

# Haley wins Vermont GOP presidential primary

On Town Meeting Day, people turn out strong in meetings and at the polls

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley won her first state in the Republican presidential primary on Tuesday — and it happened in Vermont.

Haley defeated former President Donald Trump by the slimmest of margins in the state, according to the Associated Press,

which called the race for her at 10:37 p.m. With 224 of 247 precincts reporting late Tuesday night, she was leading Trump 49.3% to 45.3%, according to the Vermont Secretary of State's Office.

Though she prevailed in the Green Mountains on Super

Tuesday — when Vermont and 14 other states held primary elections — she was trounced elsewhere, including the nearby New England states of Massachusetts and Maine. Trump continued to rack up delegates to the Republican National Convention and seemed ever closer to

clinching his party's nomination.

President Joe Biden, meanwhile, cruised to victory in Vermont's Democratic primary. The Associated Press called the race for the incumbent president at 7:20 p.m., soon after the polls closed.

■ SEE TOWN MEETINGS, A6

## Case, Reichsman, Davis win in Brattleboro; WSESD voters oust board chair

At press time, election and town meeting results from around the county

Following are Annual Town Meeting and local election results received by press time on Tuesday night:  
**Brattleboro:** Peter "Fish" Case defeated challenger Oscar

Heller for a three-year term on the Selectboard, 1,115-1095.

"It is not lost on me that my victory was by a margin of 20 votes," Case wrote on Facebook on Tuesday night in

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## So. Vermont lawmakers reflect at halfway point

Fate of legislation decided during hectic weeks of Crossover, where bills jump from one chamber to the other — if they can get over the hurdle

By Joyce Marcel  
*The Commons*

Since the first days of the year, Windham County's legislators have been hard at work in Montpelier. And now, as the midpoint of the Session looms, Vermonters are starting to see the diverse and interesting results.

Among them? An more than \$873 million transportation bill. A bill taxing the wealthy. A tweak to the Renewable Energy Standard. Multiple and massive suggested changes to Act 250, the state's land-use law.

A bill protecting African Americans from being discriminated against because of their hair. Repairing the Vermont Building at the Big E. Addressing the opioid crisis. Adding more judges. Picking a Vermont state mushroom.

Addressing the housing crisis. Credentialing immigrant medical professionals to help solve the workforce crisis. Letting us know that firefighter gear may be hazardous to the health of firefighters. Whether to keep a fish hatchery open.

It's a lot to think about. What is Crossover, exactly? On March 15, bills that do not involve money and have been voted upon by the originating body cross over to the other body. On March 22, the bills that require spending make the crossing. After this do-si-do, the Senate works on the House bills and vice versa.

Each Windham County legislator sits on one or more committees. They have put in hard hours studying bills, hearing testimony, holding discussions and voting their bills out of committee. Here's what they report at this inflection point.

### Leadership

Housing heads the list of issues

that House Majority Leader Emily Long, D-Newfane, considers most important.

"As usual, housing is at the top of the list, as is climate resiliency and flood recovery," Long said. "We have been updating our Renewable Energy Standard and we're now working on land use regulations, including modernizing Act 250."

Lawmakers, she said, "are taking steps to increase access to affordable health care by looking at an expansion of Medicaid to lessen the health care burden on Vermonters who are underinsured."

The funding mechanism for Vermont's schools is another top priority, Long said.

"An equitable public education system is a cornerstone of democracy, and it is past time to transform Vermont's public education delivery and funding system," she said.

"We must ensure every child in Vermont has equitable access to a high-quality education, regardless of their needs, race or gender, socioeconomic status, or where they reside."

"While change will be hard and it will require local and statewide support; this is also a unique opportunity to strengthen our public education system for students today and into the future," Long said. "If done thoughtfully with broad support, it will have a positive impact on our state's economy and future."

### Transportation

Rep. Sara Coffey, D-Guilford, chairs the House Transportation Committee, which is responsible for producing the FY2025 omnibus Transportation Bill.

It addresses all aspects of the transportation system: all the paving and reconstruction for roads and bridges as well as the budget for rail, public transit, bicycle/pedestrian, airports, infrastructure, Department of Motor Vehicles, maintenance, and more, along with funding for grants for Vermont towns and cities.

"This year the Transportation bill will provide more than \$873 million for transportation projects."

■ SEE CROSSOVER, A2



## Exposing the PAST

Members of the Wardsboro Photo Group gather around the table to discuss the identification of subjects and locations depicted in photos made from glass plates. From left to right: Bob LeBlond, Janet LeBlond, Charles Marchant, Jan Hull, and Lester Dunklee. Missing from the photograph: Jane Robinson.

## The Wardsboro Photo Group has unearthed stories of people and places from long-forgotten historic photos for more than three decades

By Fran Lynggaard Hansen  
*The Commons*

WARDSBORO—In one member's home on a cold February night, six members of the Wardsboro Photo Group, all accomplished photographers and historians, pass around a set

of photographs, organized by number in large plastic boxes designed to keep the art safe and dry.

They have met at this table every Wednesday night for more than 30 years.

For years, Chuck Fish, active in photography for the Dummerston Historical Society, has followed the efforts of the photo group, which is associated with the

Wardsboro History Group, and sings their praises.

"Much of the visual record of the past is locked up in the vast number of glass plate negatives that have miraculously survived. Locked up, until these dedicated workers digitize the images for posterity," he says.

Sometimes called "wet plate negatives,"

■ SEE IDENTIFYING PHOTOS, A5

## Third appeal denied for housing project in Putney

Any further appeal of Windham-Windsor Housing Trust's development on Alice Holway Drive must be filed by March 23, judge rules

By Virginia Ray  
*The Commons*

PUTNEY—State Superior Court Judge Thomas S. Durkin has denied a third appeal to stop the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) from proceeding with its Alice Holway Drive community housing project.

The development has been planned since 2019 as two new buildings intended to provide 25 mixed-income, energy-efficient,

and accessible apartments on the 0.91-acre site in Putney Village next to Putney Community Gardens.

In their appeal, neighbors to the site Laura Campbell and Deborah Lazar contended the Trust's lots are not contiguous — and should be.

Because Alice Holway Drive runs between the lots, they maintained the site does not meet the legal definition of "affordable housing" vis-a-vis Act 250, the

state's environmental protection law.

They also contested a previous district commissioner's jurisdictional opinion that concluded the project is exempt from Act 250 land-use review.

Lazar and Campbell have until March 23 to appeal the decision, which Campbell said they are giving "due consideration."

"Judge Durkin has characterized us appellants and, by extension, all the other opponents

of the WWHT project, as 'irrational,' apparently because we know the meaning of contiguous, can see that the lots are not contiguous, and have the common sense to say so in plain English," Campbell said.

### Argument 'stymies Legislature's intent,' judge says

In his Feb. 22 ruling, Superior Court Judge Thomas S. Durkin

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

Crossover

million in funding for transportation policies that go beyond just road maintenance, upgrades, and snow removal," Coffey said. "My priorities have been to support transportation greenhouse gas reductions, alternative transportation — bike and pedestrian — infrastructure, and public transportation that serves both urban and rural communities."

The state will continue to take advantage of unprecedented federal funding made available through the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Coffey said. "These funds, which will total \$1.6 billion over five years, provide Vermont the opportunity to make transformational investments in our transportation infrastructure and to address climate change," Coffey said.

Mollie Burke, P/D-Brattleboro, also sits on the Transportation Committee. Weaning Vermont off fossil fuels has been one of her longstanding goals. The IIJA is a key accomplishment of the Biden administration, Burke said. "In addition to cutting carbon pollution, there are co-benefits: better public transit helps low-income citizens, and increased funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure helps to create more vibrant and economically successful downtowns and village centers," Burke said.

This session, Coffey and Burke were also the lead sponsors of H.693, the Transportation Infrastructure and Resiliency Act.

"This bill aims to provide more affordable, accessible, and reliable [electric vehicle] charging, mobility and transit options to help Vermonters get around more easily, walkable and bike-able communities, directing the agency to expand passenger rail service and bicycle storage on the train, and funding for resilience improvements to reduce community vulnerability and mitigate future damage," Coffey said.

"Many of the policy ideas from H.693 have been incorporated into this year's transportation bill," she continued. "Building more resilient transportation infrastructure enables Vermonters to access jobs, age successfully in our communities, [and] improve our health as we reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions."

Due to the passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act in 2020, the state is bound to meet the goals for carbon emission reduction laid out in the Climate

Action Plan, Burke said. "The goal of H.693 is to follow those recommendations and enhance programs and policies to reduce carbon emissions," Burke said. "We also hope to address the resiliency of our communities in the wake of this summer's flooding."

Another section of the bill calls for transportation projects to provide access for all users of the transportation system, not just vehicles.

"Pedestrians, bicyclists, and persons with disabilities need to be included in the planning and execution of various projects, as do users of the public transit system," Burke said.

"We are also asking the state treasurer to convene a group to look into multi-state cap-and-invest programs that may provide the funding necessary to meet the climate goals of our State Climate Action Plan," she added.

Several incentives also make electric vehicles more affordable.

"There are up to \$6,000 in state incentives plus \$7,500 in federal tax credits available to purchase a new or used hybrid, plug-in hybrid, or electric car or truck," Coffey said.

She pointed Vermonters to driveelectricvt.com, which she called "a great resource with details about the incentives, a tool to compare vehicles and information about electric vehicle charging."

This year's Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program, which will provide an additional \$4 million for communities, "improves access and safety for bicyclists and/or pedestrians through the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure projects," Coffey said.

Burke is also on the leadership team of the Climate Solutions Caucus.

"We meet every other week and stay active in promoting various bills that are circulating in both the House and Senate regarding carbon emission reduction and mitigation, flood protection, and resilience," she said.

"This summer's floods have definitely intensified the conversation and the need to not only cut emissions but also protect our communities from future flooding," Burke observed.

Wealth taxes

Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro, chairs the all-important House Committee on Ways and Means. Her passion project has long been finding a

FROM SECTION FRONT

way for all Vermonters — wealthy as well as poor and middle-class — to equitably shoulder the state's tax burden.

With a population of just under 650,000, funding from more diverse sources is needed to keep Vermont running fluidly and well. That is why two new pieces of legislation from Kornheiser's committee would impose new taxes on the state's wealthiest residents. The idea of fairly taxing the wealthy is so radical right now that, in January, The New York Times did a feature story on Kornheiser's work.

Vermont joins "a growing national campaign being pushed by Democrats who believe that the measures will gain traction as states reckon with post-pandemic budget squeezes," according to the Times.

As described in the article, "One proposal would tax people with more than \$10 million in net worth on their capital gains, even if the gains have not yet been realized. Another would add a 3 percent marginal tax on individual incomes exceeding \$500,000 a year — a measure that supporters contend could pump \$98 million, or almost 5 percent of the annual budget, into the state's coffers."

"The way our tax structure is set up, our middle class is carrying an undue burden, compared to folks at the top," Kornheiser said. "We want to make sure that all Vermonters are paying their fair share."

Gov. Phil Scott has said he will oppose any tax increases this year, but the Legislature has the power to override his veto if it chooses to do so.

Renewable Energy Standard

The Renewable Energy Standard is a performance standard that has helped Vermont set emissions targets for utilities since 2015. It's been updated this year in the House Committee on Environment and Energy, of which Rep. Laura Sibilia, I-Dover, is vice chair.

"H.289 is making its way through other committees right now," Sibilia said. "It helps us set targets for utilities with the goal of reducing fossil-fuel greenhouse gas emissions. This update takes the approach of recognizing the differences in our utilities."

Vermont has several kinds of utilities: one gigantic private utility, Green Mountain Power, covers the largest part of the state. Two cooperatives, holdovers

Making the cut

Out of hundreds of bills filed, few make it all the way to becoming state law

MONTPELIER—Turning a bill into law is a complicated process. A bill becomes a law if a majority of the members of both chambers—the House and the Senate—vote to approve it and the governor signs it. If the governor vetoes it, the bill can still succeed if the Legislature then goes ahead and overrides his veto with a two-thirds majority in both legislative bodies.

Most bills never make it into law. As of this week, 869 bills have been introduced by the House and 316 in the

Senate during the 2023-2024 biennium.

The House has passed 145 bills; the Senate, 134. Of those bills, 108 have cleared both bodies. And of those, 101 have been enacted into law, six without the signature of Gov. Phil Scott.

Scott override nine bills. Two have returned to Senate committees. Four are among the 101 new laws. And one veto—an update to the Bottle Bill—was sustained.

Four new bills await the governor's consideration.

from rural electrification, also still exist, along with a bunch of small municipal utilities and one large municipal utility that serves Burlington customers.

"Our Renewable Energy Standard has really treated them all the same," Sibilia said. "This update provides an opportunity to meet the standard in differentiated ways."

The Department of Public Services did community outreach and identified the three highest priorities of Vermonters: suitability, reliability, and reduction of greenhouse gases.

Some tension has arisen, however. The DPS has its own proposal, which includes nuclear power and the elimination of net metering.

Act 250

In light of the pressing need for new home construction across the state, Sibilia's committee is also grappling with "massive" Act 250 revisions in a bill from the House (H.687), but she doubts all of it will make it out of committee this year.

"The bill incorporates so much work that has been done outside of the session that my sense is that it may not all make it across the finish line," Sibilia said. "But it looks at establishing location-based jurisdiction for Act 250 as well as changing who approves town plans and regional plans."

Much more public education is needed before Act 250 can be rewritten, she said.

"To my way of thinking, this requires a significant amount of public education and feedback," Sibilia said. "I am not in support of the bill as it is right now. But we have literally just really started as a committee to work with it."

She said that her communities are requesting help "in dealing with water and flooding." "They need people and tools and dollars to work within their communities to help people be safe and have a more resilient infrastructure. This is, I think, an important tool and a mid-to longer-term strategy."

Over on the Senate side, Wendy Harrison, D-Windham County, has also been thinking hard about Act 250, pointing out that "the Natural Resources Board—the governing body of Act 250—convened a work group of developers, conservationists, businesses, and housing advocates who came together in a consensus-based process to recommend these historic changes to Act 250."

Their goal, she said, is to "update Act 250 to support and promote growth in compact settlement patterns; facilitate appropriate rural economic development; focus on critical and increased protections for key natural resources; establish a clear, consistent, and navigable permit process; and minimize redundancies with other local, state, and federal regulations."

Sibilia estimates that only a portion of the work on Act 250 will be finished this year.

"If we do pass something that is kind of whittled down from where we are right now, it could include study language that could come back to the 2025 Legislature," Sibilia said. "The big need right now is housing."

Sibilia lives in a resort town, which gives her a unique perspective, she said.

"I can see, with regularity, that motivated developers are able to move through and afford all of the work that is required to get the Act 250 permits in areas that are pretty ecologically sensitive," Sibilia said.

"I do worry about the regular Vermonter being able to move through the process to build a house," she said, adding that the problem is "much larger than just fixing a few market factors."

"I think that we really need to be acting with intention," Sibilia said. "We need to have towns identify if they want housing, where [the housing would be built], and what income level housing folks want. This challenge is so big right now and multi-layered, with short-term rentals and our demographic

issues."

Baby boomers are aging out right now, and towns are seeing a marked decline in families with children. Given these current population projections, in 15 or 20 years, the state might have a glut of available housing, Sibilia pointed out.

"I think this situation requires more than kind of a tweaking of some market factors," she said. "I think we really would like to see a much more heavy-handed leadership role out of the administration in this moment, to ensure that we are building housing for all income levels."

At least three other committees in the Legislature are working on Act 250 recommendations.

"Instead of triggering the review by the type and size of the development and the number of miles and years distant from a previous development by the same person, the update would determine the review process by the location of the proposed development," Harrison said. "The regional planning commissions, towns and the Natural Resources Board (NRB) would together produce maps dividing the state into three main tiers to be used for development review purposes."

Under this system, Tier 1 would have places where development would be encouraged and exempt from Act 250, such as towns with robust planning and zoning, sufficient staffing, and water and sewer systems with capacity for growth.

"When Act 250 was enacted, there were very few towns with this capacity," Harrison said. "Now, a good number of Vermont towns and cities provide an equivalent level of development review and regulation as the NRB. It is likely that most of Brattleboro would be Tier 1."

Tier 3 would lie at the opposite end of the spectrum and would include ecologically important natural resource areas where any and all development would be under Act 250 jurisdiction.

"Tier 2 is the area left over and is likely to be most of the state," Harrison said. "Tier 2 is proposed to initially be subject to the existing Act 250 jurisdictional thresholds of lots, units, time, and distance."

Mapping out these specific areas will be complicated and probably controversial, Harrison said. "Our committee bill (S.311) proposes interim Act 250 exemptions to spur housing development during that mapping process, estimated to take two to four years," Harrison said.

"As an example, our bill would allow developments up to 75 units of housing in towns with permanent zoning and bylaws in an area served by municipal sewer and water," she said. "We also propose that commercial conversions to up to 29 units of housing be exempt from Act 250, as we see unused commercial space as potential housing."

To reduce the outsized negative impact of appeals, the bill proposes higher thresholds for residents to appeal municipal housing decisions, sets goals for the court to act on appeals, and adds a judge to the Superior Court.

"We have sent our bill to the Senate Natural Resources Committee for further review," Harrison said.

Supporting discriminatory schools

An issue of great concern to Sibilia, and one that the Legislature has not addressed, is that of public funds going to religious schools which might discriminate against certain types of students.

"There are public taxpayer dollars paying for private education in schools that discriminate," Sibilia said. "So I would have a problem with that."

She says she's watching the issue carefully "and hoping that we will take some action."

"I think that's pretty crazy, considering all the state has done on civil rights and civil protection," Sibilia said.

■ STORY CONTINUES ON FACING PAGE

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**Inflation**

The word from Rep. Tristan Roberts, D-Halifax, is that when it comes to budgeting, everything is more expensive this year.

“We knew that the end of federal Covid-era funding would make this a difficult budget year,” said Roberts, the clerk of the House Committee on Corrections and Institutions. “I regret to report that’s not the worst of our problems.”

Across-the-board inflation is hitting the state’s budget hard.

“Going into the second year of the two-year Capital Bill, the governor has asked for an additional \$3 million to cover cost increases for major maintenance projects such as roofing and masonry repairs that are already underway,” Roberts said.

“Meanwhile, cost estimates for projects in the planning stages seem to be going up every year,” he said.

For example, in Massachusetts at the Eastern States Exposition (“The Big E”), the 1929-built Vermont building is showing the consequences of deferred maintenance.

“For example, the beautiful cupola with the cow on top is leaking and needs to be removed, restored, and replaced,” Roberts explained.

The state had initially planned to spend \$4 million to renovate in time for the building’s centennial, “but estimates are now pushing \$8 million and up,” he said.

Vermont typically pays for capital construction by selling bonds.

“Our frugal track record for borrowing means that we have the highest credit rating of the New England states and the lowest borrowing costs,” Roberts said. “Our one-year bonding capacity is \$54 million. To increase that pot of money to keep up with inflation would mean increased borrowing costs, which wouldn’t be good in the long term.”

The conundrum: How do we take care of the buildings we have, and meet our future needs?

“I am working hard in House Corrections and Institutions to make sure that we get federal money out the door, and to ensure that our major maintenance projects are targeted to our most pressing long-term needs,” Roberts said.

This means making hard choices.

“In the case of a new courthouse that’s needed in Newport, for example, we declined to purchase a suitable parcel because the asking price is double the assessed value,” Roberts said. “Projects like the planned restoration of the Bennington Battle Monument or the replacement of the women’s prison might proceed more slowly than we would prefer as we set aside money for them over multiple budget cycles.”

He pointed out that, “as Vermonters, we’re used to doing more with less.”

“Asking our state agencies to improve their coordination is one way the Legislature can get better results while spending less,” Roberts said.

**Prisoner assistance**

When prisoners are released from the state’s correctional system, they enter a world that sometimes induces failure, Roberts said. This is another issue his committee is working on.

“Imagine leaving prison at the end of your sentence with little more than the clothes you walked in wearing,” Roberts said. “Many folks in this situation lack a valid ID, health insurance, essential prescription medications, and referrals to treatment providers and recovery coaching.”

He said it is “no wonder that many are not able to find housing and jobs, and wind up back in prison.”

“I’ve been pushing the state agencies and the health care providers involved to improve their re-entry planning and coordination so that we can help offenders break free of these harmful cycles,” Roberts said.

**Farm businesses**

Roberts strongly supports H.128, which supports accessory on-farm businesses without going through Act 250.

“We need state government to get out of the way and allow our farms and small businesses to grow their revenues,” he said.

“Instead of opening a creemee stand or an event space, farmers find themselves opening a multi-year, six-figure permitting process,” Roberts continued. “This is not acceptable.”

He said he is “urging the Legislature and the governor to agree on a streamlined process for small business development on working lands.”

**Health insurance**

The House Committee on Health Care is working on the aftermath of COVID-19, said Rep. Leslie Goldman, D-Rockingham, who is looking back at when the state was flooded with federal money and people were kept on Medicaid because of the emergency.

“That condition ended on March 31, 2023, and Vermont was required to resume normal operation of our Medicaid program,” Goldman said. “This was described as ‘unwinding,’ and states had up to 12 months to return to normal eligibility and enrollment operations.”

She said that “tens of thousands of Vermonters were affected.”

“We have been working with the Vermont Department of Health Access to support Vermonters during this transition,” Goldman said.

The goal is to make sure that Vermonters who no longer qualify for Medicaid due to income requirements continue to have access to other coverage.

“Although we know that 97% of Vermonters have access to some form of health insurance, we also know that approximately 40% of Vermonters are ‘underinsured’ because of high deductibles and copays,” she said.

“This leads to people not getting the health care they need earlier in a disease process,” Goldman continued, adding that the cycle “leads to poorer outcomes and higher costs.”

Goldman’s committee has also been working on H.721, an act relating to Medicaid expansion.

“We hope to expand access to Medicaid to age 26, which mimics the [federal] Affordable Care Act provisions,” Goldman said. “Another provision of H.721 is to assist with increased premium payments for those elders who are transitioning from Medicaid to Medicare.”

The mental health issues of students whose lives were interrupted by COVID-19 are also a concern for her committee, Goldman said.

“Locally, we have seen a worrisome increase in the consequences of the Covid disruption on the mental health of students, teachers, and staff at our schools,” she said.

“Federal funds are now gone, and funding these positions has fallen to local budgets,” added Goldman. “Unfortunately, using the funds from school budgets to support mental health has reduced the funds available for our educational programs.”

She said that as lawmakers move through this legislative session, “we are exploring every lever available to us to address this unprecedented moment in history and create a Vermont that works for everyone.”

**BIPOC hair**

A bill that is close to the heart of Rep. Mike Mrowicki, D-Putney, protects Black and Indigenous people and people of color (BIPOC) from being discriminated against because of their hair.

Mrowicki has written a Vermont version of the CROWN Act — an acronym for “Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair.” The bill protects BIPOC people from the denial of employment and educational opportunities because of the way they wear their hair.

At least 23 other states have already passed some form of this legislation.

“I had the bill written and introduced it at the request of a constituent who came to this country when she was 10 from Kenya,” Mrowicki said. “After hearing her story and those of other people of color, I was compelled to try and address this injustice.”

Mrowicki cited the story of a parent whose daughter came home after having her hair cut off by her teacher in her classroom. And he mentioned the one about a mother who had to put a sign on her child that says “Please stop touching my hair.”

“I had no idea,” Mrowicki said. “I did some research and started uncovering some unbelievable stories of mistreatment and discrimination. And how prevalent it is.”

The bill then went to the Housing and General Affairs Committee, and it passed, 132-5.

**Justice reform**

Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun, D-Westminster, also sits on the House Committee of Corrections and Institutions and believes that at least two reform issues of hers will make it to the Senate.

The first helps incarcerated individuals continue to maintain strong relationships with family members while they are in prison.

“Vermont’s single women’s facility, the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility, has a program which supports and facilitates visits between incarcerated mothers and their children in a family or child friendly environment at the facility,” Bos-Lun said.

“Our five men’s facilities lack policies and spaces to facilitate supportive visits between incarcerated fathers and their children.”

Corrections Committee bill H.815, addresses reentry, health and parent-child visitation policy issues. “Our bill will move

Vermont towards equity for children and their incarcerated fathers,” Bos-Lun said.

Another bill, H.807, addresses an inequity in sentencing. Given a choice, it seems that defendants are discouraged from choosing a community service option, which requires 200 hours, instead of a 60-hour incarcerative sentence, for certain offenses.

“This is likely to move forward in a Judiciary Committee bill,” Bos-Lun said. “People are discouraged from choosing community service by the disproportionate time requirement. Most people facing these options choose weekend incarcerative sentences, which put pressure on our corrections system and deny an individual the opportunity to engage in their community in a beneficial way.”

**Mushroom reform**

Bos-Lun’s passion project, mushrooming, is on track to make Vermont the sixth state to have a state mushroom.

“My project with students at two Windham county schools is looking likely to pass,” said Bos-Lun, the lead sponsor of H.664.

“Testimony began on Feb. 28 in the Agriculture, Food Resiliency and Forestry Committee with my introduction of the bill, followed by numerous mycological experts from the Department of Agriculture, to a Middlebury College professor, to wild mushroom guides and educators,” she said.

She noted that on March 12 three students from Windham Elementary School and three students from the Compass School are scheduled to testify.

Students from both schools studied the mushrooms and took a vote, where they chose *Heridium americanum*, or bear’s head tooth.

“It would be a valuable symbol to Vermont, to the importance of fungi in our ecosystem, to the democratic process each school went through to determine which mushroom to move forward,” Bos-Lun said.

**Criminal justice changes**

In the Senate, Sen. Nader Hashim, D-Windham County, has been working on a collection of statutory changes that would affect conditions of release. (S.195 and S.196).

“The larger issue seems to be compliance with conditions,” Hashim said. “S.195 would allow for more options to ensure compliance with conditions of release. This includes supervision, electronic monitoring, and home detention.

“S.196 is a technical change that would clarify current law so that victims of violent felonies will not have to testify in pre-trial hearings within only a few weeks of the incident,” he added.

Another bill Hashim has been working on, S.163 (legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/S.163), passed out of committee and will be voted on the floor after Town Meeting. The bill creates three new judge positions to help alleviate the criminal justice backlog in the courts.

“One of the judge positions will also be used to support a statewide drug docket,” Hashim said. “Creating a drug docket has been one of my top priorities for years, and this is a substantial step that I’m confident will help in addressing the opioid crisis while also reducing recidivism.”

Other issues Hashim is working on include a bill to create a climate change superfund (S.259 (legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/S.259)). “It would be used to address damage caused by climate change and also to build our climate resiliency.”

**New neighbors**

Hashim is also sponsoring a bill (S.191) that seeks to remove barriers for refugees, humanitarian parolees, and Afghan Special Visa Holders to access advancement grants through the Vermont Student Assistance Corp.

“This would allow our New American neighbors to more quickly gain access to skill training such as English classes, driving classes, or other skills that are necessary when starting a new life here,” he said.

Harrison has been working on a bill (S.263) to expand the health care workforce by putting U.S. credentials more quickly into the hands of graduates of international medical schools.

The Senate is starting to take testimony on the idea right now.

**Firefighters’ gear**

Harrison reports that the Senate heard disturbing news last week from a study of PFAS — per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances — in firefighters’ protective gear.

“We heard that the gear is likely a cause of the higher cancer rates experienced by firefighters,” Harrison said.

“It’s terribly ironic — and irresponsible of the manufacturers — that the pants and jackets firefighters depend on to keep them safe may actually be making them seriously sick,” she said.

Harrison said the Senate is “looking at ways to reduce their contact with PFAS, find other sources of the gear, and make sure that the firefighters have insurance coverage to protect them and their families.”

**Fish hatchery**

The most controversial decision that the Institutions Committee that Harrison serves on will most likely be whether to keep the Salisbury fish hatchery open.

“The governor’s budget proposes to close the hatchery this year,” Harrison said. “There are water quality issues that need to be addressed, but they are proposing to close the hatchery before the end of the current wastewater permit in 2027.”

The historic hatchery “is the only source of our trout brood stock and is valued by Vermont anglers,” she said.

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All Souls Church, Unitarian Universalist (ASC), a liberal religious community in West Brattleboro, VT seeks a part-time (16 hours/week) Office Administrator to manage administrative functions of the church.  
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Deadline for Applications: March 10, 2024.

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**For a description of the position and more detail, visit: [butterfieldlibrarywestminster.wordpress.com](http://butterfieldlibrarywestminster.wordpress.com).**  
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## Identifying photos

glass plates were invented in 1851 and were used in early photography until the 1880s.

Fish is grateful for the group's work.

"Thanks to them, we now see people, scenes, and buildings that are no longer here or have significantly changed," he says.

### Discovering a past preserved on glass

"Way back when," says group member and photographer, Bob LeBlond, "I was taking pictures in the village in Wardsboro of Mr. Cliff Bills. I went into his house, I looked at the photos that he had, and I received permission to copy them."

Shortly thereafter, group member Charlie Marchant, a retired history teacher and president of the Townshend Historical Society, told LeBlond about a man in Windham who also had some old glass plates.

That man, George Havell, was reluctant to loan any of his photos because others had borrowed some and hadn't returned them.

LeBlond disarmed him by recognizing an especially beautiful bellows camera — a Deardorff — standing in the room.

"As soon as I saw it, I knew what it was and that gained his trust. It's like seeing a Rolls Royce in a Chevy parking lot," remembers LeBlond.

Havell, also an accomplished photographer and historian, was impressed. The two men bonded right away.

"He had tons of old photos," recalls LeBlond. "Once he realized how serious we were about printing them, we left his house with about 1,000 old glass plates."

"That's smooth talking right there, isn't it?" Dummerstonian Lester Dunklee, another member of the group, says with a mischievous smile and a chuckle.

But the comment is made in good fun because this group is serious about history, photography, and its preservation.

They are also very much aware that Havell had salvaged his glass plates back in the 1950s, when many people were discarding such historical artifacts as useless or of little value.

All Havell asked in return was printed copies of the plates, as he had never seen the photographs in positive form. More than 900 printed copies of photos were returned to him by the group.

Eventually, he put the plates on loan and finally gave them outright before he died in 1999. The plates are now housed at the Historical Society of Windham County.

"That was back in 1992," adds Marchant. "I have the whole list of Havell glass plates. We make copies of every photo that we process, catalog them, and when we know their history, add descriptions."

Not all owners of old plates and negatives are as generous as Havell was.

"We've heard of some glass plates that have gone to the dump," member Dan Hescocock says, shaking his head in disbelief. "And then there are other people who have told us that they have a large collection, but no one is going to see them. Why?" he asks rhetorically.

"Most often, we process the photos and give them back to their owners," says member Jan Hull. It's a win-win: the owner gets a copy of the image back with the original historic plate. Sometimes the Wardsboro Photo Group helps the owner find a home for the negatives if they wish to pass them along, but the majority of the time, the owner keeps them.

Hescocock encourages people who have glass plates to get in touch with the group.

"And don't drop them!" he says with a laugh. Everyone joins in laughter with him.

### From analog to digital

Through the years, the group has processed and cataloged upwards of 30,000 to 40,000 historical photos. The group worked in the darkroom, often together, until Covid hit in 2020.

At that point, they began the process of digitizing the photos, which they could do while navigating safety guidelines during the global pandemic.

Currently, their hard drives hold around 120,000 photos, all preserved, labeled, and logged.

Their collections are shared with the University of Vermont's Fleming Museum of Art, and some local historical societies have added the Wardsboro Photo Group's work to their online collections and to their Facebook and other social media offerings.

"We started out putting our money together to pay for the chemicals, paper, and supplies. Fortunately, we have been lucky to receive two grants from the Windham Foundation," LeBlond says.

"Now we are working digitally. Our grant helps us purchase thumb drives, disks, storage containers, and any other necessary supplies," he says.

Once the pictures have been digitized, the files go to Hescocock, who retouches any flaws in the pictures and adjusts the lighting if necessary.

"If there is damage to the photo, we try to repair it," says Hescocock.

"We're careful to keep the details there and not change the picture," he adds.

Then the photos are put into the collection with the originals.

"We include a description of what the photo is, and that number travels with that photograph. That way, if I want to do a search of, say, horses, 1,500 pictures of horses come up within the search parameters. Digitally, it's so much easier this way," says LeBlond.

What about the pictures that can't be identified?

Each member of the group brings their own historical knowledge to the table.

LeBlond points out, "If it's a piece of machinery, Lester Dunklee, Dan Hescocock, and I are all over it. If it's a cemetery, or from the Civil War era, Charlie Marchant often has some knowledge to pass along. Jan Hull is one of the listers in town and has done tons of research for us, as have Janet LeBlond and Jane Robinson."

### Solving problems, identifying photos, and dessert

Each meeting follows a relaxed and predictable schedule each week.

"We get started at 7 p.m. There is usually some discussion about photos that may have been identified within the last week, or new photo discoveries," LeBlond says.

"We may even try to solve some of the world's problems, even though we know those in power won't be listening to us," he says, laughing heartily. "Then we have some dessert and get down to the copying and the real work of working with the photos."

The tone of the conversation around the table goes from serious historical discussion to robust laughter and back again as the evening unfolds.

"Through the years we've made all the possible mistakes that you can make," says Hull.

"Henceforth, there will be no more mistakes," Dunklee adds.

Laughter roars from the group. These historians take their work seriously, but not themselves.

This evening begins with some show and tell. Marchant passes around some negatives given to him from a local historical society. A magnifying glass is passed as each member looks over the negatives.

There are 47 images in this collection that turn out to be of the Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day, taken by an unknown photographer. The group works to identify some of the people and think that perhaps the era is the early 1960s.

They have a system to decide if they should spend their time developing the photos. Before they take on the project, they check to see if they will be allowed to keep a copy for their records.

"If the owner of the photos isn't willing to share them with us, we won't take that work on. And we want to know the photos will see the light of day again," says Hull.

"We always want to know what will be done with the photographs after we've finished printing, documenting, and categorizing them," Marchant adds. "Will they be going to a historical society? Into the Vermont collection at [the University of Vermont], shared with the public? We've had a few circumstances where we've done the research, and then nothing was done with the photos," he says. "And that's just a shame."

FROM SECTION FRONT

Sometimes they are asked to do presentations. They limit their talks to towns in Windham County. Through the years, they've been invited to speak in almost all the 23 towns that comprise the county.

At each presentation, the photographs will include those from the town in which they are presenting.

In addition to those pictures, the group will also include approximately 20 unidentified photographs to see if anyone in the audience knows anything about them. A scribe will note the number of the photograph and write down any available information.

Of all the talks that group members have given, one of the most memorable took place in Londonderry about 25 years ago.

They showed a photograph of a woman sitting at the steering wheel of a Model T Ford, a small toddler standing on the seat beside her.

"It's a convertible," says LeBlond, "and she is elegantly dressed in fancy lace, leather gloves, a jaunty hat on her head. She is just beaming."

"We asked the crowd if anyone knew anything about the photograph. An elderly gentleman at the back of the hall stood up and said, 'That's my mother. And that's me standing on the seat!'"

The room was electric with surprise. The gentleman went on to explain that his mother had never sat in a car before. She was tickled to have an opportunity to sit in the driver's seat.

The moment was captured on a glass negative around 1927, which came from a box of glass plates found in a barn. The images made their way to the group for processing.

"That man died years ago, and we're grateful he was there to tell his story," LeBlond says. "Now he and his mother have been preserved for eternity with his description of this important family event."

The Wardsboro Photo Group also gives digitized photos from the presentations to the people who invite them to speak. If you want to book a historical presentation, the group has one requirement.

"We like homemade refreshments," says Marchant. "None of that store-bought stuff."

They all laugh again.

### 'We know we'll learn something'

There have also been some surprises.

As Janet LeBlond recalls, Bob was printing some photos in the darkroom, and "he yelled from the basement, 'You've got to get down here to see this!'"

He had thrown the photos into the chemicals and "up came a picture of my great-grandmother, my great-grandfather, and the family dog! We were amazed. We showed it to my mother. She'd never seen the photo before."

It turns out a traveling photographer had stopped at almost every home in Wardsboro and snapped a picture. The other glass plates revealed families in their Sunday best standing outside their homes.

The group has also experienced some adventure based on photographs they have processed.

"I can't remember whose collection of photos we were working on, but they turned out to be photographs of the building of the Vernon Dam," Marchant recalls.

After contacting New England Power about the finds, the group was invited for a tour of the hydroelectric power-generating facility.

Together, they have also found lost cemeteries and stone markers, and they have viewed a secret waystation for enslaved people traveling north to freedom. In 2003, the Wardsboro Photo Group wrote a book, *Wardsboro VT: Exposing the Past*, now in its third printing with more than 7,000 copies sold. (It is still available at the Wardsboro Town Library.)

What's next? The group is thinking about a sequel to the book project, and LeBlond knows that he and other members will stay busy with the routine of the photos.

"Who knows who will show up with an interesting find from their attic or hiding out in a barn at their grandparents' house?" he



COURTESY OF WARDSBORO PHOTO GROUP


Wardsboro Photo Group members tell the story of when they shared this image during a presentation in Londonderry, and one elderly man in the audience identified himself as the child in the photo. The group travels to various towns in an ongoing effort to crowdsource identifications for the photos in their archive the old-fashioned way (which also includes dessert).

says. "Whatever it is, we know we'll learn something and enjoy the process."

Jan Hull has the last word. "These pictures are worth so much to us and others. They tell stories of the area from long ago," she says.

And, she quickly adds with a beaming smile, "of course, the visiting at our meetings is almost as much fun as doing the pictures."

Those who have glass slides or negatives of historical significance and would like to reach the Wardsboro Photo Group can do so by email at [bleblond@yahoo.com](mailto:bleblond@yahoo.com).



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## Town Meetings

Biden faced minimal competition in Vermont's primary, with five relatively unknown candidates sharing the ballot with him — among them U.S. Rep. Dean Phillips, D-Minn., and self-help author Marianne Williamson.

The president appeared on track to win a wide majority of Democratic votes Tuesday. As of 10:15 p.m., he had captured 83% of the vote, with writes in second place at 6% and Williamson in third with 4%.

### Town Meeting doings

While the presidential primary attracted much of the attention on Town Meeting day, the lingering costs of last year's storms have seeped onto meeting warrants from Groton in the

Northeast Kingdom — where damage totaled a manageable \$9,586 — to Grafton in southern Vermont — whose number is nearly 100 times more, at close to \$1 million.

At least 60 of Vermont's 247 cities and towns are facing short-term deficits because flood cleanup bills they paid last year have yet to be reimbursed by the federal and state government.

But in one town, the matter for debate was not about water, but whether to stay a "dry" town. Athens was one of 20 communities in the state to prohibit the sale of alcohol, but it is no longer.

More than 80 residents gathered on March 4 to finally permit the sale of "malt" and "vinous beverages," spirits and

FROM SECTION FRONT

"fortified wines." Some questioned the need, as the town doesn't have a store or restaurant. But others noted the longtime law banned not just over-the-counter purchases, but also caterers and wine clubs from delivering alcohol to local homes.

"Is there a potential concern of this leading to a liquor store?" one man asked.

Replied Selectboard member Krista Gay: "We don't even have a gas station."

*Contributing to this report were Kevin O'Connor, Emma Cotton, and Paul Heintz, all from VtDigger, and Randolph T. Holhut and Jeff Potter, of The Commons.*

## Roundup

thanking his supporters.

"It is not lost on me that several factors may have played into that result," he continued. "It is not lost on me that Oscar Heller cares deeply about this community and it showed in those results."

Case, who has just completed a one-year term, said he was proud of the voter turnout and proud "to stand in the political pen with Oscar and listen to him talk issues with our citizens."

Heller posted that he was "obviously disappointed to get so close, but proud of the campaign I ran and grateful for everyone who supported me!"

For the one-year seats, incumbent Franz Reichsman and newcomer Richard Davis won the three-way race, defeating Jaki Reis.

• **Windham Southeast School District Board:**

FROM SECTION FRONT

to \$11.7 million.

The proposal has received funding from both state and federal sources, including Vermont Housing Finance Agency's Tax Credit Allocation, leveraging public-private-partnership funding.

WWHT is working in partnership with Evernorth, a statewide nonprofit housing developer, on the Putney development, "tapping into their decades of experience and access to equity investors in the federal tax credits."

The two organizations co-developed new townhouses on Neumann Lane as well as the historic Noyes House in Putney.

"This is a victory for the 25 households who will be able to move into their new homes in Putney," said Kathy Beyer, Evernorth's senior vice president for real estate development.

Construction is now scheduled to begin this spring.

a priority housing project," he writes.

### WWHT schedules construction for spring

"We are grateful to the Vermont Superior Court for reaffirming the importance of this project, and of affordable housing to this community," Elizabeth Bridgewater, WWHT's executive director, said in a news release.

"We're excited to focus on moving forward with developing much-needed affordable housing," Bridgewater said. "We sincerely thank the community members who again and again voice their excitement for this project, and their understanding of the importance of creating homes that are permanently affordable and held in the community land trust model."

Bridgewater says the delay caused by the lengthy appeal process increased the cost of the project 14%, from \$10.3 million

## Putney project ruling

wrote that "to find that the project is subject to Act 250 jurisdiction, merely because of the presence of a Class III road, would be an irrational and impermissibly strict reading of the statute that stymies the Legislature's intent to encourage mixed-income housing in designated growth areas."

The latest decision is the third ruling in the legal process that began in March 2022, when a first appeal was filed contesting the permit after the Putney Development Review Board approved the site plan.

In explaining his decision, Durkin said that "the Vermont Supreme Court explained that the word 'contiguous' generally requires parcels to be touching, but that there may be exceptions to this general rule."

He also said that a "broader interpretation of the word is appropriate where such an interpretation gives effect to the legislative intent."

"The Legislature clearly intended to lessen the regulatory burden on mixed-income housing projects in designated growth areas," Durkin wrote. "It is clear to the Court that lessening this burden on qualified housing projects was done with the intent to facilitate an expedited process by which such projects can be constructed and, through this, encourage their development."

He went on to describe the Alice Holway Drive development as "precisely the type of project that the Legislature sought to encourage by adopting the priority housing project exemption from Act 250."

The judge also points out the lots are "connected by a crosswalk and, most notably, are treated as a single tax parcel by the town of Putney."

"Taken together, the only rational conclusion is that the project constitutes a single tract, or multiple contiguous tracts, sufficient to meet the definition of

# OPEN HOUSE and TOUR!

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Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 am—Noon  
Ronald Read Pavilion (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

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- Tour our wonderful Birthing Center
- Ask us your questions
- Explore our home-like birthing suites

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Use the QR code, or visit [www.bmhvt.org/30924](http://www.bmhvt.org/30924)



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OBGYN & Midwifery  
a Department of Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

17 Belmont Ave., Brattleboro, VT  
Ronald Read Pavilion, 2nd floor, Suite 2401



## For first time since 2020, Dummerston has in-person Town Meeting

Turnout strong as town residents quickly approve budget items

By Joyce Marcel  
The Commons

DUMMERSTON—After four years of electronic Town Meetings, the town was very happy to be back at the school Tuesday for an in-person meeting.

About 100 residents filled the cafeteria at 10 a.m. to hear Town Moderator Cindy Jerome call the meeting to order and remind them to respect one another while debating heated town issues.

"Caring for this community is far more important than anything else," she said.

Jerome opened the meeting by solemnly reading the names of the 59 Dummerstonians who have died since the last in-person Town Meeting. In all, Dummerston has about 1,865 residents.

Heated debate did not seem to be on the agenda. There was little debate about the expenses facing the town for the upcoming fiscal year, and members easily agreed to put \$110,000 into the Capital Fund, \$585,419 into the General Fund, of which \$449,989 will be raised by taxes, and \$711,450 for town highway expenses, of which \$574,950 will be raised by taxes.

Included in the General Fund will be raises in salaries and benefits for town employees.

Town Meeting members also agreed to use \$85,000 from the Capital Fund to buy a new tractor for the road crew. It might be a Kubota, but could also be a John Deere. Road foreman Lee Chamberlin has been checking prices, and the John Deere seems to be a much better value at a cheaper price. If any money is left over from the purchase, it will go back into the Capital Fund.

Resident Jodi Normandeau said that when she first moved to town 53 years ago, her dirt road was plowed with a pickup truck.

"Everything seems to be getting larger and larger," she said.

FROM SECTION FRONT

fire in Gaza.

• **Halifax:** Voters approved \$2.432 million in Selectboard and highway expenditures but passed over an article on the town assessing a 1% local-option rooms tax. It was the only article on the warrant that did not pass.

• **Wardsboro:** Voters approved appropriating \$455,826 to the general fund and \$1.02 million to the highway fund. They also approved \$64,579 for the Wardsboro Public Library and \$93,726 for the volunteer fire department and six health care and social service organizations.

• **Wilmington:** Voters want to keep floor voting for articles at Town Meeting, as a non-binding article instructing the Selectboard not to use Australian balloting for at least the next three years passed unanimously.

They also approved a general fund of \$3.11 million and \$1.63 million for the road budget.

• **Dover:** Voters passed all articles, including a general fund expenditure of nearly \$2.6 million and \$1.8 million for the highway department.

• **Brookline:** On March 4, voters appropriated \$201,299 to the general fund and \$327,418 for the highway fund and authorized spending \$10,000 in American Rescue Plan Act money toward a new fire truck.

• **Vernon:** Also on March 4, voters decided to postpone a decision on curbside collection of trash and recycling to September, when a Special Town Meeting will be held. A \$2.3 million general operating budget was approved.

• **Westminster:** On March 2, voters plowed through their warrant in about two hours, passing budgets of \$1.2 million for the general fund, \$1.5 million for highways, and \$5.3 million for the town school budget.

Voters also approved a "Declaration of Inclusion" calling for the town to welcome all and to commit to "being a place where individuals may live freely and express their opinions without fear, where kindness and respect are valued, and where all persons feel safe and welcome."

This section runs twice a month from March through June.

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# 'Good music can transcend culture and time'

## In Stile Moderno brings 17th-century madrigals to life at the Brattleboro Music Center

**T**HE MADRIGAL, a genre of 16th- and 17th-century music, will be showcased on Sunday, March 10, at the Brattleboro Music Center when In Stile Moderno performs "Madrigals of Claudio Monteverdi (for Five Voices and Theorbo)." An ensemble for early music which began in 2012 in Basel, Switzerland, In Stile Moderno was founded by soprano Agnes Coakley Cox and Brattleboro's own lutenist/cornettist, Nathaniel Cox.

According to its website ([instilemoderno.com](http://instilemoderno.com)), the group was named after the "modern style" of music which emerged in Italy around 1600. The group is dedicated to music of the 17th century and combines "fidelity to historical performance practice with a drive to make early music accessible and relevant to modern audiences."

"We will explore the riches of Monteverdi's nine books of madrigals, from pristine counterpoint to virtuosic showpieces," Agnes Coakley Cox told *The Commons*. "It's exciting to do an all-Monteverdi concert."

The 4 p.m. concert features Agnes Coakley Cox, soprano; Julia Soojin Cavallaro, mezzo soprano; Corey Dalton Hart, tenor; Adam Jacob Simon, baritone; Andrew Padgett, bass; and Nathaniel Cox, theorbo.



**VICTORIA CHERTOK** covers arts and entertainment in Vermont for *The Commons*. She is a classically trained harpist and received a B.A. in music at Bucknell University.

Mary Greene, executive director of the Brattleboro Music Center, said that the concert will demonstrate "both the versatility and virtuosity of programming and performance that they are known for."

*The Commons* reached soprano and cofounder Agnes Coakley Cox, 37, at a rehearsal recently to talk about the madrigal, the group's upcoming performance, and why this music still resonates after hundreds of years.

Separately, we reached cofounder and lutenist/cornettist Nathaniel Cox, 37, at home in Greenfield, Mass. recently to talk about growing up in Brattleboro, switching to the theorbo, and why this music is timeless.

Following are excerpts of our conversations.

**Agnes Coakley Cox**

**VICTORIA CHERTOK:** Where did you study music?

**AGNES COAKLEY COX:** I grew up in Watertown, Massachusetts, but was born in England. I studied music at Yale University and after college moved to Berlin, Germany, where I taught English as a second language.

While there, I went to an Anglican Church in Berlin and met a lot of musicians who encouraged me to push myself with singing and conducting. A friend said, "Why don't you go to Basel, Switzerland, and audition for graduate school with this voice teacher?" I didn't think I would get in, but I did, so it was an unexpected path for me.

**V.C.:** What was Monteverdi known for?

**A.C.C.:** He was a composer working around the turn of 17th century in Italy, at what is considered the beginning of the Baroque period. He was especially famous for his madrigals—pieces for voices.

**V.C.:** What makes a madrigal?

**A.C.C.:** Some people may have heard of madrigals in the context of madrigal choirs; people associate it with a lot of "fa la la la la."

Most people have heard English madrigals. They were inspired by madrigals from Renaissance Italy in the 16th century. It was all about having five voices that were equally important — and the subject matter of the songs is a bit formulaic, i.e.,



COURTESY PHOTO

Agnes Coakley Cox and Nathaniel Cox of In Stile Moderno, which will perform "Madrigals of Claudio Monteverdi (for Five Voices and theorbo)" on March 10.

a shepherd and shepherdess, and pastoral themes.

**V.C.:** What is text painting?

**A.C.C.:** You will hear one by one the voices that go up relating to the shepherd going up the hill. It's called a "madrigalism" in music theory. It's a fun aspect of these pieces.

**V.C.:** Where did they

perform madrigals?

**A.C.C.:** Since this was secular music, most would have been performed in [the] homes [of] people who were wealthy enough to have musicians. These pieces were also published and you could go buy the music and sing them yourself.

**V.C.:** What do you

like about performing in Brattleboro?

**A.C.C.:** We love the artistic community in Brattleboro! Nathaniel grew up taking lessons at the BMC. The musicians he met in Brattleboro were really formative in his journey. Stephen Stearns of New England Youth Theatre

■ SEE MADRIGALS, B3

BACKGROUND: FACEGUY PIXABAY



## Harmony Collective's 'Spring Forward' group show celebrates seasonal change

BRATTLEBORO—Harmony Collective says they are bringing downtown Brattleboro a beam of springtime hope with "Spring Forward," a group art show featuring several artists' expressions of what the change of season means to them. Exploring themes of growth, resilience, and the joy of sunny days ahead, Harmony Collective celebrates an artful welcome to a season of renewal.

The Spring Forward show opens Friday, March 8, from 6 to 8:30 p.m., with refreshments and opportunities to meet the artists who exhibit at and operate the Gallery.

Phoebe Wagner explores this theme with her 3D sculpture using recycled materials. "I created — birthed — this large papier-mâché tortoise almost entirely from 'trash' and recyclables found in my home," she wrote in her artist's statement. "An old 'flying saucer' sled became the base of the carapace while

the rest of the turtle body and its limbs were constructed from household throwaways, like the wire found inside an old air conditioner filter and chicken wire."

Although giant tortoises in the wild usually live in equatorial regions with hot or wet seasons and no true spring, she says, their young tend to hatch out in March and April; just in time to begin their lives during the northern hemisphere's springtime. "Hence the inclusion of a slow, lumbering, but ever-moving-forward tortoise in the Spring Forward show."

Ruby Rice's wearable art piece, "Purple Flow," is a reversible shoulder wrap inspired by the ice melts in local rivers. Visitors may already be familiar with Rice's fiber arts, using a Nuno felt process with merino wools, hand-painted silks, and hand-stitched embellishments.

Joan Lovell explores March's group show theme with her scratchboard piece, "Spring and a Young Man's Fancies," and states that her piece "is a reminder that spring is the season of renewal, fresh starts, and love."

The theme from each month's group show often carries over into artist-members' display spaces through the gallery. Such is the case with Lovell's floral watercolors and cut paper collages.

Another expression inspired by nature is in the watercolor and ink piece, "Daisies," by Rachel Eleanor Brown. "Nature is a great teacher when we are open to learning; we learn to keep moving forward as flowers keep growing and blooming," she said. "We learn to keep busy like the bees, which we depend on for so much, without their even knowing. Seasons go on and our environmental changes, and it is our response to how we create in this world that breeds hope. We always talk about thankfulness being a fall-time theme, but spring is also a great season for gratitude. The sun comes out, the mountains are green again, and there is another season to grow something better."

The show is up for the month of March, and the public is welcome. Learn more at [harmonyartsbrattleboro.com](http://harmonyartsbrattleboro.com), and follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

"Daisies" by Rachel Eleanor Brown.

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# arts & community CALENDAR

**THURSDAY**      **THURSDAY** CONT.      **FRIDAY**      **SATURDAY** CONT.      **SUNDAY** CONT.      **TUESDAY**

**7**

**Music**  
**GREENFIELD** In Stile Moderno Lunchtime Concert: This will be a short version of our full "Monteverdi" program as part of the church's "Bach's Lunch" series.  
 ▶ 12:15 p.m.  
 ▶ Free lunchtime concert - bring your lunch if you wish.  
 ▶ Episcopal Church of Saints James and Andrew, 8 Church St. Information: 413-773-3925; saintsjamesandandrew.org/events.html

**The written word**  
**BELLOWS FALLS** River-Themed Poetry Workshop: Vermont River Conservancy offers river-themed poetry workshop. Participants read and discuss poems about rivers from variety of styles, cultures, time periods and share their reactions and talk through the poetic craft moves that make the poems tick. Then participants will write their own river poems with encouragement from instructor Hayley Kolding - an ecologist and poet who currently serves Vermont River Conservancy in role of Southern VT Conservation Mgr.  
 ▶ 3-5 p.m. Walk-ins welcome. Open to the public.  
 ▶ Free.

**LATCHIS PUB**  
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▶ Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: More information or to request poems in advance visit: vermontriverconservancy.org/south.

**Well-being**  
**CHESTER** Support Group for Caregivers and their Loved Ones: Caregivers receive support, information, resources and socialization. Loved ones are supervised by trained volunteers so caregivers can relax. Come and enjoy refreshments, share experiences, ask questions.  
 ▶ 11 a.m.-1 p.m. First Thursday of every month in the Activity Room (Willard Room) - an easy level walk from the parking behind Six Loose Ladies yarn shop.  
 ▶ Free.  
 ▶ St. Lukes Episcopal Church, 313 Main St. Information: For more information email jerenhouse@seniorsolutionsvt.org.

**Visual arts and shows**  
**BRATTLEBORO** Jesse Freidin: Are You OK?": Jesse Freidin, award-winning queer-identified photographer and author, focuses his attention on elevating the experience of the LGBTQIA+ community through portraiture and interviews. "Are You OK?" addresses the dangerous wave of anti-trans legislation sweeping the country in a passionate attempt to erase stigma and elevate the voices of those most affected.  
 ▶ 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wed through Sun. "Participating in creation of this work is dangerous - we meet hiding behind buildings with extreme discretion in states that want us dead - yet the process of acknowledging each other offers a kind of healing within the frame." Freidin, part of over 150 private collections and been exhibited in galleries nationally with work featured in The New York Times, NPR, Vogue, Huffington Post, Inside Edition. He authored 3 books: When Dogs Heal: Powerful Stories of People Living with HIV and the Dogs That Saved Them, Finding Shelter: Portraits of Love, Healing and Survival, and Are You OK? Vol. 1, 2022.  
 ▶ Through Sunday, April 28.  
 ▶ Free.  
 ▶ Vermont Center for Photography, 10 Green St., (right side of the 22 High St. building). Information: 802-251-6051; vcphoto.org.

**8**

**Music**  
**BRATTLEBORO** Sarasa Ensemble: Anónimo from Amazonia: Bolivian Mission Baroque: Program of secular and sacred Baroque music from the Missions of Bolivia with an undeniable impulse from the folk element of its indigenous people.  
 ▶ 7 p.m.  
 ▶ \$20 In advance \$25 at door.  
 ▶ Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Information: 802-257-4523; bmcvt.org.

**SATURDAY**  
**9**

**Performing arts**  
**BRATTLEBORO** NECCA's Circus Spectacular brings International Aretists to the Latchis Stage (In-Person/Livestream): Circus Spectacular is NECCA's annual fundraiser - a dazzling event and unique opportunity to see some of today's renowned high flying aerialists, acrobats, jugglers. Enjoy Guest Ringmaster/world record holder John Higby (aka the YoYo Guy) sharing stage with high flying rope artist Nick Ng (on break between tours with Cirque du Soleil); award-winning juggler Stacey Strange; internationally renowned wire dancer Arielle Ebacher, among others donating their talents!  
 ▶ 3/9: 7:30 p.m., 3/10: 1 p.m. (in-person only) live on the Latchis Theater stage and via live stream (3/9) to allow for accessibility for those who are homebound and circus fans across the country. These performances benefit the financial aid student fund and circus programming for all ages.  
 ▶ Through Sunday, March 10.  
 ▶ \$25 to \$50.  
 ▶ Latchis Theatre, 50 Main St. Information: CircusSchool.org. More information: 802-254-9780.

**Instruction**  
**W. BRATTLEBORO** Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop: Join Edible Brattleboro in an our orchard located in West Brattleboro to learn the basics of pruning fruit trees. Agroecologist Sebastian Rojas leads the workshop. There is snow in the field, so dress for the weather. If you would like some hands on experience, bring your pruners.

▶ 2-3:30 p.m. If weather is inclement, event will be on 3/10.  
 ▶ Free (donations accepted with gratitude).  
 ▶ West Brattleboro Orchard (Edible Brattleboro). Information: Registration required: bit.ly/EB\_pruning. Address of orchard in West Brattleboro will be emailed to you.

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

**W. HALIFAX** Listening Session - Talk about Aging: Share thoughts and concerns about aging - yours, neighbors, your families. Windham Aging's mission is to collaborate to provide the strategic vision for systemic change so that older residents of Windham County age well. To do this: We identify existing resources, future needs, best strategies to achieve our vision. Inform the change-makers for our county so they can engage those strategies. Track progress to guide advancement toward our stated goals.  
 ▶ 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Halifax Cafe. Get connected with programs and services to help us all age well in Windham County. All are welcome.  
 ▶ Free.  
 ▶ Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Rd. Information: More information: windhamaging.com.

**SUNDAY**  
**10**

**Music**  
**BRATTLEBORO** In Stile Moderno: Madrigals of Claudio Monteverdi: For five voices and theorbo: Five-voice madrigal developed as a genre in the 16th century and became a proving ground for young composers. Today's performers are: Agnes Coakley Cox, soprano; Julia Soojin Cavallaro, mezzo soprano; Corey Dalton Hart, tenor; Adam Jacob Simon, baritone;

Andrew Padgett, bass; Nathaniel Cox, theorbo.  
 ▶ 4 p.m. In Stile Moderno explores riches of Monteverdi's 9 books of madrigals - from pristine counterpoint to virtuosic showpieces. Claudio Monteverdi, whose career bridged the Renaissance and Baroque, was one of these composers, as a teenager testing his skill in his early Renaissance-style madrigals but later pushed boundaries of the genre with concertato-style madrigals that were as dramatic and complex as his operas.  
 ▶ \$20 in advance, \$25 at door.  
 ▶ Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Tickets: https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?actions=7&p=5 802-257-4523; bmcvt.org.

**Community building**  
**DUMMERSTON** Youth Group Meets to Plan Treasure Hunt: Young people ages 13-18 in greater Brattleboro are invited to attend a gathering of this interfaith youth group. Supported by various local faith communities, attendees get to know each other through icebreakers; sharing a make-your-own pizza meal; preparing for Community Easter Treasure Hunt on Sat., 3/30 in Guilford; identifying potential group activities and service projects for the spring and summer months.  
 ▶ 5-7:30 p.m. "We will benefit from the perspectives of young people who are newly-arrived refugees," explained Brian Remer, group facilitator, who describes the group evolution into a kind of multicultural club for teens interested in sharing their cultures and learning about each other.  
 ▶ \$5 contribution towards food is encouraged.  
 ▶ Dummerston Congregational Church, 1535 Middle Rd. Information: More information or to reserve a spot, contact Nanci at 802-258-8348 or nanci.leitch@gmail.com..

**SUNDAY**  
**11**

**Music**  
**BRATTLEBORO** In Stile Moderno: Madrigals of Claudio Monteverdi: For five voices and theorbo: Five-voice madrigal developed as a genre in the 16th century and became a proving ground for young composers. Today's performers are: Agnes Coakley Cox, soprano; Julia Soojin Cavallaro, mezzo soprano; Corey Dalton Hart, tenor; Adam Jacob Simon, baritone;

**12**

**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.

**Ideas and education**  
**PUTNEY** Vermont Cartoonist Tillie Walden speaks about Comics and Queerness in VT and Beyond: From Alison Bechdel's "Fun Home" to Charles Schulz's "Peanuts," comics have been a part of American culture since print first began. But comics are no longer relegated just to newspapers, and as books like "Maus" or "Persepolis" have proven, this is a golden age for graphic novel storytelling. Even more exciting is how the comics industry is currently championing narratives for all identities and ages.  
 ▶ 6:30 p.m. All ages. Copies of book available for check out. Accessible to those w/ disabilities. Talk is part of Vermont Reads program. Since 2003, VT Humanities Council has invited students/adults/seniors across the state to read the same book & participate in community activities related to book's themes. Over 200 VT towns/cities/villages participated.  
 ▶ Free.  
 ▶ Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. Information: 802-387-4407; putneylibrary.org/events.

To submit your event: [calendar@commonsnews.org](mailto:calendar@commonsnews.org)  
 Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday

## Rock River Players to hold open auditions for Sophocles's 'Antigone'

SAXTONS RIVER—Main Street Arts (MSA) will offer two summer camp programs — Trish Roberts's Wildbrook Forest Theater Camp and The Un-Lost Island of Atlantis with Putnam Smith. No theater experience is necessary, and no audition will be required. Space is limited, with slots available by sign-up on a first-come, first-served basis. The return to offering summer camp is part of MSA's focus on strengthening the well-being of area children. The camps will explore how to connect deeply to the natural world and to each other through story-telling and imaginary play.  
 "At MSA, we view theater as a vehicle to teach risk taking, self-awareness, and collaboration in a playful way," program director Ashley Storrow said in a news release. "This aligns with MSA's new mission statement to strengthen personal and community well-being through diverse arts experiences and social connection."  
 The Wildbrook Forest camp will run Monday, June 24, through Friday, June 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The cost is \$270 per student and is open to students 8-12 years old. Roberts will bring students into the Vermont Academy forest (located behind MSA) to play theater games. Students will also try lots of improv, learn theater warmups for voices and bodies, sing, tell stories, explore and play in the forest, and rehearse for the final performance. Additionally, students will work on character-building activities, various acting techniques, and set and costume design.  
 The final performance will take place in the woods on Thursday, June 27, at 3 p.m., with a rain date of Friday, June 28, at 3 p.m. Be prepared for a 10-minute walk.  
 The second camp will run from Monday through Friday, Aug. 5 to 17, from 9 a.m. to noon, at MSA. The cost is \$300 per student. On the Un-Lost Island of Atlantis, two rival groups of explorers will uncover the mysteries of this deserted island and win out as the true discoverer.  
 Smith will lead students through theater games, trust-building exercises, and lessons in stage combat and physical comedy; participants will work together to bring this action-packed comedy to life. The program will result in a fully costumed performance on MSA's mainstage. The performances will be on Friday, Aug. 16, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, Aug. 17, at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
 Roberts has been working with youth in theatrical endeavors for more than 10 years. She holds a B.A. from Middlebury College and a Connecticut teaching certificate in both French and theater, has a master's degree in English Literature from Trinity College, and is the founder and director of Wildbrook Forest Theatre, a nature-based theater project in Westminster. Roberts is an MSA teaching artist and runs afterschool programming in the WNESU school district.  
 Smith is a graduate of Bowdoin College with a degree in philosophy. He has worked as an actor, director, playwright, nationally touring musician, farmer, letterpress printer, teacher, and librarian. As the education director at the New England Youth Theater in Brattleboro, Putnam wrote and directed numerous plays, and organized the Town Schools Theatre Program, working with many elementary schools throughout Windham county. He lives on a working homestead in Putney with his wife and two kids.  
 MSA is located at 35 Main St. in Saxtons River. For more information and to register, visit [info@mainstreetarts.org](http://info@mainstreetarts.org).

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## BMAC hosts Ukrainian egg-decorating workshop

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) hosts artist and instructor Jenny Santa Maria on Saturday, March 23, for two workshops in Pysanky, the traditional Ukrainian folk art of egg decoration.

The workshops will take place at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The techniques used in Pysanky are similar to batik. Patterns are drawn on an egg with hot beeswax, and the egg is then dipped in colored dye. The wax protects covered areas from subsequent applications of dyes, and when the wax is removed, a colored pattern is revealed.

Traditional Pysanky eggs are detailed with designs and symbols. Creating them is a meditative and methodical process.

Whether the maker is experienced or trying the practice for the first time, “the finished eggs are always a reward for the patience and concentration that are required to do the work,” say organizers.

Santa Maria’s workshop will include information about the history and traditions surrounding Pysanky, instructions on how to make the eggs, and independent work time. She will provide a variety of eggs, tools, and hard-to-find traditionally and nontraditionally colored dyes. Participants will leave with a completed colored egg.

Santa Maria’s work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, among other publications. She teaches Pysanky techniques throughout the Northeast

in early spring, calling her work “batik eggs,” because she adopts a contemporary aesthetic. She stretches the boundaries of traditional Pysanky, emphasizing the soulful process and the meditative and communal experience. Santa Maria says for many participants, this annual workshop has become a family tradition that marks the beginning of spring.

Admission is \$55 (\$45 for BMAC members), and includes all materials. No experience is necessary, but participants must be 16 or older. Space is limited, so advance registration is required. Register at [brattleboromuseum.org](http://brattleboromuseum.org) or call 802-257-0124, ext. 101.



Jenny Santa Maria

COURTESY PHOTO

## Vermont Comedy All Stars return

PUTNEY—Laughter is on the agenda as Gordon Clark and his Vermont Comedy All Stars return to Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill, for a night of side-splitting stand-up comedy on Saturday, March 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Event organizers promise “an evening filled with uproarious performances from a stellar lineup of seasoned comedians.”

Featured performers include:

- David Deery: A globe-trotting comedian/writer with two decades of experience, Deery has

performed from Berlin to Cabot, Vermont. He brings his unique perspective to the stage, having performed in major cities across Europe and America.

- Eric Dreiblatt: Based in Burlington, Dreiblatt is not only a comedian, but also a producer and host. He has performed at festivals such as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Green Mountain Comedy Festival.

- Ruth Fuller: A stand-up comic based in Burlington, Fuller’s humor explores topics

ranging from mental health to relationships. Her appearances include the Vermont Comedy Club and the Portland Maine Comedy Festival.

- Meredith Gordon: When she’s not serving lunch at her children’s school, Gordon performs stand-up. The 2022 Seven Daysies winner for “Best Stand Up” in Vermont, she has been featured at events like the Gilda Laugh Fest and the Portland Maine Comedy Fest.

- Scott Goyette: An advocate,

activist, and bocce aficionado, Goyette’s irreverent humor and self-deprecating wit have made him a two-time finalist in Vermont’s Funniest Comedian Contest.

Hosted by Clark himself, the director of the nonprofit Vermont Comedy All Stars, this showcase includes diverse comedic styles, “with Gordon proving that you can indeed teach an old dog new tricks,” organizers say.

Tickets are priced at \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Advance ticketing closes two hours before showtime. For tickets and more information, visit [nextstagearts.org](http://nextstagearts.org) or contact the box office at [info@nextstagearts.org](mailto:info@nextstagearts.org) or 802-387-0102.

## Global talent, fashion show will benefit Refugee Legal Fund

BRATTLEBORO—The Ethiopian Community Development Center (ECDC), the organization that oversees refugee settlement in southern Vermont, is having a fundraiser on Saturday, March 9, featuring local refugee (and other) talent, at the International Center on the School for International Training campus, 1 Kipling Rd.

When Afghan refugees arrived in Brattleboro two years ago, the U.S. government provided funding for legal fees. “However, newly arrived refugees from other countries, such as Eritrea, the Congo, and Yemen, do not have that financial support,” organizers said in a news release. “Thus, ECDC has organized this fundraiser.”

All money raised will be used to directly support local Vermont refugees getting their green cards. The Refugee Legal Fund will cover legal fees and the cost of high-quality and accurate legal interpretation. It will also help

offset the costs of the expensive mandatory medical exam.

The show will feature Afghan traditional music, handmade global fashion, Congolese rap, an interactive traditional Filipino performance, and more. Doors will open at 7 p.m., with the show starting at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are available at the door on a sliding scale from \$25 to \$50; drinks and light refreshments are included in the ticket price. Those unable to attend the show can make a direct donation to the Refugee Legal Fund at [givebutter.com/legalfund](http://givebutter.com/legalfund).

## The Fairlanes and The Fretbenders co-headline Stage 33 Live

BELLOWS FALLS—Stage 33 Live, 33 Bridge St., hosts The Fretbenders and The Fairlanes on Sunday, March 10, for a 3 p.m. matinee concert.

The Fretbenders are Bob and Diane Kordas, described by organizers as having “a fun, toe-tapping sound based in blues, roots, Americana, and a dash of folk, country, and rock — where a down-home barbecue meets a

speakeasy.” Diane and Bob have played in various New England swing, bluegrass, and roots bands through the years, honing their stage presence and style. For this show, they’ll be playing as a duo.

The Fairlanes play original music about life, loss, and love that lives somewhere between folk, rock, and Americana. They perform as anything from a duo to an octet, and for this show there will

be about half a dozen of them.

Seating is limited. The event will be recorded and filmed. Tickets are \$10 in advance or at the door. Advance tickets guarantee entry. All ticket proceeds go to the performers.

Tickets and more info about the nonprofit, all-volunteer project, and this and other upcoming events, can be found at [stage33live.com](http://stage33live.com).

## Madrigals

and his wife, Bonnie, have been really supportive of both of us and really encouraged us as we built our ensemble.

Stephen used to tell Nathaniel, “Don’t be the best; be the only” — which I think is wonderful advice when you are pursuing a career in the arts.

**V.C.:** What do you do when not rehearsing or performing with In Stile Moderno?

**A.C.C.:** Nathaniel and I have 3-year-old son, and I teach vocal students at Deerfield Academy and at the educational arm of the Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra.

### Nathaniel Cox

**VICTORIA CHERTOK:** You grew up in Brattleboro and started playing music at an early age. Which instrument did you start playing?

**NATHANIEL COX:** I feel like I grew up with music being a very big part of our house and our family. I played trumpet, and my brother played French horn, which was ironic considering that my father is Douglas Cox, the violin maker and a very active member of the music scene in Brattleboro.

**V.C.:** You said your teacher at BMC was very instrumental in helping you choose music as a career.

**N.C.:** One of my important early influences was Dan Farina, who taught me trumpet at BMC through high school. He was a wonderful man and an incredibly supportive teacher who deserves enormous credit for inspiring me to become a musician.

**V.C.:** Who were some of your other early musical influences?

**N.C.:** Jim Kurty at Academy School. And another big influence was Stephen Rice, director

of bands at Brattleboro Union High School.

Every day started with either band or chorus. It was a great way to start the day, especially because of how wonderful Steve Rice and Mitch Davis (chorus teacher) were as teachers and as human beings. It’s one of my fondest memories to look back on.

They were really passionate people who loved the music and were able to communicate that passion for the music to their students and seemed to take personal interest in the students who were clearly benefiting from that.

**V.C.:** Upon graduating from BUHS, you attended Oberlin Conservatory as a double major in trumpet performance and Russian language and literature. How was your experience there?

**N.C.:** Oberlin was a great experience for me to realize that I wanted to do something different than the trumpet. What I was really interested in was early music — Renaissance and baroque music.

I tried a baroque trumpet and played that a lot at Oberlin. That is where I picked up the cornetto — a distant cousin of the trumpet. Once I discovered the cornetto, I realized that was what I wanted to do.

**V.C.:** You also attended Schola Cantorum in Basel, Switzerland, and that is where you met Agnes.

**N.C.:** After graduating from Oberlin, I studied for five years with Bruce Dickey, the world master of the cornetto, in Switzerland. That is where I met Agnes, who was studying there at the same time!

**V.C.:** You said you had a bit of “lute envy” when you studied in Switzerland. How so?

**N.C.:** There were so many

people playing lute and theorbo, and I thought this looked like the coolest instrument. A friend of mine convinced me that I could do it, too, so he helped me find an instrument to borrow and started giving me lessons.

After a year or so more and more people started asking me to play with them, and eventually I started calling myself a theorbo player.

**V.C.:** What is it about this music that still appeals, hundreds of years after it was composed?

**N.C.:** There is something universal about a lot of this music; the themes such as love and suffering still apply to music today.

There is also something universal about good music that can transcend culture and time. Biologically, we are the same, and our ears work the same way.

**V.C.:** What drew you to performing this repertoire?

**N.C.:** Part of what drew me to this music is the sense of freedom and flexibility. As a performer, I have more agency to approach the music on my terms — there is much less rigidity than in traditional classical music.

I can find a piece in an old manuscript and realize my own interpretation of it, informed by my study of historical performance practice. I don’t have the luxury or the burden of generations of teachers and recordings influencing my interpretation.

**V.C.:** How do you approach doing research when beginning to learn one of these pieces?

**N.C.:** There is also the element of historical research and musicology connected to the performance. It’s an optional add-on. You’re not required to be an academic to perform early

FROM SECTION FRONT

music, but if you are interested in what people were doing in Venice in the 1620s and what was going on politically and socially, you could see how all of this was influencing the music being written and performed.

I have to figure out how I want to interpret a piece, and I apply the knowledge I’ve gained about how musicians interpreted this music in the 17th century. It is active participation — bringing music from the page to life.

It’s fascinating to look at the music through that lens and put together programs that can capture a moment in history.

**V.C.:** What exactly is the theorbo?

**N.C.:** A theorbo is a plucked instrument, a member of the lute family with 14 strings. There are six strings on the fingerboard tuned in fourths and thirds (like a guitar) and 8 bass strings extending to a second peg box that are about 5.5 feet long.

Each bass string plays a single note, and the strings are tuned in a descending scale. The top six strings are used to play melody and chords, and the bass strings are able to reinforce the bass line.

It is the perfect instrument for accompanying Monteverdi’s madrigals. It has a powerful and supportive sound that never covers up or interferes with the delicacy of the vocal lines. There is an enormous range of musical effects you can produce by plucking the strings in different ways.

*In Stile Moderno performs on Sunday, March 10 at 4 p.m. at the Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way in Brattleboro. For more information and tickets — \$20 for general admission or \$25 at the door — visit [bmctvt.org](http://bmctvt.org) or call 802-257-4523.*

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Sugar on Snow Supper

**SATURDAY, MARCH 9** First Congregational Church  
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Seatings: 5:00 and 6:15. Take-out also available.

**Menu: Ham, Potato Salad, Cole Slaw, Baked Beans, Dinner Rolls, Beverages, Sour Pickles, Donuts, and of course Maple Syrup on Snow.**

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AROUND THE TOWNS

**Wardsboro Yoked Parish moves worship services to West Wardsboro**

WARDSBORO — Worship services of the Wardsboro Yoked Parish have moved to the historic Baptist Church on Cross Road in West Wardsboro as of March 3. Service each Sunday starts at 9 a.m., and will continue through May 26. Communion is served on the first Sunday of each month and a coffee hour is provided on the last Sunday of each month. All are welcome.

**Rec. Dept. hosts chess tournament**

BRATTLEBORO — The Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department will hold its 15th annual Youth Chess Tournament at the Gibson-Aiken Center Senior Center on Saturday, March 9, from 1 to 4 p.m.

This program is for those in kindergarten through eighth-grade. All skill levels are welcome.

The cost of this tournament is \$5. Eric Strickland will be running the tournament. Depending on the number of entrants, contestants may be divided into sections according grade level. This is a Swiss System event, which means that no players are ever eliminated. Chess sets will be provided.

**Sugar on Snow supper in West B**

WEST BRATTLEBORO — First Congregational Church, 880 Western Ave., is holding its 71st annual Sugar on Snow Supper on Saturday, March 9. The traditional menu of ham, baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad, deviled eggs, homemade rolls, and maple syrup on snow with homemade doughnuts (and, of course, sour pickles) will be served.

There will be two seatings: 5 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$7 for ages 6–12, \$3 for ages 3–5, and free for those under age 3. There will be an auction at each seating for locally produced maple syrup.

Reservations for either eat in or takeout meals may be made by calling 802-257-7557.

**Lost River Racial Justice holds monthly meeting**

BRATTLEBORO — Lost River Racial Justice (LRRJ) is a currently majority-white racial justice organization. According to organizers, it is “a chapter of showing up for racial justice (SURJ) that works in close accountability with the Root Social Justice Center. LRRJ supports white people in the learning, healing, and actions necessary to dismantle white supremacy.”

LRRJ is based in Brattleboro and draws its name from the Abenaki name for these lands where we live and work. Their monthly working meetings are “a time for white-identified people to gather and deepen our racial justice work together,” according to organizers. “Though the meetings are mainly intended to bring white people into the struggle for racial justice, anyone is welcome to attend, regardless of racial identity.”

Meetings are held on Zoom on the second Monday of every month from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Go to [lostriverracialjustice.org](https://lostriverracialjustice.org) to sign up for LRRJ’s mailing list where the Zoom link is sent out.

**Talk looks at Pagan, Jewish, and Christian women in the Roman Empire**

BRATTLEBORO — Celebrate Women’s History Month with a slide presentation and exploration of women in antiquity, using literary and archaeological evidence, by Dr. Valerie A. Abrahamson on Monday, March 11, at 7 p.m. in the Main Reading Room of

Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St.

Recent scholarly research clearly shows that women had much larger roles in the early Roman Empire than previously acknowledged. “Women in Graeco-Roman cults, Judaism, and the early Jesus groups served as priestesses, synagogue leaders, missionaries, apostles, and possibly even bishops,” according to a news release.

Participants will see how ancient texts have been misinterpreted for centuries and how archaeology can expand our knowledge of the ancient world and also help promote justice and equality in today’s society.

Abrahamson holds a master’s degree in Theological Studies and doctorate of Theology in New Testament and Early Christian Origins from Harvard Divinity School. She is the author of more than 100 articles, reviews, and book chapters in New Testament archaeology, early church history, women in antiquity, and ancient goddess religion.

She has published two books in these fields: *Women and Worship at Philippi* (1995) and *Goddess and God: A Holy Tension in the First Christian Centuries* (2006). As part of her research, she has photographed over two dozen archaeological sites throughout Europe, and she uses those photos to illustrate her talks. The program is free and is accessible to people in wheelchairs. For more information, visit [brookslibraryvt.org](https://brookslibraryvt.org) or call 802-254-5290.

**Landmark College Speaker Series explores connection between belonging and success**

PUTNEY — The Spring 2024 Landmark College Academic Speakers Series welcomes

Katherine Aquino, Ph.D., for a presentation entitled “Feeling Included: The Role and Importance of Sense of Belonging on Student Success” on Wednesday, March 13, at 5 p.m. in the Brooks M. O’Brien Auditorium/Lewis Academic Building.

This one-hour interactive presentation integrates research, theory, and audience engagement to discuss the importance of one’s sense of belonging within higher education and how each campus community stakeholder has a unique responsibility in creating a supportive and inclusive institutional environment.

Dr. Aquino is an assistant professor in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership for the School of Education at St. John’s University. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, the *Journal of College Student Development*, and the *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, among others.

This event is free. For additional information or questions about venue accessibility, contact Justine Gaskamp at [justinegaskamp@landmark.edu](mailto:justinegaskamp@landmark.edu). Driving directions, a campus map, and more information about the Landmark College Academic Speaker Series are available at [landmark.edu](https://landmark.edu).

**RFPL hosts Selectboard candidate forum**

BELLOWS FALLS — Meet and hear from the candidates for Town of Rockingham Selectboard seats on Wednesday, March 13, at 7 p.m., at the Rockingham Free Public Library.

Five of the candidates are running for the two one-year terms on the Selectboard. They are Jamey Berrick, John Dunbar,

Bonnie North, Stan Talstra, and Deborah Wright. One of these, North is an incumbent on the Selectboard with her current term expiring. Another Selectboard incumbent is Rick Cowan, who is running unopposed for a three-year term.

This Candidates Forum is expected to last about 90 minutes. The candidates will each introduce themselves and answer questions about local issues. There will be some time allowed for questions from the audience. FACT TV will be recording the event.

The date for electing these (and other) Rockingham candidates has been moved to Tuesday, April 2. Voting on that date will be by Australian ballot and will take place at the Masonic Temple in Bellows Falls. The polls will be open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

**Open hours on Fridays at Hunt House**

VERNON — The Governor Hunt House Community Center, 322 Governor Hunt Rd., is now open to the Vernon community on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Enjoy free Wi-Fi, play a board game, work on a puzzle, or visit with friends. Coffee, tea, and treats are available by donation. For more information, visit [governorhunt.org](https://governorhunt.org).

**Applications sought for Brattleboro Area Farmers Market**

BRATTLEBORO — The Brattleboro Area Farmers Market is currently accepting applications for the 2024 season. The market encourages farmers, craftspeople, bakers, prepared, or specialty food applicants to apply.



For more information, call 802-490-4371 or email [farmersmarket05301@gmail.com](mailto:farmersmarket05301@gmail.com).



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**Final comment period begins for relicensing hydro facilities on Connecticut River**

BRATTLEBORO — Since late 2012, the Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon hydroelectric facilities in the heart of the Connecticut River have been in the process of renewing their operating licenses in a process known as relicensing.

The three dams at Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon in New Hampshire and Vermont are owned by Great River Hydro (formerly TransCanada), a subsidiary of Hydro-Québec whose sole shareholder is the government of Québec.

In addition, two Massachusetts facilities — Turners Falls Dam and Northfield Mountain Pump Storage Project — are now separate limited liability companies under FirstLight Power Services LLC, owned by PSP Investments, one of Canada’s largest pension investment managers.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) last issued licenses for these facilities more than 40 years ago and all five licenses initially expired in April, 2018.

According to a news release from the Connecticut River Conservancy, which has been engaged in advocating for the health of the Connecticut River and the communities in the watershed

since 1952 and participates in the relicensing of hydroelectric facilities, “these facilities use a public trust resource — your river — to produce power.”

“In exchange for this privilege and to mitigate for impacts of the dams on recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, migratory and endangered species, water quality, and other resources, FERC requires that hydropower operators provide direct benefits to the public and be protective of the ecological health of the river,” the organization wrote, calling a facility’s operating license “a public contract.”

On Feb. 22, FERC issued a notice indicating that the final license applications have been accepted as complete and ready for environmental analysis. This notice simultaneously initiated a 60-day period to submit comments and interventions for the projects.

The comment period will close on Monday, April 22.

The public is encouraged to submit a comment to FERC outlining concerns about how these dams impact the river, the surrounding communities, or one’s ability to interact with the river.

Public comments can be submitted by anyone or any entity

that has an interest. This includes individuals, town committees or commissions, regional planning commissions, or recreation clubs.

CRC staff have been meeting with local town committees to update them on the relicensing and to encourage commenting. The organization will file a motion to intervene and, if approved for that designation, will “become a legal party to the proceedings, which grants the ability to request hearings of FERC orders and appeal agency actions,” the news release said.

“These three facilities control the water in approximately 126 miles of river in Vermont and New Hampshire, and the license term is expected to be 40 years long,” said Kathy Urffer, CRC’s river steward in Vermont and director of policy and advocacy, who has been working on this relicensing for almost seven years.

She called it “literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to shape how the hydroelectric facilities mitigate for their impact on the river for future generations.”

Hydropower relicensing information, as well as a FERC Comment Guide, can be found at [ctriver.org/our-work/hydropower](https://ctriver.org/our-work/hydropower). The CRC will also hold a series

of virtual office hours about how to comment on the hydropower relicensing process. During these office hours, Urffer will join river stewards in Massachusetts (Nina Gordon-Kirsch) and New Hampshire (Kate Buckman) to answer any questions and help with your comments.

These sessions will cover issues at stake for fish passage, recreation, erosion, and accountability, as well as instruction on how to submit comments or get involved. The river stewards will also answer any questions addressed to them.

The office hours can be customized based on who attends and what you most want to address. Participants can also submit a question to the speakers upon registration.

The office hours will occur on Thursday, March 14, 5:30 p.m.; Monday, March 18, 11 a.m.; Wednesday, March 27, 8:30 a.m.; Wednesday, April 3, 7 p.m.; Thursday, April 11, noon; and Tuesday, April 16, noon.

Register for any of the sessions at [ctriver.org/event/hydropower-office-hours](https://ctriver.org/event/hydropower-office-hours).

**Cheese store will move to Proctorsville**

**Retreat Farm to turn space into a new farm market**

The Grafton Village Cheese Company (GVCC), a subsidiary of The Windham Foundation, recently announced the move of its retail store and cut-and-wrap operation to a new store east of downtown Ludlow in the village of Proctorsville.

A fixture at 400 Linden St. in Brattleboro for more than a decade, GVCC lost its lease when the building was sold to Retreat Farm in late 2022.

The acquisition of the GVCC facility by Retreat Farm was fully funded through a \$3 million Senate appropriation secured by former U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy in collaboration with Retreat Farm founder Buzz Schmidt.

Administered by the Small Business Administration, the grant covered the building’s \$2.25 million acquisition and \$750,000 in infrastructure improvements and renovations.

According to a news release, GVCC “found it challenging to find an adequate space for both the retail store and the cut-and-wrap operation around Brattleboro, hence the move.”

Store Manager Sherry DiBernardo said that “Brattleboro has been a great community to have been a part of the past 11 years, and we are very appreciative of the support from the town and the local patrons.”

**Writing a new chapter**

The 2,300-square-foot space will now be the home of the Retreat Farm Market, set to open in June.

The market will be part of a new Food Center at Retreat Farm. According to a news release, the center will highlight “regional food producers dedicated to stewarding the land and their communities through environmental leadership, employee commitment, community giving, and workplace culture.”

Retreat Farm said it has drawn on expertise from a regional advisory committee and local partners to develop the museum-inspired retail concept and food center. Partners include the Brattleboro Food Co-op and Food Connects.

“We have an opportunity to invest in the success of the next

generation of farmers and local food-based businesses by working directly with emerging producers to showcase the good work they’re doing in our communities,” said Retreat Farm Executive Director Kristin Sullivan. “At the same time, we’ll help visitors understand their role in the food system [and] to make informed purchases that positively impact our local economy and culture.”

The market will continue cheese tastings while creating new experiences that connect visitors with featured producers, including cheese and beverage pairings, immersive chocolate-themed trail walks, and a weekend Fermentation Festival in September.

Visitors will also be able to view FinAllie Ferments — the Food Center’s inaugural tenant, which will create its line of fermented foods there — through viewing windows in the mezzanine of the retail space.

The 26,000 square foot factory space once used by GVCC will eventually feature a cheesemaker and a commercial kitchen, providing an opportunity for

emerging producers to do small batches and test limited-run products.

**Same cheese shop, new location**

Grafton Village Cheese CEO Curt Alpeter expressed his appreciation for the loyal following that DiBernardo and her cheesemonger team have built in Brattleboro.

“The company faced tough decisions after Covid, including the downsizing and streamlining of our operations,” Alpeter said. “Most of our cheese is now being produced at the main plant in Grafton. The move to the Okemo Valley is another piece of the restructuring and reversioning for the company.”

“I do hope for some kind of a retail presence again in Brattleboro,” he said.

The company plans a soft opening at its new location on Saturday, March 9, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Regular operations will continue seven days a week, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



VIEWPOINT

# Homelessness casts shadow over children

It is our responsibility to create the Emergency Shelter for Families with Children — space and programming at the Prouty Center that supports children and families in our community

**F**OUR YEARS AGO, the state of Vermont mustered the political will to offer shelter to all as the pandemic unfolded. The motel program was born and has continued to this day. It has been a game changer for many — an opportunity to have a reliable place to live amid uncertainty during a time when housing has been difficult to find even for those who can afford it.

The motel program has also created settings that are not ideal. Congregate shelter in privately owned businesses that are not required to provide supportive services has led to environments that are not always healthy for people, particularly children.

Issues ranging from having no safe place to play to witnessing overdoses highlight that motels are not appropriate for long-term support of optimal child development.

The housing supply did not magically fix itself during the pandemic, and as the state brings the motel program to a close, a lack of housing remains a barrier for people to transition to a more permanent, stable home.

HOMELESSNESS can cast a profound and detrimental shadow over the lives of children, leaving an indelible mark on their physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being.

Lack of stable housing disrupts foundational elements crucial for a child's development. Educational pursuits are hindered when relocations and inconsistent attendance impede academic progress. Perpetual instability breeds anxiety and

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

stress, jeopardizing mental health. Moreover, homelessness often forces children into cramped shelters or inadequate living conditions, exposing them to heightened health risks.

Insufficient access to nutrition and health care amplifies vulnerability to illnesses, stunting both physical growth and cognitive development.

The absence of a secure home environment deprives these children of a sense of safety and belonging, compromising their emotional resilience.

Socially, the stigma associated with homelessness further isolates these youngsters, fostering feelings of shame and alienation. This isolation may impede their ability to form meaningful relationships, hindering the development of crucial social skills.

As these children navigate the challenges of homelessness, they carry the weight of these experiences into adulthood, perpetuating a cycle of hardship.

Addressing child homelessness demands comprehensive efforts, encompassing affordable

■ SEE PROUTY, C2

ESSAY



Lindsay Richard, "Glowing Palms," from a series of hand studies made in Boston Common in 2012. Silver gelatin print, 3.5 in. × 4.5 in.

## LOOKING INWARD

*Ask yourself: How can I live now so that someday I will be proud of the reflection I see?*

East Dummerston

**I**N A SEA OF overwhelming threats to human life, I find myself equally as bewildered as the next person by the dilemma of "What can I do? I'm only one person."

But what if we as individuals *do* hold far more power to change the world than we've been led to believe?

We do. What makes us incredibly powerful is our sentience. We are not machines; we are living beings.

Sentience is defined as having the ability to feel, as having the capacity to experience positive and negative feelings — such as pleasure, joy, pain, and distress — which matter to the individual.

**LINDSAY RICHARD** describes herself on her website ([lindsayrichard.com](http://lindsayrichard.com)) as "many things, but to the formal art world [she is] a photographic artist."

What we have in common is our desire to live richly and our desire to love.

Artificial intelligence is a tool designed to sell things — great for capitalism, but bad for the heart.

A computer can follow a program and improve, so to speak, by recording popular inputs. It succeeds through catering to those collective desires, but it is not driven by the most influential life force: the will to create earnestly.

To do this honestly, our motivation

can't be to take advantage of others through destructive development disguised as progress. At our core, we naturally want others to succeed.

How do we do this? Support one another in pursuing whatever makes our individual hearts sing, so far as it doesn't harm others.

What has been lost in the face of increased danger and hate is that love and forgiveness is still one of the reactive choices available to us. This direction is quiet and soft; it is the path less traveled that we choose at the fork in the road we come upon when we think we are lost.

What if we are not as lost as we believe? What if this time, instead of

■ SEE LOOKING INWARD, C2

COLUMN

# Where are the state's priorities?



Vermont has declined to participate in a summer meal program like this one in 2015. RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/COMMONS FILE PHOTO

Vermont declined to sign on to a federal program to provide free or subsidized lunches to more than 20 million children in need of nutritional support. Can a policy decision that reduces child hunger be that hard?

**R**EMEMBER THE OUTCRY when we realized that prior Republican administrations, national and state, cared about children but only from conception to birth? It's looking like déjà vu all over again with millions of children in this wealthy country going hungry.

As *The New York Times* noted in a January article, more than eight million kids in 13 states are about to be denied a federal food assistance program meant to help families in need during the summer months when



**ELAYNE CLIFT** ([elayneclift.com](http://elayneclift.com)) has written this column about women, politics, and social issues from the earliest days of this newspaper.

school is out. States needed to opt into the program, one that had been approved by Congress with bipartisan support, by the start of this year.

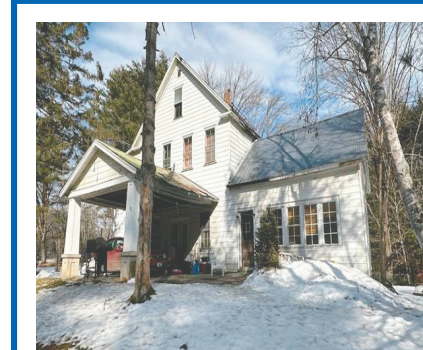
Thirty-five states, as well as U.S. territories and tribal

nations, signed onto the Agricultural Department program that would provide free or subsidized lunches to more than 20 million children in need of nutritional support. Twenty-two of them were led by Democratic governors and 13 by Republican governors.

The states that didn't sign on cited concerns about administrative costs; some had some weird ideological views or a lack of faith in the federal government.

This is happening in the face of a rapidly increasing poverty

■ SEE CHILD HUNGER, C2



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## Looking inward

FROM SECTION FRONT

grabbing the sword, we put it down?

OUR ADVERSE experiences, though we often wish to deny them, have taught us valuable lessons.

If we open our eyes to the fact that our darkest days often connect us to one another more than our brightest ones, we might actually stand a chance of getting through the collective grief we are suffering.

We make mistakes. At our best, we want to learn from them. Please allow for this within yourself and regard one another with more gentle hands. Remember that this life is all practice — we are all spirits searching, and we are all

growing through that process.

My suggestion is to get curious about your own grief and suffering and to sit with the fear that puts on your many masks as you learn to make acquaintances with the real you in the mirror.

You could begin by waving at yourself from a distance, and maybe someday you may even get close enough to look yourself in the eye.

Ask yourself: How can I live now so that someday I will be proud of the reflection I see?

When we like ourselves, we cannot be bought.

When we face hard things, we cannot be owned.

When we come together, we cannot be stopped.

## Prouty

FROM SECTION FRONT

housing initiatives, targeted support systems, and educational interventions.

By recognizing the pervasive impact of homelessness on children, society can strive toward creating a more equitable and compassionate future for the most vulnerable members of our community.

WHEN WE HEARD THAT the two former dormitories on the Winston Prouty Campus would become vacant due to a tenant relocation, we believed it would be important to explore the possibility of a family shelter that could provide a safe place for children.

In consultation with local partners, including the town of Brattleboro, Groundworks Collaborative, our Agency of Human Services field services director, and the state Office of Economic Opportunity, Winston Prouty has developed a plan to create a program to meet this need: the Emergency Shelter for Families with Children.

We feel it is our responsibility to create space and programming that supports children and families in our community when we can. This project has a limited scope, through June 2025, due to funding availability and to our plans to build 300 units of mixed income housing, hopefully starting in mid-2025.

The intention of the Emergency Shelter for Families with Children is to invite families experiencing homelessness the opportunity to join the Prouty Campus community and stay temporarily in one of two 5,000-square-foot buildings.

Intensive case management is a primary aspect of the program, with a focus on exploring barriers to housing and securing permanent housing for people.

The foundation of the shelter is that the environment will be safe for children.

Each building is a former dormitory and has approximately 10 rooms each, plus full kitchens, bathrooms with showers, and living room spaces. The shelter will be fully furnished.

The program will generally be able to temporarily house 40 people (up to 48 people, depending on family size and reasonable shared floor/facilities arrangements).

The campus includes access to outdoor play space, extensive hiking trails, green spaces, and the Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market, and it is near a shopping center with grocery, pharmacy, and banking services.

Winston Prouty provides a variety of services for children and families, and the campus is on the Monday-Saturday MOOver bus route. These elements contribute to conditions that are more likely to support optimal child development than would be possible in a motel.

OUR COMMUNITY faces complex challenges, and no single entity or organization is responsible for or is capable of addressing them singlehandedly. We must come together to develop strategies and implement solutions.

Winston Prouty is taking the lead on the shelter, just as we are exploring developing housing, but we cannot and are not doing it alone.

Support comes in many forms, from advice and technical assistance to financial resources, to feedback and words of encouragement, to collaborations and formal partnerships.

It will take all of us working together to build a thriving community, and we are grateful to contribute what we can.

## RESPONSE

# Seeking community through relationship

‘I will always aim to work toward bettering relationships as a human being among many beings, all of whom are my relatives. I strive for coexistence and affirmation, rather than disagreement and separation.’

Brattleboro OFFER THESE REMARKS ON behalf of the Vermont state-recognized Abenaki communities for whom I advocate, and that are involved in a protracted, unilateral, and disarming political challenge.

Whereas I speak as an individual, I recognize that I am only enabled to do so by being in community, a shared gift that I wish to uphold, rather than emphasizing difference and division.

I am not a part of the Canadian political process and no expert, but I try to stay apprised of some aspects of those activities to the North, since they have potential implications within what is now the border state of Vermont.

That Abenaki traditional homelands do not recognize the construct of a colonized border is where these concerns arise. What happens in Canada with federal First Nations law can have impacts in the United States, due to the asymmetrical fact that some communities there hold a federal-level

**RICH HOLSCHUH** is co-director of the *Atowi Project*, an *Elm Abenaki community initiative* “to affirm Native relationships to the Land and its inhabitants, raise Indigenous voices, and foster inclusion with understanding, in place,” according to the organization’s website ([atowi.org](http://atowi.org)). This piece is in response to “The Abenaki Nation has collective rights in their unceded homelands of Vermont” [Response, Feb. 21].

recognition status, while in the U.S. others do not.

This leads to disparities in many ways, which are not inherent but derive almost completely from the imposed, systemic political structure itself. Although it is the contemporary operative reality, it is not the values-based framework of relationship and responsibility to which I refer and aspire.

### CLARIFICATIONS:

I do not — at all — support the precepts that inform Canadian Bill C-53 or others of a similar trajectory, which affirm total federal jurisdiction over Native communities (whether there or in the U.S.). I do concur with the work

of Kahnawà:ke Mohawk political analyst Russ Diabo, who has amply contextualized this and many other passed and proposed legislative initiatives, by whatever party was in power at the time. Russ is quite clear on how the political scene is evolving and who is involved, and how, and why.

I also value Diabo’s strong statements about the Assembly of First Nations, when he says (for example): “The Election of this AFN National Chief [Cindy Woodhouse] marks the complete take-over of AFN by co-opted program Chiefs who are at Trudeau’s Re-Colonization Tables and the Woodhouse election marks the end of rights-based agenda, as AFN becomes another

federally controlled National Institution [...]”

It is my conviction that there are choices that can be made, and commonalities that can be found, that will begin to address the fundamental challenges of imposed colonized hegemony, qualified and limited access to enfranchisement, competition, and the resultant power politics that these bring.

I will always aim to work toward bettering relationships as a human being among many beings, all of whom are my relatives. I strive for coexistence and affirmation, rather than disagreement and separation.

I am the result of many ancestors, from many different places, as are we all, and in this light it is my conviction that our Mother requests that we honor our responsibilities to each other here and now, and amend our patterns of behavior.

I do not want to engage in argument and conflict, so I leave this here.

## Child hunger

FROM SECTION FRONT

rate in this country that has begun to affect not just the poor but the middle class, with housing and rental costs rising while housing assistance falls.

All of this affects struggling families, and their children, especially immigrant kids, a rapidly growing cohort who don’t deserve to go hungry.

It should also be noted that the WIC program, which helps women, infants, and children with supplemental nutrition, is at risk thanks to conservative members of Congress.

VERMONT, WHICH has a Republican governor, is one of the states that have declined to participate in the federal program. The state’s Department for Children and Families told *The New York Times* that the requirements for the federal program were “very detailed and expensive,” adding that it also wants to provide “this important summer nutrition benefit” next year, with the caveat that the state had the necessary funds to run the program and the technology to support it.

If that’s not talking out of both sides of the mouth, I don’t know what is.

According to **vermontpublic.org**, Vermont decided not to take part in the food assistance benefits of a program this year that U.S. Department of Agriculture calls “a tested and effective strategy for ending summer hunger” because of administrative costs, even though the federal government would pay for 100% of the cost of supporting families in the state — over \$3 million — that would be sent to Vermont families under the program.

But Miranda Gray, deputy commissioner of the Child Development Division of the Department of Children and Families, was upset that the USDA would cover only 50% of administrative costs. She did not cite what those costs might entail or the amount that would be required this year for half of the administrative costs.

Again, we heard political speak: “Vermont is very committed to doing this ... thoughtfully and correctly,” referring to an inadequate IT system and “budgetary pressure.”

NEEDLESS TO SAY, numerous advocates for children and nutrition assistance programs are

up in arms, although the organization Hunger Free Vermont backed the state’s decision not to participate in the program this summer, underscoring the poor technical infrastructure, and applauding employees who performed “heroically” during pandemic-era food assistance programs.

Hunger Free Vermont’s executive director, Anore Horton, declined to answer a few questions I sent her after she did not respond to a requested interview.

So, yeah — in hard times people with a conscience work hard. But where are the state’s priorities?

Have the governors who declined to participate in this federal program never looked in the eyes of hungry kids, anywhere? Have they ever been hungry themselves, even for a short time? As a *New York Times* columnist noted in a recent op-ed, “The cruelty of it is almost incomprehensible.”

According to charitable food organizations there has been a dramatic increase in demand for nutrition and food programs across the country. Many of the states that opted out of

this summer program have extremely high poverty rates and have also refused to extend Medicaid for the poor, further challenging the health status of children.

HERE’S THE fundamental question: Do we really care fervently about fetuses, but not living, breathing, hungry, and possibly sick children? Where is America’s conscience? Can a policy decision that reduces child hunger be that hard?

Has complacency overtaken compassion in this country rich in resources? (Building fewer weapons of war to send abroad could go a long way toward solving this particular problem.)

Do affluent politicians and policymakers find it that easy to look away from other people’s pain? Americans once worked hard to help win a war; can’t we do so again to win the war on poverty and hunger?

Where is the will of the nation to commit to the human rights of real children?

Just think about that when you put your own kids to bed with a full tummy night after night.

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SCAN HERE





RESPONSE

A leap from fear of change to demonization

'It is not the business of Windham-Windsor Housing Trust to solve Putney's problems with respect to policing, worsening mental health, the opioid epidemic, cavernous income disparity, crying needs for funding public education, roads, and fire and emergency services'

IN RESPONSE TO Mark Borax: Yes, Josh Laughlin was a co-owner of the Alice Holway property held by a consortium known as Gateway and sold to Windham-Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT). And yes, Josh Laughlin was on the Putney Selectboard, and yes, Josh Laughlin properly recused himself from any town business having to do with the Gateway/WWHT matter.

This simple, compelling, and entirely sufficient fact is not difficult to determine. Do your research, sir, and you would additionally discover that it was the Development and Review Board and the Planning Commission that were responsible for legally permitting this WWHT project.

Josh Laughlin did not sit on either one of these groups. WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, familiarize yourself with when and how it came to pass that Gateway came to form itself and acquire this piece of property on I-91, Route 5, and the entrance to the village of Putney.

Look around you, sir, and make note of so many Interstate exits and the kind of development that so often occurs there. Putney has a food co-op, the Yellow Barn Music School and Festival, a private residence, a senior housing project, a farmers market, and a community garden — so far — instead of a quick mart, a dollar store, a Dunkin Donuts.

All on land that was once a nationally known wildflower nursery. To vilify Gateway is to let no good deed go unpunished.

THE ASSUMPTION THAT anyone and everyone who might seek housing in any WWHT housing is "indigent, at-risk, homeless and poverty-stricken" is a blinkered response to a potential population, at best. Those labels make an assumption about people not yet arrived that sounds classist and phobic at worst.

Furthermore, none of those labels should be considered a negative — they are just a

LISA CHASE is a Putney resident. This piece is in response to "Anything but compassionate and responsible" [Viewpoint, Feb. 21].

neutral fact of all sorts of fellow citizens' lives that begs for amelioration.

But apart from that, the housing currently planned for Alice Holway Drive is a mixed-income project.

Go to the WWHT website (homemattershere.org) and do your research, sir.

YOU ARE CORRECT that zoning adjustments were made. These were made in duly warned public meetings. If the process was, in fact, illegal as this piece asserts, then the several court cases brought to expose it should have discovered it.

Should it be determined to be the case, we Putney residents must respect the findings of the law, as we must now in its current status.

If we don't like an outcome, we work to change the law — not defy or deny it.

THE COSTS FOR a housing project of this scale do seem astronomical. The financing for such endeavors is hard for the layperson to understand but by doing some research, this spider web of entities that work together to successfully underwrite projects of this scope can be understood — and in the process one can learn to appreciate the darker sides of "uncompassionate" capitalism.

Take this up with your state and federal legislators, and until they have clarified, unwound, cleaned up, and "fixed" this money-changing quagmire, do not lay this spider web at WWHT's feet.

The WWHT is working within the existing system, as it are charged to do. If there are "billion dollar corporations" getting richer, as you say, you should name those entities and not turn your criticisms into a flawed ad hominem attack on a nonprofit housing trust.

AS TO THE COSTS — if you had to build the home you yourself live in now, whatever it is — could you do it? You would be unhappily surprised at how much it costs to raise any building today.

More research might lead you to an article in Seven Days that came out in September that estimates the cost to build a modest apartment or small home at \$500,000. This puts this WWHT project in line with the average cost to build in Vermont.

Yes, beyond belief, but believe it.

THE DELAYS VISITED on the current project on Alice Holway Drive in Putney have already

raised the costs for this project by millions of dollars.

The need for housing across the socioeconomic spectrum has only grown.

IT IS NOT the business of WWHT to solve our town's problems with respect to policing, worsening mental health, the opioid epidemic, cavernous income disparity, crying needs for funding public education, roads, and fire and emergency services. The charge for WWHT is to finance and build affordable housing, which it has been doing for decades.

It is our job to wrestle with all of the contingent problems of social and cultural issues, in any way we can, big or small.

Join a town committee, run for something, volunteer on the fire department, if you have a skill they could use. Work to fix root causes.

ANY OF US who has ever rented has doubtless rarely loved our landlord. Without our landlords, what would we rent? Is this a "love it or leave it" challenge?

Maybe. If there were more housing stock, folks could pick and choose.

FINALLY: This Viewpoint is similar to others that appear here every few months. They are surprisingly the same. They are leaky vessels — their arguments do not hold water. They

reveal a fear of change that reverts to demonization and seeks an "enemy." This fear response is at the root of all "-isms."

Putney is a pretty diverse town — the socioeconomic spectrum is already here. By all means, make room in your own backyard for a tenant if you can make the money work out. What's not to applaud about the progressive legislation this state offers to encourage this? And hats off to you for mentioning solutions!

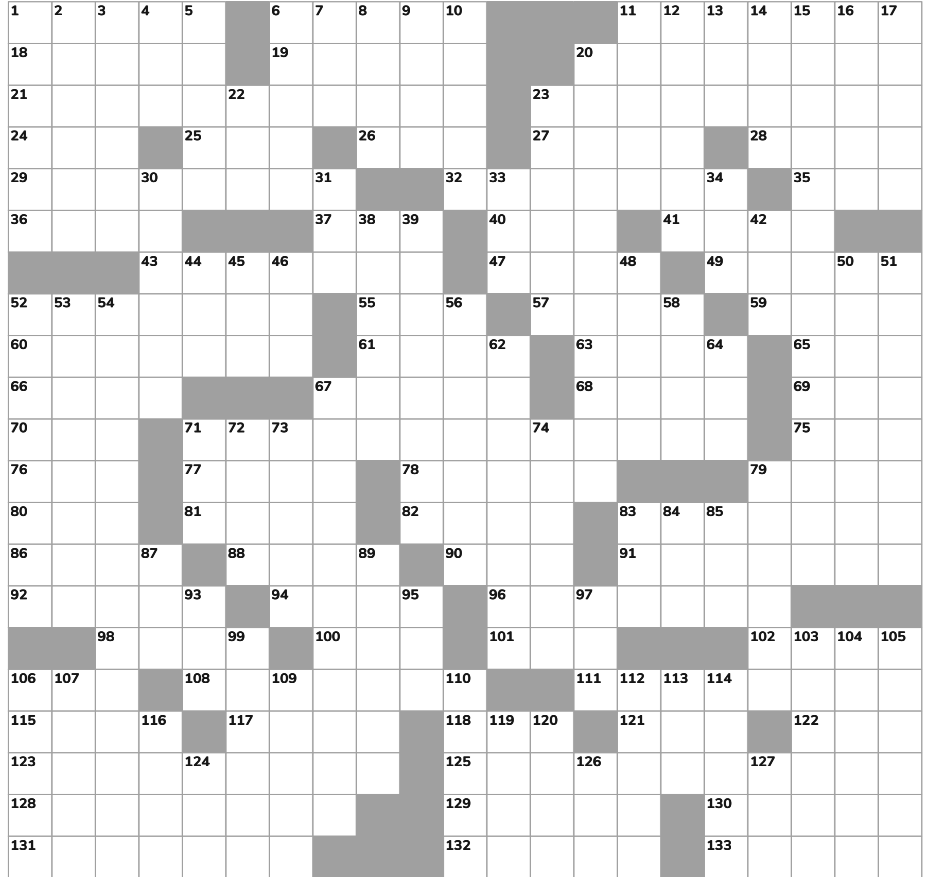
Can we assume that you will find an "indigent, at-risk, homeless, or poverty-stricken" individual who does not inspire fear in you to compassionately house?

BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"Scare Quotes"

Across

- 1. Taken \_\_ (surprised)
6. Poppy drug
11. Painters and sculptors, e.g.
18. Plane tracker
19. Clergyman's residence
20. "We Built This City" band
21. "Writing about the unholy is one way of writing about what is sacred"
23. US border
24. "\_\_ be pretty hard to beat"
25. Chess pieces
26. \_\_ Lanka
27. Go soft, as butter
28. Comic Johnson
29. "The most suspenseful part of a horror story is before, not after, the horror appears"
32. Wrestler born Paul Levesque
35. Trip provider
36. Canadian petrol name
37. Domingo, for one
40. Nonspecific extreme
41. Shower affection (on)
43. Just a few
47. The Beatles played it on 8/15/65
49. Lovers' meeting
52. Tossed about
55. Ring sparkler
57. Brief moment
59. Almost closed
60. Alpine abodes
61. Supersonic unit
63. Opening part
65. Pediatrician's grp.
66. Fighting squad
67. Tennis star Sakkari
68. Vegetating
69. It might be full of beans
70. Metrod platform
71. "Even in the grave, all is not lost"
75. Units of vol.
76. Department head?
77. Sullen
78. Soccer coach Berhalter
79. "Yeah, right!"
80. Cool and distant
81. Fourth of an EGOT
82. Chaplin on TV
83. Passing motion?
86. Santa's bag
88. Assorted: Abbr.
90. Nevertheless
91. Queen of Henry II
92. Patriots owner Robert
94. Comparative connector
96. "Search Party" actress Alia
98. Busted some rhymes
100. Span named after presidents
101. Dejected
102. "Guns" at the gym
106. Turnstile box
108. Stud's spot
111. "The only pain in pleasure is the pleasure of the pain"
115. Arcing shots
117. "That's a lie"
118. Laptop scanners?: Abbr.
121. Sushi roll fish
122. Moving vehicle
123. Openers for documents
125. "From even the greatest of horrors, irony is seldom absent"
128. Leona or Harry of New York City real estate
129. French school
130. Gmail abstainer, perhaps



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- 131. Maintained
132. "It's \_\_ than you think!"
133. Parker of movies

Down

- 1. Prince Harry's son
2. Haymakers?
3. Sneaker brand
4. Cleveland pro
5. Krispy \_\_
6. Arabian peninsula resident
7. The usual
8. Cartoonist's supplies
9. Computer operator
10. Word with system or badge
11. Even a little
12. Informed, with (on)
13. Turin trio
14. Any of las Filipinas
15. "I delight in what I fear"
16. Colorizes
17. Go to 100, say
20. "The scariest moment is always just before you start"
22. Blackpool beer, briefly
23. Metal forgers
24. Without friends
31. Confidentiality contract, in short
33. Health care pros
34. Smoking
38. Director Bergman
39. 365 days in the past
42. \_\_-la-la
44. Be in the red
45. Asian lunar holiday
46. Health care pros
48. Supermarket in a John Updike story
50. Geo. Bush nominee
51. Bank action
52. Microsoft diagnostic that looks for and repairs system files
53. Like a large garage
54. "The best spells are the

- ones you write yourself"
56. Golfer Rory
58. "Marco!" response
62. Vigor
64. Royal jelly maker
67. "If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear!"
71. ATL summer hrs.
72. Pessimist's projection
73. "Give 'er some gas!"
74. Christie of mystery
79. Online incarnation
83. Bow wood
84. Lodge member
85. Yacht's spot
87. Colonel's business
89. Songs that pop up on Black Friday
93. A driver might hit it

- 95. Arrest
97. Oklahoma city
99. What dilettantes do
103. Red Sox and Yankees, e.g.
104. Security software company
105. Military guard
106. A, as in Aristotle
107. Gourmet mushroom
109. Held power
110. Lucy's landlady
112. "In your dreams, pal!"
113. Born this way?
114. "Free Solo" peak, for short
116. "I agree"
119. Adoption agcy.?
120. Very much
124. Chop suey additive
126. Fútbol cheer
127. Ouz marsupial

Last issue's solution

"B Movies"



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Be Sure To Check Our Full Program Schedule @ brattleborotv.org. LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS. Feb. 26-March 3. CHANNEL 1078 CHANNEL 1079. PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS! Here We Are - Liv Berelson, Community Asylum Seekers Project (CASP), Director: Mon 8p, Tues 12:40p, Wed 9p, Thurs 1:15p, Fri 9:30p, Sat 12:15p, Sun 5:15p. The World Fusion Show - Ep# 172 - Payton MacDonald: Mon 5:30p, Tues 9a, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 7:30a, Sat 2p, Sun 6p. Harris Hill Ski Jump 2024 - Saturday: Mon 1p, Wed 9p, Sat 9a. Harris Hill Ski Jump 2024 - Sunday: Tues 8p, Thurs 2p, Sat 8p. Mitchell Giddings Fine Arts - Masterworks: The Inside Story with Dan Weiden: Tues 3:15p, Wed 12:40p, Thurs 9:45p, Fri 4:30p, Sat 5:30a, Sun 6:30p. Couch Potato Productions - Dummerston Historical Society Remembers Dr. Grace W. Burnett: Tues 10a, Wed 4p, Thurs 9:30a, Fri 3p, Sat 5:30p, Sun 8p. At BMAC - Artist Conversation: Fawn Krieger, David B. Smith with Wendy Vogel: Mon 10a, Fri 1p, Sat 2:30p, Sun 9:30a. Root Social Justice Center - Families United Meeting 1/26/24: Mon 5:30a, Sun 12:30p. Couch Potato Productions - Abenaki Forum 1/21/24: Fri 10a. Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Fennell: Mon 9a, Tues 5p, Thurs 11a, Sat 7p. Vermontitude - Weekly Episode: Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sat 12p, Sun 5p. News Block: WTSN News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p. Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p. BUHS-TV News: Mon-Fri 12:20p & 6:40p. St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service: Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a, Sun 11a. Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service: Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 3p. Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service: Wed 6:30a, Fri 8p, Sun 8a. St. Michael's Catholic Church - Mass: Sat 4p (LIVE), Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p. Note: Schedule subject to change. View full schedule and watch online at brattleboroTV.org. Brattleboro Community Television - 257-0888.

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**COLUMN** | Sports Roundup

# Bears fall short in bid for another state bowling title

The Brattleboro bowling team was unable to repeat as state bowling champions, as the third-seeded Bears were defeated by No. 2 South Burlington, 4-2, in the quarterfinal round of the state championship tournament on March 2 at Spare Time Lanes in Colchester.

While bowlers Thomas Bell, Charlie Forthofer, Austin Pinette, and Alyssa St. Louis all competed in the individual state tournament on Feb. 24 and got a taste of the high pressure that comes with going against the top bowlers in the state, Bears coach Will Bassett said the Baker format used in the team tournament is entirely different.

The Baker format has five bowlers each bowling two frames of a game. During the regular season, it is used at the end of matches to decide which team can win a best-of-three series. In the state tournament, it's best-of-seven, which puts an emphasis on staying focused through a long day of bowling. Last year, for example, it took 20 games for Brattleboro to win its title.

Bassett said Bell, this season's state individual champion, along with Forthofer, Pinette, St. Louis, and Cayden Gilson were the starters, with Nick Carnes, and Taylor Jillson used as substitutes throughout the matches.

Against South Burlington, Bassett said Brattleboro lost its first two quarterfinal matches, 160-166 and 147-178. The Bears then won their next two matches 178-168 and 215-119, but lost the next two, 147-192 and 119-182.

Randolph, which was the top ranked team in Vermont for most of the season, swept South Burlington in the finals, winning by scores of 168-163, 194-163, 215-124, and 202-154 to capture their first state bowling title.

Bell and Forthofer were the only bowlers who returned from last year's championship team to bowl this season, but the experience that the younger bowlers received will only help for the 2024-25 season.

## Bears defeated in boys' hockey playoffs

On a dark and stormy night, Withington Rink was packed on Feb. 28 to see the fourth-seeded Brattleboro Bears take on the fifth-seeded Mt. Mansfield Cougars in a Division I quarterfinal. But being on home ice in front of hundreds of raucous supporters wasn't enough as the Bears gave up five unanswered goals and lost to the Cougars, 5-2.

The first period was scoreless, thanks to great goaltending by Brattleboro's James Fagley and Mt. Mansfield's Lucas Parisi. The Bears then took a 1-0 lead with 8:04 left in the second period on a goal from Andy Cay, with Henry Schwartz and Evan Wright credited with assists.

Unfortunately, the joy of that goal lasted just six seconds. That's how long it took for Mt. Mansfield's Owen Labor to score the equalizer, an unassisted goal that came immediately after the faceoff that

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followed Cay's goal.

The Bears tried to regain the lead, but Mt. Mansfield's Alexandre Romanko scored a pair of goals to help his team seize the momentum. The go-ahead goal came with 4:14 left in the second period, assisted by Owen Jones. Romanko's second tally came with 45.3 seconds to go, assisted by Jones and Garret Carter.

Trailing 3-1 heading into the final period, the Bears still had a chance, but Jones snuffed it out with a goal just 16 seconds after the opening face-off of the period. Romanko and Carter assisted on the goal. Carter then got the Cougars' fifth unanswered goal with 12:18 to play, assisted by Finn Heney and Gavin Cowan.

Wright scored the Bears' second goal with 12:05 left, assisted by Cay and Alex Dick, but it was too little, too late.

The remainder of the game saw the Bears kill off four penalties as their frustration grew as the clock ticked down to the end of their season. Fagley finished with 33 saves, while Parisi made 16 saves. The Cougars did not get whistled for a penalty, while Brattleboro had a total of five.

It was a frustrating loss, but it doesn't diminish the work the Bears did to get into the position of having a home playoff game. Shorthanded and inexperienced, Bears head coach Eric Libardoni and his staff did a heroic job getting the team focused and playing hard in the second half of the season after a 1-5-1 start. Libardoni's coaching peers recognized that accomplishment by naming him the Division II Coach of the Year.

Wright was named as the Division II Player of the Year, and defenseman Ryan Lonergan (third team) and Will Miskovich (honorable mention) were also honored. Even though Brattleboro was in the Division I tournament, they mostly played Division II teams, hence the awards for the Bears in that division.

The 11-7-3 Bears will lose just three players to graduation — Fagley, Miskovich, and forward Dylan Sparks. If the core of this season's team, led by juniors Wright and Cay, return for next season, Brattleboro will have a solid foundation for future success on the ice.

## Girls' basketball playoffs

Bellows Falls came oh-so-close to a trip to the Barre Auditorium, but Sierra Derby scored with two seconds left in regulation to give the third-seeded Richford Rockets a 40-38 win over the sixth-seeded Terriers in a Division III quarterfinal game on March 2.

Both teams showed great



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO

Brattleboro's Thomas Bell, center, led the pre-game huddle before the Bears final home match at Brattleboro Bowl on Feb. 17. The Bears lost in the quarterfinal round of the state bowling championship on March 2 in Colchester.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT THE COMMONS

Brattleboro's Andy Cay celebrates after scoring in the second period of their playoff game against Mount Mansfield on Feb. 28 at Withington Rink. Mount Mansfield went on to win the game, 5-2.

intensity on defense as the first quarter ended in an 8-8 tie. The Rockets then opened the second quarter with a 9-0 run and took a 22-15 lead into halftime.

BF kept up the defensive pressure in the third quarter and trimmed the Rockets' lead to 28-22 heading into the fourth. A pair of three-pointers by Abby Nystrom gave the Terriers their first lead in the game, 35-33, midway through the fourth quarter, but a Derby basket tied the game with two minutes to play. The teams took turns holding the lead until Derby's game-winning basket settled the matter.

Richford was led by Kyrielle Deuso with 21 points and Derby with 13. Nystrom led Bellows Falls with 16 points and Delaney Lockerby added 11 points.

BF got its trip to Richford thanks to a 41-32 win over No. 11 Green Mountain in a first-round game on Feb. 28 at Holland Gymnasium. Defense was the key to the win, along with solid play by Nystrom and Laura Kamel on offense. The Terriers led 22-14 at the half and started the third quarter with a 12-1 run to quash any hopes of a GM rally. Kamel led the Terriers with 15 points, while Nystrom added 10 to give BF its first playoff win since 2020.

The Terriers finished their first season with head coach James Pecsok with a 15-7 record. BF will lose Lockerby, Eryn Ross, Riley Haskell, Tela Hart, and Aliyah Farmer to graduation.

Brattleboro won six of their last nine regular season games to finish with an 11-9 record, but it was not enough to ensure a home playoff game. As a result, the No. 9 Bears took the long bus ride to Jericho on

a trip to West Rutland to take on the second-seeded Golden Horde in the quarterfinals on March 1. The Horde punched their ticket for their 17th straight appearance in the semifinals at the Barre Auditorium with a 71-27 rout of the Rebels.

West Rutland's Peyton Guay had 27 points, 13 rebounds, and seven steals, while Kennah Wright-Chapman scored 16 points and Hayley Raiche had nine points, nine rebounds, and four steals. The Horde raced out to 23-5 lead at the end of the first quarter. The Rebels steadied themselves defensively and held the Horde to just 14 points in the second quarter, but West Rutland was even better on defense as they held a 37-10 lead at halftime. The Rebels simply could not deal with the Horde's scoring depth, or their press defense.

Parker led the Rebels with 10 points as Leland & Gray finished the season at 11-12. They will lose Parker, Sanderson, and Kianelise Pena to graduation, but the Rebels have Morse and Emerson coming back to lead the way next season.

Third-seeded Arlington took care of No. 14 Twin Valley, 43-22, in their Division IV first-round game on Feb. 28. The Wildcats finished their season with a 2-19 record, and will have this season's entire roster returning for next season.

## Bears do well in state Nordic meets

The Brattleboro boys finished fourth, while the girls took fifth place in the Division I state Nordic skiing championships last week.

In the freestyle event on Feb. 27 at at Rikert Outdoor Center in Ripton, Katherine Normandeau led the Brattleboro girls with a 19th place finish in 25 minutes, 38 seconds. Maeve Bald was 26th in 26:40.5, followed by Maayan Coleman (34th, 28:02.0), Priya Kitzmiller (41st (29:28.6), and Addison DeVault (53rd, 32:03.1). The relay team of Normandeau, Bald, Coleman, and Kitzmiller finished sixth in 56:34.4.

The Brattleboro boys were led by Gabriele Jeppesen-Belleci (11th, 21:15.4), Nico Conathan-Leach (14th, 22:18.1), Willow Sharma (17th, 22:28.1), Oliver Herrick (23rd, 23:00.2), Desmond Longsmith (34th, 24:18.1), Eben Wagner (41st, 24:59.1), and Galen Fogerty (65th, 27:26.6). The relay team of Jeppesen-Belleci, Herrick, Sharma, and Conathan-Leach finished fourth in 41:49.5.

In the classic races on March 1 at Craftsbury Outdoor Center, Normandeau finished 19th in 25:38.0, followed by Bald (25th, 26:40.5), Coleman (28:02.0), Kitzmiller (39th, 29:28.6), and DeVault (50th, 32:01.1). The relay team of Normandeau,

Bald, Coleman, and Kitzmiller finished sixth in 56:34.4.

Jeppesen-Belleci led the Brattleboro boys with an 11th place finish in 21:15.4. Conathan-Leach was 14th in 22:18.1, followed by Sharma (17th, 22:28.1), Herrick (23rd, 23:00.2), Longsmith (32nd, 24:18.1), Wagner (37th, 24:59), and Fogarty (58th, 27:26.6). The relay team of Jeppesen-Belleci, Herrick, Sharma, and Conathan-Leach finished fourth in 41:49.5.

Champlain Valley won the Division I girls' championship, while Mount Mansfield was the boys' Division I champion.

## Brattleboro Little League to hold sign-ups for 2024 season

Brattleboro Little League will hold registration for the 2024 season on March 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, and 21, from 4 to 6 p.m. each day, at American Legion Post 5 on Linden Street.

Registration is open to boys and girls from the following towns: Brattleboro, Guilford, Vernon, Putney, Dummerston, Newfane, Townshend, Marlboro, Dover, Wilmington, Wardsboro, and Halifax, as well as Chesterfield, Spofford and Hinsdale, New Hampshire. The registration fee is \$70, and scholarships are available.

## Senior bowling roundup

Week 9 of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on Feb. 29 saw first place High Rollers (29-11) go 0-5 yet still maintain a five-game lead on Four Seasons (24-21), which went 5-0 to move into second place. There is a three-way tie for third between Good Times, Stepping Stones II, and Stayin' Alive (all 23-22), followed by Four Pins (18-27), Hairiers (17-28), and Slow Movers (11-34).

Debbie Rittenhour had the women's high handicap game (233) and series (663), while John Walker had the men's high handicap game (256) and Stan Kolpa had the high handicap series (678). Stayin' Alive had the high team handicap game (863) and series (2,516).

Walker had the men's high scratch series (618) and game (244). Peter Deyo had a 555 series with a 198 game, Jerry Dunham had a 521 series with a 191 game, and Wayne Randall had a 510 series. Robert Rigby had a 507 series with a 212 game, Rick Westcott had a 506 series, Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 503 series, Fred Ashworth had a 501 series with a 193 game, and Gary Montgomery had a 211 game.

Diane Cooke had the women's high scratch series (458) and game (169). She also had a 161 game. Debbie Kolpa rolled a 162 game.

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