selection of Local Craft Beers & Ciders

Get your tickets today before they sell out!

Live Music from: Mosey Down and Groove Prophet

Local Food Trucks: Gouger's BBQ & Catering, Anon's Thai Cuisine, J&B Curbside Cafe, Mach's Wood-Fired Courmet Pizza, The Brattleboro Little League's Hot Dogs

V.I.P. early entry at 11:30

Over 100 taps to choose from!

14th Star Brewing
1st Republic Brewing Co
The Alchemist
Bent Water Brewing
Black Flannel Brewing Co
Branch & Blade Brewing
Burlington Beer Co
Citizen Cider
Dirt Church Brewing
Element Brewing
Farm Road Brewing
Frogg Brewing
Frost Beer Works
Green Empire Brewing
Hermit Thrush Brewery
Lawson's Finest Liquids
Liambru Tasty
Mount Holly Beer Co
Outer Limits Brewing
Outlaw Brewing Company
Stowe Cider
Switchback Brewing Co
Ten Bends Beer
Upper Pass Beer Co
Vermont Beer Makers
Von Trapp Brewing
West LA Beer Co
Whetstone Craft Beers
Worntown Brewery
Zero Gravity Craft Brewery

Get your tickets now at: www.BrattleboroBrewersFestival.com

Breath of the Heart
Enlivening • Deeply Healing
Individual & Group Sessions Available
Offering Woman/Mother Groups

Kaillama Morris
Therapeutic Breath Practitioner
"Breath is the master key to health and wellness a function we can learn to regulate and develop in order to improve our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being."
— Andrew Weil, MD

37 Sawmill Road Newfane, VT
(413) 512-0470
lovingspirit1@gmail.com
www.breathoftheheart.com



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

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

We look forward to hearing from you!

www.BrattleboroHearing.com

The Commons special section for
SUMMER CAMPS

Let us help you fill registrations!

This section runs twice a month from March through June.

CONTACT AN AD REP!

lori@commonsnews.org

nancy@commonsnews.org

1-888-511-5150

COLUMN | Arts Notebook



OLGA PETERS COMMONS FILE PHOTO

Tim Stevenson of Athens, founder of Post Oil Solutions, was among the 400,000 marchers who flooded the streets of New York City in 2014 to call attention to the urgency of climate change. Stevenson is the author of a new book, *Transformative Activism: A Values Revolution in Everyday Life in a Time of Societal Collapse*.

'The VALUING of life itself'

Author and organizer Tim Stevenson of Athens prepares to launch a new book, 'Transformative Activism,' on the spiritual maturity required to change today's world

TIM STEVENSON, a potent, intelligent voice on climate change and cofounder/director of Post-Oil Solutions (postoil.com), has published his second book, which launches this month. *Transformative Activism: A Values Revolution in Everyday Life in a Time of Societal Collapse* (Apocryphile Press) is, according to a publisher's release, "an effective guide to growing into the spiritual maturity we need to be agents of transformative change in a collapsing world." The book "invites us into spiritual practices that foster the human liberation we seek," the publisher says.



ANNIE LANDEMBERGER is a freelance writer who contributes regularly to these pages. She also is founder and artistic director of Rock River Players and is one half of the musical duo Bard Owl with partner T. Breeze Verdant.

"Rejecting the notion that political solutions are the answer to political problems, Stevenson looks to our inherent goodness and capacity for love." Stevenson, author of *Resilience and Resistance: Building Sustainable*

Communities for a Post Oil Age (Green Writers Press, 2015), has published an impressive body of essays and articles in Vermont publications including the *Brattleboro Reformer*, *The Commons*, and *VtDigger*.

A lifelong activist and community organizer for peace, draft resistance, welfare rights, social justice, and feminism — and speaking out against nuclear power and, most ardently in recent years, the climate crisis — since he moved to the area in 1978. By that point, he'd "burned out" on activism that had been driving him since the mid-1960s.

"In those days," Stevenson recalls, "I

■ SEE STEVENSON, B6

'Poetry Around Town' spreads nearly 100 poems all over Brattleboro

Installation of public poetry downtown started three years ago as a response to the isolation of Covid, but "Yes, the need to connect was more urgent during Covid, but 'the desire to see and hear each other is still with us'

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Poetry around Town (PAT) is back. For a third year running, the pandemic-spawned project has posted close to 100 poems in nearly 50 businesses' windows around Brattleboro.

With poems from throughout Vermont, nearby Massachusetts, and New Hampshire by both published and well-known poets, as well as by those who are fairly new to the art, the collection was curated by a small group of collaborators, then prepared for hanging in 14-point type.

A collaboration among Write Action, the Brattleboro Literary Festival, and Time to Write, PAT launched in response to isolation necessitated by the spread of Covid.

As Write Action co-founder Arlene Distler, a journalist, visual artist, and participating poet, explains: "Yes, the need to connect was more urgent during Covid, but the desire to see and hear each other is still with us. The town has been through rough times lately ... [Thus offering this means of expression] is at least as important now as it was during Covid."

Inviting people writing poetry to submit to this event, Distler says, "encourages those who have perhaps been too shy about their poetry writing to come forward in this very public, but not scary, way."

Participating poet, writer, educator, and publisher Arthur "Andy" Burrows adds: "What fascinates me with being involved in the literary community is the variety of voices and interests heard: many of us are concerned about problems in our community ... there's a lot going

on. In reviewing [the 2023 PAT poems] it's clear people are very concerned."

The poems, Burrows explains, manifest strong feelings about the environment, about peace and violence, about social challenges faced.

"It's wonderful to give poets a chance to share vision and feelings.... Many of the poems around town are very personal, emerging from the poets' lives, loves, loneliness, excitement."

Readers witness a range of voices from keen observation of the world to what's happening in one person's life here and now.

Participating poet Barbara Morrison, writer and teacher of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, adds that poetry can address "how we can bear witness to what's happening to us, how we reach others now and leave a record for the future."

Morrison adds that the hope is that PAT will bring more people downtown to patronize the many participating businesses.

In the first year of Poetry around Town, the response from the business community was outstandingly positive and that reaction has grown ever more so.

"Store owners love people stopping in front of their windows to read the poems posted there, to have conversations about them, to engage," said Distler.

As an art form, Distler said "poetry is just too invisible in our culture ... so we see this as a way to bring poetry to the fore. It's well-suited to this project because of its compactness, its expressiveness, and its imagery."

PAT has an impact not only on Brattleboro shoppers, residents, and visitors, but also, naturally, on the poets themselves.

As participating poet Lindsey

■ SEE POETRY AROUND TOWN, B5

MASKS that REVEAL what's UNDERNEATH



Daniel Callahan will lead a workshop in MassQing, "a ritual painting of the face used to reveal rather than conceal one's inner essence."

Ritual face-painting workshop is 'very much about a sort of introspection and reflection,' says multimedia artist Daniel Callahan

By Alyssa Grosso
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—A Boston-based multimedia artist, filmmaker, and graphic designer will lead a hands-on workshop that will dive into participants' inner reflections and new internal discoveries.

Daniel Callahan, whose exhibit "Daniel Callahan: En-MassQ" is on display at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center through Sunday, June 11, will share his

work in MassQing, a form of decoration of the body that uses the face as a canvas for line, shape, and color to express what is inside.

"We often think of a mask as something we use to hide our identity or something we hide behind, or even something to protect us," said Callahan. "But these masks are used to reveal and to bring what's inside out."

As described on his website, "In virtually all indigenous cultures, art is regarded not as objects in isolation, but

as instruments for ritual — used to align, balance and relate the mundane with the mystical, the known with the unknown, and the 'us' with the 'other' in order to bring about meaning, order, and harmony to all."

Callahan says that in his practice, he uses ritual "as a method, a way in which to approach not only my art, but my life. Through it I look to become a fuller human being and to create work that is deeply informed by, but ultimately transcendent of, time,

■ SEE MASSQING, B6

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



**Berkley & Veller
Greenwood Country
Realtors**

Buyer demand is still soaring!

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

Let Us Help You Reach Your Real Estate Dreams!



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

arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY 20

The written word BELLOWS FALLS "Braiding Sweetgrass" Book Discussion with author Robin Wall Kimmerer: As a botanist, Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science...

Kids and families BRATTLEBORO Lego-Palooza! Special Session: Join us for a special spring break Lego-Palooza Session!

Community building GUILDFORD Reserve Forestland: Windham County Forester Sam Schneski will talk about a new land use category in VT's Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program called Reserve Forestland.

Visual arts and shows BRATTLEBORO "Bloom": Watercolor flowers by the local group Art Among Friends. These six artists - Connie Evans, Alice Freeman, Kathy Greve, Laurie Klenkel, Louise Zak, Lynn Zimmerman - gathered online during the pandemic to create, support, and encourage one another on their artistic journeys.

THURSDAY CONT. Ideas and education BRATTLEBORO Book Talk: "The Progress Illusion: Reclaiming Our Future from the Fairytale of Economics": "I'm convinced that economics as currently taught and practiced will ensure a planetary path to ruin..."

FRIDAY 21

Performing arts BRATTLEBORO Vermont Theatre Company announces "Earnest! A Trivial Comedy for Serious People": "This version of Oscar Wilde's wittiest play will be like no other. Director CC Casady has taken care to reimagine and modernize this classic story of Algernon, the middle class black sheep in a family of successful entrepreneurs, and his lifelong quest to utilize his 23&Me results to cause chaos."

Music BRATTLEBORO Vermont Jazz Center: 7th Annual Solo Jazz Piano Festival (In Person / Face-book Live): For all music lovers, not just pianists, interested in both the practical and spiritual aspects of jazz and improvised music.

Visual arts and shows BRATTLEBORO "Bloom": Watercolor flowers by the local group Art Among Friends. These six artists - Connie Evans, Alice Freeman, Kathy Greve, Laurie Klenkel, Louise Zak, Lynn Zimmerman - gathered online during the pandemic to create, support, and encourage one another on their artistic journeys.

FRIDAY CONT. Christine McVie, whom we recently lost. 7 p.m. Doors open 6:30 p.m. (FYI: The Brattleboro group rehearses at the Vermont Jazz Center on Monday nights from 7-9 p.m., starting their summer season on May 15. You can enroll at www.rockvoices.com.). \$15 adults, \$12 seniors, \$8 students. Free for children under 12. Donation jar set up to benefit Senior Solutions. Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Rd.

Well-being PUTNEY Medicaid & Health Resources Drop-in Hours: This month, Medicaid recipients in VT will begin receiving letters asking for updated eligibility information. Stop in for information about this process, who will be affected, what your rights are in this process, how to be sure that you aren't cut off for bureaucratic reasons. People who are not on Medicaid and have questions about health care access are also welcome as there will be more health care resources available. Hosted by Vermont Workers' Center.

Community building W. BRATTLEBORO Working Together for Climate Action (In-Person/Zoom): "Tired of bad news about climate change? We're hosting three short films about communities where people are successfully fighting back by making changes benefiting those living in these communities, their economies, and the environment. Not only are they reducing pollution, these citizens are working with local governments and businesses to create jobs. There will be time for discussion of ways similar things could happen in our community."

Visual arts and shows BELLOWS FALLS Canal Street Art Gallery presents Charles W. Norris-Brown: Distant Thunder Studio: View original artworks from the late artist's unfinished graphic novel "Thunder Basin" within a re-creation of Norris-Brown's studio as an interactive exhibition including digital cataloging of the graphic novel, culminating in the launch of a Thunder Basin website.

MUSIC BRATTLEBORO Vermont Jazz Center: 7th Annual Solo Jazz Piano Festival (In Person / Face-book Live): For all music lovers, not just pianists, interested in both the practical and spiritual aspects of jazz and improvised music. VJC celebrates the vital impact the piano has played in the history of jazz with Michael Weiss, Dan Tepler, Myra Melford, Orrin Evans headline with emerging artists Shiyu Fang and Remi Savard.

Beyond Description BRATTLEBORO Artist Talk: Daniel Callahan (In-Person/Zoom/Face-book Live): Callahan discusses his multidisciplinary work - influences, themes, evolutions. Topics from mediums to mysticism, art advocacy to afrofuturism, personal/community expression, and role of art/culture/ritual in human society. Talk takes place in connection with "En-MassQ" - exhibition of art from his recent series where he documents his practice of MassQ (his alternative spelling of "masking"), a ritual painting of the face used to reveal one's inner essence.

FRIDAY CONT. 7 p.m. Through MassQing, deriving from ancient traditions of body painting, Callahan seeks to find "connection/communion with all things" and share this sense of harmony. His works have been featured at: Museum of Fine Arts, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Institute of Contemporary Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, Queens Museum, and Believer Magazine.

Film and video WILLIAMSVILLE Friday Night Movies: "CODA": in this film, Ruby is a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) and the only hearing person in her family. When the family's fishing business is threatened, Ruby is torn between pursuing her passion at Berklee College of Music and abandoning her deaf parents, who rely on her help.

SATURDAY 22

Performing arts BRATTLEBORO Circus Spring-presents "Intertwine": Metamorphosis...the precipice of leaving one life for the next. Nine stories of growth and discovery told through acrobatics and circus magic in a bold and original new work. This is America's next generation of circus artists on their Circus Springboard tour throughout New England.

MUSIC WILMINGTON St. Mary's in the Mountains presents "The Sounds of Spring": Celebration of the Season of Rebirth as part of the Red Door Concert series. Program features The Windham Philharmonic and Michael Pennington. Windham Philharmonic will perform Robert Schumann's "Spring Symphony," Frederick Delius's "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring," Johann Strauss's "Voices of Spring" waltz.

Recreation WEST TOWNSHEND Wildflower Walk: Early spring wildflowers are blooming! Time for our annual spring wildflower walk. We can hike into the Tannery Brook Ravine in West Townshend, or venture to a new spot. There are some beautiful wildflowers on a trail in Athens - a bit more of a drive, but an easier hike.

Community building WESTMINSTER Earth Day Hikes Make a Difference - Remove Invasive Plants Threatening our Biodiversity or Participate in an Educational Hike: Choices: Deer Run Meander: Ramble through woods w/ naturalists looking for signs of spring/more natural wonders. Intermediate Level Guided Hike: Roger Haydock describes geology/other natural features of the area. Rigorous Hike: Naturalist/ecologist Dan Dubie leads hike to Monument with option of working with Green Mountain Conservancy to remove Japanese Barbbery patch, or go on your own to Shoulder Trail or Ravine Trail.

W. BRATTLEBORO "From Resistance to Embrace" led by Rev. Ted Whitfield (In-Person/Zoom): Led by Rev. Ted Whitfield: "There is much to resist from violence to injustice, racism and homophobia. How do we transform our resistance into an embrace of the good, and the power held within a community?"

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Local history WESTMINSTER West Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association Annual Meeting Features Photos and Documentary: Featured speaker Daron Tansley presents his photos of wildlife and scenery from Pinnacle land and elsewhere in northern New England. A short documentary about the late Libby Mills will also be screened. Learn more about this nonprofit group - the Windmill Hill

SATURDAY CONT. Pinnacle Association - that has protected over 2,700 acres of land and has 27 miles of trails in Westminister, Rockingham, Athens, Grafton, Brookline, Townshend. 4 p.m. Free. Congregational Church of Westminster West, 44 Church St. Information: 802-387-2334; westminsterwest.org.

Kids and families GUILDFORD Guilford Astronomy Club: Lyrid Meteor Shower Viewing Party: "We're forming an Astronomy Club! Due to popular demand after our meteor shower viewing this past December, we plan to get together more often to look up at the night sky and wonder. Join us to watch for Lyrid meteors and talk about what this group could be! What would excite you most about an Astronomy Club? Stars, planets, sun, moon, asteroids, comets, meteors, constellations, black holes, or...? Presentations, readings, discussions? telescopes?"

Well-being GREENFIELD Pranayama 101: Breathwork for Everyday Ease: This workshop will give you tools to establish a deep and lasting connection with your teacher, your breath! It will be held in-person at Community Yoga and Wellness Center in Greenfield or via Zoom. Beginners are welcome.

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Camerata The Want of You: Renaissance Music and the Future: Featuring pairs of Renaissance-era and later works including Palestine, Victoria, Esmail, Bruckner, and the world premiere of "The Want of You" by Kitty Brazelton.

Local history DUMMERSTON Dummerston Historical Society Quarterly Meeting: Your help is needed to identify Dummerston scenes in photos of long ago. The Photo Committee of the Wardsboro History Group, represented by Charlie Marchant, will present over 70 images they've digitized of Dummerston glass plate negatives and hope locals can identify them.

Community building WESTMINSTER WEST Cabin Fever Potluck Supper: Church members will provide beverages - including wine - and continue to feature Chef Tristan Toleno's tradition of mac and cheese using his recipe. We hope you will bring a salad, side dish, or a dessert and hopefully stories as well. Wine available by donation. Do come even if you are unable to bring something for the potluck.

W. BRATTLEBORO "From Resistance to Embrace" led by Rev. Ted Whitfield (In-Person/Zoom): Led by Rev. Ted Whitfield: "There is much to resist from violence to injustice, racism and homophobia. How do we transform our resistance into an embrace of the good, and the power held within a community?"

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

SATURDAY CONT. a fun, lively, family-friendly street festival! Explore the good work our community for climate justice and find out ways you can make a difference. 1-4 p.m. Free. Brattleboro Common, btw. Putney Rd. & Linden St.

Film and video GREENFIELD Earth Day showing of "The Lorax": Stop by for a showing, sponsored by the Greenfield Police Assn., of "The Lorax" (2012). Based on the immortal Dr. Seuss classic, it stars the voices of Zac Efron, Taylor Swift, Danny DeVito, Betty White, and Ed Helms as the Once-ler. After the show, pick up a blue bag to join in Greenfield Middle School science teacher Judy Bennet's annual city-wide efforts to clean up litter. Bags can be disposed of for free by the Greenfield Dept. of Public Works.

SUNDAY 23

Music BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Camerata The Want of You: Renaissance Music and the Future: Featuring pairs of Renaissance-era and later works including Palestine, Victoria, Esmail, Bruckner, and the world premiere of "The Want of You" by Kitty Brazelton.

Local history DUMMERSTON Dummerston Historical Society Quarterly Meeting: Your help is needed to identify Dummerston scenes in photos of long ago. The Photo Committee of the Wardsboro History Group, represented by Charlie Marchant, will present over 70 images they've digitized of Dummerston glass plate negatives and hope locals can identify them.

Community building WESTMINSTER WEST Cabin Fever Potluck Supper: Church members will provide beverages - including wine - and continue to feature Chef Tristan Toleno's tradition of mac and cheese using his recipe. We hope you will bring a salad, side dish, or a dessert and hopefully stories as well. Wine available by donation. Do come even if you are unable to bring something for the potluck.

W. BRATTLEBORO "From Resistance to Embrace" led by Rev. Ted Whitfield (In-Person/Zoom): Led by Rev. Ted Whitfield: "There is much to resist from violence to injustice, racism and homophobia. How do we transform our resistance into an embrace of the good, and the power held within a community?"

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

Community meals BELLOWS FALLS Crock-Pot Dinner: Variety of homemade selections. Meal includes bread, salad, beverages, dessert. Some gluten-free choices will be available. Offered by the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Bellows Falls.

PROBLEM SOLVED: Aqua-Aid Systems Water Conditioning. What's In Your Water? Iron Stains? Smelly Water? Hardness? RADON? 800-252-8484. Locally owned since 1984.

Primary Care with Compassion & Convenience. GraceCottage FAMILY HEALTH & HOSPITAL. 185 Grafton Rd, Townshend, VT. gracecottage.org • 802-365-4331.

To submit your event: calendar@commonsnews.org. Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday. Visit commonsnews.org for more listings with more details.

HOUGHTON SANITARY SERVICE INC. SEPTIC TANK SERVICE CLEANING. Commercial & Residential Septic Pumping. Portable Toilet Rentals also available. Family Owned for 50 years. Call 802-254-9221. Guilford Ctr. Rd. Guilford, VT.

MONDAY 24

Sundog Poetry, Green Writers Press present an evening of poetry at Next Stage

PUTNEY—Celebrate National Poetry Month with an evening of poetry readings and a conversation with Bethany Breitland, winner of the Sundog Poetry Book Award, on Saturday, April 22, at 7 p.m. at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill.

Breitland will read from her acclaimed debut collection, *Fire Index*, and will be joined on stage with the book award's final judge Shanta Lee for an intimate conversation on craft and the healing power of poetry.

Additional poets will read, including former Vermont Poet Laureate Chard deNiord, Shanta Lee, James Crews, Meg Reynolds, Dede Cummings, Ross Thurber, and Megan Buchanan.

Breitland's poetry debut collection measures the interior life of a survivor against the world she creates through her own fractured marriage, motherhood, and religion.

Breitland confronts the trauma of her brother's death, her father's abuse, and the complicated relationships to her sister, mother, and womanhood. She tells these stories in fragments, using hybrid and persona. She reckons with her complicit and often dishonest life and with how walking out from the burning construct demands her full attention, forgiveness, and responsibility.

Breitland was born in northern Indiana. Her people, she says, "are cult members, truckers, doctors, child-mothers, and business tycoons." She has lived, studied, and taught on the West Coast, the South, and New England. Breitland earned her undergraduate degree from Pepperdine University and her MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts.

As an educator and activist, she has worked for more than 20 years concerning women's rights and the LGBTQ community. *Fire Index* is her first full-length book of poems and has received various poetry prizes, including as a semi-finalist for the OSU Press/The Journal Wheeler Prize for Poetry. She lives with her children and her partner, Michael, outside of Burlington.

Shanta Lee is an award-winning writer across genres, journalist, visual artist, and public intellectual, actively participating in the cultural discourse with work that has been widely

featured.

Shanta Lee is the author of poetry collections *Ghettoclaustrophobia: Dreamin of Mama While Trying to Speak Woman in Woke Tongues* (Diode Editions, 2021), and her new illustrated poetry collection, *Black Metamorphoses* (Etruscan Press, 2023).

Her latest work, *Dark Goddess: An Exploration of the Sacred Feminine* — which includes her photography, short film, interviews with the collaborators, and curated items from the University of Vermont's Fleming Museum of Art's permanent collection — is on view at the museum. To learn more about her work, visit shantalee.com.

Meg Reynolds is a poet, artist, and teacher from New England. Her work has been published in literary journals such as *Mid-American Review*, *Rhino*, and *Iterant*, and is forthcoming from *Prairie Schooner* and *New England Review*.

A graduate of the Stonecoast Master of Fine Arts program, her work has been twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize and once for Best of the Net. Her poetry comic collection, *A Comic Year*, came out from Finishing Line Press in 2021. Her second collection, *Does the Earth*, is forthcoming in May from Harpoon Review Books.

Dede Cummings is a poet, book designer, author, and publisher from Brattleboro. Her poetry has been published in *Mademoiselle*, *Connotation Press*, *MomEgg Review*, *Figroot*, *Bloodroot Literary*, and *Green Mountains Review*. She was an undergraduate fellow at Bread Loaf and a contributing poet in 2013, as well as a 2016 recipient of a writer's grant from the Vermont Studio Center.

Her first poetry collection, *To Look Out From*, won the 2016 Homebound Publications Poetry Prize, and her second book of poetry, *The Meeting Place*, came out in 2020 from Salmon Poetry. Cummings is the founder and publisher of Green Writers Press and she lives in West Brattleboro.

Megan Buchanan's poetry collection, *Clothesline Religion* (Green Writers Press, 2017), was nominated for the 2018 Vermont Book Award. Her poems have appeared in *The Sun* magazine,

make|shift, *A Woman's Thing*, and *Iterant*, as well as other journals and numerous anthologies.

Her work was featured on public display at Art at the Kent in 2021. Her interdisciplinary performance project *Regenerations: Reckoning with Radioactivity* was in residency at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center this past winter.

Buchanan's work has been supported by the Arts Council of Windham County, the Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Performance Lab, and the Vermont Studio Center. She lives in Putney and works with students with learning exceptionalities. Her work can be found at meganbuchanan.net.

Ross Thurber's poems have appeared in *Bloodroot Literary Magazine*, *Chrysalis Reader*, and *Vermont Life*; they are anthologized in *So Little Time: Words and Images for a World in Climate Crisis*, edited by Greg Delanty and published by Green Writers Press in 2014.

He was awarded an Emily Mason Fellowship at the Vermont Studio Center in 2012. His debut poetry collection, *Pioneer Species*, was published by GreenWriters Press in 2018. Ross lives in West Brattleboro with his family and owns and operates Lilac Ridge Farm, a third-generation organic dairy and diversified hill farm.

James Crews is the editor of several bestselling anthologies, including *The Path to Kindness: Poems of Connection and Joyant How to Love the World: Poems of Gratitude and Hope*, which has more than 100,000 copies in print.

He has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Republic*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and on NPR's *Morning Edition*.

Crews is the author of four prize-winning books of poetry — *The Book of What Stays*, *Telling My Father*, *Bluebird*, and *Every Waking Moment* — and a book of short essays, *Kindness Will Save the World: Stories of Compassion and Connection*. He also speaks and leads workshops on kindness, mindfulness, and writing for self-compassion. He lives with his husband on 40 rocky acres in the woods of Southern Vermont.

Former Vermont state poet laureate, Chard deNiord is the author of six books of poetry, *In My Unknowing* (University of Pittsburgh Press 2020), *Interstate* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019), *The Double Truth* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), *Speaking In Turn* with Tony Sanders, (Gnomon Press, 2011), *Night Mowing* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), *Sharp Golden Thorn* (Marsh Hawk Press, 2002) and *Asleep in the Fire* (University of Alabama Press, 1990).

Rock Voices Brattleboro presents spring concert

BRATTLEBORO—Rock Voices Brattleboro, the area's only community rock chorus, and director Bob Thies invite people to join them for an evening of choral music "like you've never heard it before," says Thies. The concert will take place at the Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Road, on Friday, April 21, at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Backed by a professional rock band, the choir will deliver the harmonies of songs by Janis Joplin, the Four Seasons, Justin Timberlake, the Indigo Girls, the Eagles, and Hall and Oates,

among others. There will be a special tribute to the late David Crosby and Christine McVie. A donation jar will be set up to benefit Senior Solutions, an agency whose mission is to promote the well-being and dignity of older adults in our community.

Rock Voices represents "the best of southern Vermont and the greater Pioneer Valley: a sense of community, a love of music, and a desire to share their joy and talents with others. But be warned," say organizers, "once you listen to this lively choir in person, you might find yourself signing up to join

them next time around."

The Brattleboro group rehearses at the Vermont Jazz Center on Monday nights from 7 to 9 p.m. They will be starting their summer season on May 15. Those interested may enroll at rockvoices.com.

Admission prices for the concert are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors, and \$8 for students. Children 12 and under are admitted free of charge. Tickets will be available at the door or online at EventBrite.com (eventbrite.com/e/rock-voices-brattleboro-tickets-600651152767).

Centre Congregational Church hosts 'Tempestry Project'

BRATTLEBORO—For the month of April, Centre Congregational Church, at 193 Main St., is displaying The Putney School's Tempestry Project. This is the beginning of their 88 Tempestry Project, as 14 tempestries (a combination of words *temperature* and *tapestry*) have been completed thus far. These beautifully colorful

temperature gauges demonstrate each year's temperature in a knitted or crocheted piece of art.

"The Tempestry Project is personal and collaborative fiber art, environmental education, and climate activism through data representation all rolled into a sprawling community of friends, artists, crafters, teachers, scientists, nature lovers, activists, and more," according to a news release.

The Tempestry Project was begun in 2016 by Emily McNeil, Marissa Connelly, and Justin Connelly, using climate data from the Naval Air Station on Whidbey Island, Washington. Having read about climate scientists trying to preserve climate data, the friends joked that there should be a return to more concrete forms of data, and thus, the Tempestry Project was born.

Each tempestry is a knitted or crocheted bar graph of the daily temperature for one geographic location, running from January 1 through December 31, of a given year. Each row represents a specific day and the color of the yarn represents a specific temperature range of 5 degrees.

"As of December 2018, crafters have created tempestries in nearly every U.S. state and 20 other countries," project organizers said. "All tempestries use the same same yarn colors and

temperature ranges in order to create a visually cohesive narrative across a wide expanse of makers, places, and eras. This consistency is an important aspect of the project."

The Putney School's work with the Tempestry Project began in 2021 as a faculty-student project and was then brought to the wider community in 2022 at the school's annual Harvest Festival.

According to the school, the goal is to knit one tempestry for each year the school has been in existence, with an ultimate goal of 88 tempestries. These will be displayed in the Currier Gallery during Harvest Festival 2023.

The large display will allow the community to visualize how climate change has affected Putney in the nearly nine decades since The Putney School was established in 1935. All tempestries are being knitted or crocheted by current students and staff, along with alumni, former employees, and local community members.

The tempestries displayed at Centre Church represent just a portion of the tempestries that are under construction. They are still seeking knitters and crocheters who'd like to help create a tempestry. Those interested in participating in the project may contact Putney School Librarian Sarah Wiles at swiles@putneyschool.org.

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

bc tv LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
April 17-23
CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

Here We Are with guest **Rabbi Amita Jarmon**, Brattleboro Area Jewish Community Congregation. Mon 8p, Tues 9p, Wed 12:05p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 5p, Sun 9:30a

The World Fusion Show - Ep #150 - The Fula Brothers. Mon 5:30p, Wed 6:05p, Thurs 3:05p, Fri 1:15p, Sat 12:30p, Sun 6:30p

Media Mentoring Project - Social Media Influencer Marketing 4/19/23. Wed 7p (LIVE)

19th Annual Collegiate A Cappella Concert. Thurs 9:15p, Fri 10a, Sat 2p, Sun 5:30p

Brooks Memorial Library Events - The Czech Republic, The EU and the Rise of Populism. Wed 9p, Fri 12:05p, Sat 5:45a, Sun 12:30p

Climate Emergency Book Series - Andrew Boyd: I Want a Better Catastrophe. Mon 6:05a, Tues 9:30p, Wed 10:15p, Fri 10p, Sun 9p

At BMAC - Director's Tour of "Keith Haring: Subway Drawings" 3/30/23. Mon 6:05p, Tues 12:05p, Thurs 12p & 6p, Fri 6:05p, Sun 8p

Brooks Memorial Library Events - The Buddha's Politics in the 21st Century. Mon 12:05p, Tues 3:15p, Thurs 1:30p, Fri 6:25a, Sat 8p

Free.
 One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Information: RSVP appreciated: windhamworldcouncilaffairs@gmail.com.

Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 4/18/23. Tues 6:15p (LIVE), Thurs 1p, Sat 2:30p, Sun 6p

Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 4/17/23. Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 11:30a

River Valleys Unified School District Board Mtg. 4/17/23. Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 2p

Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 4/18/23. Thurs 7p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p

Putney Selectboard Mtg. 4/19/23. Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p

Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 4/19/23. Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p

Brattleboro Development Review Board Mtg. 4/19/23. Sat 8p, Sun 9:30a

Town of Brattleboro - Brattleboro Police Asst. Chief Swearing-In Ceremony. Mon 8:45p, Wed 4:45p, Sun 9:15a

Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 4/10/23. Mon 6p, Tues 8a, Wed 3:45p

Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 4/10/23. Mon 7:15p, Tues 10a, Wed 2p

WTSA News. Mon-Fri 12p & 6p

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

Calvary Chapel of the West River Valley - Weekly Service. Tue 9a, Sat 5:30p, Sun 10a

Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service. Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p

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

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

Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 4/11/23. Mon 5:30a, Thurs 5p

Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 4/11/23. Mon 3:30p, Wed 11a

Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board Mtg. 4/12/23. Mon 9a, Tues 11:45a

West River Education District Board Mtg. 4/12/23. Mon 9p, Tues 3:30p

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

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

Brattleboro Community Television - 257-0888

MONDAY CONT.	TUESDAY CONT.	WEDNESDAY CONT.
finish off the meal with chocolate "nice cream!" ▶ 5 - 7 p.m. ▶ Free. ▶ Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: Register by emailing cooking@ediblebrattleboro.org .	▶ 5 - 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. ▶ Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic, 191 Clark Ave. Information: 802-251-8484; brattleborowalkinclinic.com .	▶ YouTube. Information: Captioning available on YouTube. Questions/requests about access: galasupport@poets.org or 888-790-0721.
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<h1>25</h1>	<h1>26</h1>	Well-being BRATTLEBORO Book Launch: "Transformative Activism: A Values Revolution in Everyday Life in a Time of Societal Collapse" by Tim Stevenson : Author/activist/community organizer for 55 years, Stevenson invites attendees to discover a practice that revolutionizes oppressive social arrangements into ones that truly sets people free — including one's inner activist. "Transformative Activism" is an effective guide to growing into the spiritual maturity needed to be effective agents of human liberation and transformative change in a collapsing world. Books available for sale and signing. ▶ 7-8 p.m. "Transformative Activism" invites readers into spiritual practices fostering the peace, freedom, social justice they seek as they learn: how to realize one's potential as an activist; how to achieve revolutionary change; a way to ground values in everyday practices; how to become a living representative of the transformed world. Along with concrete analysis of the personal/political barriers that prevent one from achieving this success, it provides in-depth, practical discussion on how to free oneself from these impediments - life-changing wisdom for the revolutionary activist.

Kids and families
BRATTLEBORO Sing & Dance with Robin: Enriching musical experience for toddlers and preschoolers (ages 5 and under). Designed to support healthy cognitive, physical, and social development, children will sing, clap, stomp, dance, and play along with the curriculum of traditional and modern folk songs. Parents encouraged to sing and participate with their child.
 ▶ 10:30 a.m. in the Community Room. (This is the last Tuesday this event will be offered for now.)
 ▶ Free.
 ▶ Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

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.



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

groundworksvt.org

adapted from ©TheHappyGivers.com

BMAC, Brattleboro Area Hospice host workshop on writing to lost loved ones

BRATTLEBORO—On Saturday, April 29, at 2 p.m., staff of the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) and Brattleboro Area Hospice will lead a workshop presented in connection with the exhibition “Mitsuko Brooks: Letters Mingle Souls,” at the BMAC, in which participants will create mail art or a letter to a loved one who has passed on.

Brooks is a Brooklyn-based artist and archivist. Her mixed-media collages and sculptures address issues of mental health. Brooks collaborates with suicide-loss survivors and asks them to express “lingering thoughts, emotions, and feelings” that they wish they could share with their lost loved ones. She then incorporates their words and sentiments in collage compositions layered upon reclaimed boards, postcards, and book covers.

The resulting works of art evoke the power of everyday objects to carry personal memories and messages.

In her essay for the BMAC exhibition, Brooks speaks of her engagement with a model of clinical psychology that considers four factors involved in a patient’s healing: the biological,

psychological, social, and spiritual. The spiritual is especially important to Brooks, and she writes: “I reference the spiritual in my new mail art ... in hopes of bringing peace to the survivors and of connecting with the other realm.”

Brooks engages with the long-standing tradition of mail art, using the art form to address highly personal mental health concerns and to foster not just material but also spiritual connections.

“By sending mail-art pieces back to the deceased, Brooks emphasizes correspondence that moves beyond conventional forms of communication and into the spiritual realm,” curator David Rios Ferreira writes in an essay accompanying the BMAC exhibition.

Brooks is of mixed settler Japanese and European descent. She was born on Misawa Air Base, Japan. Her work has been exhibited at The San Francisco Art Institute, California College of Arts, and SOMArts, among others, and her zines, artist books, and mail art collages are in permanent collections at the Smithsonian’s Archive of American Art, Canada’s Artex

Information Centre, the Asian American Arts Centre, and The Los Angeles Contemporary Archive.

She received her Master of Fine Arts in painting and drawing from UCLA, her bachelor’s from Cooper Union, and her Master of Library and Information Science and Certificate in Archives and Preservation of Cultural Materials from CUNY Queens College.

This in-person event is free, and walk-ins are welcome. Optional registration is available in advance at brattleboromuseum.org.

Norris-Brown works on display in Bellows Falls

BELLOWS FALLS—Canal Street Art Gallery, 23 Canal Street, presents “Charles W. Norris-Brown: Distant Thunder Studio,” on view from Friday, April 21, through Saturday, June 10. Join the Gallery on 3rd Friday Gallery Night in Historic Downtown Bellows Falls on April 21 from 5 to 7 p.m. to celebrate the opening of the show. All Gallery events are free and open to the public.

All the original artworks from the late artist’s unfinished graphic novel, *Thunder Basin*, will be on view within a recreation of Norris-Brown’s studio as an interactive exhibition, including artmaking for the public and digital cataloging of the graphic novel, and culminating in the launch of a *Thunder Basin* website. Finished works along with drawings, storyboard frames, studies, and writings are all included.

“I call my studio Distant Thunder,” Norris-Brown once wrote. “Sometimes I have a real studio. Other times Distant Thunder Studio is within me.”

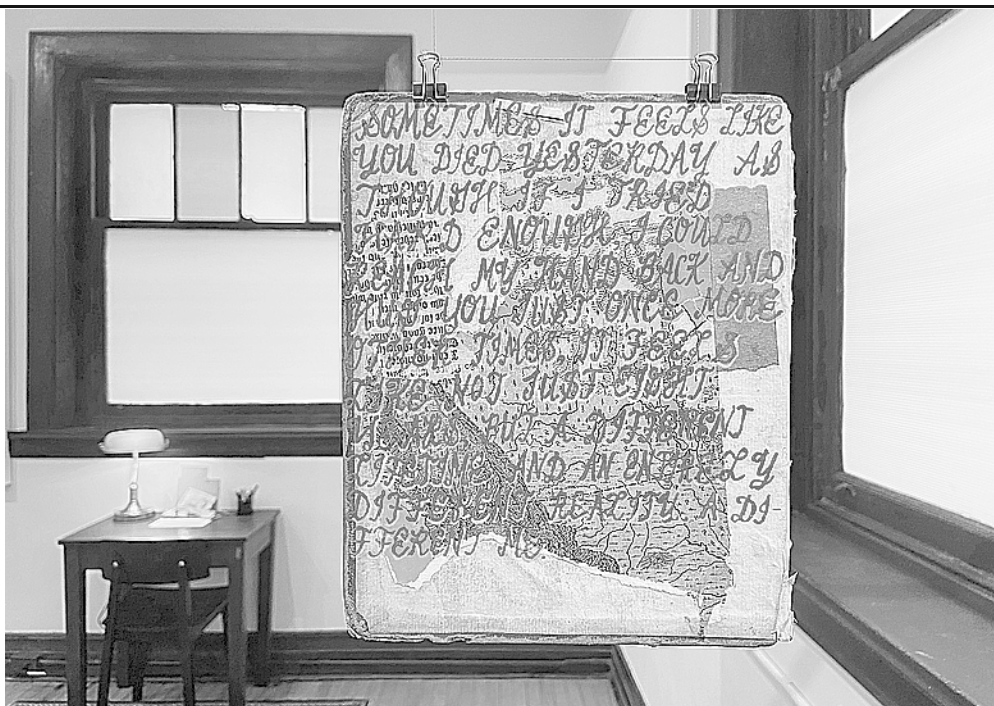
Visitors are invited to interact with the show through exploring Norris-Brown’s notebooks, plein-air studies, sketchbooks, brushes, and palettes. Art supplies and a space to create are provided as part of the exhibit. Those who are inspired may write, draw, and paint with watercolor or ink, to make their own artwork and writing about *Thunder Basin*.

Fans of the artist may become further involved through volunteering and assisting in the digital cataloging of all works pertaining to *Thunder Basin* to be available during the Distant Thunder Studio show, including artworks, sketchbooks, and notebooks, and help bring one artist’s vision to life by developing his graphic novel into a Creative Commons licensed work to be accessible for community-based projects worldwide.

Thunder Basin is the artist’s third book and unfinished work. Here a girl loses her beloved cell phone in the forest. Trickster Coyote picks it up and runs away with it, leading her to explore the forest, and ultimately, herself. This quest unfolds in the *Thunder Basin* along the west flank of Vermont’s Mount Mansfield.

Select artworks in the show which are not for sale are available as pre-ordered, full-sized archival pigment prints on cotton rag paper. These reproductions are available only during the show. At the end of the exhibit each edition is closed, and then printed.

Canal Street Art Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information go to canalstreetartgallery.com, call Mike Noyes by phone at 802-289-0104, or email artinfo@canalstreetartgallery.com.



Installation view from “Mitsuko Brooks: Letters Mingle Souls” on view at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center.

Vermont Jazz Center plans Solo Jazz Piano Festival

BRATTLEBORO—The Vermont Jazz Center celebrates the vital impact that the piano has played in the history of jazz by hosting its seventh annual Solo Jazz Piano Festival on Friday, April 21, and Saturday, April 22. The artists headlining this year’s festivals are Michael Weiss, Dan Tepfer, Myra Melford, and Orrin Evans; emerging artists are Shiyu Fang and Remi Savard.

On the performance evenings at 7:30 p.m., two headlining pianists will present back-to-back solo sets. April 21 will include sets by Weiss and Tepfer, and on April 22 concertgoers will hear Melford and Evans.

Saturday, April 22, is a full day of educational and concert programming. Beginning at 10 a.m. three of the headliners will present, with a fourth and final presentation at 3:30 p.m. These presentations are designed to be accessible to all music lovers, not just pianists.

In addition to the four presentations, Saturday will include

two short sets from the emerging artists as well as interviews and a round-table discussion with all six artists moderated by VJC Director Eugene Uman. Topics for the panel will be selected from questions presented by in-person and online audiences.

The Solo Jazz Piano Festival, now in its seventh year, is one of the cornerstones of the VJC’s programming. The festival has presented some of the world’s top pianists and most important musical innovators of this generation.

The festival continues to be a unique opportunity for audiences of all backgrounds to communicate directly with the artists as they divulge their methods and teachings through performances and presentations, and the VJC says it is honored to continue this important tradition in Brattleboro.

According to Uman, “Each of this year’s headliners are highly regarded by jazz lovers around the world. They are all

virtuosic in their abilities and have released numerous, celebrated recordings as leaders and side-people. But what sets this group of four apart is that each individual conveys a completely distinct approach to the instrument. Each pianist is a mature example of an artist who has developed an instantly recognizable vocabulary and personal style.”

The full schedule is available at bit.ly/711-piano. A full festival pass is \$80 to \$120, while the individual headliner concerts are \$20 to \$60. A Saturday daytime pass is \$60. All tickets are general admission and offered on a sliding fee scale (except the Saturday daytime pass).

For tickets to the in-person shows and information on watching livestream concerts (presented by donation), and accessibility, visit vtjazz.org or email at ginger@vtjazz.org. Vermont Jazz Center is also on Facebook.

Arts Alive series explores Brattleboro arts, artists

BRATTLEBORO—Arts Alive is bringing together several Brattleboro arts organizations to enrich the lives of local artists. This is part of a series for creatives to network and explore artistic resources.

On Saturday, April 29, at 10 a.m., Arts Alive invites the artist community to gather at Mitchell-Giddings Fine Arts on Main Street for the next field trip. Gallery owner Petria Mitchell will introduce the business, including its history, programming, and available resources.

Attendees will also hear from representatives from nearby creative businesses and organizations. These include First Proof Press, Epsilon Spires,

Harmony Collective Artist Gallery, HatchSpace, the Insight Photography Project, the Vermont Center for Photography, and the Wheelhouse Clay Center.

From noon to 1 p.m., First Proof Press will facilitate a greeting card printmaking activity for a limited number of registrants.

Arts Alive’s Field Trips are characterized by a laid-back atmosphere to inspire relationship-building and connection. During the event, participants will also have the chance to network over coffee, tea, and pastries, provided by Prime Roast Coffee Company in Keene, New Hampshire. For this particular event, other homemade snacks will be served as well.

Arts Alive encourages attendees to explore Brattleboro after the gathering. Several organizations present will have their doors open later into the day for self-guided visiting. Epsilon Spires will offer a tour from 1 to 2 p.m., and the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center will be open until 4 p.m.

Field Trips are \$5. The optional printmaking activity is \$10. To register for the event and future trips, visit monadnockartsalive.org/artist-field-trips. For information about accessibility, call 603-283-0944 or contact Nina Taylor Dunn at nina@monadnockartsalive.org.

Palaver Strings collaborates with clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and percussionist Brian Shankar Adler

PUTNEY—Palaver Strings, the innovative and dynamic ensemble known for their genre-bending performances, is set to take the stage at Next Stage Arts on April 27, at 7 p.m., with special guests clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and percussionist Brian Shankar Adler.

Azmeh, a member of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble, and Adler, who has collaborated with a diverse range of musicians including Vijay Iyer and Esperanza Spalding, bring their unique talents and musical styles

to the table. Palaver Strings is a chamber orchestra that combines classical masterworks with new compositions and arrangements. Founded in 2014 by a group of young musicians from the New England Conservatory, the ensemble has garnered national recognition for their innovative programming and collaborative approach to music-making.

Organizers say these performers have built a reputation for pushing the boundaries of classical music, and their collaboration

with Azmeh and Adler is no exception. The evening’s program will feature a range of works from traditional classical pieces to contemporary and world music.

“Palaver Strings is showcasing a new voice in classical music, making it more relevant and meaningful to a new generation of classical music fans,” Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, said in a news release. “The addition of Syrian clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and percussionist Brian Shankar Adler is going to make an already talented showcase of music into a unique evening of music not to be missed.”

The concert takes place at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$24 at the door. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine and cocktail cash bar. Advance tickets are available at nextstagearts.org. For information, call 802-387-0102.

Your local sources for home improvement

NUTS 'n' BOLTS

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

To advertise, call 802-246-6397 or email ads@commonsnews.org

Vernon SELF STORAGE
493 Stebbins Rd. Vernon, VT 802-490-9771 vernonselfstoragevt.com

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

HELP WANTED

ads@commonsnews.org • 888-511-5150

Glendale DINING SERVICES
NOW HIRING IN VERNON, VT!
Do you love cooking, working as part of a team, and providing exceptional customer service?
If you answer is YES, we want to learn more about you!
Join our residential dining team as a full-time or part-time: Cook, Server, or Dishwasher
Apply at: www.glendalediningservices.com/careers, or call 603-437-0200 x 106.

HELP WANTED: ROAD CREW MEMBER

The Town of Marlboro, Vermont is accepting applications for a road crew member. This position requires knowledge and operation of a variety of light construction equipment including pick-up trucks, dump trucks, snowplows, sanders, salt trucks, jackhammers, chainsaws, weed whacker, loader, light roller, and road rake.

Other miscellaneous labor duties performed when not operating equipment are cleaning ditches & culverts, installation of culverts, pothole patching, installing culvert posts, guard rail posts, installing street signs, brush cutting, equipment maintenance, as well as any other duties as assigned by the Road Supervisor, or/and Select Board.

While this position is predominately as a member of the Highway Crew, the Town of Marlboro engages a team approach to accomplish municipal tasks. From time to time, a road crew member may be asked to perform duties outside the highway department scope such as, moving chairs for set-up of Town Meeting site, clean up yard debris from the recycling bins, and regular schedule maintenance of the School District’s school buses.

A current Commercial Driver’s License is required. This position requires: the applicant to pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol screening, as well as random drug and alcohol screening as an employee; the ability to work a flexible schedule with holidays and weekends as necessary due to weather and other factors; and a willingness to abide by safety rules and regulations.

Pay rate (up to \$25/hour) will be based on experience. Benefits included health insurance, Life Insurance, Short-Term Disability (as needed), and VT Municipal Employee Retirement program.

Applications (due by April 30th, 2023) are available at the Marlboro Town Office, 510 South Road, Marlboro, VT, or online at marlborovt.us, or to provide a resume & cover letter, contact the Marlboro Road Supervisor Andrew Richardson by email at MarlboroHighwayDept@gmail.com or by calling (802) 257-0252.

Cersosimo Lumber Company
Do you value your weekends off?
Half day on Friday?
Join our team in Brattleboro!
Actively looking to fill:
Production – Lumber handlers & Machine operators
Maintenance – facility & sawmill
Mechanics - equipment
Competitive benefits package including health, dental, 401k.
Applications available at:
1103 Vernon Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-254-4508 • www.cersosimolumber.com
Or email resume to: employment@cersosimo.com

THIS SPACE FOR RENT

You, and some 20,000 other readers, are looking at Windham County’s best advertising value. To promote your business in the next issue of The Commons, call us at (802) 246-6397 or e-mail ads@commonsnews.org.

Extremes of feeling

Brattleboro Camerata presents world premiere of work by composer Kitty Brazelton

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Camerata presents the world premiere of a work by composer Kitty Brazelton on Sunday, April 23, at 4 p.m., at the Brattleboro Music Center (BMC).

“The Want of You: Renaissance Music and the Future” will feature pairs of Renaissance and later works, elucidating the ties between them. In a BMC media release, Camerata Director Jonathan Harvey notes the choral pieces are “all very emotionally intense — whether filled with religious ecstasy or romantic yearning, they explore extremes of feeling.”

The pairings include Renaissance composers Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Thomas Morley, Thomas Tallis, Tomás Luis de Victoria, and Pomponio Nenna with, in turn, composers of the past two centuries such as Anton Bruckner, Peter Schickele (composer of the works of P.D.Q. Bach), and William H. Harris, and living composers Reena Esmail and Brazelton herself.

Brazelton, a composer, educator, singer-songwriter, spoke about her work with *The Commons* from what had been a chicken coop her grandmother had built on the family gentleman’s farm in Barnstable, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. When she’s not composing in her East Village apartment in Manhattan, she composes in this capacious studio, surrounded by memories of childhood vacations spent here.

Before retiring to focus on her own work last January, Brazelton had taught composition at Bennington College for more than 20 years.

“Bennington was always the primary reason for my physically spending half my life in Vermont over the last 20 years,” she says.

But another connection is her great-great grandfather, George Green, who hailed from Castleton. He went to Texas for the gold rush and died in New Orleans of tuberculosis.

“I’ve developed a deep love for Vermont. I love its air, its trees, its green mountains, its cold lakes and ponds, its former farmlands grown back into forest with straggling scars of old stone walls, its calm, its arts, its people who’ve chosen it,” she says.

“And I’ve made friends — some of my best friends live in Vermont,” Brazelton continues.

“I will continue to remain connected to Vermont for the rest of my life.”

Eclectic musicality

Brazelton grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where her father, the late T. Berry Brazelton, was a pediatrician, an author, and a recognized expert on early child development.

She then attended Swarthmore College as a music major. Though she did eventually finish, she left in 1972, her senior year, just a few credits short of a degree, and headed to New York City to create with her band, Musica Orbis (MO).

An electric chamber music ensemble, MO was known for breaking barriers, fusing rock and contemporary classical with voices and innovative instrumentation from harp to electric bass, marimba to recorders, bells to a Fender Rhodes. The band premiered, among others, works by renowned modern composer George Crumb.

After several years of touring, recording, and forging new ground, the band folded in 1979, she says.

“I was very into medieval. No one else was. What I was so attracted to with early music was the polyphony — I’ve been indelibly altered by that music.”

In the 1990s, she created Hildegurlls, a band dedicated to the much-touted works of medieval composer, Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179). The group played downtown Manhattan bars and lofts; when Brazelton suggested they play Lincoln Center in 1998, they soon did, performing electro-acoustic reinterpretations of von Bingen’s 900-year-old works.

Harvey recalls he was drawn to Brazelton, not only for her connections to Vermont and her eclectic musicality, but also because of Hildegurlls and its “fascinating work updating and transforming the music of von Bingen, and because of her more recent project, ‘Essential Prayers,’ which takes old prayer texts from various religious traditions and sets them to beautiful new a cappella harmonies.”

Those pieces, says Brazelton, use “words from prayers I hope are known outside of churches: They’re multifaith in choices, but what I wanted was nonreligious.”

Harvey actually sought to commission a nonreligious choral work for the April concert based on the creation of an



Kitty Brazelton

COURTESY PHOTO

early-20th-century poet. He sent Brazelton a few poems by two contenders, both women.

Brazelton was taken by the spirit of Angelina Weld Grimké, an African American journalist, teacher, playwright, and poet. The composer chose Grimké’s brief but pithy and poignant 1923 “The Want of You” for her Camerata commission:

“A hint of gold where the moon will be;

“Through the flocking clouds just a star or two;

Leaf sounds, soft and wet and hushed,

“And oh! the crying want of you.

About unrequited — and forbidden — love between two women of color, it touched Brazelton “imagining what Grimké gave up being lesbian because she was already mixed race,” she says.

“There is hot stuff for 1923 in this sexy, completely secular text,” Brazelton adds. “It taps my spirituality, too — which doesn’t live in a church.”

In keeping with her passion for early music, *The Want of You* is written in a Renaissance polyphonic vein, a madrigal for four voice parts.

“I’m interested in what makes melodies tick,” Brazelton says. “The brass ring is to write something easy to sing, then put it together to be robust and polyphonic. If each part of the choir can grok a piece of it — that’s when it gets interesting. How can I work a text so singers can bring it to life?”

Having composed in eclectic modes and styles and with divergent influences, Brazelton’s merging of periods, styles, instruments, and voices, the news release notes, “builds music’s power to unite — across genre, across tradition, and across language.”

Her is music for a wide reach: “If I make music for me, it’s not mine,” says Brazelton.

In addition to composing the piece for the Brattleboro Camerata, Brazelton recently garnered a New York State Council on the Arts grant for *The Art of Memory*, an opera focused on the works of St. Augustine and that early-first-century theologian/philosopher’s essential, timely message: “Now is all there is.”

Currently she’s working on *The World Is Not Ending — We’ve Been Here Before*, a set of six choral pieces created in response to the pandemic to “give my singers something to sing in quarantine.”

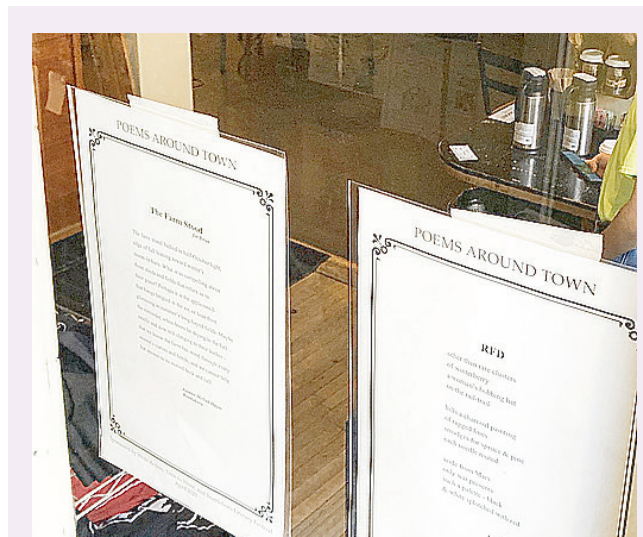
The online audio project finds Brazelton (kitbraz.info) mixing with painstaking care; at the same time, she’s recording a studio album, *The Planes of Your Location*, with Los Angeles-based ensemble Isaura String Quartet.

The Brattleboro Camerata is a 16–20 voice chamber choir specializing in Renaissance and Renaissance-inspired music. With Harvey, the Camerata explores “both beloved classics and

under-performed gems through innovative and energetic programming and performance,” the media release notes.

General admission to “The Want of You: Renaissance Music and the Future” is \$20 (\$25 at the door). Youth admission is \$10, with those 12 and under admitted free. Tickets are available at bmcvt.org or 802-257-4523. For more information about Kitty Brazelton and her music, visit kitbraz.info.

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



ARLENE DISTLER

Two poems from this year’s batch of Poetry Around Town are displayed in the window of Mocha Joe’s on Main Street in Brattleboro.

Poetry Around Town

FROM SECTION FRONT

Marie Stormo wrote to PAT: “After two and a half decades of writing the words, keeping my work privately quiet and only sharing closely with the ears of horses, wind, a few shy human kin and of course rivers, this is the first time I’ve ever chosen to unleash my writing to set foot in the human public eye.”

“That’s a lot of time building until now, and I chose your event to step into sharing my work. Thank you so much, for all the careful tending you all have done in this incredible community event. Poems save lives, I learned as a young

child — and sometimes, literally. This is no small thing, this action of words — gathering poets in these ways and offering your time and energy is quite a labor of love.”

A full brochure available on writeaction.org guides the public in finding each store and its posted poet(s). The poems will be on display at least through the end of April. Some may remain in place far longer. Poetry Around Town 2023 will go live with a reading at the River Garden 50 PAT poets on Friday, April 28, from 5 to 7 p.m. Andy Burrows will emcee.

Unity Heat Pumps
Home Heating ~ Cooling Magic!
Zero emission electric furnaces.
Serving VT, NH, MA
413-344-7031
james@unityheatpumps.com

Summer Camp Fun!
Art Camp for Kids
One-week 7 sessions Drop-ins welcome
More info/register online: rivergalleryschool.org
802-257-1577
RIVER GALLERY SCHOOL OF ART
June 26 – Aug 11

Registration Open
the **CLUB** 1/2 Day Teen Summer Workshops
www.bgcbattleboro.org/camp

- Thrifting and Fashion (7/10–7/14)
- Make Your Own Merch (7/17–7/21)
- Mural Makers (7/17–7/21)
- College and Career Counseling (7/24–7/28)
- Make Your Own Skateboard (7/31–8/4)
- Skate Camp (7/31–8/4)
- Paddle Adventures—full day (8/7–8/11)

MAKE MUSIC WITH US
SUMMER 2023
What do you want to learn?
Register today!
BMC BRATTLEBORO MUSIC CENTER
bmcvt.org/summer-programs
802-257-4523

NOW PLAYING at the MOVIES

LATCHIS THEATRE	
latchis.com 802.246.1500	
APRIL 21 - 27	
SUPER MARIO BROS.	PG
DAILY	4 PM
NIGHTLY	6:40 PM
CHEVALIER	PG-13
DAILY	4:15 PM
NIGHTLY	7 PM
PAINT	PG-13
SAT. - THURS.	4/7:10 PM
GUY RICHIE'S THE COVENANT	R
DAILY	3:45 PM
NIGHTLY	6:50 PM

Erickson speaks on climate, 'fairytale economics'

BRATTLEBORO—"I'm convinced that economics as currently taught and practiced will ensure a planetary path to ruin," says economist and author Jon D. Erickson.

On Thursday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m., he will explain why and what must be done in his newest book *The Progress Illusion: Reclaiming Our Future from the Fairytale of Economics* (Island Press) at 118 Elliot, 118 Elliot Street.

The event is sponsored by 118

Elliot, Everyone's Books, and Epsilon Spire. Books will be available for purchase and signing. Events are free but donations are appreciated. Email 118Elliot@gmail.com to reserve a seat.

Erickson is the Blittersdorf Professor of Sustainability Science and Policy at the University of Vermont, is on faculty at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, and a Fellow of the Gund Institute for the Environment. He is the author/

editor of five other books and an Emmy-award winning director and producer of documentary films. He lives in Ferrisburgh.

"This book is my small part in helping to turn the tide," Erickson said in a news release. "The mainstream of my field tells a story centered on a very narrow caricature of humanity as greedy and independent. It's a story that assumes the Earth is limitless and at our disposal.

"It's a fairytale detached from biophysical reality and lacking a

moral compass. The fate of people and planet depends on upending this illusion and writing a new story based on care, cooperation, interdependence, and stewardship."

"Given that the Arctic has mostly melted, it seems axiomatic that our planet's economic system is not working very well," writes Bill McKibben. "But Jon Erickson explains, in simple and powerful terms — just why that is, and just what would need to change if we were to actually

build a world that worked much better."

The talk is part of 118 Elliot and Everyone's Books Climate Book Series, featuring engaging authors who discuss the reality of climate emergency. Next up is Thursday, May 11, 2023, when author Chuck Collins will speak about his debut novel *Altar to an Erupting Sun* (Green Writers Press, May 2023), a near-future story of people in the Brattleboro area facing climate disruption in the critical decade ahead.

Stevenson

discovered that the conventional activist model of confrontation and adversarial behavior was wearying.

"There's something wrong here," he'd thought: "activism doesn't have to be like this."

Having been introduced to Buddhism 40 years ago, the basic tenets and values of that practice soon "became the centerpiece of my activism. Rather than trying to control and exert 'power over,' Stevenson moved on to 'accept life as it is and work with that toward

liberation," he says.

"I don't consider myself a Buddhist," he's quick to add. "I'm not part of any system or institution; I'm a spiritual activist."

STEVENSON'S CALL for "transformative action," basic to Buddhist belief, centers on the essential value of being present — here and now. Since he's probably more passionate about climate change than anyone I know, I asked him how being present could boost climate change amelioration.

"We can't necessarily look for a solution," he responds.

"What matters is acting within the moment, doing the best you can, being the best person you can — and that's enough. Do all you can as a climate activist in how you live day to day, moment to moment, in relationships, in encounters," Stevenson continues.

"What it means for me is what I feel activism is about: the valuing of life itself — human or non-human," he says. "That's all I can do; it's all any of us can do."

Stevenson, a father and grandfather, recalls: "I saw a ladybug floundering in water the other day. I took a spoon and let it out. It's an instance of life, a spark of life. I need to try to value life everywhere — as much with those whom I don't like as with those I do."

Embracing one's foe changes the paradigm, Stevenson asserts. That non-violent behavior is demonstrably different: "We're calling upon heartfelt goodness in all of us," he says. "That's a different approach to activism and to trying to affect change."

"We should show we value

the Earth and life, not through rhetoric, but in how we act," Stevenson suggests. In the introduction to *Transformative Action*, he writes: "Through everyday acts of kindness and compassion, acceptance and forgiveness, generosity and altruism, selflessness and gratitude, modesty and humility, moral courage and personal integrity, we exhibit the necessary interpersonal infrastructure that allows for a moment of human liberation. These interactions with others — partner and family, friend and enemy, neighbor and stranger alike — are cumulatively central to realizing transformative possibilities."

Transformative Action is, as much of what Stevenson writes, addressed to activists — "but I can consider all of us activists," he clarifies, "not just those out on the street."

Activism, he believes, "can be within a family where people treat each other [well] — that's an activist, even if in a limited arena," because, Stevenson says, "our social reality is forged in our everyday relationships and so, by skillfully practicing our innate values, we can prefigure the liberated world we seek."

"In this way, the behavior of activists is the revolution within the revolution, allowing for transformation not just in theory but in deed. It is precisely

through this kind of practice that the foundation for human freedom can be created."

THE GRASSROOTS organization Post Oil Solutions — spearheaded by Stevenson and his wife, Sherry Maher — took form in 2005 from a group of citizens who were eyeing the ramifications of what will happen to the world, our economies, and our communities, so dependent on oil for fuel, transportation, and manufacturing, when petroleum supplies dwindle.

"We joined together to take our first, modest steps toward creating more cooperative, self-sufficient communities," the organization says on its website (postoilsolutions.org). "Our goal is to learn about and develop sustainable practices in our homes, neighborhoods, and larger communities, so as to begin creating the infrastructure in our region necessary for a post oil society."

Most recently, Stevenson facilitated the Iraq Committee of the Brattleboro Peace and Justice group, and co-founded BrattPower, an organization dedicated to promoting local businesses and opposing "big box" store growth in Brattleboro.

"You're someone who walks the walk," I said to Stevenson

FROM SECTION FRONT

when we met.

He quickly corrected me. "I try to walk the walk; I stumble, make wrong turns, say the wrong thing," he said. But in the end, with humility and compassion, he is a catalyst for change.

Transformative Action closes with hope and "the good news [...] that people have demonstrated a tendency to exhibit this exemplary behavior at catastrophic times when our lives were on the line."

At this point, "spontaneously, instinctively, transformative moments emerge [...] and while it has been these everyday unacted-upon moments that have created the world we live in today, it is precisely these same everyday moments that, right now, provide us with the opportunity to respond to our present unprecedented crises with the moral excellence they require."

There is, he writes, "a growing movement of citizens who get it. Who are working for the decent world that most of us want. [...] Every moment of life counts."

A free book launch and reading takes place at Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro on Wednesday, April 26, from 7 to 8 p.m.

Vermont Jazz Center
72 Cotton Mill Hill • Brattleboro, VT 05301
The Tri-state region's premier center for jazz

Friday & Saturday, April 21-22nd
7th Solo Jazz Piano Festival
FOR ALL MUSIC LOVERS, not just pianists, interested in both the practical and spiritual aspects of jazz and improvised music.

In-person Tickets: www.vtjazz.org
Live Stream: facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live_videos

through this kind of practice that the foundation for human freedom can be created."

THE GRASSROOTS organization Post Oil Solutions — spearheaded by Stevenson and his wife, Sherry Maher — took form in 2005 from a group of citizens who were eyeing the ramifications of what will happen to the world, our economies, and our communities, so dependent on oil for fuel, transportation, and manufacturing, when petroleum supplies dwindle.

"We joined together to take our first, modest steps toward creating more cooperative, self-sufficient communities," the organization says on its website (postoilsolutions.org). "Our goal is to learn about and develop sustainable practices in our homes, neighborhoods, and larger communities, so as to begin creating the infrastructure in our region necessary for a post oil society."

Most recently, Stevenson facilitated the Iraq Committee of the Brattleboro Peace and Justice group, and co-founded BrattPower, an organization dedicated to promoting local businesses and opposing "big box" store growth in Brattleboro.

"You're someone who walks the walk," I said to Stevenson

MassQing

culture, and geography."

The ritual face-painting workshop is very much based on indigenous practices of body decoration. "We started to realize how strong of a connection many different people have, culturally to that art form," he said.

"The idea is that each MassQ is supposed to represent sort of where you are at the moment. So when I'm asking myself, it's very much about a sort of introspection and reflection," Callahan said.

He explained that when he is MassQing other people, he has ended up talking with them for a while and has gotten to know who and where they are in that moment.

"I also just look," he said. "And then looking at someone's face for over a long period of time as they talk, I just start to see shapes and colors and lines."

Callahan said he doesn't just see one specific thing so much as

he sees an essence.

"That essence is really a reflection of that person but also my perception of that person and also our connection in the moment that the MassQ is created," he said.

Callahan never uses the same mask twice: "Each mask is supposed to represent where you are in the moment. And we're constantly changing and evolving," he said.

"Even if you're just looking at the work from sort of a detached point of view, you still have to engage with another human being to see the work," he pointed out. "You literally have to look into someone's eyes."

The artist behind the mask

Callahan said his father inspired him to pursue art. He explained how his father would draw whatever he loved at the moment.

FROM SECTION FRONT

"That always fascinated me, in terms of his ability to take an idea in his mind and then translate it onto a page and have that be like a permanent or the semi-permanent kind of thing that would hang on my wall," he said.

Callahan earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts and Africana studies from the University of Philadelphia in 2007 and, with a full fellowship, a MFA from Emerson College in 2017.

His work has been featured at the Museum of Fine Arts, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Institute of Contemporary Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, and Queens Museum, as well as in publications such as *The Believer*, *The Bay State Banner*, and *Global Journal of Hip-Hop Culture*.

Threaded through a multidisciplinary career in teaching and commercial art are a number of multimedia projects centered on MassQing.

Callahan said he has done MassQing workshops a number of times, many with a younger audience, usually teenagers.

"I think it's like the perfect age group, because they're changing so much. And they're trying to find out who they are," he said. "And they're looking to connect in a way that makes them really open and act and [be] sort of willing to engage in such a practice."

The self-exploration journey continues

Callahan said he usually has people MassQ themselves first, and then, if there is more time, they can MassQ one another. "Now that you've learned how to be introspective and reflective and listen to yourself at that, apply that to somebody else's story and see if you can do that with someone else."

He observed that some people come to the workshop groups uninterested in participating, "but by the end of the workshop, they're doing it."

He said then they become fully invested and they get a lot out of the workshop, where "somebody changed how they even behave, or how they're what they're willing to open up to and hearing people's stories."

"You learn new things about people through MassQing that you didn't know before because of people sharing themselves," Callahan said. "Those are sort of my favorite memories from mask-ning workshops."

LATCHIS THEATRE
CONCERT SERIES

FRIDAY APRIL 21 • 8PM

LEZ ZEPPELIN

Walk-Up Sales 7:00pm | Doors Open 7:30pm | Show Begins 8:00pm

Tickets & Information
latchis.com or at the door

Q106 | **THE PEAK 101.9** | **RAMUNTO'S BRICK OVEN PIZZA**
1111 Putney Rd, Brattleboro VT

THE COLONIAL
WHOSE LIVE ANYWAY? 4.22
ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN 4.25

David Brighton's **SPACE ODDITY** 4.28
THE ULTIMATE DAVID BOWIE EXPERIENCE

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL 5.2

SHOWROOM
ALASDAIR FRASER AND NATALIE HAAS 5.5

603-352-2033 TheColonial.org
SEASON UNDERWRITERS

C&S Wholesale Grocers | TRUE NORTH NETWORKS

The Colonial Theatre is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization

The workshop will be held at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St., on Saturday, April 22 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$55 (\$45 for BMAC members, Space is limited and Registration is required.

MEMORIAM



About 300 people gathered at the Brattleboro Common on April 16 for a vigil for Leah Rosin-Pritchard, shelter director at Morningside House, who was slain on April 3.

Leah Rosin-Pritchard exemplified acceptance, compassion, warmth, empathy, and love for her fellow humans. It is more important to celebrate her ideals than to focus on those things that we use to divide us.

Thank you for being here today. Thank you for coming out and showing up in the memory of Leah Rosin-Pritchard and in support of Groundworks.

As I struggled to find the words I wanted to say, I realized that words are important as containers for the thoughts and feelings we want to express. Yet at the same time words say so little — they cannot seem to convey everything we are feeling.

The clients and staff of Groundworks are deep in the midst of processing their trauma and grief. The entire state is. But Brattleboro — you are in the eye of this storm.

The staff of Groundworks knew Leah, they saw her

KHEYA GANGULY is director of trauma prevention and resilience development at the Vermont Agency of Human Services. She gave these remarks at an April 16 vigil on the Brattleboro Common honoring the memory of Leah Rosin-Pritchard, the coordinator of Groundworks Collaborative's Morningside House shelter, who lost her life at the hands of a client there on April 3.

regularly, they talked to her every day, they reached out when they needed support. She was an essential part of their work family.

Just like any other individual family member, Leah was irreplaceable. Her loss will be felt today and into the future. There will be an empty space at their table and a silence where Leah once stood.

But there will also be the continued blessing of Leah's presence and the memories that they have of her

compassion toward her clients, her empathy for everyone around her, and her love and humor and humanness.

And there will come a time when people will be able to think of Leah and smile and be comforted that they knew her.

I HOPE TODAY will be a time to reflect on Leah's and Groundworks' contributions to the life of this community. I didn't know Leah, but after hearing and reading about her

life, I am confident we would be friends. I think many of us gathered here today feel the same way.

She had a deep love and passion for gardening, which I call "playing in the dirt and making mud pies," and cooking, for herself, her friends, her family, and anyone she thought would enjoy her food.

But, above all, Leah had a commitment to the work she did and the people she served.

I do not want to memorialize Leah as a statue above us but rather as a human who can inspire us. Leah dedicated her life to caring for those who are often unseen.

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE this trauma and the grief is so much bigger than what most of us have

■ SEE VIGIL, C2

ESSAY

What — or who — is a Vermonter?

To be taken for a local obviously takes more than just enjoying apple pie with cheddar cheese. It is a process that evolves slowly over time.

WHEN I MOVED TO Vermont, 56 years ago, one of the things I was told by many locals who have been living here for years was that you are not a Vermonter until you enjoy apple pie with cheddar cheese and sugar on snow, accompanied by a doughnut and a pickle.

I thought, "How strange!" All these years later, however, I can now say that I actually enjoy apple pie with a slice of cheddar cheese and, as to sugar on snow, I like the caramelized maple syrup and the doughnut but I can skip the pickle. So, perhaps I almost qualify to be a Vermonter.

Actually, the first persons I met when I first came to this area in 1966 were not really Vermonters. With the exception of my landlord in Putney (Henry Bentley), most others who worked at The Experiment (now World Learning) were not natives of Vermont.

This was true of the organization's founder, Dr. Donald B. Watt, who was from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and many others who came from cities like Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia, as well as from nearby Keene and Walpole.

Of course, there were also a few "natives" like Archie Whitney, Don Hazelton, Ed Cassidy, Les Ward, Mary Mitchel, Shirley Harlow, and Jim Atema, who also worked in our first headquarters at our Putney campus (now the The Greenwood School), adjacent to

BEATRIZ FANTINI is professor emerita from SIT, where she worked for 50 years. She is a freelance writer and has published short stories in her native Bolivia and in Venezuela. Her husband, Alvino Fantini, is an SIT professor emeritus.

The Putney School.

I became friends with several women from other countries, like Blanche Moyse (Switzerland), Hanne Steinmeyer (Germany), Toshiko Phipps (Japan), and Iedje Hornsby (The Netherlands), among others. We all shared a similar experience: adjusting to life in southern Vermont.

For Vermonters at that time, we were almost as foreign as those others from Philadelphia or New York, except that we had an accent.

NOT LONG AGO, I asked a neighbor, a native Vermonter, what he thought of all these people who, like me, came from so many different places.

His answer was surprising. He said that he did not think much about the differences among people but he did acknowledge that they brought many new ideas: different ways of doing things, different customs, and different foods.

I asked him if he thought that was a good thing or not. He thought for a while and said that the things "imported" through

■ SEE VERMONTERS, C2

VIEWPOINT



Full disk view of the Earth taken on Dec. 7, 1972, by the crew of the Apollo 17 spacecraft en route to the Moon at a distance of about 29,000 km (18,000 miles). It shows Africa, Antarctica, and the Arabian Peninsula.

The story of Earth

'As Earth unfolds, each primary element arises from a preceding one, much as a maturing organism passes through life stages. Earth's elemental stages constitute worlds that have shaped its physical and psychic dynamism.'

THOMAS BERRY, cultural historian and Earth "geologist," wrote: "In the known universe, Earth is more alive, more intelligent, more beautiful, more sensitive, and more complex than any other galaxy or star or planet we have examined. Earth then can be considered the primary revelation of what the universe is aiming to accomplish."

PETER ADAIR is the author of the books *Sacred Universe* and *Sacred Earth*.

We belong to a miraculous planet. That we as humans can realize this, and in our daily lives respond to Earth's qualities with feelings of awe, wonder, empathy, love, and gratitude — as well as experience dimensions of mystery and sacredness

— reveals that Earth is fundamentally a biospiritual planet.

Through our scientific investigations, we know this flowering of Earth's evolutionary journey has come about through a sequence of major transformations.

Each period of transformation was marked by the emergence of what is traditionally called a "primary element": earth, water, life, air, fire, and

■ SEE STORY OF EARTH, C2



Great investment opportunity.

Great building with all 3 units having a mud room, 2 bedrooms, dining room, large kitchen, covered porch, large living room. South facing for lots of great light. Off street parking available for each apartment. Each unit pays their own utilities. 2 hot air furnaces, newer oil tanks. One unit has new propane wall furnace. Each unit has their own electric hot water heater.

EXCLUSIVE \$289,000



Ask for Sue

802-257-7979 x2

255 Western Ave, Brattleboro, VT
www.bellvillerealty.com

Vermonters

outsiders were not necessarily good or bad, but just different from what he was used to.

“Some things are easier to adapt to, he added, like, for example, when technology arrived on the farm and cows were now milked by a machine,” he said. “That was good and it saved a lot of time. Other changes are not always as easy to accept.”

VERMONTERS, of course, are not just farmers, as some city people think. And many Vermont young people often leave the state after graduating from high school to seek an education, a new experience, or a job elsewhere. Happily, many also return, with a profession, possibly a spouse, because they recognize the beauty and tranquility of this area.

I appreciate the same as well as my neighbors here in Dummerston.

One of my neighbors, for example, a native Vermonter, became quite a mentor to my family. Through the years we learned a lot from him, about trees and plants and animals, as well as how to preserve food in our crawl space through the winter.

He seemed to know everything and everyone and he was happy to share his knowledge with “flatlanders,” as he called those of us who came from elsewhere.

One day, however, I told him that I actually came from the mountain areas of Bolivia, from La Paz, which is actually about 10,000 feet above sea level, and therefore I could hardly be called a flatlander.

He responded that “anyone who is not from Vermont is a flatlander.” I found this to be humorous.

NONETHELESS, I have felt privileged to be able to work and live in Vermont and to be able to raise my children here.

Attending Dummerston School was a happy experience for my children. When we took them out of school on various occasions during the school year to visit my parents in Bolivia, the local teachers accommodated by giving my children assignments compatible with what they were learning here so they would be able to continue their education while in Bolivia.

Better still, they were also required to send back tasks performed in and about Bolivia to share with their classmates back home in Vermont. Everyone in both locations was able to benefit.

Living in Vermont has allowed many individuals, like me, to share our cuisine with others, while at the same time we learned about many local foods. Today, of course, there are many places to obtain foreign foods in the area.

When I first arrived, I had purchased two cookbooks by Beatrice Vaughn, which focused on local dishes that are both healthy and tasty. Back in the '60s, many started to seek natural and non-processed foods — back to the basics.

For me, this was actually like being back in Bolivia, where I would have longed for frozen

vegetables, instant foods, and packaged items. And when I had first arrived in Vermont, it was perhaps a novelty to enjoy such things here, plus the fact that such food was easier to prepare.

I no longer had a cook like back home, so practicality and convenience were both strong factors that influenced my preferences. Yet, when I prepared complicated Bolivian dishes for my friends, they were always surprised to know that I made pumpkin stew, pumpkin soup, and many other common dishes in Bolivia from scratch.

After so many years, of course my attitude toward nutrition and natural foods has changed.

ADJUSTING TO DRESS like a Vermonter was another big change for me, and, I am sure, for others as well. My high heel leather boots were stylish but obviously quite impractical in the snow.

At first, I thought I would never wear Sorel boots, but it was not long before I found how practical they were, even though they still looked awful to me. Buying from LL Bean and Sam's in Brattleboro soon replaced my extensive trips to stores like Bloomingdale's or Wanamaker's in New York and Philadelphia.

Some 56 years later, I believe that I have adjusted quite well to Vermont culture while still preserving some of my own customs. Nevertheless, despite a lengthy process of acculturation and having two children born in Brattleboro, I don't think many will ever mistake me for a Vermonter. To be taken for a local obviously takes more than just enjoying apple pie with cheddar cheese. It is a process that evolves slowly over time.

From the 1960s up until the '90s, many foreign students were also present in this area. These students came from all over the world to study English at the School for International Training (SIT). In addition, there were also summer exchange students who came through programs with the Experiment in International Living. Foreigners wearing sari from India, colorful dresses from Guatemala, or white robes from Saudi Arabia would be out and about on the streets of Brattleboro. Everyone knew they were visitors, here for a period of one to three months. Local residents were accustomed to seeing these students and, in many cases, local families often provided them with home stays.

AND BEGINNING in the late 1970s, Brattleboro also witnessed the arrival of many new residents — not just from other states, but from other countries as well. Crises in many other places abroad have caused people to leave their homelands and seek opportunities elsewhere.

Brattleboro has welcomed many — people from places like Cambodia, China, Peru, Mexico, the Philippines, Venezuela, and Vietnam. In addition, during the past year, the town has witnessed the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Guatemala, Haiti, Russia, and Ukraine.

It is likely that more refugees may continue to arrive. Many will remain in this area and

FROM SECTION FRONT

make Vermont their home; others, however, will move to other areas of the United States in accordance with their professions, skills, and the possibility of contact with relatives elsewhere.

For all of these individuals, like for me, assimilating to a new culture becomes a challenging and lifelong process. The most immediate challenge, of course, is to learn a new language — English. But perhaps even more difficult is to learn about a new culture, especially when new values contrast or conflict with those learned at home.

Unlike many immigrants who arrived in the early 1900s who often joined relatives already in the United States and who were able to reside in ethnic neighborhoods that provided them with an immediate support system, today most new arrivals are few in numbers and they are immediately immersed directly into the new culture and separated from their own communities.

Will they become Vermonters? It is hard to tell.

Most, like myself, I believe, will always want to preserve some part of their own culture and share it with their children, while also adjusting and living in a second culture.

It might seem a simple matter for many who have not had this experience to just dive into the new culture and forget the past. However, it is always a difficult process to completely give up the initial culture one was raised in from childhood.

In today's world, perhaps, we are becoming accustomed to more and more individuals who have become bilingual and bicultural, and who adapt with some facility to new circumstances.

As a result of contact with new arrivals, moreover, local people are also learning about new customs, new foods, new places.

Through this process, hopefully we are all learning to develop tolerance, respect, and understanding of all human beings — such that will allow us all to live in peace and harmony with everyone.

Vigil

experienced before. Trauma and grief can write deeply on the body. It is a weight we carry with us wherever we go. No matter how we try we can't seem to escape it — no amount of running or hiding helps us avoid it.

The more we try to avoid trauma and grief, the bigger it gets and the more of us it consumes. We have to experience it, digest it, and learn from it.

Many of our trauma reactions come from fear, and those fears ride deep within the primitive parts of our brains. For many of us, fear turns into anger, and anger turns into hatred. We look for something, some ones, some group, or some threat to blame.

Understand that fear is also closely associated with our feelings of safety. We worry for ourselves, for our friends, and for our families. It is human to want to find something we can do to ensure that sense of safety, to return to a time when this fear and anger did not exist.

BUT AS WE TRY to make sense of this event, we should not tip over into blaming others.

It's all too easy to point the finger at those who we perceive to be different in some way, such as people who identify as Black, indigenous, persons of color, refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, homeless, substance users, or people who struggle with mental illness.

We want to reject those we see as other and to blame them all for the events that have occurred. We want to see people as outsiders who destroy the Vermont we love.

However, speaking from personal experience, I am a first-generation immigrant and a person of color. My parents chose to come to America when I was a child, to find a better life for my sister and me.

I came to Vermont in 1985 to attend college. I met my partner, settled down, and had three children. Those

children grew up, and while raising them my partner and I attempted to teach them our values of compassion, empathy, and service.

Today, my entire family lives a life of service to Vermont. My husband works closely with the Vermont Department of Corrections as a contractor who supervises re-entry programs for people emerging from the prison system. One of my daughters works for the Department of Health; another daughter works for a community partner, providing services to those who are in need; and my third daughter works and leads a restorative justice center.

All three of my daughters finished their college education in Vermont and have settled down and purchased homes. We love Vermont and are dedicated to making this a more compassionate and equitable place for all.

So although I may be an immigrant, and a person of color, and not originally from here, I choose to believe that the work we all do enhances life for Vermonters and provides service to our community.

The more we become open and welcoming and supportive the more we will gain and the more Vermont will flourish. I think we are an example of that.

So know that those, who today you may see as others, are a part of the fabric of our community, and in this richness of diversity we can and will grow stronger.

IN THIS TIME, unity is the one thing we can take from this event.

Leah Rosen-Pritchard was dedicated to this community, which she wanted to see to grow and flourish. Groundworks staff are also dedicated in the same way. The best way to honor their work is to pull together, and support each other.

As we pull together as a community — especially in

FROM SECTION FRONT

times of grief — we seek to make sense of events like this. And part of that sense-making involves trying to understand why.

But the whys may never be answered, so we insert our own ideas and point fingers and assign blame. It is not our job to be judge and jury.

I challenge you to work with the facts we know — and only the facts we know.

We know Leah Rosin-Pritchard is dead.

We know she worked at Groundworks.

We know many people loved her.

We know she leaves behind a partner, family, and friends.

Instead of focusing on the why, the how, or even the who, I challenge you to grab onto hope and healing. It is more important to celebrate the ideals Leah exemplified of acceptance, compassion, warmth, empathy, and love for her fellow humans than to focus on those things that we use to divide us.

ONE OF THE THINGS I really think we must remember — and probably appreciate now more than ever — is that as humans we are social beings. We need each other. We don't only heal in isolation but also in community.

The central message I have to give to you today is one of unity. I'm a practicing Hindu, but I understand many different religions and their practices, and I know that Easter marks a time of rebirth, renewal, and transformation.

Transformation is powerful. For it to occur, we must come together in unity, including all people, and all voices, to support one another in love and compassion.

Leah's obituary told the story of a friend who asked her brother told if there was anything that they could do for them.

“Just love one another,” he said.

Thank you.

Story of Earth

others. As Earth unfolds, each primary element arises from a preceding one, much as a maturing organism passes through life stages. Earth's elemental stages constitute worlds that have shaped its physical and psychic dynamism.

YEARS AGO — 4.6 billion years — a supernova gifted a wafting cloud of dust and gases with the materials that will shape our solar system. Then, 4.5 billion years ago, Earth formed as part of a necklace of planets around the Sun.

In its infancy, Earth is a mass of molten rock, as are Mercury, Venus, and Mars, the other inner planets of the solar system. Unlike those planets, Earth is of a proper size and at a favorable distance from the Sun to permit the continuous churning of its magma, star-matter restless with unformed dreams and hidden potential.

Earth is a planetary stem cell, brimming with creative possibility, poised to become a jewel

of the cosmos.

WHEN THE heavenly body that will become our Moon impacted Earth 4.4 billion years ago, precious water held within our planet's rocks is suddenly released. The moon performs a service of midwifery, and indigenous water transforms Earth into a blue ocean planet.

The seas become a global circulatory system, wearing away volcanic outcroppings and coastal shelves, while dissolving and transporting vital minerals throughout the planet.

Like a self-nourishing seed, Earth prepares for a fruitful blossoming.

OUR PLANET'S oceans become a womb for the emergence of life when, 4 billion years ago, Earth began to know and feel itself through single-celled organisms capable of sensing and responding to their environment. In the cell, nascent choice arises: What is food? Where is safety? These are the initial stirrings of intention and purpose.

The microscopic entities are Earth's most complex creations, distinctive expressions of a groping intelligence. In the sense with which we are most familiar, Earth has come alive, and each subsequent primary innovation will derive from this momentous unveiling.

AMIDST FLOURISHING LIFE in the oceans, a particular group of microorganisms called cyanobacteria fashion a unique way to obtain food. Cyanobacteria birth the remarkable process of photosynthesis: capturing energy from the sun to create sugar from carbon dioxide and water. The potent byproduct of photosynthesis is a gas never before present on Earth's surface: oxygen.

Oxygen permeated Earth's seas and atmosphere 2.4 billion years ago. In the ocean, abundant energy from the metabolism of oxygen spurs the assembly of a novel kind of

lifeform: multi-cellular organisms. These organisms are precursors of the domains of fungi, plants, and animals that would grace our planet, making Earth a zoological marvel and a lush garden of beauty and diversity.

STARTING 420 million years ago, Earth conjured out of thin air a mysterious element: fire. Requiring an oxygen atmosphere and something to ignite, fire cannot exist on the Sun or any other planet in our solar system. Fire is an evolved power of Earth.

Fire's volatile intensity carved out landscapes and remade ecosystems. In the path of this energy, plant life succumbed and animals fled. Earth sculpted a planet that can burn, and into a fiery world introduced a single species able to manipulate and encourage this elemental power.

Every human culture that has ever existed has used fire. We are fire creatures born to a fire planet. Humans assimilate fire into their biological heritage, coevolving like the bonded strands of DNA. Together, fire and humanity have transformed the planet.

FIRE IS A FASCINATION, and for early humans the most basic social unit consisted of a group who shared a fireside. Storytelling — the nourishment of imagination — originated around an open fire, one million years ago.

A new world of inner visioning formed and matured, and was brilliantly rendered in the cave paintings of paleolithic cultures. Imbued with qualities of curiosity, connection, conflict and creativity, imagination became the primary shaper of human communities.

Modern society has embraced an imaginative mythology of separation from nature. This psychic outlook, powerful and narrow, enabled the harnessing of nature's forces for human purposes, to an extent

that humans became a geological force. The result of our probing, exploitative orientation toward the world has been a diminishment of Earth's vitality.

In contrast to an untenable stance of independence from nature is the growing realization that humanity is inextricably woven into the tapestry of Earth's transformations and growth. We are an integral and significant part of an ongoing revelation.

THE NOTION THAT matter is inert, or “lifeless,” is a view derived from 19th-century science. The only matter we actually know of, composing the universe and Earth, creates, sustains, and enhances life. The dynamism of matter, especially as we witness it through the wondrous stages of Earth's unfolding, is a cosmic form of intention.

Our imagination allows us to see the whole of Earth's step-wise development. In our essence, we are the expression of Earth's magnificent process in the form of human beings.

To know ourselves as embodiments of an encompassing wholeness is the perspective of the sacred. “Spirituality is one of the potencies of the universe,” as cosmologist Brian Swimme states.

An event that can be considered of primary spiritual significance is the originating supernova, from which our solar system, Earth, and humans were formed.

All the elements required for the creation of Earth and life were produced in the magical alchemical cauldron of that star. The elements were then broadcast into the cosmos in an act of gift-giving. A blessing of plenitude. Stars are vehicles of grace in a universe valuing generosity.

Opening to the domain of wholeness — that is, learning to see the whole first — reveals the beauty, complexity, and intelligence of a benevolent and nurturing mystery. Earth embodies the holy, and in choosing to become co-creators and co-nurturers with the living Earth, we become agents of a divine world.

“The Earth is in what we all have in common. —WENDELL BERRY.

MEDIA MENTORING PROJECT

Social Media Influencer Marketing

— What is it? What are the Benefits?

Wednesday, April 19 • 7p.m. via Zoom

Join us for a panel discussion with professional public relations and social media marketers who will talk about how social media influencers help spread the word about what's good.

Who should attend: Anyone who wants to learn how to bring low-cost awareness to their product, business, non-profit, event, attraction, etc.





Panelists include:

- Rosalie Hagel Martin, Blue Whale Public Relations
- Social Media Influencers Colleen Blair and her sister Erin Torres, representing Travel Like a Local.
- Greg Lesch, executive director of the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce.

The program will be moderated by Joyce Marcel, writer of award-winning cover stories for Vermont Business Magazine who also is legislative writer for The Commons.

Email ziagulazimi9@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Panelists:


Rosalie

Colleen

Erin

Greg

Moderator:


Joyce

Sign up to receive email delivery of The Commons every Wednesday! Subscribe at commonsnews.org

Just like our paper, it's FREE!



Brattleboro still silent about what led to EMS changes. Selectboard members preach, but don't practice, 'transparency' on EMS takeovers.

As Windham County farmers deal with drought and dry soil, some find workarounds with irrigation.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Learn about the threat of wake boats on Vermont waterways

For the past 30 years my wife, Kathy, and I have kayaked on Wilmington's Lake Raponda. It's a quiet lake, and we're grateful that we can experience it with swimmers, anglers, other paddlers, and a variety of wildlife.

Last fall, I became aware of the efforts of Responsible Wakes for Vermont's Lakes (RWVL) to have the state establish rules for the operation of wake boats on our lakes and ponds.

Dave Larsen Wilmington

'Like it or not, we need weapons of war'

RE: "All children are vulnerable to this madness" [Viewpoint, Apr. 12]: I noticed that Bill Dunkel hit all the major points that gun grabbers would have us believe so as to carry out their nefarious gun-grabbing schemes.

Don Rosinski Brattleboro

Where are the bike lanes in Brattleboro?

Just as the repaving of Route 9 in Brattleboro did not yield so much as an inch of bike lanes, now we have the state pouring huge amounts of money into Route 30: new guard rails, paving, etc. Where are the bike lanes?

Edward C. Morris Brattleboro

Towns, state bear responsibility for affordable housing crisis

There have been many articles talking about affordable housing here and elsewhere. Some people just don't get it. The folks who provide rental housing are being constantly handed down laws (that have a price tag on them) they must follow in order to rent their properties.

Nancy Braus Guilford

The state and towns dictate to us what we must do, and the state and towns wonder why we can't provide so-called affordable housing.

Affordable for whom? Brattleboro, the state, and other towns in Vermont have themselves to blame.

They have built their Field of Dreams — if you build it, they will come. The state and towns supply folks from everywhere with just about everything they need, including cell phones!

And they expect Vermont landlords to foot the bill. Now we have more regulations on the way via our Legislature. Bill H.184 is just another slap in the face to those of us who provide rental homes to folks who are not ready to buy their own homes or who may not want to own their own homes.

With the cost of heating, water and sewer, taxes, inspections, snow removal, and upkeep, I can see where some of us just give up and sell to some corporate investor. I personally have been approached to sell to an out-of-state entity and did not. I'm starting to regret my decision.

Do not preach about affordable housing while adding yet another burden on the backs of we, the local landlords.

Don Rosinski Brattleboro

State officials raise serious questions about the Affordable Heat Act's affordability

State Rep. Heather Chase, you will shortly be voting on the so-called "Affordable Heat Act" (S.5), formerly the "Clean Heat Act."

The intent of the legislation is a statewide switch from heating systems that run on fossil fuels such as oil, gas, propane, and kerosene, to energy sources like electricity that have lower carbon emissions. A credit system would reward fuel dealers and consumers for changing over from fossil fuels. Those who don't make the switch would bear the higher costs of conventional fuels.

Remarkably, Vermont state officials have consistently raised serious questions about the affordability of the switch that would be mandated by the act:

• Gov. Phil Scott emphasized that "the costs and impacts are unknown."

• June Tierney, commissioner of the Vermont Department of Public Service, said, "I don't think Vermonters understand the Mack truck that's coming at them...how this is going to impact their lives and what it's going to cost."

• The Vermont Legislature Joint Fiscal Office reported that because the change from fossil fuels to electricity in the heating sector would be too expensive for many Vermonters they would need support. "The source of that support will need to be determined." Who knows where the money would come from?

Julie Moore, secretary of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, testified that the Affordable Heat Act would cost Vermonters \$1.2 billion in upfront costs of switching to cleaner heat systems and would add \$0.70 per gallon to the price of fuel. Others have concluded that the increase in the price of fuel would be much greater, possibly as high as \$4 per gallon.

Substantially higher fuel costs will leave many Vermonters at risk, a risk that is unacceptable in a cold climate.

That's a lot of caution from Vermont state officials whose job and duty it is to investigate the implications of proposed legislation.

Quite aside from the high cost is the issue of reliability. Grafton and other Vermont towns have just been through a substantial power outage — our household was out for 4½ days. Imagine, if you will, an outage of that length if we were exclusively dependent on electricity for our power (heat, transportation, and cooking). We would have had a catastrophe on our hands.

True resilience means 1) diverse sources of energy and 2) Vermonters in charge of the systems that work best for their own homes and businesses.

I urge you, Rep. Chase, to heed these cautions and vote

"no" on this act. Anna Vesely Pilette Grafton

Every dime the health care industry spends on themselves and their interests comes from us

Hospital executives make big, big salaries. Who pays them? We do. Insurance executives make big, big salaries. Who pays them? We do.

Drug company executives make big, big salaries. Who pays them? We do. Drug companies and insurance companies and private equity owners of health care facilities make big profits. Where does that money come from? Us.

The health care industry pays huge amounts of money to lobbyists. Where does that money come from? Us.

The health care industry contributes huge amounts of money to political candidates. Where does that money come from? Us.

Who benefits from all that money that comes from us? Them.

Whether it's premiums, taxes, or the prices we pay directly, every dime these people spend on themselves and their interests comes from us.

When they say universal health care "costs too much," what they mean is that it costs them too much. And the reason it costs them more is because it costs us less.

Please remember that when the opponents of universal health care claim "we" can't afford it.

Lee Russ Bennington

Project Feed the Thousands thanks supporters

Project Feed the Thousands' 29th annual campaign was a resounding success, collecting \$138,748 in cash contributions, along with food items, providing 369,839 meals. We thank all of our generous supporters and numerous area businesses for participating in what has become this area's largest annual food drive.

We support families and individuals in our area who are food insecure and need a little extra help, and during these challenging financial times, with your help, we were able to assist them.

Nine area food shelves are supported with the funds that Project Feed the Thousands raises annually: Foodworks (Groundworks Collaborative), Brigid's Kitchen, Loaves and

Fishes, Bread of Life Food Pantry (Vernon), Putney Food Shelf, Townshend Food Pantry, Guilford Cares Food Pantry, Our Place Drop In Center (Bellows Falls), and the Hinsdale Food Pantry.

We will graciously continue to accept donations year round. Checks can be mailed to Project Feed the Thousands, c/o 802 Credit Union, P.O. Box 8366, Brattleboro, VT 05304.

Contributions can also be made at projectfeedthethousands.org or through a GoFundMe campaign (bit.ly/711-project-feed).

On behalf of the entire Project Feed the Thousands board, thank you.

PROJECT FEED THE THOUSANDS Guilford

Kelli Corbeil, Co-Chair, John Sciacca, Co-Chair, George Haynes, Co-Founder, Chris Thayer, Board Member

BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY THE COMMONS CROSSWORD "Wean Selections" crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

BRATTLEBORO TIRE advertisement featuring services like oil changes, tire sales, and safety checks.

COLUMN | Sports Roundup

Glidden, Colonels too much for Bellows Falls in 11-2 win

Two days, two vastly different performances for the Bellows Falls Terriers baseball team. On April 12 in Brandon, they beat Otter Valley for the second straight game, 6-2, as the Terriers got six shutout innings from winning pitcher Trenton Fletcher and got two-hit games from Jamison Nystrom and Eli Allbee.

The next day at Hadley Field, against the Brattleboro Colonels, the Terriers fell flat on their faces in an 11-2 loss.

BF coach Bob Lockerby was unsparing in his assessment of his team's performance against the Colonels. "We didn't compete," he said. "You've got to be competitive and then when things don't go well, you have to learn to play the game and be tough and we didn't do that. We didn't play baseball. Not the way we're supposed to. Not the way we're capable of."

But Lockerby may have been a little too hard on his team, for they ran into a pretty good pitcher in Brattleboro's Jolie Glidden. The burly junior threw 97 pitches for a complete game victory, scattering six hits and keeping the BF batters off-balance with his ability to change the speed and location of his pitches.

"He got the opportunity to pitch for me a little bit when he was a freshman," said Brattleboro coach Chris Groeger. "When he was a freshman he was able to go to the state championship game. He pitched in the state championship game last year too. He's got experience. He was our No. 2 pitcher last year but he's definitely our No. 1 this year. Nothing flashy, but he gets people out and he throws strikes."

With his brother, sophomore Jayke Glidden, behind the plate calling the pitches, Jolie had a relatively stress-free outing. For Jayke, it was the first time he played at catcher in a game since Little League, but it was just as stress-free for him since they've been playing catch in their backyard for years.

Allbee was BF's starting pitcher and he got into trouble in the third inning when he gave up an RBI single to left field by Sam Bogart and a three-run double to deep center field by Jolie Glidden. Cole Moore came into relieve Allbee, and gave up a bases-loaded walk to Harper Cutler to give Brattleboro a 5-0 lead.

BF got a run in the fourth when Jesse Darrell was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded, but Brattleboro put the game away with a five-run fifth inning. Darrell, BF's third pitcher of the day, issued six walks and a hit before catcher Jake Moore came in to finish up the game on the mound.

All in all, it was a good opener for the Colonels and a letdown game for the Terriers. The Colonels will be back in action for a road game against Keene



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.

on April 19, while BF hosts Burr & Burton on April 20.

Softball

• A late-inning rally by West Rutland led to a 6-3 victory over Leland & Gray on April 13. Rebels pitcher Kristen Lowe struck out 10 batters while walking only two in the loss, and Savannah Cadrin hit a two-run homer. The Rebels host Woodstock on April 20.

• Bellows Falls rolled to a 13-1 win over White River Valley in the Terriers' home opener on April 13. Winning pitcher Izzy Stoodley struck out 12 and gave up just two hits. She also went 3-for-3 at the plate and scored three runs. Emma Thompson and Alana McAllister each had a hit for BF as they took advantage of numerous walks and errors. Jenna Dolloph, Natalie Noyes and Jaelyn Fletcher scored two runs each for the Terriers.

Track & field

• Brattleboro had a good showing in a multi-team meet in Windsor on April 12, with the Colonels boys finishing second and the Colonels girls taking fourth place.

Sean von Ranson, Dylan Holmes and Nico Conathan-Leach all qualified for the Division I state championships. Holmes qualified in the 200-meter dash with a second place finish and von Ranson qualified for the state championships with a third-place finish in the 100-meter dash. Conathan-Leach made it by winning the 3,000-meter run with a time of 10 minutes, 13.08 seconds. Katherine Normandeau also qualified for the girls' state meet with a second-place finish in the 3,000 in 11:19.78.

Other Brattleboro winners in the boys' meet included Jack Cady, who took the 400 with a time of 53.83 seconds, and von Ranson was first in the 200 in 24.21. The 4x100 relay team David Berkson-Harvey, Cady, Jacob Girard, and von Ranson were winners in 46.68.

For Bellows Falls, Riley Tuttle took first place in shot put with a toss of 11.83-meters. Tela Hartly led the BF girls with a first place throw of 26.24 meters in the javelin, while Laura Kamel had a 32.03 toss in the discus to win that event. The 4x400 relay team of Ava LaRoss, Eryn Ross, Hannah

Terry, and Nola Sciacca finished first in the 4x400-meter relay with a time of 5:02.26.

Boys' tennis

• Brattleboro opened with a 6-1 win over Mount Anthony on April 11 at the BUHS courts. In singles play, No. 1 Nathan Kim and No. 4 Thomas Hyde won their matches in straight sets, 6-0, 6-0, while No. 3 Ben Berg won his match, 6-2, 6-2, No. 2 Eben Wagner ground out a 6-4, 6-3 win, and No. 5 Mark Richard needed an 11-9 super breaker to win his match and finish the sweep.

In doubles play, the No. 1 duo of Dorian Paquette and Tucker Sargent also needed a super breaker as they rallied from a 1-6 deficit to win their match, 10-7, while No. 2 Jackson Pals and Wyatt Cudworth lost their match 4-6, 4-6.

The next day, the Colonels got shut out by Burr & Burton, 7-0, in Manchester. Brattleboro is off until April 25 when they have a rematch with the Bulldogs.

Unified basketball

• Brattleboro is undefeated so far this season. At the BUHS gym on April 11, the Colonels defeated Middlebury, 59-44. Every member of the Colonels scored, and they went out of their way to help some Middlebury players get a chance to get into the scorebook.

On April 12, the Colonels beat Otter Valley, 59-47, in Brandon. Austin Pinette had the hot hand, scoring 18 points for the winners. Ashley Cleveland added 10 points, and Silvia and Marcy Galdamez provided plenty of additional offense.

The Colonels, now 4-0, host Rutland on April 27 in a 2:15 p.m. game at the BUHS gym.

Lacrosse

• Burr & Burton rolled to a 15-3 over the Brattleboro boys in the season-opener for the Colonels on April 13 in Manchester.

• The Brattleboro girls lost to Hartford, 13-1, in their season opener at Natowich Field on April 12. Sophie Albright had the lone goal for the Colonels.

Ultimate disc

• Leland & Gray won its opening match, 15-1, over Sharon Academy on April 12 in Townshend. The Rebels had 11 different scorers and eight players got assists in the victory.

• Brattleboro got shut out by Burr & Burton, 15-0, in the season-opening match on April 13 in Manchester.

Rec. Dept. news

• The Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department will offer field hockey and boys' and girls' lacrosse



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Brattleboro pitcher Jolie Glidden went the distance in a 11-2 win over Bellows Falls in the season opener for the Colonels on April 13 at Hadley Field.

camp this summer, aided by the varsity coaches and players from Brattleboro Union High School. Anyone interested in any of these programs can register online at register1.vermontsystems.com/wb-wsc/vtbrattleboro.wsc/splash.html (register1.vermontsystems.com/wb-wsc/vtbrattleboro.wsc/splash.html?InterfaceParameter=WebTrac_1), or call the Rec. Dept.'s Gibson-Aiken Center office at 802-254-5808 for more information.

• BUHS varsity coaches and players will lead a youth field hockey camp for those in grades 3-8. This camp will run from June 27 to Aug. 8, on Tuesday nights only at the West River Park multipurpose field from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

The fee is \$60 for Brattleboro residents and \$75 for non-residents. This camp is for players of any level. Coaches will be working with campers on fundamentals and increasing knowledge of the game. Bring your own stick, goggles, mouth guard, shin guards and water bottle. Limited sticks available for use.

• BUHS girls' lacrosse coach Sarah Clark will lead girls' lacrosse camp for those in grades 3-8. Lacrosse camp will run from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on June 26 to 30, at West River Park. The fee is \$55 for Brattleboro residents and \$70 for non-residents.

Join Clark for some skills and drills and working on fundamentals and knowledge of the game. Bring your stick, goggles, mouth guard, water bottle, cleats, and or sneakers. Note that this program requires a minimum of 5 participants to run.

• BUHS coaching staff and varsity lacrosse players will be running a boys' youth lacrosse camp June 28 to Aug. 2 on Wednesday evenings from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at West River Park. This camp is for boys who are in grades 3-8. The fee is \$55 for Brattleboro residents and \$70 for non-residents.

Participants attending this camp will be trained in the fundamentals of lacrosse. All campers will receive personal attention toward skill improvement and knowledge of the game. All participants are required to wear a mask, and to come with cleats/sneakers, water bottle, snack, stick, helmet, and gloves.

• Also, the Rec. Dept. says the Dog Park, Perseverance Skate Park, and the outdoor tennis/pickleball courts at Living Memorial Park are all now open for the season.

Protect trails during mud season

• Last week's warm weather left hiking and biking trails at lower elevations

in a less muddy state than normal for mid-April. But up in the hills, it's still mud season, and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) wants to remind the public that many trails around the state are closed.

During mud season, which can run until Memorial Day in upper elevations, hiking and biking trails are still wet and muddy due to the combined effects of snow melt, thawing ground, and seasonal rain. So the FPR asks the public to avoid muddy, soft trails to protect sensitive vegetation and ensure trails are in good shape for the upcoming summer hiking and biking season.

It's always a good idea to check a trail's status before you head out, using resources such as Trailfinder.info, the Green Mountain Club (greenmountainclub.org or 802-244-7037), and the Vermont Mountain Bike Association (vmba.org) to find out what trails are closed or open near you.

It is also worth remembering that the weather in the hills can be greatly different from the valleys. Check weather reports for your destination and always be prepared with extra layers, traction, and a contingency plan, including turning around or seeking an alternative place to hike. If you encounter conditions you are not prepared for, turn around and come back another day.

Senior bowling roundup

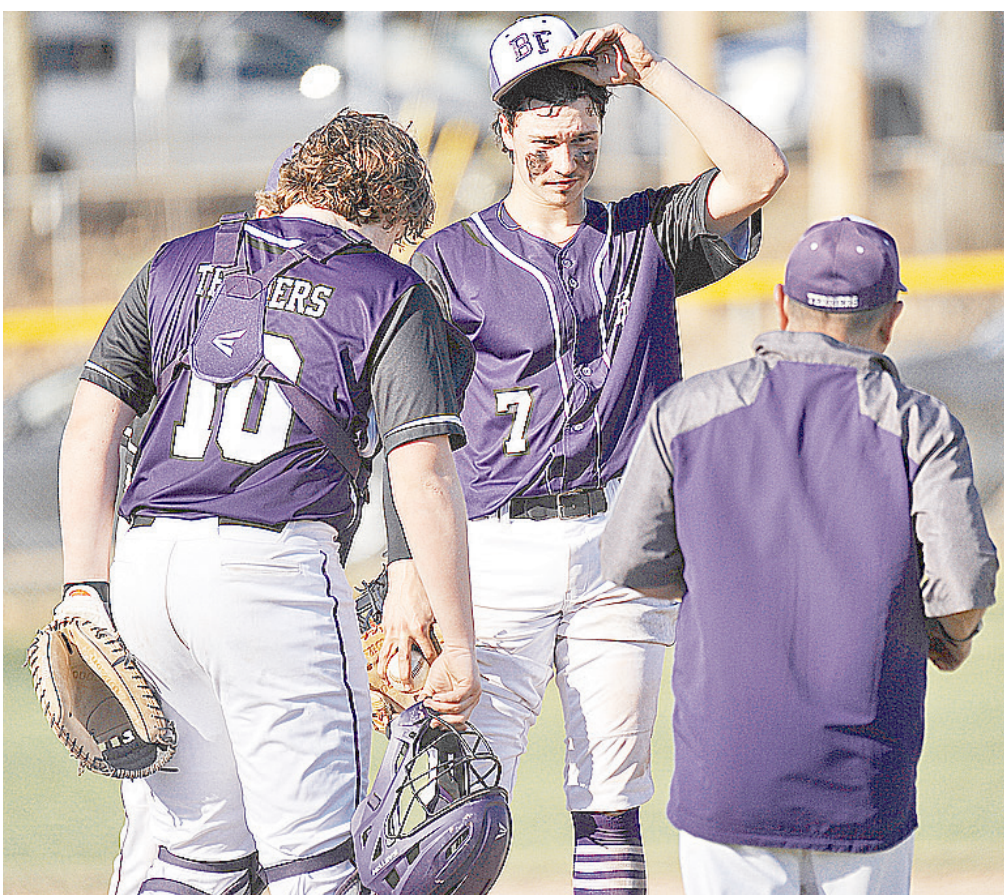
• With two weeks left in the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League, Fab Four (44-21) had a 4-1 week to stay in first place. Slo Movers (40.5-24.5) went 1-4, but still hold on to second place, followed by The Markers (39-26), Split Happens (34.5-30.5), The Strikers (27-38), The A-1's (25-40), Trash-O-Matic (25-40), and 10 Pins (25-40).

Diane Cooke had the women's high handicap game (232) and series (619), while Robert Rigby had the men's high handicap game (240) and series (644). 10 Pins had the high team handicap game (841) and series (2,421).

Rigby led the men's scratch scoring with a 644 series that featured games of 249 and 216. Chuck Adams had a 601 series with games of 209, 197, and 195. Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 571 series with games of 201 and 200, while John Walker had a 516 series, and Gary Montgomery had a 514 series with a 207 game.

Carol Gloski had the women's high scratch series (445) that featured a 160 game, while Cooke (167) had the high scratch game. Shirley Aiken rolled a 160.

Bellows Falls starting pitcher Eli Allbee, center, gets ready for a mound visit from coach Bob Lockerby, right, as catcher Jake Moore looks on during the third inning of their game against Brattleboro on April 13 at Hadley Field.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

GREEN UP DAY BENEFIT

Help Burton Car Wash Support Green Up Vermont!

April 27, 2023 11 am- 1pm

873 Putney Road, Brattleboro 802-257-5191

All Wash Proceeds generated between these hours will go to Green Up Vermont!