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## ‘We need more housing that’s more affordable for people who need it’

According to a new book discussed at an online forum hosted by State Treasurer Michael Pieciak, tight housing markets and high rents lead to soaring rates of homelessness

By Joyce Marcel  
The Commons

Why are millions of people living on the streets of the wealthiest nation on Earth?

That is the question that Gregg Colburn, an assistant professor at the University of Washington, along with data scientist and policy analyst Clayton Page Aldern, tried to discover in their book, *Homelessness Is a Housing Problem: How Structural Factors Explain U.S. Patterns*, published in March by the University of California Press.

Colburn was the guest at an online policy forum held by

State Treasurer Michael Pieciak on July 24.

The seminar was attended by approximately 280 people from around the state as well as representatives from the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, Pathways Vermont, Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, and Recovery Vermont.

Pieciak began the 90-minute seminar by pointing out that homelessness is one of the most important — and most intransigent — problems facing Vermont today.

“About six months ago, when I came into the office of treasurer, we had identified the shortage of housing as our number one economic issue,” he said.

“We expanded our local investment program to \$85 million of monies that were available for economic development and job creation. And we prioritized housing as the number one thing that could do both of those items — expand economic development and grow jobs.”

At the same time, the shortage of housing is not only an economic issue, Pieciak said.

“It clearly is exacerbating social issues that we’re experiencing in our state,” he said — in “a whole variety of ways,” like homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorder.

Pieciak first heard Colburn speak on public radio while he was driving. He immediately

bought the book.

“Within a few minutes, I said, ‘We need to make sure we can get Professor Colburn to Vermont so he can share his research and his data with us,’” Pieciak said. “Everything that he talked about in his book really was so applicable to the challenges that we’re facing here in Vermont.”

### Root causes

The fundamental question that Colburn and Aldern pose in their book is why the rate of homelessness varies so widely throughout the United States.

Their conclusion is in the book title.

“Tight housing markets, where housing is expensive and



State Treasurer Mike Pieciak and scholar Gregg Colburn, co-author of the book *Homelessness Is a Housing Problem*, discuss the root causes of homelessness in Vermont and throughout the United States.

where it’s scarce, produce high rates of homelessness,” Colburn said. “And I joke that no one’s gonna give us a Nobel Prize for this. This is not groundbreaking. We’ve known this for 25 years in the United States. But for whatever reason, we have been really reluctant to embrace this explanation.”

Colburn shot down the many explanations people give for other people’s homelessness.

First, he said, people like to

blame individual problems. Drug addiction and mental illness are almost always the first things mentioned.

“There’s some variation in rates of mental illness and drug use throughout the United States,” Colburn said. “But it bears no relationship whatsoever to rates of homelessness. It’s basically just a flatline. There are people using drugs and people who are mentally ill in every

■ SEE HOMELESSNESS, A2

## How will the ‘Flood of 2023’ rank in history — and does it foretell the future?

The storm was no match for Vermont’s “Great Flood of 1927,” a 36-hour deluge would have damaged up to \$4 billion in property today. But the latest rainfall could be a sign of things to come.

By Kevin O’Connor  
VTDigger

The good news: This month’s statewide storm was no match for Vermont’s “Great Flood of 1927,” a 36-hour downpour that economists estimate would have damaged up to \$4 billion in property today.

And the bad: Although officials are still tallying the impact of the most recent deluge, the collective cost could rival 2011’s Tropical Storm Irene — and be a sign of things to come, according to a recently-released national study.

“Make no mistake, the devastation and flooding we’re experiencing across Vermont is historic and catastrophic,” Gov. Phil Scott said in July of water that resulted in one confirmed fatality as well as road and business closures from Albany, Barton and Craftsbury in the Northeast Kingdom to Wardsboro, Weathersfield, and Weston in southern Vermont.

Many Vermonters may judge the present destruction against that of past natural disasters.

The Flood of 1927 remains the worst, having killed 84 people, while Irene claimed seven lives, state records show. But experts fear the toll of future storms could be worse.

A newly published study by national researchers at the non-partisan, nonprofit First Street Foundation has found the number of Vermont properties at flood risk is three times as many as what the Federal Emergency Management Agency considers the figure to be for 1-in-100-year events.

In the state capital of Montpelier and surrounding Washington County, for example, formerly once-a-century floods are now considered to be 1-in-62-year events, the foundation is set to report on its website Risk Factor. The study also raises the region’s total of high-risk properties from 1,400 as categorized federally to more than 4,700.

“In environmental engineering, there is a concept called stationarity, which assumes that today is going to be like yesterday, and tomorrow is going to be like yesterday,” Dr. Ed Kearns, the foundation’s chief data officer, said in a statement. “This concept used to work, but with a changing environment it’s a poor assumption and no longer does.”

■ SEE FLOOD IN HISTORY, A6



Two Golden Cross ambulances are parked in front of the Central Fire Station on Elliot Street in Brattleboro.

## Brattleboro honing in on costs to provide EMS on its own



Brattleboro Fire Chief Leonard Howard III, left, and assistant Fire Chief Charles Keir III speak at a public meeting in April 2022 that first laid out plans for the town taking over responsibility for emergency medical services.

### Final public forum expected in September before Selectboard chooses a future path

By Virginia Ray  
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Although costs are becoming more sharply focused as the town continues to explore supplying fire and emergency services in future, there’s still much more to know.

The Selectboard heard a fourth informational report regarding what is being called the Fire/EMS Transition Project at its July 25 meeting, which focused on what a fully municipal service model

contracted services model might look like.

“We have a long way to go,” said Selectboard member Peter Case, pointing out again that the board is simply receiving information to consider.

After parting ways with long-time provider Rescue Inc. in 2022, the Selectboard directed the administration on March 21 to pursue parallel tracks of information gathering, cost analysis, and risk assessment necessary to

■ SEE TOWN EMS STUDY, A3

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## The Commons

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Mia Gannon

## Homelessness

jurisdiction around the nation.”

Therefore, he continued, “the high rates of homelessness in Seattle, Washington, Oregon, and California are not a function of more people who are experiencing mental illness and more people who are addicted.”

Experiencing racism, struggling with joblessness, running from a violent home life, moving on from divorce, wearing out the couch surfing welcome, or fighting with a roommate — all are other reasons on which homelessness gets blamed.

“Each of these circumstances certainly lead to someone experiencing homelessness,” Colburn said. “But think about this at a more structural level.”

In terms of the situation writ large, it “turns out it’s not true,” he said. “It’s not an accurate explanation.”

Often, people say that having a generous social service environment — free meals, shelters, etc. — draws homeless people from other communities.

Wrong, Colburn said. “We don’t find any evidence of a mobility argument, despite the fact that we hear this over and over and over and over.”

“I’ve never been in a community that doesn’t believe that

they’re a magnet for homelessness,” Colburn continued.

“We don’t see any evidence that people are moving to jurisdictions based on generous benefits,” he said. “We don’t see people congregating in places like San Francisco saying, ‘Boy, Iowa looks pretty nice. Let’s go to Iowa.’”

Why aren’t people moving to Iowa? Because moving is difficult in the best of circumstances.

“If you’re at the end of your rope, you have no resources, and you don’t have a job, are you really going to move?” Colburn asked. “We don’t see evidence of that.”

He added that California just came up with a huge study that demonstrated that 90% of their homeless population are people from California, and 75% of the people “were actually in the exact same county that they had been when they were previously housed.”

Colburn used the analogy of a game of musical chairs in which one of the players is on crutches.

As the number of chairs decreases, the loser is likely going to be the one with the disability.

The answer is to start with enough chairs, he said.

“When we have a scarcity of

FROM SECTION FRONT

chairs, what happens is it accentuates vulnerability,” Colburn said. “And this is exactly what’s happening in many jurisdictions around the nation, including the state of Vermont.”

When there’s insufficient housing or when housing is difficult to access, “the people who are most likely to lose that game — the need for housing — are people who are vulnerable,” he said.

“And these individual vulnerabilities that get a lot of time and attention are really just the sorting mechanism,” Colburn said. “That’s the mechanism by which we identify the people who are most likely to lose the game when we don’t have enough housing.”

### What accounts for the variation?

To prove his point, Colburn cited affluent cities like Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, which have approximately five times the per capita homelessness of cities like Indianapolis, Detroit, Cleveland, and Chicago.

“There’s huge variation,” Colburn said. “We’re not talking about 20% or 30%. It’s a massive, massive variation.”

When rates of poverty are high, homelessness tends to be low — “which is very confusing, because poverty causes homelessness,” he said. “Yet some of the highest poverty places in the country, like Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, etc., have relatively low rates of homelessness. So homelessness thrives amidst affluence. It doesn’t thrive in poverty, which is a head scratcher.”

Race is not a sufficient explanation for these widely divergent rates of homelessness.

“Black, brown, and indigenous people are three to four times over-represented in the homeless population,” Colburn said. “What’s interesting is that the demographic composition of the community doesn’t explain rates of homelessness. Chicago, for example, has a much higher Black population than does Seattle, yet has much lower rates of homelessness.”

It is racism, rather than race, that accounts for higher rates of homelessness, he said.

“Systemic discrimination across multiple systems, education, housing, criminal justice, etc., produce these disproportionate outcomes, and those exist in all jurisdictions around the United States,” Colburn said.

And don’t go blaming Mother Nature, either.

“People will say, ‘Well, of

*If you are vulnerable in a state with a 2.4% vacancy rate, there’s nowhere to go. If your car breaks down, if you’ve missed a job interview, if you lose your job — whatever happens — there is very, very little margin for error. And I think that’s exactly why Vermont is struggling with this crisis.*

—Gregg Colburn

course, San Diego and L.A. have high rates of homelessness because their weather is very moderate,” Colburn said. “And that’s true. It’s much more pleasant there in January than it is in Chicago. But the point is, there’s no relationship whatsoever.”

Each January, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development counts the homeless population and rates of homelessness in the Point-in-Time Count, a census of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness.

“The narrative fits when you think about L.A. and Chicago, but then you ignore Boston and New York, which are unpleasant in January and have very high rates of homelessness. And then there are places like Miami and Dallas and San Antonio which have relatively low rates and are warm in January.”

Should you blame politics? “People frequently blame Democrats for homelessness, because homelessness tends to be high in Democratic cities,” Colburn said.

That, he said, is a true statement — but that’s because Democrats overwhelmingly run cities in United States.

“Miami and San Diego briefly had Republican mayors, and Michael Bloomberg, when he was mayor of New York, was an independent. But otherwise, it’s Democrats,” Colburn said.

“Democrats certainly aren’t blameless in this — I’m not suggesting that they are,” he continued. “But if we want to blame Democrats, we need to be intellectually honest and say, ‘Well, then why haven’t Democrats produced a huge homelessness crisis in Chicago and Cleveland?’ Democrats have been running those cities for longer than I’ve been alive.”

And in Vermont?

“Vermont blew me away,” Colburn said. “It should not be a surprise as to why you have the second-highest per capita rate of homelessness on a statewide basis in the United States, next to California. Housing market conditions really, really matter.”

### ‘Housing market conditions really, really matter’

Colburn’s key answer to why some places — Vermont and California are at the top of the list — have more homelessness than others is the lack of affordable housing stock.

Homelessness tends to be high when rents are high or when vacancy rates are low.

“And when people push back on this for me, I’ll just say, ‘Give me a city in United States that has really high rents and low vacancies that doesn’t have a problem with homelessness,’” Colburn said. “And then I get a blank stare. And I’ll say, ‘I’ll save you the effort here. There isn’t one.’”

Put another way: “There’s not a place with 10% vacancy and \$800 rents that has a massive problem with homelessness,” he said. “Why? Because housing is affordable and accessible. If you are a community, if you’re a state that is seeing very low vacancy rates and rents that are continuing to incline, it should not surprise you if you have a growing problem of homelessness.”

The situation is only worsening, Colburn warned.

“I’ve been in the South a lot, in booming cities like Raleigh, Orlando, Charlotte, and Louisville,” he said. “These are places that generally have not had huge problems with homelessness.”

But over the past two decades people have been moving to the Sunbelt, and in those cities, “their vacancy rates are going down, rents are going up, and they’re starting to see a problem.”

And in Vermont?

“Vermont blew me away,” Colburn said. “It should not be a surprise as to why you have the second-highest per capita rate of homelessness on a statewide basis in the United States, next to California. Housing market conditions really, really matter.”

It will take real effort to change the picture in Vermont, he said.

“The reality is, there are people who are vulnerable in every state in the nation,” Colburn said. “But if you are vulnerable in a state with a 2.4% vacancy rate, there’s nowhere to go. If your car breaks down, if you’ve missed a job interview, if you lose your job — whatever happens — there is very, very little margin for error. And I think that’s exactly why Vermont is struggling with this crisis.”

Vermont lacks “supply elasticity,” Colburn said. It is difficult to build new housing stock here.

“Topography has a big impact on that — mountains and water and the regulatory environment,” Colburn said. “What we have to do as a nation, as states, as local jurisdictions, is to have capital investments to construct housing.”

“We need more housing that’s more affordable for people who need it. And otherwise, if we continue to just fund these crisis responses, we will not stop the flow of people into the crisis of homelessness, and these crisis response systems are bursting at the seams.”

Pieciak asked Colburn what he says to people who say that constructing new housing is expensive.

“You know what is also really expensive?” Colburn said. “Untreated homelessness.”

The reason why it’s sometimes hard to understand the huge costs of homelessness, he said, “is because they’re distributed through a variety of different systems. You could think about the emergency health system, or about [emergency] rooms that are that are providing basic health coverage to people experiencing homelessness. Think about streets and sanitation, public health, libraries, police and fire.”

The point is that “all of these systems have huge costs associated with homelessness,” Colburn said. “When you add them up — and a variety of research has done this — what we see is that homelessness is hugely expensive.”

For more information on Colburn and his book, visit [homelessnesshousingproblem.com](http://homelessnesshousingproblem.com). To view the online forum, visit [bit.ly/725-homelessness](http://bit.ly/725-homelessness).



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## Town EMS study

develop a preferred alternative model for fire and emergency medical service delivery.

The board has set the goal of choosing a clear path in September, following a final public forum on the issue, when options and costs have been thoroughly researched and presented.

The parallel tracks include a contracted EMS service provider and a municipal EMS service.

If the town continues on the path toward municipal emergency services, the timetable will let the town incorporate costs into the fiscal year 2025 general fund budget and to prepare for the currently projected July 1, 2024 start-up date.

At its May 2 meeting, the Selectboard approved a project plan for the Fire-EMS Transition at which there was an opportunity for public input. Two weeks later, the Selectboard received more information about public engagement for the project. That was also when the public was able to provide feedback about the draft Request for Information (RFI) and solicitation strategy proposed for use on the contracted EMS track.

A June 16 forum was the third chance for public input. Since June, said Town Manager John Potter, a section of the town website dedicated to the project ([brattleboro.org/emsproject](http://brattleboro.org/emsproject)) has been updated and has seen a 72% uptick in public viewing.

People with thoughts, questions, or concerns related to the Fire-EMS Transition Project have sent 52 emails to date to an address established for the public to weigh in ([emsfeedback@brattleboro.org](mailto:emsfeedback@brattleboro.org)).

These comments will be summarized for the Selectboard prior to deliberation.

### Fully municipal EMS operating model and costs

Two key components are being considered for a potential municipal EMS model: the ability to respond to multiple simultaneous emergencies and being fiscally responsible with the least impact on the general fund, said Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland at the July 25 meeting.

In March, the Selectboard agreed that the town should be able to respond to two medical emergencies and send as many as six firefighters to a working fire at the same time, thus necessitating a minimum platoon size of 10 EMS/fire providers and an EMS supervisor.

The supervisory position, said Moreland, is “key.”

The supervisor would serve as primary liaison to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital and to EMS District 13, while also maintaining proper staff training and overseeing a quality control and improvement program.

The proposed model would require seven new firefighters, one of whom would as supervisor be paid the same rate as a captain at \$89,185 annually.

All staffing, benefits, and overtime for the seven additional staff would result in an additional cost of \$717,307 for fiscal year '25. Other operational costs were estimated at about \$235,978.

For the first nine months of

the year — Golden Cross, the Claremont, New Hampshire-based EMS firm that is working with the Brattleboro Fire Department to provide EMS services on an interim basis — has received \$627,845 in reimbursement.

Given a known collection lag time of about three months, Moreland and town staff members who are working the numbers estimate \$837,127 will be collected in total for the year. They estimate annual revenue could reach \$942,160, if the town were to bill more, either through an in-house billing system or a third party.

Moreland said it is possible that billing could occur without a “new cost to the general fund.”

He also noted that a complete picture includes fuel costs, medical supply costs, workers’ compensation insurance, vehicle insurance, equipment replacement down the road, and other tangential costs.

The impact of moving forward without the services of Golden Cross, he said, could be about \$110,000 and might provide “somewhere between a small savings and a modest savings.”

Moreland emphasized again that he was “absolutely not” suggesting that running a town EMS is profitable.

“It just isn’t,” he said, while noting exploring other sources of revenue, such as non-transport fees and subscription offerings, would be “worthwhile” potential policy changes to consider.

“We all need to remember that the town will pay these cost increases no matter how EMS is delivered — whether in-house or contracted by a third party,” Moreland said.

He noted that when combined expenses of \$828,171 are deducted from the additional expected \$942,160 in revenue, the net impact to the General Fund for a fully municipal EMS program in fiscal year 2025 is calculated to be reduced by \$113,875. In future years, expenses are likely to rise, he said.

### Two firms respond to RFI

Two responses to the June 1 request for information have been returned to the town. The purpose of the RFI was to begin to identify EMS providers that may be interested in serving Brattleboro.

The RFI was provided to a list of 82 EMS providers, along with notification to the state health/EMS departments in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York. Notice was sent to a variety of EMS trade journals, posted on the town website, and published as a public notice in the newspaper of record.

Those responding were not identified at the July 25 meeting, and the town will officially make the RFI responses public once the procurement process has been completed. Redacted submissions were made available to the Selectboard in the supporting documents for the meeting and posted on the town website.

The Commons has independently learned that the two firms responding are Rescue Inc. and AmCare Medical Systems, Inc.,

FROM SECTION FRONT

of St. Albans.

A draft request for proposal (RFP) from potential third-party EMS contractors has been prepared based on feedback from the RFI. It is available on the town website. Proposals will be considered from single firms or joint ventures.

Potter said in his report that the town will entertain any of a range of EMS approaches, “including ones that provide dedicated ambulances or ones where ambulances are shared with other municipalities, as well as approaches that rely on Brattleboro Fire Department personnel and equipment to provide some level of emergency response or that do not.”

The RFP, approved by the board July 25, was expected to be released this week. Proposals, of which Potter said the board hopes to receive several, are due Aug. 29.

### This year in the department

Prior to the Transition Project information dispersal, Assistant Fire Chief and Town Health Officer Charles W. “Chuck” Keir III gave an update of department activity with statistics from July 1, 2022 to July 3 of this year.

The department has made 4,500 emergency responses, in addition to their work at fires, vehicle crashes, etc., he said, adding that 3,051 calls required EMS responses.

The average time was 27 minutes, 45 seconds. Two ambulances were needed for 480 calls and three were needed 58 times. Mutual aid was required twice. The service transported 2,044 patients.

He also praised department personnel.

“Our staff has endured countless policy and procedure changes,” Keir said. “They have increased EMS licensure, have sat through hundreds and hundreds of hours of training.”

He also said that partnering

## BRATTLEBORO

# Living Memorial Park project comes alive

## Lolatte describes ‘planning and legwork’ in anticipation of permitting for parts of \$4.1 million park upgrades

By Virginia Ray  
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO — Recreation & Parks Director Carol Lolatte is getting her ducks in a row as the Living Memorial Park Generational Improvement Project starts to take shape.

In March, Representative Town Meeting voted 98-19 to support a \$4.1 million bond for the work, which includes improvements to the 1970s-era skating rink — replacing a 30-year-old condenser, a 25-year-old dehumidifier, and a rusting and uninsulated 49-year-old roof — as well as replacing lighting on the upper softball field with an LED system.

“The whole goal here is to start lining this stuff up so, for example, when the skating rink closes in March [2024], that we’re ready to go,” Lolatte said at a July 25 Selectboard update.

“When the softball season ends a year from this August, we’re ready to upgrade the lights,” she said. “I think the biggest chess piece that we’re

going to have is the maintenance building.”

She said her number one goal “is to make sure that there’s the least disruption for all programs and park users but, more importantly, to get a lot of this planning and legwork done because some of these projects will require Act 250 permitting.”

Lolatte noted there is about \$120,000 in current unassigned funds intended to start the project.

While the town finance director will not apply for the bond until November, Lolatte said she is “starting to move forward” and develop a request for proposal (RFP) for architects for skating facility projects, which include constructing the new roof, replacing the fire alarm and dehumidification systems, and upgrading R-22 insulation for needed engineering work.

“Everyone does support this project, but I think it’s important because of the magnitude of the project that you do keep us informed, and I appreciate it,” said Selectboard member Elizabeth McLoughlin,

suggesting also that Lolatte ask local legislators to “give the Act 250 people a nudge.”

The Vermont Natural Resources Board and the District 2 Environmental Commission are responsible for administering the environmental conservation law, whose complexity is reflected in a 51-page single-spaced document describing the permitting process.

Also slated for remediation are two maintenance buildings that no longer serve storage needs and expanding parking at the Kiwanis Shelter to include about 20 more parking spaces.

Asked if some costs, notably the high-ticket estimate for the maintenance buildings, had been re-examined, Lolatte said, “I always like to put the sharpest pen to the paper, and I’ll continue to do that because the sharper the pen is, the less money has to be raised.”

She added, “We don’t want to compromise the project, but we want to get the best bang for our buck.”

with Golden Cross this year caused the department to have “endured some hardship there and some growth as we learned to live with another organization within our walls.”

Noting a recent report in VTDigger that, since June

2022, 16 people have left the department, Fire Chief Leonard Howard III explained what was behind that number.

Five left for another fire/EMS agency, he said. Three left for personal reasons, one was “a voluntary resignation,” one retired,

and five others “opted out or couldn’t fulfill” their probationary periods, he added.

The last was a part-time fire inspector whose post has already been filled, Howard said, projecting that a full staff of 28 will be in place by Aug. 3.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**Town of Brattleboro  
Request for Proposals  
Emergency Medical Services  
EMS**

The Town of Brattleboro, VT is seeking proposals from EMS providers for an EMS ambulance service contract to provide the Town of Brattleboro residents and visitors with comprehensive, high quality, emergency medical services (EMS, including full 911 emergency care and transport). Proposals will be considered from single firms or joint ventures. The response deadline is by 4:00pm on August 29, 2023.

Interested EMS providers are may obtain an RFP packet by contacting Patrick Moreland at [pmoreland@brattleboro.org](mailto:pmoreland@brattleboro.org), or visit [www.brattleboro.org/emsproject](http://www.brattleboro.org/emsproject).

**NOTICE OF ABANDONMENT**  
June 15, 2023 (Notice 1 of 3)

The Brooks Memorial Library wishes to resolve ownership issues with the items described below, which are listed in more detail on the library website and are available in print on the premise upon request. Please be advised that the following described property is hereby considered abandoned by its prior owners and will become the property of the Brooks Memorial Library, if no person can prove ownership of the property, pursuant to the provisions of Vermont Statutes Title 27: Chapter 12 – Museum Property.

171 items, including 6 clothing and other accessories (handkerchiefs, fans, spectacles, etc.), 35 household items (decorative, cooking, eating, textiles, etc.), 37 dolls, 13 paintings (drawings, sketches, etc.), 37 photographs (stereographs, tintypes, daguerreotype, postcard collection, etc.), 5 sculptures, 12 documents (letters, legal contracts, articles of association, etc.), 8 map collections, 18 other miscellaneous items.

As provided for in the Vermont statute, anyone intending to claim ownership or presents information about the whereabouts of an owner, has until February 24, 2024 to notify the Brooks Memorial Library in writing. If written assertion of title is not presented by February 24, 2024, the property will be considered abandoned or donated and default to the ownership of Brooks Memorial Library.

Please visit [brookslibraryvt.org](http://brookslibraryvt.org) or the library’s circulation desk for a detailed printed description of the items listed above or contact the Library Director, Starr Latronica, for more information or to make a claim.

Contact information:  
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Phone: 802-254-5290  
Address: 224 Main St., Brattleboro, VT 05301

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[employment@cersosimo.com](mailto:employment@cersosimo.com)

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*CCV values individual differences that can be engaged in the service of learning. Diverse experiences from people of varied backgrounds inform and enrich our community. CCV strongly encourages applications from historically marginalized and underrepresented populations. CCV is an Equal Opportunity Employer, in compliance with ADA requirements, and will make reasonable accommodations for the known disability of an otherwise qualified applicant.*

**The Commons  
DRIVERS WANTED**

The Commons seeks additional drivers to fill our Wednesday delivery routes. Drivers are needed on a regular basis every Wednesday, or on a substitute basis to fill in when a regular driver is unavailable.

It’s not a difficult job, but it does require reliability (both with one’s executive function and one’s vehicle), good communications skills, efficiency, a little record-keeping, some resilience, some problem-solving, and a healthy dollop of patience and good humor.

All routes start in Keene between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays, and each follows one of several delineated paths around Windham County, typically ending by mid-afternoon. Take-home pay ranges between \$110 and \$250 per Wednesday run, depending on the route.

If you are interested, we’d love to have you join our team!

**Please email your interest to  
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**HELP  
WANTED**

**The Windmill Hill  
Pinnacle Association  
is hiring a part-time  
Administrative  
Coordinator**

The administrative coordinator will support the Board of Directors to manage the activities and projects of our nonprofit. The position will primarily be an administrative role with room to expand, and with the expectation that roles and responsibilities will evolve as needed.

**For full job description, important info, and how to apply, visit [windmillhillpinnacle.org](http://windmillhillpinnacle.org).  
Apply by August 7.**

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**Interested applicants, please email  
[Gail\\_Ames@marymeyer.com](mailto:Gail_Ames@marymeyer.com)  
No phone calls, please. Mary Meyer is an EOE.**

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Or email resume to: [employment@cersosimo.com](mailto:employment@cersosimo.com)

# MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

## College news

• **Lily Huitong Friesen** of Brattleboro graduated from St. Michael's College in Colchester in May 2023 during the College's 116th Commencement. Friesen was also named to the Dean's List for the spring 2023 semester and was inducted into an honor society, Sigma Xi.

• The following local students received their degrees in May as part of the Class of 2023 at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island: **John Imperatore** of West Dover, B.A., communication and media studies; **Abigail Sargent** of Dummerston, B.A., art and architectural history; and **Lexia Wolak** of Brattleboro, B.S., criminal justice and B.A., psychology.

• **Kade Perrotti** of Vernon recently graduated from Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology with a B.S. in computer engineering.

• **Lia Clark** of Saxtons River recently graduated with a B.A. in political science from Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts.

• The following local students were honored for academic achievement in the spring 2023 semester at Northern Vermont University: **Jillian Woodard** of Bellows Falls, **Samantha Martin** of Brattleboro, and **Denny Hughes** of Guilford were all named to the President's List, while **Gregory Fitzgerald** and **Fiona Perez Razaque**, both of Brattleboro, were named to the Dean's List.

• **Emilia Dick Fiora del Fabro** of Brattleboro, **Alex Shriver** of Brattleboro, **Will Taggard** of Brattleboro, and **Broden Walsh** of Marlboro were all named to the Dean's List for the spring 2023 semester at Tufts University.

• **Haley Frechette** of Dummerston, who is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, and **Annamarie Mulkey** of Stratton, who is pursuing a degree in clinical lab sciences, were both named to the Dean's List for the spring 2023 semester at the Albany (N.Y.) College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

## Obituaries



• **Stuart C. Archambault, 78**, of Londonderry, died July 22, 2023. Stuart was born on Aug. 25, 1944 to the late Carlton Archambault and Frances C. Archambault Dutchburn in Montgomery, where he grew up working on his family farm. Upon graduating Enosburg High School in 1963, Stuart joined the Army, where he studied engineering. When he got out of the Army, Stuart trained to be a Vermont Game Warden, a position he proudly held for 36 years. After retiring in 2003, Stuart still spent most days outdoors — caretaking, fishing, hunting, boating, and revitalizing the farm where he grew up in Montgomery. Stuart is survived by his wife, Ellen W. Archambault; his son, Jason, and his wife Janice Archambault; granddaughters Caitlin and Caylee Archambault; a brother, Lee R. Longe, and his wife Glenda, and brother-in-law Douglas A. Wright. Stuart was predeceased by his brothers Bruce and Wayne Archambault. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Graveside services and a Celebration of Life will be held Aug. 12, 2023 at the Houghtonville Cemetery in Grafton, at 11 a.m. A reception will follow at the Grafton Chapel. Donations to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, Attn: Conservation Camp Scholarships, 1 National Life Dr., Davis 2, Montpelier, VT 05620, the Londonderry Rescue Squad, or the Jack Byrne Center for Palliative and Hospice Care in Lebanon, New Hampshire. Arrangements are under the care of Fenton & Hennessey Funeral Home in Bellows Falls.



• **Derek Coleman, 52**, died on April 4, 2023. He was born on Feb. 4, 1971 to Richard and Beverly Coleman, and was raised in Vernon and Bellows Falls. He attended Vernon Elementary School and graduated from Bellows Falls Union High School in 1989. Shortly thereafter, he married his high school sweetheart, Melissa Dunn, and they had two sons, Tyler & Forrest. Derek was an expert hunter and marksman. Between Vermont and New Hampshire, he would tag out each year. He was so proud when he hunted down a bear with his bow. He took pride in the art of the hunt. He only hunted with a bow later in life and would scout and plan his hunting expeditions most of the year. Derek also loved sports like his dad and his nephew Keegan. The three shared a special bond of their love and dedication to the Red Sox, Celtics, and Steelers, and long games of cribbage. Derek's proudest achievement was being Forrest and Keegan's life coach in hunting and baseball. He also loved spending time with his niece Chloe, doing homework, watching movies and braiding her hair. He loved the children in his life more than anything. After a devastating injury at work 15 years ago, Derek was prescribed highly

addictive pain killers. This was the beginning of a terrible addiction Derek could never seem to get ahead of. Derek moved to Iowa to stay with his best friend Vinny Morris in hopes of getting clean and finding a new and healthier life. It was there Derek met the love of his life, Sonya McLain. Together, they had two beautiful children, Grace and Kip. When things sadly did not work out, Derek made his way back to Vermont to spend quality time with his mother and father before they passed. Between the sadness of losing his family, the iron fist of his devastating addiction, and undiagnosed mental illness, the struggle was just too much for him to endure. Derek left this world one year to the day after his father's death. Derek is survived by his children, Forrest Coleman of Vermont and Grace and Kip Coleman of Iowa; his loving sister, Stephanie Coleman Givens of Brattleboro; his nephew Keegan Coleman Givens of Eastham, Massachusetts; his niece Chloe Bly Givens of Brattleboro; his life partner Melissa Dunn Coleman of New York and Sonya McLain of Iowa; as well as loving aunts, uncles and cousins. Derek was preceded in death by his parents, Richard and Beverly Coleman, his son Tyler Dillon Coleman, and his brother-in-law, Arthur Givens. Derek was a kind and loving soul, and a friend to many. Derek's story should be a lesson to us all. Behind every addict, there is a family and friends who care deeply for their loved one. Behind every addict, there is a living, breathing human being who battles a demon that can destroy what was a once a functioning member of society. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: None provided.

• **Henry H. Rounds Sr., 85**, died peacefully at his home on July 16, 2023, after a brave battle with cancer. He was born April 6, 1938, in Grafton, son of Harland and Catherine (Walsh) Rounds. He was one of 18 children. He is survived by his brother, Joe Rounds, and his sisters, Inez Brooks and Jean Wright. He had fond memories of growing up on the farm in Grafton and was always willing to share his stories. On Dec. 26, 1958, he married the love of his life, Betty (Johnson). Henry is survived by his wife of 64 years, and his children, Hank and Cindy Rounds, Delilah and Dennis Haskell, Lisa and Tom Rutkowski, and Deborah and Rodney Lique. Henry was a log home builder for many years and was delighted to say he built over 101 homes. The proudest accomplishment of his life are his grandchildren: Andrea, Adam, Nathan, Nick, Henry, Roger, Randy, Parker, and Ashley. Henry could always be seen at their sporting events, enthusiastically cheering them on. Henry is also survived by his 10 great-grandchildren. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral service will take place on Aug. 11, at 11 a.m., at Grafton Community Church, with burial in Burgess Cemetery. A reception will follow. Donations to the American Cancer Society.

• **Richard Henry "Dick" Stafursky, 78**, of Brattleboro, died of lymphoma on July 8, 2023 at Albany (N.Y.) Medical Center. He was born on June 2, 1945 in Conway, Massachusetts,

## State rep. selected for fellowship in government leadership development

The Council of State Governments (CSG) has announced that Tristan Roberts, a Democrat who represents Halifax, Whitingham, and Wilmington in the Vermont House, has been selected to participate in the 2023 CSG Henry Toll Fellowship.



Tristan Roberts

The Henry Toll Fellowship is a national leadership development program for state government officials, bringing together 46 individuals representing 28 of the states and U.S. territories and from all branches of state government.

"I'm honored and excited to be selected for the Toll Fellowship because of the difference this will make for my constituents," said Roberts in a news release. "My first year in office has given me deeper appreciation of how Vermont's State government supports and sometimes hinders small towns like the ones I represent. I look forward to learning more from the Council of State Governments and the experience of all those involved in this intensive training."

Roberts is a writer and homesteader in Halifax. For the last five years he has worked for a nonprofit, the Health Product Declaration Collaborative, to reduce the prevalence of toxic

chemicals in building products.

Since 1986, CSG has annually convened a new class of CSG Henry Toll Fellows at its national headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky, for an intensive leadership boot camp. The program's sessions are designed to stimulate personal assessment and growth, empower leaders to collaborate and communicate more effectively, and provide nonpartisan networking and relationship-building opportunities.

Toll Fellows are nominated by their peers and selected by alumni of the program. The

Fellowship honors the founder of CSG, Henry Toll, who, as a former state senator from Colorado, was the driving force behind the creation of CSG in 1933.

"I'm especially excited that the Toll Fellowship and CSG are a nonpartisan setting," said Roberts. "While the media often paints American politics as a partisan environment, multi-party cooperation and compromise is common in the Vermont House. I'm proud of the consensus on major bills that the House Corrections and Institutions committee came to this year. With the Toll Fellowship, I hope to gain a better understanding of where legislators across the policy spectrum are coming from, and how to collaborate on policies that work for all Vermonters."

There are more than 1,350 graduates of the Toll Fellowship, including five state/territorial house speakers, three sitting state supreme court justices, 10 sitting members of Congress, five sitting governors, and more than 200 Toll alumni currently serving as state/territorial legislators.

For more information on the CSG Henry Toll Fellowship, visit: [csgovts.info/tolls23](http://csgovts.info/tolls23) or email [toll@csg.org](mailto:toll@csg.org).

## Transitions



• **Liz Olson** has been promoted to the position of teller supervisor at the main branch of Brattleboro Savings & Loan.

Olson joined the bank in the fall of 2018 and, since that time, has shown professionalism and leadership in all that she does. Prior to her time at BS&L, almost all of her work experience was in customer service, including working at the Vermont Country Deli where she started as counter staff and soon worked her way up to floor supervisor. In addition to Olson's customer service experience, she successfully completed an extensive ABA certification program focused on becoming a team leader or supervisor.

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

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Hi, my name is **Millie**! I am a little nervous at first, but once I get to know you I will be following you everywhere. I need a lot of socialization so I can grow into a very confident dog. I haven't had much experience with other animals and kids, so the intro needs to be nice and slow. I will be a larger dog when I am full grown.

Hello! My name is **Sweet Chili**. I'm just an awesome little kitten on the prowl for a home to grow old in. I was born to a feral kitty in a local colony so I can startle easy, but just give me a little time to settle in and it'll be like I was always there. everything a kitten should be - cuddly, playful and spunky! I'm still very impressionable, so I would do fine in any household. Even one with dogs, other cats or gentle kids. Stop by soon before you miss your chance to take me home!

Hi, my name is **Milo!**  
 I am a little nervous at first, but warms up very quickly. I am young and impressionable and may be able to live with dogs, cats and respectful kids. I will be a larger dog when I am full grown.

Hello! My name is **Venus**. I'm just a sweet little kitten on the prowl for a home to grow old in. I'm everything a kitten should be - cuddly, playful and spunky! I'm still very impressionable, so I would do fine in any household. Even one with dogs, other cats or kids. Just give me a little time to settle in and it'll be like I was always there. Stop by soon before you miss your chance to take me home!

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AROUND THE TOWNS

Free youth workshop explores engineering topics

BRATTLEBORO—Students entering grades 3–6 this fall are invited to explore the field of engineering at Science Fun Day on Tuesday, Aug. 15, at the Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St., from 1 to 4 p.m.

There is no cost to participate, but space is limited. Advance registration is required at [bit.ly/725-fun](https://bit.ly/725-fun). The deadline to register is Saturday, Aug. 12. Although sponsored by UVM Extension 4-H, enrollment in 4-H is not required, only an interest in learning about engineering.

Participants will have the opportunity to create, build, and test at Science Fun Day, which will offer hands-on activities relating to everyday engineering, renewable plastics, and hurricane-proof housing.

The workshop will be led by the UVM STEM Ambassadors, students participating in a collaboration between UVM Extension 4-H, the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Students majoring in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering or math) may apply to be an ambassador and will receive training to teach engineering, computer science, robotics, healthy living and animal science topics to youths.

This summer's activities are made possible thanks to a grant from the Vermont Agency of Education. For questions, contact Hunter Feeley at [hunter.feeley@uvm.edu](mailto:hunter.feeley@uvm.edu). To request language interpretation, translation assistance and/or a disability-related accommodation to participate, contact Lauren Traister at 802-656-7565 or [lauren.traister@uvm.edu](mailto:lauren.traister@uvm.edu) by Aug. 4.

Learn how to make gluten-free sourdough at Co-Op

BRATTLEBORO — Over four Saturdays, August 5, 12, 19, and 26, from 1 to 2:30 p.m., the Brattleboro Food Co-op will offer a course in how to start and maintain sprouted, gluten-free sourdough and make flatbreads, tortillas, pasta, pie crust, injera, flapjacks, pizza crust, artisan bread, and cake.

Taught by Lisa Nichols, BFC's tastings and education coordinator, participants will make four recipes in each class and have plenty of goodies to take and bake at home. A fee of \$45 per person will cover the cost of ingredients for the series of four classes, held in the Co-op's Community Room. Scholarships are available. Register by Aug. 4 by emailing Lisa at [education@BFC.coop](mailto:education@BFC.coop).

Senior lunch served in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions present their Second Wednesday luncheon on Wednesday, Aug. 9, with take-outs available from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and an in-house meal at noon. The menu for this meal is barbecue chicken, vegetarian english muffin pizza, scalloped potatoes, and summer squash casserole with pineapple upside down cake for dessert.

Reservations are requested by calling the Grange at 802-254-1138 and leaving your name, phone number, and the number of meals desired, as well as whether you are taking it with you or eating in. A donation of \$3 for those 60 and older and \$4 for the younger folk is suggested. All are welcome.

Townwide yard sale planned in Hinsdale

HINSDALE, N.H. — The Hinsdale Area Farmers' Market, which operates on Main Street in Millstream Riverfront Park each Saturday through October, will hold a townwide yard sale event on Aug. 12 in collaboration with the Hinsdale Community Recreation Center.

Interested parties can participate in two ways — by reserving a space at the Market in downtown Hinsdale for a discounted rate of \$3, or by setting up at their address and requesting to be added to the Town Yard Sale Map.

To reserve a space at the Farmers' Market, contact [farmersmarketofhinsdalenh@gmail.com](mailto:farmersmarketofhinsdalenh@gmail.com). If you would like to be added to the map, email the community center at [rentals@hcc@gmail.com](mailto:rentals@hcc@gmail.com).

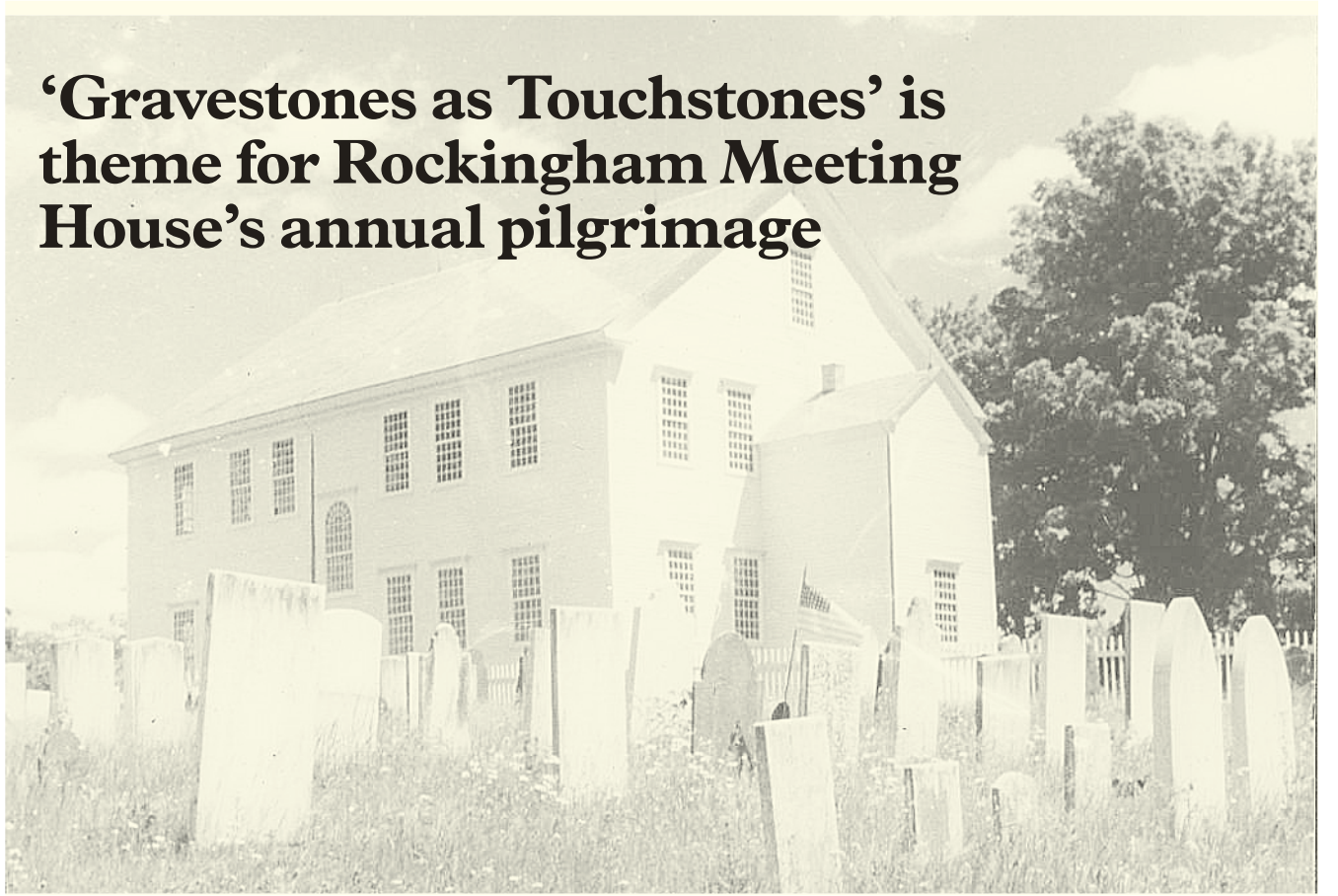
Bargain hunters will be able to pick up maps at the Hinsdale Farmers' Market on the day of the event or at the community center on the Thursday before the event. The deadline to participate is Monday, Aug. 8, at noon.

Summer sale begins at BF Community Closet

BELLOWS FALLS — The Community Closet at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St., has a varied selection of summer wear from casual to dressy and in all sizes from petite to XL.

All are invited to come in and check out the racks of T-shirts and other tops, shorts and slacks, dresses, children's clothing, and more. Clothes are priced to sell and housewares are free. The Community Closet is open most Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon, and all proceeds are given back to the community at the end of the year.

'Gravestones as Touchstones' is theme for Rockingham Meeting House's annual pilgrimage



The Rockingham Meeting House

COURTESY PHOTO

*From every shires ende  
Of Newe England, to  
Rockingham they wende,  
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan  
that they were seeke.*

ROCKINGHAM — Wednesday, Aug. 6, marks the 117th annual gathering at the Rockingham Meeting House to celebrate its 1906 restoration.

"Gravestones as Touchstones" is this year's Pilgrimage theme. Part of Rockingham Old Home Days, Pilgrimage activities include food, music, and historic reflection. Keynote speaker Dennis Montagna will explore cemeteries as settings for public history with an eye to the importance of the meeting house graveyard as a source of community awareness and mindfulness, underscoring the need for preservation of this important Rockingham archive. Montagna directs the National

Park Service Northeast Region Monument Research and Preservation Program. Based at the Park Service's Northeast Region Office, the program provides comprehensive assistance in the interpretation and care of historic cemeteries, outdoor sculpture, and public monuments to managers of National Park sites and to other constituents nationwide.

He writes and lectures on commemoration in burial spaces, with a particular interest in those found outside of traditional cemetery environments. Among these are Franklin Roosevelt's gravesite at Hyde Park, N.Y., and Father Divine's mausoleum on his estate near Philadelphia.

Montagna has assisted historic cemeteries with a wide range of preservation efforts and also helped plan the conservation response to vandalism at Mount Carmel Jewish Cemetery in Philadelphia, and advised

Arlington National Cemetery on the conservation of the Tomb of the Unknowns. He holds a bachelor's degree in studio art and art history from Florida State University, a master's degree in art history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a doctorate from the University of Delaware.

He participated in the 1989 ICCROM Architectural Conservation Course in Rome, Italy, with grants from the Kress and Getty Foundations, and in subsequent years returned to Rome as a course instructor.

He currently serves as the president of the Association for Gravestone Studies and as an advisor to the Vermont Marble Museum in Proctor.

Historian and folklorist David Deacon will provide a program of local history through music and storytelling to remind those in attendance of the lives of those now resting in the graveyard.

"I'm especially interested in songs that tell us something about social attitudes or songs that had a social purpose. People sang when they gathered or danced," Deacon said in a news release. He will accompany himself on fiddle and guitar to demonstrate what the music sounded like once upon a time.

Deacon moved to Bellows Falls in 1980 and graduated from Bellows Falls Union High School in 1981. He went on to Marlboro College and then to the University of North Carolina for a master's degree in folklore. His concentration in American history was at Syracuse University, where he earned a master's and doctorate.

The Bellows Falls paper mill industry features prominently in his doctoral thesis: "Paper

Town: Sense of Place in Industrial Small-Town New England 1869–1927." He is an adjunct professor of history at SUNY and at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York. He is currently researching the role of John Atkinson in the building of the Bellows Falls Canal, 1791–1801.

The meeting house opens at 10 a.m. with ongoing tours of the meeting house and graveyard. David Deacon's program starts at 11:30 a.m. Dennis Montagna's presentation starts at 1 p.m.. Participants are encouraged to bring along a picnic or grab a meal at the food tent that opens at 11 a.m.

The event is sponsored by the Rockingham Meeting House Association. Donations made to the Association and food sales during the Pilgrimage are used to help the Town of Rockingham preserve this National Historic Landmark.

With its timber frame raised in 1787, the meeting house served the community as both a place of worship and as town hall until 1839. The annual town meeting continued to be held at the meeting house until 1869, when the new Town Hall opened on the village square. After 37 years of abandonment, citizens of the town restored the meeting house in 1906.

An annual Selectboard meeting still convenes at this place every August. Music events, weddings, and memorial services are regularly scheduled during the summer and fall.

Old Home Days Weekend begins on Friday, Aug. 4, at the Bellows Falls Recreation Center, with events and fireworks on Saturday from 3 to 10 p.m. at the Waypoint Center.

CCV announces half-price tuition

MONTPELIER — With support from Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont Legislature, Vermonters seeking education and training in certain high-demand fields will receive a 50% tuition break at the Community College of Vermont (CCV) during the upcoming 2023–24 academic year.

More than 20 degree and certificate programs are included in the Vermont Tuition Advantage program in areas that meet the demands of critical workforce needs in Vermont. This includes healthcare, early childhood

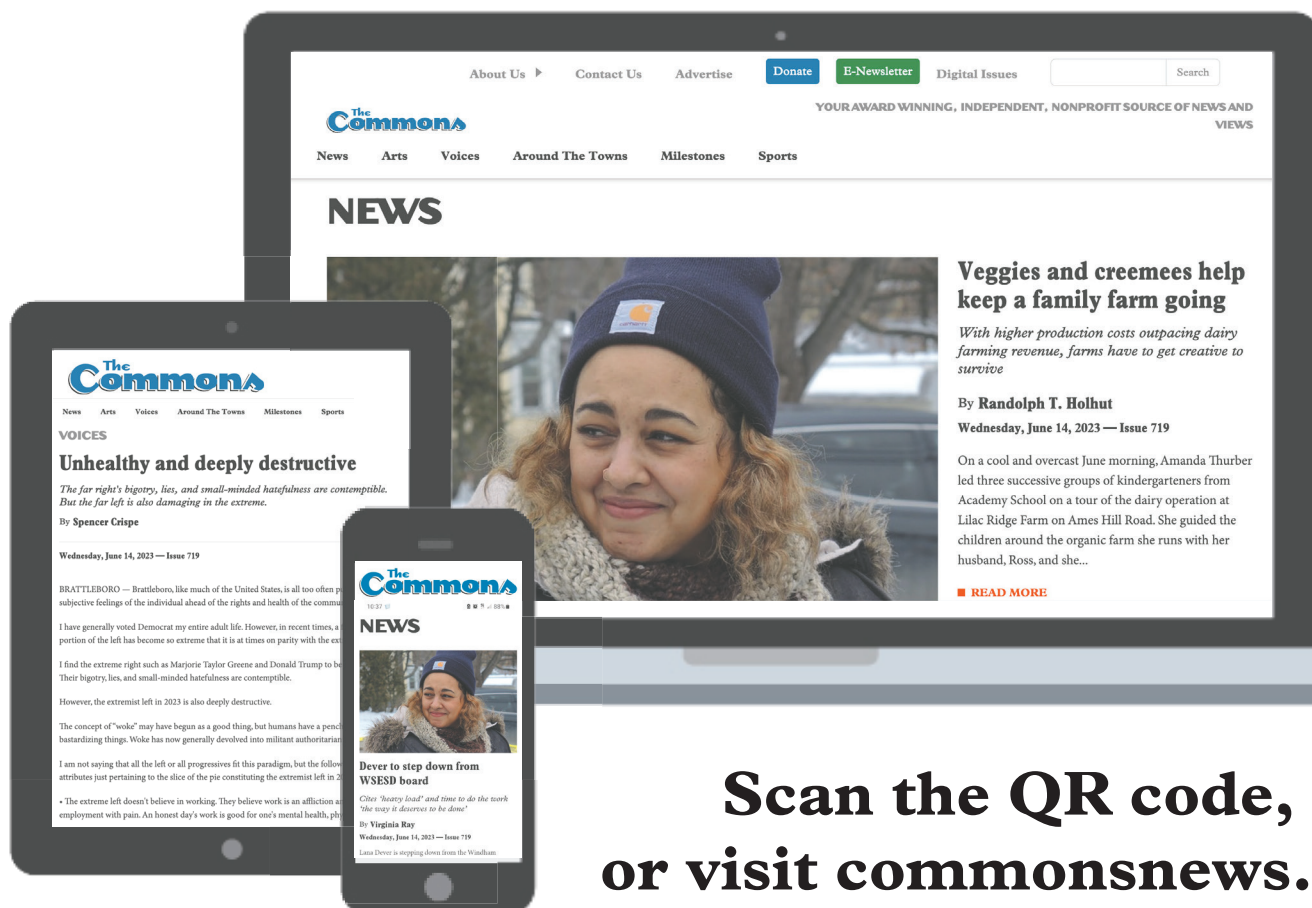
education, IT, bookkeeping, and more.

"Too many Vermonters choose not to continue their education after high school because of cost, and they end up missing out on the skills and knowledge they need to move into promising jobs," said CCV President Joyce Judy in a news release. "With this initiative, we are making huge strides toward reversing that trend and giving all Vermonters a chance to advance in their careers."

Funding is available to Vermont residents on a first come, first-served basis. To learn more and apply, visit [ccv.edu/advantage](https://ccv.edu/advantage).

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## Flood in history

FROM SECTION FRONT

### 1927: 'The greatest catastrophe'

Then again, yesterday shattered precedent, too. The year 1927 is remembered for such advances as the first talking motion picture, first Model A automobile and first solo nonstop flight across the Atlantic — all while Vermont maintained fewer than 100 miles of asphalt roads, with the rest being dirt or gravel under local control.

"The rational Vermonter has been of the opinion that hard roads would ruin the state," a Chicago Tribune reporter wrote in 1928 of the reluctance to pave the way for outsiders to roll in.

That spelled mud when up to 15 inches of rain fell for 36 hours Nov. 2-4, 1927, the late historians Deborah Pickman Clifford and Nicholas Clifford detail in their 2007 book *The Troubled Roar of the Waters: Vermont in Flood and Recovery, 1927-1931*.

The storm, deemed "the greatest catastrophe in Vermont's history" by then-Gov. John Weeks, destroyed 1,258 bridges and countless more miles of road and rails, state records show. That slowed or stopped delivery of food and other household essentials and forced farmers to churn whatever milk they couldn't ship or store into butter, as only 30 percent had electricity before the storm, let alone refrigeration.

Three Massachusetts travelers, trying to drive to Burlington, stopped in Montpelier to ask directions, period newspapers recounted. The man they met told them it would take two weeks. "Do you live here?" one of the tourists was quoted in the press. "I guess I do — I am the governor," Weeks reportedly replied, spurring the travelers to abandon their car and walk 40 miles from the capital to the state's largest city.

They weren't alone. Historians recall how an Army captain had to ride a horse from Colchester's Fort Ethan Allen over Smugglers Notch to offer the military's help to Montpelier, while a Central Vermont Railway brakeman walked, waded and swam 50 miles to Essex Junction to report train troubles in Bethel.

Few complained. When then-U.S. Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover surveyed Vermont on behalf of then-President Calvin Coolidge, Hoover's car had to stop in Waterbury because of muddy roads.

"We have nothing left," one local was said to have told Hoover, "but plenty of courage."

Long before the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a special session of the 1927 Legislature approved what was then an \$8.5 million bond issue to not only repair but also improve roads.

"There was no point in simply restoring roads that would once again be vulnerable to catastrophe, that even before the flood had already been inadequate, and whose maintenance costs would be greater than if they were rebuilt in a more durable form," the Cliffords wrote in their book.

Vermont would spend what was then \$12 million on highways (including a then-unprecedented \$2.6 million federal grant) the first two of four years of rebuilding, state records show. The governor, using the disaster to overturn a tradition of one-term officeholders, ran for reelection in 1928 and persuaded the Legislature to approve another 125 miles of "hard road."

The state's current highway system was born.

### 2011: 'Irene was just the appetizer ...'

Vermont faced its second biggest test on Aug. 28, 2011, when Tropical Storm Irene crumbled more than 500 miles of highway, closing such north-south arteries as Route 100 — the state's longest — and east-west corridors including Route 9 linking Bennington and Brattleboro, and Route 4 connecting Rutland and White River Junction.

Irene's statistics, though not as steep as those in 1927, nonetheless were staggering. The 2011 storm dumped up to 11 inches of rain, destroyed nearly \$750 million in property (a figure equal to almost two-thirds of that year's state general fund budget) and damaged 200 bridges, 450 utility poles, 600 historic buildings, 1,000 culverts, 2,400 road segments, 3,500 homes and businesses, and 20,000 acres of farmland.

In Danby, Irene washed away the old home of the late Nobel Prize-winning writer Pearl Buck just hours after the town christened its new artifact-filled historical society. Rockingham watched the water carry off its nearly 150-year-old Bartonsville Covered Bridge — an act captured and replayed on YouTube



Boston Herald-Traveler news photographer Leslie Jones captured this glass negative of flooding in Bellows Falls in November 1927.

a half-million times.

Most expensively, Irene gutted the 1,500-employee Waterbury State Office Complex — ironically, the home of Vermont Emergency Management. Crews spent \$130 million to restore the campus (with all occupied space now a half-foot above the 500-year flood mark) in the state government's biggest-ever construction project.

Just as the 1927 flood spurred the state to modernize its infrastructure, Irene sparked more government changes. Many cities and towns bought out property owners in flood zones to avert future problems, while the state built stronger roads and bridges, updated its laws so planning addresses resilience and river corridor protection, and launched a Flood Ready Vermont website to educate the public about its programs.

"When the flooding comes, no one can stop that, but there's work we can do to be ready for the next thing," Neale Lunderville, the state's former Irene recovery officer who's now head of Vermont Gas Systems, said on the storm's 10th anniversary in 2021. "Irene was just the appetizer for

the main course that's yet to come if we don't buckle down and start making changes."

### 2023: 'Historical data no longer capture the threats'

The most recent storm dropped as much as an average two months of rain, with a state high of 9.2 inches in Calais, according to the National Weather Service. But infrastructure improvements after Irene lessened damage to transportation and utility lines.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation, which required four months to repair more than 500 miles of highway ravaged in 2011, reopened 90% of the 100 state roads closed by July's storm within a week, the agency has reported.

Green Mountain Power, which provides electricity to three-quarters of the state, reported 140,650 total outages during

Irene, compared to 52,500 during this month's storm.

Even so, the most recent flooding sparked coast-to-coast headlines. Reporters have quoted scientists who blame saturated ground, mountains that channel water into river valleys — and climate change.

"As temperatures rise, the air can hold more moisture, which can mean more severe rainfall, bringing worse flooding," *The New York Times* summed up the situation.

But many current models don't account for such shifts. The National Weather Service bases its predictions for extreme rainfall more on past observations. Likewise, the new research from the First Street Foundation estimates the number of properties at flood risk is significantly larger than what FEMA says.

This month's Vermont storm has turned the latter study's release into national news.

"Historic flooding," *The Washington Post* wrote in connecting the research to current events, "was not a product of any tropical system — laying bare how flooding predictions based on historical data no longer capture the threats posed by extreme rainfall as the planet warms and the air carries more moisture."

The latest storm also has highlighted the need for continued investment in long-term planning.

"I have seen an increase in records being broken, records that have stood for decades or even a century," FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell told reporters during a visit to Vermont. "We really need to start to better understand what it's going to look like 10 or 20 years from now, so we can use our mitigation dollars to help reduce those impacts and help these systems be more resilient."

## Food Connects in home stretch of capital campaign to expand its regional distribution network

BATTLEBORO—On June 29, Food Connects held an event at the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) Business Park at 22 Browne Court to announce the launch of a public campaign to raise \$1 million. The campaign aims to support the expansion of their regional food distribution network and foster sustainable growth in the local food system.

Speakers included Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbets, state Sen. Wendy Harrison, D-Windham, BDCC Executive Director Adam Grinold, and Food Connects Founder and Executive Director Richard Berkfield.

Food Connects initiated the campaign in 2022 to add 10,000 square feet of food storage at the site of the former Book Press that includes dry, cold, and frozen storage. The goal, they said, is "to increase the region's access to fresh, nutrient-dense, local food and help small and emerging farms and food businesses access food storage and wholesale distribution."

With the ability to store and distribute food on a larger scale, Food Connects says it will "connect more farmers with wholesale buyers, including schools, hospitals, and restaurants, increasing

access to local food and supporting the local economy."

Food Connects has received 70%, or \$700,000, toward its campaign goal. Fundraising for the remaining funds has already begun, accompanied by a match challenge announced at the event. A generous individual donor has pledged to contribute a \$25,000 matching gift if Food Connects can secure \$25,000 from donors by the end of the summer.

Tebbets emphasized Food Connects work by citing some statistics from the Agency of Agriculture.

"When we invest in our schools and purchase local food, the entire local economy benefits," he said. "For each dollar we spend on local food for Farm to School, \$1.60 is recirculated [back] into the Vermont economy."

He continued, "Over 100 Vermont farms sell to schools and early childhood programs. Local food purchases are helping farmers succeed and sustain the working landscape."

Former U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy was pivotal in securing these funds as part of a congressionally directed spending request during his final year in office. Food Connects has also secured \$200,000 from USDA Rural Development and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture. With the launch of the public campaign, they aim to raise the remaining \$300,000 through foundation grants, individual contributions, and corporate gifts.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the value of Food Connects' network and storage expansion project. The

recent growth of Food Connects has positively affected their Farm to School program, especially during the pandemic. By expanding operations and strengthening their partnerships, they were able to ensure students had access to nutritious food, even during remote learning.

The program's success was further reinforced when the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union committed to \$50,000 in purchases for meal boxes during the summer break of 2023.

Harrison spoke about the importance of school meals for the state.

"They [Food Connects] provide critical support for healthy, local meals in schools," she also referenced the state's funding for universal school meals, saying, "I received the most messages from local constituents, writing in support of universal school meals. People really care, and not only are those meals going to be provided at no cost to families, but in our area, those meals will include local food and support local farmers."

By expanding storage capabilities and enhancing operational infrastructure, Food Connects is well-positioned to meet the increasing demand for local and regional food products. Their commitment to supporting farmers, promoting sustainable food systems, and fostering healthier communities makes them a leader in the regional food distribution landscape.

For more information or to donate to the Food Connects capital campaign, go to [foodconnects.org/donate](https://foodconnects.org/donate).



# FAIR DAY

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Saturday, August 5th

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9:00 Auction Preview

9:30 Auction Begins – Heart Felt Antiques & Auction Services

10:00 Birthday Parade with the Taconic Bagpipers

11:00-1:00 Music by Ralph Sherman & Friends

1:00-3:00 Music by The Buzzards

1:00-3:00 Pony Rides

2:00 p.m. Bidding for 1940 Chevy Pickup & T-Shirt Quilt

3:00 p.m. Raffle Prize Drawings

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Information: 802-365-9109  
[gracecottage.org/events](https://gracecottage.org/events)

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### GOT AN OPINION?

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



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

# RiverJam Romp

forges a musical tradition

In its second year, the music camp, born in a 'post-pandemic surge of creative energy,' moves to Marlboro in September



COURTESY PHOTO

RiverJam Romp's music camps bring together people who love to play, dance, and listen to traditional music from all over the world.



Echoes of Floyd, a Pink Floyd tribute band, played for the fourth time at the Stone Church to a crowd of 125 people to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Pink Floyd's iconic album *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

**B**RATTLEBORO — New Hampshire-based Pink Floyd tribute band Echoes of Floyd played at the Stone Church in Brattleboro to a joyous crowd of 125 people on July 28 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the release of the iconic album "The Dark Side of the Moon." Originally

released in 1973, the album sold more than 50 million copies worldwide. This was Echoes of Floyd's fourth visit to the Stone Church in the last four years. Band members include Geoff Williams on guitar, sax, vocals, vocoder, and SFX; Seth MacLean on guitar, lap steel, synth, and vocals; Rick Mutti on drums; Matt

Desrousseau on keys and synth; and Mark Grover on bass.

Williams said of Pink Floyd's lasting impact: "It's music I turn to when I'm down. I can't go right to happy music. I need to start from where I am." —Victoria Chertok

By Annie Landenberger  
The Commons

**M**ARLBORO — Formerly home to Marlboro College, Potash Hill, a campus of buildings — historic and new, all striking in their New England vernacular architecture — offers all of the amenities and ample square footage for the nurturing of the arts.

Thus, it's a perfect spot for RiverJam Romp's second annual summer camp slated for Friday, Sept. 8 through Sunday, Sept. 10. RJR launched in 2021 in a post-pandemic burst of creative energy among four friends: Peter Siegel, Mary Fraser, Amanda Witman, and Louisa Engle.

"With a common commitment to building inclusive communities," according to **riverjamromp.org**, "and a desire to recognize and uplift locally-rooted music and dance traditions, we put our heads together and dreamed up RiverJam Romp [since] our local traditions have essential roots... across rivers, mountains, valleys, and state lines" from southern Vermont eastward to the Monadnock region of New Hampshire and south into the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts.

In this, its second year, Siegel says that he and organizers hope that the RJR's bringing the music camp scene to the Brattleboro area will become a tradition.

"So many of the staff go elsewhere to teach" that the founders realized a local gathering of such talents would be welcome, he says.

"This is a bit of a homecoming event," Siegel adds, noting that the organizers have been inspired by a number of music and dance camps, including Maine Fiddle Camp, Pinewoods Camp, The Ashokan Center, John C. Campbell Folk School, and Meadowlark Music Camp. While such events serve their regions — and their local arts economies — they require significant travel for enthusiasts from this area who want to participate. Thus, the creation of a new traditional music camp on local turf is a relief to the carbon footprint, too.

The thrust of the camp, according to Siegel and Witman, is to honor, preserve, and revel in old traditions and, at the same

time, to let them morph into here and now, to create something unexpected and totally new, to make space for fusion and innovation among a host of traditions — "from the South, from the Caribbean, from West Africa, from the world," Siegel says.

Taking the model inherited from established camps elsewhere, "we want to slowly add to it, expand on it — bring in a drum circle, for instance, or even bring in contact improv sometime down the line," he explains.

Witman said that "evolving the traditions is a big piece of what we believe in."

"We have many locally-rooted traditions here that never cross paths, so wouldn't it be so cool to see Irish fiddle get together with African drummers and to see — to hear — what will happen?" she suggests.

Siegel adds that "we are rooted in tradition, but we're not holding on tight. That's what's tearing our world apart now. You can respect and love these traditions, but you don't have to cling to a field recording of 1923. You can take it into the future wherever it goes."

### A musical agenda

The weekend starts, after check-in Friday, with an all-comers jam followed by dinner and an open-to-the-public dance led by New England Dancing Masters (Andy Davis, Mary Cay Brass, Peter and Mary Alice Amidon) and a post-dance jam.

On Saturday, participants will engage in two workshops before lunch, after which there'll be a staff concert, followed by another workshop, a pre-dinner song, another public dance, and a post-dance jam.

Sunday, again, participants will engage in two workshops before lunch and "September Pole," a processional and dance in the afternoon before departure.

Teachers for RiverRompe '23 include a host of noted locals:

• **Peter and Mary Alice Amidon**, of Brattleboro, whose choral arrangements and compositions are rooted in their lifelong immersion in the harmonies of Sacred Harp singing, African American spirituals and gospel, pub singing, other spontaneous group harmony singing, and American and English folks songs.

■ SEE RIVERJAM ROMP, B3

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# arts & community CALENDAR

## THURSDAY

# 3

### Community building

**JACKSONVILLE The Power of Dignity: Community Conversation on Substance Use:** Opioid-related deaths in VT continue to rise and harmful substance use has touched almost everyone in the community. Even though no individual or organization has all the answers, community conversations grounded in mutual respect help generate dignified solutions to challenges related to substance use. Join Community Substance Use Response (CSUR) and Voices of Hope in a public conversation about substance use.

► 5:30-7 p.m. CSUR represents organizations including: *Voices of Hope in Deerfield Valley, Turning Point of Windham County, AIDS Project of Southern VT in Brattleboro, Grace Cottage Hospital, Building a Positive Community (BAPC), Meetinghouse Solutions.*

► Free.

► Jacksonville Municipal Building (next to the library), Route 100. Information: More info: [VoicesOfHope,voicesofhopevt@gmail.com](mailto:VoicesOfHope,voicesofhopevt@gmail.com).

### Community meals

**GUILFORD Guilford Cares Food Pantry:** All are welcome to shop curbside from a list of fresh and frozen foods, canned and packaged items, dairy products.

► 3-4 p.m. every Thursday.

► Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: Questions: call Pat Haine, Pantry Director, 802-257-0626.

## FRIDAY

# 4

### Performing arts

**BRATTLEBORO "Counting Pebbles":** A new play about trauma, resilience and EMS (Emergency Medical Services): Join Fautline Ensemble (group of artists and health workers) for a live continuing education performance about rural EMS providers struggling with and finding paths through trauma. Counting Pebbles was developed from interviews, anonymous stories, artwork, physical improvisation and the artists' experience as health workers and creators of collaborative performances.

► 8/4 and 8/5 (Fri., Sat.): 7 p.m.; 8/6 (Sun.): 1 p.m. with a "rain date" 8/18-8/20 in event of performer illness or emergency. Masks required - available at door. After responding to a fatal overdose of one of their own, rural EMTs/paramedics question the repetitive trauma/stress of their work. Based on EMS provider stories across the US (2016-2018), this project grapples with unique challenges faced by emergency medical responders. (Limited parking - carpool if possible.)

► Through Thursday, July 6.

► \$0 to \$5.

► Rescue, Inc., 541 Canal St. Information: Limited seating - reserve yours: [tinyurl.com/3tbxfpkw](http://tinyurl.com/3tbxfpkw).

### Music

**BRATTLEBORO Rock Voices is Back!** Director Bob Thies invites you to an evening of choral music. Backed by a professional rock band paying tribute to the 1970s - songs by ABBA, Earth Wind & Fire, Gordon Lightfoot, 10cc, Pat Benatar, Little River Band, Christopher Cross, The Doobie Brothers, Cass Elliot, Supertramp, more. There will be a 50/50 raffle to benefit Theatre Adventure, the region's only inclusive theater arts program, whose actors are youth and adults with developmental challenges.

► 7:30 p.m. (doors open 7 p.m.).

► \$15 adults, \$12 seniors, \$8 students, free for children under age 12.

► Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Rd. Information: Tickets available at door or online at [EventBrite.com](http://EventBrite.com). Rock Voices website: [EventBrite.com](http://EventBrite.com).

**GUILFORD Ben Grosscup: "Songs of Freedom & Struggle":** Ben sings about ideas/values of revolutionary social movements he's been part of. Drawing upon activist folk singing traditions, he brings new songs to the rallies, strikes, picket lines, virtual events where they're most relevant. He leads a purposeful group singing that cultivates music and cultural work as catalysts for a just and peaceful world. He's executive director of The People's Music Network for Songs of Freedom and Struggle: <https://peoplesmusic.org/>.

► 7 p.m. (doors open 6:30 p.m.). Rain date: Sat., 8/5. Limited event parking for those needing close access. Otherwise, park below Carpenter Hill Rd. Come early, picnic, enjoy community and your neighbors. Bring chairs (a few are onsite), linger after. No one turned away; children welcome.

► \$10 - \$15 suggested donation (all proceeds go to the performer).

## FRIDAY CONT.

► Springs Farm, 49 Carpenter Hill Rd. Information: [springsfarmvt.com](http://springsfarmvt.com).

### Arts and crafts

**BRATTLEBORO "Sounds & Signs" - Nu Mu Tu Music and Art Festival:** 118 Elliot welcomes all to participate in a community art-making event where visual representations of sound/graphic scores will be made to be "played" by an improvisational orchestra. We'll be prepared for art making - stations equipped with art-making materials. There'll be a large central collaborative composition anyone can work on. Smaller stations with art-making materials available to artists who prefer to work individually or in smaller groups.

► 5-8 p.m. Event led by Hallie Lederer.

► Free.

► One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Information: [118Elliot.com](mailto:118Elliot.com), [118Elliot@gmail.com](mailto:118Elliot@gmail.com).

### Visual arts and shows

**BRATTLEBORO Delia Robinson - "Layering" - A Night of Art and Mini Crankie performances:** On exhibit are new and collected paintings, sculptural clay whistles, live mini showings featuring a story scroll made by Robinson's fantastical hand. She finds her muse in a land of celestial whimsy. People/forest animals frolic in trees while elephants pull sledges laden with layered cakes that echo the turrets of far off castles. Wheels of fire mingle with stars and dance in a prophetic sky. Her colors are bold and bright, and invite viewers into a festival of visual delight.

► 5-8 p.m. A night of art and mini Crankie performances by Delia Robinson.

► Free.

► Gallery in the Woods, 145 Main St. Information: 802-257-4777; [galleryinthewoods.com](http://galleryinthewoods.com).

### Ideas and education

**BRATTLEBORO Gregorian Chant Conference Weekend:** Discover the timeless riches and beauty of this foundation of all Western music, learn to chant its melodies in the liturgies of the Church, and experience the joys of sacred choral singing. Led by visiting organist and choir director, Michael Olbash.

► 8/4: Starts at 6:30 p.m.

► Through Sunday, August 6.

► \$45 covers Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

► St. Michael Catholic Church, 47 Walnut St. Information: Details and registration: [StMichaelVT.com](mailto:StMichaelVT.com).

## SATURDAY

# 5

### Performing arts

**GUILFORD The Pageant Performances: Singers, Readers, Actors, Costume Designers, General Helpers are invited to participate:** The Guilford Community Church is organizing this event and anyone is welcome to participate.

► 8/5: Saturday at 7 p.m., 8/6: Sunday at 10 a.m. Performances take place in the Guilford Community Park Pavilion.

► Through Sunday, August 6.

► Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr. off Rte. 5. Information: Details/Rehearsal times: Sue Owings at [skowings@gmail.com](mailto:skowings@gmail.com) / 802-579-4524 or Guilford Church office: 802-257-0994.

**WEST CHESTERFIELD "Misalliance": Staged Reading of George Bernard Shaw's "Comedy of Marriage":** Play takes place one afternoon in the conservatory of a large country house in Hindhead, Surrey in Edwardian era England. Hypatia - daughter of self-made underwear mogul - is a "new woman," bored with the stuffy attitudes of the aristocracy and anxious to shape her world. Fast-paced modernity is on a collision course with the stodgy status quo when an airplane crashes through the conservatory bringing two unexpected guests.

► 7:30 p.m. Two performances 8/5 and 8/12. Cast: Phil Kramer, Bob Gruen, Ian Hefele, Damien Licata, Roberta Barnes, Heidi Schwiager, Michael Auerbach, Charlotte Traas and Harral Hamilton. Directed by Sam Pilo.

► Through Saturday, August 12.

► \$17.

► Actors Theatre Playhouse, Corner Brook & Main St. Information: Tickets/more information: [tinyurl.com/5c3a9k8p](http://tinyurl.com/5c3a9k8p).

**GUILFORD "Pageant of the Parables" - Guilford Community Church production of drama, music and dance:** An original Guilford Community Church production of drama, music and dance, "Pageant of the Parables" will be performed by local talent. The music is provided by the Guilford Community Church Choir, directed by Andy Davis and Peter Amidon and includes an original song composed by Andy and Peter for the event: "The Mustard Seed." Choreography by Kathy Gatto-Gurney; artwork by John Gurney.

► 8/5: 7 p.m.-7:40 p.m. (Also Sunday, 8/6: 10-10:40 a.m.) All proceeds from the Pageant will be donated to Vermont flood relief.

► Through Sunday, August 6.

## SATURDAY CONT.

► 8/5: \$10-\$20 suggested. Tickets at door. Free for children under 12 (must be w/ adult). 8/6: Free; donations welcome.

► Guilford Community Park Pavilion, 24 Church Dr. (behind Country Store, next to Guilford Community Church).

**GUILFORD "Pageant of the Parables" - Guilford Community Church production of drama, music and dance:** An original Guilford Community Church production of drama, music and dance, "Pageant of the Parables" will be performed by local talent. The music is provided by the Guilford Community Church Choir, directed by Andy Davis and Peter Amidon and includes an original song composed by Andy and Peter for the event: "The Mustard Seed." Choreography by Kathy Gatto-Gurney; artwork by John Gurney. Dancers/actors range in age from 5 to 74.

► 8/5: 7 p.m.-7:40 p.m. (Also Sunday, 8/6: 10-10:40 a.m.) All proceeds from the Pageant will be donated to VT flood relief.

► Through Sunday, August 6.

► 8/5: \$10-\$20 suggested. Tickets at door. Free for children under 12 (must be w/ adult). 8/6: Free; donations welcome.

► Guilford Community Park Pavilion, 24 Church Dr. (behind Country Store, next to Guilford Community Church). Information: 802-257-0994, [guilfordchurch@gmail.com](mailto:guilfordchurch@gmail.com).

**Music**

**PUTNEY Bandwagon Summer Series: Glen David Andrews Band:** Glen David Andrews, prodigious trombonist/vocalist, returns to captivate audiences once again! Touring in celebration of his new album, "Le Trième Carnaval," known for electrifying performances and soulful compositions. With commanding vocals and virtuosic trombone skills, he's established himself as a true force in the world of contemporary jazz and funk. His music is packed with beauty, hard-earned truths, compassion, humor, anger, joy, and - most of all - hope.

► 6 p.m. A native son/loved musician of New Orleans, Andrews is a warrior for cultural preservation at a time indigenous traditions are being threatened in the city. Next Stage bar and Vermont Gelato will sell their wares on site.

► \$20 in advance, \$25 at gate, free for children under age 12. Advance ticketing closes 2 hours before showtime.

► Putney Inn, 57 Putney Landing Rd. Information: 802-387-5517; [putneyinn.com](mailto:putneyinn.com).

### Instruction

**BRATTLEBORO Adult Cooking Class Series: Gluten-Free Sourdough:** Gluten-free? Miss having flavorful bread with a satisfying crust? Ancient cooking techniques to the rescue! Participants learn to start maintain sprouted sourdough and make artisan bread, flapjacks, flatbreads, tortillas, pasta, pie crust, injera, pizza crust, cake. Everyone makes 4 recipes in each class and has plenty of goodies to take/bake at home. Taught by Lisa, BFC's tastings and education coordinator.

► 1-2:30 p.m. (total of 4 classes on Saturdays).

► Through Saturday, August 26.

► To cover the ingredients, cost is \$45 per person for 4 classes. Scholarships available.

► Brattleboro Food Co-op Community Room, 7 Canal St. Information: Register at least 48 hours in advance by emailing [Lisa at education@BFC.coop](mailto:Lisa at education@BFC.coop).

### Farmers' markets

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

► 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturdays. Rain or shine.

► Through Saturday, October 28.

► Brattleboro Farmers Market, 570 Western Ave., Rt. 9, near covered bridge. Information: 802-490-4371; [brattleborofarmersmarket.com](http://brattleborofarmersmarket.com).

### The written word

**Brattleboro Poetry Discussion Group (via Zoom):** Discussion about Richard Blanco's work. No experience necessary; copies of the poems provided. Led by Barbara Morrison.

► 12 noon - 2 p.m.

► Free.

► Zoom. Information: Register: [info@timetowrite.us](mailto:info@timetowrite.us).

### Kids and families

**TOWNSHEND 73rd Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day:** This family-friendly event offers fun and fanfare, with the traditional Birthday Parade, an all-day auction, bingo, kids' games, pony rides, homemade pies, jewelry, t-shirts, bargain booths, fried dough, food booths, live music, and more.

► 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Two special items to be auctioned at 2 p.m. are a beautiful 1940 Chevy truck and an exquisite, one-of-a-kind, queen-size quilt displaying every Fair Day t-shirt from 1999-2022.

► Free.

► Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day, Intersection of VT Routes 30 & 35. Information: More information: 802-365-9109 or [gracecottage.org](http://gracecottage.org).

### Well-being

**BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Zen Center (In-Person or wherever you are):** One way to engage with the ecological

crisis: This group chants briefly and then sits in silence for a half hour. All are welcome to join this peaceful action.

► 1:00 - 1:35 p.m. on Saturdays.

► Free.

► Wells Fountain, south side Windham County District Courthouse, Jct. Putney Rd. & Main St. (Rte 30).

## SUNDAY

# 6

### Music

**BELLOWS FALLS Lou Antonucci: "You, Me, & Harry" - a celebration of Harry Chapin's music:** Celebrate the story-songs of Harry Chapin - "Cat's in the Cradle," "Taxi," "Story of a Life," "W.O.L.D.," "A Better Place to Be," many more. With a musical career spanning several decades, Antonucci has always been inspired by Chapin's music and spirit. He created "You, Me, & Harry" and this will be one of the first public run-throughs of the program before booking into larger venues.

► 3 p.m. Limited seating for this show. Event recorded/filmed. Note: Free admission by donating 5 non-perishable food items, three personal-care items, or \$10 cash for Our Place Drop-In Center at the door on show day. Our Place offers community meals/food pantry/ social service resources for the Bellows Falls area. Harry Chapin held a fundamental belief that access to nutritious food is a human right and that hunger is a solvable problem in a world of abundance.

► \$5 in advance, \$10 at door, or free with specified donations.

► Stage 33 Live, 33 Bridge St. Information: 802-289-0148; [stage33live.com](http://stage33live.com).

**PUTNEY 20th Twilight on the Tavern Lawn series presents The Woodpeckers:** The Woodpeckers joyfully play the classic swing music of the 1920s and 1930s. In a highly improvisatory, good-humored, spontaneous, conversational, interactive style, they freshly interpret the exhilarating music of that time - when jazz was being born and embraced/celebrated by young and old. Quartet includes Ron Kelley, tenor sax; Walter Slowinski, clarinet; Ty Gibbons, upright bass; Mark Anagnostopoulos, rhythm guitar. All members sing.

► 6 p.m. on lawn (bring lawn chair or blanket). Food available. In case of rain, moves to Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill (co-presenter).

► Free to the public. Donations accepted.

► Putney Tavern Lawn, Main St., downtown Putney. Information: [twilightmusic.org](http://twilightmusic.org), 802-387-5772.

### Farmers' markets

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

► 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Sundays - corner of Frost and Elm. (Gardeners may drop off surplus from their gardens from 10:30-closing; before noon preferred).

► Through Sunday, October 29.

► Free.

► Turning Point, 39 Elm St. (corner of Frost and Elm St.). Information: [EdibleBrattleboro@gmail.com](mailto:EdibleBrattleboro@gmail.com).

**PUTNEY Putney Farmers Market - plus Live Music today with Scandi**

► 11-3 p.m. on Sundays. Across from the Putney Food Coop.

► Putney Farmers Market, 17 Carol Brown Way. Information: [putneyfarmersmarket.org](http://putneyfarmersmarket.org).

### Well-being

**W. BRATTLEBORO All Souls Church Hybrid Worship Service: "Hold Fast to Dreams" (In-Person/Zoom):** A festival of songs: Do What Must Be Done, Hope Lingers On, We Are... and readings about unlocking the power of sleep and dreams. Featuring our musicians: Steve, George, Marie, Ellie, Catie, and guests. Sweet dreams, everyone. Coordinated by Eva Greene.

► 10 a.m.

► Free.

► All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 29 South St. Information: Go to [ascvt.org](http://ascvt.org) Sunday shortly before 10 a.m. to join via Zoom.

### Community building

**BRATTLEBORO Garden Party Fund-raiser for Brooks Memorial Library:** Tickets include desserts, drinks, and free raffle ticket for gift certificates to area garden centers.

► 2 - 5 p.m. Follow signs on Meadowbrook Rd. No rain date.

► \$25 (\$40 for 2 people) available at Brooks Memorial Library or at the event.

► Sharon Myers Private Home.

### Dance

**GUILFORD Brattleboro Area Contra Dance first Sunday Series:** Steve Zakon-Anderson calling with musicians Cedar Stanistreet and Yann Falquet. Join us and bring a friend.

► 6:30-9 p.m. CoVid vaccination booster required as is wearing an M95 or KN95 mask while indoors. If you previously attended, your vax info is on file. Broad Brook Community Center hall is beautifully restored, the windows open wide, plus enchanting music.

► \$15 - \$20 (sliding scale).

## SUNDAY CONT.

► Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: More information: [Erich Kruger-ewkruger@gmail.com](mailto:Erich Kruger-ewkruger@gmail.com).

### Visual arts and shows

**BRATTLEBORO Inner Landscapes: Three Views (Erika Radich, Jessie Pollock, Maggie Cahoon):** Maggie Cahoon: "My paintings hint at something quite beyond our ordinary reality and flow into a realm that speaks in color, fluidity, sensing. This language, while unorthodox, is strangely familiar to me, beyond measure." Jessie Pollock: "Nature has always been my inspiration, especially the beauty of moss and stones." Erika Radich: "This work evokes stability and a sense of lightness and hope. Elements are playful and irreverent, falling over and into each other."

► 8/6, 5 p.m.: Artists Forum. Open Thur.-Sat. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 12 noon-5 p.m.

► Through Sunday, August 27.

► Free.

► Mitchell-Giddings Fine Arts, 183 Main St. Information: 802-251-8290; [mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com](http://mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com).

**BRATTLEBORO Giddings Fine Arts invites you to participate in an Artist Talk with Maggie Cahoon, Erika Radich, Jessie Pollock:** These artists bring together unique/highly personal/non-figurative imagery of reflective, deep, imaginative spaces while responding through diverse palette of explosive color. Within her series of alcohol ink paintings, Cahoon explores sensual world of swirling/mysterious veils of color. Pollock's heavily painted surfaces invite us to reflect on rugged beauty of our endangered landscape. Radich fashions collaged structures to transport us to a place of optimism and hope.

► 8/6: 5 p.m. These three artists are currently featured in "Landscapes: Three Views" running through 8/27.

► Free.

► Mitchell-Giddings Fine Arts, 183 Main St. Information: 802-251-8290; [mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com](http://mitchellgiddingsfinearts.com).

## TUESDAY

# 8

### Kids and families

**BRATTLEBORO "Stars Above": An Open Air American Circus:** Modern take on nostalgic small touring circuses over 200 years ago. Featuring all-star cast of circus performers and musicians, the show centers around a day in the life of a traveling family troupe. Combining elements of contemporary and classical circus, it explores and celebrates interwoven connections to loved ones, community, what we've lost.

► All-ages production is performed outdoors under the vast canopy of sky and stars on a custom-built circular stage and aerial rig.

► Through Wednesday, August 9.

► \$25 to \$65.

► New England Center for Circus Arts (Trapezium), 10 Town Crier Dr. Information: Tickets: [tinyurl.com/3nujtvue](http://tinyurl.com/3nujtvue).

### 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](http://brattleborowalkinclinic.com).

### Community building

**GUILFORD Senior Walk on Hayes Road in West Guilford:** Listen to Joy Hayes recount childhood memories and unusual historical events. This is a short level walk with a more challenging option. Sponsored by Guilford Cares and Guilford Conservation Commission.

► 10:30 a.m. walk takes place at 182 Hayes Rd. To carpool, meet at Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Road by 10:15 am.

► Free.

► Broad Brook Community Center, 3940 Guilford Center Rd. Information: 802-451-0405; [broadbrookcommunitycenter.org](http://broadbrookcommunitycenter.org).

## WEDNESDAY

# 9

### Performing arts

**BELLOWS FALLS Modern Times Theater brings Theatrical Magic with "The Baffo Box Show: A Compact Cardboard Comedy":** in this comedy in a box, step into a fragile cardboard universe where the Baffo Brothers keep the sun running on schedule/ negotiate with demanding neighbor/

## WEDNESDAY CONT.

attempt to keep a changing world from coming apart. Performed in a one-of-a-kind suit-stage, it packs classic hand puppetry, stand-up comedy, Dadaist ventriloquism into a cardboard box and delivers it w/ impeccable timing. Inside are the Baffos - slapstick chaps who keep the sun, moon, everything else running on schedule.

► 5 p.m. Modern Times Theater has been making/touring puppet shows/variety acts pursuing a radically divergent model of art making - creating venues in unlikely locations and revitalizing the historic, run-down, defunct. Founders Rose Friedman and Justin Lander are producers for Vermont Vaudeville and alumni of Bread and Puppet Theater. This show is supported by a 2022 Family Grant from the Jim Henson Fdn.

► Free.

► Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463-4270; [rockinghamlibrary.org](http://rockinghamlibrary.org).

**Music**

**BRATTLEBORO The Garcia Project: "The Days Between Tour":** Garcia Project's performances are based on set lists performed by The Jerry Garcia Band. Their shows are classic recreations from 1976 to 1995. With precise arrangements, feel for various eras, proper instrumentation, they faithfully channel and project feelings, emotions, music propelling the Jerry Garcia Band and fans through many years of musical bliss. It's about family, soul searching, rejoicing, contemplating, celebrating, loving one another.

► 8 p.m.

► \$20 in advance, \$25 at door.

► The Stone Church in Brattleboro, 210 Main St. Information: Tickets: [Stonechurchvt.com](http://Stonechurchvt.com).

**PUTNEY NXT Documentary Film Series: Monterey Pop (1968):** Featuring performances by popular artists of the 1960s, this concert film highlights the music of the 1967 California festival. Some of the notable acts include the Mamas and the Papas, Simon & Garfunkel, Jefferson Airplane, the Who, Otis Redding, and the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Hendrix's post-performance antics - lighting a guitar on fire, breaking it and tossing a part into the audience - are captured.

► 7 p.m.: Film. 8:20 p.m.: Discussion of film with musician/librarian/archivist John Levin follows screening. Co-presented with Next Chapter Records.

► \$10 suggested donation. Advance ticketing closes two hours before showtime.

► Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; [nextstagearts.org](http://nextstagearts.org).

**Community building**

**DUMMERSTON Scott Farm Orchard is hosting a Crepe Night fundraiser for Sandglass Theater:** Second Wednesday of each month (June-Sept.) it's picnic-style fun as we celebrate the harvest, good simple food, community. Outdoor/indoor tables and chairs provided and sprawling, grassy hillside is perfect for picnic blankets, folding lawn chairs, and bare feet. Farm serves savory supper crepes (galettes), sweet dessert crepes, side salads. Crepes served in hand-held cardboard pouches, easily eaten without utensils.

► 5:30-7:30 p.m. Drinks available for purchase at the bar. Each month is co-hosted by a different local non-profit who benefits from the evening's proceeds. Project is funded in part by grants from Windham Foundation, New England Foundation for the Arts, Vermont Arts Council.

► \$20 adult, \$12 child.

► Scott Farm, 707 Kipling Rd. If you would like to volunteer for this event, please reach out to us! [info@sandglasstheater.org](mailto:info@sandglasstheater.org) 802-254-6868; [scottfarmvermont.com](http://scottfarmvermont.com).

### Community meals

**DUMMERSTON Dummerston Grange Senior Lunch:** Menu: BBQ chicken, vegetarian English muffin pizza, scalloped potato, summer squash casserole with pineapple upside down cake for dessert. All are welcome. Offered by Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions.

► 12 noon: in-house meal. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. take-out.

► \$3.00 for those 60 and older and \$4.00 for younger folk is suggested.

► Evening Star Grange, 1080 East-West Rd. Information: Reservations: 802-254-1138. Leave your name, phone number, number of meals desired, eating in or take-out.

### Community building

**BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Area Contra Dance first Sunday Series:** Steve Zakon-Anderson calling with musicians Cedar Stanistreet and Yann Falquet. Join us and bring a friend.

► 6:30-9 p.m. CoVid vaccination booster required as is wearing an M95 or KN95 mask while indoors. If you previously attended, your vax info is on file. Broad Brook Community Center hall is beautifully restored, the windows open wide, plus enchanting music.

► \$15 - \$20 (sliding scale).

To submit your event: [calendar@commonsnews.org](mailto:calendar@commonsnews.org)

Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday

Publication of this week's Calendar is underwritten by BERKLEY & VELLER GREENWOOD COUNTRY REALTORS • [www.berkleyveller.com](http://www.berkleyveller.com)



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## RiverJam Romp

Having led choral harmony workshops at major traditional music festivals and choral singing workshops at home and abroad, they're key players in the Guilford Community Church and the Hollowell Singers hospice choir; their choral arrangements are sung by hundreds of choirs throughout the United States and the United Kingdom.

• **Mary Cay Brass**, of Athens, found traditional music as a child when Croatian neighbors invited her to join a children's folk dance troupe. Later, while studying ethnomusicology at the University of Minnesota, she encountered numerous folk dance groups at the height of the folk music revival in the 1970s.

As a Fulbright Scholar, she worked with ethnomusicologists and conducted field research in Croatia and soon thereafter began immersing in New England contra dance traditions. After moving to southern Vermont in 1984, Brass played regularly for contradances in Greenfield, Massachusetts and throughout the country, and she led international performance tours with Village Harmony.

• With a passion for traditional New England contra dancing, **David Cantieni** of Deerfield, Massachusetts, has led workshops and played dance music for years on the Irish-style wooden flute, Breton bombard, oboe, sax, and pennywhistle.

Cantieni has performed with bands Swallowtail and Wild Asparagus. His appearances include Celtic Week at Swannanoa Gathering; Northern Week at The Ashokan Center; Summer Heritage Workshops in Elkins, West Virginia, among others.

• Founding member of **New England Dancing Masters Andy Davis** of Brattleboro calls traditional New England-style contra and square dances for dancers of all ages and abilities. For decades, Davis has taught music and dance in Vermont public schools and in summer camps, playing accordion and piano for jigs, reels, polkas, marches, and waltzes.

Composer of a variety of dance tunes and songs, Davis has published books and recordings for the teaching of New England traditional dance. Among a host of credits, he performed for three decades with John Roberts, Fred Breunig, and the late Tony Barrand as Nowell Sing We Clear.

• With a fond memory of dancing through a long tunnel of clasped hands during an elementary school contra dance, **Louisa Engle** of Brattleboro grew up to be a fiddler and fiddle teacher who is passionate about bringing together musicians and dancers of different ages and abilities.

She has taught at the Brattleboro Music Center, Maine Fiddle Camp, and Nelson Elementary School and has called and played at family contra dances throughout New England. Currently into Maypole dances, claw hammer banjo, and alternate fiddle tunings, she's helped run the all-night Brattleboro Dawn Dance for over a decade.

• **Julia Friend** of Brattleboro is a singer of pub songs, sea shanties, and ballads. Embracing the

power and vulnerability of the human voice, she's an occasional performer at folk festivals and is happiest swapping songs and blending harmonies in dark corners in the wee hours of the night.

She co-authored the Country Dance & Song Society's folk singing starter kit, helped launch Youth Traditional Song Weekend, and cheers for singing in all genres.

• Having explored many styles of music, especially jazz, guitarist **Yann Falquet** of Brattleboro has developed a personal guitar style for Québec folk music, inspired by the playing of accompanists from Brittany, Scandinavia, Ireland, and North America. His involvement in Québec's traditional music scene has brought Falquet to perform on numerous recordings and to tour Canada, the U.S., Europe, and Australia with his trio Genticorum.

• **Lissa Schneckenburger** was raised in a small town in Maine and moved to Brattleboro as a young adult. Starting fiddle at age 6, she grew up in the New England contradance scene, developing an extensive repertoire while playing for dances, teaching at numerous camps and festivals, and touring with bands such as Halali and Low Lily. Her music showcases a range from traditional New England dance tunes to original songs inspired by her experience as a foster and adoptive parent.

• **Peter Siegel**, of Brattleboro, founding member of The Gaslight Tinkers, presents music deeply rooted in American traditions while spanning the globe. Over the years he's shared the stage and been mentored by Pete Seeger, Jay Unger and Molly Mason, Utah Phillips, and Noel Paul Stookey, among others.

A bandmate with bluegrass powerhouse Michael Daves and poet Alicia Jo Rabins in the '90s band Underbelly, he also contributed to and recorded on the Grammy-winning Seeger album *Tomorrow's Children*. He's published songs in *Sing Out!* magazine and in The Portland Collection.

Teaching in public schools and writing songs and theatrical productions with children for the last 20 years, Siegel has also written for the site Edutopia ([edutopia.org](http://edutopia.org)) on social curriculum and music educational practices. A CD, Peace Place, produced with students from Symonds Elementary School in Keene, won a Parents' Choice Award in 2012.

• **Cedar Stanistreet** grew up playing both classical violin and traditional fiddle music, and he studied violin performance at the Crane School of Music. For the past 10 years, he's played for contra dances across North America with a number of bands, including Nor'easter, Cardinal Direction, Maivish, and Cloud Ten.

Stanistreet, of Brattleboro, also repairs violins, violas, and cellos.

• **Amanda Witman** of Brattleboro is a singer, song leader, instrumentalist, and event organizer. An advocate for inclusive, community-based music where players and singers at all levels are encouraged and

FROM SECTION FRONT

supported, she founded and co-leads the monthly Brattleboro Pub Sing and helps organize the annual Northern Roots Festival.

She sings with Vermont-based quartet Big Woods Voices, performing detailed, original arrangements of poetry and songs.

• **Steve Zakon-Anderson** of Hancock, New Hampshire has been a caller and organizer for contra dancing for almost 40 years, and he has also been a chef at various locations from Fiddleheads Cafe in Hancock, New Hampshire, to MacDowell artists' residency in nearby Peterborough. Having been chef in the past for Northern Roots and RiverJam Romp, Zakon-Anderson will be cooking for RJR at Potash Hill this year with his wife, Bettie.

Among the 30 RJR workshops: Gospel Harmony Singing By Ear, Exploring the Ukulele, Backing Crooked Tunes, Storytelling through Song, Cider Songs and Cidermaking, Adding Groove and Lift to Your Fiddling, and Discovering Bob McQuillen Tunes.

### First year at Potash Hill

While its first year attracted 80 participants of all ages from around New England and Québec at its Green Mountain Camp site, this year the capacity is greater at Potash Hill where dining, lodging, workshops spaces, and outdoor nooks abound.

"We're delighted to have River Jam Romp here for a weekend of song, dance, and community," says Brian Mooney, managing director of Potash Hill. "Potash Hill is a special place with a long history of bringing people together for creative exploration, education, and the forging of lasting friendships."

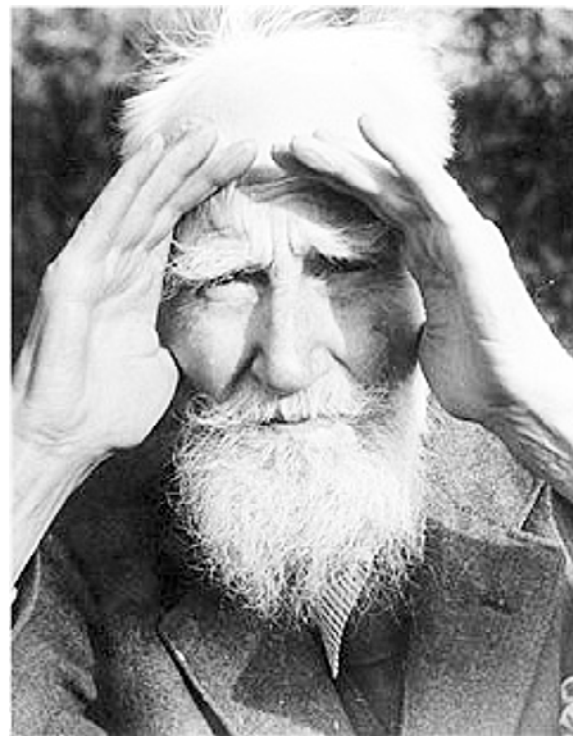
Mooney, who graduated from Marlboro College and later taught writing there, said that "we always keep this in mind as we continue to make progress towards the goal of putting the campus to productive use and making it self-sustaining."

River Jam will be followed in October by Boston States Fiddle Camp.

For more on Potash Hill and upcoming events and programs, visit [potashhill.org](http://potashhill.org).

Community dances will be open to the public on Friday and Saturday nights on a sliding scale (\$10-20 suggested). Friday night's dance is especially suited to families with small children. To participate for the full weekend or to purchase a day pass, go to [riverjamromp.org](http://riverjamromp.org). Financial aid is available. Registration includes housing (dorm or tent camping) and meals, along with all workshops, dances, jams, activities, and a staff concert. Commuters are welcome. The price is the same no matter where one sleeps.

Looking ahead, RJR organizers say their vision is much bigger than a single camp. They want to develop other events "to support and carry forward musical community, collaboration, and the evolution of traditions" under the umbrella of nonprofit, Southern Vermont Traditional Music, Inc., which also co-sponsors Village Dance and the Brattleboro Dawn Dance.



George Bernard Shaw

COURTESY PHOTO

## ATP presents staged reading of George Bernard Shaw's 'The Misalliance'

WEST CHESTERFIELD, N.H.—A staged reading of George Bernard Shaw's *The Misalliance* will be presented at the Actors Theatre Playhouse for performances on two Saturdays, Aug. 5 and 12. Both performances begin promptly at 7:30.

*The Misalliance* is a play written in 1909-1910 by George Bernard Shaw. The play takes place entirely on a single Saturday afternoon in the conservatory of a large country house in Hindhead, Surrey, in Edwardian era England.

The action follows Hypatia—the daughter of a self-made underwear mogul. She's a "new woman"; bored with the stuffy attitudes of the aristocracy and anxious to shape her world.

Shaw lets the audience know that fast-paced modernity is on a collision course with the stodgy status quo when an airplane crashes through the conservatory, bringing two unexpected guests.

One is a handsome young man who immediately arouses Hypatia's hunting instinct. The other is a female daredevil of a circus acrobat whose vitality and directness inflame all the other men at the house party.

It turns out that it is customary for her to rouse men wherever she goes, and in the second act, she makes a note of having received her 58th proposal.

This romantic comedy reverses the traditional roles in courtship—in *Misalliance* women are the ardent hunters and men, their hapless prey.

Shaw's *Misalliance* is an ironic debate about marriage, "The New Woman," and the distance that exists between parent and child. All told there are eight marriage proposals offered for consideration in the course of one summer afternoon.

The question of whether any one of these combinations of marriage might be an auspicious alliance, or a misalliance, prompts one of the prospective husbands to make the famous Shavian speculation that has

shocked many theater-goers: "If marriages were made by putting all the men's names into one sack and the women's names into another, and having them taken out by a blindfolded child like lottery numbers, there would be just as high a percentage of happy marriages as we have now."

In the cast are Phil Kramer, Roberta Barnes, Bob Gruen, Heidi Schwiager, Ian Heffele, Damien Licata, Michael Auerbach, Charlotte Traas, and Harral Hamilton. Sam Pilo directs.

The Actors Theatre Playhouse is located at the corner of Brook and Main streets in West Chesterfield. All tickets are \$17 for general seating and can be reserved at [atplayhouse.org](http://atplayhouse.org).

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**OPPENHEIMER** R  
WEEKDAYS 3:30 / 6:50  
SAT. & SUN. 2:15 / 6:50

**BARBIE** PG-13  
MON.-THUR. 3:45 / 6:45  
FRIDAY 3:45 / 6:45 / 9  
SATURDAY 2 / 6:45 / 9  
SUNDAY 2 / 6:45

**HAUNTED MANSION** PG-13  
MON.-THUR. 3:45 / 6:40  
FRIDAY 3:45 / 6:40 / 9  
SATURDAY 2 / 6:40 / 9  
SUNDAY 2 / 6:40

**SOUND OF FREEDOM** PG-13  
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## LOCAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

July 31 - Aug. 6  
CHANNEL 1078

CHANNEL 1079

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHANNEL NUMBERS!

**Here We Are - Lisa McCormick, Musician:** Mon 8p, Tues 12:15p, Wed 9p, Thurs 1:25p, Sat 12:20p & 8p, Sun 5:20p

**The World Fusion Show - Ep # 157 - Ruth Mendelson:** Mon 5:30p, Tues 4:30p & 8p, Thurs 10:30a, Fri 5:30p, Sat 6:30p, Sun 9:30a

**BCTV Summer Video Camp - 2023 Video Reel:** Mon 8:35p, Tues 5:45a, Wed 3:30p, Thurs 2p, Fri 10a & 3:40p, Sun 6p

**Chesterfield Historical Society - David Mann: The Surveys and Surveyors Part 1:** Mon 2:30p, Tues 8:30p, Thurs 4p, Fri 6a, Sat 2p & 8:35p, Sun 1p

**Brooks Memorial Library - Tin Pan Alley Sing-Along:** Tues 1p, Wed 9a, Thurs 9:35a & 3p, Fri 4:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 4p & 6:45p

**Brattleboro Gallery Walk - July 7, 2023:** Tues 5:30a, Wed 9:30p, Thurs 5:45a, Sat 5p & 10:45p, Sun 12:45p

**Brooks Memorial Library - Stay Connected with a Wi-Fi Hotspot:** Tues 11:55a & 1:55p, Wed 9:55a, Thurs 1:15p & 3:55p, Sat 12:55p, Sun 12:55p & 5:55p

**Windham World Affairs Council - Antarctica: Ocean Currents, Climate, and Exploration 6/23/23:** Mon 10a, Wed 12:15p & 4:15p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 12:15p, Sat 9a, Sun 7:45p

**Energy Week with Georges Harvey & Tom Finnell:** 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:** WTSA News: Mon-Fri 12p & 6p, Reformer News Break: Mon-Fri 12:05p & 6:05p

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

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

**Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service:** Wed 10a, Thurs 7a, Sun 5p

**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

**Vernon Selectboard Mtg. 8/1/23:** Thurs 8:30p, Fri 5:30, Sat 2:30p

**Brattleboro Selectboard Special Mtg. 7/25/23:** Tues 6p, Thurs 1p, Sun 8:30p

**Guilford Selectboard Mtg. 7/24/23:** Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 11:45a

**Jamaica Selectboard Mtg. 7/24/23:** Mon 10:35a, Wed 8:30p, Thurs 6a, Fri 2:15p, Sun 7p

**Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board Mtg. 7/10/23:** Mon 9:30a, Tues 12p, Wed 9:55p, Thurs 7:25a, Fri 3:40p, Sun 6p

**Townshend Selectboard Mtg. 7/25/23:** Thurs 6p, Fri 8a, Sat 12p

**Windham Southeast School District Board Mtg. 7/25/23:** Mon 12p, Sat 5:45p, Sun 8:30a

**Dummerston Selectboard Mtg. 7/26/23:** Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p

**Putney Selectboard Mtg. 7/26/23:** Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:50p

**Windham Elementary School Board Mtg. 7/27/23:** Mon 2:45p, Sat 8:30p, Sun 6a

**River Valleys Unified School District Board Special Mtg. 7/13/23:** Sat 5:15p

**West River Education District Board Mtg. 7/10/23:** Tues 9:35p, Thurs 5:30a & 4:30p, Sat 11:30a

**Brattleboro Planning Commission Special Mtg. 7/5/23:** Tues 10a, Wed 10a, Thurs 11:15a

**Brattleboro Development Review Board Mtg. 6/21/23:** Tues 1:45p

**Town Matters - Weekly Episode:** Mon 6p, Wed 4:45p, Thurs 11a, Fri 11:30a, Sat 5p

**The David Pakman Show:** Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

**Note: Schedule subject to change.**

View full schedule and watch online at [brattleborotv.org](http://brattleborotv.org)

BCTV's Program Highlights are sponsored by **The Commons**. BCTV's municipal meeting coverage helps **Commons** reporters stay in touch. Read about it in the Town & Village section at [www.commonnews.org](http://www.commonnews.org).

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## Modern Times Theater brings theatrical magic to RFPL

BELLOWS FALLS—The Rockingham Free Public Library is pleased to welcome back Modern Times Theater on Wednesday, Aug. 9, at 5 p.m., for a new production: *The Baffo Box Show: A Compact Cardboard Comedy*.

"When the world breaks," says the news release, "someone has to fix it. In this comedy in a box, audiences are invited into a fragile universe of cardboard, where the Baffo Brothers keep the sun running on schedule, negotiate with a demanding neighbor, and attempt to keep a changing world from coming apart."

Performed in a "suit-stage," this show packs classic hand puppetry, Dadaist ventriloquism, and stand-up comedy into a cardboard box "and delivers it, with impeccable timing, live on stage."

Inside the box are the Baffos—two slapstick chaps who keep the sun, moon, and everything else running on schedule. From the moment the lid opens, "audiences are captivated as the Baffos juggle and dance their way through the day's chores, despite the undeniable evidence that their world is changing."

A "daring work" of puppetry and object manipulation, "full of beautiful images, junk music sonatas, and Modern Times Theater's brand of all-ages comedy, this re-envisioning of classic hand puppet forms is digital entertainment as it was meant to be: two hands, ten fingers, and no camera tricks," say organizers.

Puppeteered by Justin Lander and directed by Rose Friedman,

The Baffo Box Show is supported by a 2022 Family Grant from the Jim Henson Foundation.

Modern Times Theater has been making and touring puppet shows and variety acts and creating public community events since 2007. They say they pursue a radically divergent model of art making, creating venues in unlikely locations, and revitalizing the historic, run-down, and defunct. Working in populist theater forms, they seek to reinvent and reimagine classic American entertainment.

Co-founders Friedman and Lander are a husband-and-wife duo, producers for Vermont Vaudeville, and alumni of the Bread and Puppet Theater.

The Baffo Box Show is presented with funding from the Vermont Early Literacy Initiative, which is hosted by Vermont Humanities Council. For more information about the event and other library programs, visit [rockinghamlibrary.org](http://rockinghamlibrary.org), call 802-463-4270, or stop by the library at 65 Westminster St.

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## Delia Robinson is featured artist at Gallery in the Woods

BRATTLEBORO—Join Gallery in the Woods, 145 Main St., on Friday, Aug. 4, from 5 to 8 p.m., for Layering, a night of art and mini crankie performances by Delia Robinson. On exhibit are new and collected paintings, sculptural clay whistles, and live mini showings featuring a story scroll made by Robinson.

"As the paint is laid down, layer after layer, I notice what a perfect analog art making is for life in Vermont," Robinson said in a news release.

Robinson lives in Montpelier, where she paints, writes, sings songs, creates crankie theater performances, and continues a family tradition of making figurative

clay whistles.

"She finds her muse in a land of celestial whimsy," say organizers. "People and forest animals frolic in trees while elephants pull sledges laden with layered cakes that echo the turrets of far off castles. Wheels of fire mingle with stars and dance in a prophetic sky. Her colors are bold and bright. They invite the viewers into a festival of visual delight."

A viewer at a recent show wrote, "Her articulate imagination defies the range of possibility of mere words. Her work must be seen and lingered upon."

For more information, call 802-257-4777 or visit [galleryinthewoods.com](http://galleryinthewoods.com).

## Twilight on the Tavern Lawn presents The Woodpeckers

PUTNEY—Twilight Music continues its 20th Twilight On The Tavern Lawn series of folk, world beat, jazz, Americana, rock, and bluegrass summer concerts on Sunday, Aug. 6, with classic swing quartet The Woodpeckers.

The Woodpeckers play the classic swing music of the 1920s and '30s. "In a highly improvisatory, good-humored, spontaneous, conversational, and interactive style, they freshly interpret the exhilarating music of that time, when jazz was being born and was embraced and celebrated by young and old,"

organizers say.

The quartet includes Ron Kelley on tenor sax, Walter Slowinski on clarinet, Ty Gibbons on upright bass, and Mark Anagnostopulos on rhythm guitar. All members sing.

The concert begins at 6 p.m. in downtown Putney on the Putney Tavern lawn (bring a lawn chair or blanket) or at Next Stage at 15 Kimball Hill in case of rain. The concert is free to the public (donations are accepted) and food will be available. For more information, call 802-387-5772 or visit [twilightmusic.org](http://twilightmusic.org).

## Literary Cocktail Hour hosts Joyce Maynard

BRATTLEBORO—On Friday, Aug. 11, at 5 p.m., the Literary Cocktail Hour hosts *New York Times* bestselling author Joyce Maynard for an online chat. Register for this free event at [bit.ly/LitCocktail32](http://bit.ly/LitCocktail32).

Over her 50-year career, Maynard has published hundreds of essays as well as 20 books, both fiction and nonfiction, including the memoir *At Home in the World* and the novels *To Die For* and *Labor Day*, both adapted for film.

Maynard's newest novel, *The Bird Hotel*, was published in May, 2023. *How the Light Gets In*, and the sequel to her novel, *Count*

*the Ways*—winner of the Grand Prize for an American novel published in France and named an Amazon Best Book in 2021—will be published in summer, 2024. Maynard is a fellow of artist colonies Macdowell and Yaddo. Every winter for over two decades, she has led the Lake Atitlan Memoir workshop, Write by the Lake, in Guatemala.

"With a mystery at its center, *The Bird Hotel* is filled with warmth, drama, romance, humor, pop culture, and a little magical realism," states the author's website. "It is a big, sweeping story spanning four decades, offering lyricism as well as whimsy."

While the world brought to life on the page is rendered from Joyce Maynard's imagination, it is informed by the more than 20 years she has spent time each year in a small Mayan indigenous village in Guatemala. For more information about this novel, go to [joycemaynard.com](http://joycemaynard.com).

The Brattleboro Literary Festival hosts these monthly chats with well-known authors. Your donation to [brattleborolifefest.org/donate-now](http://brattleborolifefest.org/donate-now) will help them to continue not only our monthly virtual programs but will support their annual festival.



Joyce Maynard

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## Yellow Barn wraps up summer season

PUTNEY—Yellow Barn's 54th summer festival comes to a celebratory conclusion with nightly concerts, plus a Saturday matinee.

On Thursday, Aug. 3, at 8 p.m. Yellow Barn enters the final weekend of its annual festival with a program of literary influences: James Joyce's *Chamber Music* set by Luciano Berio for mezzo-soprano, clarinet, cello, and harp; Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* novella, set by Leoš Janáček for string quartet; and Frederico Garcia Lorca's poetry, set by George Crumb for his seminal "Madrigals" for voice, flute, double bass, harp, and percussion.

About Lorca's work, Crumb writes, "I feel that the essential meaning of the poetry is

concerned with the most primary things: life, death, love, the smell of the earth, the sounds of the wind and the sea." The program also includes a performance of Georges Aperghis's 1979 "Les sept crimes de l'amour" (with percussionist Eduardo Leandro), and Benjamin Britten's "Sechs Hölderlin-Fragmente," the composer's only German song-cycle.

Thursday night concerts at Yellow Barn are free and open to the public, thanks to the support of a group of Putney residents in memory of Eva Mondon.

On Friday, Aug. 4, at 8 p.m., Yellow Barn opens with Bach's "Contrapunctus XIV" from *The Art of Fugue* and closes with Beethoven's String Quartet in F major, Op.135 (with cellist

John Myerscough), each performed alongside shorter pieces by Baroque English composer Henry Purcell.

Artistic Director Seth Knopp has programmed these works with three newer pieces: John Tavener's *Akhmatova Songs* for soprano and string quartet, Gérard Pesson's *Le Gel, par jeu* (The Frost, at Its Play), and György Kurtág's *Six Moments Musicaux*.

Pesson has described *Le Gel, par jeu* as a "macabre dance" inspired by an Emily Dickinson poem, while *Six Moments Musicaux* includes references to playwright Samuel Beckett and Czech composer Janáček. "Janáček was fascinated by the rhythms of human speech, and

Kurtág pays homage to his commitment to recapturing those rhythms by giving his own work a speech-like cadence," explains the news release.

On Saturday, Yellow Barn offers both a matinee performance at 12:30 p.m. and the season finale at 8 p.m.

The matinee begins with Mozart's Trio in E-flat major, "Kegelstatt," followed by Edward Elgar's Piano Quintet in A minor. According to music critic Jonathan Blumhofer, Elgar's "dark psychological state" following the end of World War I is reflected in this "brilliant flowering of creative work."

After intermission, audiences will hear Ukrainian composer Valentyn Silvestrov's "Epitaphium (L. B.)," a piece written in honor of Silvestrov's late wife, followed by Ana Sokolović's *dawn always begins in the bones*. Friday evening ends with Robert Schumann's "Mondnacht" (Moonlit Night) from his *Liederkreis* song cycle.

The text of "Mondnacht" comes from a poem of the same name by the German Romantic writer Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, which writer Oskar Seidlin described as "one of the few perfect lyrical marvels in the German language."

Yellow Barn's final concert of the 2023 Summer Festival will start with Anton Webern's "Rondo" for string quartet. The program continues with Brett Dean's 2021 "Imaginary Ballet" (with cellist Jean-Michel Fonteneau), inspired in part by Dean's experience of the COVID-19 lockdown.

During that difficult time, Dean has said that he was drawn to "music of energy, directness, and verve in an effort to counteract consciously the at times almost overwhelming sense of global tragedy."

The first half of the program will conclude with two pieces for two pianos: Maurice Ravel's "Ma mère l'oye" (Mother Goose) and György Ligeti's "Három lakodalmi tánc" (Three Wedding Dances).

After intermission, audiences are treated to a set of celebratory dances: Mauricio Kagel's "Dressur" for three percussionists (featuring Eduardo Leandro), Fred Lerdahl's *Waltzes*, and Pesson's "En valse tyrolienne" from *Transformations du Menuet K.355 de Mozart*.

"No trace of irreverence in this customization workshop," Pesson has written, "but quite the opposite, a deep fondness for this music that is so intertwined with the fabric of our lives. It is also a well-known fact that Mozart often surprised those who were close to him with his sense of humor and playful temperament."

Concerts are generally 2 1/2 hours in length, including intermission. All events take place in the Big Barn on Main Street in Putney. Tickets can be reserved and purchased online at [yellowbarn.org](http://yellowbarn.org), or by calling Yellow Barn at 802-387-6637.

## Putney Public Library hosts poetry reading with Cramer, Parker-Houghton

PUTNEY—After having met at open readings sponsored by Write Action in Brattleboro, Michael Cramer and Rolf Parker-Houghton quickly became admirers of each other's poetry. They will present a joint reading at the

Putney Public Library, 55 Main St., on Wednesday, Aug. 2, at 6:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

After work and study in physics, computer science, and music, Cramer now lives, writes,

and reads in Guilford with his wife Crystal Washburn. His poems have appeared in *Frogpond Journal*, *bottlerockets*, *Modern Haiku*, *tinywords*, *New England Letters*, *Seven Days*, and elsewhere; as well as the anthologies *string theory: The Red Moon Anthology of English Language Haiku*, *Window Seats*, *Bird Whistle*, *Birchsong*, and others.

Parker-Houghton is a freelance writer of history, whose articles have been published in *The Commons*, *Brattleboro Reformer*, and *Deerfield Valley News*. He also writes a column on math and science education for *Parent Express*. His poems have been published in *The Road Not Taken: The Journal of Formal Poetry*, and *Vita Poetica*.

In 2023, he was shortlisted for the O'Beal's Five Words International Poetry Contest. He and his wife, the artist Cynthia Parker-Houghton, live in Brattleboro, with their son, Morgen. They also create fake archeological digs and other free events which they create under the name of "The University of Brattleboro," whose motto is *Desperationem pugnamus cum humore et in communi cum aliis*, which translates to "We fight despair with humor and in community with others."

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Lela Jaacks with her sculpture outside of the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center.

## Sculptor will speak about her work

BRATTLEBORO—Sculptor Lela Jaacks of Brownsville will give a free talk about her work at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) on Thursday, Aug. 10, at 7 p.m. The event will take place in person in BMAC’s sculpture garden, alongside Jaacks’s exhibit, “micro/tele Scope.” Walk-ins are welcome, or register at [brattleboromuseum.org](http://brattleboromuseum.org). Jaacks will discuss the making of her art, including the inspiration for “micro/tele Scope,” sculptural works that integrate

natural and handmade materials in an exploration of space, light, texture, and color. Of her approach to sculpture, Jaacks says, “The thread that weaves my work together is the language of patterning. [...] I encourage viewers to pause and acknowledge beauty that might otherwise go unnoticed.” Originally from Cairns, Australia, Jaacks spent her formative years in remote northern Queensland, where she developed a love for the natural world, she says. She draws on the landscapes

of her childhood—in conversation with the built environment—to create a balance between form and space, between the micro and the expansive. In doing so, she uses a variety of materials, including metal, wood, concrete, glass, acrylic, and found natural artifacts. Jaacks received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in sculpture from Rhode Island School of Design. “micro/tele Scope” is on display outdoors at BMAC and is accessible 24/7 through Oct. 31.

## Tape Art returns to Brattleboro with new mural at BMAC

BRATTLEBORO—No, the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) is not coming apart at the seams. The ribbons of colored tape that will soon be affixed to the front of the museum’s 1915 building are art. More specifically, tape art—the handiwork of Michael Townsend and Leah Smith, a Rhode Island-based public art duo known as Tape Art.

Just over a year ago, Townsend and Smith collaborated with BMAC and the ArtLords, a group of Brattleboro-based Afghan artists, on a project called “Honoring Honar,” which consisted of 17 temporary murals displayed throughout downtown Brattleboro.

Based on the enthusiastic response to that project, BMAC has invited Townsend and Smith to return to Brattleboro in August, this time to create a large mural across the front of the museum building. And the artists are hoping Brattleboro residents and visitors will help them with the museum-sized task at hand.

According to Townsend: “The mural will be a two-part installation that will articulate the architectural makeup of the building. In phase one, the stone blocks of the museum will be lovingly wrapped in a bold blue. The museum will become an artery system of the exposed concrete mortar.

“In phase two, that artery system will flow with color outwards from the entrance of the museum as the mortar is covered with different colored tapes. By the end of phase two, the entire front of the museum will be a dramatic tape patchwork that will make the building itself a vibrant sculpture. It will be bonkers beautiful!” The first part of the mural will go up Wednesday to Friday, Aug.



Michael Townsend of Tape Art.

2 to 4, and will be unveiled during Gallery Walk, Brattleboro’s monthly first-Friday celebration of all things artful. The second part will be created Aug. 16–18.

Townsend and Smith invite people of all ages, abilities, and experience levels to join them between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. each day to help with the installations. The mural will remain on view until Sunday, August 27, at noon, at which time all are welcome to help the artists peel off the tape and bid farewell to their temporary artwork.

For those unable to see the mural in person, a time-lapse video of its creation and removal will be made available at [brattleboromuseum.org](http://brattleboromuseum.org) after the project is completed.

“We love presenting art outside the museum, where it can be viewed 24/7,” said BMAC Manager of Education and Community Engagement

Programs Kirsten Marts, “and we love facilitating collaborations between artists and the public. This project does both those things.”

Tape Art is an evolving group of public artists, including Townsend and Smith, who create large-scale temporary drawings and installations out of low-adhesive tape. Founded in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1989, Tape Art is cited as the world’s first tape artist group.

All Tape Art creations are intentionally temporary. Over the past 33 years, Tape Art has created over 500 large murals and thousands of smaller drawings on walls around the globe. Tape Art’s extensive teaching practice has resulted in the introduction of tape drawing to over 50,000 people in a wide range of settings, including schools, community centers, senior living facilities, hospitals, and prisons.

## Stars Above, an all-American open-air circus, comes to town

BRATTLEBORO—Brooklyn-based production company Hideaway Circus is set to stage its open-air, family-friendly circus, Stars Above, in partnership with local presenter, the New England Center for Circus Arts (NECCA) on Tuesday, Aug. 8 at 7 p.m. and Wednesday, Aug. 9 at 4 p.m..

“NECCA is working to support the regrowth of circus in America,” Serenity Smith Forchion, NECCA’s producing director, said in a news release. “We hosted Hideaway Circus for a residency in 2021 when they created their first major touring show. That show was a huge success, and we’re really pleased to welcome them back with a quick

stop in their now packed touring schedule.”

Stars Above is an all-ages production that blends contemporary and traditional circus arts. The performance, delivered by an international cast of skilled performers, unfolds on a custom-built circular stage and aerial rig, beneath the vast expanse of the sky.

Circus Director Lyndsay Aviner said, “We are eager to present Stars Above to Brattleboro... we have further diversified our lineup, introducing exhilarating acts, including an extraordinary rollerskating duo and a beautiful acrobatic bicycle act.”

The show will be offered in NECCA’s grassy backyard and

offers three tiers of seating: General Admission, where spectators can bring their own portable chair or blanket; Premium Seating, providing a comfortable outdoor spectator lawn chair; and the VIP Experience, which offers center-front seating with the most comfortable chairs.

“Circus outdoors in the summer is magic” said Forchion. “Come to Stars Above and create unforgettable memories, because circus transcends language, age, and culture and can truly offer a universally joyful experience.”

Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$65 and are available at [starsabovecircus.com](http://starsabovecircus.com).

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# Pikes Falls festival returns to Jamaica after pandemic hiatus

Community invited to three concerts and a garden party featuring musicians from Vermont and afar

JAMAICA—Pikes Falls Chamber Music Festival is returning to celebrate the 2023 summer season with an admission-free concert series. Concerts begin on Tuesday, Aug. 8 in Jamaica and run through Saturday, Aug. 12.

The summer festival emphasizing music and visual art began in 2012, founded by Susanna Loewy, who continues as the nonprofit's executive director.

Since then, PFCM has performed 59 concerts in southern Vermont, commissioned 13 world premieres, and has shown 13 works of visual art.

As described in a news release, this year's schedule includes three new concerts with "a stronger focus on celebrating the community." The festival highlights musicians from the Grammy-nominated Inscape Chamber Orchestra in Washington, D.C., as well as musicians from in and around Vermont.

As is PFCM's tradition, a piece by the festival's

composer-in-residence, Nathan Lincoln-Decusatis, will be performed at the concluding concert.

Performances will be held at the Jamaica Town Hall on Tuesday, Aug. 8, featuring Ensemble Amphion Baroque, and on Saturday, Aug. 12, when the Pikes Falls Chamber Musicians will play. They will also perform at the Grafton Community Church on Thursday, Aug. 10.

All three performances start at 7 p.m. and are free. A limited number of reserved seats are available for \$10.

Throughout the week, PFCM will also perform for assisted living facilities in Manchester and Townshend. Additionally, PFCM will celebrate and join the community in hosting a garden party on Wednesday, Aug. 9, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 3417 Vermont Route 30.

For more information and to purchase reserved seating, visit [pikesfallschambermusicfestival.com](http://pikesfallschambermusicfestival.com).



Musicians perform at a previous year's Pikes Falls Chamber Music Festival.

# Nu Mu Festival returns to 118 Elliot

BRATTLEBORO—The Nu Mu Music and Art Festival returns to 118 Elliot, for this second year, known as "Nu Mu Tu."

Opening on Friday night Gallery Walk on Aug. 4 with "Sounds and Signs," a community art-making event and exhibition of graphic scores, Nu Mu Tu begins a month of musical performances celebrating improvisational music.

All are invited to join artist Hallie Lederer, of Brooklyn's Powerhouse Arts, who will guide participants during Gallery Walk to create visual representations of music called "graphic scores." These images will be interpreted by the Community Improvisational Orchestra on Sunday, Aug. 27, at 6 p.m., to close the festival.

"Sounds and Signs" will also include samples of graphic scores by other artists and musicians as part of an exhibition on display through August at 118 Elliot.

Nu Mu Tu, a collaboration between 118 Elliot's John Loggia and Jeff Lederer's Little(i)Music, offers a creative convergence of new music and art organized around jazz musician and teacher Lederer's yearly pilgrimage to the Brattleboro area and the spirit of free jazz, where everything is always new.

Throughout August, Nu Mu Tu will present a series of weekend performances by both established and up-and-coming musicians in addition to Lederer,



John Loggia and Jeff Lederer are the collaborators on the Nu Mu Tu Festival at 118 Elliot.

including Ras Moshe, Payton MacDonald, Jeremy Slater, Ayumi Ishito, Aron Namenwirth, Paul Austerlitz, David Peck, Ayizon Sanon, Ben James, Julian Gerstin, and Bonnie Kane.

"118 Elliot is focused on creating opportunities for local artists and musicians to work with visiting practitioners of their artform," said Loggia.

"We are excited to work with the community to create these 'graphic scores' during August Gallery Walk and welcome all who would like to participate in the Community Improvisational Orchestra to perform them."

"I am looking forward to playing with many great musicians and directing the Community Improvisational Orchestra,"

Lederer said. "There will be many opportunities to experiment and collaborate. This is going to be a lot of fun!"

A full festival schedule is available online at [118elliot.com](http://118elliot.com) and [facebook.com/118elliot](http://facebook.com/118elliot) as well as at [brattleboro.com/events-calendar](http://brattleboro.com/events-calendar). A \$15 suggested donation for each concert goes directly to the musicians.

# Rock Voices presents a summer concert

BRATTLEBORO—Rock Voices Brattleboro and Director Bob Thies invite everyone to join them for an evening of choral music. The concert will be at Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Rd., on Friday, Aug. 4, at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.

Backed by a professional rock band, this season's music pays tribute to the 1970s, including songs by ABBA; Earth, Wind & Fire;

Gordon Lightfoot; 10cc; Pat Benatar; Little River Band; Christopher Cross; The Doobie Brothers; Cass Elliot; Supertramp; and more. There will be a 50/50 raffle to benefit Theatre Adventure, an inclusive theater arts program whose actors are youth and adults with developmental challenges.

Rock Voices organizers say they offer a sense of community as well as a love of music and a desire to share their joy and talents

with others. Those interested in joining the Brattleboro group can enroll at [rockvoices.com](http://rockvoices.com). The group rehearses at the Vermont Jazz Center on Monday nights from 7 to 9 p.m., and the fall season begins Monday, Sept. 11.

Admission prices are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors, and \$8 for students. Children 12 and under are admitted free of charge. Tickets will be available at the door or online at [bit.ly/725-rock](http://bit.ly/725-rock).

# Crowell Gallery presents works by Ragouzeos

NEWFANE—During the month of August, The Crowell Gallery will be featuring an exhibit of recent large-scale ink drawings and small color paintings by Newfane artist Leonard Ragouzeos.

Prior to moving to Newfane in 2005, Ragouzeos taught as a professor of studio art for 31 years in Iowa and in Pennsylvania, while simultaneously maintaining an active studio life and exhibition presence.

He began working with India

ink on paper in a representational manner in the mid-1990s, focusing on faces and single common objects like tools or fruit. Several of Leonard's newest "Utility Pole" series will be included in this exhibit. Also on display will be a series of small color abstractions in water media and oils.

The black ink drawings in this exhibit were made on Yupo, an archival synthetic paper with a smooth, nonabsorbent, vellum-like surface.

"I enjoy the physical nature

of working on a large scale," Ragouzeos said. "The drawings are made on a wall, so I must move quickly to control the flowing ink, avoiding and directing the drips and accidents that occur."

Brushes, pens, rollers, and other tools are used to apply the ink. A hair dryer is always on hand ready to guide the ink and hasten the drying process, allowing Ragouzeos to build layers of grays into deep blacks with subtle or dramatic value shifts, he explains.

"The purely abstract color paintings in the exhibit are the antithesis of the large black representational drawings,"

according to the news release. "Color speaks in a language not shared by black, a language with emotions and feelings. Working small in color with gouache or oils is a slower, more intimate process and provides the artist with a counterpoint to the black work."

The Ragouzeos exhibit will hang through the month of August. An artist reception will be held on Saturday, Aug. 12, from 4 to 6 p.m., in the gallery at 23 West Street, behind the Moore Free Library in Newfane. Gallery hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 1 to 5 p.m.; Thursday 1 to 6 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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# 35 resident artists to perform during Marlboro Music's fourth concert weekend

MARLBORO—Marlboro Music Festival's fourth concert weekend, featuring three opportunities to attend, is nearly here as 35 resident artists will perform masterworks and new music by their resident composer.

On Friday, Aug. 4, Marlboro Music Festival gives back to the local community with the annual town benefit concert in Persons Auditorium. All proceeds from this event support Marlboro town organizations.

Helmut Lachenmann is this season's composer in residence at Marlboro Music. "This is a rare U.S. visit for the 87-year-old German composer who has shaped contemporary music worldwide over the past 50 years with his 'Musique Concrète Instrumentale,'" say organizers. During his time at Marlboro, Lachenmann has worked closely with musicians on a selection of works, three of which will be heard during this weekend's programs.

Audiences will also experience music by Beethoven, Brahms, Dvořák, and Schubert this weekend, with performances by Co-Artistic Director Jonathan Biss and many senior artists, including wind players Nathan Hughes, Anthony McGill, Alberto Menéndez Escribano, and Peter Whelan; violinists Joseph Lin and Daniel Phillips; violists Sally Chisholm and Kim Kashkashian; cellist Jay Campbell; soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon; and pianists Lydia Brown and Anna Polonsky.

Tickets are available for Friday, Aug. 4, and Saturday, Aug. 5, concerts. Tickets are \$20-40 and may be purchased at [marlboromusic.org](http://marlboromusic.org) or by calling the Marlboro box office at 802-254-2394.

Sunday's performance is sold out; the box office maintains a waiting list for returned tickets. Audience members may contact the Marlboro reception desk for more information at 802-254-2394 or [reception@marlboromusic.org](mailto:reception@marlboromusic.org).

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VIEWPOINT

# Big changes — and new protections — for workers in Vt.

Vermont law now makes it clear: Employees need not tolerate any amount of harassment for any length of time. And the new rules apply to everyone.

**O**N JULY 1, amendments to the Fair Employment Practices Act (FEPA) — Vermont’s workplace anti-harassment and discrimination law — went into effect.

The amendments make significant changes that broaden protections to employees. Business owners, heads of organizations, and those responsible for employment compliance should make an effort to understand these changes — and then take whatever meaningful action is necessary to ensure their workplaces are (at a minimum) free from harassment and discrimination under the new requirements.

IMPORTANTLY, the amendments expand forms of harassment from only “verbal or physical” to include “written, auditory, or visual.” Essentially, broadening this part of the definition acknowledges that harassment can come in many forms and provides employees with greater protection from it, no matter how they experience it.

The amendments also specifically state that “sexual

**JENNIFER JACOBS**, a human resource consultant, owns *Adaptiva HR* ([adaptivahr.com](http://adaptivahr.com)), a consulting firm that provides human resources support, management and leadership coaching, and training services for workplaces.

harassment *need not* [my emphasis] be severe or persistent in order to be unlawful pursuant to this subchapter.”

This is a big change. Quid pro quo harassment has always had the one-time-is-enough test. Ostensibly, this definition protects an employee if the employer tries to take some kind of adverse action in response to the employee not putting up with harassment by someone who has decision-making authority over their working conditions.

For a hostile work environment (i.e., not quid pro quo), the conduct was previously determined to be harassment only if it fell into the murky territory of “severe and persistent.” This change puts employees and employers on notice that *all* conduct

■ SEE FEPA LAW CHANGES, C2

DISPATCH



PHOTOILLUSTRATION BASED ON IMAGE BY CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

# Stared down, under siege

When the raccoons grow in numbers and form a gang of marauders, they become a formidable force. And an arrogant one.

**B**RATTLEBORO, VERMONT is a quiet town, for the most part. Sure, we have our share of some of the world’s worst problems, but we handle them well, and the quality of life for most residents is something to be envied.

But I never thought I would be terrorized by a gang of roving masked thugs in my safe little town.

On July 24, as I sat in my hot tub, as I do most nights, a pair of beady eyes framed by a facial mask stared at me over the tub’s shell.

At first I thought I might be having some sort of

**RICHARD DAVIS**, a retired registered nurse and tireless advocate for access to health care, is a former Brattleboro Reformer columnist. He continues to post his writing weekly on his Facebook profile ([bit.ly/575\\_davis](https://bit.ly/575_davis)).

hot-water-related hallucination but, sure enough, a raccoon had climbed the steps to the tub and decided to stare me down.

I YELLED AT the raccoon, and he was unfazed. I threw water at him and he did not move until I sent more water his way. I did not get the sense that he was rabid but that he just had an arrogant attitude toward humans.

As I got out of the hot tub

another raccoon ran by me, and I began to realize that I was witnessing something I had never seen before.

I went into the house and then went to my kitchen door, where the scene unfolded.

Five raccoons were chomping on fallen bird seed below a feeder. I suspect they have been there many nights, but my timing had never allowed me to witness the scene.

I yelled at them and opened the door — and none of them moved. They just ignored me.

I decided to leave them alone to avoid being a victim of their gang mentality.

THIS SCENE helped me to finally know how my composted-trash barrel had been ripped open so many times after I took great pains to secure it, a siege that started about a month before. I would wake up in the morning and see my composted trash scattered all over.

My first effort had me spraying the contents of the barrel and the outside with a bleach

■ SEE GANG OF RACCOONS, C2

VIEWPOINT

# We may not be able to stop the floods. But we can make a difference.

We have just experienced Vermont’s worst climate-related disaster in nearly 100 years. We need to stay safe, pitch in with relief and reconstruction, and address the root causes of the catastrophe.

**A**S I DROVE UP Putney Road through the rain recently, I passed a woman pushing a shopping cart, full of rain-soaked bedding.

Over the days since, I have wondered how she fared. In Brattleboro, the flood was particularly disruptive to people living in tents and mobile homes, exacerbating our housing injustices and underscoring the need for decent stable housing for all Vermonters.

The flood also underscored the need for climate action.

We have just experienced Vermont’s worst climate-related disaster since the flood of 1927, nearly 100 years ago. We need to stay safe, pitch in with relief and reconstruction, and address the root causes of the catastrophe.

Meeting post-flood with fellow Vermonters in Barre, Brattleboro,

**ISAAC EVANS-FRANTZ** is the executive director of *Action Corps*, a national nonpartisan organization that works with Congress in support of U.S. policies to save lives around the world. In his personal capacity, he is a member of the executive committee of the *Sierra Club Vermont Chapter*. He is also the founding chair of the *Vermont Democratic Party’s LGBTQI+ caucus* and was the first student voting member of the *Vermont State Board of Education*.

Montpelier, and beyond, I’m hearing renewed concerns about the climate crisis. The smoky haze, the hot humid air, and the increased number of tick bites were already getting to many

■ SEE FLOOD MEASURES, C2



TOM BUCHANAN/SPECIAL TO THE COMMONS

Londonderry was one of the towns most battered by the flooding throughout the state on July 10.



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## LETTERS FROM READERS

**Opposition to Putney affordable housing project is not about opposition to affordable housing**

RE: "Vt. Supreme Court rejects challenge to Putney housing" [News, Jul. 26]:

I thank and applaud Laura Campbell for all of the time and energy she has given to opposing the proposed housing project in Putney. She and those who have helped and supported her in this effort deserve a lot of credit for stepping up and showing up to meet all of the complex challenges of this important issue.

It is important because it will change Putney in ways that many of its residents will have to live with for years to come.

Let's be clear about one thing: The opposition to this project is not, as some would have you believe, about opposition to affordable housing. I don't know anyone who is against affordable housing. Who in their right mind would be against affordable housing in this day and age?

This is primarily opposition to the site of this proposed building project, which for so many reasons is — well, to put it bluntly — just plain stupid.

Those who argue for this project float various reasons why the site makes sense. But whenever I read their reasons — and there seem to be very few — they just don't seem to hold water.

They mention transportation for people who don't have cars and the proximity to the bus line. But as Julie Tamler pointed out in her letter ["Affordable housing needs to recognize what tenants will need," July 26], the bus is not that convenient. It stops a couple of times in the morning en route to Brattleboro, but if you don't happen to catch the last of those few trips back in the morning, you're basically stranded in Brattleboro for several hours.

And all of this access to shopping in Putney. Well, if you want to do all of your shopping at the Putney Co-op and the Putney General Store, that might work. I love these stores

as much as anyone here in Putney, but I think it might be unrealistic to think that people are going to be entirely reliant on them.

And then there's the argument that Putney businesses are in desperate need of local workers. The paper mill seems to always be hiring, but that's not unusual for a factory in any town. But in downtown Putney, aside from the General Store, The Putney Diner, and The Gleanery, I don't really see many businesses, especially ones that look like they're in need of help. Years ago, Putney had many more little shops and businesses downtown. But now it looks like those few buildings have been purchased and renovated by people who, to date, don't appear to be opening for commerce.

During the many months of this controversy, other viable alternative sites in Putney have been suggested for affordable housing. Yet these options have never been discussed or even seriously considered.

It has been pointed out that Putney has stepped up and provided a great deal of affordable housing per capita. And since this project was proposed, many new units, either completed or under construction, have been added to that number in existing residences.

So it raises the question: Where are the other small towns in the vicinity of Brattleboro in regard to providing affordable housing? But OK, if it has to be in Putney, why aren't these other viable sites not considered? It makes one wonder: Could it be that these other options would not provide a small group of people a large amount of money? It's just a question.

To be honest, I was not wanting to write another letter about this issue. It's not easy to speak your mind about an issue like housing without being misunderstood and, in some cases, vilified.

In my last letter, I was compelled to support those with concerns about the issue of increased crime rates that have occurred in the neighborhoods and on the premises of several of WWHT properties. I was compelled because those who expressed concerns were

repeatedly shamed in an effort to silence them.

My intention was not to suggest that people who live in affordable housing are all criminals. That would be absurd. Rather, I intended to point out a pattern that seems to be connected with many of WWHT buildings and that these incidents have been well documented over the last several years. Nobody is making this stuff up.

As I recall, when this project was being proposed, an architect's rendition appeared in the paper. I remember that it was a handful of small duplexes scattered through the field and across the road. Though it generated opposition even at that early stage, at least it was somewhat palatable in that it made an effort to be less intrusive to the surrounding environment.

However, that initial design has changed drastically. Perhaps to accommodate more units, it has turned into two big buildings on a relatively small space; the only green space in downtown Putney. And across the street, though it doesn't seem to abut the Beatrice Aiken Wildlife Preserve, the proposed parking area for these buildings comes mighty close. I never would have believed that Putney would "pave paradise and put up a parking lot." But apparently, I was wrong.

Two state representatives, one of whom represents Putney, referred to those who oppose this building project as NIMBYs, and one of them also used the word "nasty" to describe those with concerns. So once again, I am compelled to respond.

The first thing I'd like to say to these representatives is that is easy for you to say. Because these buildings are, in fact, not going up in your backyard. I'm happy for both of you that you have, within walking distance of your homes, some nice, pastoral areas and access to nature and wildlife that you can enjoy. How very fortunate. However, I guess those of us who live in downtown Putney are not to be afforded this same opportunity.

I submit this letter at the risk of being referred to as a nasty NIMBY. But the last I checked, those of us who are

in opposition to this proposed building project are also your constituents — at least for now.

And I am frankly appalled and embarrassed that members of the Democratic Party repeatedly stoop to using politically correct rhetoric to shame and silence those who might disagree with them. It's not a good look. And it is not what I grew up knowing the Democratic Party to be.

Maureen Tadlock  
Putney

**This is hardly a NIMBY debate**

RE: "Affordable housing needs to recognize what tenants will need" [Letters, Jul. 26]:

Julie Tamler's letter addresses pertinent social and economic issues associated with the Windham-Windsor Housing Trust's proposed development on Alice Holway Drive. I hope the world will read it.

There is a huge disconnect between the glossy presentations by WWHT for "affordable" housing and comprehending the long-term social, economic, and environmental consequences of building on this particular parcel of land.

This lot was sold to WWHT by Jeff Shumlin, brother of former Gov. Peter Shumlin.

Peter Shumlin appointed Judge Thomas G. Walsh to the Environmental Division of the Vermont Superior Court. Thomas S. Durkin (appointed by former governor Jim Douglas), that court's presiding judge who issued the recent appellate ruling in favor of WWHT, is a longtime resident of Brattleboro.

Several physical realities connected to this development reveal that the town sewer system periodically backs up and discharges adjacent to the Putney Meadows property line. WWHT revised their plan after sinkhole testing was done on the portion of land on the opposite side of Alice Holway Drive, where parking is designated for the complex.

Route 5 traffic does not go 30 mph into the town by any stretch of the imagination. Air quality will not be monitored

or tested from idling cars due to increased traffic to and from the complex. That was considered outside the scope of concern by the Environmental Review Board's decision to OK the permit for the project.

There are serious environmental and legitimate land-use issues raised by Ms. Campbell. To those who live near the gardens, this is hardly a NIMBY debate — sorry, State Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun. There are valid objections from residents who live nowhere near this lot. NIMBY is a manufactured buzzword that has never accomplished anything but to polarize people. Not everyone can live near a proposed development site yet are adept at determining long-range effects enumerated in the appeal.

Environmentalists have been arrogantly accused in the press of impeding progress regarding this proposed build. Environmentalists want sustainable progress. There are alternatives.

All the promotional brochures will not persuade anyone that this complex will engender a healthy and safe beacon for families in need or that the community garden will survive and thrive. Because WWHT and the organization's supporters say it will does not mean it is or it will be so.

Barb Raskin  
Putney

**Property lines meet at the center of the road**

RE: "Vt. Supreme Court rejects challenge to Putney housing" [News, Jul. 26]:

Your article mentions a complaint by Laura Campbell about "WWHT's 'startling' characterization of lots on opposite sides of Carol Brown Way as 'contiguous,' when they touch at no point; rather, the lots are separated by a busy thoroughfare owned and maintained by the town of Putney."

Ms. Campbell may be ignorant of the standard relationship of property lines to town roads in Vermont: each lot has its boundary at the street's center. Two lots on opposite sides of a street do touch there.

As a point of fact under

Vermont law, Ms. Campbell's claim appears false.

Whit Blauvelt  
Bellows Falls

**What is the board of education in Florida trying to protect?**

The Florida Board of Education has set a new standard of how history will be taught in Florida schools. This comes after a long assault on the parts of history that tell the truth about the United States' dark past of slavery.

The board's new account is that African-Americans "learned skills for their own personal benefit." This implies that slavery was not that bad after all, and it may have even been good for those who were enslaved.

It is hard to believe that those who are in charge of "education" could be so... what can we say? Blind? Corrupt, racist, dumb, and, of course, uneducated?

Every country has its dark side and, therefore, its dark side of history. Something that was said in Florida was telling the truth would make white students feel bad. (Of course, it wasn't put that way, but that was the gist of the idea.) It *should* make white students feel bad, as it should anyone who looks at what happened in the South in the era of slavery.

Denying history because it might make one feel bad is folly and fraudulence. What happened, happened. We have only one of two ways to deal with this: acknowledge it or ignore it. What would we be ignoring? That humanity is capable of great wrongs and even evil.

When you're in high school, you need to know about what happened, even if it makes your ancestor look wicked, immoral, depraved, cruel, ruthless, and shameless. If they were, they were. The lesson is that humanity has a choice as to how it acts.

I can't imagine what the board of education in Florida is trying to protect. Could it be that some of the racism that existed in the past are still with us? Could it be that they don't want white people to look as bad as

■ STORY CONTINUES ON FACING PAGE

**■ Gang of raccoons**

FROM SECTION FRONT

solution.

The next day was no different from the day before, and I had to use more compost bags to gather up my waste once again. The next day, I took two bungee cords and tried to tighten the barrel. That effort was just as successful as the bleach spray.

A day later, I took a long piece of rope and tied it around the barrel a number of times and secured a few knots. I was sure this would work. The first

night the trash was untouched, but on the second night it was the same old scene again.

I started looking for recommendations online but I had tried all the suggested methods.

Then I had a new idea. I forced the barrel at an odd angle under the steps near our door, and it took a great deal of force to release the barrel. I was sure this was going to work and, for a few nights, it did.

I figured it must have been a

raccoon pilfering my waste, and I was almost convinced I had beat him at this crazy game. But after securing the barrel on day three, I awoke to find the trash all over the place.

How could a raccoon be so strong to be able to move that barrel? Could a bear be visiting my trash? Was a human playing out some sort of weird vendetta?

I finally had to give up and do what I had been putting off. I now keep my compost barrel in the cellar behind a bulkhead door.

IT IS CLEAR to me now that the raccoon gang, and not one lone raccoon, has been vandalizing my trash. They have been a formidable force.

I still don't have a solution for securing the barrel I have to leave curbside the night before pickup.

I never thought that such a gang would be terrorizing me in Brattleboro, Vermont.

**■ Flood measures**

FROM SECTION FRONT

of us.

But the flooding took the concerns to a new level, sounding the alarm once again about our climate.

So what can we do?

IN VERMONT, transportation, heating, and cooling together make up three quarters of our greenhouse gas emissions. These are the sectors that drive climate change the most, and Vermont should focus our attention there first.

For transportation, swapping out cars and trucks for electric vehicles is not enough. We need to ensure easy access to charging stations and make it easier to walk, bike, and take public transit to meet our needs. We can build new housing near public transportation or within walking distance of jobs, stores, and community centers.

For heating and cooling buildings, we can weatherize them with better insulation

and support the installation of heat pumps and more efficient wood stoves.

As Vermont implements the Affordable Heat Act, we must keep an eye on the Public Utility Commission, making sure its policies actually lower emissions — and do so in a way that is affordable for low-income and middle-class Vermonters.

We must stand up to the self-serving fossil-fuel industry lobby.

DURING MY U.S. Senate campaign, I called for a transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030. This is ambitious, necessary, and possible. A renewable energy standard in Vermont can do that here — while boosting solar, wind, and battery storage with good union jobs — and move us away from natural gas and commercial biofuel.

In light of the tremendous damage from the recent

floods, big oil should pay.

Last year, the largest oil companies raked in over \$200 billion in profits while Vermonters paid bank-breaking prices at the pump. Exxon has known about climate change for half a century and worked to keep the science from the public — much as the tobacco companies suppressed data about smoking.

Big oil should clean up the mess it has created, foot the bill for the damages we are seeing, and help us make the changes we need, like construction that protects against future floods and heat pumps and insulation for our homes.

Vermont is becoming warmer and wetter. We may not be able to stop the floods. But we can make a difference, helping save middle class and low-income families money, while making our communities stronger and doing our part to tackle the drivers of the climate emergency.

**■ FEPA law changes**

FROM SECTION FRONT

meeting the definition of harassment has the same occurrence threshold.

With regard to the impact the conduct may have on an employee as part of determining if it is harassment, the amendments make the following deletions, noted in brackets:

"The conduct has the purpose or effect of [substantially] interfering with an individual's work [performance] or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment."

Again, this is a significant change.

THE AMENDMENTS are striving to ensure that work environments are not places where employees need to tolerate harassing behavior at any level and for any length of time. It need not be "substantial," and it need not impede their ability to do their job. It is sufficient that it happens to them or even exists around them.

As HR consultants and trainers, we sometimes get pushback as we walk through examples of how harassment might look in the workplace. We have had individuals actually say, "So I can't say anything anymore!?"

After a few too many times hearing this, one time I said, "Yes. If the only things that have been coming out of your mouth qualify as harassment under these definitions, you should not say anything."

Maybe not the best response, but really — aren't there a whole range of things we can say and do at work that do not come anywhere near harassment?

And why should one person's preference to talk "however they want" take precedence over another person being treated in a way that is/feels derogatory, demeaning, dehumanizing, or objectifying or is discriminatory in any way?

FORTUNATELY, I suspect that most employers have a much higher bar for behavior and workplace culture than that. And yet, even those may be feeling a little squeamish about the changes.

Understandably, some may also share the sentiment, "I just want everyone to show up and behave like adults," a phrase we have heard on a few occasions.

I get that frustration. However, in my experience the

employers who not only have the fewest interpersonal issues in the workplace (including zero allegations of harassment) but also have a truly healthy and vibrant culture are the ones who cultivate an intentional place to work.

These employers include thorough onboarding for new employees, a meaningful process for performance reviews, manager training and development, and actively soliciting employee feedback about the workplace and its leaders.

Oddly, mandated harassment training was not included in these updates. However, it seems unwise to avoid this simply because it is not required.

EMPLOYEES and SUPERVISORS alike need to understand the recent changes to the law. Keep in mind that Vermont's law applies not only to coworker-and-supervisor interactions but to everyone who has anything to do with the employer: customers, clients, vendors, volunteers, board members.

Everyone. Lastly, when providing training and sharing expectations, make sure attention is given to

what is permitted and desired, not just what is not. What actions and practices will foster the kind of environment you and others want to spend so much of your time in (and at the same time will decrease the likelihood of harassment)?

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS need to do now?

1. Amend or replace your old harassment policy.

2. Tell employees about the revised policy as soon as possible. (Don't just put it in the handbook.)

3. Begin planning for how you will provide training about the changes. Consider training that is broader in scope than simply understanding legal definitions.

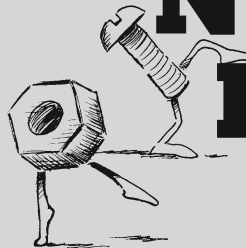
4. Look at how pay decisions are made to ensure they are not inadvertently discriminatory.

5. Take all complaints and/or suspected behavior concerning harassment and discrimination seriously. Remember, an employer has a duty to know what is going on and take corrective action whether anyone complains about harassment or not.



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they were? Could it be that they themselves are unwilling to look history in the eyes and see it all — the good, the bad, and the ugly?

Robert Fritz Newfane

Brattleboro's EMS decision was shortsighted, horrendously wrong bureaucratic expansion

I have been silent on the Selectboard's termination of the Rescue Inc. contract in favor of the town taking over EMS, but it is now time for me to speak on the issue.

This was a shortsighted and horrendously wrong decision, because the numbers just do not make sense.

The town was paying Rescue \$280,000 annually for the EMS Services.

Per a recent article in the Reformer, here are the costs to switch over:

- Start up costs \$1,000,000 from Stimulus money
• Operational costs per year: \$950,000
• Added staff: \$717,000
• Other costs: \$236,000
• Total cost: \$2,903,000
• Costs after year 1: \$1,903,000
• Projected revenue: \$837,000
• Annual loss after year 1: \$1,066,000

The result of this decision would be annual losses of around \$1 million plus the irresponsible use of the \$1 million in stimulus money, which could be used for far better purposes.

Adding six or seven new staff members means increased salaries, benefits, and retirement obligations for the town down the road. VtDigger reported recently that our town has had 16 firefighters leave their employment in the past year and we are having difficulty in filling new positions and are currently understaffed and staffed with many inexperienced officers.

Town property taxes just went up 2.74% for commercial properties and 5.46% for homes. Home values and rental costs have skyrocketed.

Where will all this end? Brattleboro already has some of the highest taxes in the state and is well on its way to becoming completely unaffordable, if it isn't already.

I do not know where we go from here, but where we are now is unacceptable.

The Selectboard needs to take a thorough look at this regretful decision and see that it is really a large bureaucratic expanse of town government with short- and long-term increased costs to the municipality.

It is time for the people of Brattleboro to speak up, and I urge all interested residents to get educated and do just that at the public hearing in September.

Hugh W. Barber Brattleboro

An excellent column

RE: "A step back in time, a space for girls to be themselves" [News, Jul. 12]:

I was shopping in Claremont, New Hampshire yesterday and picked up a copy of The Commons for a local update on the storm damage — very well covered.

Then I read Fran Lynngaard Hansen's piece on the Green Mountain Camp for Girls. What a wonderful article! (And, for that matter, what a wonderful place!)

Extremely well written, it takes you into the camp and tells a story about a place I would have thought did not exist anymore.

Excellent work, Fran. Thank you.

Harry Wright Bradford, N.H.

Our motivation to keep Amber present in our lives is all the stronger

The year 2023 has been a successful one for the Walk for Amber Scholarship. Between the walk and raffle on June 4 and our Welcome Center fundraiser on June 24, we raised just over \$4,000.

On June 15, we awarded three Amber Bernier Scholarships — you go Madison, Ella, and Brooke! — bringing our total to 57 since giving out the first scholarship in 2004.

We are so grateful to our community for all the support and care and to donors for supporting these events. And we are so proud of our scholarship recipients who by their character and determination do great honor to our daughter's memory.

Finally, we would like to share our remarks prior to the walk. We hope it gives a sense of our journey as we grieve and honor our precious daughter, and our gratitude to this special community:

Sept. 21, 2021. It is a day that passed unremarkably in our lives. We looked back at the news of that day: The U.S. lifted the travel ban on vaccinated foreign travelers. Pfizer announced that its BioNTech vaccine was safe for children. The U.S. death toll from the pandemic equaled that of the 1918 Spanish flu. And, more ominously, U.S. border patrol agents on horseback were videotaped using whips to drive back Haitian immigrants at the U.S.-Mexican border.

Not in the headlines — and honestly, not even in our awareness — Sept. 21, 2021 marked 17 years, 6 months, and 19 days since the day we lost Amber. It was the day that we started living our lives without Amber longer than we had her in our lives.

So, from that day to the present, we are in a different place: still missing, still longing, and still profoundly aware that having lost her is unreasonable — literally, beyond reason.

Yet as the life we knew before becomes more distant, our motivation to keep Amber present in our lives is all the stronger. The Amber Bernier Scholarship is a living memorial: a memorial to her life, to her generosity, to her love of friends and family, and to her sense of fairness and equity.

Truly, we cannot express how deeply grateful we are to you for joining us as we give back to this wonderful community, invest in the dreams of our youth, and honor the memory of our daughter.

Dan and Debbie Bernier-Sontag Brattleboro

We're number ... 38?

In a recent Oxfam study on worker well-being, the United States came in last of the 38 countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The countries in the OECD include not only western European countries, Canada, and the U.S., but also Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, Poland, Hungary, Turkey, Israel, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

Since most of us are workers, this is a big deal. Most people thought the U.S. was at the top. Why is it at the bottom?

For at least the last 40 years, the U.S. has steadily eliminated worker's rights and increased protections for large corporations. Safety standards have also dropped because the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has experienced repeated funding cuts.

Unions have been undermined so that workers have no voice. Taxes for the rich have decreased while taxes for rest of us have gone up. Most of our representatives in Washington act like they believe that the well-being of the people of the country is not the business of government.

Some state directly that taking care of people is not what they are about and supporting the military and the wealthy and attacking marginalized people is the proper role of government.

As a result, we have increased poverty and homelessness, and many people are working long hours and still not making enough money to get by on.

Even people in our country who seem to be doing well are often one illness or injury away from becoming homeless.

Is this why the Centers for

Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) says life expectancy is dropping in the U.S. and why our rates fall below those of most industrialized countries?

If you are a worker and aren't in the top 20% financially, does how you vote affect your personal quality of life and the lives of the people in your community in a positive or negative way? Are you okay with being on the bottom in terms of worker well-being?

If you want more information on this study, visit bit.ly/725-study.

Norman Emmons Charlestown, N.H.

You don't need lots of money or glitz to create equality activism

Throughout four weeks in June, the village of Bellows Falls celebrated the queer community and kept the legacy of the Andrews Inn alive.

So what did Bellows Falls Pride actually do to honor Pride month? By revering our

history and staying true to who we are, engaging locally with merchants, inviting aligned nonprofits to collaborate, and honoring the seminal decade of activism by the founders of the Andrews Inn, our plans unfolded organically and powerfully on a local level.

We began by booking four classic LGBTQ-themed films at the beautiful Bellows Falls Opera House. We paid homage to the Andrews Inn with a founder's photo exhibit. We supported a Pride Whistlestop Tour through all 10 Amtrak Vermont stations, with a crowd of more than 30 people in Bellows Falls — and were joined by Vermont's U.S. representative, Becca Balint!

We purchased a 30-foot rainbow banner that appeared first at the train station and now hangs proudly above the downtown Square. We held a T-Dance at the incredible Field Center.

Through collaboration with the town administration, Selectboard, public works department, and the local and

state historic preservation community, we gained permission to relocate the Andrews Inn historic marker so it can be seen easily from the street.

Finally, we collaborated with the Bellows Falls Moose Lodge to host a community dance, Love Will Keep Us Together, with music by DJ extraordinaire Uncle Thiccc (a.k.a. "Wade the Great" Garrett).

Bellows Falls Pride has been the best volunteer-led effort I've experienced throughout my 40-plus years of community activism. It was heartwarming to see longtime friends from Keene make their way across the river to join in our celebrations and to welcome so many new faces.

We owe a debt of gratitude to so many sponsors and supporters. Our fantastic downtown merchants fully embraced Pride month, decorated their storefronts and created beautiful displays. It was inspiring to be met with strong enthusiasm and support by others whose only investment was in doing the right thing.

Bellows Falls Pride was

birthed without fanfare and proves that you don't need a lot of money or glitz to create an opportunity for equality activism. Anyone can have an impact simply by showing up — more important than ever as long-held rights for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities, and women, are now being eroded at lightning speed.

Which raises the question: How will you be able to say that you made a difference?

In light of the recent Supreme Court ruling codifying discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons, the effectiveness of collective action at a grassroots level is more important than ever. Watch Facebook and visit our website for up to date information, bellowsfallspride.com

In solidarity, BELLOW FALLS PRIDE Bellows Falls

Susan MacNeil, Aaron Almanza, Michael Bruno, Gail Golec, Betsy Thurston, Elijah Zimmer

BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"The Me-Less Crossword"

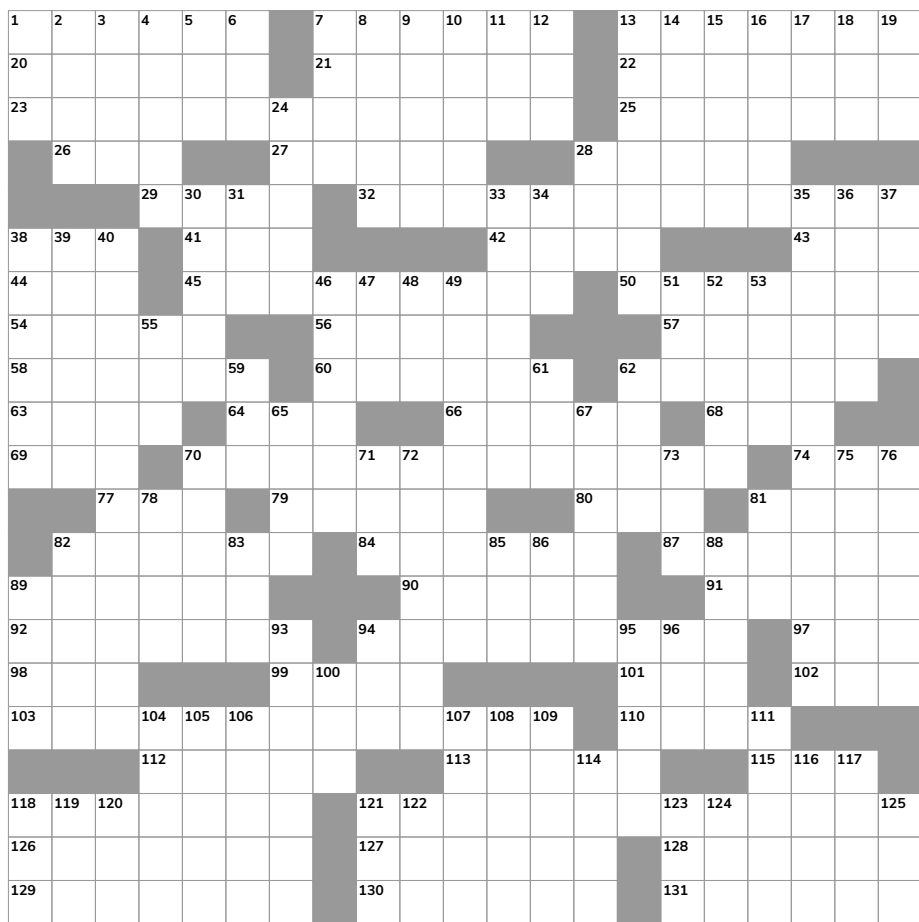
Across

- 1. Readily available
7. Place to spend balboas
13. Moved very slowly
20. Actress Waller-Bridge
21. Certain Tibetan
22. Duke Ellington tune whose title is Spanish for "lost"
23. Call back a major UK music festival?
25. Haircut that makes you cry?
26. Long March leader
27. No-brainer course
28. Places that sell flatboxes
29. Biblical preposition
32. Singer Jones spinning a dreidel, say?
38. Close pal
41. "Catch-22" pilot
42. Lunchtime, often
43. Versified tribute
44. Historic time
45. Verdi opera
50. Responsibly green holiday choice
54. Lawyer's work
56. Cavalry weapon
57. Let out a sigh, say
58. Butcher's collection
60. Saturate
62. Freelancer's employer
63. Move gradually
64. See 59-Down
66. Of the kidneys
68. Word with "bod" or "joke"
69. Poker player Bilzerian
70. Breakfast cereal partially made with leafy greens?
74. Little scribble
77. "Stumped," in texts
79. Former Delta rival
80. London lav
81. Last letter in the NATO alphabet
82. Banded rock
84. Victors' gestures
87. Water-heating tank
89. Milne character
90. Cocoon dwellers
91. Strike caller?
92. Ahead
94. Citrus-flavored dessert
97. Yalie
98. GI entertainers
99. Kinks bassist Quaipe
101. Badger repeatedly
102. Hamilton's bill
103. Smelly and chilly actress Merrill?
110. Senator Tillis
112. Biblical book after Micah
113. Zaps in the microwave
115. Bern's river
118. Chaperone "illmatic" rapper?
121. Tally smashed in?
126. Steven, in Strasbourg
127. \_ rancheros (Tex-Mex breakfast)
128. Strange bird
129. Tends a tabby
130. "Como la Flor" singer
131. Native American unit of money

- 8. Make \_ of (flub up)
9. Punk rock activist Tolokonnikova
10. From India, say
11. Anthropology subject
12. Geom. measure
13. Gonzaga's city
14. Singer/rapper Cherry
15. "Succession" actor \_ Moayed
16. Emphatic assertion
17. Architect Maya
18. Teaching deg.
19. Scooby\_
24. Corporate shuffle
28. When doubled, a '65 Dixie Cups hit
30. Like Frigga
31. Prefix with state
33. More disloyal
34. Pro Bowl kicker Youngho \_
35. Marsupial with actress Stevenson?
36. Not for kids
37. "You'll need this"
38. Supported on Kickstarter
39. Land on Lake Victoria
40. Doing new decorations of Korean currency?
46. Egyptian god of death
47. Hasty escape
48. Outward flow
49. Glass house?
51. Movie frame
52. Nitrous \_
53. "\_\_\_-Team"
55. First apple eater
59. With 64-Across, certain pronouns
61. Cut off
62. Advertiser's award
65. Outback birds
67. Ready to go
70. Lift pass buyer
71. Cleveland cager
72. Fast, in some tech product ads
73. Watch pocket

Down

- 1. Jazz Appreciation mo.
2. Not us
3. Host Kotb
4. All the vowels
5. Red Auerbach Trophy grp.
6. Viña \_ Mar, Chile
7. Trial opener

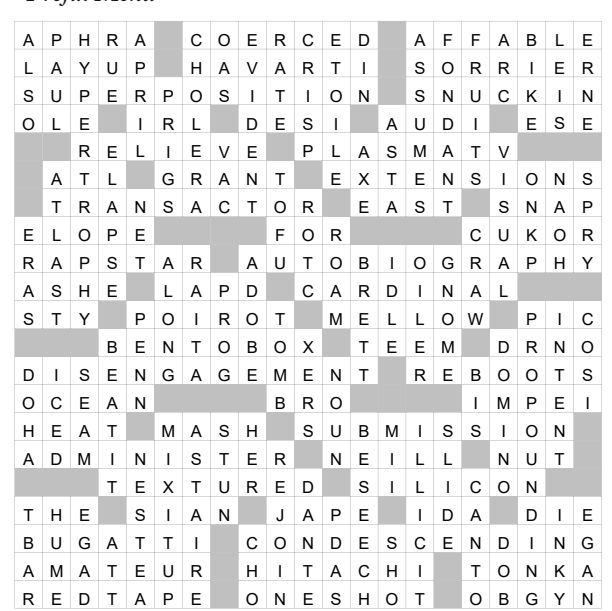


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- 75. La Liga cheer
76. Submit, as a paper
78. "3 Feet High And Rising" rappers, for short
81. Light red
82. Light name in cutlery
83. Sex ed subj.
85. Mail place: Abbr.
86. Alternative to pakora
88. Expenditure
89. Flouncy footrest
93. Husbands and wives
94. Company letters?
95. More than ready to get started
96. Root word?
100. Graceful tree
104. Jumping joints
105. Greek New Age keyboardist
106. Protestors' shout
107. Spy's collection
108. Tres x tres
109. Goodyear's home
111. Coated candy
114. Princess who caused an eternal winter
116. On the summit of
117. Contacts company
118. Investigator, briefly
119. Words before "standstill" or "loss"
120. Hobbyist's package
121. Sounds of hesitation
122. Day before Lent: Abbr.
123. \_ Jones
124. Author LeShan
125. Blue voter, briefly

Last issue's solution

"Prefix Menu"



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**COLUMN** | Sports Roundup



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO

The Brattleboro Little League 12-U All-Stars congratulate the 10-U team as they took their victory lap after winning the District 2 tournament on July 15 at South Main Street Field. All three of Brattleboro's All-Star teams played in state tournaments this summer.

# Post 5, Little League All-Stars fall short in their respective quests for state title

Brattleboro Post 5 fielded a solid team this year with plenty of good pitching, a steady defense, and timely hitting. Their goal was to win the Vermont American Legion Baseball tournament, and they had all the pieces needed to succeed.

Unfortunately, Essex Post 91 also possesses all those ingredients and once again stood in the way of Brattleboro's quest for its first state title since 2019.

Post 5 did their best, but Essex would not be denied as Post 91 won their third straight state Legion title last week in Castleton.

Brattleboro got trounced in their first meeting with Essex, a 16-0 win in five innings on July 24. But Post 5 stayed focused and earned the right to face Post 91 for the title with a 10-7 victory over Lakes Region on July 25.

After giving up three runs in the top of the second inning, Post 5 responded with seven runs in the bottom of the second, with Aidan Davis hitting a two-run double as one of Brattleboro's five hits in the frame.

Lakes Region scored another run off Post 5 starting pitcher Jackson Emery before Brattleboro coach Eric Libardoni turned to Davis to



**RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT**, deputy editor of this newspaper, has written this column since 2010 and has covered sports in Windham County since the 1980s. Readers can send him sports information at [news@commonsnews.org](mailto:news@commonsnews.org).

close out the game. A three-run double by Lakes Region's Kyle James whittled the Post 5 lead to 8-7, but Davis held them scoreless the rest of the way.

However, Brattleboro did have to survive one last scare. Lakes Region loaded the bases with one out in the seventh. Alex Bingham, who was being saved for the next game against Essex, came in to get out of the jam with a strikeout and a pick off of a baserunner at first to end the game.

As planned, Bingham got the start on the mound for the July 26 game against Essex. Post 5 was faced with having to beat Essex twice in the same day to dethrone the reigning champs, and Bingham gave Brattleboro a chance by holding Post 91 to seven hits over five innings.

Unfortunately, Essex had its ace pitcher Andrew Goodrich rested and ready to take on Brattleboro. Goodrich, the tournament MVP in 2021 and 2022, struck out the first five batters he faced and finished with a total of 13 strikeouts.

It wasn't until the sixth inning that Brattleboro finally had some success at the plate against Goodrich. Zinabu McNeice singled, Davis hit a double, and Turner Clews got them both home with a single to cut the Essex lead to 5-2. Brattleboro would get no closer, and the 5-2 victory gave Post 91 the state title and a trip to this week's Northeast Regional Tournament at Fitton Field in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Brattleboro players selected for the All-Tournament Team were Turner Clews at catcher, Alex Bingham at shortstop, and Aidan Davis and Harper Cutler as outfielders.

This is the last season for Clews, Bingham, and McNeice, as they have aged out of Legion ball. Losing these three players is tough, but the 2024 season looks bright for Post 5. Half of this season's team was 16 years old, so they have two more seasons of eligibility if they choose to continue with Post 5. Davis, the regular season MVP in the Southern Division, has one more year of eligibility and should pick up valuable experience playing for Keene State College, while Emery and Jolie and Jayke Glidden should be the core of a strong pitching staff.

By contrast, Essex will be replacing as many as eight players in 2024, but the youth baseball program in that town seems to produce a steady stream of great players — such as the Little Leaguers you'll read about shortly. There is little doubt Essex will be vying for a fourth straight Legion championship next year, and is there is little doubt that Brattleboro will be there waiting for them.

### Little League roundup

First, I'll start by correcting a mistake from last week's roundup, where my misinterpretation of the Little League 12-U state tournament schedule still had Brattleboro alive in the tournament after losing to St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County in the first weekend of play.

Unfortunately, those two losses in the double-elimination tournament ended the playoff run for Brattleboro in the first weekend of play. The District 2 champs deserved a better fate, but they delivered a lot of good memories for their fans in the

District tournament and you'll likely be seeing many of these players' names popping up in this space in the years to come.

While the 12-U team had an early exit from their tournament, the 10-U team reached the state final with a 12-2 win in five innings over Barre Red on July 28 in Foster Road Park in Essex.

Faced with a win-or-go-home game in this double-elimination tournament, Brattleboro emphatically won this game by pounding out 21 hits. Gavin Carpenter had four hits, while Zealand Wentworth, Dawson Newton, and Cole Systo all had three hits, and Cooper Deyo, Owen Malouin, and Brayson George all had two hits. Simon Potter was the winning pitcher, with Jack Bennett finishing up in relief.

That set up the championship game against undefeated Essex on July 29, and Essex won the title with a 3-0 win over Brattleboro. In contrast to the fireworks at the plate against Barre, Brattleboro managed only two hits — by Newton and Malouin — and four walks.

Essex starting pitcher Joe Taylor-Marsh gave up both hits; he threw 4 2/3 innings before giving way to relievers Dylan Markey and David Bent, who got the final four outs to preserve the win. Brattleboro's best chance to score came in the fifth inning, when they loaded the bases with two outs. Markey came in and got the final out on a called third strike to end the inning.

Essex got its three runs in the third inning against Newton, Brattleboro's starting pitcher. He scattered nine hits over 4 2/3 innings of work. Bennett finished up and held Essex scoreless through his stint on the mound.

It was the second straight year that Essex has won the 10-U state championship, and the bulk of this year's team played as 9-year-olds for last year's champions. Essex now advances to the East Region tournament in Cranston, Rhode Island.

The Brattleboro 11-U team was sort of under the radar this season. Since they got an automatic berth in the state tournament for District 2, they never had a playoff game at South Main Street Field.

In the state tournament in Northfield, Brattleboro opened with a 12-1 win over Granite Valley. Bentley Sparks was the winning pitcher, while Eli Depue finished up in relief. Sparks and Elide Coplan each

had three hits, while Owen Houghton and Depue had two hits each.

Game 2 was an 8-5 loss to Champlain Valley, as Brattleboro saw an early 4-0 lead vanish with a strong comeback by the victors. Coplan took the loss for Brattleboro.

Brattleboro again faced Champlain Valley in the elimination game, and fell short, 3-2, in seven innings. Vinny Doell and Sparks split the pitching duties; Doell struck out 10 batters over 4 1/3 innings, while Sparks finished up. A throwing error in the bottom of the seventh would provide the margin of victory for Champlain Valley.

It's a great achievement to have all three Brattleboro Little League All-Star teams play in their respective state tournaments. They held their own against some of the best youth baseball programs in the state, and while all three fell short of their championships, these teams upheld the tradition of Brattleboro as one of the great baseball towns of Vermont.

### Shrine game is this weekend

This year's Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl will be held at the Dave Wolk Stadium at Vermont State University-Castleton on Saturday, Aug. 5. Kickoff is slated for 11:30 a.m.

Training camp opened up earlier this week for the top high school football players from Vermont and New Hampshire who will be playing in this game, a fundraiser for the Shriner's Children's Hospitals in Boston and Springfield, Massachusetts and Montreal, Quebec.

Four Bellows Falls players and one Brattleboro player will be on this year's Vermont squad. Bellows Falls is sending running back Caden Haskell, center Jake Moore, quarterback Jamison Nystrom, and guard Dillon Perry, while Brattleboro is sending wide receiver Tristan Evans.

Windsor's Greg Balch will be coaching the Vermont team. It's his second stint as a Shrine coach; the first came in 2018 when he led Vermont to a 24-13 win. For more information about the game and where to get your tickets, visit [shrinemaplesugarbowl.com](http://shrinemaplesugarbowl.com).

### High water cancels Riverfest

The West and Connecticut rivers are not particularly safe for boaters, as both high water

and higher than normal contamination caused by runoff from the July 9-10 floods remain a problem.

That, along with some planned repairs to the flashboards on the Bellows Falls Dam that further affected water levels, led the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) to pull the plug on its second annual Riverfest, which would have been held this past weekend.

The murky river water still looks like an iced coffee with a couple of shots of half-and-half, and it will likely remain that way until we get a long stretch of dry weather. The CRC was wise to wait until next year to have its celebration of the Connecticut River and the recreational opportunities it provides.

### Senior bowling roundup

Week 13 of the spring/summer season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on July 27 saw Five Pins (45-20) have another 5-0 week to remain in first place. Slo Movers (43-22) went 4-1 to move into second place, followed by No Splits (41.5-23.5), Turkeys (39-21), Skippers (36.5-28.5), Stayin' Alive (31.5-33.5), The Bowlers (30-35), High Rollers (27-38), and Wrecking Crew (24.5-40.5).

Shirley Aiken had the women's high handicap game (270) and series (731). Ron Cargill had the men's high handicap game (268), while Warren Corriveau Sr. had the high handicap series (691). Wrecking Crew had the high team handicap game (899), while Five Pins had the high team handicap series (2,546).

Chuck Adams led the men's scratch scoring with a 640 series that featured games of 221, 212, and 207, while Corriveau had a 628 series with games of 221, 216, and 191. Robert Rigby had a 528 series with a 215 game, John Walker had a 508 series with a 180 game, and Duane Schillemat had a 504 series. Bob Uccello had a 198 game, Fred Ashworth had a 184 game, and Wayne Randall had a 180 game.

Aiken had the women's high scratch game (210) and series (551). She also had games of 174 and 167, while Carol Gloski rolled a 186.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT COMMONS FILE PHOTO

Brattleboro's Gavin Carpenter went 4-for-4 with two RBIs and a run scored in helping to lead the All-Stars for a 12-2 win over Barre Red in the state Little League 10-U tournament in Essex on July 28.

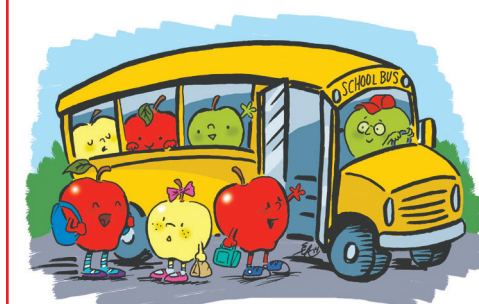


Illustration by Sarah Adam

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