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

Bellows Falls gets an early look at new housing

Open house at the Bellows Falls Garage shows off some of the 27 new apartments that will be ready for occupancy in June

By Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—Despite damp, cold weather, a large crowd attended Monday's open house at the Bellows Falls Garage Housing Project, listening to speeches and getting the chance to tour the completed fourth floor of the building.

Project organizers explained that there are still another six weeks of work until completion of the building, where wiring still hangs from fixtures and drywall

mud spatters the floors on the other levels.

Applications for the building's 27 apartments started coming in last week, and tenants are expected to begin moving in on June 1.

The building offers five 480-square-foot studio apartments, 18 one-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 526 to 634 square feet, and four two-bedroom apartments ranging from 840 to 990 square feet.

Rear access to the Bellows

■ SEE GARAGE TOUR, A6

L&G students bond in journey to New Orleans

Almost two decades after Hurricane Katrina, students get a firsthand look at a region that has not yet bounced back from catastrophe

By Woody Laidlaw
Community News Service, for The Commons

TOWNSHEND—Eight students from Leland & Gray Union Middle and High School are back after trips to New York City and New Orleans to collect oral histories from people affected by climate catastrophes.

In late March, the students traveled to New York City, where they learned about United Nations' environmental policy and sustainability goals and sat in on a U.N. General Assembly session.

They then traveled more than 30 hours by train to New Orleans to watch climate mitigation strategies in practice. Students worked with a local group, the Bunny Friend Neighborhood Association in the city's Ninth Ward, to build regenerative gardens and to learn about the role they play in flood mitigation.

Sophomore Ely White, who went on the trip, said he was most inspired by the Association's president, Katherine Prevost, who has played a key part in the ward's reconstruction. Students

■ SEE NEW ORLEANS, A5



MATTHEW ROY/UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH

Rev. James Curry holds his preferred version of a sawed-off shotgun — the remains of a firearm that will eventually be transformed into a garden tool, jewelry, or a work of art. Curry and his nonprofit organization, Swords to Plowshares Northeast, will be featured guests at an event at the Retreat Farm which will assemble a number of civic, faith, and law-enforcement leaders to discuss gun safety and gun violence prevention.

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—On April 20, a 12-year-old girl was shot and killed in Hartford, Connecticut, while sitting in a parked car.

“The same thing happened — also in Hartford — 29 years ago. That should have been a turning point. It wasn't. We need to just keep working at it with faith, prayer, and action and know we're not alone.”

So said Right Rev. James Curry, retired Episcopal bishop suffragan of Connecticut, in a recent conversation about his upcoming visit to Brattleboro.

Curry is co-founder of Swords to Plowshares Northeast (S2P), which will share its wherefore, knowhow, and why on Saturday, April 29,

'WEAPONS of DEATH into TOOLS of LIFE'

Community organizations, law enforcement agencies, and faith communities plan Swords to Plowshares, addressing gun violence by taking firearms and forging them anew into gardening tools, jewelry, and works of art

in a gun safety and violence prevention event at Retreat Farm.

The organization's vision is “to be the go-to civilian source for managing gun buybacks and repurposing the weapons.”

It takes its name from a verse in the Book of Isaiah: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Curry, a founding member of Bishops United against Gun Violence, serves as S2P's head of operations and chief blacksmith, creating the gardening tools, jewelry, and works of art that ultimately emerge from the group.

Charged with organizing forge demonstrations with community and religious groups throughout the Northeast, he notes that S2P has presented

■ SEE SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES, A5

State programs help towns express their character through public art

Coffey's bill advances in the Senate, on track to get more funding for art in public buildings

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Art matters. And in Windham County, where many artists live and work, it is also a serious economic driver.

Rep. Sara Coffey, D-Guilford, a former dancer and award-winning

arts administrator, understands that.

“One of the small things that I've been working on this session is a piece of legislation that that would impact artists but also the public and some of our state buildings,” Coffey said.

While Coffey, as chair of the Transportation Committee, has had her hands full this Legislative session writing a multimillion-dollar Transportation Bill, she has also quietly plopped an additional \$25,000 into a bill to raise the funds available to the Art in State Buildings (AISB) program.

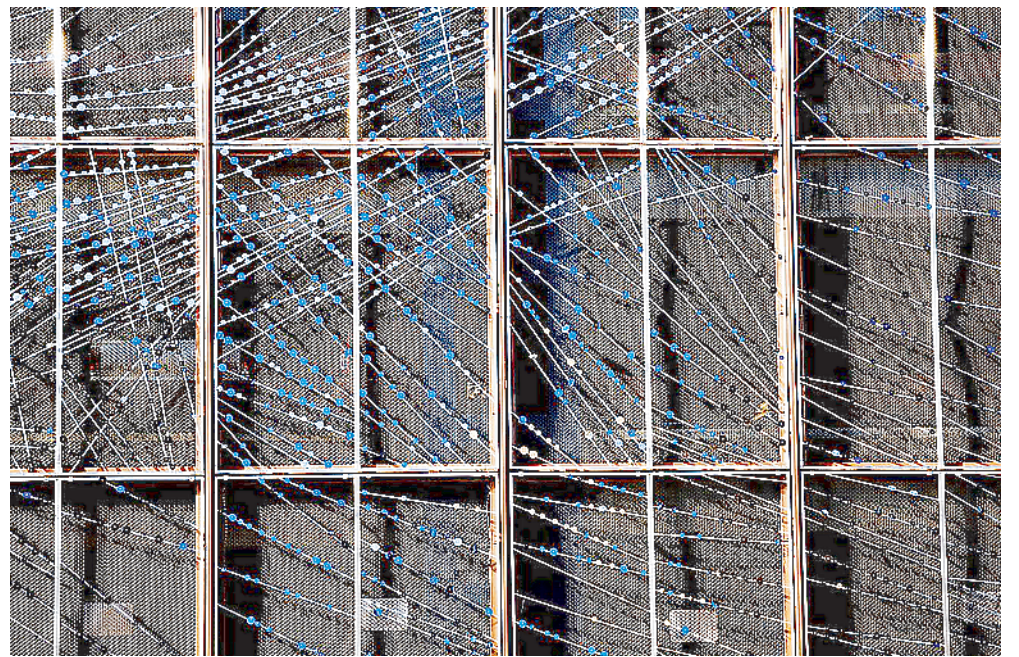
If signed into law, it would boost the program's funding

from \$50,000 to \$75,000 per fiscal year, or about 3/1000 of 1% of the \$8.5 billion general budget.

That funding is transferred from the project budgets for building or renovating state properties.

Since 1988, the AISB program has been administered by the Vermont Arts Council in coordination with the Department of Buildings and General Services and the Art in State Buildings Advisory Committee.

So far it has commissioned artworks from more than 60 artists to appear in 35 state-owned buildings and public spaces across Vermont, according to



FACEBOOK.COM/ASKTHERIVERVT

“Ask the River,” a public art project that received funding through the state's Animating Infrastructure Grant program, included an installation on the Brattleboro Transportation Center.

the Vermont Arts Council website (vermontartscouncil.org).

Coffey's bill, H.102, acknowledges the role of public art, which “improves the character and quality of State buildings; enhances

the workplace of State employees by creating an environment of distinction, enjoyment, and pride; and adds value to the cultural, aesthetic, and economic vitality of the State.”

The bill, therefore, seeks “to support Vermont artists and the benefits of public art by providing ongoing funding for the commissioning of works of art

■ SEE PUBLIC ART, A2

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Deadline for the May 3 issue
 April 28



VIM'S MISSION

Recognizing that a vigorous exchange of ideas and information allows democracy to function and is the lifeblood of a community, Vermont Independent Media:
 • creates a forum for community participation,
 • promotes local independent journalism,
 • fosters civic engagement by building media skills

through publication of *The Commons* and commonsnews.org, and through the Media Mentoring Project.

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

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

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

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In memoriam:

- Alan O. Dann, Judy Gorman, Mia Gannon

Public art

FROM SECTION FRONT

for installation in State buildings and facilities.”

Renovations of the Windham County Family and District Courthouse in Brattleboro in 2010 included “a beautiful piece by Julia Zanes and Donald Saaf,” she said, commissioned from the two Saxtons River artists through the program. A list of completed projects describes the work in the 30 Putney Road building as “etched glass windows, relief sculpture on the exterior of buildings, [and] paintings in hallway and stairwell.”

H. 102 passed the House on March 30; it is now in the Senate Institutions Committee, which has held hearings on the issue and voted in favor of the bill. It was scheduled for a second reading in the full Senate on April 25.

Amy Cunningham, the interim president of the Vermont Arts Council, is delighted with the prospective funding bump for the program — its first pay raise since the law establishing the program was passed in 1988.

“The bill is a long-overdue update to this longstanding program to commission artwork in state buildings where there’s either new construction or renovations happening,” Cunningham said.

“The art enhances the working environment of these buildings,” she continued. “It is really a source of pride for all Vermonters that we’re building up a collection of really important Vermont-based art in state buildings throughout the state for all Vermonters to enjoy.”

Multiple funding sources

Artists should take note: The state now has several separate pots of money to support Vermont artists. The Art in State Buildings program is just one of them.

“That’s using state capital money to commission a work in a state building or on a state property,” Cunningham said. “So it’s a pretty specific thing.”

The AISB program is not about getting paintings on display at the Vermont State House, for example.

“That is handled in a different whole different way altogether,” Coffey said — a way that involves no taxpayer funds.

“The state curator is in charge of that; those pieces are commissioned by the Friends of the State House. And so that is not public money — it’s really important that the distinction is made, I think, because there can be confusion.”

Another pot of art money lies in a program called Better Places, a noncompetitive, community-matching grant program run by the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. It is not exclusively about art; its goal is to empower Vermonters “to create inclusive and vibrant public places serving Vermont’s designated downtowns, village centers, new town centers, or neighborhood development areas.”

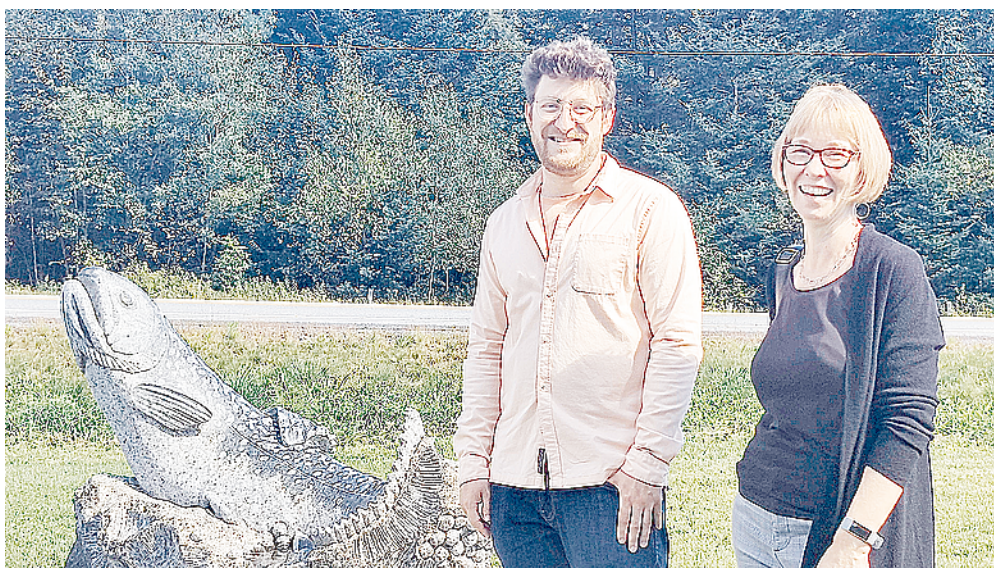
The program provides one-on-one project coaching, local fundraising support, and two-to-one matching grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000 to make community-led “place-making” ideas happen.

The wall mural on High Street leading into Brattleboro, inspired by Epsilon Spires and the Afghan Artlords, is a perfect example of creative place-making.

“I was actually so happy to be the lead sponsor on this legislation that that created this program in statute and began to fund it,” Coffey said.

Another pot of money is the Animating Infrastructure Grant program, also run by the Vermont Arts Council, which funded \$15,000 in 2019 for the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance to support “Ask the River,” described as “a new kinetic public art installation.”

“It is specifically about integrating public art into infrastructure projects,” Cunningham said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sculptor Sean Hunter Williams, left, and State Rep Sara Coffey, D-Guilford, stand with his sculpture that was installed in 2020 at the Roxbury Fish Hatchery with funding through the Art and State Buildings program.

“The big thing in Brattleboro is the exterior of the Transportation Center in downtown. It’s a multifaceted project to activate that whole building with all kinds of arts and historical interpretation.”

Each such project is initiated by the community; it’s not about an artist saying, “Hey, I want money to do this project.”

“For example, in Brattleboro they did a call to artists and asked for proposals,” Cunningham said. “It doesn’t start with an artist. It starts with an identified project, and then we put out a call to artists for design proposals.”

In addition to hosting workshops and networking events, the Arts Council has other grants for artists, for “the creation of original work, time in residencies, skill development, and business training,” the organization’s website explains.

In addition to the AISB program, Artist Development Grants support the professional development efforts of artists at all stages of their careers, Creation Grants support the creation of new work by Vermont artists of all disciplines, and Vermont Creative Futures Grants provide aid to artists who continue to struggle financially due to the impact of

the COVID-19 pandemic.

The more, the better

“The more kinds of things that we can do like this, whether it’s at the state level or at the local level, the better,” said Coffey, who added that she does this work because she is passionate about art and artists.

Prior to entering politics in 2018, Coffey ran the nonprofit Vermont Performance Lab, a rural incubator for cutting-edge multimedia and performance art. She has described the nonprofit during those 13 years as “working at the intersection of art-making and community.”

“Opportunities for artists is really something that I care a lot about,” she said. “I hope that we can continue to do more.”

Artists are “incredible contributors to making communities wonderful places to live and work and for visitors to come visit,” said the third-term lawmaker, whose district spans Vernon and Guilford.

“It’s an exciting way to think about how artists can be part of how we improve our infrastructure, and also bring some beauty or whimsy or a way to express the character of a town or a place,” Coffey said. “There are all sorts of opportunities.”

Rotary offers scholarships to local college students

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Rotary Club again will offer college scholarships to graduating students at Brattleboro Union, Leland & Gray, and Hinsdale High Schools. The amount of assistance will be \$2,000 to \$3,000 per student. A combination of financial need, academic achievement, and community service will be used as the criteria for selecting the recipients.

The awards will be presented during part of the 2023 graduation festivities at each high school in June. In addition, the Rotary Club will invite every student given an award to attend a Rotary Club meeting this summer to be recognized by its members.

The Gateway Foundation was established by The Brattleboro Rotary Club more than 30 years ago to help enable deserving students to attend the college of their choice. It has given more than \$500,000 in scholarships since then.

The scholarship money awarded comes from annual rotary fundraising projects, including Christmas Tree sales, and generous contributions from Rotarians and members of the community. The Brattleboro Rotary Club’s Gateway Foundation scholarships are different from the scholarships offered by the Sunrise Rotary Club.

Every application must include a student application, a Parent Contribution Questionnaire (PCQ), a 250-word essay entitled, “What I learned by doing community service this year,” and a current transcript of grades.

The applications and financial assistance forms are available at each school’s guidance department, and at the Brattleboro Rotary Club website, brattlebororotaryclub.org, and must be submitted by Friday, May 19, to John C. Mabie, Esq., 45 Linden St., Brattleboro, VT 05301.

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Here We Are with guest with guest Chard deNiord - Poet Mon 8p, Tues 3:15p, Thurs 12p, Fri 8p, Sat 9a, Sun 6p	Brattleboro Selectboard Mtg. 4/18/23: Mon 7:30p, Tues 10a, Wed 1:45p, Thurs 11a, Sun 8:30p
The World Fusion Show - Ep #150 - The Fula Brothers Mon 5:30p, Tues 11a, Wed 5:30p, Sat 12:30p & 6:30p, Sun 9:30a & 5:30p	Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board Mtg. 4/24/23: Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 11:30a
Media Mentoring Project - Social Media Influencer Marketing 4/19/23: Wed 9p, Thurs 1:30p, Fri 12p, Sat 8p, Sun 5:30a	Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 4/24/23: Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2p
19th Annual Collegiate A Cappella Concert Mon 10a, Tues 12p, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 9a, Fri 9:30p, Sat 2p, Sun 6:30p	Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 4/24/23: Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 2:30p
Windham World Affairs Council - The Czech Republic, The EU, and the Rise of Populism Mon 12p, Tues 3:45p, Wed 10:45a	River Valleys Unified School District Annual Mtg. 4/25/23: Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30a, Sat 12p
Around Town with Maria - Vigil for Leah Rosin-Pritchard 4/16/23: Wed 12:15p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 4:25p, Sat 9:30a, Sun 8:30p	Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 2/25/23: Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 2:30p
Landmark College Presents - Hilary Price: How I Became a Cartoonist Mon 1:15p, Tues 10a, Wed 9a, Fri 7a, Sat 9:30p	Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 4/25/23: Thurs 3:30p, Sun 6p
Brattleboro Literary Festival - A True Story of Nazi Escape, Superman, and Marilyn Monroe Mon 2:15p, Tues 5:45a, Thurs 5p, Fri 1:45p, Sun 4p	Windham Central Supervisory Union Board and Exec. Commission Mtg. 4/26/23: Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 12p
Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p	Newfane Planning Commission Mtg. 4/27/23: Sat 6p, Sun 8:30a
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p	Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg. 4/27/23: Sat 8:30p, Sun 6a
WTSA News Mon-Fri 12p & 6p	Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 4/18/23: Mon 5:45p, Tues 7:15a, Wed 1:30p
St. Michael’s Episcopal Church - Weekly Service Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a	Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast 4/17/23: Mon 6p, Tues 7:30a, Wed 12p
Calvary Chapel of the West River Valley - Weekly Service Tue 9a, Sat 5:30p, Sun 10a	Newfane Selectboard Mtg. 4/17/23: Mon 4:30p, Tues 6a, Sat 5p
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p	Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 4/18/23: Mon 3:25p, Tues 6p, Wed 10:45a
Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a	Brattleboro Planning Commission Mtg. 4/3/23: Mon 9a, Tues 7p, Wed 8:30a, Thurs 1:25p
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
 BCTV’s Program Highlights are sponsored by **The Commons**. BCTV’s municipal meeting coverage helps **Commons** reporters stay in touch. Read about it in the Town & Village section at www.commonsnnews.org.
Brattleboro Community Television - 257-0888

AROUND THE TOWNS

Celebrate Earth Day with a free energy savings kit

WINOOSKI — Earth Day is a celebration, and also the perfect time to think about practical actions Vermonters can take to keep our planet healthy and habitable. Efficiency Vermont says that's why it is offering free Energy Savings Kits.

The kits contain easy-to-install energy saving measures like LEDs and water saving devices, plus, they'll be shipped with a special Earth Day wildflower seed packet from American Meadows that supports Vermont's pollinator habitat.

The free kits have a retail value of about \$47, and when installed will generate roughly equal amount in annual energy cost savings. The kits include: 10 LED bulbs (40/60/75-watt equivalents), one smart bulb, one low-flow showerhead, and two faucet aerators. Sign up to receive a free Energy Savings Kit at efficiencyvermont.com/kits.

WinDART hosts pet food drive

WILMINGTON — The Windham Disaster Animal Response Team (WinDART) will host a spring pet food drive at Shaw's supermarket in Wilmington on Saturday, April 29, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WinDART is accepting donations of dry and canned dog and cat food, along with cat litter, which will be donated to the Deerfield Valley Food Pantry to help keep pets together with their families during difficult times. For more information, contact team leader Joanne Bourbeau at info@vermontdart.org or go to VermontDART.org/donate.

'Fearless Futures' summit introduces students to post-grad options

WHITINGHAM — Brattleboro Development Credit Corp.'s (BDCC) Pipelines and Pathways Program (P3) will present two separate events this spring to help students explore post-secondary opportunities.

The first event is the Twin Valley Middle-High School Fearless Futures Summit on Tuesday, May 2, from 9 a.m. to noon, in the TVMHS gymnasium, presented in partnership with HireAbility Vermont. Students from Twin Valley and Leland & Gray are invited to attend.

The second event is the Bellows Falls Union High School Fearless Futures Summit on Tuesday, June 6, from 9 a.m. to noon, in the BFHUS gymnasium. Students from BFUHS, Bellows Falls Middle School, Brattleboro Union High School, and the Windham Regional Career Center are invited to attend.

The Fearless Futures Summit is more than a traditional career or college fair. Presenters will offer interactive stations to showcase the myriad opportunities at their organization and pathways to success students might not be aware of.

Riparian buffers to be discussed at RFPL

BELLOWS FALLS — On Tuesday, May 2, at 7 p.m., at the Rockingham Free Public Library, join Cory Ross, District Manager for the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, for a presentation on riparian buffers, their conservation values, and how to establish them along Westminster's waters.

Vegetated buffers along shorelines are the simplest and most effective way to improve water quality, enhance and protect wildlife, and the value of rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands. Cory will provide information on funding opportunities to help landowners plant buffers on their property at little or no cost.

This presentation is sponsored by the Westminster Conservation Commission. For more information, contact Alma Beals at 802-722-3355 or Sarah Waldo at 802-387-6036.

Brooks Memorial Library, Vermont Humanities present 'We Are All Fast Food Workers Now'

BRATTLEBORO — Vermont Humanities 2022-23 season of

First Wednesdays in Brattleboro will conclude at Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St., on May 3 at 7 p.m.

Labor historian Annelise Orleck provides a close look at globalization and its costs from the perspective of low-wage workers themselves — berry pickers, fast food servers, garment workers, cashiers, hotel housekeepers, home health care aides, and even adjunct professors — who are fighting for respect, safety, and a living wage.

Orleck is professor of history at Dartmouth College and the author of five books on the history of U.S. women, politics, immigration, and activism, including *Storming Caesars Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty*.

The venue is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. For more information, brookslibraryvt.org or call 802-254-5290.

Author John Elder Robison discusses neurodiversity at Landmark College

PUTNEY — Landmark College will host a free public talk by author John Elder Robison on Wednesday, May 3, at 7 p.m., in the Brooks M. O'Brien Auditorium, located in the Lewis Academic Building.

Robison's talk will address the socio-historical factors that led to neurodivergent people being classified as disordered, and why that might or might not be accurate. He will also make the case that these individuals have played a key role in the advance of civilization, and how adopting a mindset that embraces neurodiversity benefits all of humanity. He will share some of his own experiences as a proud, neurodiverse individual.

Robison is a *New York Times* bestselling author, entrepreneur, and advocate for autistic people. He is the author of several books on autism spectrum disorder, including *Switched On: A Memoir of Brain Change and Emotional Awakening* and *Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's*. Since 2018, he has also been an adviser

to the Landmark College Center for Neurodiversity. RSVP at landmark.edu/JERobison to help with planning light refreshments.

All Souls Church welcomes spring with crafts fair

WEST BRATTLEBORO — "Welcome Spring!" a craft fair featuring works by the gifted crafters of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, will be held outdoors on Saturday, May 6, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., rain or shine.

Reflecting the UU principles of respecting the environment and adopting a green lifestyle, organizers for this fundraiser have selected many recycled and up-cycled materials to repurpose — some fun and whimsical, others decorative, or downright useful.

Among the items for sale are totes of various size, flowered wreaths, fairy houses, fabric flower brooches, decorative table mats, as well as many baked goods, jams, and plants for inside and out. Materials will also be available so that both adults and kids can create a fabric garden flag or a floral crown.

All Souls Church is located in the West Village Meeting House, 29 South Street. For more information, call 802-254-9377.

Scott Farm hosts annual fruit tree, perennials sale

DUMMERSTON — Scott Farm invites the community to

experience the joy of gardening and fruit cultivation at its annual Tree Sale on the weekend of May 6 and 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. More than 60 varieties of bare root trees and perennial plants will be available for purchase, including 30 apple varieties, a dozen additional fruits, and 25 dozen perennials.

Members of the public can place their orders online in advance for quick pick-up the weekend of the sale or make purchases directly at the farm. Along with the farm's signature apple trees, blueberries, cherries, pears, plums, peaches, lavender, peonies, asters, and many others will be also available for purchase. For more information and to place advance orders, visit scottfarmvermont.com/tree-sale.

Book donations sought for Putney Library's Garden Fundraiser

PUTNEY — While it might still be a little early to weed your garden, it's a perfect time to weed your books! Do your spring cleaning and support the library's new tree and garden planting with a donation to the Garden Fundraiser Book Sale.

The Putney Public Library seeks book donations to support our Garden Fundraiser Book Sale, which will take place on Saturday, May 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Sunday, May 21, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Books of all kinds are welcome, except for encyclopedia sets, magazines, textbooks, Reader's Digest condensed books, DVDs

and CDs, and anything that is musty or moldy. Donations of these kinds will be sent back with you.

Donations cannot be left outside the library after hours. Instead, bring donations only during library hours: Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information call 802-387-4407 or email emily@putneylibrary.org.

Dummerston Energy Committee seeks EV ambassadors

DUMMERSTON — The Dummerston Energy Committee (DEC) is considering developing an Electric Vehicle and Equipment Ambassador Program, and they would like to gauge town interest.

The idea is to gather a list of residents who own and have experience with electric-powered devices and are willing to answer questions and provide guidance to those looking to electrify. This includes everything from EVs and bikes to heat pumps and yard equipment.

In addition, DEC is looking for new community members to add to their team. Those who have interest in helping Dummerston and its residents reduce energy consumption and use all forms of energy as wisely as possible should reach out and let them know. Contact them anytime at energy@dummerston.org.

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TOWN OF PUTNEY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117, and Putney Zoning Regulations, Section 110.4, notice is hereby given that the Putney Development Review Board will meet at **7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 16** for the purpose of considering one application. Site visit is scheduled for **May 16, 2023, Tuesday, 6:15 pm.**

Application #22-12-29 Conditional Use & Site Plan Review: Change of Use from a single-family dwelling to seven apartments and one office space. Susan Nepveu (Applicant/Owner). Property location is 101 Main Street, Tax Map 30-50-41. Application will be reviewed under Section 220 Conditional Use Approval; Section 240 Site Plan Review; Section 320.4 Village Residential District; Section 503 Home Industry; Section 509 Landscaping, Screening and Site Lighting; Section 501 Off-Street Parking Space Requirements and Section 830 Adverse Effect.

A copy of the application and additional information can be obtained at the Putney Town Office upon request or on the town website. The meeting is open to the public in a hybrid Zoom platform. Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §§ 4464 (a)(1)(C) and 4471 (a), participation in this local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Dated at Putney, Vermont, this 24th day of April, 2023.

Karen M. Astley
Zoning Administrator

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Brattleboro Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, 5.17.2023 at 7:00 PM in the Selectboard Meeting Room, Municipal Center, 230 Main St., Brattleboro, VT; the meeting will also be held on Zoom. Meeting ID: 881 4045 1917 Passcode: 190450.

2023-28 Susan Benjamin for 22 Chestnut Enterprise, LLC; RN District; request for Subdivision Approval to convert building into five unit condominium at 22 Chestnut St; TMP #315316.000; 2023-31 Clifford Allard; IN District; request for Site Plan & Local Act 250 Approval to expand an electric room by 102 sq. ft. at 354 Old Ferry Rd; TMP #8020.000 Pursuant to 24 VSA §§ 4464(a)(1)(C) and 4471(a), participation in this local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

NOTE: Meetings are open to the public. For specific accommodations please call the Planning Services Department at 802-251-8154. Application materials are available at <https://tinyurl.com/DRB-Applications>. Additional materials may be submitted up to the time of the meeting and will be uploaded to the above address.

PUBLIC NOTICES

ads@commonsnews.org • 888-511-5150

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT **PROBATE DIVISION**
Windham Unit **Docket No.: 23-PR-01826**
In re ESTATE of: Nancy Lou Farrell

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Nancy Lou Farrell (Decedent)
late of Vernon, Vermont (Decedent's town of residence)

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

Dated: April 14, 2023 c/o Jonathan D. Secrest, Esq,
Lisa Kemp, Administrator Secrest & Darrow, PLC
209 Austine Dr, Brattleboro, VT 05301

Name of Publication: The Commons 802-251-6598
Publication Date: April 26, 2023 jsecrest@secrestdarrow.com

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

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT **PROBATE DIVISION**
Windham Unit **Docket No.: 23-PR-01832**
In re ESTATE of: Karen O'Neill

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Karen O'Neill (Decedent)
late of Wilmington, Vermont (Decedent's town of residence)

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

Dated: April 14, 2023 c/o Jonathan D. Secrest, Esq,
Shawn O'Neill, Executor Secrest & Darrow, PLC
209 Austine Dr, Brattleboro, VT 05301

Name of Publication: The Commons 802-251-6598
Publication Date: April 26, 2023 jsecrest@secrestdarrow.com

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

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT **PROBATE DIVISION**
Windham Unit **Docket No.: 23-PR-01806**
IN RE ESTATE of: Alexander D. Nislick

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Alexander D. Nislick late of Brattleboro, Vermont.

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

Dated: April 20, 2023 25 Slabtown Creek Road
Stephen W. Nislick, Administrator Blairstown, NJ 07825

Name of Publication: The Commons 201-306-8453
Publication Date: April 26, 2023 snislick@hugoneu.com

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

The Town of Putney Fire Department has for sale a 1989 Smoker Craft 21' Pontoon Boat with a 2004 Shore Lander trailer. The boat has a 2004 Mercury 40 HP 4-Stroke outboard motor. The boat and trailer are being sold "as is." The boat and trailer can be viewed at the Putney Fire Department located at 21 Carl Snyder Drive, Putney. Minimum opening bid is \$3,000.00.

Sealed bids must be submitted to the Putney Town Office by 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 25, 2023. Please mark envelope containing bids "1989 Pontoon Boat". Mail to Town of Putney, P.O. Box 233, Putney, VT 05346. Bids can be brought to the Town Hall at 127 Main Street, Putney, VT and placed in the secure lock box labeled "Town Business Only".

Any questions or request for pictures please email Thomas Goddard, Fire Chief at chief@putneyvt.org or phone 802.387.4372.

Bids will be opened May 25, 2023. Award will be announced at the May 31, 2023 Selectboard meeting.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to waive any specifications or requirements when determined to be in the best interest of the Town.

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT
Amendment to the Code of Ordinances
April 18, 2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Selectboard of the Town of Brattleboro on April 18, 2023 at a duly warned meeting adopted the following AMENDMENTS to Chapter 16, Article VI, Section 2 and Appendix C of the Brattleboro Code of Ordinances, viz:

Chapter 16, Traffic, Article VI, Stopping, Standing, and Parking, Section 2, Parking Meter Areas **Sec. 16-111.**
The parking meters in the Municipal Lot shall indicate three (3) hour maximum parking time and shall require rates of fifty cents (50¢) per sixty (60) minute period, twenty five cents (25¢) per nineteen (19) minute period, ten cents (10¢) per eight minute period, and five cents (5¢) per six (6) minute period.

Appendix C, Regulations Governing the Control of Traffic.
Article I. Loading and Unloading Zones Section, **16-87 Loading and Unloading Zones.**
19. On the west side of Oak Street, in the area directly in front of 24 Oak Street, in the area directly in front of the 24 Oak Street, a 78 foot zone.

Article II Parking **16-100. No-Parking Areas.**
17) On the westerly side of Oak Street, in the area directly in front of 24 Oak Street, the Community School, will be Drop Off and Pick-Up Only Monday – Friday 7:15am – 8:30am and 2:15pm – 3:30pm, otherwise 1-hour limited parking between the hours of 8:30am and 2:15pm.

Article II Parking **16-101. Limited-Parking Areas.**
17) On the westerly side of Oak Street, in the area directly in front of 24 Oak Street, the Community School, will be Drop Off and Pick-Up Only Monday – Friday 7:15am – 8:30am and 2:15pm.

Article II Parking Meter Areas **16-110. Off-Street Areas.**
1) Gibson-Aiken Center Lot, easterly of the Gibson-Aiken Center -- all of the parking spaces with the exception of the two (2) that are designated as spaces for handicapped parking. The first ten (10) parking spaces located easterly of the Grove Street entrance to the Municipal Center Lot:
6) Municipal Center Lot, northerly of Grove Street and westerly of Main Street;
7) All of the parking spaces totaling twenty (20) in number located northerly of the Municipal Center, easterly of the space for handicapped parking in front of the State Office Building, and southerly of the State Office Building;

Article VII Taxi Stands, Hotel Zones, bust Stops, Police car Zones, Fire Lanes, Spaces for Handicapped parking, Reserved Spaces and Emergency Zones **16-108. Reserved Spaces.**
1) All of the parking spaces in the Municipal Center Lot with the exception of those spaces that are metered designated as fire lanes, designated as spaces for handicapped parking, or set aside for delivery vehicles.

A copy of this Amendment may be obtained from the Brattleboro Town Manager's Office. John R. Potter, Brattleboro Town Manager, 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301, telephone number 251-8151 is a person with knowledge of this Amendment and who is available to answer questions in connection therewith.

This amendment shall be posted in five conspicuous places within the Town and published in the Brattleboro Reformer on the 25 day of April, 2023 and shall become effective on the 18 day of June, 2023, unless a petition for a vote to disapprove the ordinance at a special or regular town meeting is signed by not less than five (5%) percent of the qualified voters of the Town of Brattleboro and filed with the Town Clerk within 44 days of the date of adoption stated above.

Amendment to Chapter 11 Page 2

BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
Jan Goodnow, Chair
Franz Reichsman, Vice-Chair
Peter Case, Clerk
Elizabeth McLoughlin
Daniel Quipp

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT **PROBATE DIVISION**
Windham Unit **Docket No.: 23-PR-01365**
In re ESTATE of: Russell D. Brown
late of Athens, Vermont

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Russell D. Brown, late of Athens, Vermont.

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

Dated: April 18, 2023 c/o Costello, Valente & Gentry PC
Daniel Brown, Administrator P.O. Box 483
Brattleboro, VT 05302

Name of Publication: The Commons
Publication Date: April 26, 2023

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

MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

Obituaries

• **Barbara L. Bristol, 66**, of Putney, formerly of Brookline, died March 29, 2023. She was born in Townsend on Feb. 8, 1957, the daughter of the late A.S. and Betty Clark. She graduated from Leland & Gray Union High School and the Thompson School of Nursing. She worked for many years at Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend. Later in life, she enjoyed working at the Brattleboro and Putney Food Co-ops. She is survived by her daughter, Emily Moore, and son-in-law, Gero Dolfus, of Putney; granddaughter Grace Dolfus of Putney; and siblings Jan Bingham, Archie Clark II, and Win Clark. She was predeceased by her parents; her husband, Jay Bristol; and her son, Trevor Moore. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of life service will be held later in the spring at Dover Center Cemetery.

• **Allen Peter Dearborn, 83**, of Brattleboro. Died peacefully at home on April 12, 2023. Peter was born July 19, 1939, the son of Allen and Ethel Brown Dearborn. He attended St. Michael's School in Brattleboro and St. Michael's College in Colchester, earning his degree in mathematics. He married Mary Corbeil on June 10, 1961. Peter and Mary had five children: Chris, Alison, Melissa, Jon, and Jackie. Peter dreamed of a life of flying with the Air Force but due to hearing complications pursued another career. Peter worked at the Book Press in Brattleboro, Peerless Insurance in Keene, New Hampshire (as the head of the Data Processing Division when computers were still in their infancy), and Leader Building Supply in Brattleboro. Beyond his work, his true passion was that of an artisan. He enjoyed wood working, carpentry, and upholstery. His workmanship can be found in many homes he enhanced through all of his dedicated years. He and Mary divorced in 1986 and Peter married Collette Desmarais, who had two children, Jen and Zack. They resided in Swanzey, New Hampshire until Collette's passing in 2018. Peter reunited with Mary C. Rivers, and shared her home at Chestnut Street in Brattleboro. In his free time, he loved to water ski and camp. If the lake was smooth as glass in the morning, he would try to start off the dock on one ski so he wouldn't get wet. He always tried to fix things that were broken, and liked to tinker with electronics, all while parsing out random tidbits of humor. Never the disciplinarian, he preferred to lead by quiet example, that it is better to use your creativity to make the world a better place, as

was evident in his many handmade gifts and restoration projects. Peter is survived by his former wife, Mary C. Rivers of Brattleboro; his daughter, Jacqueline Dearborn and her husband Rawley Fosler of Marble, Colorado; his son, Christopher and his wife Pamela Siegel and their two children, Jasper and Kelsey of South Hadley, Massachusetts; his daughter Alison Dearborn and her husband Dave Kelley of Boulder, Colorado and her two children, McKenzie and Anna; granddaughter McKenzie Rieder, her husband Dan Allen and their three children, Gambol, Winona, and Aubrey of Glenwood Springs, Colorado; his granddaughter Anna Woods and her husband David Woods and their son, Merritt of Denver, Colorado; his daughter, Melissa Dearborn of Avon, Connecticut; his son, Jonathan Dearborn and his wife Cassandra Ryan and his daughter Isabella of Brattleboro; his stepdaughter, Jennifer K. Desmarais Longiaru and her husband Christopher; and their two daughters, Persephone and Calliope of Monroe, Connecticut; and Zachary Wilson and his daughter Charlie of Charleston, South Carolina. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: In lieu of flowers, please give donations to a charity of your choice. To share a memory or condolences to Peter's family, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Richard S. Eastman, 75**, of Brattleboro. Died at his home, surrounded by family, on April 18, 2023, of congestive heart failure. He was born April 5, 1948 in Medford, Massachusetts. He spent his early youth in Milford and Hampton Beach, New Hampshire before moving to Hinsdale, New Hampshire. At 17 years old, he earned his harness racing driver's license, becoming one of the youngest drivers to ever do so. Some of the happiest days of his life were spent grooming, training and racing harness horses at the Hinsdale Raceway as well as up and down the Eastern seaboard from New Hampshire to Maryland. To support his growing family he took employment in 1978 at what was then Boise Cascade in Brattleboro, retiring from the paper mill after 34 years. Most recently, he enjoyed working as a school bus monitor for F.M. Kuzmeskus. He loved all animals, especially his rescue dogs Willy, Benny and Joey, and his cat Millie. He was an avid golfer and for many years was a member of the Pine Grove Golf Course in Chesterfield, New Hampshire, partnering with his golfing buddy Rick Bokum. In his earlier years, he was a member of a men's bowling league, the Hinsdale Racetrack team, and played softball on the Boise Cascade team. He was predeceased by his parents Roger and Margaret Eastman of Hinsdale, siblings Robert Eastman of Nashua, New Hampshire, Carol Brown of Hinsdale, and niece

Linda Konkowski of Chesterfield. Surviving family members include his wife Cicely Eastman of Brattleboro; sister Jean Nay of Hinsdale; children Hope and husband Dean Sarver of Parker, Colorado; Melissa and husband Brian Steyer of Soldiers Grove, WI; Brett Eastman of Hinsdale, and Alan and wife Paula Zappala of Laconia, New Hampshire; stepdaughters Dana Johnson of Treasure Island, Florida, and Jill Johnson of Tucson, Arizona; grandchildren Brayden Eastman of Hinsdale, Shawn Zappala of Laconia, Tyler Steyer of Hendersonville, Tennessee, Cameron Steyer and fiancée Ashley Atten of Reedstown, Wisconsin, Evan Brittingham of Parker, Cheyanne Zappala of Holden, Massachusetts, and Madison Johnson of Brattleboro; as well as numerous nieces and nephews. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: There will be no calling hours. The immediate family will be holding a small, private memorial service at a later date. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302.

• **Louise Laura Elliott, 95**, of Brattleboro. Died on April 9, 2023, Easter Sunday, at home with her family present. She was born Feb. 23, 1928 in Wrentham, Massachusetts. She attended the Providence Bible Institute where she met her husband, Eugene. They were married on June 4, 1949. She was a devoted Christian, loved to sing in the church choirs, and was the organist for some of the churches that her husband pastored. She was loved by everyone who ever had the extreme privilege of knowing her. Louise was the oldest member of the West Brattleboro Baptist Church and was known for her famous apple pies and the fudge she made every Christmas. She is survived by her three daughters, Donna McLellan of Brattleboro, Patti Paquette of Vernon, and Darlene and her husband Colgate Gilbert of Keene, New Hampshire; grandchildren Jolene, Laura, Frederick, and Nelson; and great-grandchildren Britney and Evan Wright and Jace and Jaxon Snow. Her granddaughter Shannon predeceased her. She is also survived by a close family friend, Steven Paquette, who Louise thought of as a son and was always there when she needed him. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service is planned for May 6, at 1 p.m., at West Brattleboro Baptist Church. Donations in her honor can be made to Bayada Hospice.

• **Nancy Elizabeth Kaepfel, 80**, of Brattleboro. Died unexpectedly on April 17, 2023, in Saratoga Springs, New York, with family by her side. Nancy was born in Brattleboro on Oct. 3, 1942, the daughter of Robert and Mary (Coughlin) Parmenter. She attended St. Michael's Parochial School and Castleton State College. Nancy was a lifelong communicant of St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church. She had worked as office manager for her son's business, Butch's Moving & Storage in Brattleboro, which she retired from in 2020. Previously, she was employed by Bolster Movers, and Georgia-Pacific, starting with the company at the time it was known as Erving Paper. Nancy enjoyed spending time with her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and her beloved dogs. Her summers were spent in York Beach, Maine, with family and friends, enjoying the ocean, shopping, and shows at the Ogunquit Playhouse. On Jan. 15, 1959, she married Robert M. "Bob" Kaepfel, who predeceased her. Nancy leaves four sons: Michael of Brattleboro, Kevin of South Berwick, Maine, Phillip (Karen) of Vernon, and Robert (Alisha) of Guilford; three daughters: Elizabeth Murdough (Herbert) of Hinsdale, New Hampshire, Lisa Levesque (Paul) of Charlestown, New Hampshire, and Barbara Hewes (Nathan) also of Charlestown. Nancy spent a great deal of time with her grandchildren Patrick, Kate, Jesse, Cody, Neylon, Nikolas, Colin, MacKenzie, Matthew, Jacob, Kristopher, Jordan, Morgan, Natalie, and Colleen. Nancy was blessed with nine great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by a granddaughter, Krista Murdough, and her brother, Thomas Parmenter. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral Mass will be held Friday, May 5, at 11 a.m., at St. Michael's Catholic Church. Committal Rites and burial will follow in St. Michael's Parish Cemetery. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302, or to Brigid's Kitchen, 47 Walnut St., Brattleboro, VT 05301. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Jonathan Kinnersley, 57**, of Brattleboro, ended his battle with ALS on March 22, 2023 with the same grace and courage he'd



shown throughout his illness. He died at home with his wife Susan present. Born on May 5, 1965, Jonathan loved life and learning. He graduated from the University of Edinburgh with a Ph.D. in atmospheric science and continued on to postgraduate work at the University of Washington in Seattle. There he met Susan during a hiking trip. Together, they had two children, Hazel and Charlie. He was a wonderful father and his children brought out the very best in him. Jonathan loved music. A violinist, he played classical music as well as modern and traditional fiddle tunes. He enjoyed composing music for friends and family both on the violin and the guitar. He recently had two of his fiddle tunes published in *Fiddler Magazine*, one of his last accomplishments. Jonathan loved singing and sang with the chorale, choir and his much loved a cappella group, the Harmony Lot. He enjoyed trying new things and began acting in recent years and took to it immediately enjoying both the work and the people. Jonathan loved the outdoors all seasons and all weather. He was an avid cyclist, hiker, skier, and snowboarder. He loved gardening and creating unique spaces to sit outside and enjoy nature. Everyone will miss this intelligent, kind, and sometimes goofy man. He leaves his family — Susan, Hazel, Charlie, his sister Theresa and her partner Mel with everlasting fond memories and music. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of Jonathan's Life will be held on Monday, May 29, at 3 p.m., at 187 Hillwinds Rd. Brattleboro. Anyone who wishes to share a memory of Jonathan or would like to bring a snack to share may email Susan at sblebeda@hotmail.com.

• **Douglas Lawton "Joe" March, 79**, formerly of Brattleboro. Died peacefully in his sleep on March 27, 2023 at his home in Warren, Maine, eight days after his 79th birthday. He was in the company of his wife Pat, his niece Nadine Kissell Lyman, and his sister-in-law Pat Lyman, who was telling him a story about "the good old days" that put a smile on his face. Born March 19, 1944, in Brattleboro to Hal Lawton March and Edith Louise (Coates) March, he is survived by his wife, Patricia, his niece Nadine Kissell (John Therrien), his nephew Paul "Buzz" Lyman (Nicole), cousins Phil and Bonnie Brown, great-niece Kelsey Kissell (Kyle Gouin), his beloved dog "Autumn Too," and his brothers Robin and Hal March (Marge). In 1961, Joe graduated from Brattleboro Union High School. A metal plate in his leg from a bicycle accident kept him from armed service, but with his graduation present, a Caterpillar bulldozer, Joe immediately went to work. A few of his many jobs were as a deputy sheriff in Windham County, car salesman in Massachusetts, ski lift attendant at Hogback Mountain in Marlboro, go-kart mechanic (trophy, first overall, Thunder Road enduro at Barre), and contributing writer for *Northern Logger*. In 1974, Joe and Bob Davis of Dummerston went into business as March Construction. After building a garage, a sawmill, and a log house in Guilford, Joe and BUHS and University of Vermont graduate Patricia Lyman opened a second business, Thistle Ridge Greenhouses. Coming to a favorite vacation spot in Maine. In 1997, they were married on the point at Marshall Light. In 2002, they bought a plot of land on Otter Cove in Friendship, Maine. March Construction had evolved into a landscaping business, which they sold before they moved to their Maine property and built a house and garage by the sea. Soon unable to stand retirement, Joe bought The Dinner Pail clam shack on Route 97 in Friendship, where he and Pat moved plenty of lobster rolls and Whoopie pies. A year later, he sold that business and began another landscaping and earth-moving business in Thomaston, where he and Pat were very active in the creation of Thomaston Dog Park. Taking the name "The Black Dirt Guy," Joe researched and wrote the book (which he also sold) on organic compost. In 2021, Joe sold his home on the cove and they moved into a new house on Wottons Mill Road in Warren. His Black Dirt business will continue under the direction of Pat, Nadine Kissell and long-time employee Chris Groul. "Joe" was a nickname that he grew up with, and he liked to give nicknames to all of his friends and associates. He loved his machinery; he named each one: "Dirt Girl," "Gecko" (the green one), and so on. Joe's life was full of adventures and he was a great storyteller. He could be a hard-nosed business man, but he valued honesty, high standards, and personal relationships above all. Beyond all his hard work and business success, Joe

will be remembered for his sense of humor, his ready smile, and his big heart, always willing to help others in any way he could. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial service will be held on May 1, at 5 p.m., at Broad Bay Congregational Church of Christ at 941 Main St., in Waldoboro, Maine. It will be a celebration of Joe's life and legacy, with food, pictures and music and all things that Joe enjoyed. Another memorial gathering will be held at a later date in Joe's hometown of Brattleboro. Donations be sent to Thomaston Dog Park Association, P.O. Box 342, Thomaston, ME 04861. Letters of condolence can be sent to Pat March, 67 Wottons Mill Road, Warren, ME 04864.

• **Romaine Michael Smith, 61**, of Jamaica. Died April 11, 2023 on Route 30 in Jamaica as a result of injuries he sustained in a motorcycle accident. A lifelong resident of the West River Valley, Romaine was born in Townshend on Jan. 19, 1962, the son of Raymond Russell and Irene Maude (Knight) Smith. He attended school in Jamaica and was a graduate of Leland & Gray High School. He worked in the logging business most of his career, for many years as an independent logger. Romaine loved the outdoors and enjoyed hunting, deep sea fishing, riding his Harley-Davidson, and time shared with his family and large host of friends. He also enjoyed music and watching detective shows. A man of faith, with his wife he attended Calvary Church in West Townshend. On Sept. 24, 2011, in Jamaica, he was married to Donna Marie Mercier, who survives. Besides his devoted wife, he leaves two sons, Michael (Monica) and Mitchell (Deanna), all of Jamaica; stepdaughters Desaray Mercier of Westminster and Amanda Bragg of Texas; stepson Joshua Mercier of Virginia; brothers Russell Smith of Jamaica, Raymond Smith (Debbie) of Londonderry, and Peter Smith (Patricia), also of Londonderry; a half-sister, Ginny of New York; and a half-brother, Norman of North Carolina. Additionally, he is survived by six grandchildren and many nieces and nephews, and several cousins. He was predeceased by two sisters, Ramona Coleman and Rhonda Brown. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of his life will be conducted Saturday, May 6, at noon, at the Calvary Church in West Townshend with a reception to follow. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com. To defer the cost of funeral expenses, the family asks that donations be made directly to Atamaniuk Funeral Home using the Tribute Fund tab located on Romaine's online obituary.

• **Judith Jayne "Judy" (Diem) Wagenbach, 77**, of Putney, formerly of Madison, New Jersey. Died on March 28, 2023, surrounded by her loving family, after a sudden illness. A beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and longtime teacher, she was born in Newark, New Jersey on February 20, 1946, the daughter of Howard and Isabel (Jayne) Diem, proudly growing up in Newark with her older sister Carol. Growing up, Judy's idyllic summers were spent at Longwood Lake in Oak Ridge, New Jersey in a cabin built by her father. Judy graduated with honors from Vailsburg High School in 1963 and was a member of the Steven Crane Chapter of the National Honor Society. She graduated from Montclair State College, cum laude, with a B.A. in home economics in 1967, and was president of the College Chapter of the AHEA and a member of the Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society. Judy continued her education by earning a master's at Seton Hall University and obtaining a Wilson Reading Certification, enabling her to work with dyslexic students. Judy began her teaching career in Parsippany and then taught from 1977 until 2004 in Morris Plains, New Jersey at both the Morris Plains Borough School and the Mountain Way School. Judy was named a teacher of the year and was twice invited by former students to their National Honor Society Induction ceremonies as the teacher who most influenced them, an honor of which she was especially proud. Judy is survived by her husband Wayne A. Wagenbach, whom she met in seventh grade, began dating in 11th grade, and married on Aug. 19, 1967, following their graduation from Montclair State. They chose to reside in Madison where they raised their family. Judy and Wayne were active members of Grace Episcopal Church in Madison where Judy was a Sunday School teacher and member of the Vestry. In 1994 they built a summer home on Cape Cod, where friends and family gathered and memories were made. In 2004, Judy and Wayne retired to Putney, where Judy continued teaching as a Wilson instructor at Putney Central School, Greenwood School, and Landmark College. In Vermont, Judy volunteered at the Hilltop

House, serving on its Board, and was a member of the Brattleboro Floral Arts and Garden Club, serving as vice-president and president. Judy had many talents, including knitting and quilting and donated her beautiful mittens and quilts to many charitable organizations and events. Judy was famous for her baking and cooking skills and took joy in making chocolate chip cookies for all. Judy positively impacted countless lives and she will be dearly missed by all who knew her, including her faithful canine companions Gordon and Leona. In addition to her husband, Judy is survived by her sons Paul Wagenbach and his wife Staci of Mendham, New Jersey and Kurt Wagenbach and his wife Katherine of Putney, and her cherished grandchildren Kemp, Leah, Charles, and Kole Wagenbach. Judy is also survived by her sister Carol Diem Brady of Madeira Beach, Florida, and by her brother-in-law Todd Wagenbach and sister-in-law Camille Wagenbach of Brick, New Jersey and their sons Todd, Jr., and Michael. She is also survived by her aunt, Joy Jayne, and her children David, Kathy, and Kim, and by her cousin Nancy Jane Preston. And Judy's life was made all the better by her many friends, including Jane, Theresa, Harriet, and Gloria. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: At Judy's request, there will be no funeral services and the family will celebrate Judy's life privately. Donations to St. Brigid's Kitchen, 47 Walnut Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301 or the Putney Food Shelf, 10 Christian Square, P.O. Box 337, Putney, VT 05346.

Services

• A funeral Mass for **Winifred J. "Winnie" Amarosa** will be conducted Friday, April 28, at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Hinsdale, New Hampshire. Burial will follow in the Amarosa family lot in Pine Grove Cemetery where she will be laid to rest beside her husband. A lifelong resident of Hinsdale, Mrs. Amarosa died on January 7, 2023 at Cheshire Medical Center in Keene, New Hampshire. To view her full obituary and share condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• Graveside funeral services for **Dana Dix** are scheduled for Saturday, April 29, at 11 a.m., in Sadawga Cemetery in Whitingham. Mr. Dix, 73, a resident of Whitingham, died Feb. 8, 2023 at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington.

• Graveside funeral services for **Thelma Latchis "Terry" Carvelas** will be conducted Saturday, April 29, at 11:30 a.m., in Morningside Cemetery with Fr. Thomas Lokotis of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Holyoke, Massachusetts officiating. Mrs. Carvelas, 92, a native of Brattleboro, died on Feb. 25, 2023 in Park City, Utah. Her complete obituary can be viewed at atamaniuk.com.

• Graveside committal services for **Phillip J. Haskins** will be conducted Saturday, April 29, at 1 p.m. at the family lot in Morningside Cemetery in Brattleboro. A reception will follow the services to be held at American Legion Post 5 on Linden Street. Mr. Haskins, 83, of Brattleboro, died Feb. 28, 2023. To view his full obituary, visit atamaniuk.com.

• A celebration of life service for **Donna Ann Daley** will be conducted Saturday, April 29, from noon to 4 p.m., at the Eagles Club on Chickering Drive. Donna, 74, died in her home on Jan. 21, 2023. To view her full obituary and share a memory, visit atamaniuk.com.

• A celebration of the life of **Geraldine "Gerry" Kunkle** will be held at The Gleanery in Putney on Saturday, May 13, between the hours of 1 and 3 p.m. Mrs. Kunkle, 92, of Putney, died at Vernon Green Nursing Home on March 23, 2023.

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.

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■ Swords to Plowshares

all around Connecticut and the organization has worked with groups in Pennsylvania, Maine, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C.

The visit to Retreat Farm marks S2P's first event in Vermont.

According to S2P's website (s2pnortheast.org), its mission is "to build coalitions of community groups, religious organizations, police departments, hospitals, and businesses. All working together, we will build sustainable efforts across the country to help reduce gun violence."

With that context, the event is sponsored by St. Michael's Episcopal Church, in collaboration with the Windham County Sheriff's Department, the Brattleboro Police Department, and the Windham County NAACP, and 13 area faith communities: All Souls Church, Unitarian Universalist; Brattleboro Area Jewish Community; Brattleboro Zen Center; Centre Congregational Church, UCC; Dummerston Congregational Church, UCC; First Congregational Church of Brattleboro, UCC; First United Methodist Church; Guilford Community Church, UCC; Newfane Congregational Church, UCC; Trinity Lutheran Church; Putney Friends Meeting; Vermont Insight Meditation; and Vermont Interfaith Initiative.

S2P will bring together a number of community leaders, including Steffen Gillom, president, Windham County NAACP; Marc Thurman, the NAACP's education committee chair; Brattleboro Police Chief Norma Hardy; Windham County Sheriff Mark Anderson; the Right Rev. Thomas Ely, retired bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont; and Cliff L. Wood, a St. Michael's parishioner, and the event's co-chair.

The event, which will offer a performance by Shoulder Narrows, an student-run, low-voice, a cappella group, will also honor two regional organizations dedicated to connecting community with farming and food: Edible Brattleboro and SUSU Community Farm.

Wood will offer a look at the garden tools created from weapons and present them to the two organizations.

Established in 2017 by Curry and three other anti-gun-violence advocates, S2P is a small not-for-profit funded primarily by individual donations. As described on its website, the organization focuses "on reducing gun violence in the communities in which our events take place."

"With 40,000 gun deaths per year in our country, something must be done now," the organization asserts. "The strategy we apply to this problem is to convert weapons of death into tools of life, and then use those tools to the betterment of the community. All with the goal of reducing senseless gun deaths."

At the Brattleboro gathering, following remarks by various area leaders committed to curbing gun violence, Curry will speak and then launch a live demonstration, where he will take weapons and forge them into tools and implements of nurture.

Attendees can hammer a ringed rifle part into a heart, or they can volunteer to try a hand at the forging and heavy hammering required to make the garden tools.

"We are very aware of the need for safety," he adds, so safety protocols will be followed.

Birth of a movement

The genesis of S2P is symbolized by a welded cross Curry wears when in bishop attire. "It comes from Mozambique," Curry explains. "I received it when I was visiting an Anglican church there in 2006."

At the time, Bishop Dinis Sengulane of Mozambique's Anglican Diocese of Lebombo was spearheading an effort to get guns out of the countryside where they'd been hidden during the civil war that ravaged the African country from 1977 to 1992.

After the war, Curry says, the bishop insisted the country had to rid itself of guns that remained in garden plots and other clandestine sites.

"They worked with Christian Aid, out of Great Britain, inviting citizens to turn in guns in an effort to rebuild," Curry says.

A program to buy back the guns took place throughout the impoverished country. With that

initiative proven to be remarkably successful, Sengulane pushed the envelope and challenged not only blacksmiths but also artists to make symbols of hope and peace out of the decommissioned gun parts.

Curry's cross is made from two such pieces welded together—with both from a disassembled AK-47.

He has maintained a strong relationship with Sengulane, who he describes as "a very creative thinking and do-er working to control malaria, AIDS, [tuberculosis], poverty, and gun violence." Curry calls the success in Mozambique "a major incentive for launching S2P."

S2P's founding was also sparked at the annual gathering of the National Vigil for All Victims of Gun Violence in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the Newtown Action Alliance in 2016, where Curry met Rev. Jeremy Lucas, pastor of Lake Oswego (Oregon) Christ Church.

Lucas had heard of a local girls sports team that wanted to raise funds to attend a tournament in California. So they had a raffle.

The prize: an AR-15 rifle. Lucas purchased \$3,000 worth of tickets, hoping to win the rifle — to keep it out of circulation and to destroy it. It worked — he won.

From there, the priest reached out to RawTools (rawtools.org), a Mennonite-initiated, Colorado-based program to gain knowhow — and tools — needed to take a destructive prize and turn it into into something constructive.

"A few of us there wanted to launch a program similar to Raw Tools' in the Northeast, starting in Connecticut," Curry recalls.

Guns to gardens

Bishop Curry has worked for 30 years in gun violence prevention and with families traumatized by shooting deaths. When he retired from the bishopric in 2012, he began devoting his full attention to gun-violence prevention, working in Hartford with victims and community groups.

"I did a lot of legwork federally as well as in Connecticut, but I found that the hands-on teaching around basic skills focused on transformation became a life for me," Curry recalls.

So when the S2P founders began to get their project off the ground, they began working with Episcopal and UCC leaders in Connecticut: talking, planning, and making connections with local police departments. In New Haven, "where gun buybacks were already happening, both police and others said, 'Yes, let's try it — we'll not just buy guns back; we'll transform them.'"

With no blacksmithing skills, Curry connected with RawTools' Mike Martin and spent a week with him and his father, Fred, to learn what he needed to do to transform the weapons.

The Martins "became friends, as well as teachers," Curry says.

A community garden movement was steadily growing in New Haven, "so we contacted folks there to tie into that. The police department and mayor's office offered lots of support and soon S2P was underway, starting in Connecticut's third largest city," Curry says.

They started "with a few blacksmithing pieces." And soon they were given funds to buy a trailer, which has let S2P take its show on the road to work with and help empower school groups, churches, and community groups.

An act of empowerment

With S2P, says Curry, "I have found focus on God's promise of peace that is not yet fully realized by any means. S2P allows us to participate in action toward fulfillment of that promise."

This new movement — guns to garden tools — is emerging in various ways across the country. Groups from New England to Oakland, California are organizing a blacksmithing marathon for the month of June, livestreaming blacksmiths at work around the clock for 31 days to recognize those killed last year in the U.S. by guns.

"It's important to note that two-thirds of gun deaths are suicides," Curry adds, noting S2P's focus on making sure that "lost, forgotten, and unsecured guns [are] discovered and secured to keep them away from curious kids and teens, to prevent accidental shootings."

"We just want people to think carefully about keeping guns in homes," he continues. "If they want to get rid of them, there are avenues for doing so; if they choose to keep them, we just want them to be safe."

Curry asserts that too many people have loaded guns unsecured in their homes, calling it "an invitation for disaster." "We are not about taking guns away from people," he says. "It's about safe usage and safe storage of weapons."

FROM SECTION FRONT

Available at the event will be free gun safety locks and information about gun safety, mental health, suicide prevention, and how-to dispose of firearms safely and securely.

The impact of S2P is clear. In a recent news broadcast from Providence, Rhode Island, television station WLNE, covering a S2P event at nearby UMass Dartmouth, one student said that instead of just talking about the onslaught of news of gun violence, students there "are taking a different approach."

They are learning that dismay can be channeled into positive action.

Prior to the pandemic, S2P worked in prisons, offering prisoners an opportunity to forge tools of nurture from tools of violence.

"These are guys who know gun violence" Curry remarks, "and they were proud to be making the tools."

S2P was invited to participate in last year's Wear Orange (wearorange.org) in Washington, D.C., where interfaith leaders from that region and beyond staged a day of demonstration. After a press conference at the Capitol, they marched to Washington City Church of the Brethren, where the S2P forge was set up.

Part of the service allowed individuals to take turns hammering: each time the anvil hit metal, a name was spoken from a list of all victims of shootings in the District of Columbia from the first five months of 2022, along with all victims of mass shootings elsewhere in the country in that time period.

S2P forges are mobile and scattered around Connecticut. "I think we're a model for the country," Curry surmises.

He and all at S2P are happy to consult with others who want to launch similar initiatives. "Connecticut politicians are 100% behind us," Curry says. "We have strong government support, yet it's still so frustrating to look at the lack of progress around the country."

In response, S2P offers an outlet.

"We invite legislators back to the forge to pound out their frustration and anger," Curry says.

He notes how Chris Murphy, who represents his state in the U.S. Senate, keeps at it doggedly in Washington "butting heads and seeing so little gain, but staying with it. The rest of us have to add other dimensions so we can go beyond the gridlock."

Despite the politicization of guns, as a nonprofit, S2P is non-partisan, and Curry tries to keep politics at arm's length. "Really," he says.

"We just want to be the Johnny Appleseed of gun violence prevention," Curry says. "We're just one teeny component of a solution."

That component comes at a time of escalating violence.

According to the Gun Violence Archive, a nonprofit and nonpartisan group that collects and aggregates data on gun violence in the U.S., 44,348 people died from guns in 2022. Of those people, 20,090 died from suicide, and 20,258 were killed in homicides or accidental shootings.

As of April 23, 13,031 people have died from gun violence since the first of the year. Put another way, with 69% of the year remaining, more than 42,000 people will die by the new year if the current trends prevail.

Curry contemplates this dizzying increase in gun violence seen over the last few weeks in the form of more mass shootings to wrong-place-wrong-time incidents.

"As a Christian," he says, "I have to live in hope. I see people really connect with the idea that instruments of potential harm can be transformed into instruments of nurture."

With so-called "stand-your-ground" laws giving people license to be aggressive with firearms, Curry sees a "love affair with guns."

"I think this is wrong," he says. "I don't think that's what the Second Amendment allows."

He called the recent spate of highly publicized injuries and deaths of young people "obscene."

"We have to see a turnaround in our culture that says it's not OK to shoot another — especially for something as painfully innocent as turning around in someone else's driveway," he said. "The way to change is to start small and keep cultivating solutions."

Swords to Plowshares (S2P), a free gun safety and violence prevention event, will take place rain or shine on Saturday, April 29, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Retreat Farm on Route 30 in Brattleboro. For more information, contact event coordinators Thomas Ely (Thomase1@gmail.com) or Cliff Wood (Clwood0213@gmail.com).



Leland & Gray students interview a first responder who was in the thick of the massive destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana.

■ New Orleans

FROM SECTION FRONT

also visited the Katrina National Memorial Foundation Museum and recorded interviews with survivors and first responders to the namesake hurricane that struck New Orleans in August 2005.

One memorable story for White was the story of John, a bus driver they interviewed. A first responder to Katrina, John was part of many search and rescue teams in the immediate aftermath of the storm. He told the students about finding the sibling of someone who was just a few feet away from where they were searching.

John's story caused students to reflect on their own experiences.

White said he was struck by the destruction left in the wake of Katrina that remains, even after nearly two decades have passed. The Ninth Ward is still recovering from the destruction wrought by the storm. Some roofs are still lined with tarps, and empty lots remain.

"There's a lot of work that still needs to be done," said White.

In their free time, students danced on pontoon boats to the music of Taylor Swift as they cooked together. For some of them, the trip was their first time out of the state.

According to a press release from Journey Away, White "came away from the trip feeling more

thankful for a safe place to live and a roof over his head." In additional comments to *The Commons*, White talked about traveling with other students.

"We didn't know each other super well even though we go to a small school," he said. "We bonded over the trip."

The journey started in the fall when students took a once-a-week class to plan the details and figure out how to raise \$6,000 to fund the trip. According to trip facilitator and school librarian Jenna Greenbaum, the students applied for grants from the Stratton Community Foundation and the Windham Foundation, then crafted an itinerary around "policy, framing, and reality" and what those words meant to them.

The students found success with a community Mardi Gras night on Feb. 17, raising a large chunk of the expense budget. The party also gave the group a chance to practice their oral history skills. Students set up a listening booth where attendees told stories about how the weather had affected their lives to practice their interviewing skills in the leadup to their trip.

Reimagining the travel program

Historically, the school's trip program, Journey East, facilitated

an exchange trip between students from Townshend and China. But the COVID-19 pandemic and the current geopolitical situation necessitated changes, said Greenbaum.

Greenbaum is interested in re-establishing the exchange aspect of the program in the future.

"I hope to bring people back in the summers of '24 or '25," she said. She envisions the trip being extended and involving more extensive travel to places like Vietnam and France.

Now having returned, the students are set to work on environmental stories around Vermont and explore how climate events have affected their home state, according to the news release. Audio recordings of student interviews and stories will be on display at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, beginning Saturday, June 24.

An experienced traveler himself, White said Journey Away was different from traveling with his family, as he's used to.

He considers the experience formative and said he believes that "learning outside the classroom and traveling is something every high school student should do."

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—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Garage tour

FROM SECTION FRONT

Falls Garage is also off of Canal Street, as is the building's main parking area.

Federal and state money, along with federal tax credit equity, provided the funding for the \$10.7 million project. The building will include 19 apartments eligible for rental vouchers. Income eligibility ranges from \$16,500 to \$84,600 a year, with rents ranging from \$400 to \$1088 a month, utilities included.

Other projects nearby

The Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) is the prime mover behind the project, with help from several other organizations and state and national politicians as well.

WWHT declares its mission as providing "permanently affordable housing solutions in Southeastern Vermont, through property management, homeowner education, low-cost loans and financial assistance, and advocacy."

When completed and occupied, the Bellows Falls Garage Project will fill a big need in the community for affordable housing.

The building, at 115 Rockingham St., is within a quarter-mile of several other major projects that the nonprofit has built and managed in Bellows Falls for decades.

These properties include the

renovated Howard Block (61 The Square), with 13 second- and third-floor apartments and six street-level retail spaces, and the Exner Block (7 Canal St.), renovated in the late 1990s to provide 10 apartments and several retail spaces on the street. The organization has also renovated several houses in the community.

"I'm thrilled this is happening," said State Rep. Sara Coffey, D-Guilford. "This is an amazing example of imagination and vision becoming a reality — turning an old garage into something so beautiful and improving the downtown and village center."

A big project comes together

The Bellows Falls Garage is the first major housing project in the village in many years.

"The building was developed to meet the needs of a variety of citizens," explained WWHT Executive Director Elizabeth Bridgewater. "We took into account the area's needs and income levels. The building will serve a range of community members."

The speakers at the event included representatives from the offices of U.S. Sens. Bernie Sanders and Peter Welch, and U.S. Rep. Becca Balint. FACT TV, the local community access station, filmed attendees who shared their memories of the building.

Also present were



A view from the top of the Bellows Falls Garage apartments looking south toward The Square.

ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

representatives from the many organizations that helped with financing and building the project, which included M&T Bank, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, the Vermont Community Development Program, the town of Rockingham, the Vermont Community Loan Fund, Efficiency Vermont, and the Windham Regional Commission.

Several speakers noted how the original plans, which intended to use the concrete shell of the 102-year-old building, were abandoned when serious flaws were discovered in the old concrete work.

"We had some problems at the start," Bridgewater told the crowd. "We had to pivot and respond. We had a good spirit and a 'can-do' attitude. We found a way to go forward."

Originally, that way forward called for preserving the concrete front façade of the original design, but that plan was also scrapped for safety reasons when that front façade proved not structurally safe. Engineers discovered that when the concrete was originally poured, the material did not properly cure, resulting in gaps and holes that would make it impossible to safely reuse the wall in the rebuilding.

Instead, a new building front on the old building's footprint replicated the original design.

The new building's overall design celebrates its industrial heritage in the community, while at the same time creates what Bridgewater called a "highly energy efficient" and technically-cutting-edge structure.

Also preserved in the new design were the numerous large windows on all sides of the building, providing what Bridgewater described as "gorgeous views" of the Connecticut River with its bridges and dam, the historic



Former Bellows Falls Garage building owner Frank Hawkins, left, and longtime village resident Doug MacPhee, right, discuss the project at the April 24 open house.

ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

Bellows Falls Canal, the village's large rail yard, and its distinct, well-preserved downtown area. Speakers noted how the building greets visitors to the town from New Hampshire and points north.

A slide show illustrated the building's history as a car dealership, gas station, parking garage, body shop, machine shop, dry cleaner, retail shop, and storage facility. At one time, the property was owned and occupied by a religious commune that operated a woodworking business and retail store there.

In her speech, Bridgewater noted that she had worked at WWHT for several years before

becoming director. "The parting words of the former executive director when I took over were, 'You've got to find a project in Bellows Falls!'" Bridgewater said in her at-times-emotional speech at the event.

"The need for affordable housing is great here," she said. "We did find a project in BF!"

Windham & Windsor Housing Trust is located at 68 Birge St. in Brattleboro and can be reached at 802-254-4604. Stewart Property Management is accepting applications for the building's apartments, and can be reached by calling 603-641-2163.



While the original Bellows Falls Garage needed to be demolished, its concrete facade was recreated in the new structure.

ROBERT F. SMITH/THE COMMONS

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

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AN IMPORTANT FILM ABOUT TRAUMA, ADDICTION, & RECOVERY

Free Screening Thursday
April 27, 5:30-7:30 PM

Old School Community Center
1 School Street
Wilmington, VT

Free Admission
Snacks Provided

UPROOTING ADDICTION
HEALING FROM THE GROUND UP

For more details, contact:
voicesofhopevt@gmail.com

Hosted by Community Substance Use Response (CSUR)

HOPE VOICES OF HOPE | TURNING POINT | AIDS Project of Southern Vermont | BAPC Building a Positive Community

Funding by the VT Dept. of Health Division of Substance Use

The Community Substance Use Response (CSUR) is hosting two free events in April. The first is a film showing and discussion, *Uprooting Addiction: Healing From the Ground Up*, on Thursday, April 27th at 5:30 at 1 School Street, OSCC building in Wilmington. All are welcome to this important film about trauma, addiction and recovery. Film makers will be present and snacks will be provided.

On Friday, April 28th from 9-12:00, CSUR will also host a free workshop, *Multiple Roots of Addiction* and lunch. The workshop will explore the interpersonal, cultural, and traumatic roots of addiction including intergenerational trauma, oppression, racism, and stigma. Lunch is provided and RSVP are requested in advance at voicesofhopevt@gmail.com. The workshop will be held at 18 Beaver Street, Wilmington (Old Firehouse). For more information, please contact Robin Rieseke at Voices at (802) 490-3316.

Understanding and Addressing the Multiple Roots of Addiction

Friday, April 28th
9AM to Noon
18 Beaver Street, Wilmington (Old Firehouse)
Light Snacks provided

For more details, contact: voicesofhopevt@gmail.com
RSVP by April 21 - voicesofhopevt@gmail.com

What you will learn, explore and discover:

- Interpersonal, cultural, and traumatic roots of chronic addiction. A review of ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and how childhood trauma increases vulnerability to addiction.
- Risk factors that increase vulnerability including intergenerational trauma, oppression, racism, addiction related trauma, and stigma.
- Learning how addiction and trauma impact the brain.
- Recovery--trauma informed interventions and addressing the roots of addiction.

About the film. At an innovative retreat organized by addiction and trauma, counselor Hope Payson (LCSW, LADC), six people (including Daryl McGraw) from varying walks of life – each affected by childhood trauma – come together to share their stories, emerging from darkness through community, connection, and compassion. All are welcome!

About the Workshop: Explore the interpersonal, cultural, and traumatic roots of addiction including intergenerational trauma, oppression, racism, and stigma. Learn how addiction and trauma impact the brain and how trauma-informed interventions and addressing roots of addiction can support recovery. Lunch provided. Please register in advance.

PRESENTERS

Hope Payson, LCSW, LADC is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Alcohol and Drug Counselor who specializes in the treatment of addiction and trauma. She has over 30 years of experience working in a variety of community mental health settings. Hope currently coordinates a private psychotherapy practice in Winsted, CT and offers training and consultation services on issues related to addiction, recovery and trauma treatment. She is also the Producer of the documentary "Uprooting Addiction: Healing from the Ground Up"

Daryl McGraw, MA is the CEO of Formerly Inc, Connecticut's first criminal justice reentry reform consultant agency. Daryl holds a bachelor's degree in Human Services and a master's degree in Organizational Management and is an Addictions Counselor, Recovery Support Specialist, and a Criminal Justice Professional.



FUNDING BY THE VT DEPT. OF HEALTH DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE USE

Putney ceramics artist's work on display at SVAC

'My way forward is through my art, traveling with people who seek only the opportunity to become fully whoever they yearn to be,' says Susan Wilson

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

PUTNEY—Susan Wilson's work is, according to artist and critic Deborah Barlow, all about "emotion and empathy."

"I work in quiet meditation," says the figurative ceramic artist, whose art is on exhibit at the annual Solo Exhibition show at Southern Vermont Arts Center (SVAC) in Manchester.

"I breathe life into spaces around and within my figures," Wilson, based in Putney, explains. "I use slabs laid over molds, from broomsticks and dowels to balls and ceramic head molds that I have made. From a head mold, generic at first, the character and gesture unfold. Who is going to show up?"

Wilson's sources are newspapers, photographs, life-drawing sessions, anatomy books, stories about migrants and refugees, reports from African friends, "and my never-ending visits to museums and galleries, from the Uffizi [Galleries] to Mass MoCA to The Hermitage to galleries in Brussels and Moscow."

Her work has, indeed, been influenced by time on the road: she's visited an AIDS orphanage in Cameroon and a Kenyan village that is taking in orphans who have AIDS.

"And the years here of my singing and gardening with Rwandan graduate students at

Antioch University and hearing their stories would [contextualize] this work and where it comes from in me," Wilson says.

The intensity of her concerns about human justice for those with hopes and fears experiencing gross inequity comes from these life experiences.

With a background in art at Denison University, the University of Delaware, and Montclair State University, Wilson furthered her explorations in a range of workshops taking place at locales ranging from Odyssey Studio in North Carolina to Haystack Mountain School in Maine. She has shown throughout New Jersey as well as in Philadelphia, New York, Cleveland, and Boston; Brattleboro and Stowe, Vermont; and Keene and Hanover, New Hampshire, among others, and she has been published in *500 Figures in Clay, Vol. 2* (Lark Books).

"After a three-decade career teaching art in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, after raising a family and doing justice work for people from sub-Saharan Africans to those with AIDS and to those standing in our soup kitchen lines, I retired to Putney with my husband, two sons, and dog," Wilson says.

Taken by the spirit of community in southern Vermont — by the awareness of and activity around social justice, food security, climate and energy issues,



"Enathe," a sculpture by Susan Wilson.

COURTESY PHOTO

homelessness, and asylum seekers — Wilson says in an artist's statement: "Now I know that, instead of waiting and hoping, and searching for personal sanctuary, I must act. My way forward is through my art, traveling with people who seek only the opportunity to become fully whoever they yearn to be."

In "Yearnings," Wilson's SVAC exhibit, are two multi-unit pieces, one titled "Hands and Voices," the other, "Yearnings," as well as a single head-to-torso piece, "Enathe."

Inspired by her Rwandan friends and others encountered in African countries, each of Wilson's figures manifests a depth and complexity, a capturing of human essence — of yearnings for dreams and fulfillment.

In faces richly worked and colored in clay atop bodies of rough-hewn wood, one can read miles into the heart of these subjects — and that of their maker. With eyes sometimes watching, sometimes downcast and lips just slightly, gently open as if asking to be heard, the figures hold their heads proudly, as if knowing their inner worth. Their skin gleams, and in myriad ways, they are beautiful.

About the work, Wilson says: "In this time of alienation and conflict in our world, I teeter on a razor's edge of glaring contradictions of our goodness and tribulences [...] My work in clay has always been about finding my place in the world."

"With the three-dimensionality of clay, I create real spaces

■ SEE WILSON, B4

Juno was gone. And now it's back.

Orchestra returns under the Brattleboro Music Center umbrella with a focus on showcasing women composers, starting with a concert on April 30

By Annie Landenberger
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—When Juno Orchestra performed "Zenith!" featuring Sibelius, Haydn, and Mozart" in June of 2022 at Persons Auditorium on the former Marlboro College campus to a standing ovation from a full house, it was presumed to be its final, farewell concert. So much can happen in a year.

Juno was gone. However, by the grace of a major foundation's generosity, Juno is back.

According to founder/director, cellist Zon Eastes, Juno was conceived and run as a five-year project starting in 2017 to explore new works and oft-overlooked extant compositions.

When Covid shutdowns imperiled the lively arts, the ensemble maintained an audience online with innovative, collaborative programming. They called on the talents of a range of area artists, from performers at the New England Center for Circus Arts to the Vermont Jazz Center Director Eugene Uman.

As the pandemic's shroud lifted, the ensemble reassembled live to complete its final phases, culminating in its swan song, which Eastes called "a big success, a wonderful concert."

The following day, out of the blue, he was approached "by someone I've known for many years but who's not really been involved" in music locally. Having lived in Brattleboro but now working in New York, the friend asked if Eastes would continue creating with Juno, if funded.

The result: an opportunity to carry on, thanks to the Bay & Paul Foundations (BPF) of New York City.

Eastes speaks with passion about Juno and its rebirth. "Juno is all about exploration and engagement," he said. "Whether it be delving into a lesser known, amazing Haydn symphony or commissioning a new piece of music from a gifted composer, Juno finds a remarkable opportunity to go deeper."

A portion of BPF's grant has already been made to the Brattleboro Music Center (BMC), where Juno had been in residency for its duration.

The two-pronged initiative will both empower Juno Orchestra, under Eastes's leadership, to move into the future and will create a plan to secure the BMC archive, which includes seven decades of recordings and materials from the New England Bach Festival and many performances at the BMC since the 1950s.

Juno Orchestra is now to be tucked under the BMC's umbrella. Though it had been housed there, it was "always separate

■ SEE JUNO ORCHESTRA, B4

COLUMN | Creative Conversations

'A sweet homage to where we are from'

Brattleboro American roots band Low Lily primed to release new album after pandemic delay

WHEN LIZ SIMMONS gets into her car to drive to Springfield, Massachusetts, where she teaches voice at Community Music School of Springfield, she listens to music ranging from Dolly Parton to Emmylou Harris, from Patsy Cline to Beyoncé, from Alison Krauss and Union Station to Indigo Girls, from Shawn Colvin to Kate Bush. She admits her taste in music is diverse.

When not teaching youngsters how to sing, Simmons fronts her Brattleboro-based band, Low Lily, whose members have toured all over the U.S., the U.K., and Canada over the past decade and garnered two No. 1 songs on international folk radio and, in 2019, two Independent Music Awards: Best Bluegrass Song and bluegrass Vox Pop Fan Favorite, both for "10,000 Days



VICTORIA CHERTOK began covering the arts in Windham County in 2017. Her work is featured in *The Commons* and *Seven Days*. A harpist by training and mother of two sons, she enjoys attending concerts. (Last concert attended: Melvin Seals & JGB, Infinity Music Hall, Hartford, Connecticut.)

Like These."

With the release of a new album, *Angels in the Wreckage*, after a delay due to the pandemic, the American Roots band brings its three-part harmonies and original music to The Stone Church on Sunday, April 30 for a long-awaited album release party.

Low Lily, founded in 2014, is made up of Liz Simmons, 44, of Brattleboro, on guitar and vocals; Flynn Cohen, 52, on guitar, mandolin, and vocals; and Natalie Padilla, 34, on fiddle and vocals.

Padilla joined the band last summer, and her world-class fiddle playing has won her fiddle championships in

multiple styles, including bluegrass, old time, and Texas fiddle. Low Lily will be joined by Stefan Amidon of Brattleboro on drums and Hazel Royer of Boston on double bass for this album release tour.

Simmons and Cohen are married and have one son, Gabe Bradshaw, 21, who studies recording, production, and engineering at The Blackbird Academy in Nashville.

The Commons reached Simmons by phone recently to talk about Low Lily's award-winning song from the band's first album, "Hope Lingers On," the new album "Angels in the Wreckage," and the upcoming album release party.



ZINNIA SIEGEL, COURTESY PHOTO

Low Lily: Liz Simmons, Flynn Cohen, Natalie Padilla

VICTORIA CHERTOK: Congrats on the release of your new album.

LIZ SIMMONS: Thank you! We've put out a few singles these past few years, but because of the pandemic, it's been five years since our last full-length album. What came out is a 14-track album.

It felt right to do a little more of an epic project. It takes the listener on a journey and has some ups and downs. In general, we're capturing the energy of what we do musically, as well as more soft, introspective moments.

We put out our last full length album in 2018 and we did an EP — a short-play,

six-track album in 2015. We brought a fiddle player, Natalie Padilla, from Bozeman, Montana, on board last summer after Lissa Schneckenburger, our former fiddle player, amicably parted ways. (Though Schneckenburger is no longer a performing member of

■ SEE LOW LILY, B3

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

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SOLD

arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY

27

Music

PUTNEY Palaver Strings - Elements: Clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and percussionist Brian Shankar Adler explore fluid space between improvisation and composition, drawing on classical, jazz, Syrian folk elements. Pieces by Azmeh include his new piece for strings - "Suite for Improviser and Orchestra" and "In The Element," taking its name from experiencing a warm summer run in the rain, and speaks to broader themes of feeling in (or out) of one's element musically and culturally.

► 7 p.m. *Each year, Palaver presents a full series of live performances featuring diverse musical programming, cross-genre projects, and community collaborations.*

► \$20 in advance, \$24 at door, \$10 livestream.
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org.

The written word

Three Poets Launching Debut Collections - (Online): Titles and authors are: "Odes to Ordinary" by Emily Benson-Scott; "Fire Index" by Bethany Breitland; and "Quick to Bolt" by Mary Fister. Includes discussion. Hosted by Green Writers Press founder and publisher Dede Cummings.

► 6:30 - 8 p.m.
► Free.
► Online. Information: Watch online: tinyurl.com/y8xsvz52.

Well-being

WILMINGTON Voices of Hope - "Uprooting Addiction: Healing From the Ground Up" - Film Showing and Discussion: This grassroots group supports people impacted by substance abuse. Filmmakers will be present to share an innovative retreat where addiction and trauma counselor Hope Payson (LCSW, LADC), six people (including Daryl McGraw) from varying walks of life, each affected by childhood trauma, come together to share their stories, emerging from darkness through community, connection, and compassion.

► 5:30 p.m. *All are welcome to watch this film about trauma, addiction and recovery. Snacks provided. (Also see 4/28).*
► Free - workshop and lunch.
► Old School Community Center, 1 School St. Information:

THURSDAY CONT.

voicesofhopevt.org, voicesofhopevt.org or Voices: 802-490-3316.

Community meals

PUTNEY Putney Monthly Free Produce Distribution: Monthly food drop of free produce and some non-perishables.

► 9-9:45 a.m. *Fourth Thursday of every month. Because of COVID, it is drive-up service. Bags provided. Co-sponsored by Vermont Foodbank and Putney Foodshelf on Alice Holloway Dr. (in front of Putney Meadows - white building across from Putney Co-op and Putney Fire Station).*
► Free.
► Putney Great Meadows.

FRIDAY

28

Performing arts

GREENFIELD Human Agenda Theater presents "Mira and the Liminal Dimension": Collaboratively created original theater piece investigates the concept of Liminal Space as it applies to our lives and world. We follow Mira as she finds herself stuck Alice in Wonderland-style in the "Liminal Dimension," a place that embodies the in-between and the strange. She's guided by many, especially by a spirit of the dimension - Janus. With Janus's help, Mira grapples with being stuck in between - in her life, job, and soul.

► 7 - 9 p.m.
► Through Sunday, April 30.
► \$10 to \$30.
► Hawks & Reed Ballroom, 289 Main St. Information: Tickets: tinyurl.com/4m87wv59.

Music

SOUTH NEWFANE Jason Anderson Fundraiser Concert at the South Newfane Schoolhouse: With sold out shows in Boston and Philadelphia and 3 EPs and a full-length record, Jason also has a cache of new material. A portion of the proceeds supports the South Newfane Schoolhouse Building Fund.

► 7 p.m.
► \$15 advance tickets.
► South Newfane Schoolhouse, 387 Dover Rd. More information: Maia Segura at snschoollhouse@gmail.com Tickets: tinyurl.com/2tyfct6.

FRIDAY CONT.

Instruction

BRATTLEBORO NECCA: April Flight Night - Flowers, Faeries, and Fauna: "Yes, even you can swing on the flying trapeze! Learn to fly through the air with the greatest of ease. You will climb the ladder, take off from the platform, hang upside down by your knees, and do a backflip twenty feet in the air! No previous experience needed, just bring a dream of flying and your curiosity for adventure. Ages 7 and up."
► 5 - 7 p.m.
► \$10 for one swing, \$20 for three swings.
► New England Center for Circus Arts (Trapezium), 10 Town Circle Dr. Information: Register tinyurl.com/2p8b8kpx.

The written word

BRATTLEBORO Write Action, Time to Write, Brattleboro Literary Festival announce Relaxed Evening of Poetry at the River Garden: In-person reading by poets participating in "Poems Around Town" - part of annual celebration of poetry featuring almost 100 poems. Poets mainly from the Brattleboro region, also statewide, are in 48 locations in downtown Brattleboro. With over 50 poets, we're limiting number of readers to 20. Each has 4 min. to read their poem - perhaps one or two more. Essentially, this is a sampling of area poets - from published to those just coming out of the closet as poets!

► 5-7 p.m. *Refreshments served; beer/wine available from bar. Guide for what is where/ by whom: www.writeaction.org. Also in print at Brattleboro Co-Op, Chamber of Commerce, Brooks Memorial Library, Everyone's Books. Many poems will also be up for May Gallery Walk.*
► Free.
► River Garden Marketplace, 157 Main St. Information: info@writeaction.org.

Kids and families

DUMMERSTON Dummerston School Spring Arts Night and Family Contra Dance: Celebrate spring with our student artists and performers! Live music, all ages, community dance for one and all! Fiddle, accordion, keyboard. Join us for a short program of band and chorus performances and then enjoy our K-8 student art gallery installation in the middle school wing. Families and community members are invited!

► 6:30 p.m. in the Gym.
► Free.
► Dummerston School, 52 Schoolhouse Road (Cnr. Schoolhouse Rd. and Rt. 5). Information: 802-254-2733; dummerston.wsesu.org.

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO Voices of Hope -Workshop and Lunch: Workshop will explore the interpersonal, cultural, and traumatic roots of addiction including intergenerational trauma, oppression, racism, and stigma. Learn how addiction and trauma impact the brain and how trauma informed interventions and addressing roots of addiction can support recovery.

► 9 a.m.-12 noon. *Lunch provided. RSVP requested in advance: voicesofhopevt@gmail.com. (Also see 4/27).*
► Workshop and lunch are free of charge.
► 134 Elliot, 134 Elliot St. Information: voicesofhopevt@gmail.com, facebook.com/VoicesofHopeVT, 802-490-3316 Voices, 802-490-5645 Recovery Support Services.

WILMINGTON Voices of Hope -Workshop and Lunch: Workshop explores the interpersonal, cultural, traumatic roots of addiction including intergenerational trauma, oppression, racism, stigma. Learn how addiction and trauma impact the brain and how trauma-informed interventions and addressing roots of addiction can support recovery.

► 9 a.m.-12 noon. *Lunch provided. RSVP requested in advance at voicesofhopevt@gmail.com. (Also see 4/27).*
► Free (workshop and lunch).
► Old Firehouse, 18 Beaver St., Information: Resources page: voicesofhopevt.org or contact Voices: 802-490-3316.

Dance

BRATTLEBORO The Queer Dance Party: Special Guests: are Haute Sauce and DJ Wooly Mar: "Additional special guests will join us! You are the stars of the night! Dress-up inspiration is Beltane pageantry!"

► The Stone Church in Brattleboro, 210 Main St. Information: Tickets: stonechurchvt.com.

SATURDAY

29

Performing arts

PUTNEY "Sara Juli's Naughty Bits" - A Work in Development (for the child who did nothing wrong): Juli's latest contemporary dance-theater work explores the impacts of trauma on the brain stemming from sexual assault as a child. Interweaving regressed thinking with a conflicted inner voice, coupled with finding the humor in the tragic, she breaks down victimhood to ultimately reclaim the mind. Juli's signature style of movement is fused with text and comedy.

► 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. *Following each performance, Juli engages in a discussion with the audience - providing an opportunity to reflect on the themes presented/ delve deeper into the creative process behind the work. (Content warning: Contains material related to sexual trauma and assault.)*
► Free.
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org.

The written word

BRATTLEBORO Writing Workshop offered by Brattleboro Museum & Art Center and Brattleboro Area Hospice: Presented in connection with the "Mitsuko Brooks: Letters Mingle Souls" exhibition. Brooks' mixed-media and collages and sculptures address issues of mental health. She collaborates with suicide-loss survivors and asks them to express lingering thoughts, emotions, feelings they wish they could share with their lost loved one. She then incorporates their words and sentiments in collage compositions layered upon reclaimed boards, postcards, book covers.

► 2 p.m. *Walk-ins welcome. Brooks speaks of her engagement with a model of clinical psychology that considers four factors involved in healing: biological, psychological, social, and especially spiritual.*
► Free.
► Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: Optional registration in advance: brattleboromuseum.org.

Kids and families

WEST BRATTLEBORO Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Brattleboro - First-Time Students Only: "Let us help make your child Bullyproof! Using games and drills, this free and fun seminar will introduce some of the verbal assertiveness and non-violent techniques children need in order to take on the bullies without becoming one!"

► 10:30 a.m.-12 noon. *For kids ages 5 through 12.*
► Free.
► Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Brattleboro, 55 Marlboro Road. Information: Register by email or Facebook: amarugij@gmail.com, fb.me/e/2ids8lKkz.

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Zen Center - Meditation (In-Person or wherever you may be): One way to engage with the ecological crisis - we chant briefly and then sit in silence for a half hour. All are welcome to join this peaceful action, either in-person or from wherever they might be.

► 1-1:35 p.m. on Saturdays.
► Free.
► Wells Fountain, south side Windham County District Courthouse, Jct. Putney Rd. & Main St. (Rte 30). Information: alison.f.bundy@gmail.com.

Community building

TOWNSHEND Pancake Flip N' Earth Friendly Fun: Pancake Breakfast / Earth Friendly Games and Activities: Hosted and sponsored by Community Hope & Action: Pancake Flip N' Earth Friendly Fun event. Followed by earth-friendly games and activities on the Townshend Common. This event celebrates Earth Day and the Month of the Young Child. Open to people of all ages and towns.

► 9-11 a.m. *Pancake Breakfast in the Townshend Church. 11 a.m.-1 p.m.: Earth-friendly games and activities on the Townshend*

SATURDAY CONT.

Common. The mission of Community Hope & Actions is to instill hope by creating opportunities to support and connect everyone within our community.
► Free.
► Townshend Church, 46 Common Rd. Information: We need volunteers to help with the event/ activities: Contact Elisha Underwood at wrwthives@gmail.com., 802-365-4700.

Arts and crafts

CHESTERFIELD Creative Chesterfield Artisan Fair featuring Chesterfield Artisans: Browse handmade crafts created in a small town by big talent. Featuring paintings, floral designs, jewelry, woodworking, baked goods, and more." Sponsored by The Chesterfield Economic Development Committee.

► 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
► Free.
► Chesterfield Town Hall, 490 Rte. 63. Information: 603-363-4624.

SUNDAY

30

Music

PUTNEY Next Stage Arts and Twilight Music present singer/songwriter Carsie Blanton and her trio (In-Person/Livestream): Carsie Blanton writes anthems for a world worth saving. Inspired by artists such as Nina Simone and Randy Newman, her songs encompass a wide range of genres - sultry pop to punk-tinged Americana. She delivers each song with an equal dose of moxie and mischief, bringing her audience together in joyful celebration of everything worth fighting for. Americana artist Brittany Ann Tranbaugh opens.

► 7 p.m.
► \$25 at door, \$22 in advance, \$10 livestream.
► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: Tickets: tinyurl.com/2s6m66jx.

BRATTLEBORO Anna Patton's "The Soubrettes" sing close harmonies: Today, The Soubrettes action-packed 30-minute set includes songs by Billy Strayhorn, Rachelle Garniez, Dan Hicks, Ben Patton. The choir will be joined by Jesse Ball on guitar and other guest instrumentalists.

► 3:30 p.m. *Show up with extra time to listen if you can because there will be great music from many ensembles from 2 p.m. into early evening.*
► \$5 suggested donation.
► Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill, #222. Information: 802-254-9088; vtjazz.org.

TUESDAY

2

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.

Community building

BELLOWS FALLS Presentation: Riparian Buffers: Cory Ross, District Mgr. Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, offers a presentation on riparian buffers, their conservation value, how to establish them along Westminster's waters. Vegetated buffers along shorelines are the simplest and most effective way to improve water quality, enhance/protect wildlife and the values of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands. Plus funding opportunities to help landowners plant buffers at little or no cost.

► 7 p.m. *Sponsored by the Westminster Conservation Commission.*
► Free.
► Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: More information, Alma Beals, 802-722-3355 or Sarah Waldo, 802-387-6036.
Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard (via Zoom):

Headlines about global insect declines and 3 billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective current landscape designs have been at sustaining plants/animals that sustain us. To create landscapes that enhance local ecosystems rather than degrade, we must remove invasives on our property and add the native plant communities that sustain food webs, sequester carbon, maintain diverse native bee communities, manage our watersheds.

► 7 p.m. *"If we do this in half of a lawn area, we can create Homegrown National Park - a network of viable habitats throughout the U.S. providing vital corridors connecting the few natural areas that remain. This approach to conservation empowers everyone to play a significant role in the future of the natural world. It's enormously restorative for those taking action. Join us to find out how you can be involved." Douglas Tallamy, PhD, is one of the clearest voices calling for restoration of native plants across our landscape. His research has shown the impacts of our landscaping choices on native biodiversity. His books include: "Bringing Nature Home," NY Times bestseller "Nature's Best Hope," "The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees." Sponsored by Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center and Green Mountain Conservancy.*
► Donations welcome.
► Zoom. Information: Register: tinyurl.com/yck8s3kn.

Visual arts and shows

PUTNEY Putney Public Library Exhibit - "Affinities" - Assemblages" by Bonnie Mennell: Bonnie Mennell: "Objects find me. Their beauty, form, textures and colors draw me to them. I collect them, asking permission and giving thanks. I bring them to my home and studio. I live with them. They engage me both in the moment and over time."
► 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sat. *Bonnie, a Putney resident, also teaches as part of the New England Council Collective, which offers workshops in the deep listening approach to group dialogue.*
► Through Saturday, May 20.
► Free.
► Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407; putneylibrary.org/events.

WEDNESDAY

3

Ideas and education

BRATTLEBORO We Are All Fast Food Workers Now: Labor historian Annelle Orleck provides a close look at globalization and its costs from the perspective of low-wage workers themselves - berry pickers, fast food servers, garment workers, cashiers, hotel housekeepers, home health care aides, and even adjunct professors - who are fighting for respect, safety, and a living wage. Hosted by Vermont Humanities, Brooks Memorial Library, the Town of Brattleboro.

► 7 p.m.
► Free.
► Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

Jason Anderson returns to South Newfane Schoolhouse for fundraising concert

SOUTH NEWFANE—Award-winning singer-songwriter Jason Anderson made his South Newfane debut to a packed room in 2018. Two years later, the stage was set for an encore performance when the world shut down.

As COVID-19 ground life — and Anderson's touring plans — to a halt in 2020, he decamped to the internet, launching a series of online performances that allowed him to stay connected to family, friends, and fans around the world throughout the dark days of the pandemic.


After more than 150 virtual gigs under his belt, the former band member of Strand of Oaks is finally hitting the terrestrial road again on a much-anticipated tour of the eastern United States, including a fundraising show at the South Newfane Schoolhouse, 387 Dover Road, on Friday, April 28 at 7 p.m.

"With sold out shows in Boston

and Philadelphia, it's clear that Anderson's audience is just as ready for live music as he is," say promoters. Armed with a cache of new material, the prolific songwriter has kept busy, with three EPs and a full-length record all released over the last three years. Find out more about his music at jasonandersonmusic.net.

The South Newfane Schoolhouse is owned and operated by the South Newfane Community Association. It was built in 1867 as a one-room schoolhouse that remained in operation until the 1950s. Today, the bright, airy schoolhouse is a valuable community resource providing residents with a place to meet, view the work of local Rock River artists, host a wedding or party, or dance to a local band. Learn more at [facebook.com/SouthNewfaneSchoolhouse](https://www.facebook.com/SouthNewfaneSchoolhouse). Throughout the Covid pandemic shutdown, the space also provided a safe alternative for individuals away from home for much needed respite, music, martial arts, and yoga practices, as well as providing a beautiful place for reflection. It also became home to the local Little Library after the renovation of a neglected storage space. South Newfane Community Association is currently raising funds to help cover deferred maintenance.

Advance tickets are available for \$15 at tinyurl.com/2tyfct6. A portion of the concert proceeds supports the South Newfane Schoolhouse Building Fund.



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In-Sight seeks entries for Youth Pride Photo Contest

BRATTLEBORO—In-Sight Photography Project invites LGBTQ+ identifying youth (ages 11 to 18) to submit images to a Youth Pride Photo Contest and Exhibition in partnership with Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC), Vital Partnerships, and United Way of Windham County.

For 30 years, In-Sight has empowered youth through the photographic arts to engage in community and culture. In a news release, organizers say it is thrilling to collaborate with these partners to celebrate the region's young LGBTQ+ photographers.

LGBTQ+ youth living within an hour of In-Sight's facilities in Brattleboro can find details about submissions and submit images through insightphotography.org. Images must be photography based: digital, analog film, or an

alternative process such as cyanotype or collage. The deadline for submissions is midnight on Friday, May 26.

Photographers do not need to be current or former In-Sight students, though current or former students can borrow equipment, if needed.

All submissions will be included in a virtual gallery, and each artist will receive a gift for their submission. A jury of local professional photographers will be selecting 25 images to be shown in In-Sight's Tiny Gallery throughout Pride Month, with an opening during Gallery Walk on Friday, June 2, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Of the 25 images in the gallery exhibition, three images will receive top honors and a new camera. Participants could receive either a Canon DSLR, Polaroid Now, or a Polaroid Go. The public is invited to

join In-Sight, BMAC, Vital Partnerships, and United Way of Windham County in viewing the work of our young artists and seeing them accept their awards. The show will close with Gallery Walk on Friday, July 7. In addition, the 25 selected images will be on display in the BMAC's East Gallery Dec. 20, 2023 through Jan. 14, 2024.

Uplifting young artists through unique opportunities is at the heart of In-Sight Photography Project's work. Staff and the board of directors are excited to use the gallery to bring LGBTQ+ youth and allies together to recognize their artistry with the community. All questions about the contest and exhibition can be directed to Emily Wagner, executive director.

Carsie Blanton performs in Putney on April 30

PUTNEY—Next Stage Arts Project and Twilight Music present singer-songwriters Carsie Blanton and her quartet, plus Brittany Ann Tranbaugh, at Next Stage, 15 Kimball Hill, on Sunday, April 30, at 7 p.m.

Carsie Blanton "writes anthems for a world worth saving," say organizers. "Inspired by artists including Nina Simone and Randy Newman, her songs encompass a range of genres, from sultry pop to punk-tinged Americana.

"Whether alone with her electric guitar or fronting her 'handsome band,' Blanton delivers every song with an equal dose of moxie and mischief, bringing her audience together in joyful celebration of everything worth fighting for," states a news release.

Since releasing her first album in 2002, Blanton has recorded seven more, appeared on NPR's *Mountain Stage*, and has shared the stage with the likes of Paul Simon, The Weepies, and Shawn Colvin. In February 2011, she toured with Anais Mitchell's *Hadestown*, playing the role of Head Fate.

"Fragile and strong, with lush and cheerful arrangements infused with jazz elements, Blanton's latest album, *Love and Rage*, is a reminder that the fight for racial and gender equity can—and should—have joyous moments," say organizers.

Brittany Ann Tranbaugh's first EP *Quarter Life Crisis Haircut* features her 2022 John Lennon Songwriting Contest Song of the Year winner *Kiss You*. In the last year, Tranbaugh has quit her office job to pursue a full-time music career, "establishing herself as local favorite in the Philadelphia music scene," and recording a second EP, *Comets*, to be released



DAN TAPPAN, CREATIVE COMMONS (BY-NC-SA) LICENSE
Carsie Blanton

this fall, according to the news release.

Tickets are \$22 advance, \$25 at the door, \$10 virtual. For information, call 802-387-0102. Advance tickets are available at nextstagearts.org. Next Stage will provide a beer, wine, and cocktail cash bar.

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DAILY 3:45 PM
NIGHTLY 6:50 PM

'Bowlerama' at Brattleboro Clayworks benefits Empty Bowls Dinner

BRATTLEBORO—Almost every Spring for 19 years, Brattleboro Clayworks has invited the community to help make bowls to feed the hungry. This year's Bowlerama will be held on Saturday, May 13.

Volunteers will make hand-built bowls to donate to the annual Brattleboro Empty Bowls dinner. There will be no throwing on the wheels at this event. Participants won't need any experience or special skills, since artist-teachers Judith Thomas, Andi Matthews, and Karen Horton will provide basic instruction and gentle support to help shepherd attendees' creations from start to finish. And, they say, it's

a lot of fun.

The Empty Bowls Dinner, held in early October at Landmark College in Putney, raises funds for Groundworks Collaborative. Potters contribute bowls, local eateries donate home-cooked soups, and musicians share their talents. For a \$25 donation, participants will enjoy live music and a delicious meal in a handcrafted bowl they then take home.

While many bowls are donated by professional potters, bowls made by so-called *amateurs*—from the French "amor," for the love of it—are often the first to be chosen.

Groundworks Collaborative works with people and systems

creating solutions to end hunger and homelessness for all people in our region, envisioning a community in which everyone has their basic needs met, including a safe and dignified place to call home.

Space for this workshop is limited to 15 participants per session. Sign up in advance for the 10 a.m. to noon or 1 to 3 p.m. sessions by calling Brattleboro Clayworks at 802-254-9174. Children ages 10 and older are welcome, accompanied by an adult.

Clayworks donates instruction, clay, glaze, and firing costs. There is no charge to participate; however, financial donations to Groundworks are welcome.

Storytelling roundtable tackles theme of immigration

Hinojosa's exhibition 'Paradise City' on display at BMAC

BRATTLEBORO—New York-based artist Juan Hinojosa, whose work is on view in the exhibition "Paradise City" at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC), will lead a storytelling roundtable on the theme of newcomers and immigration at BMAC on Thursday, May 4, at 7 p.m.

Presented in collaboration with Vermont Folklife, the event will begin with a short tour of the exhibition, which features Hinojosa's collaged figures symbolizing travelers from another world. Afterward, visitors will be invited to share their family histories and make mini collages on the theme of "home."

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

In his art and in this event, Hinojosa, whose parents emigrated to the United States from Peru, explores what it means to be from a place. Through community engagement and storytelling, Hinojosa aims to reveal the many shared experiences all Americans have.

In a statement accompanying the exhibition, Hinojosa reflects on his experience as the child of immigrants: "Here, the children of immigrants are often the ones caught in the middle, between

two cultures, languages, and national identities." His collaged figures, made of objects he finds in catalogs, on the street, and in the subways of New York City, raise questions about what it means to be an American.

In addition to grappling with American consumerism, Hinojosa's work explores the significance of objects in relation to memory and identity.

Curator Sarah Freeman writes in an essay accompanying the exhibit, "Small sculptures and canvases embellished with buttons, badges, and various trappings resemble artifacts that Hinojosa's figures might have carried with them on their journeys as tokens

and mementos of home. Or perhaps the figures have collected these small objects in their new environments, as they have tried to make sense of their new surroundings and build their new lives."

Hinojosa received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Parsons School of Design and was awarded residencies at Material for the Arts (New York), Vermont Studio Center, and LMCC (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Governors Island COVID-19 Response Residency program). His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Woodside Herald*, and *Open House New York*.

Low Lily

the band, Low Lily's new album features four of her original songs.)

V.C.: What does the band's name "Low Lily" mean?

L.S.: It's a colloquial name for the trout lily, a flower that grows in low-lying areas, particularly in the Northeast, a sweet homage to where we are from.

V.C.: Does Low Lily play originals only? Any covers?

L.S.: We do mainly originals with a couple of reimagined covers. We have a few on the album: a Jethro Tull song, "Wond'ring Again," which closes the album, and a Shawn Colvin song, "Round of Blues," which opens the album. We have personal connections to these songs.

Natalie and Flynn write instrumentals, and we include a couple of those as well.

V.C.: How did you pick the title of your new album, *Angels in the Wreckage*?

L.S.: It comes from thinking about light and dark, love and loss, beauty and destruction, and how these dualities always live side by side in this world. And humans always manage to find anchors in the storm, like angels in the wreckage.

V.C.: Some of your lyrics on the new album have social justice themes and tackle complex topics of love, loss, hope, justice, family heritage, and environmental destruction. Tell me about the origin of the songs "What'll You Do" and "One Wild World."

L.S.: "What'll You Do," which Lissa wrote on the new

album, is a kind of sequel to the song "Hope Lingers On" from our first album, which really took off. Choirs around the world are still singing it as an anthem for peace and justice, and we thought that was so cool. You send a message, and it reverberates around the world.

"What'll We Do" is edgier and is speaking about the disproportionate violence against Black people by the police. It's a rallying cry for people to stand up and shout for justice.

We were a little concerned about putting it out there—we didn't want it to be misinterpreted. There are plenty of police people who are respectful and kind, so what we're really saying is "no racist police"—standing up against those police who operate from that place that yields violence, racial profiling, and incarceration.

"One Wild World" is a hopeful song about growing from love, appreciating the good things that humans have created in the world, making the world a better place to leave for our children.

We have to operate from hope and love in order to carry on. Sometimes it is time to fight, and sometimes it is a time to come from a place of love.

V.C.: "Angels in the Wreckage" was produced by banjo legend Dirk Powell. What was it like to work with him?

L.S.: Dirk is an amazing musician, a multi-instrumentalist, and recording producer in our genre. I had the opportunity to work with him on my friend Kyle Carey's record several years ago and liked working

with him a lot. Then he mastered Low Lily's 2018 album.

We felt his perspective and his take on music would be a really valuable thing to add to what we do. He did just that, and he added so much. He played bass and banjo on almost all of the tracks, and he added a bit of his Louisiana Cajun sound with accordion and triangle on our song "Lonely."

V.C.: Who were some of your early music influences?

L.S.: My parents are my earliest musical influences, as they are both musicians. My mom used to sing me to sleep with old-time ballads from the American folk tradition, and English, Scots, and Irish traditions, too. She was a real product of folk revival and knew all those old songs, also from her mother who sang to her.

As I got older, I was into all the folk music, including (at the time) contemporary artists like Indigo Girls, Tracy Chapman, and Sarah McLachlan, but I was also into pop music.

I was classically trained in my teens and sang in musicals and in school and local choirs. I did find my way back to folk music in my late teens. At the time I was passionate about Irish traditional singing and then later became re-enamored with bluegrass and Americana styles.

V.C.: Which instruments do you play?

L.S.: I play guitar on stage, but I'm also a closet pianist. I don't really tell people that. My first instrument was the ukulele when I was 4 years old. But then I started taking flute in fifth grade and played for six

FROM SECTION FRONT

years. I also started with piano lessons at age 11, then acoustic guitar when I was 13.

V.C.: Finally, what are you most excited about with your new album and your album release show?

FLYNN COHEN: I hope our audience feels both inspired and viscerally excited by listening to the music. I also hope that our existing fans appreciate the new songs as much as the old ones. I am personally excited to play more bluegrass-inspired music and to perform all of this new material that we haven't done before.

NATALIE PADILLA: I hope this album inspires the listener to join us in a journey through lyrics and melodies, taking the time to sit still and enjoy music. I have a good time rocking out on stage with Low Lily in trio form, but this will be next level, and I can't wait!

L.S.: Putting out an album and planning a tour is a lot of work, so I'm excited to finally play the music for an audience! We spend so much time promoting it, and sometimes I forget why I actually do it, and when I get on stage and there is magic.

Then I am reminded of what the point of it all is.

Low Lily's album release party for Angels in the Wreckage takes place on Sunday, April 30 at 7 p.m. at the Stone Church, 210 Main St., in Brattleboro. Doors open 6:30 p.m. Tickets (\$17) are available at stonechurchvt.com. For more information on Low Lily, visit lowlily.com.

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Juno Orchestra

but close to our hearts,” explains BMC Executive Director Mary Greene.

“Bringing Juno into the BMC family was part of the critical thinking facilitated by Bay & Paul Foundations,” she says.

With this mutually beneficial framework, Juno is now secure in ongoing exploration of worthy compositions and in upholding its reputation for excellence.

“It’s different now that Juno has the prospect of becoming an ongoing ensemble of the BMC,” Eastes adds. “There’s security in that when choosing repertoire and assembling the best players possible.”

“We’re adding to the strength of our region’s creative sector’s well-being, too,” notes Eastes, the agent representing the Southern Vermont Creative Zone within the Vermont Arts Council’s Vermont Creative Network, an effort to study and strategize about the economic impact of the arts and the creative sector in the state.

Homage to the power of women

Wasting no time to reboot, Eastes and Juno are in rehearsal now for a concert Sunday, April 30, at 4 p.m. at the BMC.

“Heaven’s Borders” will feature exclusively works of women composers to honor the Roman goddess Juno, the namesake of the ensemble, and as a homage to the power of women.

Eastes puts forth that women are rarely recognized enough in many realms — composing being among them. Going forward, in fact, Juno’s focus will be on music of women, and following this event, Juno begins work on five concerts for its next season.

Composers in the April 30 performance include Libby Croad, a London-based composer, arranger, and violinist who studied violin and composition at the Royal Academy of Music and whose compositions have been performed on BBC Radio and Television. Her Suite for String Orchestra was first performed by the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra and broadcast on Classic FM.

Hot on the new composers’

scene, Jessie Montgomery has been affiliated, since 1999, with The Sphinx Organization, which supports young African American and Latinx string players.

A two-time laureate of the annual Sphinx Competition and awarded its highest honor, Montgomery has received numerous grants and awards. With degrees from The Juilliard School and New York University, she maintains an active schedule as a violinist and is a graduate fellow in music composition at Princeton University and a professor of violin and composition at The New School.

Of *Strum*, her work that Juno will perform, Montgomery describes it as “the culminating result of several versions of a string quintet I wrote in 2006.” She says that “the voicing is often spread wide over the ensemble, giving the music an expansive quality of sound. Within *Strum*, I utilized texture motives, layers of rhythmic or harmonic ostinati that string together to form a bed of sound for melodies to weave in and out.”

Strum, which draws on “American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement,” has what Montgomery describes as “a kind of narrative that begins with fleeting nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration.”

Bulgarian-born Dobrinka Tabakova has lived in London since she was 11. With a degree from Guildhall School of Music and Drama and a doctorate in composition from King’s College London, she was appointed in 2017 as composer-in-residence with the BBC Concert Orchestra. Other residencies have included Truro Cathedral, MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra, Davos Festival, and Off the Beaten Path, a festival in the Bulgarian Rhodope Mountains.

Tabakova’s *Organum Light* takes its inspiration from medieval chant, conjoining melody and harmony. As the artist describes, the music is “complicated by the fact that towards the start and end of the piece there’s a dronal quality.”

According to Eastes, “From a melodic perspective, there’s a distinct sense running through [it] that the players are physically linked, bound together, such that when one moves, they all move, in an act of tutti traction hinged as to create a mixture of parallel and contrary motion.”

The late Polish composer

FROM SECTION FRONT

and violinist Grażyna Bacewicz was born in 1909 and studied in Warsaw and Paris before serving as principal violinist of the Polish Radio Orchestra. Following World War II, which had disrupted her career, she supported herself entirely through composing.

Her *Concerto for String Orchestra* on the April Juno program is “well worth exploring,” Eastes says. “[It is] beautifully crafted, vital, and passionate [...] utilizing forms and melodic elements from the Baroque and Classical eras in tandem with contemporary rhythms and harmonies.”

Finally, the upcoming Juno program features Barbara Strozzi. Born in 1619, the Italian composer and singer of the Baroque period published eight volumes of her own music, and had more secular music in print than any other composer of the era.

“Strozzi produced a remarkable amount of music without any support from the church and with no consistent patronage from the nobility,” Eastes notes.

Current research reveals that Strozzi did not compose much sacred music. But from one piece, composed of 14 motets for solo singer and accompaniment, Juno will present two of the motets in arrangements created by Dana Maiben, baroque music specialist and Juno violinist.

This last composer holds a bit of a special place in Eastes’ Brattleboro history.

“When I came here in 1982, all the rooms in the former BMC home were named after composers,” he says. “I taught cello in the Barbara Strozzi room. She was one militant woman!”

All pieces are for string orchestra exclusively; some new faces in the ensemble will be among familiar professional instrumentalists from throughout the region, including soprano solo Junko Watanabe, who will appear for the works by Strozzi.

Eastes notes another inspiration for the upcoming concert.

He’s intrigued by the current exploration now underway by Juno, also the namesake for “a solar-powered NASA spacecraft that spans the width of a basketball court and makes long, looping orbits around giant planet Jupiter,” he says. “In keeping with Juno Orchestra’s inclination toward innovation in performance, NASA-provided images will play a part in the April 30 concert.”

Tickets for the April 30 concert are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, or \$10 for youth, and they can be purchased at bmcvt.org.

Toussaint St. Negritude performs at Stage 33 Live

BELLOWS FALLS—Afrofuturist, oro-shamanic, Black gay poet and jazz bass clarinetist Toussaint St. Negritude is coming to Stage 33 Live, 33 Bridge Street, on Sunday, May 7, at 7 p.m.

Toussaint St. Negritude presents what organizers are calling “a dynamic solo performance of liberational truth-telling, collaboratively pairing the call of his poetry with the intuitive responses of the bass clarinet, and additional instrumentation.”

Along with the music and poetry, the former Poet Laureate of Belfast, Maine, further extends the experience visually

with his own handmade hats and accompanying attire. “As is the tradition of all Black and queer artistry,” states a news release, “Toussaint St. Negritude summons the soul to be held, heard and seen.”

U.S. Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks described his work as “full of sweet sounds and surprises.” Originally from San Francisco, Toussaint has lived and broadly thrived across the African Diaspora, from the sacred mountains of Haiti to the Coltrane District of North Philadelphia.

He, along with bassist Gahlord Dewald, is the leader

of the band Jaguar Stereo, a free-form ensemble of his own poetry and improvisational jazz, and his works have been widely published and recorded for over 40 years.

On an alpine sanctuary facing east, Toussaint St. Negritude says he continues to thrive in the farthest elevations of Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom.

Tickets are \$10 in advance, or \$15 at the door. There will be no opener; guests should plan on a timely arrival. There is limited seating, and the event will be recorded and filmed. More information can be found at stage33live.com.

Saxtons River Art Guild hosts urban landscape painting workshop

BELLOWS FALLS—The Saxtons River Art Guild (SRAG) presents a one-day workshop given by Vermont watercolorist John Dimick on Saturday, May 6, at the United Church of Bellows Falls, 8 School Street, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Workshop fees are \$70 for SRAG members and \$90 for nonmembers.

The theme of the workshop is “Painting Urban Landscapes.” This is open to all abilities; however, some watercolor experience is suggested. Artists interested in the urban landscape theme and working in other media can contact Dimick to discuss registering for this workshop. He has painted urban and architectural scenes in oils.

In this workshop, Dimick will explain and demonstrate the steps that he generally follows when painting an urban landscape, such as the street scenes in Brattleboro or Bellows Falls.

He will demonstrate the progression of steps from a photograph to a sketch on the watercolor paper and then the gradual development, working toward the finished painting.

Participants are encouraged to bring a couple of photos of their own to work from or they may work from Dimick’s photos.

Participants should expect to start working on their own after a brief introduction. He will have several finished paintings or prints of street scenes that are completed on hand to illustrate certain unusual techniques he uses.

Dimick is an award-winning artist at various juried shows. Vermont Artisans Designs in Brattleboro carries many of



COURTESY PHOTO

“After the Shower,” a watercolor painting by John Dimick.

his paintings, prints, and notecards. Dimick was the cover artist featured in the January/February edition of *Monadnock Table* magazine.

Writer Diana Damato described his work as ranging “from nature-based scenes to city sites, including locations in downtown Brattleboro, machine shops, unique perspectives of bridges, and western United States and

European settings.” Examples of his work may be viewed at johndimickartist.com.

SRAG will have coffee and tea; those attending the workshop should bring lunch if they wish. For registration or more information, contact Carolyn Berglund at poohbear@ne.rr.com. Masks and COVID-19 vaccinations are required to attend the SRAG workshops.

Wilson

FROM SECTION FRONT

within and around my archetypal figures to explore my fears and hopes, questions, and yearnings to belong. These universal concerns, I hope, invite viewers to contemplate their own questions and concerns.”

In text accompanying the SVAC exhibit, Wilson adds: “My imagery has changed from introspection and hoping and waiting for a path forward to imaging the nobility and quiet determination of a refugee on the move. There is a new urgency for me now. People are on the move. Fears are palpable. Questions are urgent. Seeking has hands. Reaching has arms. Hope has feet. Resistance has wings.”

The catalyst — and raw material — for fusing ceramics with wood, as seen in the SVAC exhibit, came about pretty organically.

“My son is a bread baker,” Wilson says, explaining that he uses slab wood to fire his oven. “For years, this slab wood has been evocative for me, and it had been standing in my studio. One day, I happened to put a ceramic head on top of one piece of slab wood, and that was it. I want the wood to represent a body, but also a wall or impediment for these people whom I honor to move forward in their lives.”

Wilson works in a converted animal shed and two carriage bays at the back of the 220-year-old farmhouse she shares with her husband, Phillip.

“The shed is now my winter studio, complete with a kiln, and

the bays are now my summer studio,” she says.

With lots of southern light, the studio is, she says, “full of work in progress and lots of questions for me to answer. My kiln right now is half-loaded and waiting for me to fill it. I have a canvas-covered table for work in terra cotta clay and one for white clays, porcelain, and stoneware. I have lots of books for inspiration, as well as copious tests, experiments, and notes.”

Of the future, Wilson explains, “I’m ready to launch into new work. I find myself looking backward and forward. I want to finish and revisit old work and explore new ideas,” all the while inspired by those who support and guide her.

After a long list of family members, she includes: “Martin Luther King, Barack Obama, John Lewis, RBG [Ruth Bader Ginsburg], George Floyd, William, Yves, Enathe, Erasme, Phillip, [The New York Times] and its truths, my sons, and my dearest friends and neighbors — all are my saints,” she writes.

Without them and without their telling her the truth, “I would not be who I am,” she says.

Susan Wilson (susanwilsonart.com) is among the 11 artists whose work is included in the Southern Vermont Arts Center’s Spring 2023 Solo Exhibitions. It is on display through Sunday, May 7 at SVAC (svac.org), 860 SVAC Dr., Manchester; open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed Mondays.

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VIEWPOINT



Southern State Correctional Facility.

The deprivation, neglect, and violence that characterize Vermont's prisons is causing premature deaths of inmates at an alarming rate

Brattleboro
ON THE MORNING of April 17, David Mitchell, a 46-year-old man from Rutland, complained to prison guards that he couldn't breathe and needed urgent medical treatment.

According to multiple accounts from other people incarcerated in the same block at Southern State Correctional Facility, the guard told Mitchell to stop complaining and go back to his cell. When Mitchell kept begging to be taken to the hospital, he was threatened with being sent "to the hole" — solitary confinement — if he didn't stop. Within an hour, he died in his cell.

WE ARE NOT EVEN four months into 2023, and David Mitchell is already the eighth person to

JONATHAN ELWELL organizes with Vermont Just Justice, on whose website (vtjustjustice.org) this piece was originally published. The organization is planning a rally on Thursday, May 4 at the Vermont State House to "[let] our legislators know that incarceration should not be a death sentence." Information: bit.ly/712-statehouse.

die in Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) custody this year. If the DOC had its way, all we would have known was that Mitchell was "found unresponsive in his cell" and that "life-saving efforts were unsuccessful."

The state police reported on Tuesday that Mitchell had "told staff Monday morning that he was feeling unwell and had difficulty breathing."

We know more of the story only because of two courageous inmates who have risked their own well-being to share the truth, despite DOC temporarily

shutting down communication between Springfield's incarcerated population and the outside world. DOC has already retaliated against the first witness, John White, by transferring him from Springfield to St. Albans.

Mitchell's death bears a disturbing resemblance to Kenneth Johnson's passing four years earlier. Johnson was detained for two years at Northern State Correctional Facility in Newport and in the fall of 2019 began to complain of severe chest pain and difficulty breathing. He was given steroids which did not solve the problem

and, instead, aggravated his diabetes.

On the night of Dec. 6, Mitchell complained of extreme difficulty breathing. Instead of receiving care or being rushed to the hospital, Johnson received a threat. He was warned to stop faking it, or else he would be moved to solitary.

He passed away before the sun rose the next morning.

A SUBSEQUENT investigation by the Defender General's office would reveal that DOC not only failed to treat Johnson humanely in the moments when his life still could have been saved, but also that the situation could have been avoided if he had received better care and an accurate diagnosis in the months leading up to his death.

Perhaps even worse than these errors, the report showed

■ SEE PRISONS, C2

VIEWPOINT

Bill undermines independent schools and hurts children

Support for H.483 is based on the misperception that independent schools serve an elite population and siphon off funding from public school students

Westminster
THE VERMONT House of Representatives has passed a short-sighted effort that will hurt children in the state under the guise of "supporting public education."

H.483, "An act relating to the accountability and oversight of approved independent schools that are eligible to receive public tuition," is really about what benefits certain adults (and the public school sector) while completely disregarding children and what is best to assure success for every child.

Support for this anti-independent-school bill is based on the misperception that independent schools serve an elite population and siphon off funding from public school students.

While this typification may be more true in some regions of the country, it is not an accurate portrayal in Vermont, where the combination of the small population and our community-based values make most independent schools dedicated to serving students who are not thriving in what are generally more well-funded and more populous (and therefore more socially desirable) public schools.

IN SHORT, kids who go to independent schools are usually going there because their local public school is not serving their needs, and a fresh start in a new setting is their

RICK GORDON describes himself as "a lifelong liberal, longtime public school board member, and retired founding director of Compass School," an independent school in Westminster.

opportunity to find success in school.

Students drawn to independent schools may be burdened by anxiety that is exacerbated by larger class sizes or have unique learning needs, have faced bullying or ridicule from peers, or are non-conforming in a way that just makes them feel they don't fit into a larger setting.

We should honor our public schools for the miraculous job they do serving a relatively wide range of students. But ask any educator if they can equally well serve every child, and if they are honest they will tell you that, of course, they connect better with some students than others.

That is why even in Vermont, with one of the highest graduation rates in the country, still more than 10% of our kids don't graduate, and we know a good many more have suboptimal school experiences.

Nationwide, the non-graduation rate is well over 20%. The fact is, no one school can adequately serve every child and asking a single

■ SEE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, C2

VIEWPOINT



The sea lamprey's concentric rings of teeth.

NEW HAMPSHIRE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

The fish everyone loves to hate

Sea lampreys are important in our watershed. Welcome them, as they are helping their species and our river.

Westminster
IT IS SPRING, and the up-river migrations of shad, American eel, sea lamprey, and other minor players in the migration game are getting underway.

Unfortunately, many people do not like sea lamprey — even if they have never seen one, they know they do not like it. Unfortunately, the misunderstood nature of sea lamprey in our watershed fuels the dislike.

So right from the get-go, know that we should value the

DAVID L. DEEN is a member of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board and the Connecticut Atlantic Salmon River Commission. Whenever he can, David writes about, lectures on, and fishes the Connecticut River.

sea lamprey, for it is not a parasite to our fish and, as a native fish in the Connecticut River, it is an important contributor to the balance of nature.

THE SEA LAMPREY is not an eel — it lacks the bone skeleton and hinged jaw. Adults have an

internal skeleton of cartilage so, unlike our usual fish, they lack bones, jaws, and paired fins.

The lamprey's taxonomic name is *Petromyzon marinus*. *Petromyzon* translates roughly from the Latin into "one who suckles stone."

■ SEE LAMPREYS, C2



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Prisons

that DOC personnel then lied to hide their guilt, both immediately by logging false information in their reports.

They said that Johnson died at the off-site hospital rather than at the prison infirmary and that he was still alive well after video footage shows he had already died. In the longer term, the DOC failed to adequately provide the administrative review that is required after someone dies in the state agency's custody.

This policy itself was put into place in 2006 as part of a series of reforms in response to a string of deaths of inmates in DOC custody.

Most notorious among these deaths was Jim Quigley, who killed himself in his cell after being in solitary for almost four months as punishment for filing grievances against DOC mistreatment.

THE STATE OF Vermont is killing people.

I don't mean this in the sense that being incarcerated leads to people dying younger — although this connection has been shown to be true time and again, with some estimates suggesting that people lose as much as two years from their life expectancy for every year they are locked up.

Or in the sense that prisons and policing enforce and maintain an incredibly unjust social order that causes too many people in our communities to die too soon because they lack health care or safe housing, and they face battles with addiction and despair that they are not able to win.

No, I mean this much more directly.

I say that the state of Vermont is killing people because the deprivation, neglect, and violence that characterize Vermont's prisons is causing premature death at an alarming rate. We may not have the death penalty, but the state forces people to endure conditions that are not conducive to life. Yet our government also denies culpability when people in those inhumane conditions die.

The state of Vermont is killing people. To say anything less is to obscure the truth.

THE POOR STANDARD of health care within prisons is a major cause of these killings. The most recent Prison Research and Innovation Network (PRIN) study of people locked up in Springfield showed that 83% say they don't get medical care when they need it and 90% say they received better medical care outside of prison.

Not only do people not get the care they need while they're in prison, but many actually develop new ailments during incarceration.

Since entering prison, over two-thirds of respondents reported developing anxiety or depression; over half reported developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), over a third reported becoming overweight or obese, and over a quarter reported developing high blood pressure.

Being in prison doesn't just keep you from getting better. It actively makes you sicker.

THE DOC RECENTLY announced that it has signed a three-year contract with Wellpath LLC to provide medical services in Vermont's prisons starting this

FROM SECTION FRONT

summer.

This is deeply concerning, as Wellpath has a history of corrupt practices and substandard care. In many ways, it is just likely to be more of the same, as the company — in the revolving door of for-profit prison medical-care contractors — will replace VitalCore Health Strategies, which replaced Centurion, which replaced Wellpath back in 2015, when it operated under the name Correct Care Solutions.

It is important to be attentive to these companies' practices because, with control over medical care in Vermont's prisons, they can be the difference between life and death for those on the inside.

But I also want to keep this in the context of how prisons function.

Incarceration is fundamentally driven by deprivation, lack of autonomy, and abusive hierarchies that are based on the imminent threat of violence. You could put the very best doctors in prison infirmaries, and access to care would still be restricted by controlling correctional officers and threatened by a lack of autonomy that incarcerated people have over their own bodies.

If we want fewer Vermonters to die in prison, we absolutely need to scrutinize the actions of the for-profit health care companies and their DOC collaborators and demand better care for those inside.

But we also simply need fewer people locked up in inhumane environments, and we need responses to harm that do not multiply harm on an institutional scale. Similarly, we need mental and physical health care across the state that allows people to live well and meet their needs in their own communities — leading to less harm happening in the first place.

NO CASE shows this better than Jeffrey Hall and Mbyayenge Mafuta.

Hall had been detained at St. Albans since mid-November of last year on charges of petit larceny, driving a motor vehicle without the owner's consent, and providing false information to police.

Mafuta had been detained there since August, when he was arrested after allegedly vandalizing a few dozen homes. He had a history of dealing with

Lampreys

FROM SECTION FRONT

Lamprey grow to 40 inches long. They have well-developed eyes, a single nostril on top of the head, and seven gill openings on each side of their body but no bones; hence, they are rare as fossils.

Scientists know they are evolutionary survivors, having traveled our oceans and rivers for 360 million years. They inhabit the Atlantic Ocean and the coastal rivers, from Labrador to the Gulf of Mexico.

Lampreys are anadromous fish, meaning they come to fresh water to spawn and their young return to the sea to grow into adults.

They stop feeding when they return from salt to fresh water. Only the spawning urge drives the lamprey upriver. Lampreys cannot eat, so they must live on fat reserves in their bodies. This is not a matter of choice but the result of remarkable changes inside the lamprey.

Because of those changes — among them, losing their teeth — adult sea lampreys in our river do not attack our fish.

Their landlocked cousins in Lake Champlain, on the other hand, are a menace. Lake lamprey migrate from the tributary streams into the broad lake and back. These vampire fish never do make it to salt water and therefore never undergo the internal changes of the true anadromous lamprey, so they continue to feed without letup throughout their lives in the lake and its tributaries.

BACK IN OUR WATERSHED, up to 100,000 lampreys each year

return upriver to select their spawning site by following the scent of the ammocoetes larvae now buried in the river bottom mud spawned in previous years.

The ammocoetes are not predators, since they lack the sucker mouths of adults. Ammocoetes burrow into the mud, filtering out algae, small organisms, and rotting waste as food. The larvae will remain in the streams for up to 10 years, drifting farther downstream each year and eventually migrating to the ocean.

During their three-year stay in the ocean, lamprey become parasites, rasping into the flesh and sucking the bodily fluids of fish using their sucker-like jawless mouth rimmed by cartilage, filled with rows of horny teeth and a rasplike "tongue." Although lampreys sometimes prey on small invertebrates, they are especially fish predators. Once attached, a lamprey will severely weaken or kill its victim fish.

Being weak swimmers, lamprey use their mouths and eel-like bodies to swim their way up waterfalls. Selecting slower moving waters, they can make their way up falls by attaching themselves by mouth suction to a flat area on a stone, wiggling their bodies until they feel the flow of the water eddy and lessen, and during that small window of pulse, immediately thrust upward and attach their mouth again at a higher point on the rock face. They do so time after time after time, until they surmount the falls.

Sea lamprey build concave

circular nests by thrashing their bodies to clean the sediment off a stream bottom and, if necessary, by removing one stone at a time, attaching to it through mouth suction and swimming it out of the nest. Male and female intertwine over the nest to deposit and fertilize eggs.

THERE ARE BENEFITS to having lamprey in our river, including improving its chemical balance as a result of transport of trace elements from the ocean back upriver from whence those micronutrients originated.

Fish and marine mammals, including seals and striped bass, favor lamprey because of their high fat content. Other fish reuse lamprey nests instead of digging their own, as a silt-free, concave area is good for all fish eggs and adult fish know it.

Immediately after spawning, lamprey die and, like all things in nature, they become the base of the new food chain. Life begins again as other species feed on their carcasses.


Sea lampreys are the fish everyone loves to hate, but they are important in our watershed. In June, in any undammed tributary stream off the lower river below Bellow Falls, look in moving shallow water for thrashing lamprey.

Welcome them, as they are helping their species and our river. Better yet, volunteer with the Connecticut River conservancy to monitor their nests spots at [bit.ly/711-lamprey](#).


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Hi, my name is **Amore!** I am a happy boy who loves to play with tennis balls. I have lived with dogs and cats and I may be able to with a proper intro. I am not a fan of kids and shouldn't live with any. I can be a bit shy of new people but with a little TLC I will love you forever. If I sound like the guy for you please stop by the Windham County Humane Society and meet me.



Hi new friends, I'm **Nelly!** I'm a sweet guy who came all the way from NJ to find a new home in Vermont. Not much is known about my history but so far I like gentle pets and face scratches. It might take me a little while to settle in with you but give me some time and we'll be best of friends! I may be able to live with another cat or a cat-savvy dog with a proper introduction. And I'd even be willing to give kiddos a try as long as they can respect a fine man like me. Make it more than just a dream for me and come adopt me today!




Hi new friends, I'm **Igor!** Kind of a spooky name, I know! I was originally found as a stray in NJ before arriving to WCHS on transport. The staff in NJ describes me as curious and outgoing. Since I was a stray not too much of my history is known so introductions to other cats and dogs in my new home should be gradual to start. I can be friendly with people on my terms but I prefer to lead the interaction and will get sassy if bothered. I would do best with an experienced cat owner who can read my body language and know when you leave me to myself. I don't want to wait for my new home any longer, come meet me soon!

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mental health issues and many run-ins with the Burlington police, including a previous incident where Mafuta had turned himself in to police, said he was off his meds, and asked to be locked up.

On Dec. 19, 2022, he complained to guards that he was hearing voices and having thoughts of harming himself or others. This left him in the hole overnight — St. Albans's only tangible response for someone experiencing this type of crisis.

The next day, a health screener employed by VitalCore

cleared him to return to the general population. Two days later, on Dec. 22, Mafuta is alleged to have beaten Hall, who was rushed to the hospital with life-threatening injuries. Hall never recovered and passed away in March.

Mafuta has been charged with attempted murder, which may be upgraded depending on the results of Hall's autopsy. But if we simply place the blame on this one young man who was experiencing a severe mental health crisis, we fail to understand what more fundamentally caused this moment of violence.

Vermont's prisons are killing people, and they killed Jeffrey Hall. His death is a result of a society that did not have the resources or the compassion to give Mafuta the care he needed.

It is the result of a society whose catch-all response to

people in crisis or who act differently is to lock them up.

It is the result of locking them up in a place that is fueled by depriving people of freedom and resources and embedding whatever shreds of care that do exist so deep within hierarchies and power inequities that they are practically nonexistent.

It is the result of a society that is content to disappear social problems behind bars.

After they were exposed for covering up the killing of Kenneth Johnson, Vermont DOC promised a culture shift so that events like this wouldn't happen again. But they are happening, now at an unprecedented rate.

This goes deeper than any culture shift. We need power to shift. We need structures to shift. We need the state to stop killing people.

Independent schools

FROM SECTION FRONT

school (public or private) to be all things to all children is costly financially and hurtful to children deserving a better learning experience.

Independent schools often

save our tax dollars by serving students with unique needs. The public commitment is capped at the "statewide public school average tuition rate," which, due to complicated rules, is actually below the per-pupil cost in most districts.

Again: Despite the misperception, our public dollars aren't paying \$50,000+ prep school tuitions. Last year's high school tuition reimbursement rate was \$17,278, far below the statewide public per-pupil cost that is well over \$20,000.

I CAN UNDERSTAND the concern with public funds going out of state or to the very small number of private schools that have highly selective admissions policies or refuse to serve students with special needs.

But H.483 goes well beyond addressing these legitimate concerns with how to better serve all children and aims to burden and undermine all independent schools, most of which are helping us achieve what should be a shared commitment statewide to assure every child can find success in school.

Our public schools cannot do this alone. Instead of vilifying independent schools, we should strive to have independent and public schools work together to assure that every child succeeds.

There are much more constructive ways to do this than H.483 and its unalloyed attempt to burden independent schools and undermine their effectiveness.

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

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

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



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LETTERS FROM READERS

Windham voters should reject petition to close school

According to an April 14 story in *VtDigger*, 40 Readsboro residents signed a petition requesting that the town close its elementary school. The same thing is happening in Windham this year.

Both petitions reflect a trend to undervalue small community schools and accept the opinion that closing a local school and sending children to a larger consolidated school would be better.

No evidence supports this opinion, and the effect — and perhaps the purpose of these petitions — is to divide and confuse the community.

A year ago, a group of concerned citizens who appreciate the value of the Windham Elementary School founded a nonprofit group to show the advantages of town and school cooperation.

Thanks to generous donations from residents and their support of bake sales and raffles, they raised the money to replace the worn-out linoleum floor in the school's multipurpose room with a new maple floor that community volunteers worked weekends and vacations to install.

This group of small school supporters also built a row of raised-bed gardens with planks donated by a local mill. Students planted the vegetables and flowers they had started in their classrooms, and over the summer, community volunteers and students took turns keeping the beds watered.

In September, there was a well-attended harvest festival, Potato Day, with a bonfire, music, and games. Other projects included a new sandbox, also built with donated planks from the local sawmill, and work on the school nature trail.

Between now and May 20, Windham's Town Meeting Day this year, a vote will take place on the petition to close the school.

The petitioners' argument is that parents will have a choice about where their children attend elementary school. This is misleading. The Windham children will not have the choice to attend their local town school because it will be gone. And unless parents have the time to transport their children to and from an out-of-town school, the only "choice" for young Windham children is to ride the early bus down the mountain to Townshend with the high school students.

I believe that the people in Windham should reject the petition to close their school and work together so that the students receive a well-rounded, community-supported public education in their own village school.

John Beagan
Windham

Green Up Day, the Month of the Young Child, and hope for the future

Someone recently described Brattleboro as a paradox, and I think it's safe to say this is true for all of Vermont and, possibly, the entire planet.

In these times of devastating loss and challenges, we all need to find those things that help keep us connected and grounded to hope.

One way I do this is by coordinating and promoting Green Up Day locally. As many of you know, Green Up Day (greenupvermont.org) is a 53-year-old tradition that brings people together physically, socially, and environmentally by getting outside to clean up miles of Vermont roads throughout the state. Green bags are provided in advance and on the day, which this year is Saturday, May 6.

As I was delivering Green Up Bags to the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce this past week, I had the fortune of over-hearing two young people talking to Greg Lesch, the executive director.

The couple had just moved to the area with their young children and were excited to be able to live and raise their family here. I told them about Green Up Day and some of the Month of the Young Child (winstonprouty.org/moyc) events happening in April. It was an exciting conversation and one that filled me with hope for the future.

Maybe, just maybe, some of these community traditions might ease some of our pain and remind us of the good in the world.

Green Up Day tables will be set up on Saturday, May 6 at the Turning Point of Windham County (Flat and Elm streets), M&T Bank on Canal Street, Brattleboro Subaru on Putney Road, and the West Brattleboro Fire Department lawn from 8 a.m. to noon.

Folks in Brattleboro can also pick up bags in advance at Brown and Roberts and the Brattleboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Brooks Memorial Library, and the Brattleboro Food Co-op.

If you or an organization you work with are interested in helping to coordinate next year's Green Up Day, please contact me at 802-275-7232.

Robin Rieske
Brattleboro

The writer, who works in public health, has been coordinating Green Up Day for over 10 years with Becky Anderson.

'Vermont's wildlife is worth far more to the state alive than dead'

A new bill, H.191, gives Vermont legislators the opportunity to banish the cruel and widely despised practice of recreational trapping from our

state. Steel-jaw leghold traps cause gruesome injuries, prolonged agony, and death for an untold number of wild and domestic animals in Vermont.

Trapped animals may die of blood loss, dehydration, hypothermia, or predation, or may chew or twist off a limb, paw or digit to escape. Traps also drown animals, a particularly inhumane and horrifying death for river otters and beavers who can hold their breath for eight minutes or more.

Body-gripping traps are designed to kill quickly when two rotating jaws close on an animal's neck or chest but often just slam onto the animal's abdomen or other body part and cause unimaginable suffering.

And no matter their intended target, traps are indiscriminate and frequently capture family pets, hunting dogs, imperiled species, and raptors.

Last year Vermont legislators introduced a trapping ban bill similar to H.191, but it was watered down, and in the end

it called for developing a set of trapping "best management practices."

Those guidelines, proposed by trappers, still allow for an unacceptable level of pain and suffering for trapped animals and don't adequately protect Vermont pets from accidental capture. In effect, last year's go-around accomplished little more than to demonstrate that a full ban on this practice is still needed.

In 2022, Vermont Fish and Wildlife also contracted a poll to assess public attitudes toward trapping. Initially, its results seemed to indicate strong support among Vermonters. But then an open records search revealed that pollsters noted a 12% increase in Vermonter support for "trapping" when it was preceded by the term "regulated," implying to those surveyed that standards for trapping effectiveness and humaneness actually exist. They don't.

How would Vermonters have responded to that poll if they had been given the cold, unvarnished truth about trapping?

We already know the answer to that question for the nation as a whole, with 74% of Americans saying they oppose the practice and 10 U.S. states now severely restricting or prohibiting it. More than 100 countries worldwide have also prohibited the use of leghold traps.

Vermont's wildlife is worth far more to the state alive than dead, with wildlife watchers, national park visitors, and non-consumptive users outnumbering and outspending hunters and trappers by a wide margin.

And there's no economic value in trapping animals to sell to a dying fur industry. Demand for fur is bottoming out.

The actions and preferences of an extremely small — and shrinking — segment of the population should not jeopardize the safety and well-being of our wildlife and pets.

Vermont legislators should pass H.191 to protect them from the suffering inflicted by recreational trapping.

Joanne Bourbeau
Whitingham

The writer is the Northeast regional director for the Humane Society of the United States.

Used and abused by the pharmaceutical industry

Every dime the health care industry spends on themselves and their interests comes from us. Health care costs all of us.

As a recipient of the pharmaceutical companies and suffering from mental illness, I am outraged, as not only is the industry making money off of my illness but it also abuses my treatment.

Let me explain. I am essentially an experiment that is not reimbursed monetarily — as if the side effects are not enough.

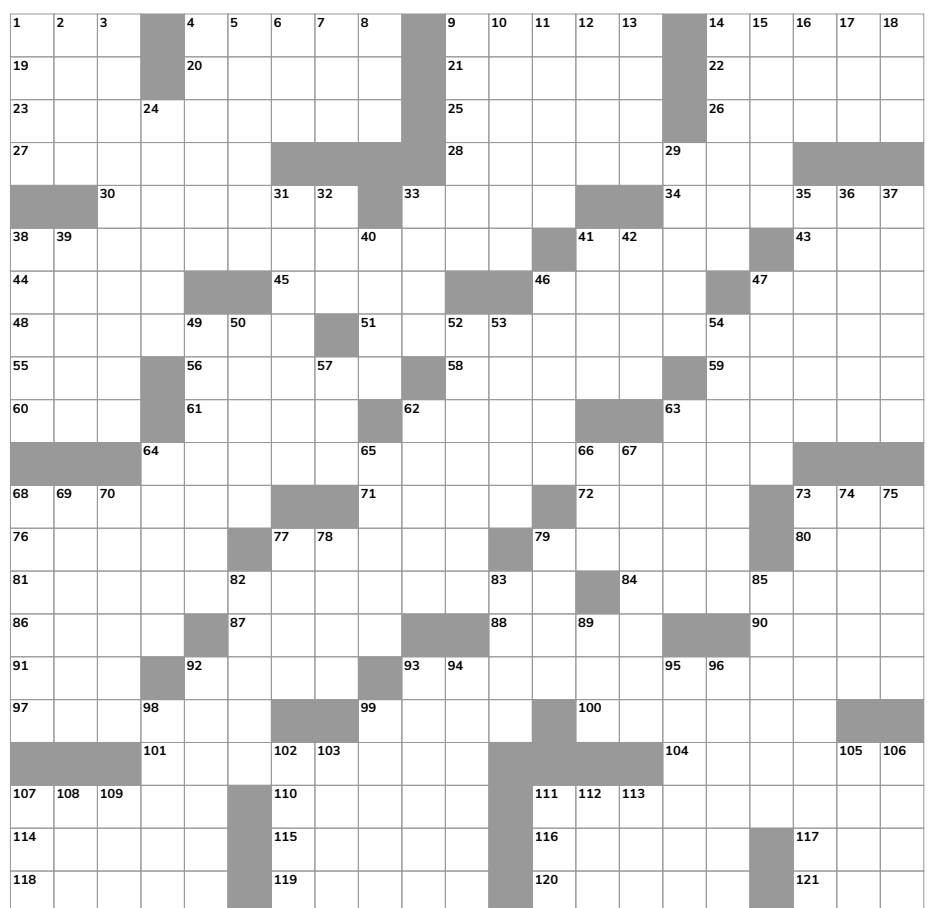
Speaking for myself and my peers, we can't afford it and, in fact, we are literally suffering — emotionally, mentally, and monetarily — at the hands of the industry.

Kelley L. Murray
Brattleboro

JOON PAHK
THE COMMONS CROSSWORD
"Uh-Oh"

Across

- Meat on a Cuban sandwich
- Amherst sch.
- Architect Zaha
- Compete like 67-Down
- Greek H
- Gymnast Comaneci
- Expiration date phrase
- Laser printer refill
- Allure of Tom Hiddleston in a Marvel movie?
- "Me and Bobby ___"
- Speed reader?
- Aviator Earhart
- Part of a ship's dashboard?
- Zigzag path
- Places
- Toxic mood
- Unsurprising fact about kennel club members?
- Fire chief's rank: Abbr.
- Ctrl-X
- Of all time
- Falco of "Nurse Jackie"
- Two tablets, say
- Catch up on sleep
- Decennial
- Hush that descends at 4:20?
- Nav. rank
- Play lists?
- "Death of a Salesman" family name
- Ills
- Downright?: Abbr.
- Algerian port
- Cheese that's made in reverse?
- Tap
- What astronomers have long done?
- King James on the court
- "Exodus" author Leon
- Parlor purchase
- Place for pampering
- Self-evident truth
- "Don't let those folks escape!"
- Dramatic way to introduce oneself
- Second social media account
- Money-laundering front?
- 2000 animated sci-fi film
- Fill
- After the deadline
- Org. for the Sun and Storm
- Hindu queen
- Philanthropist Broad
- A little, musically
- The urge to chew on tin cans and bleat?
- Robert of "Savage Salvation"
- Wild party
- Podcasting partner
- With 111-Across, what a balding person might do before a date?
- Unrepeated episode
- 1990s Britcom, informally
- Slacken
- See 101-Across
- Staggers
- "100%"
- Report card letter
- Wrath
- Genuflected
- Dressy shoes
- Horned figure of myth
- Ottawa's prov.



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Down

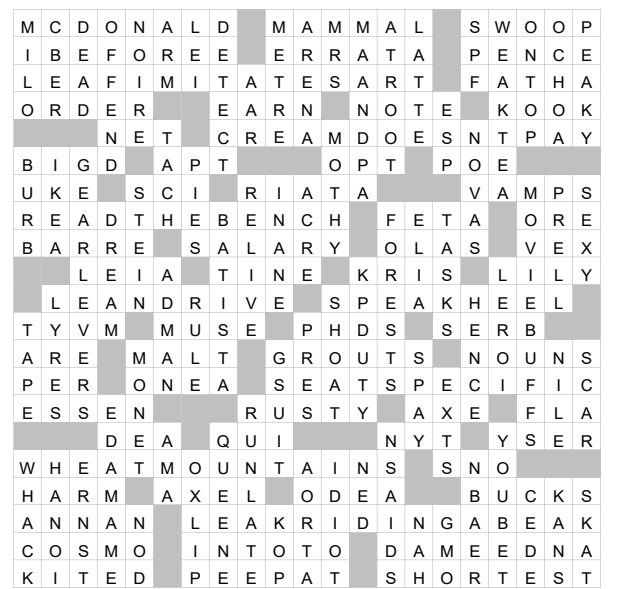
- Cate Blanchett in "Thor: Ragnarok"
- Bohr model subject
- "That explains it"
- Relating to inches or ounces, from the Latin
- Hawaiian thanks
- Programmer Lovelace
- "___, this is an Arby's"
- Director Raimi
- Nonsense, to Scrooge
- Broad ties
- Impressionist Edgar
- "Sure"
- Like green hair
- Narrow channel
- Wombat relative
- "Then what?"
- Afternoon "spot"
- Go off
- "No promises"
- JFK Library architect
- Supervised
- ___ school
- Amanda Gorman, e.g.
- Picturesque
- Strength
- Bear witness
- Apportions
- Bakery appliances
- Put-down
- Best Picture winner partly in ASL
- Org.
- "Philadelphia" director Jonathan
- Variety show
- "In this ___?"
- 2022 AL MVP Judge
- Antiquarian
- With 107-Down, biblical refuge
- "We won't need that"
- Paramount Network, once
- Ramirez of "Napoleon Dynamite"
- "Despacito" singer Luis
- Norwegian currency

- Convex navel
- Part of a show
- Olympic gold medalist Brian
- Expired
- Sigh, say
- Vitamin B7
- Largest majority-Hispanic city in the United States
- Backup to the backup strategy
- Fell on one's face
- Chips go-with, informally
- This: Sp.
- "___ that something?"
- Cease to be buds?
- Influence
- Emerged
- Pen brand

- Jeff of "Survivor"
- Fairy tale sister
- Fairy tale monster
- Poorly made
- More posh
- Words a bluffer doesn't want to hear
- Egg-shaped
- Activity in a tub
- Double-reed woodwind
- "Charlotte's Web" girl
- Ridge on a neck
- See 53-Down
- Affleck of "The Last Duel"
- Service charge
- NFL three-pointers
- "R.I.P." singer Rita
- Splinter, for one

Last issue's solution

"Wean Selections"



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COLUMN | Sports Roundup

Colonels start softball season with three losses

The Brattleboro softball team looks a lot different this year. They have a new coach in Erin Cooke, who was a pretty good pitcher for the Colonels in the mid-1990s and was the starting pitcher for the 1997 state champions. It is also a team with only two seniors, with a lot of ninth- and 10th-graders in starting roles.

After getting mercy-ruled by Keene and Hoosac Valley in their first two games of the season last week, the Colonels needed a game where they could build up some confidence. Brattleboro hosted the Burr & Burton Bulldogs on April 22 at Sawyer Field and while the Colonels lost, 7-5, enough positive things happened to give Cooke and her team some hope.

"We weren't able to put runs on the board in our first two games," Cooke said, "Today, we were making contact with the ball and that felt good. It was a step in the right direction."

Brattleboro got into a hole early when the Bulldogs scored three runs in the first inning without a hit as starting pitcher Marina Wilson struggled with her control. She walked three batters, and hit another with a pitch in the inning.

Bulldogs pitcher Skyler Dotson was having just as much trouble finding the plate, but the Colonels finally broke through in the third inning when they got a pair of runs on an RBI double by Kayli Speno and a groundout by Wilson.

The Bulldogs were poised for another big inning in the top of the fourth, but were held to a single run thanks to a great throw by Colonels center fielder Kelis Melo to cut down Dotson at home plate. Trailing 4-2, Brattleboro tied the game in the bottom of fourth when Speno plated one run on a fielder's choice and Jasmine Thibault was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded to force in the tying run.

The Bulldogs took the lead to stay by scoring two runs in the sixth on a fielder's choice and a throwing error. Brattleboro made it 6-5 in the bottom half of the inning when an error on a pop up by Thibault scored Wilson, but a bases-loaded walk in the seventh gave Burr & Burton an insurance run.

While Brattleboro ended the first week of the season with a 0-3 record, this team that Cooke described as "young and learning" have the potential to get better as the season progresses.

Baseball

• After a lackluster performance against Brattleboro on April 13, Bellows Falls got back on the beam against Springfield as Jamison Nystrom threw a no-hitter in a 12-0 win over the Cosmos on April 15 at Birskey-Wyman Field.

Nystrom walked only two batters, one of whom was thrown out attempting to steal second base by catcher Jake Moore, in his seven innings of work. It took a while for the BF bats to get going, but once they did, the Terriers started piling up the runs. Jackson Clark hit a three-run double.

On April 20 at Hadley Field, the tables were turned on the Terriers as they were held hitless by Burr & Burton pitcher Seb Dostal as the Bulldogs 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.

7-0, Dostal struck out 16 and walked just one batter.

Against Green Mountain on April 22 in Chester, the Terriers lost a 1-0 game as eight-grader Kaiden McCarthy pitched a complete game shutout and drove in the game's only run with a sacrifice fly in the first inning.

McCarthy struck out 13 batters and held BF to just four hits. Nystrom was the losing pitcher, despite allowing only three hits. The Terriers ended the week with a 3-3 record.

• Brattleboro got hammered by Keene, 11-1, in a six-inning road game on April 19 that was shortened by the 10-run rule. Gavin Rigby and Brandon Weeks combined on a two-hitter for the hosts. Rigby walked one batter and struck out 10 over four innings and Weeks walked three and allowed one hit over two innings. The Keene offense rapped out 10 hits and took advantage of seven Colonel errors in the victory.

• Leland & Gray went up to South Royalton on April 15 and lost to White River Valley, 9-4. Cody Hescocock was the losing pitcher, but scored a pair of runs for the Rebels.

On April 17, the Rebels edged the Woodstock Wasps, 4-3 in eight innings. It was 1-1 through the first seven innings before the visiting Rebels scored three runs on hits by Delano Schmidt and Wyatt Beattie in the top of the eighth and held off a Wasp rally in the home eighth. Hescocock got the win in relief of starter Parker Richardson.

The Rebels had another comeback win on the road on April 20, this time pulling out a 9-8 victory over Windsor. Theo Kelloway got the game-winning hit in the top of the seventh with a two-run single. Beattie and Kelloway shared the pitching duties. A 14-7 win at Springfield on April 22 improved the Rebels' record to 3-2 to end a stretch of four straight road games.

Track & field

• The Bellows Falls girls and Brattleboro boys were the winners at a multi-team meet in Fair Haven on April 19.

Tela Hartly (100 meter hurdles) and Laura Kamel (discus) were the winners for the BF girls, while the 4x100 relay team of Hadley Gleim, Eryn Ross, Nola Sciacca, and Ava LaRoss finished second. Sciacca was third in the 200 meters and javelin, and Hartly (long jump) and Gleim (triple jump) also had third place performances.

Brattleboro's Addison DeVault and Meredith Lewis finished first and second in the pole vault. Maeve Bald finished second in the 3,000-meter run. The Colonel girls finished seventh overall.

Sean von Ranson led



Brattleboro shortstop Aliza Speno, left, tries to catch the ball as Burr & Burton baserunner Tela Dykes (17) slides into second base during the first inning of their April 22 softball game. At right, backing up the play, is Brattleboro second baseman Jasmine Thibeault (24).

the Brattleboro boys with wins in the 200 and 400, and he was part of the winning 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams. David Berkson-Harvey, Dylan Holmes, and Jacob Girard were winners in the 4x100, while Waylund Walsh, Oliver Herrick, and Stockton Woodruff took the 4x400.

Softball

• Bellows Falls picked up a 6-5 win over visiting Poultney on April 18. Izzy Stoodley threw 117 pitches in holding the Blue Devils three hits while striking out nine batters. Natalie Noyes led the BF offense with two hits, including a triple, driving in one run and scoring two runs.

Boys' lacrosse

• Brattleboro visited Rutland on April 15 and left with an 11-3 loss. Rutland scored six goals in the second quarter to pull away from the Colonels in an extremely physical game. Brattleboro's goals came from James Davies in the first quarter, and Will Miskovich and Nathan Domina in the second quarter. Thad Sawyer had 13 saves in goal.

Saxtons River fishing derby is May 6

• The Saxtons River Rec Area will hold its annual fishing derby on Saturday, May 6 at the ponds on Pleasant Valley Road. Following last year's schedule, there will be three different age groups in three shifts to help ensure more children can participate with their families.

Children ages 4 to 6 will register at 8 a.m., with fishing beginning at 8:30 a.m. Age group 7 to 10 will register at 9:15 a.m., with fishing starting at 9:45 a.m. Age group 11 through 14 will register at 10:30 a.m., with fishing beginning at 11 a.m.

Children not showing up at their correct time will not be able to participate. Families with children in multiple age groups will only be allowed to have the appropriate-aged child registered and fishing during their given time. Siblings can be present but not fish.

Adults are responsible for providing their children with all the gear, bait, and assistance needed while at the derby. Participants and families will be required to leave the derby once their age group's session has ended unless there is a sibling in the next age group. Donations towards expenses will be



Brattleboro catcher Kayli Speno blocks home plate as she prepares to tag out Burr & Burton baserunner Skylar Dotson (9) during the fourth inning of their April 22 softball game at Sawyer Field.

accepted at the derby, and volunteers of all ages are welcome to contact samanthamperry@hotmail.com or through the Saxtons River Rec Facebook page.

Tulip Trot celebrates Green Street School's centennial

• Green Street School's 11th annual Tulip Trot 5K run/walk and half-mile Sprout Sprint takes place on Saturday, May 13, from 9 a.m. to noon, in Brattleboro. Since May of 2013, Green Street School has held the Tulip Trot — a event that incorporates family, fitness, fun and community. It has been the school's primary fundraiser each year, organized by a dedicated and revolving group of parents and staff.

This year's Tulip Trot will celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Green Street School, as well as the theme of this year's event: "Everybody is a Winning Body."

Event organizers say they "encourage any person of any age and shape to participate in our day." To that end, they have eliminated gender-specific categories from their awards and registrations as part of their efforts to encourage diversity in their community events. To find out more about how to enter,

or how to be a volunteer, visit tuliprot5k.com.

Grace Cottage hosts family-friendly 5K

• Also on May 13 is the Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital 5K. Runners and walkers will meet on the Townshend Town Common for an 8:30 a.m. shotgun start. You can run, walk, roll, stroll, or push your baby carriage for this fun, family-friendly event.

Registration is \$20 per participant; children younger than 18 are free with signed parent/guardian permission. Registration is open at gracecottage.org/events. A virtual option is also available. Register at the same link. All proceeds from this event will benefit healthcare services at Grace Cottage.

Second Wind will provide official timing. Last year's winners were Al Clausen of Townshend, with a time of 18 minutes, 49 seconds, and Kelsey Taddei of Townshend, at 24:44 — while pushing two children in a stroller, and while supervising another child next to her on a bicycle. For more information, contact Grace Cottage at info@gracecottage.org or call 802-365-9109.

Senior bowling roundup

• Entering the final week of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League, Fab Four (45-25) is still in first place, but The Markers (43-27) had a 4-1 week to move into second place. Slo Movers (41.5-28.5) again went 1-4, to fall into third place, followed by Split Happens (34.5-34.5), The Strikers (31-39), The A-1's (29-41), 10 Pins (26-44), and Trash-O-Matic (26-44).

Nancy Dalzell had the women's high handicap game (252) and series (709), while Charlie Marchant had the men's high handicap game (252) and series (701). 10 Pins again had the high team handicap game (923) and series (2,500).

Chuck Adams led the men's scratch scoring with a 565 series that featured games of 222 and 197. Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 561 series with games of 215 and 191, while Duane Schillemat had a 540 series with a 214 game, Robert Rigby had a 539 series with a 198 game, and Gary Montgomery had a 508 series with a 191 game. Al Dascomb rolled a 196 game.

Dalzell had the women's high scratch series (550) that featured games of 199, 181, and 170. Carol Gloski rolled a 190.

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