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Brattleboro, Vermont • Wednesday, October 11, 2023 • Vol. XVIII, No. 41 • Issue No. 735

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One dead after car, train collide in Vernon

Accident remains under investigation

Combined sources

VERNON—One person was killed and another was injured on Oct. 6 after a northbound Amtrak passenger train collided with his car at a rail crossing in Vernon.

According to Vermont State Police, a dispatcher received a 911 call just after 5 p.m., reporting an automobile accident near the intersection of Route 142 and Bemis Road in Vernon.

Upon arrival at the scene, state troopers learned the crash

involved the northbound Amtrak Vermonter had struck the vehicle.

Both occupants of the 2002 Toyota RAV4 were transported to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, where the driver of the car, Craig Hudson, 53, of Brattleboro, was pronounced dead.

A passenger, Shenandoah Gilbert, 47, of Vernon, was injured, and state police said she was transferred to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H.

■ SEE FATAL ACCIDENT, A3

Kunin has something to say about age limits. (And Barbie.)

‘There are differences in my ability from when I was younger,’ says Vermont’s first and so far only female governor, who is celebrating her 90th birthday with a new book and statewide reading tour

By Kevin O’Connor
ViDigger

Madeleine Kunin still fields calls about serving in the last millennium as Vermont’s first and so far only female governor, and later as deputy U.S. education secretary and ambassador to her birthplace of Switzerland. But, now retired, the Democratic politico turned published poet would rather wrestle with more present, personal questions.

*At summer’s end,
green leaves, shake themselves
red with excitement.
Same as last year,
still a surprise.
Each day must decide
before it reveals itself —
Will it still be summer
or already fall?*

Such words aren’t simply an excerpt from her sixth and latest book, *Walk With Me*, a poetry collection in which she illuminates her past and present in a surprisingly honest yet hopeful light. They also mirror the internal inquiry of a self-described “well-lived woman who still loves life,” who’s set to mark her 90th birthday Thursday.

“I used to think 90 was ancient,” she said in a recent interview. “I am acutely aware of change, which seems to happen every day, in small steps, but quickly. Yes, there are down times, but I manage to spring back. Resilience is what I treasure.”

On the one hand, Kunin is an elder stateswoman who still garners attention by commenting on such hot-button issues as abortion and antisemitism and headlines including U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

On the other, she recently

■ SEE KUNIN, A6

Can the show go on?



Dance school hopes to replace assets that disappeared from storage facility in time for annual performance

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

B RATTLEBORO—To anyone who knows *The Nutcracker* ballet, surely one of the most delightful scenes is when Mother Ginger arrives in all her larger-than-life glory and suddenly the stage is filled with wee Bon Bons, or Polichinelles, spilling out from under her colossal skirt to twirl and dance. The skirt is so big that the role of Mother Ginger is traditionally played by a tall male who can navigate in the about-100-pound-dress-full of children and work the apparatus under the skirt needed to open the curtain within to release the Pulichinelles.

For the Brattleboro School of Dance, which stages the ballet each winter, the parts that make Mother Ginger’s skirt work are among myriad items lost by a big, mind-boggling mistake, and the

■ SEE ‘NUTCRACKER’, A3

The Mother Ginger costume and apparatus, part of Brattleboro School of Dance’s collection of *Nutcracker* props, was among the \$50,000 of the organization’s belongings accidentally disposed of by the facility where they were stored. To stage this year’s performance, the school has mounted a GoFundMe campaign.



Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., on the House floor prior to the vote that removed Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., as House speaker.

In the room where it happened

From her vantage point in the midst of the U.S. Capitol, Balint recounts chaos in the U.S. House of Representatives brought on by Republican infighting and resulting in the historic ousting of the chamber’s speaker

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

B RATTLEBORO—When Vermont sent its first female representative to Washington this past year, it was in itself a historic moment.

But U.S. Rep. Becca Balint, D-Vt., has become part of a greater, and more tragic history. She has found herself inside what she calls “a Republican Civil War.”

In the House, just days after mustering just enough votes for a last-minute 45-day funding bill that averted a shutdown of the federal government, Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., was ousted from his leadership position on Oct. 3 by a rebellion of a hard-right, ex-President-Trump-inspired faction within the GOP.

It was the first time ever that a House speaker has been voted

out of office, and Balint was — to paraphrase the Broadway hit *Hamilton* — in the room where it happened.

“I ran for Congress because our democracy is in crisis,” Balint later explained in a press statement.

“Since the first week of this session, the House has been led by a speaker whose failure to govern with integrity is actively eroding our democracy,” Balint continued. “Kevin McCarthy enables dangerous extremism that has real consequences for Vermonters and working families across the country.”

Balint said that McCarthy “sold his speakership to the highest bidder: MAGA extremists — shepherding through their agenda to ban abortion, attack marginalized people, prop up billionaires, and pollute our communities.”

“He has shown time and time again that he is not a partner we can trust, breaking every promise

he has made over the last nine months,” she concluded. “This Congress has urgent work to do. I will continue to fight extremism while working hard on behalf of Vermonters.”

It took 15 votes and major compromises with the hard right members of his party for McCarthy to win the speakership in the first place. Balint, who had to sit through that process as well, was angered by McCarthy’s brinksmanship — the House came very close to closing the government this time around. She had had enough.

After the debacle, and with no speaker, the House adjourned, and Balint returned to Vermont to spend time with her family.

“I’m waiting to be called back to D.C.,” Balint told *The Commons* on Oct. 6. “So I thought I’d come home and see my kids and my sisters, my wife, and my dog, while I had a chance. Maybe

■ SEE CHAOS, A3

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A publication of Vermont Independent Media
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Deadline for the October 18 issue
October 13

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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.

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Without our volunteers, this newspaper would exist only in our imaginations.
 Special thanks to:
 Simi and Mark Berman, Diana Bingham, Jim Maxwell, Rob Bertsche, Barbara Evans, Cameron Cobane, Shannon Ward, and Hooker-Dunham Theater & Gallery; Clay Turnbull and NEC; Brendan Emmett Quigley and Jon Pakh
In memoriam:
 Alan O. Dann, Judy Gorman, Mia Gannon

'You're not alone': Brattleboro activist cultivates rural LGBTQ connections

'We've come a long way, but we have a long way to go,' says HB Lozito, executive director of Out in the Open and winner of the 2023 Con Hogan Award for creative, entrepreneurial, community leadership.

By Kevin O'Connor
VtDigger

BRATTLEBORO—HB Lozito recalls living in a big city out West when memories began to bubble of a small-town childhood back East.

Lozito appreciated the freedom that the San Francisco Bay Area offered someone who uses the word "queer" with pride and "they" as a singular pronoun. But the concrete metropolis didn't have the more grounded moments of the thirty-something's birthplace in Maine.

"I had been living in a very large population of LGBTQ people, but it also felt important to be somewhere rural," Lozito recounted recently. "I wanted to have both of those things, together."

Vermont — the first state in the nation to adopt same-sex civil unions, in 2000, and full marriage rights by a legislative vote, in 2009 — seemed to be the answer. Yet a move to Brattleboro a decade ago initially sparked a question.

"I was saying to myself, 'I know there are queer people here, but where are they?'"

Today, Lozito is executive director of Out in the Open, a nonprofit working to connect rural LGBTQ+ New Englanders through programs ranging from social events and support groups to an annual summit that has drawn a national crowd.

"Members of the LGBTQ community who are in some really rural parts of Vermont might feel like they're the only person in their town or county," Lozito said in an interview. "We're here to support you. You're not alone."

As an affirmation, the Vermont Community Foundation has selected Lozito to receive the 2023 Con Hogan Award for creative, entrepreneurial, community



HB Lozito, executive director of the LGBTQ+ support organization Out in the Open, is the winner of the 2023 Con Hogan Award for creative, entrepreneurial, community leadership.

leadership. "Lozito has been instrumental not only in creating safe and thriving places for rural LGBTQ+ people but also in building long-term visibility, knowledge and power in the community," the selection committee said in a statement. "They have helped redefine what it means to be queer and live rurally."

The \$15,000 annual prize is named for the late Con Hogan, a Vermont public policy maker who served in both Democratic and Republican administrations before his death in 2018. The award recognizes people who are following in his footsteps by working collaboratively on shared goals.

Growing up in Maine, Lozito was an elementary student when their mother presented

an anti-sweatshop fashion show "that really got me interested in organizing."

Lozito moved to the West Coast to study environmental studies and politics, and went on to work in Portland, Oregon, and Oakland, California, before moving to Brattleboro in 2011 and joining the nonprofit formerly named Green Mountain Crossroads in 2014.

"People can be so incredibly isolated from each other, especially in rural places," Lozito said. "When you're in a city, you can have a huge party with exactly your own demographics. But for all kinds of reasons, we're not able to do that here."

That, in turn, can bring challenges — and, conversely, a potential path to a bigger

community.

"There's fewer of us in general in rural spaces, so there's more opportunity for people to connect in a broader-spectrum way," Lozito said. "It allows us to have different kinds of conversations than we might have if everyone's just sharing a very specific slice of one part of their identity."

People who question why a seemingly progressive paradise like Vermont needs a LGBTQ+ support organization aren't seeing the full picture, the activist said.

"Things are relatively better for some parts of our community, but we've seen a huge rise in negative experiences for trans youth and trans adults. And there are LGBTQ people who are unhoused or undocumented, living with substance use disorder,

having a hard time receiving medical care — every kind of experience that people are having in the state."

Named a "Champion of Pride" by *The Advocate*, Lozito told the national magazine about Out in the Open's launch of a Health Equity & Access for Rural TLGBQ+ (HEART) program to offer peer support for medical appointments, care planning, transportation and insurance haggling.

"I am working for a future where all people have their needs met all of the time," they were quoted as saying.

Lozito is set to be recognized at a public ceremony on Oct. 11 at the Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier, with more information available at the selection committee's website.

The award comes a year after fellow Brattleboro resident Joe Wiah, director of the Ethiopian Community Development Council's refugee resettlement efforts in southern Vermont, received the 2022 Con Hogan prize.

"I think people now are more able to find safety in being out as themselves," Lozito said in anticipation of this year's event. "We've come a long way, but we have a long way to go."

PUTNEY Selectboard invites comments on draft Town Plan

PUTNEY—The Putney Selectboard will present and receive comments in person and virtually on the "Planning Commission Approved Draft 2023 Putney Town Plan" at two public hearings scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 24, at 5:30 p.m., and Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 5:30 p.m., at Putney Town Hall, 127 Main St.

The Draft 2023 Putney Town Plan covers the entire town of Putney. Drafted with community input, it addresses State municipal planning goals as well as the Putney community aspirations and priorities. The 8-year plan includes eight topical chapters, each with recommended objectives, policies, and actions, summarized in an integrated implementation plan of the proposed actions.

The chapter headings include Vision and Strategic Priorities, Natural Resources and Land Use, Housing, Energy, Economic Development, Community Facilities and Services, Transportation, Resilience, and Implementation Plan.

The public hearing will held be as a hybrid meeting. This means that the Selectboard hearing will be held physically and electronically. Please note that while the board will strive to provide means for those attending remotely to participate in the public hearing, technical difficulties or reasons that otherwise prevent or interrupt remote public participation are possible.

To access and participate in the hearing remotely via Zoom go to bit.ly/735-putney, or call toll-free at 646-558-8656. The meeting ID is 814 9457 3455, and the passcode is 4385438. A link to a recording of the hearing will be available at putneyvt.org.

Visitors are welcome at the hearing. Those wishing to address the Selectboard regarding the Draft 2023 Town Plan will be given opportunity to present comments in person or virtually.

The Town Plan is available for download at putneyvt.org, and printed copies are available for review at Town Hall, the Putney Public Library, the Putney General Store, the Putney Diner, Putney Cares, and Next Stage Arts Project.

The Selectboard also welcomes written comments on the Plan. These must be received no later than midnight, Wednesday, Nov. 15, to box233@putneyvt.org or P.O. Box 233, Putney, VT 05346 — Attn. Town Manager; or hand delivered to Town Hall.

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The dragon costume was among the many items erroneously removed from the Brattleboro School of Dance's storage space and sent to the landfill.

■ 'Nutcracker'

school has taken to a GoFundMe crowdfunding campaign ([bit.ly/735-nutcracker-props](https://www.gofundme.com/c/735-nutcracker-props)) for the community's help to replace them.

As of Oct. 10, the school has raised almost half of the campaign's current \$10,000 goal.

Now in a landfill

The school's owner since 2018, Director Bridget Struthers, explains that, a few years ago, the school rented a storage unit to safely house the majority of its *Nutcracker* props and supplies.

"Shortly after the 2021 production, when we arrived to pick up the items, we found it empty," Struthers writes in the appeal.

"After some investigation, we discovered that the person responsible for clearing out units had mistakenly disposed of our belongings instead of the contents in the unit right next to ours," she says. "Everything we stored is now in a landfill."

The list of items is "long and expensive," Struthers explains, and includes the Mother Ginger apparatus, the Soldier and Kissy Doll boxes, the snow that falls during "Waltz of the Snowflakes," the dragon, numerous rolls of specialized Marley dance flooring, and all of the Victorian furniture for the iconic

party scene.

"It's the most bizarre, fluke accident," Struthers told *The Commons*. "It's an honest mistake, but the consequences are staggering for us because a lot of that stuff in the storage unit is completely useless to most people. It's a bunch of old, handmade set pieces and things really specific to dance performances. I feel so silly, but we tallied the numbers and to replace everything it's at least \$50,000."

Struthers is working with a lawyer, her insurance company, and the storage company's insurance, but the going is slow and the chance of recovering the financial loss is not guaranteed.

"Things are in motion, but the storage company is saying they're really not willing to pay anything," she says. "It's a long and slow process and, in the meantime, we have to put a show on, which is why we decided to do a GoFundMe. We probably won't ever recover as much as we need to."

The show will go on

Despite the overwhelming loss — and the fact that Struthers is getting married at the end of October — *The Nutcracker* performance is set to open Friday, Dec. 15.

"Brattleboro School of Dance is not willing to sacrifice our *Nutcracker* tradition," Struthers says. "Since the production is in a few short months, we are doing what we always do to make the show happen — thinking and working creatively as a community," she writes in the appeal, adding she thought about renting sets and props but decided to "use this as an opportunity to rebuild and remake and upgrade some of the designs."

The school is remaking props now with help from a father of one of the students, Rich Leavy of Southern Vermont Home, LLC of Brattleboro, who is helping remake sets and props. His daughter is also in *The Nutcracker*.

"Happy to do it. My daughter's been at the school for years, and Bridget and the rest of the teachers there have become a big part of her life and this is just an opportunity to say thanks and help them out in a pinch," said Leavy.

Some of his employees will work on the set, and other volunteers are welcome.

"The more, the merrier," Leavy said.

'Our community is just incredible'

"We have so much support,"

says Struthers. "Our community is just incredible. It will happen. It seems stressful — and it is, when I actually think about it — but there are so many people stepping in to help in so many ways that it feels manageable."

Everyone can help by volunteering to help rebuild sets, spreading the word about the school's programs, making financial donations, and soon, helping collect items on a list that will be shared on Facebook.

Brattleboro School of Dance has been providing dance instruction and staging productions for the past 45 years and has 150–200 students.

"Every year we strive to build upon and improve what we've done in previous *Nutcracker* productions," Struthers says, adding that she hopes with the community's help to stage "the best show yet."

"We need all the help we can get, and you can help us meet our goal," she says.

For more information, visit the GoFundMe campaign page ([bit.ly/735-nutcracker-props](https://www.gofundme.com/c/735-nutcracker-props)) or email info@brattleboroschoolofdance.com.

FROM SECTION FRONT

■ Fatal accident

FROM SECTION FRONT

State police said that no one was injured on the train, and it continued on its route to St. Albans after a delay.

The Vermont State Police Crash Reconstruction Team investigated at the scene with remote assistance from Amtrak Police. Team members were assisted by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, New England Central Railroad, the Amtrak road foreman, Vernon

Fire Department, and Rescue Inc. Route 142 in the area of the accident was closed during the investigation.

The train tracks cross Bemis Road, a private drive, with no crossing guard or lights.

State police request that anyone who can offer information related to the crash contact Trooper Timothy Alibozek at Westminster Barracks at 802-722-4600.

■ Chaos

FROM SECTION FRONT

take a hot shower."

What brought on the vote of "no confidence" in the House? "This is a man who was completely and totally untrustworthy," Balint said. "He broke every promise that he made to us as Democrats. He broke promises to the Senate and to the president. And it was all because he was aiding and abetting the extremist factions in his party."

Balint referred back to Jan. 6, 2021 when, following the defeat of President Donald Trump at the polls, a group of his supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol in an armed insurrection that ended with the death of five people, including a police officer.

"The other thing that was critically important for many of us — myself included — is I will never forgive him for what he did in the days and weeks after Jan. 6," Balint said.

As reported in *The New York Times*, McCarthy told Republicans two days after the attack, "I've had it with this guy" and called the then-president's behavior "atrocious and totally wrong."

"And then, within a few weeks, he was down at Mar-a-Lago kissing Trump's ring," Balint said. "This is a man without principles, and I could not support that."

But it wasn't the Democrats who pulled the plug on McCarthy, she said — it was McCarthy's own party that called for the vote to remove him.

"He did not have the votes to remain speaker without Democrats helping him keep his seat," Balint said.

And she emphasized that — in an "incredibly surprising" show of unity — Democrats voted in a bloc to remove McCarthy. "Not the Blue Dogs. Not the Problem Solvers. Not the new Dems. Not the Progressive Dems. Nobody had confidence in him as a leader."

Balint said that after McCarthy was removed as the speaker, some of the hard-right representatives proposed making Trump his successor, since the top job does not have to go to an actual member of the House.

Some Republicans originally floated the idea of the former president during the 15-vote deadlock that ultimately resulted in McCarthy's ascension to the job by a slim margin.

As of Oct. 6, "Trump's got more votes for speaker than he did back in January," Balint said.

"These are not serious people," she observed. "Republicans' own rules say you can't have someone who's been indicted in leadership."

The House Minority Leader, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., offered McCarthy a power-sharing agreement.

"House Democrats remain committed to a bipartisan path forward," Jeffries wrote, but "we simply need Republican partners willing to break with MAGA extremism, reform the highly partisan House rules that were adopted at the beginning of this Congress, and join us in finding common good for the people."

Balint supports Jeffries' stand. "Our leader had said to [McCarthy], 'We can talk about a power sharing agreement in this body, because you don't have the votes,'" Balint said. "And he said, 'I'm not interested in that, and I don't need your vote.'"

"So there you have it. He didn't need our votes. And he was not willing to talk with us about what any kind of bipartisan power sharing agreement could be — again, because he completely kowtowed to the extremists within his party."

The Democrats did not call the vote, Balint said — Republicans did.

"That's why we've been saying all along: This is a Republican Civil War, and they need to sort it out," she said.

Now the whole country is watching to see what comes next. And what must come next are the yearly appropriations bills that fund the U.S. government.

"We can't negotiate with them over any kind of funding package, which is what is facing us," Balint said. "Essentially, the most immediate concern is this continuing resolution we just passed will run out, right?"

For the Democrats, "we've seen that he has no principles. We've seen that he's willing to break every single promise," she continued. "So why would we stick with him?"

What does Balint see as a possible resolution? "I will say what I've said for months," she said. "The so-called moderates within the caucus need to be louder."

Such Republicans "cannot just talk with us privately, when the cameras aren't rolling," Balint said. "They need to stand up for their colleagues who are serious about governing."

New volunteer opportunities launched to maintain West River Trail

BRATTLEBORO—The Friends of the West River Trail (FWRT) are launching a new volunteer opportunity called "Adopt an Acre."

A 26-acre parcel of land the trail runs through, called the Riverstone Preserve, includes an interpretive trail, called the Sibosen Trail. FWRT owns this property on which they have a conservation easement with the

Vermont Land Trust.

In their Land Management Plan, FWRT pledged to mitigate and control the invasive plants on this property. For several years, with the help of grant funds from the National Resources Conservation Service, FWRT hired Long View Forest to professionally treat the invasives while, during its monthly volunteer work days, FWRT also manually

pulled seedlings that continued to emerge.

Much of the 26 acres continues to need professional treatment, but there are six one-acre parcels that can be managed manually, and FWRT seeks teams (families or groups of friends or individuals) to adopt the parcels. They estimate each parcel may take the equivalent of 8 to 16 hours per season (depending on how many

people are sharing the work).

If you are interested in "Adopting an Acre," contact the FWRT Steering Committee at lowersection@westrivertrail.org. They will provide training on identifying invasives and how to use a phone app to find parcel boundaries and participants' locations on their parcels in real time.

'Button Up' campaign encourages Vermonters to stay warm with new weatherization offers

WINOOSKI—Winter is just around the corner, and heating fuel prices remain at historic highs, according to Button Up Vermont, the campaign every autumn to raise awareness around weatherizing homes.

Button Up encourages homeowners to weatherize their homes so they'll be warm and comfortable in the cold months ahead. And increased weatherization incentives and financing options make preparing homes more affordable than ever.

The program has begun this month and seeks to help Vermonters get the tools, rebates, and resources they need.

"Buttoning up a home helps Vermonters save money, use less energy, and stay warm this winter," Gov. Phil Scott said in a news release. "It can also help lower heating bills at a time when fuel prices remain high. These offers can help more Vermonters live in more comfortable and affordable homes. It truly is a win-win."

There are some telltale signs that a home is losing heat.

"Drafts, snow melting unevenly on your roof, and icicles are all signs heat is escaping from your home and wasting energy," said Robyn King, home

weatherization program manager for Efficiency Vermont. "Insulating and air-sealing your home can solve these problems and avoid mold. Weatherizing your home now will keep you warm this winter, save money on heating bills, and create a healthier space."

Comprehensive weatherization can button up any home ahead of winter. Extra financing is available for flood-affected residents to weatherize as they rebuild from this summer's devastating floods. That's on top of offers to help Vermonters rebuild homes that were hit in the floods.

Here's how to button up ahead of winter:

- Attend a Button Up event to learn more about stopping heat loss and buttoning up a home.
- Schedule a free Virtual Home Energy Visit with an Efficiency Vermont energy expert.
- Complete DIY projects to stop drafts—and get \$100 back.
- Find a qualified contractor through Efficiency Vermont's Efficiency Excellence Network to help complete a comprehensive weatherization project to insulate and air seal the home.

Increased incentives are available from Efficiency Vermont.

Customers can recover up to 75 percent of a project's cost, up to \$4,000, and those who qualify as low- and moderate-income can recoup 75 percent of costs up to \$9,500. Low- to no-interest financing is available for projects up to \$20,000. On-bill financing through participating utility providers can also spread the cost of weatherizing over time.

Flood-damaged homes weatherized in the past are eligible to re-apply. That's provided a state weatherization agency weatherized the home in the past 15 years. Many programs are prioritizing flood-impacted residents ahead of winter. Local weatherization agencies will have more information about programs and wait times in specific areas.

Button Up Vermont is supported by a partnership of energy services providers and clean energy champions, including Efficiency Vermont, the nation's first Energy Efficiency Utility, which has helped Vermont avoid more than 12 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions. For more information, contact Efficiency Vermont at 888-921-5990 or visit [efficiencyvermont.com](https://www.efficiencyvermont.com).

DON'T HIBERNATE. BUTTON UP.

There's no need to sleep away the winter. Button up your home with up to 75% off weatherization project costs.* You'll stay warm and cozy – save money, too.

Join us virtually for Weatherization Wednesdays throughout October to learn more!

[ButtonUpVermont.org](https://www.ButtonUpVermont.org)

*subject to eligibility and availability

 ButtonUpVermont

sponsored by Efficiency Vermont



MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

College news

• **Caroline Mehner** of West Wardsboro, **Samuel Thibault** of Williamsville, and **Owen Rounds** of Westminster all recently graduated from the University of Hartford in West Hartford, Connecticut.

Obituaries



• **Richard "Dick" Barker, 78**, formerly of Brookline. Died Sept. 18, 2023 at the home of his eldest brother, Tom Barker, of Londonderry. Dick was born on Sept. 11, 1945, nine days after the end of World War II, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts to Norman Barker and Catherine Reid. The second of four brothers, Dick grew up in Glens Falls, New York, where he attended St. Mary's Academy before going on to Albany College of Pharmacy. He spent his toy years — defined by Dick as the intervening years between getting a job and having kids — first in Burlington, and then in Brattleboro, where he worked as the pharmacist at Grand Union. Dick married Catherine Santasania in the summer of 1978, when *Grease* was the No. 1 movie in America, and together they raised four children in Brookline. Dick was one of the most even-tempered, gregarious men in existence. He derived great pleasure from conversing with people and did so effortlessly with literally everyone. He was no stranger to hard work, either. He founded the Messenger Valley Pharmacy in Townshend, chaired the Leland & Gray Union High School Board, was Brookline town moderator, and still found time to attend every game, concert, parade, and theatrical production his children were a part of. In his free time, he did projects, and not just the ones Mr. Weber assigned in geometry every spring (although he did his fair share of those, too — shhh!). Every year he made his yard a bit larger. He built porches, sheds, sunrooms, decks, stone walls, and was known to randomly rearrange the walls in the basement. But in the evenings, when he wasn't playing basketball, ping pong, or pool with his kids and their friends, he'd enter a remarkably calm, almost meditative state. He'd sit on the porch in the dark, nursing a beer and listening to folk music — Judy Collins and Joan Baez — while patiently awaiting interruption, a battle between the boys that needed arbitration or a random question. "Do you know everyone? Tell me all the people you don't know." Dick loved the outdoors. He liked to hike, camp, canoe, and ski. He was the pitcher for his softball team and loved to watch baseball, basketball, and oddball comedies — Monty Python, *Airplane*, Mel Brooks, and *The Naked Gun*. He gave his laughter, time, and wisdom freely, asking for nothing in return. In addition to Tom, Dick is survived by his two younger brothers, Ed (Penny) Barker of Hampstead, New Hampshire, and Bob (Cindy) Barker of Traverse City, Michigan. He's also survived

by his ex-wife, Catherine Barker of Port St. Lucie, Florida and his four children, Lori (TJ) Gotshall of Peru, Robert (Megan) Richardson of Townshend, Jeffrey Barker of Portland, Oregon, and Sarah (Brad) Edgerton of Cary, North Carolina. He was the proud grandpa of eight grandchildren, ranging in age from 5 to 32. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service in his honor will be held at First Baptist Church, 62 Crescent St., South Londonderry on Saturday, Oct. 14, at 11 a.m.

• **Judith A. Barnes, 83**, of Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Died Sept. 22, 2023 at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. She was born in Brattleboro on July 1, 1940, the daughter of Robert and Ruby (Ebenhausen) Lucier. Judy grew up in Hinsdale and was a 1958 graduate of Hinsdale High School. On Jan. 30, 1965, she married the love of her life, Richard Barnes, who predeceased her in 2018 after 53 years of marriage. Early in life, she worked at the former Stretch and Sew in Brattleboro, before moving on to work at the former Cheshire National Bank in Hinsdale, which transitioned into Citizens Bank. She continued to work for Citizens Bank in Keene, New Hampshire before retiring in 1997. She was an avid quilter and did so weekly with a group of close friends in Northfield, Massachusetts. She was involved in the Hinsdale Alumni Association and was past president of the Hinsdale Little League. When her boys were young, she was a den mother for the Cub Scouts. She was an active member of Hinsdale community all her life and truly was a friend to all. She is survived by her two sons, Erik and his wife Peg of Wilmot, New Hampshire and Brett and his wife Heidi of Guilford. She is also survived by her beloved grandchildren Lauren, Jackson, and Alexa Barnes, and sisters Paula Girard and her husband Donald of Turners Falls, Massachusetts, and Linda Enright and her husband Larry of Sarasota, Florida, as well as many nieces and nephews. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A private graveside service was held Sept. 28 in West Northfield Cemetery. Donations to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, 17 Belmont Ave., Brattleboro, VT 05301. To send condolences, visit kiddfuneralhome.net.



• **Jessica E. (Cooper) Birenbach, 48**, of Brattleboro. Died quietly at home on Sept. 14, 2023.

Daughter of the late David and Donna Cooper, Jessica leaves behind a son, Jacob Birenbach of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, whom she loved deeply. She also leaves a brother, Jeremy Cooper and his wife Jaime of Worcester, Massachusetts; aunts and uncles Diana Augspurger of Buffalo, New York, Marcia and James Gusha of Rutland, Massachusetts, and Paul White and his partner Richard of Natick, Massachusetts, as well as several cousins. Jessica graduated from Clinton (Mass.) High School in 1993. Her passion for art lead her to take a summer program at Rhode Island School of Design. From there, she attended Moore College of Art in

Philadelphia. Jessica was incredibly creative and enjoyed activities that allowed her to express this, including painting, photography, and writing. She had a huge heart and above all valued her family and close friendships. She also took great joy in caring for all the pets she had. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service will be held Saturday, Nov. 4, at 10 a.m., at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Jefferson, Massachusetts. Donations to the Worcester Animal Rescue League, 139 Holden St., Worcester, MA 01606. To view Jessica's online tribute, send a condolence message to the family, or for more information, visit phaneuf.net.

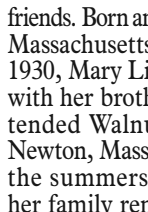


• **Barbara Collins Fletcher, 79**, of Chesterfield, New Hampshire. Died unexpectedly on Oct. 1, 2023 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts. She was born in Brattleboro on May 15, 1944 to Albert and Christine (Hescock) Collins. She attended local schools and graduated from Brattleboro Union High School in 1962. Barbara worked during her teen years at the Hoffman Insurance Agency and married her high school sweetheart, Edwin "Butch" Fletcher Jr., in June 1963. They moved to Chesterfield, where they built their home and raised their family. In 1979, Barb returned to work at the Richards Group, where she worked for 28 years. Family was very important to Barbara. She also enjoyed gardening, cooking, special visits over coffee with her girlfriends, long walks on the beach, and especially holidays with her family. Throughout the years, she has traveled with her husband, enjoying their retirement and exploring the country. After celebrating their 60th anniversary trip of a lifetime to Alaska, Barbara is survived by the love of her life, Edwin; her son, Brent Fletcher and his wife, Deanna, of Chesterfield; her daughter, Alison Knapp, and her husband, Hiram, of Rockingham, her three grandchildren, Chelsea Fletcher, and fiancé, Edwin Chamul, of West Brattleboro, Nicholas Fletcher, and his partner, Rachel Strakhov, of New York City, and Quincy Knapp of Rockingham; and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents and her two sisters, Joyce Brooks and Debra Greenleaf. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside committal services will be conducted Saturday, Oct. 14, at 2 p.m., in Morningside Cemetery in Brattleboro. Donations to Rescue, Inc., P.O. Box 593, Brattleboro, VT 05302. To share a memory or offer condolences to the family, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Mary Lila Gregg, 92**, of Guilford. Died peacefully in her home on Sept. 29, 2023, surrounded by her loving family and friends. Born and raised in Waban, Massachusetts, on October 19, 1930, Mary Lila White grew up with her brother James and attended Walnut Hill School in Newton, Massachusetts. During the summers, Mary Lila and her family rented farms in and around Brattleboro and, in 1942, they bought a farm on Stoney Hill in Guilford. Her father was an avid antique car collector and Mary Lila loved sharing stories of learning how to drive in a Model T as her mom hid behind the barn as Mary Lila came roaring down the hill through the back pasture. At 19, Mary Lila drove in a race in Greenfield, Massachusetts, proudly beating out the other women. She attended Bradford Junior College and then the School of Nursing at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, where she met Michael Gregg. After graduating from nursing school with a B.S., Mary Lila and Mike married on Jan. 11, 1958 and began what would become an eventful life together. They lived for a short time in Hamilton, Montana, then moved to Baltimore, Maryland, where their first daughter, Pamela, was born. Mike then took a job with the Public Health Service and off they went to Lahore, Pakistan. It was there that their second daughter, Marianne, was born. Eventually, they landed in Atlanta, Georgia where they lived



for 35 years. Their third daughter, Jennifer, was born in Atlanta and Mary Lila settled in as a dotting mother and busy body. Not being one to stay on one project for too long, Mary Lila had her hand in many different endeavors. She traveled with Mike all over the world, became the chaperone all the classmates wanted on field trips, a fearless Girl Scout Leader, and all-around wonderful mother and wife. Mary Lila's summers were spent in Vermont with her girls and mother at the farm. When Mike retired, he and Mary Lila moved up to the farm in Guilford. Reestablishing her roots there, she once again kept busy, volunteering with several local groups including Guilford Cares, Windham Child Care, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, and Meals on Wheels. She and Mike would continue to travel part time, but as grandchildren started to appear, her life took a new look, she was Mamma. Mary Lila kept busy with many projects and fulfilled her endless curiosities, such as driving a bulldozer, working as a short order cook, driving a tractor-trailer truck, and trying her hand at blacksmithing. She never committed to any of them for very long as there was always something else that caught her attention. Mike lovingly referred to her as his butterfly, fitting from one thing to another. She was a busy member of the Guilford Community Church. She has supported the church's Annual Christmas Bazaar with a donation of an American Girl doll for their raffle for over 15 years. Mary Lila will be remembered as a funny, generous, loving woman. She always had a story to tell and in her final months, spent many hours sharing these stories with those around her. She is missed by her daughters, Pamela Gregg McFadden and her husband Rich, of Dummerston, Marianne Gregg Lawrence and her husband John, of Guilford, and Jennifer Gregg Geise and her boyfriend Bob Penfield, of Preston, Connecticut. She was proud of her grandchildren David, Brandon, Corinne, Payton, Spencer, Jack, and Hope, and her four great-grandchildren. She is predeceased by her loving husband, her parents, her brother James, and her infant son Dana. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Her daughters invite you to come and share stories and hear other stories at her home (855 Stoney Hill Rd) on Oct. 13, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and/or Oct. 14, at 11 a.m., at Guilford Community Church. At Mary Lila's request, she wants her life to be celebrated with color, music, and laughter, so wear your brightest at the service, remember that life is short, so eat dessert first (or, at the very least, plan accordingly). Donations to Guilford Cares, 93 March Davis Dr., Guilford, VT 05301; Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr., Guilford, VT 05301; or Guilford Fire Department, 108 Guilford Center Rd., Guilford, VT 05301. To offer condolences to the family, visit atamaniuk.com.



• **William "Bill" Jannen, 93**, of Boston. Died on Oct. 1, 2023, surrounded by his family. Bill was the consummate host and will be forever remembered for his love of great food, great wine, and excellent conversation. With a glass of Scotch in hand, Bill never shied away from a thought-provoking discussion on any subject. He is survived by his daughters, Katrina Jannen of Carlisle, Massachusetts and Leland Jannen Smith of Brattleboro; and his grandchildren: Robert Donnelly III and his wife Anjelica, Garrick Donnelly, Katherine Donnelly, Rhea Smith, and Maevie Smith. He was predeceased by his wife, Lynn Garrick Jannen, who was his constant companion and true love for 46 years, and his brother, Harold Jannen. The son of German immigrant parents, Bill was born Jan. 14, 1930 in New York City. He attended Brooklyn Technical High School while working at the family deli and earned a football scholarship to Princeton University, his alma mater. He continued his education at Columbia Law School, where he made Law Review, and returned to Columbia University after a law career at Cahill Gordon & Reindel, to pursue his Ph.D. in history. He taught Modern European History at Brooklyn College for many years. In his retirement, he pursued his love of

writing and history, and published *The Lions of July*, a culmination of his life's research into the origins of World War I. Prior to living in Boston, Bill, along with his wife Lynn, resided in New York City and Princeton, New Jersey, spending their summers in Marlboro, Vermont. Bill will be fondly remembered and sorely missed by all who knew him. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside committal services were held Oct. 10 in King Cemetery in Marlboro. In lieu of flowers you may donate to a charity close to your heart and raise a glass in his honor — skoll! To share a memory or offer condolences to Bill's family, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Linda Johnson, 73**, died on Oct. 1, 2023 at Springfield Hospital. Linda was born on Sept. 15, 1950 in Townshend to the late Harral and Mary (Vivier) Hamilton. Linda would marry George Johnson in 1982 in Bellows Falls. Linda loved being at the ocean, a good game of Yahtzee, collecting teacups, and dancing, but the biggest joy of her life was being with her family. Linda is survived by her sons Paul Nolin and David Wood, and a daughter, Vikki (Matthew) Johnson. She is also survived by her brothers Wayne, Wendell, Walter, Warren Hamilton and Laura Simmons, Lorraine Hassler, and Dorreen Hansen, as well as eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, and five nieces and five nephews. Linda was predeceased by her parents, her husband, and siblings Kenneth, Dennis, and Martin Hamilton. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral service took place on Oct. 9 at the Fenton & Hennessey Funeral Home in Bellows Falls, followed by burial at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Putney.

• **Charles Edward Ketchum, 89**, died Sept. 10, 2023 in Cookeville, Tennessee following a short illness. Charlie was born May 19, 1934 in New Haven, Connecticut to Millen Hoxsie and Edna (Andrews) Ketchum. On June 23, 1956, he married Margaret Spence in Woodbridge, Connecticut. They had two children, Debra and Kenneth. Charlie proudly served in the Army in Germany in the early 1960s. When he returned from the service, he and Peg settled in Suffern, New York, where he worked at the *Rockland County Journal News*. In 1975, Charlie and Peg moved to Vermont where they managed a retail store in Putney before buying the Brattleboro Public Market, which they owned for many years. After they sold the market, they became manufacturer representatives for many upscale products, traveling all around New England. Charlie was a train enthusiast, and had a passion for classic cars. He was an avid reader and a skilled craftsman in woodworking. Together, Charlie and Peg loved antiquing and traveling in their motor home. Charlie was predeceased by his wife in 2021, his son, Ken, in 2006, and a brother, Dennis. He is survived by his daughter Deb, a brother Bob (Kathy), five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: None provided.

• **Douglas John Kroc, 71**, of West Dummerston. Died peacefully at home, with his family by his side, on Sept. 25, 2023 as the smell of freshly cut grass was coming through the open window. He is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Ann (Kohne) Kroc; his sister Robin Kroc and brother William Kroc, his daughter Ellen (Kroc) Zilcoski, son-in-law Adam Zilcoski and their children Cecilia (9) and Samuel (6); his daughter Andrea (Kroc) Ciombor, son-in-law Justin Ciombor and their children Mackenzie (9), Gavin (7), and Hadley (4). He was the son of Robert and Gladys (Earnshaw) Kroc. Doug was born in 1952, raised in Homewood, Illinois, and graduated high school from Homewood-Flossmoor High School in 1970. He graduated from Purdue University in 1974 with a B.A. in social studies education. He went on to earn a M.A. in eaching from DePauw University in 1978. Doug and Ann, who met at Purdue, moved to Vermont the same year, where they began building their home and community. Doug spent more than 40 years as an educator, teaching at the Brattleboro Area Middle School and finishing his career teaching social studies and serving

as the department head, as well as coaching women's basketball, at Brattleboro Union High School. He also served as president of the teachers' union and was viewed as a leader throughout the Windham Southeast district. Through these roles, he connected with countless students, educators and community members. Doug's passion was his family and he celebrated with them the most at "Camp Kroc for Kids," the nickname he and Ann gave their property in Dummerston upon building "the bunkhouse" in 2021. Many fun days were spent at Camp Kroc and many more will follow. His other passions included making and listening to music, golfing, camping, biking, kayaking, fishing; all things he loved to do with his friends and family. He loved any excuse to do chores on his tractor or tinker with projects in his workshop. Doug loved to travel and as a child often visited Torch Lake, Michigan to swim and boat, and to Colorado to ski. In adulthood, he traveled to England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, Cuba, China and, most recently, Aruba, to swim and snorkel with his entire family. He visited many parts of the United States in his travels, but particularly loved New England. Doug felt a deep connection to everyone he worked with at Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, especially Dr. Alicia Morgans and his entire care team. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: The family is planning a celebration of life in the spring. Donations to Dana Farber (danafarber.jimmyfund.org), United Way of Windham County (unitedwaywindhamcounty.org), or Windham County Dental Center at 53 Fairview St., Brattleboro, VT 05301. To view an online tribute, send condolences to the family, or for more information, visit csnh.com.

• **Shirley Anne LeClair, 86**, of Brattleboro. Died Sept. 29, 2023 at Pine Heights in Brattleboro, where she had been a resident since April 2019. Shirley was born in Brattleboro on Feb. 4, 1937, the daughter of Joseph and Mary (Taylor) Lamoureux. She attended Brattleboro public schools, graduating from Brattleboro High School. For many years, she owned and operated her own janitorial business serving several accounts in downtown Brattleboro that included the *Brattleboro Reformer's* offices as well as several others on Main Street. She was known for her strong work ethic, never missing a day on the job. Shirley also worked for the former Tree Spirit Company and Trico Vendors. When she was in her mid-40's, Shirley took up cycling and running, competing in several 10K races including the annual Turkey Trot and other local races. She was an active member of the Red Clover Rover Running Club in Brattleboro. Steadfast in her walk of faith, Shirley was a longtime member of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses in Brattleboro. She studied the scriptures and devoted each day in reading her Bible. Shirley was a faithful prayer warrior. It was her faith that gave her the inner strength to overcome and deal with many hardships in her life that included the passing of three of her four children. Shirley helped establish a local support group for bereaved parents and served as co-editor of its monthly newsletter, *Lifeline for Bereaved Parents*. The newsletter had a mailing list of just under 500 addresses. She was married to Stanley Ward, Sr. who predeceased her on Sept. 22, 1976. She later married Joseph LeClair, who is also deceased. Shirley leaves one son, Stephen Ward, of Tusculumbia, Alabama; a brother, Joseph Lamoureux and wife, Phyllis, of Guilford; one niece, Kelly Wicker, of Windham; and a nephew, Todd Brooks, of Vernon. She was predeceased by three children: Mary Flores, John Ward and Stanley Ward, Jr.; and a sister, Caroline Brooks. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside services for the family will take place in the Ward family lot in Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Putney, where she will be laid to rest next to her husband and three children. Donations may be made to a charity of one's choice. To offer condolences to her family, visit atamaniuk.com.

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.

PETS AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION



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Brattleboro, VT
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Hi, my name is **Buddy!** I was a very spunky cool dude. I seem to like everyone. I do have quite the personality and loves to snuggle. I love going for walks and being around my peeps. I may be able to live with another dog. Cats are a complete unknown to me. Please come and make my sweet dreams come true.



Hello world, I'm the gorgeous **Fiona!** I'm a bit timid, but I'm sweet and snuggly once I'm comfortable. I have lived with other cats before so a slow introduction would be great! Dogs and kids will probably be intimidating to me as well so introductions should be done slowly. Come take me home and make me the happiest girl alive!



Hi, my name is **Vahala.** I'm a darling golden girl in search of a retirement home to soak up the sun in for the rest of my years. I'm super lovable and snuggly. I'd make anyone the best sidekick! I'd prefer to live in a quiet household with older, mellow children. And I might be able to live with another cat or dog so long as we're introduced properly. I'd love to meet you soon and make you realize you can't live another day without me!

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Death is the penalty we all pay for the privilege of life.

—ROBERT HALF



Alexander House in Saxtons River.

COURTESY PHOTO



Wilbur Hall at Vermont Academy in Saxtons River.

COURTESY PHOTO

2023 Rockingham Old House Awards announced

ROCKINGHAM—The Rockingham Historic Preservation Commission will host a reception for the town's 2023 Old House Award winners on Sunday, October 15, at 10 a.m. at the Rockingham Meeting House, 11 Meeting House Rd, Rockingham Village. The public is invited to congratulate the winners and celebrate historic preservation efforts underway throughout the town. "Restored between 1906 and 1907, the meeting house is the birthplace of historic preservation in Rockingham, setting the pace for our region," said John Leppman, commission chair, in a news release. "It is big and bright, and a great place for the community to applaud historic preservation." Awards made annually by the commission are designed to recognize property owners who maintain and restore their historic homes and commercial

and industrial buildings. Eligible properties are older homes and businesses that have received exterior restoration and conservation by their owners, typically in the past five years. Brass plaques are awarded to the winners, who are encouraged to proudly post them on their entrances to call out their efforts to keep Rockingham historic. This year's winners are:
 • Susan Saunders, Saxtons River Inn. With its five-story corner tower, the village's turn-of-the-century hotel dominates its commercial core. Replacing an early nineteenth-century structure that was demolished to clear the site, the hotel was constructed in 1903 for the Saxtons River Hotel Company. William H. Dean Sr., a local builder, participated in the project. The building has been only slightly altered from its original appearance

and recently restored.
 • William Purdy, 29 School St., Bellows Falls. A Greek Revival brick house built circa 1835 for Asa Wentworth, a prominent figure in the community serving as vice president of Bellows Falls Savings Institution. He also held interest in the flatboat company that transported merchandise up the river from southern New England to the upper valley of the Connecticut River.
 • Vermont Academy, Wilbur Hall, constructed in 1892 as the Academy's first library. This small, asymmetrical, one-story stone building is an excellent example of the Craftsman style with Richardsonian influences. Architect William P. Wentworth of Boston designed the building. Wilbur Hall is located on the north side of the Long Walk across from Jones Hall.

• Ronald Tompkins, 12 Main St., Saxtons River, an expression of architectural style in Saxtons River village, taking the form of Italianate Revival capped by a symbolic belvedere. Constructed in 1867-68 for John Alexander, the house virtually retains its original appearance. The surrounding grounds are landscaped with mature coniferous and deciduous trees, some of which were planted at the time of the house's completion. The Old House Award program is made possible in part through the generosity of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service. For more information about the event or the Old House Awards, contact clg@rockbf.org.

MSA to host wellness programs

SAXTONS RIVER—Main Street Arts (MSA) will be starting several wellness programs this autumn, including yoga, tai chi, and Feldenkrais workshops. The whole body being well contributes to participating in positive life experiences, which help everyone to be more resilient. "A person's wellness impacts their ability to be creative and present in the moment," said Ashley Storrow, programs director at MSA. Tai chi classes with John

Bohannon will be held on Tuesdays, at 11 a.m. The classes are free, and comfortable clothing is recommended. Community yoga classes will be held at MSA through Dec. 17. The fee is a \$10-20 sliding scale, cash or Venmo, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Drop-ins are welcome. No registration is required. Fluid Yoga is led by Brittany Frost and will be held Wednesdays, from 8 to 9 a.m. Frost is an artist, gardener, and

fermentation enthusiast living with her family in Townshend. She received certification in HEALing yoga in July 2023. Autumn Hatha Yoga will be held on Sundays from 5 to 6:15 p.m. with Candace Jensen. She has been practicing yoga for nearly 20 years and specializes in Hatha Flow and Yoga Nidra. She has certification in several forms of yoga. There will be three Feldenkrais workshops with Paris Kern that are designed to help participants

reduce pain and gain flexibility. The workshops will be held on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 9 a.m. to noon; Sunday, Nov. 19, from noon to 4 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 9, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$50 per session or \$120 for all three sessions. To register, visit mainstreetarts.org/feldenkrais. For more information on the other classes, visit mainstreetarts.org or email info@mainstreetarts.org.

SEVCA seeks community members to serve on Board of Directors

WESTMINSTER — Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) is actively seeking area residents to consider joining their Board of Directors. People who possess these skills or areas of expertise are especially welcome to apply: legal, fundraising, governance, financial or multi-year budget planning, human resources, assessment and strategic planning, early childhood education, social work,

diversity and inclusion, or other assets essential to a strong and resilient business. In addition, they say, those who live below poverty level, are a member of an under-represented or historically excluded group, have insight about the hardships people face today, or work serving people experiencing hardship are also encouraged to join. Elected officials who have a heart for effective and accountable social services and those

committed to alleviating — and ultimately, to eliminating — poverty in Windham and Windsor county communities would also be valued as board members. "Board service supports low and moderate wealth community members, and it can be an excellent way to gain professional development skills while meeting and working with others who share a commitment to social justice," according to a news release. Board members attend one board

meeting per month and one or two committee meetings monthly or bi-monthly. Meetings are conducted primarily via Zoom. Board applicants must be willing to submit to criminal background checks and offender registry checks, requirements imposed by federally funded grants upon all SEVCA employees, vendor contractors, and volunteers. For more information, contact SEVCA at sevca@sevca.org or 800-464-9951.



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Diversity fund established at The Grammar School

PUTNEY—The Grammar School (TGS) has announced the creation of The Otis Fund, designed to enhance student diversity at the school's pre-K through eighth-grade campus.

Named for TGS graduate Otis Jacobson (class of 2018) and initially funded by a generous \$50,000 donation from his parents, Candace Damon and David Jacobson, the scholarship is intended to support students from BIPOC communities throughout their years at TGS.

According to David Jacobson, the donation is part of "an ongoing drive to increase diversity in the student body" in the small, independent day school. Situated on a sprawling campus, TGS encourages outdoor education, a strength that helped the school weather the Covid pandemic in unique and long-lasting ways.

Damon and Jacobson adopted their son from Kazakhstan in 2005, hence their interest in diversity and cultural exchange.

"Otis has always had a diverse group of friends and classmates, and has benefitted from interacting with different cultures," Jacobson said in a news release.

The Otis Fund is just one effort on the part of TGS to maintain this cross-cultural interaction with students from many different backgrounds.

Otis has weighed in on the creation of this fund in his name.

"My time at The Grammar School built an excellent foundation for a well-grounded perspective," he says. "I chose The Grammar School after moving

to Vermont from New York in the sixth grade. One of the most immediate changes was that my athletic elasticity expanded almost exponentially — swimming through caves in Ecuador [on the eighth-grade trip], hiking mountains, and snowboarding twice a week. Being able to try a plethora of sports in local nature environments gave me lots of chances to build meaningful connections and friendships, and the outdoor education assisted me in learning about the wildlife and ecosystem around the campus."

TGS gave Otis not only an opportunity to immerse himself in nature, he says, but also a love of language, specifically French. Now a college student studying fashion design in France, Otis says that his French language instruction was integral to his broader education. At TGS, he "secured lifelong familial friendships and skills I never would have otherwise."

TGS Head of school Nick Perry sees The Otis Fund as a welcome addition to the school's continued efforts in recruiting a diverse student body.

"TGS has always welcomed students and families from different ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds. Now, with the Otis Fund, it is possible for TGS to extend to more families who would not otherwise be able to make a TGS education work financially. At TGS we nurture a culture of kindness and educate students to contribute to a more just and compassionate world. The Otis Fund will help us with this mission," Perry said.

The Grammar School (thegrammarschool.org), a close-knit community of 120 students from preschool through eighth-grade and 25 teachers and staff, was founded in 1960 by a small group of families with the understanding that a child's elementary school years provide the foundation for all future learning. TGS is the oldest of the independent elementary schools in southern Vermont.

Located on 60 acres of fields and forest in Putney, TGS's families are from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Programming includes the arts, service learning, and nature-based education.



Madeleine Kunin, who immigrated to America as a 6-year-old Jewish girl to escape the Holocaust, visited her birthplace of Switzerland this summer.

Kunin

joined her former gubernatorial staff at a screening of the film, *Barbie*.

"I found it a great spoof," she said. "There were some very good lines."

Take the showstopping feminist monologue reprinted everywhere from *USA Today* to the *Los Angeles Times*.

"It is literally impossible to be a woman," the character Gloria, played by America Ferrera, says in the film. "You have to never get old, never be rude, never show off, never be selfish, never fall down, never fail, never show fear, never get out of line ..."

Kunin relates. "I think that's true for any woman who's the first."

'Can this woman be as strong as a man?'

Kunin has plenty of firsthand experience. Winning a Vermont House seat in 1972, she became the state's first female Democratic whip in 1974, first female leader of the House Appropriations Committee in 1976, second female lieutenant governor in 1978 (after Consuelo Bailey, elected in 1954) and first female governor in 1984.

"Most women cannot risk revealing public emotion; they are asked to take the toughness test each time they appear in public," she wrote in her first book, the 1994 autobiography, *Living a Political Life*. "A silent assessment is made by the audience as a woman approaches the podium: Can this woman be as strong as a man?"

Kunin continued to face scrutiny as she moved to Washington, D.C., to work as deputy U.S. education secretary in 1993 and to Switzerland to serve as ambassador in 1996. Now living at the Wake Robin retirement community in Shelburne, she has traded old questions for new ones.

For example, should older officeholders — be it Democratic President Joe Biden, U.S. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell or others recently captured in "senior moments" as they advance in years — be subject to age limits?

Kunin doesn't support one specific standard, as she believes individuals age at their own pace.

"For myself, I couldn't take that responsibility of being in a leadership position, as I know there are differences in my ability from when I was younger," she said.

Then again, age isn't slowing her down much. Of the six books she's written, Kunin has published the last three within the past decade, including *Coming of Age: My Journey to the Eighties*, a memoir addressing everything from love and sex to aging and death, and *Red Kite, Blue Sky*, a debut poetry collection deemed

by *Harvard Review* poetry editor Major Jackson as "spectacularly fresh and tender."

Kunin has begun a statewide reading tour in support of her latest anthology, including a Oct. 15 reading at the Brattleboro Literary Festival.

But for all of Kunin's past, her new book is anything but political.

'There's still happiness to be found'

Instead, the 126-page paperback from Brattleboro's Green Writers Press is personal. Many poems focus on family, including the European relatives she reunited with this summer. She had emigrated as a 6-year-old Jewish girl to escape the Holocaust.

In "Kaddish," Kunin recounts her father, who died by suicide when she was 2½.

... Photographs, some brown, some black,
are the only leavings of his life
small swatches that I try to sew together
into a garment that fits his elegant pose ...

In "When I Was Nursing My Babies," she recalls the rocking chair in which she fed her four children, and then reclaimed when she divorced her first husband, Arthur Kunin, after 34 years of marriage.

... It now is wedged into a crowded corner
of my bedroom
where its feet stick out.
I tend to trip over it
in the middle of the night.
I have not sat in it.

FROM SECTION FRONT

But I must keep it now, that I have it.
In "Goodbye II," she remembers her second husband, John W. Hennessey Jr., whom she met when she was 71 and lived with until he died at age 92.

... Gone?
Blood drained,
gray, still.
Untouchable, cold.
I braved a kiss
on your cool forehead,
the only part
I dared to touch,
and make my exit.

I beckon you back one more time
to pocket my hand,
in yours.
I dared to touch.
Other poems speak of joy and wonder, beginnings and, on the last page, "Ending":

I would like to probe deep,
write about life and death,
the meaning of existence.
I should have the answers by now,
when the end is so near.
I procrastinate.
I tell myself
there is still time
Maybe tomorrow
Or the next day
Or the day after that
to write about the meaning of life,
The meaning of my life.
Have I made a difference?
Have I been kind?
Have I dropped a coin
into a beggar's hand?
Will I be remembered,
and by whom?
For What?
I'm too tired
No more deep questions, please.
Maybe tomorrow,
Or the next day
Or the day after that.

When asked for her birthday wishes, Kunin shared three.

"I want my family and my friends to be accessible and well. I want to have a sense of adventure. And I want Donald Trump to go away."

As for another female Vermont governor?

"It will happen, but I don't know if I'll have to be 100 to see it. In the end, I have to be hopeful. The world is upside down. Sometimes it's depressing. But there's still happiness to be found."

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'THE STORY OF US'

Brattleboro Literary Festival focuses on voices of the marginalized

BRATTLEBORO—Organizers of the 22nd annual Brattleboro Literary Festival say this year's event "will tell the story of us — stories about who we are, how we are surviving, and what issues are we facing as humans with a focus on people who are marginalized."

The festival's nearly 40 indoor programs during the weekend of Oct. 13-15 will feature nonfiction from Tracy Kidder, Will Schwalbe, Jonathan Rosen, Neil King Jr., Martha McPhee, Chloé Cooper Jones, and Jeff Sharlet; fiction from Kelly Link, Andre Dubus III, Mary Beth Keane, Catherine Newman, Holly Black, Angie Kim, and Jean Kwok; poetry from Madeleine May Kunin, Brian Turner, Oliver de la Paz, and Chen Chen; and many, many more, representing a diversity of backgrounds and genres.

Featured authors this year have written books about homelessness, patriarchy, friendship, politics, religion, hospice care, poverty, immigration, marriage, financial hardship, schizophrenia, neurodiversity, climate change, handicaps, coming of age, transgendered lives, family, fantasy, history, and mystery, among other topics.

Programs run from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday. On Friday night at 7 p.m., they will feature a special Friday the 13th mystery panel with Jennifer McMahon, Margot Douaihy, and Michael Ruhlman, discussing what scares us and why we like it. The evening also includes a new book launch for Brattleboro poet Diana Whitney with Cate Marvin.

More than 60 authors will be featured in a series

of conversations and readings that offer vivid reflections of our lives. All festival events are free and take place in downtown Brattleboro across five venues.

Additional authors attending are: Kathleen Alcott, Charlene Allen, Nin Andrews, Asale Angel-Ajani, Sarah Audsley, Jill Bialosky, Tom Bodett, Patrick Bringley, Franny Choi, Ewa Chrusciel, Charles Coe, Martha Collins, Tom Comitta, Jennifer De Leon, Denise Duhamel, Daisy Alpert Florin, Jeff Friedman, Robbie Gamble, David Gessner, Diana Goetsch, Allegra Goodman, Nikhil Goyal, Henry Hoke, Ann Hood, Dayna Lorenz, Kyle Lukoff, Robin MacArthur, Richard Michelson, Maud Newton, Idra Novoy, Peter Orner, Patricia Park, Pamela Petro, Bill Roorbach, Angela Saini, Liz Scheier, Jeffrey Sharlet, Enzo

Silon Surin, Alejandro Varela, Henry Walters, Robert Watson, Baron Wormser, Laura Zigman, and more.

The Brattleboro Literary Festival is sponsored by Stepanski Family Charitable Trust, the Thompson Trust, Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Humanities Council, and the Windham Foundation and presented in partnership with Brattleboro Community Television, Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Brattleboro Area Hospice, Brooks Memorial Library, Downtown Brattleboro Alliance, Poets & Writers, Toadstool Books, Wild Book Company, and Write Action. For more information, visit brattleborolifest.org.

COLUMN | Arts Notebook



Diana Whitney

JEFF WOODWARD

Coming into her own creative power

Diana Whitney's new poetry collection, 'Dark Beds,' debuts at Brattleboro Literary Festival this weekend

Brattleboro

ON OCT. 10, Brattleboro-based poet Diana Whitney's new collection, *Dark Beds*, was released by June Road Press. This Friday at Epsilon Spires, Whitney will read from that collection at the 2023 Brattleboro Literary Festival.

The publisher's media release describes *Dark Beds* as "an anthem for the 'sandwich generation' caught between demands, yearning to reclaim desire and find fulfillment, maybe even some magic, in the everyday. These poems shimmer with longing



ANNIE LANDENBERGER is an arts writer and columnist for The Commons; 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.

and infuse the fatigue of caregiving, motherhood, and domesticity — and the rugged landscape of rural Vermont through the seasons — with new meaning and beauty."

Whitney was born in England while her father was doing graduate studies at Oxford; she was then a youngster in Washington,

D.C. and moved just before entering sixth grade to Williamstown, Massachusetts, where her father taught at Williams College. Attending the local public high school was a bit of a nightmare, she says, both because she was the new kid and because she secretly identified as bisexual.

With a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, Whitney earned a Rhodes Scholarship and studied at the University of Oxford, where she earned a Master of Arts degree in English literature.

She then moved to Vermont's Northeast Kingdom and studied at the Warren Wilson College MFA Program for Writers. She is currently finishing her degree at New England

■ SEE WHITNEY, B5

October in flaming tumult pours
pitchers of light into the canopy.
Drink it deep like wild apple cider,
the hard green apples got with difficulty
from a high gnarled tree, yielding
a quart of tart elixir, fox red and chestnut,
the feral essence pressed from the fruit,
the sweet intensity I want life to be

— excerpt from "Wild Cider," by Diana Whitney

Taking a creative leap

Ruth Garbus and her band celebrate the release of her new full-length live album, 'Alive People,' with a performance at the Stone Church

By Victoria Chertok
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Back in town after playing three shows in California recently, singer-songwriter Ruth Garbus, 42, recalls a story from her band's West Coast visit, where they "had a magical time in Santa Cruz staying at a friend's place."

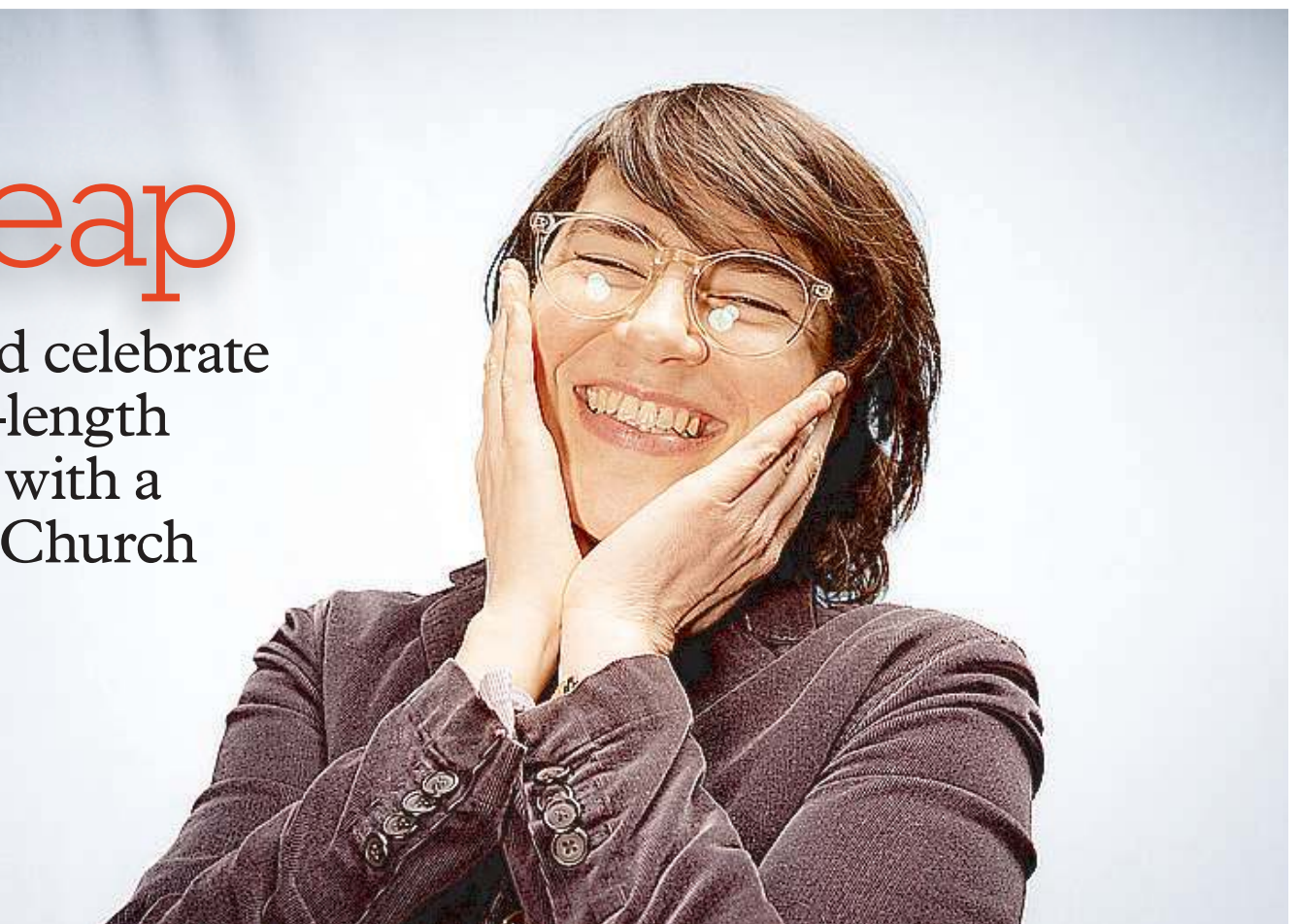
Garbus describes "a giant tortoise that roams freely around

the property, along with other animals, including Coral," a terrier who was "constantly running and jumping and getting into mischief."

"But when we played our set, she lay on the grass and stared at us, mesmerized," Garbus says. "It was perhaps our greatest achievement out West, to have calmed Coral."

Garbus and her band take the stage at the Stone Church on

■ SEE GARBUS, B4



Ruth Garbus

JOSHUA STEELE PHOTOGRAPHY. COURTESY PHOTO

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arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY

12

Recreation

BRATTLEBORO Thorn In My Side: Original award-winning game show created by Ben Stockman, Colin Hinckley, James Gelter, Jesse Tidd, Shannon Ward. Each month, three contestants compete in bizarre challenges that fit that month's theme.

- ▶ 8 p.m. Show is aimed for adult audiences. Hooker-Dunham hosts Thorn In My Side on the 3rd Thursday of every month.
- ▶ Tickets are by donation. Suggested donation is \$10.
- ▶ Hooker-Dunham Theater, 139 Main St. Information: 802-281-3232; hookerdunham.org.

The written word

BRATTLEBORO Teen Writing Games: We'll make black-out poetry, rolling story-cubes, play exquisite corpse, and other fun, writing-related games. Pizza and snacks provided. Hosted by the Teen Advisory Board.

- ▶ 7-9 p.m., 2nd floor. "Teens Only" events are open to people in grades 7-12. Masks not required, but we have them if you want them.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: Questions: Reach out to us: teens@brookslibraryvt.org.

Community building

BRATTLEBORO ACLU of Vermont - Rights and Bites: Saxton's River Distillery is a stop on the ACLU of Vermont's statewide tour to connect with supporters and build community. Mingle with advocates and legal experts over refreshments. Door prize and giveaways. Open to all.

- ▶ 5:30 - 7 p.m.
- ▶ Saxtons River Distillery, 155 Chickering Dr. Information: 802-246-1128; saxtonsdistillery.com.

Community meals

PUTNEY Putney Monthly Free Produce Distribution: The Vermont Foodbank and Putney Foodshelf co-sponsor this monthly food drop of free produce and some non-perishables. All are welcome.

- ▶ 9 a.m.-9:45 a.m. 4th Thursday of every month. This is a drive-up service, Bags provided. Located on Alice Holloway drive (in front of Putney Meadows - white building across from the Putney Coop and Putney Fire Station.).
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Putney Foodshelf, 10 Christian Sq. Information: 802-387-8551.

Ideas and education

JACKSONVILLE Workshop: Explore the Magic and Lore of Local Flora: Let's look at ways to maintain a sense of peace and balance in our home and selves. Traditionally, we think of white sage when it comes to cleansing homes, however, in VT, we have many local plants to work with for clearing. With instructor Stacy Salpietro-Babb of Brattleboro, we'll work on crafting Smoke Clearing Wands using local indigenous plants and discuss ways of keeping the energy of a home peaceful and in balance. Take home a little folk magic for the Autumn season.

- ▶ 6 p.m. In addition to smoke clearing, we'll explore using waters and vibration to keep your home feeling balanced.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Whitingham Free Public Library, 2948 VT Rte. 100. Information: Call the library at 802-368-7506 to register.

FRIDAY

13

Music

PUTNEY Next Stage Arts presents Felipe LaSalles: "The New Immigrant Experience": "2018 Guggenheim Fellow Felipe Salles is an internationally renowned composer. Join us for

FRIDAY CONT.

this groundbreaking multimedia work."

- ▶ 7:30 p.m. Next Stage provides beer, wine, cocktail cash bar.
- ▶ \$20 in advance, \$25 at door, \$10 livestream.
- ▶ Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/wha8rfkp> (or at door) 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org.

PUTNEY Felipe Salles: The New Immigrant Experience (In-Person / Livestream): Felipe Salles, internationally renowned composer and 2018 Guggenheim Fellow, celebrates his groundbreaking multimedia work - "The New Immigrant Experience: capturing experiences of Dreamers in America in concert.

- ▶ 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.
- ▶ \$20 in advance, \$25 at door, \$10 livestream. Advance ticketing closes two hours before showtime.
- ▶ Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org.

The written word

Brattleboro Literary Festival: Jam-packed weekend with 60 outstanding authors at various locations in Brattleboro.

- ▶ Visit Brattleboro Words Project to find out how you can participate in telling stories and supporting this on-going, community-driven Project: <https://brattleborowords.org>.
- ▶ Through Sunday, October 15.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Brattleboro Literary Festival 2023. Information: Times, Authors, Locations: tinyurl.com/4njdu3b7.

Kids and families

BRATTLEBORO Flight Night - Halloween: Give flying trapeze a try in this Halloween-themed flight night! You'll climb the ladder, take off from the platform, hang upside down by your knees, and do a backflip into the net if you wish! No experience needed, just bring a dream of flying and curiosity for adventure.

- ▶ 5 - 7 p.m. For ages 7 and up.
- ▶ \$20 for 3 swings. Reservation required.
- ▶ New England Center for Circus Arts (Trapezium), 10 Town Crier Dr. Information: 802-254-9780; ncenterforcircusarts.org.

Well-being

WILLIAMSVILLE Healing Walk at Manitou: Meditative walk includes poems or other readings and chances to share. Led by Fred Taylor.

- ▶ 4-5:30 p.m. Meet at parking lot by 4 p.m. Rain or shine.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Manitou Project, 300 Sunset Lake Rd. Information: 802-257-1832; manitouproject.org.

SATURDAY

14

Music

BRATTLEBORO "Second Saturday with Sharon & Daniel" returns to Latchis Pub: With playful harmonies, acoustic guitars, percussion, upright bass, and keyboards Sharon Leslie and Daniel Kasnitz perform fresh renditions of classic hits with a funky, jazzy twist. From standards to captivatingly re-worked top-40 to seasonal favorites, Sharon & Daniel make musical merriment.

- ▶ 7 p.m. Monthly series for the musical duo Sharon & Daniel continues. Appropriate for all ages. Singing, dancing, dinner, drinks.
- ▶ Entertainment is free of charge.
- ▶ Latchis Pub, 6 Flat St. Information: More information: sharonanddaniel.com, sharonanddaniel.com.

Farmers' markets

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Area Farmers Market: BAFM has over 50 vendors, bringing our region's best farmers, makers, and chefs all to one place. Live music 11 a.m.-1 p.m., special events and workshops throughout the season.

- ▶ 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturdays. Rain or shine.
- ▶ Through Saturday, October 28.
- ▶ Brattleboro Farmers Market, 570 Western Ave., Rt. 9, near covered bridge.

SATURDAY CONT.

Information: 802-490-4371; brattleborofarmersmarket.com.

Kids and families

GUILFORD Sun Party - See the Eclipse! North America is in for a double-header of eclipses in the next seven months. The first one will be today (about 20% totality) and will give us a chance to experiment with safe viewing options, including the distribution of free eclipse viewing glasses. While we're sitting around watching the magic sky, we can do some shadow tracing and eclipse creation. Popcorn and beverages served.

- ▶ 12 noon-2:30 p.m. For the 2nd eclipse, 4/8/2024 - 96% totality, - we'll have another Sun Party. Between eclipses, we offer activities for adults/children and distribute eclipse viewing glasses. Activities range from creative writing and art - with total eclipse as a prompt - to understanding more about the sun and solar system we live in. We'll also help you create other ways to safely watch the sun. If it's cloudy or rainy, there will be plenty of live streams from places where the sun always shines: www.exploratorium.edu/ eclipse for example. Note: If the weather is impossible, the next total eclipse in Guilford will be 5/1/2079.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Guilford Free Library, 4024 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-257-4603; guilfordfreelibraryvt.org.

Well-being

WILLIAMSVILLE Mushroom Walk at Manitou with Justin Garner: This has been a phenomenal year for mushrooms! We'll discuss the edible and medicinal properties of the mushrooms we come across along with their interconnections to tree and plant communities. We'll finish the day by cooking and tasting the edibles that we collect.

- ▶ 1-4 p.m. Garner has been a lifelong student of the natural world, beginning with the study of wild edible plants. He pursued training in herbal medicine at the Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism. Study/identification of mushrooms is one of his long-standing passions. Rain date: 10/15.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Manitou Project, 300 Sunset Lake Rd. Information: Space is limited/advance registration required: Fred Taylor at rtaylor@antioch.

Visual arts and shows

BRATTLEBORO Vermont Center for Photography celebrates 25 years - Auction and Celebration: Join us for food, drinks, live music, and an inaugural silent auction fundraiser featuring work by dozens artists and craftspeople from southern Vermont and beyond."

- ▶ 6-9 p.m. Preview auction line-up in VCP's Print Gallery through 10/14.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Vermont Center for Photography, 10 Green St., (right side of the 22 High St. building). VCP Galleries are open from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. 802-251-6051; vcphoto.org.

Ideas and education

BRATTLEBORO Windham World Affairs Council: "US and China: From 'Old Friends' to the 'New Cold War' "?: Dr. Sara Newland, Asst. Dir of Government at Smith College, seeks to understand behavior of local officials as domestic public servants and as actors in international relations. Her research on local governance/public service provision was published in "China Quarterly and Governance." Her new work focuses on subnational diplomacy, particularly the role state/local officials play in the complicated relationships between the U.S., China and Taiwan.

- ▶ 6:30 p.m.
- ▶ Free.

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

- ▶ One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. If unable to attend live, find a Zoom link when you register below: Register: tinyurl.com/yckarjyx.

SUNDAY

15

Music

GRAFTON Grafton Community Church 2023 Evensong Series: Breeze Verdant & Annie Landenberger (In Person/Zoom): Bard Owl offers upbeat tunes, jazz, ballads, rocking blues, sweet and slow tunes - new, old, original, familiar, unexpected. Grafton Evensong playlist centers on hope in various manifestations. Followed by community supper.

- ▶ 5:30 p.m. music starts. Community supper on the lower level follows. Handicap accessible.
- ▶ Free though thank you offerings for both concert and meal will be appreciated.
- ▶ Grafton Community Church, 55 Main St. For more information on Bard Owl, visit bardowmusic.com Zoom: Evensong concerts/recordings are under worship tab at graftoncommunitychurch.org.

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro American Legion Band presents a "Salute to the Movies" Concert: Featuring music from the Lion King, James Bond, Phantom of the Opera, and many others.

- ▶ 3 p.m. BYOB and chairs!
- ▶ Concert if free but donations are welcome.
- ▶ Brattleboro Common, btw. Putney Rd. & Linden St.

Recreation

MARLBORO The Stream Primeval: A Field Outing: Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center's Naturalist Patti Smith leads walk to beaver ponds and meadows made by beavers she studies. Explore ways beavers shaped the pre-colonial landscape along this wild stream. Visit Dew and her family and see their lodge. Walk is about a mile round trip.

- ▶ 4-6 p.m. Meet at 2582 South Rd. - visitors parking lot at Potash Hill (formerly Marlboro College). To really experience the beaver meadow, wear rubber boots or be prepared to get wet feet. Fully experiencing the beaver meadow is optional - gentle descent/gentle climb to return. This event is part of a series of BEEC sponsored beaver-related events happening in Halifax and Westminster.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Marlboro College, 2582 South Rd. Information: 802-257-4633; marlboro.edu.

Farmers' markets

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro's Share the Harvest Stand: Free Fresh Produce for All!

- ▶ 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Sundays (corner Frost and Elm). (Gardeners may drop off surplus from their gardens from 10:30-closing: before noon preferred).
- ▶ Through Sunday, October 29.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Turning Point, 39 Elm St. (corner of Frost and Elm St.). Information: EdibleBrattleboro@gmail.com.

PUTNEY Putney Farmers Market - plus music by The Woodpeckers

- ▶ 11-3 p.m. on Sundays through 10/22/2023. Across from Putney Food Co-op.
- ▶ Putney Farmers Market, 17 Carol Brown Way. Information: putneyfarmersmarket.org.

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO "Eggs Are Not Always Egg-Shaped" (In-Person and Zoom): "Our good friend Amer Latif presents a Qur'anic meditation on how our idea of God veils the actual presence of God in our lives and in the world. Amer will play the Neh, a traditional flute."

- ▶ Pre-service activities offered - 8:45 a.m. Choir rehearsal. 9 a.m. Children's Religious Exploration class, Adult Coffee & Conversation, Quiet Meditation.
- ▶ All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church West Village Meeting House, 29 South St. Join via Zoom: Go to www.ascvt.org on Sunday shortly before 10 a.m. 802-254-9377; ascvt.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

"Act III" was created by artists Matthew J. Peake, Gordon Korstange, and Gretchen Abendschein. This collaborative piece will be part of the "Merge Collages: A Show and Tell Experience" exhibit at Main Street Arts that runs through Oct. 29.

Artists to teach collage art workshop at MSA

SAXTONS RIVER—Three Vermont artists — Matthew J. Peake, Gordon Korstange, and Gretchen Abendschein — will lead "Alone Together," a workshop on creating merge collages at Main Street Arts (MSA) on Sunday, Oct. 15, at 2 p.m. The fee for the workshop is \$20 per person.

An exhibit of their own merge collages runs through Oct. 29. The art show displays a number of collaborative and individual works available for purchase, with a portion of the sales going to MSA.

"We have chosen some of our Merge Collages for your viewing pleasure along with the written descriptions," said Peake.

According to Peake, the collaborative works stem from a game in which each of the three artists takes a turn setting a parameter for choosing the subject matter.

After 10 minutes working

with one parameter, a chime rings, and they rotate the collages and add images that will interact with what has already been created.

In the next phase of three rounds, a random word is added to the emerging collage. Then, one last turn remains to add a finishing image. The completed collages are set up, and the players discuss the process as well as the result.

Artists then take a collage home to write about it. The prompt for writing could be "describe, but go beyond the frame," or "make one of the figures or objects speak." The three words must be incorporated into the writing.

The workshop will basically follow the same game in groups of three attendees with guidance from the artists. For more information or questions, contact MSA at 802-869-2960 or info@mainstreetarts.org.

TUESDAY

17

Well-being

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

- ▶ 5 - 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays.
- ▶ Brattleboro Walk-In Clinic, 191 Clark Ave. Information: 802-251-8484; brattleborowalkinclinic.com.

WEDNESDAY

18

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO Regenerating Life Part 1: Water Cools the Planet: In need of some climate optimism? Edible Brattleboro and Brooks Memorial Library offer this free screening of the documentary film, "Regenerating Life," in three parts with special guest experts joining us for discussion following each screening.

- ▶ 7 - 8:15 p.m.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: Questions: Email Marilyn at EdibleBrattleboro@gmail.com.

BELLOWS FALLS "Hospice 101: Why Hospice Doesn't Need to Sound Scary":

Hospice is a service provided to individuals during the final stages of an incurable disease, but it's so much more than that! Our Hospice team will walk you through UNDERSTANDING ALL ASPECTS OF THE CARE received during hospice. In addition to learning

WEDNESDAY CONT.

about the physical, emotional, spiritual support provided to the individual on Hospice, learn how the same VNH team supports the family and friends around the individual.

- ▶ 5:30 p.m. Presented by Anthony Knox of Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT & NH.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463-4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.

Community building

BELLOWS FALLS Knit-Along with the Fiber Friends: Kick off this fall by knitting your own hat with the Fiber Friends Knit-Along. A Knit-Along is a fun way to experience the community aspect of knitting. Program is open to all ages and levels of knitting experience - whether you've never knitted before and always wanted to learn, are an expert or somewhere in-between, you're welcome to join.

- ▶ 5 p.m. 10/11 and 10/18: Knitters gather in person both days to start/finish the same project together at the Rockingham Free Public Library beginning 10/11 and continuing 10/18.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Materials provided. Advance registration required. Register: rockinghamlibrary.org. More information: 802-463-4270, email youthservices@rockinghamlibrary.org.

Arts and crafts

PUTNEY Craft Night at Putney Library: Bring a craft project and hang out in the company of others on Wednesday evenings.

- ▶ 5-7 p.m. Continues 11/15 and 12/6.
- ▶ Free.
- ▶ Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407; putneylibrary.org/events.

In Stile Moderno presents 'Songs of Love & Suffering' at BMC

BRATTLEBORO—In Stile Moderno presents “Misero Amante: Songs of Love and Suffering” on Friday, Oct. 13 at the Brattleboro Music Center.

The program for the 7 p.m. concert invites the audience into the world of 17th-century Italy to indulge in every poet’s favorite subject: the joys and pains of love.

From the thrill of first attraction to the disappointment of a bad break-up, “every moment of the lover’s journey was captured by the most celebrated musicians of the era,” say organizers, including Girolamo Kapsberger, Barbara Strozzi, Giulio Caccini, and Claudio Monteverdi. Alongside love songs and laments, the concert will showcase instrumental music for guitars, the orbo, recorder, and cornetto.

In Stile Moderno says it is thrilled to welcome lutenist

Cameron Welke and multi-instrumentalist Dan Meyers to create “an enchanting sound world” of plucked, wind, and percussion instruments.

An ensemble for early music, In Stile Moderno was founded in Basel, Switzerland, in 2012 by Brattleboro soprano Agnes Coakley and lutenist/cornettist Nathaniel Cox. Named after the “modern style” of music which emerged in Italy around 1600, the ensemble is dedicated to music of the 17th century and combines fidelity to historical performance practice with a drive to make early music accessible and relevant to modern audiences.

Tickets are \$20 general admission or \$25 at the door, and are available at bmcvt.org or by calling 802-257-4523. For more information, call the BMC or email info@bmcvt.org.

‘The New Immigrant Experience’ comes to Next Stage on Oct. 13

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts presents composer and 2018 Guggenheim Fellow Felipe Salles’s multimedia work, *The New Immigrant Experience*, on Friday, October 13, at 7:30 p.m. at Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill.

The project portrays experiences of the almost 700,000 individuals currently protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, commonly referred to as “Dreamers” based on the never-passed proposals in Congress called the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education, for Alien Minors) Act. Salles himself emigrated from Brazil to the U.S. in 1995.

“Felipe Salles is a jazz composer who uses his personal narrative of an immigrant to help us understand the human stories behind headlines in the news,” Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, said in a news release. “We love presenting artists who utilize their artistry as a lever for social change

and bringing us together. We’re proud to bring Salles into local schools to talk with kids and present his craft.”

The two-CD/DVD set of *The New Immigrant Experience*, his eighth recording, features the 18-piece Felipe Salles Interconnections Ensemble and was released in 2020 via Tapestry Records. With the aid of a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowship, Salles developed this work using speech cadences and melodic motifs based on key words as the main source of musical material.

Individual stories and experiences of growing up bilingual and undocumented also informed musical choices, he says. The personal stories shared in this work were collected through interviews Salles conducted with a group of nine “Dreamers” during the summer of 2018. Videos of the interviews were created by Fernanda Faya.

“It’s an emotional musical journey through beautiful

orchestral textures, carefully developed motifs, and intense solo features that combine the power of a big band recording and the dramatic landscape of a soundtrack,” say organizers.

Premiered in April 2018 at performances in New York City and Massachusetts, *The New Immigrant Experience* was subsequently recorded in the studio. The recording was then recombined with live video excerpts, creating an experience that “gives full-throated voice to immigrant groups in the United States today,” notes the artist’s website.

Salles gained firsthand knowledge of the issues surrounding DACA and the “Dreamers” after befriending classical pianist Tereza Lee, the original inspiration behind the DREAM Act.

After writing *The Lullaby Project* (2018), a large-scale work inspired by the cross-generational importance of Brazilian lullabies as part of a cultural identity for immigrant families like Salles’s, *The New Immigrant Experience* was a continuation of his artistic vision and a vehicle to contribute to the discussion regarding the place and value of immigrants in America during these turbulent political times.

“*The New Immigrant Experience* is a complete work of art, whether one experiences the music alone or in combination with the DVD, or in live performance with videos projected behind the band, as it will be presented at Next Stage,” say organizers.

Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, and \$10 for access to the livestream of the performance. Next Stage will provide a cash bar. Advance tickets and more information are available at nextstagearts.org.

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 FRIDAY 4 / 6:50 / 8:50
 SATURDAY 2:15 / 6:50 / 8:50
 SUNDAY 2:15 & 6:50
 MON.-THUR. 4 & 6:50

BOTTOMS R
 FRIDAY 4 / 7 / 8:50
 SATURDAY 2 / 7 / 8:50
 SUNDAY 2 & 7
 MON.-WED. 4 & 7

FLORA AND SON R
 MON, OCT. 16 4:15 & 6:45
 TUES, OCT. 17 4:15 & 6:45

PAW PATROL: THE MIGHTY MOVIE PG
 FRIDAY 4:15 / 6:40 / 8:40
 SATURDAY 2:15 / 6:40 / 8:40
 SUNDAY 2:15 & 6:40
 MON.-THUR. 4:15 & 6:40

Bard Owl featured in Grafton Community Church Evensong

GRAFTON—On Sunday, Oct. 15, at 5:30 p.m., Bard Owl — T. Breeze Verdant and Annie Landenberger — will be featured performers in the Grafton Community Church’s (GCC) 2023 Evensong Series.

In lieu of morning worship that Sunday, the church offers the Evensong tradition coordinated by GCC Music Minister Ken Olsson. Of the series, Olsson said in a news release that “we wanted to offer to the community a concert series with a touch of worship.”

Pastor Bill Watson added, “In the longest season of the liturgical year, it’s wonderful to change the pace of worship with these Evensong presentations. They add a fresh perspective to our spirituality.”

Bard Owl’s playlist includes upbeat tunes mixed with jazz, ballads, rocking blues, sweet and slow tunes, and describes their music as “new, old, original, familiar, unexpected.” The Williamsville-based duo will be playing tunes centered on hope in various manifestations.

Folklore scholar, athlete, and circus performer, Montana Miller says of Bard Owl: “Annie and Breeze are the kind of singers who, like other artists we grew up singing along with, know how to embrace and gather an audience into the warmth and generous spirit of their music. Their love for each other permeates every song; humble and heartfelt melodies invite us to join in and it’s healing just to listen.”

Following Evensong, all are invited to a community supper in the lower level of the church. The event is free, though thank offerings for both the concert and the meal are appreciated. Grafton Community Church, at 55 Main St., is handicapped accessible with an elevator.

Evensong concerts are also available on Zoom: The link to concerts and their recordings can be found before the Evensong and during the following week under the worship tab at graffoncommunitychurch.org. For more information about Bard Owl, visit bardowlmusic.com.



T. Breeze Verdant and Annie Landenberger, a.k.a. Bard Owl

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Garbus

FROM SECTION FRONT

Saturday, Oct. 14 for an album release party for *Alive People*, her third full-length album.

The album, released this year by Chicago-based Orindal Records, was recorded in front of a sold-out audience of 100 at 10 Forward, an arts venue and bar in Greenfield, Massachusetts on Sept. 16, 2022.

At the Stone Church show, Garbus will be on vocals and will be joined by elie mcafee-hahn on keyboards, Nick Bisceglia on guitar, Julia Tadlock on vocals, and Julie Bodian on guitar.

Coincidentally, Bisceglia was the recording engineer for the album, but he didn't play on it, although Garbus often performs with him and mcafee-hahn.

Jumping off the cliff

When asked about how the new album came about, Garbus recalls, "I wrote many of the songs on *Alive People* before the pandemic and was intending to record them in March 2020."

She made "some attempts to do that myself over the next two years, but it was a struggle to motivate myself to do the necessary work on my own, and to feel deeply engaged with the music after so long."

Garbus finally took decisive action.

"So, I decided to basically do the equivalent of bungee jumping off a cliff, and do it live," she says. "I needed that thrill and that challenge, and I love performing in front of an audience."

She says that the finished album is unusual, in that it was mixed and mastered in such a way that it sounds like it was recorded in a studio.

"Nick [Bisceglia] recorded it so well — we had such a clean base to work from — that we were able to do that, and Justin Pizzoferrato [of Sonelab, a recording studio in Easthampton, Massachusetts] did brilliant work on the mix," she says.

She expresses gratitude to her bandmates and is "so pleased with the album artwork and design," with a cover painting by Audrey Helen Weber, an artist and children's book illustrator from Greenfield, Massachusetts.

A house full of music

Garbus, who grew up in New Canaan, Connecticut, says her house was filled with music.

"My mom is a classically trained pianist and has taught piano for years," she says. "She also plays harpsichord and accordion. My dad plays fiddle and banjo and is teaching himself the mandolin."

Garbus started on violin when she was 7 or 8 years old and then switched to clarinet at age 9, which she played all through high school.

Garbus moved to Brattleboro in 2001 after dropping out of high school and design school, to follow her sister Merrill, who is the founder of Tune-Yards, an

Oakland, California-based music project.

"When I came to Brattleboro, I taught myself how to play the guitar and started singing, and it's just been a journey from there," she says.

For two decades, Garbus has been writing, performing, and recording music. In a recent online review, the reviewer called her genre "rock."

Garbus bursts out laughing.

"I'm not sure I would call it rock," she says. "They probably had to categorize it that way for some reason, but people more often describe my music as avant-folk, or folk rock. To me, it's a combination of three things: folk, jazz, and some of it is almost like Renaissance-era art songs."

She is also a member of the experimental quintet Gloyd as well as the trio Earth Flower with Sam Gendel and Phil Melanson.

Inspired by Brattleboro

While in California, Garbus appeared on Tim Heidecker's podcast *Office Hours Live*, where she performed "Mono No Aware," a song from the new album. The multidisciplinary performing artist, writer, and comedian even joined her on background vocals.

"He is a supportive music fan, so that was very special," Garbus recalls.

Pitchfork has called the song a "meditative, idiosyncratic set about the impermanence of all things." The Japanese concept of mono no aware is roughly translated as "the pathos of things."

Garbus points to other songs on the album.

"The song 'Reenchantment of the World' is partly inspired by experiences I've had here in Brattleboro, and so is the song 'Whisper in Steel.' People who live around Brattleboro might recognize our community in the lyrics."

"I'm often inspired by stuff that is ignored," Garbus says. "One thing I get to do as a musician and artist is to remind myself that the entire world is alive — not just the trees and the flowers and the animals, but also the plastic and the lifted pickup trucks and the municipal buildings."

Garbus says she's grateful for her "deep relationship" with the town, "to experience being a part of this community, to be inspired by this life, and also have the opportunity to express myself to a wider audience."

'Like fertilizer to me'

Garbus met Brattleboro's Kyle Thomas (King Tuff) in the early 2000s, when she first moved to the area.

"Kyle is basically my brother," she says. "My sister Merrill lived here and was working at Mocha Joe's and knew Kyle needed a roommate. We met for the first time, and he was like, 'You're going to live with me!'"

The two were in a band, Feathers, with Kurt Weisman,

'I get to wake up in a forest!'

Locate S,1 returns to Windham County, both on stage and in life

By Victoria Chertok
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Christina Schneider — performing under as stage persona Locate S,1 — takes the stage at the Stone Church on Saturday night and will open Ruth Garbus's performance [story, this issue] with a stripped-down version of her band, she tells *The Commons*.

The opening set will include Schneider on guitar and Vox, Kevin Barnes (who also plays in the band Of Montreal) on bass, and Clayton Rychlik on drums.

Schneider, 34, is excited for her return to southern Vermont after a decade living in Brooklyn, New York and Athens, Georgia. She is a 2008 graduate of The Putney School and attended Marlboro College, so she says "it feels like a homecoming."

"I get to wake up in the forest every day!" she says.

Working on underlying anger

Her newest release, *Wicked Jaw* (Capture Tracks, Brooklyn, 2022), was recorded at a home studio in Athens, Georgia over the span of a week with the whole band. She says most of the songs on the album were written over a two-year period.

"As an over-communicator who often can't control what comes out of my mouth, I identified with the idea of having a wicked jaw," says Schneider.

"I produced it entirely myself, and it's very exciting to learn how to be a producer and to just say what I want to say," she adds.

In an Aug. 2 cover story in *Flagpole*, an alt-weekly in Athens, Georgia, Schneider says, "Throughout the writing of this album, I was learning how to be less of a snarky jerk, and trying to work on the underlying anger that causes me to lash out when I feel threatened instead of just processing those emotions on my own time."

Schneider deals with serious topics on this album. This expressive album of "interpersonal analysis and self-reflection that questions what it means to be a survivor, but takes it even further by questioning what it means to be a woman, a modern American and more," writes *Flagpole* reviewer Sam Lipkin.

When asked how she feels about her newest release, she



Christina Schneider — a.k.a. Locate S,1 — and her band.

says she is "really proud of it."

"It definitely moves away from the dance-y pop-iness of the last two albums and sort of a mellow exercise in songwriting — where I got to focus on the songwriting craft," she says.

The biggest lesson from the album, she says, is "being kind to yourself while still holding yourself accountable — those are important things."

She describes her partner, Kevin Barnes, also in the band Of Montreal, as "such a brilliant genius."

"It's so identifiable that it's almost like if he collaborates at any level, it just kind of sounds like Of Montreal," Schneider says with a laugh. "So I just really wanted to explore what my kind of sound could be."

How did she come up with name for her band: Locate, S1?

"I kept seeing that spray-painted on construction sites, and it shows that there are gas pipes near the road and you shouldn't penetrate the ground there or the whole block could explode," Schneider says. "I also learned that S,1 is what they call the first beat of the heart. There's S,1 and S,2. I thought that was pretty cool!"

'Almost a shared hallucination'

In the lyrics of her song "Go

back to Disnee," which has a bossa nova beat, Schneider talks about the United States and "the sadness that lies beneath."

"I wrote that song in Athens, in July 2020 during Covid," she says. "There were lots of fireworks going off. I was not feeling very patriotic, and I was just so sad that this is our country."

She had recently read an interview with actor John Cassavetes.

"He said, 'Maybe there really wasn't an America; maybe it was only Frank Capra,'" she says. Capra, the powerhouse director of movies like *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, is credited with creating "a lasting vision of the country's people and values."

The song, she says, explores "almost a shared hallucination [that] what we are as a society is not the full picture and the sadness that lies beneath — that is where that song came from."

She thinks the song "Heart Attack" is not only the pop-iest song on her new album, it's also the oddest one.

"It has a different sonic world," Schneider says. "I just love playing that song...it's such a pop song!"

Like a homecoming

Schneider grew up in Cross River, New York and started playing guitar "as early as I can remember." Both of her parents were guitarists, and her mom taught guitar at Schneider's elementary school.

Her early music influence was Joni Mitchell. "To this day, I think that she is the greatest songwriter of all time!" she says.

She also loves "classic rock, The Beatles, Syd Barrett, psychedelic rock in general, and funk."

"I'm so excited to play a hometown show in Brattleboro!" says Schneider, who says she grew up listening to Garbus's music.

"She inspired me to be a songwriter; it's like a homecoming to me," she says. "I look up to her so much! Those two worlds colliding — my fans and Ruth's fans — is my wish."

Christina Schneider (Locate S,1) opens for Ruth Garbus on Saturday, Oct. 14 at 8 p.m. at The Stone Church, 210 Main St., Brattleboro.

For more information, visit stonechurchvt.com. To follow Christina Schneider Locate S,1 on Instagram, visit [instagram.com/locate_s1](https://www.instagram.com/locate_s1).

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'It might have been yesterday. It could be tomorrow'

BUHS Players present 'Inherit the Wind,' a riveting drama where religious relief is pitted against science

By Nancy A. Olson
Special to The Commons

BRATTLEBORO — Controversy over what gets taught in American public schools is not new.

In July 1925, John Thomas Scopes, a public high school science teacher in the city of Dayton, Tennessee, went on trial for violating the law by teaching his students the theory of evolution as developed by Charles Darwin.

For those who believed that the story of creation as told in the Old Testament was literal truth, the concept of evolution was blasphemy. Anti-evolutionists in the Tennessee Legislature succeeded in passing the Butler Act in March 1925, making the teaching of evolution a misdemeanor.

Renowned orator and three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan led the prosecution. Acclaimed defense attorney Clarence Darrow led the defense. The trial became known as the "Scopes Monkey Trial" and received news coverage around the world.

In 1950, Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee completed writing *Inherit the Wind*, their play based loosely on the Scopes trial but intended as a work of fiction. Their larger goal was to address the question of intellectual freedom in the era of Sen. Joseph McCarthy and the Red Scare.

Not until 1955, however, was their play first performed, in Dallas, Texas. It is purposely not set in any particular era, with the authors noting in the prologue, "It might have been yesterday. It could be tomorrow."

'A good courtroom drama'

Given the current national attention focused on controversies in some states about what teachers can teach, the Brattleboro Union High School Players will present *Inherit the Wind* this weekend.

"I decided we needed to do a good courtroom drama," said Rebekah Kersten, BUHS English/theater teacher and the show's director.

"With the current political climate — for example, the debate on critical race theory, or questions about Florida's Advanced Placement course on African American history — the time seemed right to tell this story," she said.

To help the actors acquire some historical context for the play, the cast and director have had conversations about the 1920s and the 1950s.

"We talked about McCarthyism," Kersten said, "and about what artists then were doing to combat [the senator's] false accusations of Communist infiltration of all levels of government, including public schools, and teachers having to sign loyalty



In this scene from the BUHS Players production of 'Inherit the Wind,' Nyx Miller as Rev. Jeremiah Brown (center) leads a prayer meeting. Standing, from left, are Kaitlyn Blouin, Bibi Johnson, Eva Lord, Alex Aither, and Remy Flood. Seated, from left, are Leo Storm and Lila Armour-Jones.

oaths."

"For example, *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, tells a story set in a different time [Puritan-era Massachusetts in the 17th century] that mirrors the "witch-hunt" hysteria going on in the U.S. in the 1950s," she added.

Listed in the *Inherit the Wind* script, Kersten said, are suggestions of slogans to put on placards that characters carry when they are protesting outside the courtroom. One, "Save Our Schools From Science," particularly resonated with the cast.

"We're 98 years after this trial occurred, and we're still there," Kersten said.

"It's happening in this country right now with regard to education and our students," she continued. "The message of the play — that students aren't taught what to think but how to think for themselves — resonates with me as a mother, a teacher, a director, as a human being."

The cast reflects on their roles

John Mosher, a senior, portrays the prosecuting attorney, Matthew Harrison Brady. "He's a talented lawyer who

definitely cares a lot about what he believes," Mosher said.

"He's sometimes a little misguided, but he's only human. He comes all the way down from Nebraska to the town of Hillsboro (state unnamed) to try this case because he thinks that what Bertram Cates, the teacher, did was wrong," he continued.

Mosher characterized Brady as "strong in his beliefs, but that sometimes doesn't allow him to see the other person's perspective."

"It's a fantastic play," he said. "It can serve as an example of a time and place, and shows the truth of what was there. Erasing history is just not right."

Leo Mousseau, a junior, plays Henry Drummond, the defense lawyer.

"He's a famous lawyer from out of town who firmly believes in the right to think," Mousseau said. "He turns the case from a trial about the teaching of evolution into a trial on the prosecution of the right to think, which he sees as not being valued by the people in this town. That enrages him."

Drummond wants to inspire people to stand up for what they

think instead of being prosecuted for what they believe, Mousseau said.

"His motto is that everybody has the right to be wrong," he said. "I like him. He's funny and sarcastic. He listens to everyone, even if he disagrees."

Griffin Woodruff, a sophomore, plays Bertram Cates, the science teacher who is on trial for violating the Butler Act.

"Cates wants to educate," Woodruff said. "He wants to open people's minds to new things, even if those things contradict what the person believed before."

Woodruff sees his character as being of two minds about his situation. On the one hand, Cates has a sense of stubbornness, believing he didn't do anything wrong. On the other, the potential consequences of his actions are starting to make him anxious.

"It's like being lost at a really big concert," Woodruff said, "and you can't find your parents, and that 'Oh, no!' feeling sets in."

Nyx Miller, a senior, has the part of Rev. Jeremiah Brown, who Miller describes as a "fire-and-brimstone pastor, who is passionate about the Bible, which is his entire life. Anyone who denies the Bible is denying Rev. Brown's life."

"It's a challenging role for me," Miller said. "The character I'm playing is fully on the religious side. I as an individual am fully on the science side. The message of this play would be that religion cannot be stronger than science, and belief cannot be stronger than fact."

Lila Armour-Jones portrays Rachel Brown, the daughter of Rev. Brown. Rachel teaches second grade in town and has developed feelings for Cates.

"She's a very caring person," Armour-Jones said. "She tries to balance caring for someone else and her own moral beliefs, and the two don't match."

Armour-Jones said that balance is "especially difficult because of her father, the powerful religious leader of the town."

"She's under a lot of pressure because she so badly wants to be the model of religious grace

that her father and the community want her to be, yet she loves Cates," she said. "This conflict is causing a great rift within her."

Other characters

Kyle Girard, a senior, plays E. K. Hornbeck, the big-city journalist from Chicago who covers the trial.

Alexandra Aither, a ninth grader, portrays two characters combined into one role: Mrs. Bannister, a townspeople, who is a photographer.

Kaitlyn Blouin, a junior, plays three roles: a reporter, a radio operator, and Mrs. Blair, one of the townspeople.

Remy Flood, a sophomore, plays Howard Blair, a student of Mr. Cates.

Mrs. Krebs, played by Eva Lord, a ninth grader, is another townspeople who very much believes Cates is in the wrong.

Bibi Johnson, a sophomore, plays the mayor of Hillsboro.

Miles Rae, in ninth grade, plays Meeker the Bailiff.

Leo Storm, a freshman, plays two characters, Dunlop, and Elijah, who sells Bibles and is illiterate.

Levi Healey, also in ninth grade, plays Mr. Stillers, who manages the feed store.

Making good arguments

As the two famous legal lions face each other in the courtroom, at issue is the freedom to think.

"I tell my students, 'You don't have to agree with what I say,'" Kersten explained.

"What you're obligated to do is to make a good, supported argument," she said. "You might have a point of view I've never considered. We need to be heard and respected. If we lose that, what do we have as a society?"

Performances of the Brattleboro Union High School Players' production of Inherit the Wind will take place in the high school auditorium on Friday, Oct. 13, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 14, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets (\$5) will be available at the door.

Whitney

College in Henneker, New Hampshire.

She came to southern Vermont with her husband, Tim Whitney, where he — now a therapist — taught history and coached rowing at The Putney School while she taught literature there and coached both the cross-country ski and rowing teams.

What started as a temporary stop, ended up as home: "We fell in love with Brattleboro," she says.

A PROLIFIC WRITER in a range of genres, Whitney's work is frank, witty, intelligent, and informed. She writes about subjects others might not touch; she opens doors many would like to look through.

Her essays, op-eds, and book reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, and the *Kenyon Review*; in *Glamour* and *Ms.*, and in other top publications.

She's been poetry critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and an editor and book coach, as well.

Whitney compiled the bestselling anthology *You Don't Have to Be Everything: Poems for Girls Becoming Themselves* (Workman Publishing, 2021), which won the Claudia Lewis Award, a prize bestowed on poetry books for young readers.

A POET FIRST, Whitney says she hadn't created any poems of note since the birth of her first daughter in 2005.

"There was a long silence: motherhood had rendered me mute at first," she says.

What actually "broke the silence," she says, was not poetry, but a column on parenting — "Spilt Milk: Making a Mess of Motherhood" — which she wrote every other week for the *Brattleboro Reformer*.

From 2009 to 2013, those regular musings — candid, insightful, irreverent — made readers laugh, wonder, ponder, and breathe relief. Eventually syndicated, it ran as a public radio commentary series and became a blog (huffpost.com/author/diana-whitney) at *The Huffington Post*.

"Spilt Milk" nudged Whitney out of the "baby cave," she says. "It got me out of discombobulated silence, and from there I started writing poetry again."

Her first poetry collection, *Wanting It* (Harbor Mountain Press), came out in 2014. Called by *Coal Hill Review* a "masterful, subtle, complicated depiction of a woman" it became an indie bestseller, winning the Rubery Book Award for poetry.

THE COLLECTION of poems in *Dark Beds*, she explains, "is the poems I've written since *Wanting It*."

Though she's been working on a memoir about motherhood, sexuality, feminism, and breaking patterns of female silence while also producing this collection, she quips about the time it took to produce.

"You know the 'slow-food movement'?"

I'm an aficionado of the 'slow-writing movement.' This book took a long time to come into the world," she says: one can't help but think of gestational time.

In fact, Whitney says, "there's a lot about motherhood in it. The second poem, 'Velvet Rocks,' is about my second daughter — and, apologizing for what might seem cliché — the miracle of her birth:

*with amber suspended between two states
of matter between out and in
between here and there S-curves
of current shifting alluvial silt
filtered through algae*

Whitney's mother, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 2013 and died this summer at age 78, figures prominently in her memoir-in-progress, as she does in *Dark Beds*.

In the poem "The Long Goodbye" — its title also common parlance for Alzheimer's disease — Whitney's addresses the reality with honest poignancy:

*Run your fingers everywhere.
Danger is the size of a sesame seed,
a single brain cell, smaller.
If I could I'd make my mother walk and talk
again, but what do I know of magic
or redemption? Only the long goodbye.
How tired we are of doing our best.*

"That goodbye was 10 years long and now it's over, so there's a lot of sadness and also relief that my mother has been released," says Whitney, pointing out "a bittersweet quality to launching this book a few weeks after my mom died."

Her mother, she says, is captured "in my writing, in my daughters, in the poems about motherhood, in the poems that are really struggling with motherhood, and in the poems about marriage. My mom was in a very long marriage, and it wasn't easy."

Dark Beds, Whitney adds, is about "coming into my own creative power, watching my daughters grow towards and in adolescence as I watched my mother descend into Alzheimer's and eventually into silence."

SCOPING FEMINISM, desire and longing, motherhood, depression, sexuality, grief, longing, limerence, and other private struggles, Whitney's diction is as lean as she is.

A yoga teacher and athlete, she writes sparingly, with allusions to the classics, with an abundance of images from the natural world, and from a deeply rooted, intense sensuality.

Dark Beds digs at all it is to be a woman — her ranging sexuality; her being a daughter, mother, lover; her being a voice yearning to be heard.

"There are a lot of different layers of the book," she says, including "marriage, infidelity, betrayal, and healing, and what it takes for a long marriage to survive."

She credits Esther Perel for inspiration.

FROM SECTION FRONT

The author of *Mating in Captivity: Unlocking Erotic Intelligence* and a psychotherapist known for her work on human relationships, Perel has posed an essential question: "How can we want what we already have?"

It's a question aimed at figuring out the feeling of emptiness, the sadness of loneliness versus the satisfaction of being alone, of the desiring of ever more beyond what's abundantly at hand.

"*Dark Beds* was me wrestling with Perel's question and writing my way towards an answer," says Whitney, who says she looked within herself for answers and not outward.

The collection charts "a woman's quest for selfhood" and her struggles with creative and erotic power, with "a longing for the other; a longing to be seen, to be heard," while forging resilience along the way.

WHITNEY ALSO WRITES the newsletter *Girl Trouble*, where she shares insight about her favorite books and feminist heroes. She was awarded a 2021–2022 Creation Grant from the Vermont Arts Council (vermontartscouncil.org) for a collection of the same title, about "girls, rape culture, and excavating female adolescence."

An ardent feminist, an advocate for abuse survivors, and a potent voice for reproductive rights, she has also received grants and awards from the Sustainable Arts Foundation, the Women's National Book Association, the Vermont Arts Endowment, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the Vermont Studio Center.

Having served on the Brattleboro Literary Festival's poetry committee for a handful of past years, Whitney is now a featured poet in the 2023 event.

"I'm honored and humbled to be part of it," she says, calling the event "the quintessential Vermont experience."

"It's peak leaf season in a charming small town filled with writers and readers and lovers of books. We get the most wonderful authors," she says. "It's really extraordinary that people come from all over to Brattleboro to hear them read."

Whitney's reading on Oct. 13, which she shares with Cate Marvin, acclaimed feminist poet from New York City, begins at 7 p.m. at Epsilon Spires, 190 Main St., in Brattleboro. It'll be followed, Whitney says, by a launch party at 8 p.m. in the venue's intimately lit and trendy gathering space.

"There'll be music, food, drink — a party," she says. "Everyone's invited to celebrate *Dark Beds*."

Dark Beds is available at *Everyone's Books*, 25 Elliot St., or and directly from its award-winning publisher, *June Road Press* (juneroadpress.com).

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COLUMN | Deeper Dive

A deep connection to gospel music and a resounding sense of swing

Jazz and gospel pianist Cyrus Chestnut brings trio to Vermont Jazz Center for Oct. 14 concert

THE VERMONT JAZZ CENTER will present Cyrus Chestnut in a trio concert on Saturday, Oct. 14 at 7:30 p.m. Called “the best jazz pianist of his generation” by *Time* magazine, Chestnut will appear with bassist Herman Burney and drummer Kelton Norris.

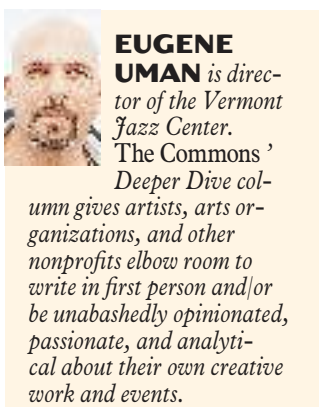
Chestnut’s repertoire includes selections from the Great American Songbook, spirituals, jazz standards, and original music as well as surprising transformations from other genres.

Along with his interpretations of jazz-related gems, his recordings include compositions by Elvis Presley, Erik Satie, and even Beethoven. Chestnut carefully arranges each piece, developing it with reharmonizations, introductions, and interludes. His approach is characterized by two constants: a deep connection to gospel music and a resounding sense of swing.

As a youth, Chestnut was immersed in, and continues to follow, the spiritual beliefs of the Baptist church. His training as a musician followed a path from church musician to the Peabody Conservatory Preparatory Program and the Berklee College of Music.

He quickly became known as a consummate sideman, touring the world and making recordings with several jazz legends. He is now recognized as a leader in his own right.

Chestnut currently holds the position of master instructor of jazz piano and improvisation at Howard University. He



EUGENE UMAN is director of the Vermont Jazz Center. *The Commons’ Deeper Dive* column gives artists, arts organizations, and other nonprofits elbow room to write in first person and/or be unabashedly opinionated, passionate, and analytical about their own creative work and events.

continues to tour and record as a soloist, with his own groups, and as a high-level sideman at noted jazz festivals and venues.

At the root of Chestnut’s gift has always been a deep connection between jazz and God.

“I believe the ability to play music is a gift from God, and every time I play, I’m thankful. Every time I sit down to play, for me, is worship and expression,” he told *DownBeat* magazine.

In an interview with *iRockJazz.com*, Chestnut reflected on the many musical skills he learned as a member of the church.

“The church was a great training ground. It was an unspoken school, much like the Betty Carter and the Buhaina [Art Blakey] schools; the church taught me ear-training, how to improvise, and the principles of accompaniment.

“It was my job to figure out the keys and chords behind vocalists. People would sing in all 12 keys and modulate, and I’d



Cyrus Chestnut

COURTESY PHOTO

have to follow them. Playing for the choir you had to give support.

“At the end of the preacher’s sermons, I’d provide the musical ‘amen.’ You listen in church and use your ears — it wasn’t about you but what you could contribute to the whole.”

This thread has continued throughout his career. In most of his albums as a leader he includes at least one spiritual.

For example, on his most recent recording he pays a moving tribute to his recently departed father in a hauntingly beautiful solo version of the traditional hymn “I Must Tell Jesus.”

AS A YOUTH, Chestnut continued to study the classics while holding his position as pianist and organist at the church. He then went on to study jazz composition and performance at Berklee.

After graduating, his path led to stints as a sideman with vocalist Jon Hendricks from 1986 to 1988, trumpeter Terence Blanchard and saxophonist Donald Harrison from 1988 to 1990, and Wynton Marsalis in 1991.

Soon after, Chestnut joined forces with the legendary singer Betty Carter and has often said that working with the National Medal of Arts award-winning singer was his “graduate school.” He learned from her that “jazz is about finding out who you are.” Indeed, that notion of identifying his purpose in life has become Chestnut’s North Star.

IN AN INTERVIEW with *Neon Jazz*, Chestnut tells a compelling story of how he internalized this lesson. He and Carter’s accompanying trio were warming up the audience for her concert by playing a scripted trio version of Miles Davis’s arrangement of *If I Were a Bell*.

They played the classic arrangement “right down to the letter.” Carter glared at Chestnut as she entered the stage to sing.

After they finished their set, Carter asked him to come to her dressing room where she tore into him.

“I didn’t hire you to play something that I already know,” she told him. “Find a different way to play it — don’t just regurgitate the same thing.”

Chestnut reflected: “After that conversation I was forever changed. Even to this day, a mechanism goes off if I feel like I’m playing the same thing over and over again — it’s the voice of Betty yelling at me: ‘You need to think, don’t just play something that I’ve heard before.’ Jazz is a thinking person’s music. I’m now on a mission to find something different.”

SINCE HIS TENURE with Betty Carter, Chestnut has worked with an array of leading musicians, including saxophonists Vincent Herring, Steve Wilson, James Carter, Donald Harrison and Joe Lovano; trumpeters Roy Hargrove and Freddie Hubbard, as well as Chick Corea, Kevin Mahogany, Dee Dee Bridgewater, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Pops, and opera singer Kathleen Battle.

In 1996, he appeared on the soundtrack to director Robert Altman’s feature film *Kansas City* (which also found Cyrus portraying a Count Basie-inspired pianist).

Chestnut’s music is a combination of several styles and influences, fused together through the filter of his intellect and heart.

In the interview with *Neon Jazz*, Cyrus digs into that idea. “It’s so easy to be typecast as ‘the soulful guy.’ I appreciate that you know, I appreciate the consistency.

“But we grow. A baby doesn’t stay 6 months old for the rest of its life. They grow up! After a while we evolve. So, as I evolve, for sure the music is going to evolve.”

Listeners will identify pianists that have influenced Chestnut’s sound: Erroll Garner, Oscar Peterson, McCoy Tyner, Billy Taylor, Kenny Barron, Bobby Timmons, and Bud Powell, for example.

But he is himself. “People will come up to me after a set and say this or that tune sounded just like Oscar

Peterson or Ahmad Jamal. I am not trying to be them; I am trying to find out who Cyrus Chestnut is.”

It is also very clear that Chestnut is open-minded in choosing his material. For example, he is a lover of the classical repertoire, and sometimes performs jazz versions of Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata*, Satie’s *Gymnopédie No. 1* and Debussy’s *Golliwogg’s Cakewalk*. He makes these his own, too.

In an online interview for the *Pace Report*, Chestnut reflected, “I can study and play the baroque, but no, that’s not me, I want to be inspired by the baroque. [...] I grew up with Parliament, Little Richard (my momma had the CDs), King Curtis, Thelonious Monk — it’s all these influences. All I’m trying to do is operate from what’s been given to me and then present it.”

CHESTNUT, now in his early 60s, is a mature, developed master at the top of his game. His sound is most clearly defined by his use of the language of gospel piano, its nuances, harmonizations, the building of solos to a thrilling peak. He has the gospel pianist’s ability to get funky

at the spur of the moment, with blues embellishments, tremolo chords and call and response phrases.

He summed this up in an interview with *iRockJazz*.

“If I’m going to be honest about who I am, there’s the element from the church that has to be present not in a separate way but in a collective way. Anything that I play could have elements of a hymn or some type of gospel tinge[....]”

Chestnut perhaps best sums up his vision in an interview with *Neon Jazz*:

“A person who loves music [...] A servant for humankind, doing what I can to make the world a better place. Doing everything I can. I strive to change the world into a better place using one rhythm, one melody, and one harmony at a time.”

Admission to this in-person event is offered for a sliding fee (\$25 to \$45). All seats are general admission and available at vtjazz.org and by email at ginger@vtjazz.org. For accessibility needs, email ginger@vtjazz.org. The streaming of this concert at vtjazz.org and at [facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live](https://www.facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live) will be offered free, but donations will be welcomed.

Rev. Vince Anderson & His Love Choir return to Putney on Oct. 14

PUTNEY—The Next Stage Bandwagon Summer Series presents Reverend Vince Anderson and His Love Choir on Saturday, Oct. 14, at 3 p.m. at the Putney Inn, 57 Putney Landing Rd.

“Reverend Vince utilizes his mixture of gospel, funk, and dance music as a platform to preach peace, tolerance, and love of humanity,” Keith Marks, executive director of Next Stage Arts, said in a news release. “We hosted the Rev and his Love Choir last year inside the theater, and after that evening of religious intoxication through music, we knew we had to bring him back as part of our Bandwagon Series.”

After coming to New York in the 1990s to enter the seminary and study to be a Methodist minister, Anderson dropped out to follow his second calling — music. His band, The Love Choir, defines its style as “dirty gospel,” busting out trumpets, guitars, and a keyboard.

Together, they have played a now-legendary weekly show in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, for more than 20 years.

“Reconnecting with his faith and using his intense soulful music,” say organizers, “he began to preach a type of spirituality that meets people where they are, is open to all, and moves everyone that sees him play.” Reverend Vince is also involved in social activism, working with other progressive faith leaders at home and around the country to build inclusive communities.

Tickets are \$20 advance, \$25 at the door, and kids under 12 get in free. For advance tickets and more information, visit nextstagearts.org. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar, and food from The HAngry Traveler and Vermont Gelato will be available for purchase. Bring lawn chairs or blankets for outdoor seating on the lawn.

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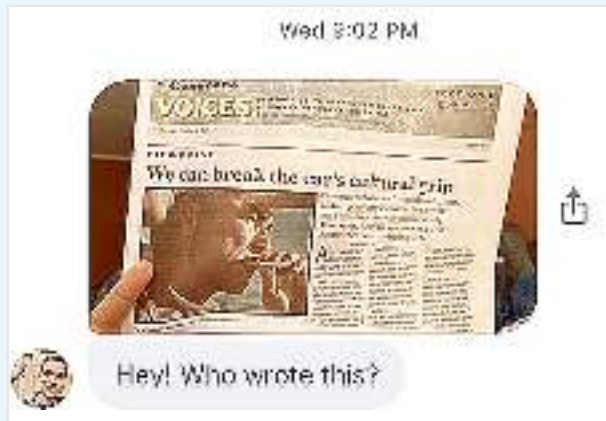
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CLARIFICATION



Alert reader Tim Wessel texts the editor a reasonable question.

Context is everything

OWING TO a production error, the print edition of last week's *Commons* omitted the byline and author information for "We can break the car's cultural grip," a piece written by Rebecca Jones of Brattleboro. Jones is a physician practicing in Brattleboro and a member of 350 Brattleboro, a local volunteer group dedicated to climate justice.

To be clear, this was squarely my mistake. The online version of the piece (commonsnews.org/issue/734/734jones-5) was properly attributed.

ON A RELATED NOTE: As a result of our recent redesign, which required a herculean effort of data conversion of 15 years of data into a new database structure, our website archives are missing biographical information for many Voices contributions. We are in the process of correcting these omissions for the record.

Context for Voices contributions is an essential part of the whole, and we apologize for these omissions. —Jeff Potter, editor

VIEWPOINT

A transgression etched in local, organic carrot

What might one of our Putney children be reflecting to our community?



A symbol of hate transformed with the same carrot used to draw it.

ON WEDNESDAY, Sept. 27, I went for a walk before sunset. Heading up Kimball Hill, I noticed several brightly colored objects scattered around the sidewalk ahead of me. As I approached, I saw three carrots, one broken in half, and two green plastic bags discarded a bit farther up.

Those who have children at Putney Central School are probably aware that the school offers a program called Food for Kids, giving students the opportunity to go "shopping" for free groceries at school each Wednesday.

I imagined that perhaps some PCS kids had been walking home from school, maybe munching on snacks out of their food bags, and then discarded the bags and carrots.

That's when I was stunned to see that one of the halves of the broken carrot had been used to draw a swastika in the middle of the sidewalk.

MY IMPULSE was to get distance from the symbol, and I started walking again. Then I stopped to process what I'd just encountered.

I turned and saw someone I know walking up the hill, a member of the Putney Selectboard. I pointed out the swastika. We chatted for some minutes. The Selectboard member took photos and said they would bring this up at the upcoming meeting, then walked on.

I knelt down and picked up a broken carrot end. I pressed it into the pavement, connecting the free ends of the swastika to its corners, transforming it into a quartered square. The carrot made for a surprisingly smooth crayon. I drew more squares and rectangles, stacking one on top of the other, creating a hopscotch board of sorts.

I put the carrots into the green plastic bag and took them away to dispose of.

A TRANSGRESSION etched in local, organic carrot. What might one of our Putney children be reflecting to our community?

Children will use the tools available to them. The adults in their lives get to decide what tools to offer them. The children get to decide how to use what's offered.

Thanks to the organizing efforts and labor of many Putney community members, PCS children have regular access at school to nourishing, local, farm-fresh food.

Could our community also put that level of effort and care into regularly providing experiences that help PCS students expand their cultural awareness and understanding?

Putney

JESSICA GREENE is a mediator, writer, and mother living in Putney.

VIEWPOINT

Oct. 7 was not Day 1 of Israel's war on Palestinians

U.S. mainstream media does not have the courage of its own professed convictions when it comes to Palestine and Israel

WHAT IS HAPPENING in Palestine and Israel has finally put to a lie the pretense that the United States was or ever could be an "honest broker" — as Washington has long labeled itself — in negotiating a fair and just peace.

Since Saturday, Oct. 7, regardless of whether they are liberal, conservative, or somewhere in between, U.S. officials with President Joe Biden first out of the gate have been falling over themselves in the rush to justify any action Israel decides to take.

Carpet bomb Gaza? No problem. Slaughter more Palestinian children? Be our guest. Bomb an international border crossing? We'll just look the other way.

This most recent U.S. capitulation and complicity pulls back the curtain on Washington and Tel Aviv as comfortable bedfellows in their shared desire to delegitimize and defuse Palestinians' decades-long struggle for autonomy and justice.

NO LESS A PARTY to that incestuous relationship is the U.S. big media, which across the board willingly join in the Israel First chorus by sidelining or omitting the Palestinian narrative. On the rare occasions when a Palestinian opinion or news source is included, it must always, always be "counterbalanced" with an Israeli one.

But here's the problem: There is no balance.

KATE CASA, a former journalist and an editor of this newspaper in its earliest years, has worked for years in higher education, development, and communications. She has lived in and reported from the Middle East.

Israel is a nuclear power that receives \$3.8 billion in U.S. military weaponry each year. It boasts the most sophisticated spyware and surveillance mechanisms of any country in the world.

The heavily armed and fortified troops of the Israel Defense Forces are backed up by Israeli police throughout the occupied West Bank and the border with Gaza, where they man hundreds of checkpoints, barriers, and other roadblocks that impede or block Palestinian movement.

Israeli troops and police routinely enter villages, where they arrest or kill Palestinian children with impunity. Soldiers accompany and often assist some of the more than 700,000 settlers who live illegally on stolen Palestinian land, channel their raw sewage into Palestinian fields, and daily harass, attack, and often kill Palestinians as they attempt to take their children to school, harvest their crops, worship, or transport the ill to hospital.

I AM NOT A scientist, but even I understand that pressure

SEE PALESTINE, C2

PRIMARY SOURCES

'You have no idea how much damage this does to people'

One Vermonter testifies to state lawmakers about his journey through the systems that are intended to help people experiencing homelessness but end up letting them down again and again. And his is a success story.

I WAS BORN in Burlington and raised in Chittenden County. I graduated high school in Essex Junction, and then graduated with an associate's degree from Champlain College.

I have worked in retail, in home health care, as a contractor for the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service, and ultimately as an occupancy analyst for JPMorgan Chase.

I am a son, a brother, an uncle, and a friend to many. I am a writer, an artist, a nerd, and a novice ukulele player.

From late October 2020 through mid-August 2021 I lived at the John Graham Shelter in Vergennes. This was followed by two years in transitional housing, through the single-room occupancy (SRO) program, from August 2021 until Sept. 1, when I successfully leased a newly built apartment in Bristol.

At the time I entered the shelter, I believed that this was the lowest point in my

BRYAN PLANT II gave this testimony on Oct. 5 to a joint hearing of the House Committee on Human Services and Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, as the two committees met to evaluate Act 81 as proscribed by the law that retroactively saved the state's emergency motel housing program.

life. Boy, was I wrong.

Just prior to entering the shelter, an acquaintance of a good friend, familiar with the system, helped me start the mountain of paperwork required to acquire services. The plan prior to moving into the shelter was that this acquaintance would run point (volunteering her time), and the shelter staff would provide support.

That did not happen.

After a week I was essentially ghosted, and the paperwork we filled out was never

submitted. After wasting two months, it was finally cleared up, and I had to start from scratch.

This also began the process of regular changes with service coordinators. If you count the initial advocate, I'm now on number 11 (in three years). This is not unique for people experiencing homelessness.

AROUND THAT SAME TIME, I began to try to access the federal government's Lifeline Program for free cell phone service for low-income consumers. Vermont is serviced by Q Link. Their actions forced me to go without a phone for months, and they wouldn't help me when I didn't have coverage. This took close to six months to resolve — a huge barrier to keeping up with appointments and services.

In late January/early February 2021, I was presented with the opportunity to participate in the SRO program, which

SEE TESTIMONY, C2



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

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

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■ Palestine

FROM SECTION FRONT

applied to matter in a confined space leads to explosion, and explosions are ugly. Israel has been steadily applying pressure on Palestinians since 1948, when Zionist ethnic-cleansing campaigns of terror killed thousands and drove thousands more from their homes in historic Palestine into refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and elsewhere in the region. The pressure increased in 1967, when Israel occupied and subsequently annexed the West Bank and Gaza, creating another massive displacement of Palestinians. So, Oct. 7 was not “Day 1” of the so-called Israel-Gaza war. It was Day 280 of the 75th year of Israel’s war on Palestinians. And all of this — the oppression, destruction, and death of Palestinian lives, land, and property — would not be possible without hundreds of billions of dollars in U.S. weaponry and aid, with U.S. diplomatic and geopolitical clout to back it up.

SO HOW ABOUT we just be honest with ourselves now? The United States has no interest whatsoever in truth or integrity when it comes to Palestinians. Washington will never willingly concede that Palestinians

have human rights. Whether it’s NPR or *The Wall Street Journal*, U.S. mainstream media does not have the courage of its own professed convictions when it comes to Palestine and Israel. U.S. academic institutions have little appetite for poking the “antisemitism” beast, which invariably rears its ugly head when students demand justice for Palestine or when faculty question Israel. Oh, and if you live in one of the 35 U.S. states that have passed anti-boycott legislation, you are likewise not free to express your opinion about Israel through nonviolent participation in a boycott. If you are one of the few but growing number of Americans to whom this sounds wrong; if you are interested in deciding for yourself what’s happening, you will need to dig deep. News organizations that do attempt to report the facts get blacklisted on social media platforms, and there’s a good chance that any post you make in support of Palestinians will get you a time-out or worse. You will have to look broadly, and internationally, for factual sources of news and information, but they are out there. Find them. Read, listen — and then please think for yourself.

War does not determine who is right — only who is left. —BERTRAND RUSSELL

VIEWPOINT

Celebrating the Indigenous peoples of Vermont

‘On Indigenous Peoples Day, let us affirm that all Indigenous people need to come together to find ways to both uplift and celebrate our differences’

Oct. 9 is Indigenous Peoples Day — an opportunity for all Americans to acknowledge the resilience and diversity of Native cultures in the United States, and celebrate the contributions of those who have been in relationship with the Land long before the arrival of Christopher Columbus.

We are the four Western Abenaki tribes recognized by the state of Vermont: Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi, Elnu Abenaki Tribe, Ko’asek Traditional Band of the Koas Abenaki Nation, and Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation. On this day of national acknowledgment, it is important to come together in celebration of all Native cultures. We have been Indigenous people of these homelands, now recognized as a part of the United States, for more than 12,000 years. The Abenaki in Vermont live peacefully as place-based people, celebrate our heritage, and enjoy the recognition granted to us by the governor, state Legislature, and the entire Vermont congressional delegation. We believe that communities are stronger when they are inclusive, respect differences, and honor a variety of lived

RICH HOLSCHUH, CHIEF DON STEVENS, VERA SHEEHAN, and CHIEF JOANNE CRAWFORD, are representatives of the Abenaki Alliance (abenakialliance.org), whose mission is “to foster a collective voice for the Abenaki communities of our homelands while building a strong, sustainable, and united presence that shares our Native heritage, culture, and values with those around us.” This commentary comes to us via *VtDigger* (vtdigger.org).

experiences. We also recognize and honor our Canadian First Nations counterparts, Odanak and Wôlinak in Québec. We have shared heritage, family origins, and cultural traditions. There is more that ties us together than sets us apart. Sadly, some individuals seek to divide, rather than celebrate our commonalities. It is important to understand that we all live within the colonial-derivative governmental structures imposed upon us by our respective nations. We are separated by an international border and are citizens of different countries. We are subject to different laws and live under different rules of sovereignty. Odanak and Wôlinak are recognized under Canadian law, embodying their unique lived experiences in Canada. They are not recognized in the United States,

where our lived experiences and realities are different. ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY, let us affirm that all Indigenous people need to come together to find ways to both uplift and celebrate our differences. Our tribal nations need to work together to end the violence, competition, and disconnection that is the legacy of colonization across North America so that we all may find better paths forward in a changing world. Our truths, our stories, and our ancestors are intertwined throughout history, and we honor all beings who share this space with us in our traditional ways. If we work together, we can foster an inclusive and respectful voice for our shared heritage to ensure cultural continuity for future generations. Wliwini. Thank you.

■ Testimony

FROM SECTION FRONT

provides a path to obtaining a Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher. This would be my first experience with filling out Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) paperwork. I filled out the 20-plus-page application and provided financial information as requested. In April I was asked to refresh the financial information — which included filling out the application, in full, for a second time. About two months later, I heard back that I was accepted into the program. The lack of time frames and communication was problematic, let alone the time it took. When months go by, it’s easy for depression, doubt, despair, and hopelessness to set in. The system has let us down so many times, so why should we believe it wouldn’t do so again?

I SAID EARLIER that I thought moving into the shelter was the lowest point in my life. I was wrong. That would be Aug 25, 2021, the day of my disability hearing and my move to my SRO unit. The hearing was grueling because your life is laid bare for people to sift through and confirm all the worst things about your life, while others are actively trying to deny you assistance. This experience nearly broke me. I was then unceremoniously moved to my SRO unit, without contact from any of my support network for several days. These were people I had depended on, who knew how hard this was for me, who knew how poor my health was, who understood my limited ability to get around. I thought I had built connections with them. I was left to flounder for several days. Thankfully, I got through the initial move-in period. I could go on about various programs that were supposed to help with one thing or another (for example, furniture) but fell short. I did receive VERAP (Vermont Emergency Rental Assistance Program) approval, and ultimately I was fortunate with the decision on my disability case. But with a favorable decision, came losing some benefits. The Fed giveth, and the state taketh away. I was able to keep Medicaid during the Covid emergency order; it helped greatly with covering my many medications, counseling appointments, physical therapy, and durable medical equipment. I have now received notice that I am losing Medicaid at the end of October. I am concerned what effect this will have on my health care. The copays for counseling alone will likely force me to go less often. Additionally, in losing Medicaid, I will no longer be eligible for phone service through the Lifeline Program.

OVER THE COURSE of the next two years, while trying to get my life back on track, every few months it seemed like some agency or another needed paperwork filled out. Someone actually needs to read through the questions on these forms, because many are often unclear. They can be so confusing that even service coordinators get them wrong or are stumped by them. Meanwhile, the applicant is worried that one wrong answer can get them dropped from a program and will face the long wait to possibly get benefits restored. This is made even worse by the unrealistic turnaround request times. If I never see another 10-day required response request, it will be too soon. That’s received, not postmarked. The request often shows up 4 days after it’s dated/printed, which gives a person roughly 24 to 48 hours to gather the info and get it back into the mail. Service coordinators are rarely available to meet on such short notice, due to their caseloads, and if multiple clients receive the same requests, somebody gets left in the cold. The fear/stress/panic/anxiety that this evokes in the many, many clients who struggle with mental illness echoes for days and weeks. Trust me, you have no idea how much damage this does to people. It’s especially insulting when the response packet then sits on a desk for weeks or even months.

This is not acceptable. It is an area that I hope the Legislature will look at.


I AM SUCCESSFULLY housed as of September, but my Section 8 voucher almost didn’t get extended. For those unfamiliar with the SRO program, a person accepted into the program spends a year in a transitional living space, and at the end of one year, if they are in good standing, they become eligible for Section 8. Currently, this program is the *only* clear path for many to receive assistance and is available only in limited places. At the end of my year, I was deemed no longer eligible for the subsidy at the location I was living. I could stay there paying full rent on the space, but VSHA would provide no assistance. I was also informed that I would have only six months to use the Section 8 voucher or I would lose it. In other words, I was treated like, if I didn’t find a place, I was doing something wrong. Anyone familiar with the housing situation in Vermont knows how limited the supply is, how high the rents are, and how dire the situation truly is. I conducted my search, but was having very little success in this effort. In November 2022, via my service coordinator (number 9, for those keeping track), I began to reach out to VSHA to make a six-month extension process easier. That period was set to end Jan 30, 2023. We reached out five times before receiving a brief response asking who this request was for — even though my name was clearly provided multiple times. The holidays occurred, after which we reached out five more times before the deadline. We reached out eight more times before getting a response in late March. In April I received a letter telling me I was terminated from the program due to inactivity, but I could request an appeal. I requested an appeal, only to follow up with VSHA to have them tell me they felt a hearing was unnecessary unless my financial situation had changed. I then had to fire back that they kept dodging my questions, that I had spent months trying to get answers, that they kept referencing stuff I already knew, and that if a hearing was the only way to get heard, then I demanded one. VSHA reluctantly agreed to have a hearing. Prior to the hearing, I provided them with cell phone call logs (date/number/time) and all email correspondence. Then, 15 minutes before the hearing, I received a hearing cancellation notice and an email with a soft apology, reinstating me back into the program. They need me to provide updated financials and fill out of another 20-plus-page questionnaire.

I WANT TO BE clear: This is not an uncommon story. If I didn’t keep fighting and keep those records, I might not be housed today. How is someone going through their worst days facing challenges — whether it’s substance-use disorder, trauma, or mental health roadblocks, or whether their service coordinators are not bringing their A game — going to get the help they need? And why are people who are experiencing this always held to a higher standard than providers, state agencies, and others? They can miss deadlines. We cannot. They can lose paperwork. We cannot.

I’ve somehow made it through. Mine is a success story. I don’t know the stories of the speakers testifying on this issue, but I find it disheartening that there are only two people with lived experience speaking today and that we were each given so little time. The problem is not going away. It cannot be ignored. I came today to try to bookend this chapter in my life, give it some meaning, while I figure what comes next. If able, I’d like to return in some capacity to being a productive member of society. I look to add many other titles to my personal resume. I hope sharing my experiences today land in the ears of those that need to hear it. That instead of pulling up the ladder behind me, the process gets smoother and less painful for those who still have nowhere to go. I appreciate your time. Thank you.

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Here We Are - Michael Fuller, T.J. Buckley's, Owner and Chef. Mon 8p, Tues 6a, Wed 11a, Thurs 120p, Fri 9:30p, Sun 5:20p	Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 10/9/23: Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 11:45a
The World Fusion Show - Ep# 162 - Taproots: Mon 5:30p, Tues 4:30p & 8p, Wed 1:30p, Thurs 12:30p, Fri 6a, Sat 6:30a & 3:30p	West River Education District Board Mtg. 10/10/23: Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - Tracy Kitter & Robbie Gamble: Sat 12:30p (LIVE)	Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 10/10/23: Thurs 8:30, Fri 5:30a, Sat 2:30p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - Angela Saini & Carrie Baker: Sat 2p (LIVE)	Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 10/10/23: Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p
1st Wednesdays Presents - The Joy of Lex with the Co-Host of "A Way with Words": Mon 3:15p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 9p, Thurs 9a, Fri 4:45p, Sat 8p, Sun 9:30a	Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 10/11/23: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p
Chesterfield Historical Society - David Mann - The Surveys and Surveyors Part 3: Tues 12:30p, Wed 4:30p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 6:30a, Sat 9a, Sun 6p	Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Board Mtg. 10/11/23: Sat 6p, Sun 6:30a
Windham World Affairs Council - Peter Galbraith - Is The American Century Over?: Mon 1:15p, Thurs 2p, Fri 10a, Sat 5p, Sun 7:30p	Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 10/13/23: Mon 8p Tues 6:15a, Wed 12p
Stained Glass Windows of St. Michaels - Week 5: The Guardian Angel: Mon 8:35p, Tues 9a, Wed 9a, Thurs 5:50p, Fri 12:30p, Sun 4p	Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg. 9/21/23: Mon 6p, Tues 10a, Wed 2:45p, Sun 9a
Stained Glass Windows of St. Michaels - Week 6: St. Cecilia: Tues 8:30p, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 10:15a, Sat 9:15p, Sun 9:15p	Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 10/2/23: Mon 9a, Tues 12:45p, Wed 10:30a, Sun 6p
Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	Brattleboro Planning Commission Mtg. 10/2/23: Mon 6a, Tues 6p, Thurs 2:45p
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	River Valleys Unified School District Board Mtg. 10/2/23: Mon 10:15a, Tues 2p, Sat 8:30p, Sun 10:45a
News Block: WTSA News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p	Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 10/5/23: Mon 4:15p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 8:45a, Sun 7:15p
St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	VT Nuclear Decommissioning Citizens Advisory Panel Mtg. 9/19/23: Tues 9p, Wed 6a, Thurs 12p, Fri 2:15p
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p	Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board Mtg. 9/25/23: Mon 11:30a, Tues 5p, Fri 5p, Sat 11a
Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a	Town Matters - Weekly Episode: Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p
St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass: Sat 4p (LIVE), Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p	The David Pakman Show: Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

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

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Applications for Human Services funding due by Nov. 8

BRATTLEBORO — The Representative Town Meeting Human Services Review Committee is accepting applications for Fiscal Year 2025 Human Services Funding. The application, as well as instructions and guidelines, are posted at brattleboro.org. The deadline to submit applications to the Brattleboro Town Manager's Office via email is Wednesday, Nov. 8, at 5 p.m. All applications should be sent to Jessica Sticklor at jsticklor@brattleboro.org. She may also be called for more information about the process at 802-251-8115.

An information session regarding Human Services Funding is scheduled on Wednesday, Oct. 18, at 4:30 p.m., at the Municipal Center, 230 Main St., in the Selectboard Meeting Room and by an online platform to be determined and later posted on brattleboro.org. Applicants are encouraged to attend.

Brigid's Kitchen plans Welcome Center fundraiser

GUILFORD — St. Brigid's Kitchen and Food Pantry will be at the Vermont Welcome Center on Interstate 91 on Friday, Oct. 13, for one of their biggest fundraisers of the year.

They are seeking donations of fresh fruit, cookies, brownies, and other baked goods to sell at their booth. Those who would like to volunteer any of these items or a monetary donation, call 802-451-6833 or email stbrigidskitchenvt@gmail.com.

Donations may be dropped off at St. Brigid's Kitchen and Pantry at 38 Walnut St. in Brattleboro on Thursday, Oct. 12, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monetary donations may also be made through stbrigidskitchenandpantry.org. All proceeds go toward continuing their mission to feed the hungry.

Mushroom walk at Manitou

WILLIAMSVILLE — By all accounts, this has been a phenomenal year for mushrooms, so it's the perfect time to join mushroom enthusiast Justin Garner on Saturday, Oct. 14, from 1 to 4 p.m. for an exploration of the mushroom species found at The Manitou Project, 300 Sunset Lake Rd.

The edible and medicinal properties of mushrooms will be discussed, along with their interconnections to the tree and plant communities. The day will finish with cooking and tasting the edibles collected. No prior mushroom identification knowledge is required. In case of rain,

the event will be held on Oct. 15.

Garner says he has been a lifelong student of the natural world, beginning with the study of wild edible plants. He pursued training in herbal medicine at Bastyr University and the Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism. The study and identification of mushrooms has been one of his longstanding passions. He recently led a series of mushroom workshops at Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center.

Space is limited and advance registration is required. Contact Fred Taylor at rtaylor@antioch.edu to register or for more information.

RFPL offers 'Hospice 101' session on Oct. 18

BELLOWS FALLS — On Wednesday, Oct. 18, at the Rockingham Free Public Library, Anthony Knox of Visiting Nurse and Hospice for VT and NH presents "Hospice 101: Why Hospice Doesn't Need to Sound Scary."

"The word 'Hospice' has a lot of negative reactions when brought up in conversation, but it really shouldn't," Knox said in a news release. "Hospice is a service provided to individuals during the final stages of an incurable disease, but the service is so much more than that. Our Hospice team will walk you through understanding all aspects of the care received during hospice."

"In addition to learning about the physical, emotional and spiritual support provided to the individual on Hospice, you will learn about how the same VNH team also supports the family and friends around the individual. There can be a lot of fear about the idea of Hospice, but the VNH will show you that it doesn't have to be as scary as you think!"

VNH is active in more than 100 towns across Vermont and New Hampshire. This event is free. For more information, visit rockinghamlibrary.org, email programming@rockinghamlibrary.org, call the library at 802-463-4270, or stop by at 65 Westminster St.

Breakfast served at Williamsville Hall

WILLIAMSVILLE — On Thursday, Oct. 19, from 8 to 10:30 a.m., a complimentary monthly breakfast will be offered at Williamsville Hall, 35 Dover Rd.

Open to everyone, the event provides homemade pastries, tea, coffee, and orange juice. If the weather is amenable, seating will be outside; if not, seating will be inside. Donations for the Hall, which is ADA compliant, are appreciated. For more information, email williamsvillehall@gmail.com, or visit williamsvillehall.org.

BELLOWS FALLS

Our Place reports record food, cash donations in Load the Opera House drive

BELLOWS FALLS—The food came rolling in recently as Our Place Drop-in Center almost doubled the amount it collected over last year's Overflow the Opera House food drive.

"The generous people of this area dropped off 2,238 pounds of food for our pantry," said Our Place Executive Director Dave Billings in a news release. "They also donated almost \$12,500 in cash that we can use to purchase food."

With the help of the employees of Chroma Technology and Sonnax and a design by Charlie Hunter, promotion for this year's drive included a banner across the Square, T-shirts worn by volunteers, and special bags left at Lisa's Market to remind shoppers to pick up items to donate. A few Chroma employees also created a Super Mario-themed can-struction for the window at Edward Jones.

Those same employees, plus the Bellows Falls Rotary Club and the Bellows Falls Woman's Club, also ran on-site food drives that added to the haul, and they showed up to wave signs in the Square.

Peter "Fish" Case of Peak Radio, assisted by Radio Bob, broadcast throughout the day. The volunteers also appreciated

the pizza donated by Athens Pizza and the anonymous drop-off of coffee and doughnuts on the chilly morning.

"We owe a big thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered or helped in some way, including Jen and her staff at the Opera House," said Billings. "We now have a good basis to continue our mission of connecting people to food and each other."

Our Place is located at 4 Island St. and offers boxes of food to prepare at home plus breakfast and lunch each weekday. Further information can be found at ourplacevermont.org and on Facebook, or by contacting info@ourplacevermont.org or 802-463-2217.

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AROUND THE TOWNS

After hours event celebrates World Singing Day at Brooks Memorial Library

BRATTLEBORO — All ages and voices are invited to fill their hearts with joy and the library with song on Friday, October 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Main Reading Room of Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St.

The community singalong will feature a songbook of many traditions (folk, golden oldies, gospel, Beatles, old pop and rock, show tunes, etc.). Participants will take turns choosing what to sing and the lyrics will be projected on a screen for all to see. Rich Grumbine accompanies on guitar.

World Singing Day promotes a global singalong held annually in October. "As a catalyst for positive human connection, this one day each year serves as an opportunity to celebrate our global family through the international

language of music. It is a joyful community experience for musicians and non-musicians alike, from shower singers to professionals, as they gather in their communities and sing together," say organizers.

All are invited to attend and bring friends and family members. The event is accessible to people in wheelchairs. For more information, contact the library at 802-254-5290 or visit brookslibraryvt.org.

Heath Gordon Scholarship fundraiser is Oct. 21

CHESTER — The annual Heath Gordon Scholarship fundraiser will take place at American Legion Post 67, 635 VT Route 103 South, on Saturday, Oct. 21, featuring both a live and silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and live music by MV19, which features former members of Vehicle and Mistress, who will be playing

classic rock covers.

Admission is \$10 and all proceeds support a Green Mountain Union High School scholarship fund for students seeking a college degree in music or art. This year's fundraiser is dedicated to Wendy Gordon. The event starts at 6 p.m. and will go until everyone feels that they have sufficiently rocked and rolled. For more information, visit facebook.com/HeathGordonScholarshipFund.

Dummerston Historical Society hosts talk on Dr. Grace Burnett

DUMMERSTON — Dr. Robert Tortolani will speak on the life and medical practice of Dr. Grace Burnett at Dummerston Historical Society's quarterly meeting on Sunday, Oct. 22, at 2 p.m., at the Society's schoolhouse in Dummerston Center.

Burnett was born and raised in Dummerston and became Brattleboro's first woman

physician, which was a real feat in the early 1900s. She graduated from medical school 1912 and established her Brattleboro practice in 1914. The Historical Society has approximately 30 of her medical books.

Through his personal and medical experience and love of history, Tortolani will share his insight into the life of Dr. Burnett in the early and mid-1900s. He continues to be very active in numerous pursuits in Brattleboro, Windham County, and the greater Vermont community since leaving active practice in 2017, including leading a weekly veterans group, running a free clinic, teaching medical students, and speaking to various historical society groups.

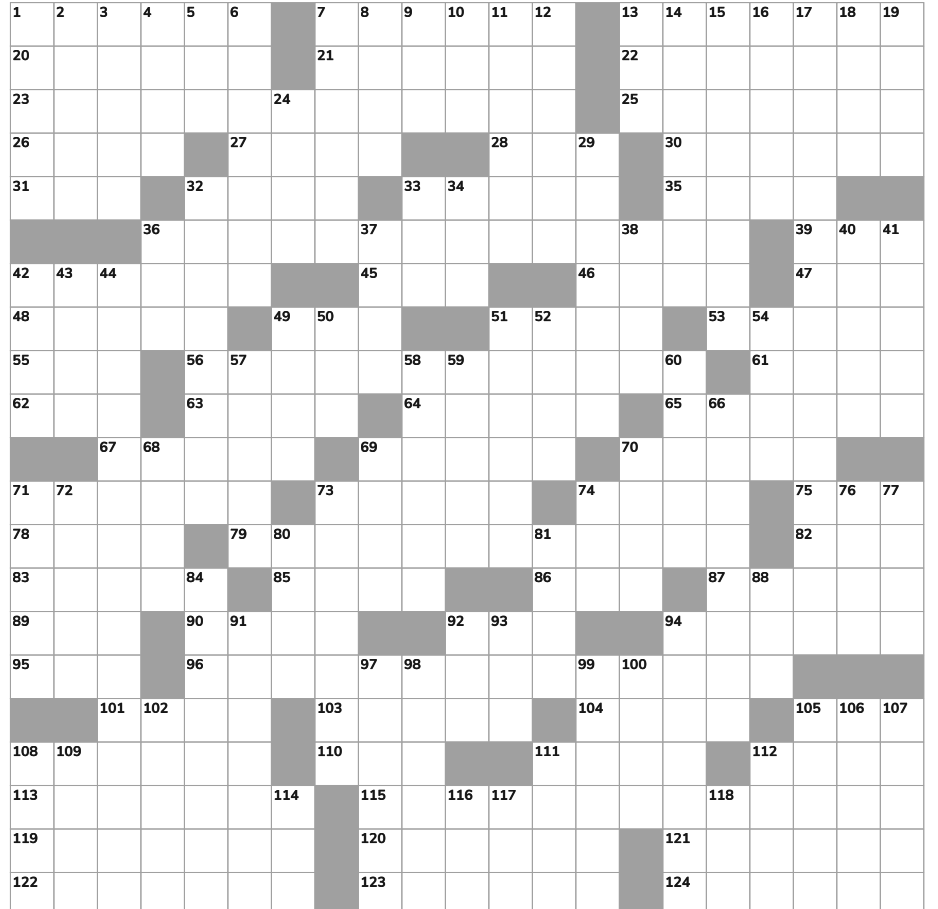
All are invited, free of charge, and the Historical Society is accessible. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact gailsvt@gmail.com or call 802-254-9311.

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Across

- "The Life Aquatic with Steve ___"
- African antelope
- Organic promise
- Water purification company
- Perceived to be
- Most slippery
- Stuff that has to get done before the championship?
- Run long
- Office fill-in
- They're all in the family
- Slalom curve
- Put into service
- Venice-to-Naples dir.
- Modeled
- "Straight Up" singer
- Hot corner bag
- Wallet plan?
- Turntable stat
- Nod's meaning
- Piece of history
- Minor flaw
- Ligurian ___
- Taylor and Fillmore, partywise
- Coagulate
- Neet rival
- Like dishwater and bathwater
- Punch-to-the-stomach sound
- Very small mountain range?
- Shawarma holder
- Fate
- Out of shape
- Va-va-voom
- Equiangular figure
- "Up a Road Slowly" author Hunt
- Pays to play
- Sheepish?
- Mr. Mussolini
- Hiker's path
- With 16-Down, Dana Scully's show
- Lt.'s subordinate
- Teri's "Young Frankenstein" role
- Strengthen eyelid movements?
- Thanksgiving, e.g.: Abbr.
- Co. with a spokesduck
- Casting location
- Go a-courting
- Practiced, as a trade
- Floral neckpiece
- "Like, yesterday!"
- CBS forensic series
- Fixed charge
- Big laugh
- Appease Cy Young candidate?
- "First Take" channel
- Manicurist's abrasive
- Tinted
- College application no.
- How Viola in "Twelfth Night" is disguised
- Pathetic
- Does and bucks
- Karate blow
- Nightclub
- Scary people on Murdoch's channel?
- Retiree's title
- Melodic-sounding
- Husband-to-be
- "Sure looks like it"



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- Port on the Loire
- Foams

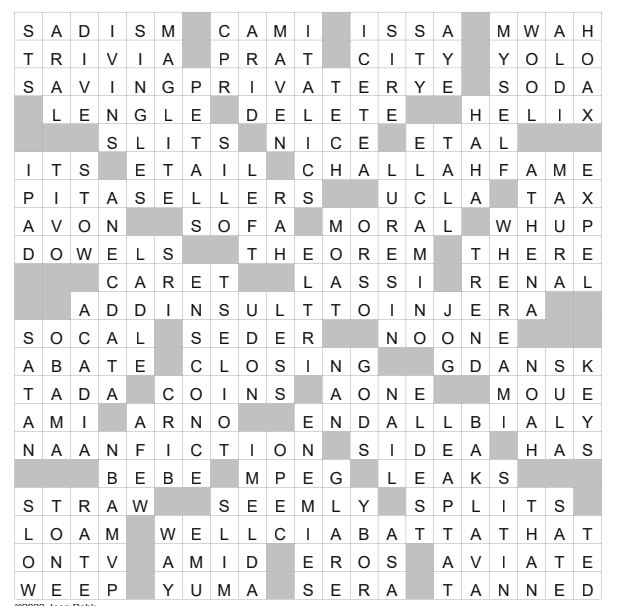
Down

- Drink garnishes
- Frozen drink treats
- French English Channel feeder
- Boo-boo
- Klutzy
- XDefiant game maker
- Novelist Allende
- Diner on "Alice"
- When doubled, a sci-fi shooting sound
- "It's ___ from me"
- Rio Grande city
- Invites to the roof garden
- Great opening
- Excel row?
- Veteran mariners
- See 74-Across
- Bookworm's post-dinner drink?
- This, in Toledo
- Are, in Avignon
- Kia subcompact
- Not too swift
- Takes the kitty
- Jazz Appreciation Mo.
- Spanx product
- Seek a handout
- Sub station?
- Hindu garment
- Tortellini topping
- Mexican native
- Fort no-show
- "Get lost!"
- Panning in the style of a Mayberry aunt?
- No longer present
- CPR giver
- To wit
- Nile crawlers
- Familiar with
- Just before the hour

- Lili St. ___
- Agt. that blends in
- Posse leader
- "Love your stuff"
- Indiana Jones's hat
- "___ the rub"
- Prompting assistant
- False flattery
- Belgian treaty city
- House swing spot
- Church recesses
- Big cards
- "Totally agree"
- Both dis and dat
- Affected goodbye
- Chinese truth
- Mark, as a checklist
- "Bluey" viewer
- Douglas ___

Last issue's solution

"Breaking Bread"



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COLUMN | *Sports Roundup*

Elliott leads Bears to 26-20 win over Terriers

The Brattleboro Bears played their best football game of the season in a 26-20 win over the Bellows Falls Terriers on Oct. 6 at Hadley Field.

Bears quarterback Karson Elliott, who played the entire game, threw for three touchdowns — two to Jackson Emery and another to Alex Papadimitriou — and ran for a 60-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter, providing the margin of victory.

Brattleboro's defense also turned in a strong performance, recovering three fumbles and not allowing BF's running game to roll up lots of yardage.

After a scoreless first quarter, Elliott put the Bears on the board with a 57-yard touchdown pass to a wide open Emery for a 7-0 lead with 8:55 to play in the second quarter. It was the only score in the first half.

The Terriers got back into the game in a big way on their opening possession of the third quarter with a 58-yard touchdown run by Walker James. A two-point conversion try failed, and BF trailed 7-6 with 10:28 remaining in the third.

Brattleboro got its second touchdown with a 35-yard pass from Elliott to Papadimitriou, but BF's Cole Moore intercepted a two-point conversion pass to make it 13-6 with 6:24 left in the third.

The door was left open for a BF comeback, and they responded with a long scoring drive capped off with a 2-yard run up the middle by James. Tristan Boylan's point-after kick tied the game, 13-13, with 22.6 seconds left in the third.

But Brattleboro responded to the challenge in the fourth quarter with a combination of tough inside running from Noah Perusse, a 20-yard keeper by Elliott, and the biggest play of the game — a juggling 14-yard touchdown catch by Emery as he tumbled into the end zone. Elliott's extra point put the Bears in front, 20-13, with 9:20 to play.

BF tried to tie the game, but penalties and great defensive pressure by linemen Sam Maddow and Jett Emery thwarted the Terriers. Brattleboro got the ball back with 3:15 to play, and Elliott's 60-yard run to the end zone sealed the Terriers' fate. A two-point conversion try failed but the Bears had a 26-13 lead with 2:47 to play.

The Terriers needed points in a hurry, and cut the lead to 26-20 with 1:52 remaining on a 37-yard touchdown catch by James that was set up by a 30-yard catch by Blake Bertrand. An onside kick attempt failed, and the Bears ran out the clock to improve their record to 2-3-1.

It was the second straight loss for the 3-3 Terriers. Both the Terriers and the Bears have tough games this weekend. Brattleboro is hosting Rutland in the Bears' final regular season home game on Friday at 7 p.m. at Natowich Field, while the Terriers head north for a Saturday matinee with Lyndon Institute at 1 p.m.

Boys' soccer

• Undeclared Twin Valley Wildcats are on a roll in Division IV, thanks to their scoring machine, striker Cody Magnant. He scored four goals against Long Trail School in a 5-1 win on Oct. 2. Hunter Roth scored the other goal for the Wildcats and also had two assists, while Brayden Brown and Steven Oyer had an assist apiece.

Twin Valley had jumped out to a 5-0 lead, but Cody Lamson scored for LTS in the 77th minute. Wildcats goalkeeper Kman Lackey made five saves.

The Wildcats closed out the week with a 1-0 road win over Rivendell on Oct. 6. Magnant scored the game's only goal with five minutes left in regulation, with Niko Gerding getting the assist. Twin Valley had a 15-4 advantage in shots.

Since the Wilmington-Whitingham school merger in 2004 that created Twin Valley, the Wildcats have won



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.

state titles in 2005, 2013, 2014, 2019, and 2020. With the talent on this year's team, coach Buddy Hayford, the all-time career leader in victories in Vermont high school soccer, has a good chance of seeing the Wildcats win a sixth state title next month.

• With a 4-2 win over Woodstock on Oct. 2 and a 3-1 loss to Mount Anthony on Oct. 6, Brattleboro is now 6-2-1 on the season.

• Leland & Gray shut out Bellows Falls, 3-0, on Oct. 2. The Terriers then got shut out again in a 4-0 loss to Springfield on Oct. 6. BF is still searching for its first win of the season.

• Austin Kubisek scored three goals, two of them off penalty kicks, as Green Mountain defeated Leland & Gray, 3-1, on Oct. 6.

Girls' soccer

• Zadi Olmstead had a pair of goals as Brattleboro defeated Bellows Falls, 4-1, in Westminster on Oct. 3. Reese Croutworst had a goal and an assist and Sophie Albright also scored. Bears goalkeeper Abigail Henry made eight saves in the victory, allowing just one goal to BF's Elizabeth Anderson early in the second half.

The Bears then lost to Rutland, 4-1, on Oct. 4. Croutworst gave Brattleboro a 1-1 tie late in the first half on a header off an Albright corner kick. Rutland then took control with a goal from Allannah Rooney and a pair of successful penalty kicks by Adysen Kinsman before the first half ended. The Bears ended the week with



Brattleboro quarterback Karson Elliott (2) threw for three touchdowns and ran for another touchdown as the Bears defeated Bellows Falls, 26-20, on Oct. 6 at Hadley Field.

a 5-3-1 record.

• With a 7-2 loss to Leland & Gray on Oct. 6, Bellows Falls ended the week at 1-7. Leland & Gray improved to 7-2-1.

• Proctor shut out Twin Valley, 5-0, on Oct. 3. With a 5-0 loss to Long Trail, the Wildcats fell to 0-10.

Field hockey

• It took a bit of time for Bellows Falls to get rolling against Otter Valley on Oct. 3, but once they did, the result was 6-0 shutout victory.

BF had a 1-0 lead at the half, but they then scored a goal in the third

quarter and got four more in the fourth quarter to put the game away. Ava LaRoss led the Terriers with three goals, while Veronica Moore had two goals and Nola Sciacca added another. Livi Clough made two saves in goal to pick up another win for the Terriers.

Unfortunately, the goals weren't there when BF hosted Burr and Burton on Oct. 6. Kaelin Downey had the game's only score, assisted by Piper Morgan on a penalty corner, as the Bulldogs blanked the Terriers, 1-0. BF is now 5-3 on the season.

• Brattleboro had a pair of road losses last week, a 3-0 defeat at Woodstock on Oct. 2, and a 4-0 loss at Burr and Burton on Oct. 4. The Bears finished the week with a 3-6 record.

Cross-country

• The Woods Trail Run, the annual dress rehearsal for the Vermont high school cross-country championships, was held on Oct. 7 at Thetford Academy.

This race is unique in that it classifies runners by time, rather than school size, so racers have a chance to compete in heats against their peers from across New England over the 5K course that has been the site of the Vermont state meet since 1992.

In the girls' division, Brattleboro's Tillie Farwell finished 194th overall out of 392 runners in 26 minutes, 42.23 seconds. Other finishers for the Bears included Elliana Galdamez (271st, 28:45.14), Evie Kiehle (290th, 29:10.97), Priya Kitzmiller (296, 29:29.71), and Addison DeVault (338th, 31:31.32). Brattleboro finished 33rd out of 36 schools.

In the boys' event, Nico Jonathan-Leach finished 74th overall out of 460 runners in 18:53.89, followed by teammates Jonas Ackerman-Hovis (251st, 21:33.45), Miles Hovis-Ackerman (257th, 22:19.73), Jude Anders (300th, 22:21.65), and Jack Webster-Rose (390th, 23:58.08). Brattleboro finished 34th out of 42 schools.

The Brattleboro runners will be back in Thetford on Oct. 28 for the state meet, with the Southern Vermont League Championships set for Oct. 20 in Rutland.

Killington Cup tickets go on sale Oct. 12

• Tickets for the 2023 Stifel Killington Cup will be available for purchase starting Oct. 12 at 10 a.m. at killington.com. Taking place on Nov.24-26, the Audi FIS Ski World

Cup will once again bring the top women's giant slalom and slalom racers to Vermont.

The Killington event is expected to attract U.S. Ski Team superstars, including Mikaela Shiffrin, a five-time Killington Cup slalom victor and winningest alpine skier in history, and former University of Vermont skier and 2023 world champion, Paula Moltzan.

Returning this year are the athlete bib presentation, fireworks display, and festival village opening to kick things off on Friday night. No ticket is required for the Friday night activities, which are free to the public. Saturday and Sunday will feature world-class ski racing, as well as live music performances, starting at just \$10 for a ticket.

Senior bowling roundup

• Week 5 of the fall/winter season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on Oct. 5 saw Stepping Stones (22-3) had another a 5-0 week, hanging on to first place, while Hairiers (20-5) had another 4-1 week to hang on to second place. Skippers and Four Pins (both 14-11) tied for third, followed by Four Seasons and High Rollers (both 13-12), No Splits and Dumblebor (both 11-14), and PEWJ (2-23).

Vicki Butynski had the women's high handicap game (240) and Nancy Dalzell had the high handicap series (669). Norm Corliss had the men's high handicap game (260), while Chuck Adams had the high handicap series (729). No Splits had the high team handicap game (912) and Four Pins had the high handicap series (2,616).

Adams had the men's high scratch series (673) with games of 235, 223, and 214. Robert Rigby had a 652 series that featured games of 242 and 226. Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 577 series with games of 224 and 193, John Walker had a 551 series with games of 200 and 194, Fred Ashworth had a 528 series with a 200 game, Al Dascomb had a 506 series with a 196 game, and Duane Schillemat had a 500 series with a 192 game. Rick Westcott had a 528 game.

Dalzell had the women's high scratch series (477) with games of 170 and 161. Butynski had a 159 game, Deb Kolpa had games of 157 and 151, and Carol Gloski rolled a 155.



Bellows Falls forward Ava LaRoss (8), seen here being shadowed by Brattleboro defender Ellen Young during a game last month, scored three goals in a 6-0 win over Otter Valley on Oct. 3.

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