

Seven candidates vie for Brattleboro Selectboard

■ Candidate profiles, A4–A5

Windham Southeast School Board elections

■ Candidate profiles, A2–A3

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BELLOWS FALLS

Principal finds support from school community

Broadley will leave in June; school board hears pleas to try to keep him from doing so

By Woody Laidlaw
Community News Service, for The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS — Residents, teachers, and students turned out in recent weeks to persuade the Bellows Falls Union High School and Windham Northeast Supervisory Union (WNESU) boards to reinstate Principal John Broadley, who in a letter last month announced that he will not seek to renew his contract.

The larger-than-normal turnouts at the board meetings on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 saw parents express concern about interruptions and continuity for their children as Broadley joins a number of employees leaving the district since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Departures include a superintendent, principals at both the high-school and middle-school levels, and a math teacher, on top of a persistent lack of substitutes.

Parent Amanda Demaris has three children who have gone through the district system, two of whom could be returning to schools with no principal in the fall.

“If he has any shortcomings, I think it would be better to work with a person that is involved in this community,” she said of Broadley at the meeting on Jan. 31.

That sentiment was echoed at both meetings by numerous other members of the community, including Bellows Falls High School math teacher Susan Swan and Bellows Falls Middle School student Dawn Stewart, both of whom strongly support Broadley’s reinstatement.

The community response stems from feeling blindsided by the BFUHS board’s decision to accept Broadley’s retirement letter and a perceived lack of transparency by the board in the process. The agenda for the meeting at which Broadley’s letter was read makes minimal reference to the retirement, even though it was included in the meeting minutes.

Next steps in hiring

A quiet murmur broke out among attendees when WNESU Superintendent Andy Haas revealed a proposal for how the district would go about hiring a

■ SEE WORK-BASED LEARNING, A7



House Majority Leader Emily Long, D-Newfane, is starting her second biennium as the second-in-command in the Vermont House.

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

NEWFANE—With the Vermont State House full of newcomers — roughly one-third of the legislators are first-termers this year — House Majority Leader Emily Long has her work cut out for her.

The Newfane Democrat is now in her fifth term in Montpelier, where she represents her hometown of

Newfane, plus Townshend and Marlboro. This is her second term as House Majority Leader — a job, she says, that requires her to keep the legislative process humming along.

“The majority leader is the head of the majority caucus, which in our case is the Democratic caucus,” Long said. “And my role is to basically make sure that our work runs smoothly.”

“I keep things focused,” she continued. “I step in for the

speaker as presiding officer when needed. I help with training for members, making sure that people know the process.”

This year, with so many newcomers, orientation has been particularly key. Speaker of the House Jill Krowinski and her staff partnered with the Snelling Center for Government — a nonpartisan nonprofit based in Williston that champions the late Gov. Richard Snelling’s “vision of government that works for the people of Vermont” — to

Unified PARTY, unified VOICE

In her second term as House majority leader, Newfane’s Emily Long works to get new Democratic legislators up to speed and create consensus and unity with their party

provide four days of intense training.

“When you’ve never been in the building, been in session, or been here as a legislator, it’s a lot different,” Long said. “You have people surrounding you all the time, tapping you on the shoulder and saying they want to meet with you.”

Long has spent the early part of the session teaching people the process of being a legislator — a demanding job, she said.

■ SEE LONG, A7

The WORKPLACE as CLASSROOM

Work-Based Learning program at Bellows Falls Union High School prepares students for a variety of careers

By Robert F. Smith
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS — Heather Waryas is coordinator of Bellows Falls Union High School’s Work Based Learning Program, which put students into actual work situations to learn the skills needed to develop a career.

The work-based learning idea is not new — students have apprenticed in the community for centuries. It has had any number of names, depending on the culture or country: apprenticeship, internship, on-the-job training, work integrated training, vocational education, and others.

But this ancient training technique just might be part of the answer to a serious problem facing the country.

In technically skilled manual trades like carpenters, electricians, and mechanics, and others fields such as nursing, firefighting, policing, accounting, cooking, and journalism, there is a need for new workers. This program can give students an early start toward a career.

Waryas, whose position has been newly expanded to full-time, said that 26 local businesses have been involved in the BFUHS program, “going above

and beyond” to help make the program work. She said that 25% of the school’s students have been “actively engaged” in the program.

Taking students out of the classroom and exposing them earlier in their educational years to actual work situations is receiving greater and greater stress in our local school systems.

One business owner described it in very practical terms: “It’s being around people who get up and go to work every day.”

What is a successful education?

“The success of a high school is routinely measured by what percentage of students go on to college or secondary education,” Waryas said, “Yet there’s really no follow-up on how many graduate from college, what they have for careers, or how happy they are



Springfield Fire Chief Pail Stegner welcomes Green Mountain Union High School Senior Noah Cherubini of Chester, a student in the Health Services Program at the Howard Dean Technical Center in Springfield. Cherubini was visiting the Fire Department and observing their work as part of the Work-Based Learning Program offered by area high schools and tech centers.

with their choices.” Waryas said that the work-based learning model is taking a different approach.

“What means success for our students,” she said, “is that they find their why. Why am I going

to school? Why am I studying this subject? Why do I have to do homework? Why is it important that I show up to school and get to classes on time?”

The school’s goal is for all students to have a career plan for

after graduation, far beyond simply a general plan for some students to get into the college of their choice.

“Based on their interests and skill sets, we want to help all

■ SEE WORK-BASED LEARNING, A8

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

Three races and a solo bid for Windham Southeast School Board

March 7 election sees four seats to be filled in a district still grappling with post-pandemic learning challenges, removal of a principal, a new superintendent, and an ongoing investigation of decades-long alleged sexual abuse

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Windham Southeast School District (WSED) voters will see three races for school board directors in the Tuesday, March 7 election. One candidate is running unopposed for a fourth seat on the board.

Kimberly Price and Jaci Reynolds are vying to represent Brattleboro in the three-year seat being vacated by Emily Murphy-Kaur. Also, Robin Morgan — appointed last fall to the seat held by David Schoales, who resigned in October — is being challenged to complete the one year remaining on that three-year term

Robin Morgan

Morgan moved here from Chicago in 2010 and has been involved in community organizing, including working with Lost River Racial Justice.

She is a music teacher, leading music and movement classes for caregivers and children, including in preschools and day cares, as well as teaching private lessons in voice and piano.

Morgan has been a Windham Southeast Supervisory Union (WSEU) parent for almost nine years and has volunteered extensively at Academy School, serving on its Leadership Council since its inception.

She joined the Brattleboro Area Middle School (BAMS) Leadership Council in the fall but attended just a few meetings before being appointed to the WSED board to replace Schoales.

Previously, she served on the former Brattleboro Town School Board for a little over two years. When that board was dissolved, she continued participating in meetings for the merged board and served on the Communications Council as a community volunteer.

Morgan says she has followed the WSEU Diversity and Equity Committee meetings for several years and helped organize school community events such as the Diversity Day celebrations at Gallery Walk.

“Ever since I was elected to the Brattleboro town board, I have been fortunate to have a lot of parents and teachers frequently reaching out to me to ask questions or tell me about their school experiences,” she says.

“Having an inside view of my own three kids’ journeys in school gives me an important perspective as a board member, but having so many people share their experiences with me gives me a much broader lens on what people’s diverse experiences in this district are like.”

When she was being considered for her current seat, Morgan

by Rikki Risatti.

Dummerston representative incumbent Michelle Luetjen-Green is being challenged for a three-year term by Eva Nolan.

Ruby McAdoo is the sole candidate on the ballot for a three-year term to represent Putney, as incumbent Liz Adams has decided not to seek another term.

All candidates were asked by *The Commons* why they are running, how they feel the current board has performed in the face of such issues as the firing of the Brattleboro Union High School principal and the district’s ongoing sexual abuse investigation, and, if elected, what they hope to accomplish during their terms.

said that she hoped to be elected to continue on the board but would also check in with her family before committing to run.

“I think that coming onto the board and absorbing all the training and learning about how things are working is such a big investment of others’ time, trust, and relationships that it doesn’t really make a lot of sense to serve on this board for only four months,” she says.

“The past three months have been pretty heavy ones as a board member, with a lot of very long and serious meetings outside our regular schedule, but my kids have really been good sports, and I have terrific family support from my husband, Jon, and my mom, Georgia, so we are making it work.”

Morgan says she believes the board has, overall, “done a good job navigating unprecedented and difficult situations over the past few years, from the impacts of the pandemic to the frequent changes in superintendent to the undertaking of the sexual abuse investigation and the situation with the [Brattleboro Union High School] principal.”

“This is a remarkable amount of upheaval in a short period of time and, given all that they have had to deal with, I think the board and the district administration have done well,” she says.

“I really think that our entire community is still affected by a lot of stress and trauma from enduring the last few years and all the challenges we have been facing, and that has impacted everyone — students, families, teachers, administrators, and board members.”

“I really think that building more trust between our board, with our administrators, and with our community is a vital next step, and deep listening is a big part of that.”

For Morgan, another element of trust building “has to do with how we handle the legacy of abuse in our schools and the findings of the investigation.”

are all responsible for the strength and success of our school system,” she says. “I have always felt a strong sense of civic responsibility and believe that serving on the WSED school board is the right place for my focus,” she said.

“I want to see all children thrive in our schools. I believe the function of the school board is to ensure the work of the district is in line with our community’s mission and values. As a WSED school board member, I will aim to prioritize equity and inclusion in the governance work of the board.”

Calling the WSED “still a relatively newly-merged district,” McAdoo said she believes “an unfortunate byproduct of the merger is that our communities don’t feel a connection to the school district, particularly around the budgeting and governance processes.”

“I think the WSED board and administration could do a better job at keeping the public informed on the work and structure of the district,” she said.

“I look forward to finding solutions to help increase public awareness about the workings of the WSED, which will help to dispel the perception of a lack of transparency at the board level. The merged district is a pretty complex machine, and we need to do a better job at explaining how the machinery works.”

McAdoo finds the recent work of the WSED board around the sexual abuse and assault investigation to have been “critically important.”

“The WSED board has taken the right steps to ensure that the investigation was established and accusations are taken seriously,” she said. “In all honesty, due to the sensitive and confidential work being done in executive session, it is hard to speak to what the WSED board could have done better.”

“For both the WSED and WSEU boards, I believe there needs to be a continued focus on repairing the relationship with the administration, which has been challenged over the last few years through the recent superintendent transition. Working to instill trust between the administration and the board will, in turn, help to build back trust between the electorate and the school board.”

McAdoo said she is excited by the opportunity to continue the WSED board’s work “on strengthening [their] systems of governance.”

She also believes the community “is ready for the WSED board to return to a pre-Covid practice of rotating the location of their meetings” and feels that will allow the board “to see the facilities of each school and gain a better understanding of individual schools and communities.”

“In observing board meetings, I have seen the administration working hard to share the experience of each school, but the communities need to see board members in their schools to feel a connection to the work of the WSED board,” the candidate said.

“This is the wisdom I am hearing from many residents in WSED towns. I would also like to prioritize revitalizing and re-envisioning the committees of the board, such as the Programmatic [Committee] and Performance Equity Committee. Many of the WSED committees have been dormant or ineffective for too long.”

Kimberly Price

Price grew up in Brattleboro, then left for a number of years, returning to raise her children — both of whom attend Brattleboro schools. She served as a director on the former Brattleboro Town School Board before the merger.

She said she always enjoyed her time on that board and feels members made “insightful decisions.” She has missed working with “the incredible administrators we have in our district.”

“I have been able to continue to work and help support local students, as I am currently on the board of directors for Community House,” Price said. “I feel I have the experience to help me jump right into the position, but I have been away from the process long enough to have an outside perspective.”

Price believes current board directors for both the supervisory

union and school district are “working very hard on the issues they are facing.”

“The sexual abuse investigation is very complicated,” she said. “The public will always want to be as informed as possible, but it is extremely difficult due to the legal limitations.”

“The board is working as hard as they can within the scope of the investigation. They just need to be as open with the investigation as legally allowed.”

Key issues for Price include mental health, inclusivity in school, and school safety.

“School safety is a national issue, and we need to make sure we are keeping our students and school staff safe,” she said. “We also need to continue working to make our schools inclusive of all students. The schools are making strides with inclusivity, but work needs to continue.”

“Mental health is also a concern. We need to make sure we are supporting the whole child.”

Jaci Reynolds

Reynolds owns a catering business and food truck — Jaci’s BBQ Joint — which is transitioning to a brick-and-mortar location at the newly renovated Vermont Marketplace on Canal Street.

She previously served on the Windham Southeast School District board from March 2020 until March 2022 and was a Brattleboro delegate on the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union board from March 2021 through March 2022. She was also among the candidates who stepped up to take Schoales’s seat last fall.

“I would like to continue the work of the board and am well suited to represent this community,” Reynolds says. “I am a woman and a member of the Sovereign Abenaki nation of Missisquoi, St. Francis/Sokoki band. Diverse representation is critical.”

Reynolds notes that she “grew up in poverty, much like so many of our community members.”

“I understand the needs of our most vulnerable students. Access to education is an absolute luxury that I did not have, and I believe it is vital for the many families who are also without this gift to be represented appropriately, particularly in matters of equity. I am that person.”

Reynolds is also a former foster parent who has participated in trauma-informed training. She said the experience of foster parenting “helped give me the tools to better understand children with complicated backgrounds.”

The parent of two children in the district, Reynolds says she has “firsthand experience” with special education. She is a current member of the district’s newly formed Special Education Parent Advisory Committee and serves on the board of Black Mountain Assisted Family Living, “where we provide housing for adults with disabilities.”

Reynolds is also the Brattleboro representative on the WSED Independent Budget Review Committee for fiscal year 2024.

“As a board member, I was present and involved at meetings, even when my baby was in attendance with me,” she said.

“I was discerning in my decisions and asked for clarifying information when needed. I was supportive of our school staff and administration. I was fully supportive of the sexual assault investigation and remain so. I supported our ongoing social justice commitment.”

“I was always respectful of my fellow board members, even when we disagreed, and I will continue to be.” Reynolds said she seeks “transparency and accountability from all people who are involved with our school community.”

“I want to help improve communication from the board and share as much information as possible in an accessible manner,” she said. “I have stayed involved in board meetings this past year, and I am ready to be in a position to help out once again. I have learned a lot as an outside observer that I believe will be helpful. I have been able to connect with so many community members and can bring a lot more feedback to the table now.”

Reynolds said the sexual abuse investigation “is an example of the board stepping up to do what the community asked for, and I

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Windham Southeast School Board candidates, from left: Robin Morgan, Ruby McAdoo, Kimberly Price, Jaci Reynolds, Michelle Leutjen-Green, Eva Nolan, and Rikki Risatti.

am thankful for that.”
 However, she said, “outreach to encourage people to report hasn’t been great.”
 For example, metadata — data about the data in the investigation — “has been withheld,” Reynolds said.
 “The board can easily correct both of these things, and it will make a huge difference. As a parent, I still haven’t received any communication from the district on guiding my child in reporting something, if necessary. This is something the board should have already mandated.”

Regarding the termination of former BUHS Principal Steve Perrin, Reynolds says it is “such a sensitive topic that nobody seems to be willing to even say his name.”

“I couldn’t judge how the board handled that, because it was obviously all done in executive session, but I will say that it is absolutely critical that decisions were made impartially, which is difficult to imagine because this is a person we all know and have had varying relationships with.”

“My hope is that legal counsel and the advice of the Vermont School Boards Association was followed and that personal feelings were kept out of it for the protection of everyone involved,” she said.

Reynolds said that had she been a board member during the time of the firing, she would have felt “obligated” to recuse herself “because I believe that objectivity would have been impossible for me, as I worked with Steve as the food service director in 2017-18.”

“Only board members with no personal connection should be in a position to assess his fitness to continue his role as BUHS principal,” she said. “It’s just too murky of a situation otherwise.”

Looking at the upcoming term, Reynolds said she is excited “to work toward increasing the amount of local food — specifically, proteins — served at our schools.”

She has been in contact with folks directly involved in the process for the school district’s purchase of food and said, “I think we can make a big impact for next school year.”

As a member of the newly formed Special Education Parent Advisory Council, Reynolds said she will serve on the council if elected.

“Through this work I hope to bring resources and support to families. Another big goal for me is to see students with disabilities represented and discussed whenever we discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion,” Reynolds said.

“I have felt like we discuss race often — and rightly so — yet students with disabilities are rarely mentioned unless a parent brings it up,” she added. “They need to be centered in more of our conversations.”

Reynolds wants voters to know “how absolutely thrilling it is to see so many folks interested in serving on the board.”

“Technically, I have an opponent in Kim Price, but that’s not how it feels to me,” she said. “Kim was an excellent board member in the past and would be once again. It feels really good knowing that whatever the outcome, we will have a student centered person in this three-year seat.”

Michelle Leutjen-Green

Incumbent Luetjen-Green has lived here for almost five years and has four children in grades 3 to 12 attending district schools.

She is the board representative on the Dummerston Leadership Council and an active member and volunteer in the school community.

Before staying home with her children fulltime, she worked with abused and traumatized children as a child development specialist.

“My own life experience was to grow up in poverty with drug addiction in my home,” she says. “Only one of my parents has a high school education, so I certainly have perspective of the challenges and needs of our most at-risk students, but I think what I bring to the table is that I’m not confused about the scope of my role.”

“I am deeply aware of the impact public education has on our society and grateful for the hard work that goes into it. So

much so that I promised myself I would say ‘yes’ and help whenever I could once all my kids were school-aged.”

After being a school volunteer, in 2020 Luetjen-Green’s community asked her to run for an open seat on the board.

“I didn’t come to the table with an agenda of things I believed weren’t being tackled aggressively enough; I showed up willing to listen, learn, and serve,” she said. “I anticipated there would be a pre-existing established order in how things were done on this level of local governance.”

Subsequently, she said, she experienced how a board meeting is run but felt “a lack of substance around reporting school operations and student outcome.”

“There wasn’t clear purpose to our discussions, other than to flush out whatever felt important enough to be added to an agenda by the chair,” she said. “This was largely in part because we are a newly merged district that never defined or developed operating protocols, reporting systems, or goal-setting strategies.”

“If we truly want to grow and improve our schools, we need to work together systematically with purpose and intention — not just talk about what we think a better school system looks like.”

Luetjen-Green believes the relationships she has built with families, teachers, administrators, and board members have helped her understand “how to best represent my community in the board room.”

The town representative to the SU and SE boards for the past three years, Luetjen-Green has chaired the Communication Council throughout her term and sat on the Finance Committee for the past two years.

“The work of the Communication Council has improved access and participation at board and committee meetings through social media and email sign-up opportunities,” says Luetjen-Green. “We took responsibility for ensuring all voters were informed on important ballot questions, such as dissolution of our newly merged school district.”

She served as chair of the SU board until the past year, when Kerry Amidon was voted to step into that role.

“I was replaced as the WSESU chair, but I can hold my head high,” said Luetjen-Green. “I did excellent work with the time I had in that role. I consulted with the superintendent on the creation of a yearly agenda calendar to ensure the work being done in our schools was at the forefront of every meeting. I was alarmed that we weren’t evaluating our superintendents and brought forward a peer-reviewed evaluation system, approved and implemented immediately, which has now been modeled out into the district for all administrators.”

As chair of the board of the supervisory union, she noted that she “brought forward developmental trainings from the Vermont School Board Association to help us establish foundational procedures and protocols that support being effective in our role through respectful collaboration with our administrative team.”

“It’s been many months and we are still establishing our agreed-on values, but once we get there, I believe it will help us better focus on what we agree on — and that is to see our schools and students thrive.”

As representative on the SU board, Luetjen-Green has participated in two superintendent searches.

The candidate noted that for a new board member, “it takes time to truly understand our role, our scope, and the process around open meeting law and how a board meeting is run.”

“To be an effective board member, you also need to put in the time to understand what systematic operations of a large school system look like to be able to advocate for positive changes and support accountability and growth,” she said.

“I’ve given a great amount of time and energy serving in this role. I have perspective of what next steps look like to begin to align the board’s work with our administrators’ work so we can actually set goals together and monitor progress. I can’t walk away from the

opportunity to be part of something so meaningful.”

Aside from Morgan, who came to the board in November, Luetjen-Green is the only candidate who has actually been on the current school board for any time as members have grappled with myriad issues.

She believes the board has “done the best they could, based on our scope of understanding and the guidance of our board leadership.”

“I do believe we could be communicating better with the public, our administration, and even each other,” she said. “I think relying on professional services to guide us through such a challenging need is really important and to understand our scope of involvement. It’s tempting to want to problem-solve and provide solutions, but our role is to understand the problem and hold the district accountable to addressing it appropriately and transparently.”

For Luetjen-Green, key issues now and to come include “getting strategic in how the board operates.”

“We are a newly formed board, since our communities merged into one district, and we never established a foundational approach on how to be most effective,” she said.

The board has “seen growth this past year, but we need to align our work with the work being done in the schools, so that we can share goals with our administrators and define what growth and accountability looks like.”

“Only then can we really delve into specific topics that are important to our community and educators, such as meeting our students’ social/emotional needs; growth around diversity, equity, and inclusion across the district; and supporting our schools and every classroom to mirror the values we hold dear to our hearts in providing an enriching experience for all.”

“While we can’t change the school’s culture of the future. It is important to remember that survivors live with the trauma for the rest of their lives.”

“We, as a community, can ensure that services are available and continue the kitchen-table discussions taught in our schools and bring them home. I plan to listen and come in to support and work as a team with all board directors for the good of all our schools.”

Nolan said that “as a mom,” she wants parents, students, educators, board members, and administrators “to all work as a team in creating a thriving environment for all our schools.”

“Through my lived experience, I can add an important voice,” she said. “Bullying across the country has gone up. Sadly, we have a lot of work to do.”

“I am a believer that change doesn’t have to take forever,” she said. “I want Vermont to be the leader in creating a safe and fun environment for all students.”

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to services,” said the candidate, who, with her husband, has created a video (bit.ly/702-nolan).

“As a mom with school-aged children, I’m deeply concerned about safety and bullying in our schools,” Nolan said. “I’m in a unique position where I have the time to serve and use my training to add voice to how we move forward.”

“I am familiar with colleges and the process of an investigation when a sexual assault allegation is made. I understand what it means to be in a supportive role.”

“I enjoy collaborating and working in a team. We get more done as a community. I want students to feel empowered to speak to educators, parents, and each other. Having a safe and welcoming environment is essential.”

As to how the current board is handling challenges, Nolan said she knows “only as much as the public.”

“However, I believe in the board’s integrity and following directions from their legal representative,” she said. “Because of my background, I understand investigations have a process. Some information will be private to protect all parties, including survivors. It might seem frustrating, but the process will come to an end. I have witnessed colleges create a stronger community of education, outreach, and supporting students, educators, and administrators after allegations.”

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from [Social Security Disability Insurance], which is constructed to prevent people from employment from earning more than \$1,100 a month. How many children taken by [the Department for Children and Families] come from families with a guardian netting about \$26,000 a year or less compared to other economic classes?”

After working several jobs pre- and post-high school graduation, where they earned honors, by 2012, Risatti filmed part of the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in New York City. Their PSA video recording debut was featured in Asheville, North Carolina “as the fruition of an Arts and Humanities residency involved in producing the third and final part of a zine series during WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, formerly Willing Workers on Organic Farms) resistance to mono-agriculture.”

A staunch activist, they were elected for a three-year term as a Representative Town Meeting member for District 2 in 2020 and is serving a two-year term on its Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Risatti said they are campaigning to serve “to support our collective responsibilities of recovering from democide [said to mean “(Mass) murder of people by a government which has power over them”] with hopes to further earn, nurture, and expand our joys and grace in reconciling grievances without suffering martyrdom.”

“I deeply thank people’s altruistic intentions and loving efforts,” they said, regarding the district and board. “I practice gratitude of our developments by learning from listening carefully to people’s shared thoughts and feelings about prioritizing and manifesting values. I respect and appreciate our adaptability to compassionately resolve endless challenges and ethical differences together.”

In their response to *The Commons’* questions, Risatti chose to ask more questions.

“One of the countless steps towards community transparency and accountability to past, present, and future generations I committed in preparation of this election is sending draft versions of these interview questions to all the candidates and current local board members,” Risatti says, “I think there are wise lessons expressed and explicitly protected within the Miranda Rights

because all statements ‘can and will be used against you’ in life.

“However, I think avoidance of these issues is negligence and I do not endorse silence about the following concerns:

- What is the quality of occupational preparation and standardized curriculum options in all grades in all the Brattleboro/Wantastegok Ndakina schools about the intersections of outdoor environmental studies, sex health, gender theory, economics, art humanities, governance; precolonial living history, slavery, war, and civic movements?
- How publicly accessible are warned meetings, audit information, and qualifications of authors and criteria of curriculum materials we purchase and contact information with the teachers we contract with and appointed committee members in WSESU?
- How is employment affirmative action reviewed and enforced in WSESU?
- Is there a census chart of our school employees to reflect occupational demographics?
- How many BIPOC, non-BIPOC, teachers with disabilities/differences, and LGBTQIA+ are employed currently and what have the comparative ratios been since each of our schools’ founding?
- What is the school employee salary spectrum compared to qualifications, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and disabilities/different abilities?
- How much, by percentage and cost, was previously invested into BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and differently-enabled authors in school curriculum and libraries?
- What are the current accumulated values and proposed budgets for future purchases into comparatively-diverse authors? If this info is not yet available, when will we propose a request for bid contracting this research so collected facts may create a statistical foundation for discerning how to address equitable education?
- What have you done to help decolonize education?
- What do people need to do to help decolonize education?
- How do students empower themselves?
- How could the school systems become more democratic?
- How have you helped improve democracy?
- What do you think and feel about race-shifting and the influential effects members of corporations posing as indigenous nations directly have, short and long-term?”

PUBLIC NOTICES

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Invitation to Bid

The Town of Brattleboro, Finance Department, is currently seeking proposals for Auditing services.

This work will include the Financial Audit, Management Letter, Compliance Report and Accounting Services (further details on these services can be found at the Town’s website, [Brattleboro.org](https://www.brattleboro.org)). Further information on this RFP may be found on the Town’s website, [Brattleboro.org](https://www.brattleboro.org). Sealed proposals must be received no later than 10:00 AM on February 28, 2023, by John Potter, Town Manager at the following address: Town of Brattleboro 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301. Please mark the envelope as follows: SEALED AUDIT BID. No faxed, e-mailed, or late proposals will be accepted.

Copies of the most recent audited financial statements and Single Audit are available on the Town’s website at www.brattleboro.org.

Please refer questions to Kimberly Frost, Finance Director at 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301. Phone: 802-251-8104 E-mail: kfrost@brattleboro.org The Town of Brattleboro reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and reserves the right to select the bid best suiting the needs of the Town.

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION
 Windham Unit Docket No.: 22-PR-05766
 In re ESTATE of: Paul Ouellet

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Paul Ouellet (Decedent)
 late of Attleboro, Massachusetts (Decedent’s town of residence)

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

Dated: February 13, 2023 147 Western Avenue
 Molly Ladner, Attorney Brattleboro, VT 05301
 Name of Publication: The Commons 802-257-7244
 Publication Date: February 15, 2023 mladner@pdsclaw.com

Name of Probate Court: Vermont County Superior Court, Windham Unit
 Address of Probate Court: 30 Putney Road, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT 05301

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BRATTLEBORO

Seven vie for three Selectboard seats

Candidates describe problems, priorities, and potential for town's future

By Virginia Ray
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—All three open seats on the Selectboard here will see races on Town Meeting Day on Tuesday, March 7. Incumbent Elizabeth McLoughlin is being challenged by former Selectboard member Richard DeGray for a three-year seat, while incumbent Jessica Gelter is vying with four other candidates for two one-year seats.

In-person voting will take place Tuesday, March 7 at American Legion Post 5, 32 Linden St., from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Absentee ballots must be requested, because—unlike the procedure for November general election—ballots for Town

Meeting Day in Brattleboro are not automatically mailed to all active registered voters. Ballots will be available starting Wednesday, Feb. 15.

All voters are encouraged to visit their My Voter Page (mvp.vermont.gov) to update their registration addresses, including their physical and mailing addresses, and to request absentee ballots to be mailed.

If you encounter problems logging into your My Voter Page, call Town Clerk Hilary Francis at 802-251-8157. To register to vote, use the online voter registration page at olvr.vermont.gov or call the town clerk.

Here's a look at the candidates who are on the ballot.

Elizabeth "Liz" McLoughlin (three-year seat)

Elizabeth "Liz" McLoughlin moved to Brattleboro 15 years ago after having visited family here for more than 20 years.

A wife, mother, and a new grandmother, McLoughlin, a town planner, and her husband each own small businesses. She holds a master's degree with a concentration in housing and has been an environmental planning consultant for four decades.

McLoughlin sees Selectboard service "as a way to give back and support our beloved town," which she believes hosts a "vibrant" arts culture, "exceptional" park and recreation program, and is "welcoming to all."

Her first civic engagements were with the former Brattleboro Area Drop-in Center (now Groundworks), working on its Empty Bowls Dinner leadership committee for many years as well as serving on its board. At the same time, she joined the Planning Commission, ultimately serving as chair.

In addition to her time on the Selectboard and Planning Commission, McLoughlin has served as a member of Representative Town Meeting, serving on its Finance

Committee. She has also served on the committee that established Perseverance Skatepark and the Windham Regional Commission's advisory committee on the aesthetics of the Route 91 bridge over the West River.

She has also been a member of the Connecticut River Joint Commission-Wantastiquet Local River Subcommittee, and has served as a commissioner on the Windham Regional Commission.

On the Selectboard she has been clerk, vice chair, and chair. "I have an in-depth understanding of town operations and the staff—our greatest asset," McLoughlin told *The Commons*. "I also understand the budget process and the Selectboard's duty and responsibility to provide for the needs of the town while respecting the taxpayer burden."

McLoughlin's campaign motto, "POW," stands for "pragmatic, optimistic, and wise," she says.

She was asked why she wants to run again, especially in the face of so many issues and challenges that often appear insurmountable and take so much time when they are resolvable.

"First, as [President John F. Kennedy] famously said, regarding why we go to the moon, 'We choose to go to the moon [...] and do the other things not because

they are easy, but because they are hard; because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we're willing to accept,'" McLoughlin answers.

"Second, I run with years of experience on the Selectboard under my belt, with institutional memory to provide consistency for the new Town Manager and with resolve to work toward goals unfinished from the time without a Town Manager.

"We have myriad problems right here in Brattleboro which defy easy solutions. My decades of experience in environmental and town planning give me an understanding of what may be possible to achieve at the town level.

"Years of volunteering on nonprofit and public boards has helped me to understand the difference between a municipal responsibility and a state-funded responsibility. I hope to work for the town and with our legislative delegation on behalf of Brattleboro."

When asked what she considers the greatest challenges for Brattleboro in the next three years, and what can and should be done in the short- and long-term to address those challenges, McLoughlin cited homelessness and housing; opioid and mental health care/crime, and victimization of the vulnerable; and emergency medical services as top priorities/challenges.

She cites the many federal subsidies and a state program for emergency housing, which helped during the pandemic, will end after March. Yet, she said, still there are those without housing.

While the state Legislature intends to keep the emergency shelter program going with federal pandemic relief money until June, McLoughlin says, "Let's not just hope [Gov. Phil Scott] signs it; we need to urge him to do so."

"After that, we need to pay close attention to what the Legislature intends to do to support shelters and housing. How this money comes to Windham County and to Brattleboro is important. Brattleboro is doing what we can to support shelters. Groundworks provides not just housing to people but also case workers needed for support and to find permanent housing."

She notes many social service agencies and volunteers in town working toward solutions and says the issue is a regional problem.

"I would be remiss if I did not point out that Brattleboro is alone among Windham County towns in providing the infrastructure for those in need among us. Other towns in the region can do more and should not simply rely on the institutions, hard work, and tax dollars of Brattleboro to shoulder this responsibility.

"If a family home burns in a neighboring town, that family is moved to a shelter in Brattleboro, those kids are taken out of that town's school and disconnected from friends and former neighbors," McLoughlin says. "Why can't each town provide for emergency shelter for their townspeople?"

McLoughlin says that in terms of housing policy, town planners and planning commissioners "have significantly reduced barriers to create housing, through zoning changes which are a model to other towns in Vermont."

"Also, our town has staff to assist in navigating state funding programs to create new housing units, from adding new construction or rehabilitating existing buildings, adding one or two units, or many."

She says the town allows and has supported creating additional dwelling units within single-family properties for many years.

"In my tenure in the Selectboard, we voted to create a housing inspection program to improve the quality of rental housing," McLoughlin says. "We need to encourage the creation of new housing units. We need to support the work of both housing nonprofits and independent landlords in this quest for more housing, as housing is needed across the board for all income levels."

She notes that non-taxpayer-based funding ("program income," in municipal finance argot) is used in Brattleboro to help fund nonprofit low- and moderate-income housing.

"In the past 12 years, the Selectboard has granted or loaned almost \$1 million [from community development programs and funding in accounts administered by the town] to low-income housing, bringing the total investment from all sources, public and private, to \$31 million.

"Worker housing is also a particular focus of state and local efforts, as it is critical to allow new people to move here to fill open jobs throughout our town."

Regarding opioid and mental health care and crime, "alternatives to assist those experiencing mental health crisis, other than the Brattleboro Police Department, should be more readily available," McLoughlin says, citing this as a recommendation in the final report of the Community Safety Review that the Selectboard commissioned in 2020 in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd in Minnesota,

"State and local mental health providers should be more robust," she says, adding that state money is needed. "Often, mental health providers are not available when needed: this system needs improvement. Also, there are times when mental health providers do not feel safe in responding to crisis situations.

"This means that the Police Department handles these emergencies. Our Police Department has [been] and continues to be trained in de-escalation and other measures to handle mental health emergencies, but they need and welcome mental health partners."

McLoughlin says that many suffer from opioid use disorder here and are victimized by criminals, "and we struggle to rid our town of these criminal drug dealers."

"There are public and nonprofit agencies who assist those experiencing addiction in Brattleboro, and we support and partner with these agencies," she says.

"Crime in Brattleboro, especially in downtown shops, makes the headlines. However, crime victimizes all of us in our homes and neighborhoods. Criminals especially victimize the vulnerable among us."

"We need to work together to protect ourselves and our neighbors and both work with and support our Police Department. Currently, Brattleboro is hiring more police officers, but it takes time to hire and train new officers. Also, I support a police substation at the Brattleboro Transportation Center, which would assist the Police Department with downtown patrols. I also support public bathrooms to be located there."

McLoughlin says the town and, particularly, the Selectboard bear the responsibility to provide ambulance service, and that the board "takes this responsibility very seriously."

"We are currently examining our options to provide this service," she says. "We have sought professional expertise in the examination of whether our Brattleboro Fire Department, by itself or with an outside ambulance service, is the best option. Our paramount concern is to make sure public safety is served."

Asked if there is anything else she'd like voters to know, McLoughlin says she supports the general improvements to Living Memorial Park and using town environmental fund money to pay for them.

"Among the many upgrades at the park, this action will address three environmental sustainability goals: the skating rink will replace the highly toxic refrigerant technology (R22) and transition to a nontoxic natural refrigerant; the new roof will be insulated; and new lights on the upper ball field will be LED, requiring fewer fixtures with the long-term benefit of less energy consumption."

Richard "Dick" DeGray (three-year seat)

Richard "Dick" DeGray grew up in Adams, Massachusetts, and arrived here more than 40 years ago as a contractor for the former Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant in Vernon.

Now retired, DeGray volunteers 40 hours a week as the person who started and remains in charge of the myriad flowers planted around town. His wife is owner/proprietor of The Vermont Shop. He has a daughter and two stepsons.

"I believe it has made a tremendous difference for downtown businesses, residents, and tourists, and the feedback has been outstanding," DeGray says, adding that part of his inspiration came from the iconic Bridge of Flowers in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts. "It's probably the proudest accomplishment and project I've ever worked at."

DeGray served on the then-Brattleboro Union High School Board for four years and served on the Selectboard for seven years before stepping down in 2013. He subsequently served again for one year, from 2015 to 2016.

He has also volunteered with organizations including Youth Services; the former Reformer Christmas Stocking program, which offered winter clothing; and Hotline for Help, a defunct nonprofit that offered support, information, and referrals to people in crisis. He has delivered Meals on Wheels and spent 24 years overseeing the boys' and girls' youth basketball programs for the Recreation Department.

"I think I've demonstrated that I love Brattleboro," says DeGray. "I'm not from here, I am of here, and I like to see all the good our community is about in terms of what it does for people, although not without its blemishes, which we need to continue to work on."

DeGray says he was "very disappointed" last year when no incumbents were challenged. He thinks the board needs to look at the time that meetings take to help encourage more people to serve.

"I understand finding the time and sometimes it seems these meetings go on forever, and that's something the board needs to look at so people would be more interested," he says. "I think that's a factor why people don't want to get involved."

Mostly, DeGray says he believes he can "contribute to the betterment of the community" and so has thrown his hat in the ring.

"There are people who can't handle running and getting defeated. I've run and lost, so I know how that feels. You have to remember it's not fatal. If people think my opponent is doing a great job and want her back, then so be it. I'm not an unknown commodity, however. People know who Dick DeGray is. If they think I can do a great job, they'll vote for me."

DeGray has no qualms about facing the challenges ahead.

"I'm not afraid of any of it at all," he says. "We have a new town manager, and by 'new' I mean no previous ties to the community and no preconceived notions. I think when you have a new piece of paper, there are opportunities there. I would look forward to working with John Potter, the new manager, and I believe we can get things going and hopefully make the community a better and safer place."

When looking at the challenges that Brattleboro faces, DeGray said that "any issues we have are not insurmountable. In 2011, when I was chair, we had the Brooks House fire and [Tropical Storm] Irene within five months, and we rebounded from those catastrophes. The town came together, provided services—we helped each other out."

DeGray finds "affordability" the first and foremost challenge for Brattleboro.

"People are having difficulty paying the rents—which are exorbitant, and not only from tax bills, but also water and sewer," he says.

He believes the town hasn't had "any significant growth in the past several years."

"We have to get with our existing businesses and see what their needs are so we don't have somebody pulling up stakes and we lose several hundred jobs. The last significant growth program, which I was a part of, was Commonwealth Dairy. We helped them out with a tax stabilization agreement, part of which was to create 30 jobs, and I think they are well over 100 at that facility."

In 2019, VTDigger reported that 150 people work at Commonwealth Dairy; its profile on indeed.com, a recruitment website, claims a range of "201 to 500."

DeGray believes that the town's capacity to house the people who work here "is always going to be an issue" and says that it goes hand-in-hand with creating "places for people to work [and] employment opportunities for

people to move to town."

He believes one potential way to help create affordable housing lies in the town's ownership of "a significant number of properties."

"We have to come up with a list of buildable lots we own and sell them, with Town Meeting approval, for \$1 to contractors who want to build duplexes or triplexes and work with them on permitting costs and maybe even tax stabilization to keep rents lower and create more affordable housing.

"We can't keep going to state and local government for help. I think there's a role for us as a community to help with the resources we have in terms of land that could be used to build affordable workforce housing."

DeGray also recognizes drugs and crime as issues with which to reckon.

"Our retail stores are being used as ATMs for drug-addicted people, and we have a homeless issue and a drug problem," he says. "I don't believe homeless people are shoplifters. People who need money are breaking in and looking for strictly cash."

"Merchants aren't missing product from their stores, only cash. Sometimes they're taking the whole cash register. And then shop owners have deductibles and they have to replace the glass in their doors. One store downtown was broken into five times."

"I think we have to change our model. I know our police force is understaffed. I don't believe having a substation in the Transportation Center is the answer. I would rather see us go old school and see officers back on the street along with a social worker, as we had several years ago. That worked pretty good. Having them on the street to help people get what they need."

DeGray says the state has to help here by providing money for "detoxification for addiction" and that the community needs to find more shelters or "assist Groundworks to expand the model they currently have to get people off the street."

"And Washington needs to be a part of this solution," he says, noting every state has a drug problem and he doesn't believe any are getting the extent of federal help needed.

Having sufficient law enforcement and taking care of all emergency personnel are related areas of concern for DeGray.

"We're down eight or nine officers, and that's difficult and stressful on our existing force," he says. "People forget our officers—police, fire, [EMS]—walk into some pretty horrific scenes, and we need to take care of them because those people are also family people."

"I'm a fan of making sure we're taking care of our first responders in every way we can. We certainly need more manpower, but that doesn't make horrific situations go away. These people need time off and counseling if they need it. I'm not saying that's not happening, but I want to make sure it is happening if they need it."

As far as providing emergency medical services for the community, DeGray says that "where we are" is "in the land of we-don't-know-what's-going-to-happen."

Admitting he may not know exactly what happened with the Brattleboro Fire Department and Rescue Inc., DeGray says that if it works out that the fire department permanently takes over providing emergency medical services, "I'm OK with that."

He says he's concerned "with the numbers and the potential impact on taxpayers," but that he's also concerned about not having Rescue Inc. as the town's mutual aid partner, relying instead on services from another town.

"If somebody's having a heart attack and we have to call mutual aid, we have somebody right in town 5 miles away," DeGray says of Rescue Inc., noting that when people have health issues, response time is critical.

"Whatever we have to do to reestablish our relationship with Rescue, it is paramount for Brattleboro residents to have that relationship working," he says.

Asked if he has anything else to say to voters, DeGray says, "I trust them and strongly encourage them to come out and vote."

"Let's do something different this year and have the highest turnout ever for a local election," he says.

Jessica "Jess" Gelter (one-year seat)

A nonprofit executive, working artist, and mother, Selectboard incumbent Jessica "Jess" Gelter grew up "all over the Northeast," graduating from Brattleboro Union High School in 2003 and

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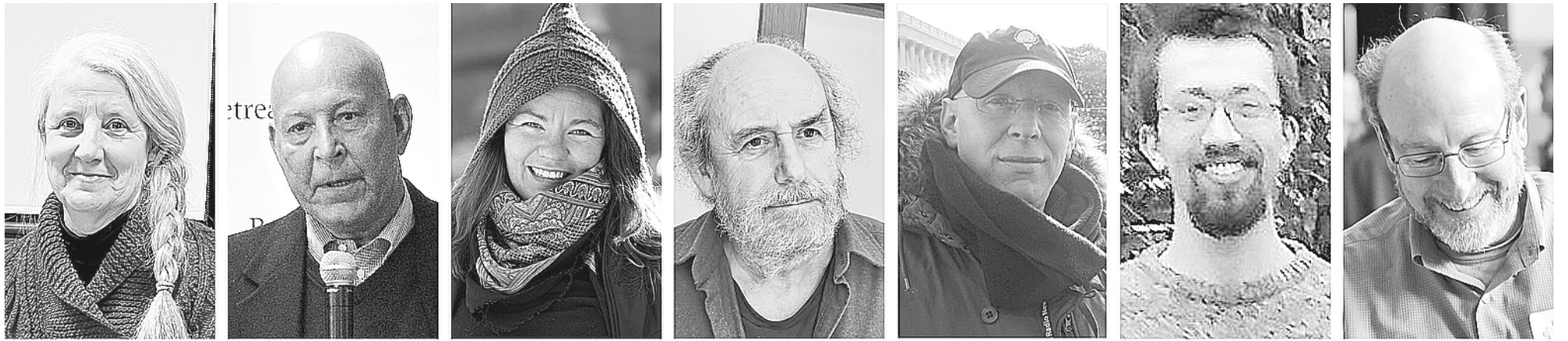
Here We Are with guest Lester Dumkie : Mon 9p, Wed 6:05p, Thurs 1:30p, Fri 10a, Sat 6:30p, Sun 5:30p	Guilford Selectboard Mtg 2/13/23 : Wed 6p, Thurs 8:30a, Fri 2p, Sun 8:30a & 8:30p
Harris Hill Ski Jump Livestream : Sat 11a, Sun 11:30a	Jamaica Selectboard Mtg 2/13/23 : Wed 8:30p, Fri 8a, Sat 11a, Sun 6a
Windham County's Got Talent 1/26/23 : Mon 1:25p, Tues 9:05p, Wed 4:25p, Thurs 9a, Fri 12:30p, Sat 9a	Townshend Selectboard Mtg 2/14/23 : Thurs 7p, Fri 11:30a, Sat 1:30p, Sun 6p
Northern Roots Festival 1/28/23 : Mon 6a, Tues 12p, Fri 2p	Windham Southeast School District Mtg 2/14/23 : Fri 6p, Sat 8:30a, Sun 12p
Landmark College Presents - Taylor Dunne & Eric Stewart - Resisting Nuclear Armament : Wed 9p, Thurs 2p, Fri 7a, Sat 8:30p, Sun 7:30p	Brattleboro Development Review Board Mtg 2/15/23 : Fri 8:30p, Sat 6a, Sun 2:30p
Thorn in My Side - BREAKFAST! - May 26th, 2022 : Mon 9a, Tues 3:30p, Thurs 4:30p, Fri 10:30a, Sat 7p, Sunday 6p	Meet the Candidates - Brattleboro Selectboard Candidate Forum 2/16/23 : Sat 9p
Southern Vermont Live Music - Trio Amphion - Masterworks of Baroque Chamber Music : Mon 12p, Tues 8p, Wed 12p, Fri 4:30p, Sat 5:50a, Sun 8:30p	Windham Southeast School District Special Mtg 1/50/23 : Tues 7:45a, Thurs 5p, Fri 6:45a
Southern Vermont Live Music - Sonata Op 5 No. 4 in F Major : Mon 1:10p, Tues 3:15p, Wed 6:45p, Thurs 9:15p, Fri 12:15p, Sat 5:30a & 8:5p, Sun 9:45a	Windham Solid Waste Management District Presents - Where is Away for Recyclables : Mon 7:45, Tues 1:15p, Thurs 5:15p
Town of Brattleboro - Borrow Snowshoes from Brooks Memorial Library : Mon 1:24p, Tues 3:30p, Wed 6:35p, Thurs 9:30p, Fri 12:05p & 5:35p, Sat 5:45a, Sun 10a	Montpelier Connection - Declaration of Inclusion Comes to Windham County : Wed 4p, Thurs 7:30a, Fri 5p, Sat 6p
Vermontitude - Weekly Episode : Tue 11:30a & 6:30p, Wed 6a, Thu 1p, Sun 5p	Brattleboro Planning Commission Mtg 2/6/23 : Mon 10a, Tues 6p, Wed 1p, Thurs 12p
WTSA News : Mon-Fri 12p & 6p	West River Education District Mtg 2/8/23 : Mon 6p, Tues 10a, Wed 11:25a, Thurs 5:25p
St. Michael's Episcopal Church - Weekly Service : Wed 2p, Sat 7:30a	Brattleboro Charter Revision Commission Mtg 2/9/23 : Mon 12p, Tues 6:30a, Thurs 2:45p, Fri 5:30a
Calvary Chapel of the West River Valley - Weekly Service : Tue 9a, Sat 5:30p, Sun 10a	Newfane Planning Commission Mtg 2/9/23 : Mon 5:30a, Tue 10:35a
Trinity Lutheran Church - Weekly Service : Wed 10a, Thurs 7a	Rescue Inc Presents - Rescue Inc Consortium Mtg 1/17/23 : Mon 6:35p, Wed 10:15a, Thurs 6:15a
Guilford Community Church - Weekly Service : Wed 5:30a, Fri 8:30p, Sun 8a	Energy Week with George Harvey & Tom Finnell : Mon 9a, Tue 5p, Wed 12p, Thu 11a & 6p, Sat 7p, Sun 11a
St. Michael's Catholic Church Mass : Sat 4p (LIVE) on Channel 1079 for this week only, Tue 6:45a & 2p, Thurs 8p	The David Pakman Show : Mon 8a, Tue 9a, Wed 5p, Fri 10:30a, Sun 5p

Note: Schedule subject to change.

View full schedule and watch online at brattleborotv.org

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Brattleboro Community Television - 257-0888



COURTESY PHOTO (TIM WESSEL (MCLOUGHLIN); COURTESY PHOTO (JOSH STEELE (GELTER); COURTESY PHOTO (AGAVE, CASE, STEVENS); COMMONS FILE PHOTO (DEGRAY AND REICHSMAN)

Three-year seat: Liz McLoughlin (incumbent), Dick DeGray. One-year seat: Jess Gelter (incumbent), Spoon Agave, Fish Case, Sam Stevens, Franz Reichsman.

going on to Boston University. While she currently owns a home next to the cemetery where her grandparents and great-grandparents are buried, Gelter doesn't believe length of residency should give a person "any more right to a voice or elected office than another."

"Many folks new to this community care about it very much, and we all work hard to understand not just its history, but also its present," she says.

Prior to being elected for two one-year terms on the Selectboard, Gelter served on the Planning Commission, where she helped update the master plan and zoning bylaws and selected contractors for projects such as the downtown redesign and town housing plan, among other work.

"Something I am proud of during my time on the Planning Commission was that we worked collaboratively to develop a set of values to help us guide our decisions with a firm grounding in equity," she says.

She also served as a Representative Town Meeting member in 2021, just before taking a seat on the Selectboard.

Gelter says that during the past two years the Selectboard "has tackled a lot, or has started to tackle a lot."

"A progressive friend who had served on the Selectboard told me, 'It takes too long to get anything done. I didn't have the patience.' But I'm patient. I want at least another year to see through some of the things we are working on."

For Gelter, those things include establishing a plan for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Community Safety funds; helping new Town Manager John Potter "settle in"; managing "whatever transition is on the horizon" for emergency medical service in town; making the Transportation Center a safe place; developing solutions to prevent downtown break-ins; and setting up a structure to tackle the housing crisis.

"One of my more municipally nerdy goals is to direct the town manager to create a long-term facilities capital investment plan," Gelter says, noting the existing capital equipment plan for significant town purchases like plows and firetrucks. By allocating money to these purchases before they are needed, that plan has significantly reduced the need for the town to service debt.

"What I'm hoping for is a long-term view on what our buildings and facilities will need as far as upkeep, renovation, and major investment. That way we can better understand our long-term schedule for taking out bonds for these big-ticket items."

"This year it was hard to say 'yes' to the investments at Memorial Park when we don't really know what's up next or when. Providing that context to future Selectboard members is important so we don't end up in a tough situation."

As an example, Gelter says, "corners were cut in the past, leaders tried to save the taxpayers money, but it means our Transportation Center is in need of work far sooner than it should've been, and many are rethinking the cost-cutting measure of moving the police station out to Black Mountain Road."

"There is such a thing as healthy debt, and I think it's important that future Selectboard members understand how that debt for major facilities projects is used to provide services to the town in the long-term."

Gelter believes Brattleboro's greatest challenges are housing, EMS and other safety systems, crime prevention, and adequate mental health support systems.

In sum, she cites the following as ways to address these issues:

"Using board time to hold community conversations to raise community awareness."

"Investing money from ARPA and the Community Safety Fund in both temporary and long-term solutions and having a clear system in place so that if we have or set aside additional funds to these purposes we have a systematic way to distribute them to projects appropriately."

"Hearing from folks who are most impacted and responding with understanding and empathy."

"Working collaboratively as a board through a deliberative process, asking good questions, digging for more information, and coming out with well-researched

solutions." "I am not an expert in any of these areas," Gelter says. "I'm pretty sure none of my fellow Selectboard members are, either. We're not going to be able to slap down a solution and say, 'This is how we fix things.' We share ideas, we hire town staff who have expertise, we talk through solutions, and we figure it out together. We are growing towards being a more safe, more welcoming, more fertile place for everyone."

Gelter also sees climate change as an issue for which a host of entities have a role and responsibility.

"Every individual, every town, every state, every country has a role to play in changing how society approaches caring for the planet," she says. "I am proud of the work Brattleboro is doing to transition towards being a more climate-friendly organization."

"It is my goal to continue to push the town in that direction by providing opportunities for public discussion about climate-change-related topics, encouraging individual action, and approving investment in climate-friendly purchases and facilities improvements. This is an existential issue and will impact everything we do in the near and far future, from housing to health care."

Peter "Fish" Case (one-year seat)

Longtime *Reformer* columnist and Great Eastern Radio General Manager Peter "Fish" Case moved to Brattleboro from Wilmington about 35 years ago. He is a Town Meeting representative for District 2 and has served on many nonprofit boards. He has been vice president of Groundworks Collaborative, chaired the Windham County Relay for Life, and served on the boards of Girls on the Run and the Boys & Girls Club. He is current president of Black Mountain Assisted Family Living.

Asked if he felt he would change his affiliations and/or outspoken media persona if elected, the candidate says he would not.

"I have no intention of changing anything," Case says. "My approach to everything is with common sense and reason. It doesn't always connect with everyone, but what does?"

"The huge amount of support I'm seeing right now from Brattleboro voters is because of who I am and my outspoken nature. My ability to message and convey issues is strong and, as far as I can tell, missing from our current board. I have a platform that allows and affords me an opportunity to inform. When appropriate, I will; when it's not appropriate, I won't."

"I want to take what I feel is a good situation and good board and try and make it better."

Case says he's running because he feels the current board "is strong, and I can make it stronger."

"My strengths are in messaging and communications — making complex things easy to unpack and explain," he says. "I am a strong decision maker, and I can act quickly when needed. Sometimes decisions need to take some time; I, too, can bring that skill set to this board."

Case says serving this community is something "I've always done and will continue to do."

"I believe that public service is an honor, and I hope that in March the people of Brattleboro see fit to allow me to serve them. My motto is, 'There are no problems, only solutions.' We have to be able to chat these things through and bring actionable ideas forward. A majority of these things can be vetted through committees and decisions can be made during meetings."

Brattleboro is looking at a "refacing," says Case.

"It's a great community with wonderful, caring people — you can't really ask for better — but it also has a darker side, as we've seen recently with a rash of break-ins and ongoing drug problems," he says. "There are many ways to deal with these issues and none of them are simple — nor will getting everyone to understand those issues."

"Messaging will be a big part of how this town moves forward. People need to feel safe in Brattleboro again. That is Brattleboro's biggest challenge, with housing close behind it."

Making the needed changes,

Case says, "starts with conversations and collaboration."

"Those conversations shouldn't take place on Tuesday nights. They should be handled by committees so conversations don't get hijacked into something unintended — even when well-intended."

"Whether it's long-term or short-term, focus and planning will help guide these conversations into things the board can act on," Case says.

Samuel "Sam" Stevens (one-year seat)

Samuel "Sam" Stevens is a Brattleboro native who majored in parks and forest resources at Unity College in Maine and then completed his B.A. in political science at the University of Vermont. He has been a town meeting representative and serves on the Cemetery Committee. This is his first run for Selectboard.

Stevens says he's running "because there are a number of issues that I'm concerned about, and I would like to have a seat at the table if and when those items are discussed."

"The presence of a plethora of issues and challenges only reinforces, in my mind, that there is good to be done in this community and, if everyone does their part, a lot of good can be done," he says.

"I'm stepping up to the plate. I believe that having observed the process of the Selectboard and having studied the political process academically both give me a reasonable base in performing the duties of the position, although this will naturally be a learning opportunity for me, also."

Stevens said that homelessness, increased crime, and an increasing drug problem are the "three hot topics right now."

"I also think that the increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing in Brattleboro are important. An important issue for me, personally, is how to make Brattleboro attractive to young people as a place to live, work, and build a stable and thriving life. A more near-term issue is the relationship the town is going to have with emergency services."

"The Selectboard doesn't really have the ability to dramatically change the issues," he continues. "Rather, they are there to assist agencies, businesses, and the public in various ways as a means to those ends."

"I would like to be available to listen in on opinions and provide whatever assistance can be offered to causes that will, even in small ways, help make Brattleboro an even better place to live."

Spoon Agave (one-year seat)

Spoon Agave has been a Brattleboro resident for 34 years. He has served on the Selectboard, town School Board, Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Traffic and Safety Committee, Finance Committee, and — to him, most important — the last Charter Revision Commission, where, he says, "I studied diligently and in great depth the structure of municipal government and its relationship and embodiment within a democracy."

Agave has chaired several of those groups, including the Charter Revision. He has been a Town Meeting representative for nearly 25 years.

"I'm 76 and have spent my entire life reading, inquiring, and investigating every subject under the sun, with emphasis on American history, labor history, human rights, worker rights, and democracy," Agave says, adding that he is a high school graduate, Vietnam infantry veteran, and retired truck driver.

"As a person of modest means, I am also among the half of our population that rents and recently experienced the difficult and exceedingly costly problem of needing to relocate."

Agave says he's running again now "because I am qualified, capable, and motivated to deal with the immensity of our challenges; because I feel a sense of responsibility to all the people and life that comes after me."

"I am afraid, like all of us are, but I have to have the courage to face whatever may be in store for us. Perhaps if I can show some courage, a few others who are fearful will draw themselves up and join the fight for our lives,"

he says.

When asked about the greatest challenges for Brattleboro in the next three years and what he thinks can and should be done in the short and long terms to address those issues, Agave takes a philosophical approach, citing a "moral responsibility" and "the foundation of human sustainability" at root.

"The challenges are here right now and are only going to intensify," he says. "The challenges are from this moment until forever. Nothing ends or starts in three years. The challenge is to collectively, as a community, admit we are in trouble so that we can begin talking about why and then what to do about it. Nobody is going to fix anything for us. The circle of responsibility starts with each one of us and radiates outwards."

"We have to talk honestly about why the number of homeless is so large and growing, it seems, every day. We have to talk about why we cannot find enough people to protect our community."

Agave says finding "the techniques and channels to converse within" is needed.

"We have to ask ourselves: what does it mean to be a community? Are we going to be 12,000 people working together with purpose or 12,000 individuals acting alone, or in gangs, to try and survive?"

"Sustainability and community are necessarily and inextricably bound, two sides of the same coin," he says. "Community and all its parts — housing, food security, safety, health care, recreation, the creative culture — all must exist within the context of sustainability."

Agave says the town charter is the mandate to address "the common good" of all citizens and that to plan for the town's future "should be a primary objective for our Selectboard."

"I am seeking your vote to take a seat on the Selectboard to focus its attention on our future," he says. "A future that everyone is worried about. It isn't possible to choose a path to the future without some agreement about the road we are on now."

Agave says it has "never been more immediately urgent" to hold a "community dialogue... formal conversation" about the future.

"We need a place to talk as a community about our hopes and fears and concerns," he says.

"It is a conversation that should have begun long ago. At the same time, we are faced with very difficult problems in housing and homelessness, crime, police understaffing, and health care. We need solutions based on deeper understanding, sound information, community dialogue and involvement, and action plans set in motion with timetables. We need experienced, confident, and proactive leadership."

"I can fill potholes with the best of 'em, and they will get filled. But today we need a lot more than that," Agave says.

Franz Reichsman (one-year seat)

Franz Reichsman has years of experience in Representative Town Meeting, including chairing its finance committee for five years. He served as medical director of all EMS providers and ambulance crews in Cheshire County, New Hampshire, for seven years. He has a medical degree, was an emergency department doctor for 30 years, and has a master's degree in public health with focus on epidemiology and biostatistics.

He cites a quote from Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran — "Work is love made visible" — adding he's modified it for municipal government.

"The budget is love made visible," Reichsman says.

"Managing the tax burden and the expenditures of the town is where values and priorities become real. One often hears the word 'values' in political discussion, but what does it mean?" he says.

"To me, it simply means the things we value, the things we want more of. If you want to see our values and know where things are headed in Brattleboro, and if you want to influence that direction, look to the budget for knowledge and inspiration."

Reichsman said he believes he has "the ability and the background to be helpful in this mix

of people and ideas. That's why I'm running. I'm comfortable crunching numbers and looking at data. I think those things would be helpful on the Selectboard."

He also believes the issues that Brattleboro, and thus the Selectboard, face are many, but not "insurmountable."

"We have surmounted many such issues in the past, and we are in the process of surmounting others right now," he says. "We have in place the systems and the people we need to do a lot of surmounting."

Reichsman says he recognizes that it takes "hard work and dedication on the part of many people and groups to accomplish the goals our community has identified as important."

"Look around," he adds. "Those people, paid and unpaid, individually and in groups, are participating every day in the processes of public affairs and town government, often going well beyond what's required of them, all in order to actualize the things we need and want for our town."

"The Selectboard, along with the town administration and Representative Town Meeting, are key actualizers. Working through the questions, and sometimes through differences and disagreements, has built Brattleboro into a caring, somewhat free-wheeling, and generally awesome place to live. That's why we live here. Let's do the work that's needed to keep it that way."

Reichsman says it seems to him that several areas needing to be addressed are "well known," and highlights three.

About future provision for emergency medical services in Brattleboro, he says, "The process has not gone smoothly thus far, and it's not completely clear what outcomes are politically achievable at this point."

"It looks to me like we're likely to continue the current arrangement with Golden Cross Ambulance for another year, and then decide on the longer-term picture."

He says that decisions must be "both medical and financial" in nature and that the "immediate next step" will be further assessment of the report from AP Triton, a consulting firm that the town engaged to analyze its EMS options in the aftermath of the breakdown of the town's relationship with longtime EMS provider Rescue Inc.

"Over the next year, good

decisions must be made with regard to providing emergency medical services in Brattleboro," Reichsman says. "Also, whatever else happens, the relationship between the town and Rescue Inc. must be repaired, if not for the purposes of reinstating Rescue as our primary EMS provider, then for the purpose of mutual aid when any component of the existing system is overstressed."

Having a backup ambulance come from 20 miles away, says Reichsman, "is not acceptable when there's a person in need and ambulances and crews are available a few hundred yards away. Repairing the relationship will require a sustained effort and goodwill from both sides."

Reichsman says the escalation of vandalism and break-ins — "the flagrant abuse of businesses in town" — is a high priority and that it is "intolerable for owners and employees in our town to be subjected to this type of criminal activity."

"I think security cameras in strategic locations have proven effective in identifying and bringing to justice systems those responsible," he says.

"A discussion of the causes and the prevention of crime quickly gets complicated, but our commitment to public safety must include addressing this issue. It is imperative that we continue the community-based discussion of safety issues and that we include all members of the community in that discussion."

Reichsman also considers homelessness as a priority.

"I fear we are on the cusp of a dramatic increase in the number of unsheltered people in Brattleboro, as the statewide program of providing housing in hotel rooms comes to an end," he says.

"The excellent local efforts of Groundworks and its supporters have helped tremendously, but they're likely to be overwhelmed when those in the hotels are, all of a sudden, back on the street."

"If and when that happens, the town must be ready with a plan for addressing the needs that arise. Crucially, those needs are not exclusively for walls and a roof. There are many associated needs to consider in the unhoused population of our town."

Reichsman also believes that "community voices, law enforcement, and the court system all have crucial roles to play" in addressing Brattleboro's future.

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MILESTONES

Births, deaths, and news of people from Windham County

College news

• **Grace Wilkinson** of Bellows Falls, **Lucy Daly** of Jamaica, and **Annabelle Gray** of Londonderry were all named to the Dean's List for the fall 2022 semester at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts.

• The following local students were honored for academic achievement in the fall 2022 semester at Community College of Vermont. Named to the President's List were **Wyatt Schaefer** of Bellows Falls; **Paige Mellish, Noah Morgan**, and **Avery Witman** of Brattleboro; **Alysa Morse** of Putney, **Julie Cermola** of Saxtons River; **Nicholas Petronic** and **Ruth Wright** of Townshend, and **Kestrel Voulgarakis** of Wilmington. Named to the Dean's List were **Liam Mallan** and **Alejandra Morcillo** of Bellows Falls, **Edwin Chamul, Emma Li**, and **Jade Newton** of Brattleboro; **Emma Kelly** of Dover, **Makaila Morse** of Newfane, **Nathaniel Jackson** and **Fern Patton** of Putney, **Madison Anyan** and **Kailuna Holmes** of Townshend, **Rami Abdallah** and **Alexander Kemp** of Vernon, **Sarah Sprague** of Whitingham, and **Lorelei Briggs** of Wilmington. Part-time students named to the Student Honors List were **Melissa French** and **Jourdan Metcalfe** of Bellows Falls, **Mya Bailey, Eleanor Cautela-Clouet, Krista Coughlin-Galbraith, Robert Dykes, Emma Ethier, Christina Howe, Allura Jacobs, Sarah McElroy, Casey Parris, Seth Putnam, Jason Shatney, Rebecca Tatkovsky**, and **Alexandria Tupper** of Brattleboro; **Alexis Drake, Ethan Gray**, and **Krystal Martin** of Dummerston; **Carly Lane** of Jamaica, **Paige Rohane** of Putney, **Birgess Schemm** and **Maureen Velsor** of Saxtons River, **Paul Jerz** of Townshend, **Jeffrey Rivard** of West Brattleboro, **Alexis Grisales** and **Hannah Hoffman** of West Dover, **Rheanna Pare** of West Townshend, and **Susanna Yule** of Whitingham.

Obituaries



• **Stephen Roy "Charley Harley" Banis, 75**, of Guilford. Died Jan. 24, 2023 at his home with no doctor and no medicine (he insisted!). Charlie was born at home in Winchester, New Hampshire, the son of the late Doris (Barber) and Stephen Banis. The youngest of seven and the only boy, Charlie attended Winchester School until the eighth grade. "By fifth or sixth grade, I repaired my teachers' automobiles. They knew I was crafty and bored." From that time on, he could fix any older automobile or motorcycle. Friends say he was one of a kind and that they don't make them like Charlie any more. Charlie built many motorcycles and hot rods and loved working on Model A's and anything with a flathead Ford motor, or was built before computers. He was a welder, mechanic, and carpenter, building his own house with his girlfriend of 36 years, Lynn M. Tobey. He shared his knowledge and was always happy to help his friends and family. He loved hunting

and fishing, and boating when the kids were younger. He was a role model for his kids. Strong willed, he quit drinking 36 years ago and smoking 10 years ago. He never took anything more than an aspirin. Besides Lynn, Charlie is survived by his son Harley D. Banis (Kattie) and his stepson Troy J. Hanson (Brittany), both of Guilford; and sons Jonah and Stephen. He also leaves sisters Francis Fisher (Dean deceased), Angela Lupien (CB deceased), Dolores Kemp (Donald), Stephanie Morgan (Edgar), and Diane Perrone; and grandchildren Brook L. M. Hanson and Eliana C. Banis and grandchildren he never met. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Sylvia M. Tobey. He was predeceased by his sister Sonia Fuller and two of his best buddies, Loren E. Tobey and Stanley Lynde. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A celebration of Charlie's life will happen when the weather warms so his family and friends can join in with their motorcycles, hot rods, and old cars. Of course, this includes any and all modes of transportation. Date and venue to be announced. To share a memory or send condolences to Charlie's family, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Diane Allen Bassett, 82**, of Brattleboro. Died Feb. 10, 2023 following a period of declining health. The daughter of the late Harold and Margaret Allen, Diane was born in Brattleboro on March 7, 1940. Diane attended school in Brattleboro, graduating from Brattleboro Union High School in 1958. She continued her education at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, graduating with a degree in government in 1962. After graduation, Diane moved to Massachusetts, where she started her family. She moved back to her hometown in 1985, and worked for many years as a legal assistant in the law offices of William McCarty and Potter Stewart, Jr. An avid golfer, Diane was a longtime member of the Brattleboro Country Club. She also enjoyed reading, working in her garden, and spending time with family and friends. Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by Timothy Ryan, Jr., her partner of over 25 years. She leaves behind her two children, Douglas and Elisabeth, both of Brattleboro, her grandson, Daniel McCauley-Bassett of Chesapeake, Virginia, her twin brother Douglas Allen of Marcellus, New York, along with many extended family members and friends. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Burial will take place at Meetinghouse Hill Cemetery in Brattleboro at a later date. Donations to the Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302. Atamaniuk Funeral Home of Brattleboro is in charge of arrangements.

• **Marie J. Gilligan, 88**, of Brattleboro and Whipple Hollow, Vermont. Died Feb. 5, 2023 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts, surrounded by her family. She was known as "Gigi" to her grandchildren and known as a friendly and joyful face to so many people she loved and even those she barely even knew. She was born in Rutland on Nov. 12, 1934, the daughter of Joseph and Catherine (Jakubiak) Mondella. She was a graduate of Mount Saint Joseph Academy and Casenovia (N.Y.) College. While in high school, she met the love of her life, Richard "Dickie" Gilligan. On October 22, 1960, they were married, and a few years later started their family, bringing three sons into the world. Marie began her first business, "Marie's Gift Shop," which later became "The Dolly Toy House" in Rutland. She worked for New England Telephone, retiring after more than 30 years of service. She was a proud antique doll collector, and was even featured in *Yankee Magazine* as the

"Doll Lady." Even into her 88th year, she carried a beautiful and joyful girl-like energy about her when it came to talking about her dolls and the many antiques she would find while driving around New England. Marie also loved playing the slot machines at casinos and she was incredibly lucky when it came to scratch tickets. She found so much joy in making floral arrangements and boxwood trees. She spent many years volunteering at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital and brought joy to so many people's faces. She was known by the people she loved as somebody who was always giving, even to those she'd never met. She was so proud of her family, and especially loved watching and supporting her grandchildren at their many sports games and activities. Survivors include her sons Rick Gilligan (Kelly) of Amherst, New Hampshire, Glenn Gilligan of Brattleboro and Whipple Hollow, and Randy (Patty) of Vernon; grandchildren Micayla Gilligan, Devin Gilligan (Madi), Patrick Gilligan, and Ryan Gilligan; her sister, Virginia Barry; her brother, Joseph Mondella; and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her husband in 2018 and her sister Janie Wener in 2022. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral Mass will be held Thursday, Feb. 23, at 1 p.m. in St. Peter's Church in Rutland. Visiting hours will be held prior from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Clifford Funeral Home in Rutland. Donations to Mount St. Joseph Academy, in care of Clifford Funeral Home, 2 Washington St., Rutland, VT 05701

• **Robert Ayer "Bob" Hall, 99**, of Shelburne, Vermont. Died peacefully in his home, surrounded by his loving family, on Jan. 30, 2023. He was born in St. Johnsbury on October 2, 1923, and had resided in Shelburne for 56 years before his passing. Bob was happily married to his beloved wife, Fran, for 68 years until she was taken by cancer in September 2014. He is survived by his four children, Steve Hall, Deb Hall, Stu Hall and wife Holly Hall, and Rob Hall and wife Susan Hall; grandchildren Jeffrey Robert Hall and wife Katharine Braun-Levine, Meredith Hall Ritter and husband Matthew Wilson Ritter, Jenna Ross and partner Joe Leo, Dan Ross, Carrie Hersey and husband Lucas Hersey, Heather Hall, Kelsey Hall, and William Hall; and five great-grandchildren, Zoziah Robert Hall, Joelianny Sky Levine-Hall, Emily Cecilia Ritter, David Hersey and Melissa Hersey. Bob grew up in Waterbury and graduated from the University of Vermont with a B.S. in mechanical engineering. He served in the Army in Europe during World War II as part of Battery B, 46th Field Artillery Battalion. He was awarded the European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal with two Battle Stars, along with the Victory Medal, American Theater Ribbon and a Good Conduct Medal. He went on to work at General Electric in Schenectady, N.Y., and then in Burlington, Vt., for 31 years before retiring. Bob was a family man and an avid hobbyist who had many interests and talents. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, boating and playing cribbage — and for many years was a ham radio enthusiast and an active member of several regional and international ham radio communities and networks, including during his time serving as president of the Burlington Amateur Radio Club in the late 60s. Bob also enjoyed listening to big band music and, in earlier days, dancing to it with Fran on Friday night outings with friends. As a young couple, they even danced on the deck of the steamboat Ticonderoga while it was active on Lake Champlain. In their later years, Bob and Fran purchased an electric organ and enjoyed taking lessons and playing for

family and friends at home. Bob and Fran were frequent travelers who made two cross-country trips covering 48 states, traversing a southern route on their first cross-country trek and, a few years later, heading out via the northern U.S. states. They enjoyed a vacation in Hawaii and numerous summer vacations on the coast of Maine. In between these trips, there was a lovely flow of visiting or receiving family to celebrate special life events. Bob was a talented and enthusiastic photographer, starting at the age of 10 when he got his first camera. He set up a darkroom at his family home in St. Johnsbury and developed black-and-white prints. During high school, he became the photographer for the yearbook and sports teams. While serving in the Army, Bob used any free time he had to take photographs. As an employee at GE, he continued using his skills as a photographer and ventured into video production, helping to create some of the company's earliest instructional videos for its employees. It goes without saying that his family has been well documented over the years with his photographs, and he has inspired many family members to follow his love for this great hobby. Before Bob's vision became compromised, he enjoyed painting from photographs that he had taken of important places in his life. Family meant the world to Bob, and this included the family pets. He was a devoted son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather, always generous with his time, energy and love. Bob was truly a "gentle" man, and his attitude in life was always "the glass is half full," which is probably one of the reasons he lived to 99. His wisdom helped him to live in the moment and have a grateful heart — a beautiful model for us all. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Donations to UVM Home Health & Hospice, 1110 Prim Rd., Colchester, VT 05446 (uvhomehealth.org); Age Well: Meals on Wheels in Vermont, 875 Roosevelt Highway, Suite 210, Colchester, VT 05446 (agewellvt.org); or Humane Society of Chittenden County, 142 Kindness Ct., South Burlington, VT 05403 (hscvvt.org).



• **Violet Agnes "Vi" Howard, 91**, of Marlboro. Died peacefully on Feb. 3, 2023 at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital following a period of declining health. Mrs. Howard was born in South Deerfield, Massachusetts on Oct. 24, 1931, the daughter of George and Mildred (Baxter) Powling. She was raised in Marlboro, attending Marlboro public schools. She worked as a logger for many years with her father and two brothers, Percy and Calvin Powling. She also operated her own house cleaning business serving families primarily in the Marlboro area. In her earlier years, Violet had been employed at the former Arnold Ware Company on Cotton Mill Hill in Brattleboro. She was active in barrel racing up until her 80s and sorted cattle at the Pond Hill Ranch in Castleton, earning the distinction of being a world qualifier. Violet was a member of the Quarter Horse Association and Draft Horse Pulling Association. On Feb. 14, 1948, she was married to Sturgis E. Howard, who is deceased. Survivors include her companion of 58 years, David L. Johnson; daughters Maggie M. Smith and Peggy S. Howard (Keith), both of Hinsdale, New Hampshire, and Jane V. Clark (Jay) and Barbara A. Young (Alan), all of Marlboro; two grandchildren and a nephew whom she helped raise, Monica Smith (Mike), Davie Covey (Jocelyn), and Mark Powling; four other grandchildren, Donald Smith (Heather), Jeremy Clark (Hillary), Ted Greenwood, V (Rena), and Robert "B.J." Clark; great grandchildren Chrystal, Shawna, Joshie, Sarah, and Monica Smith (Mike), Davie (Jocelyn) Covey, Ted Greenwood, and Jennifer, Amber, and Jeremiah Clark; great-great grandchildren James, Kyle, and Logun Turner, Raymond, Zachary, Scarlett and Jeremiah Smith, Peyton Covey and Aaliyah Clark. Additionally, she leaves a sister, Hazel Brown, and many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. Violet was predeceased by a daughter, Mary A. Howard; brothers, Calvin, Percy, Lester and George Powling; three sisters, Hazel Bourn, Irene Bourn and Leone Beam; and a granddaughter, Beverly Covey. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Memorial contributions in Violet's name may be made to Windham County Humane Society, P.O. Box 397, Brattleboro, VT 05302; Gerda's Equine Rescue, P.O. Box 1352, West Townshend, VT 05359; or Pond Hill Ranch, 1683 Pond Hill Ranch Rd., Castleton, VT 05735. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.

• **Barbara LeVan, 69**, of Wilmington. Died peacefully in her home, surrounded by the love of family, on Feb. 1, 2023 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. She was born on Dec. 18, 1953, the daughter of Dolores Nikles (Nicki) and Robert LeVan. Barbara is survived by her daughter Emma Rose Sprenger-Timmons and grandson Lennon Timmons from West Dover; her father Robert LeVan and his wife Gail LeVan; her sister Sandy LeVan; brother Robert LeVan and his wife Linda Dietz; and stepdaughters Brie Beckwith and husband Justin and their children Redemond and Frida of Warren, Thylene Pike-Sprenger and husband David Rothman and their children Tulsii and Wilder of Fayston. Originally from Allentown, Pennsylvania, Barbara



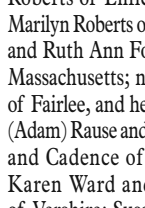
studied at the University of Maryland and then at the University of Pittsburgh where she received her degree in physical therapy. Her clinical work brought her to Summit County Colorado and New Hampshire. She blended functional rehab and manual therapy with craniosacral therapy, energy medicine and spiritual healing practices. In 1989, Barbara opened her private practice, Physical Therapy Plus, LLC in Wilmington. She owned and managed this patient-centered, holistic, community-based practice until 2013 and continued to treat patients from her home office until 2019, when she retired. Barbara taught for the Upledger Institute and the Barral Institute, where she developed deep connections to teachers and colleagues. She was an advanced teacher of manual therapies and enjoyed a long and distinguished teaching career, both nationally and internationally. In her teaching travels throughout the world, she often brought Eric and Emma Rose with her. The love of Barbara's life, her husband Eric Sprenger, predeceased her March 1, 2022. They shared a full and joyous connection to outdoor activities; biking, hiking, cross-country, telemark, and Alpine skiing, distance swimming at Lake Whitingham, snow shoeing, camping, kayaking, and walking together and with their daughters and later their grandchildren in their beloved Vermont woods. Their first date in 1996 consisted of a 10-mile hike/run on the Haystack Ridge Mountain Loop. They had a beautiful outdoor wedding in 1999 at Jenckes Farm in Marlboro with friends, family. In the fall of 1999, they welcomed 3-month-old Emma Rose into the family through adoption. Barbara ("Nana") said time and time again that Lennon was her source of light, especially within the year after Eric's passing. Nana, Emma Rose, and Lennon enjoyed walks to the lake together as well as other outdoor adventures, and many visits to see the neighbor's tractor. Lennon always looked forward to his sleepovers at Nana's house. Barbara and Eric enjoyed their travels to the Mad River Valley to visit Brie, Tyne, and their families for ski adventures, and looked forward to when they would visit Wilmington for backyard barbecues and swimming at the lake. Barbara was a brilliant and treasured soul who touched many lives through her wisdom, loving presence and healing abilities; she was described as having a mother earth connection. She was passionate about gardening, studying and playing cello with her close friend and teacher Judith Serkin, meditating, sewing toddler clothing and dresses for Emma as well as gifts for loved ones, and her tradition of Sunday night dinners at the lake with family and close friends. Barbara's love, generosity and strength will carry on through her family and friends. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Services will be held at West Dover Congregational Church on April 1 at 11 a.m., followed by an interment service for close friends and family. A celebration of life will be held at Memorial Hall on April 1 from 1 to 4 p.m. Donations to the Dr. John E. Upledger Foundation, 11211 Prosperity Farms Rd., D323, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. To send the family personal condolences, visit sheafuneralhomes.com.

• **Frederick H. Roberts, 81**, of Bernardston, Massachusetts. Died Feb. 4, 2023 at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, Massachusetts, with his wife Joyce at his side. Fred was born March 9, 1941 in Providence, Rhode Island, the son of Alfred B. and Muriel (Goff) Roberts. He attended elementary and high school in North Kingston, Rhode Island and excelled in baseball, football, and basketball. He continued to stay active in sports after high school, playing softball in the Brattleboro, Greenfield, and Keene, New Hampshire leagues. He served honorably in Massachusetts Army National Guard. He moved to Hinsdale, New Hampshire, then Northfield, Massachusetts, working for his brother on Old Yankee Farm. Later he was employed at Greenfield Tap & Die, Concel Paper, Hinsdale Paper, and Erving Paper. His last employment was at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for 28 years. He was a member of American Legion Post 5 in Brattleboro. Fred is survived by his wife Joyce (Roberts) of 58 years of Bernardston; sisters-in-law Joyce Roberts of Enfield, New Hampshire, Marilyn Roberts of Vernon, Connecticut, and Ruth Ann Fortunato of Westfield, Massachusetts; nieces Coralie Mitchell of Fairlee, and her daughters Stephanie (Adam) Rause and their children Mitchell and Cadence of Cross Jct. Virginia; Karen Ward and her husband Chad of Vershire; Susan Crate and husband Shane of Enfield, New Hampshire and son Lance Crate of Manchester; Diane DiPietro of Westfield, Massachusetts and her children Shane Carter and wife Kira of Deerfield, New Hampshire and their children Rory, Nash, Liliana and Justin Carter of Westfield; Lauren DiPietro of Ludlow, Massachusetts and their children Ariel and Talen; Leah DiPietro of Monson, Massachusetts; and Kyla DiPietro of Enfield, Connecticut; nephews Gordon P. Roberts and children Owen and Roisin of North Kingston; Garrett Roberts and children Kelson, Taylor, and Paxton of Wickford, Rhode Island; Bruce Roberts and wife Elaine of Pepperill, Massachusetts and children Timothy and Annie. He is also survived by his best friend Dwight Blossom of Hinsdale, as well as many

other friends and relatives. He was predeceased by his parents, mother-in-law Edna D. Roberts, brothers William G. and Gordon P. Roberts, and brother-in-law Wendell S. Roberts. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A funeral service will be held Monday Feb. 20 at noon at Kidder Funeral Home, 1 Parker Ave. Northfield. A calling hour will precede the service at 11 a.m. Burial will be in the spring in Center Cemetery in Bernardston, Mass. Donations to American Parkinson's Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018. To send condolences, visit kiddfuneralhome.com.

• **Shawna (Bonneau) Stevens, 70**, of Keene, New Hampshire, formerly of Brattleboro. Died peacefully on Jan. 24, 2023. Shawna was born in Brattleboro to the late Raymond and Joyce (Starkey) Bonneau on June 13, 1952, where she spent much of her youth. She graduated from Brattleboro Union High School and entered the workforce, taking on many different roles throughout her life. At various points, she worked waiting tables, as an office administrator, and as a drug addiction counselor. While these roles were important to her, the most important role was the one she held as mom. While she may not have been perfect, she loved her family, especially her children and grandchildren. Shawna will be remembered as a mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, and aunt. In addition to being remembered for loving her family, Shawna will be remembered as a cat-loving free spirit who was happiest with warm sunshine on her shoulders at the beach in Florida, or her hands in the cool, fresh dirt of a garden in Vermont. Shawna was always spiritual, leaning into the teachings of Christianity throughout life. No matter what she was going through, she was always kind, courteous, and treated people with respect. In addition to her parents, Shawna was predeceased by the father of her children, Michael Stevens Sr. She is survived by her cherished children Michael Stevens (Donna) and Collen Beaudouin; siblings Richard Bonneau and Catherine Bonneau McCarthy (John); and three grandchildren and three nieces, and their children. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: Services will take place at the convenience of the family. All are invited to attend. Please check the Cremation Society of New Hampshire website, csnh.com, where service details will be posted as they become available. Donations to the Brattleboro Retreat or a charity of your choice.

• **Megan Lea (Thurber) Willett, 46**, of White River Junction, formerly of Brattleboro. Died Feb. 4, 2023 at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire, following a courageous battle with cancer. Megan was born in Brattleboro on May 19, 1976, the daughter of Kenneth and Marleen (McDonald) Thurber. She was raised and educated in Brattleboro, graduating from Brattleboro Union High School with the Class of 1994. At the time of her death, she was employed as a sales associate at LaValley Building Supply in West Lebanon, New Hampshire. Previously, she worked as a licensed nurse's assistant at The Terrace in Wilder and for several nursing homes in the Brattleboro area including Vernon Green in Vernon. While in high school, Megan worked at the former Riverview Diner. Megan loved the outdoors and enjoyed camping, fishing, kayaking, and spending time at Hampton Beach and on Cape Cod. She was a sun lover and enjoyed working on her tan every summer. Megan also cherished time shared with her family. On May 1, 2021, in White River Jct., she was married to Lyle Willett, who survives. Besides her husband she leaves her children Dylan Betit of Whitingham, Felicia Betit of Barre, Massachusetts, and Lillie McBreaity of Fort Kent, Maine; her father, Kenneth Thurber of Belchertown, Massachusetts; her stepmother, Linda Thurber of Brattleboro; sisters Melissa Guyette of Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire and Karey Plummer of Beaverton, Michigan; and brothers Taylor and Spencer Thurber of Brattleboro. Additionally, she is survived by her paternal grandmother, Pauline Thurber of Guilford, and many nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and uncles. Megan also leaves behind her cat, Hemi, who she loved and could always be found wherever she was. She was predeceased by her mother and a nephew, Jason Guyette. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: A memorial gathering will be held at a later date and time to be announced by the funeral home. Donations to Children's Hospital at DHMC (CHA), 1 Medical Center Drive, HB 7070, Lebanon, NH 03756. To send condolences, visit atamaniuk.com.



• **Katie Marjorie Wilson, 40**, beloved daughter and sister, died at home on Dec. 22, 2022. She came into the world three months premature, at 1.5 pounds. She not only survived, but thrived. She was greatly loved, and leaves a big hole in her parents' lives. She was predeceased by her mother, Marjorie Wilson, and her paternal grandparents Gert and Holton Wilson. She is survived by her parents, Eva and Dennis Wilson, her sister Amy (Jody) Goodnow, her "Om!" Annmarie Anthony and her "adopted" grandfather Richard Lesure. MEMORIAL INFORMATION: No services are planned.

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

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We both can be a bit nervous at first but once we get settled we are very loving and affectionate. We both enjoy the company of other cats, dogs and children would be new to us.

Fee adoption Waived Hi, my name is **Zoey!** I am a gentle older gal looking for my retirement home where I can soak up sunbeams and love. I would need someone who can take me out a lot because I can't hold my bladder as long. I enjoy lounging on my dog bed and taking walks in nice weather. I'm generally mellow although I occasionally get some zoomies in the yard! I am well behaved on a leash plus I seem to be mostly housebroken! I have been used to being the only pet and would rather not have to get used to other animals at my age. I would be happy in a home with kids as long as they can be respectful of a sweet senior like me.

Hi there, I'm **Buddah!** I'm a sweet and handsome guy who came to WCHS after my owner moved and couldn't take me with them. Once I'm settled in a home, I am friendly, playful and a lap cat! I am used to being indoors only and I have previously lived peacefully with a dog. I haven't always gotten along with other cats but now that I'm neutered I may be able to share my home with a feline friend- or I'd like to be just as happy to be your one and only kitty! I am not sure about kids so they should be older and cat-savvy.

Hi, my name is **Apollo!** I am a sweet boy looking for a new place to call home. I have lived in a home with other dogs and kids previously and may be able to again with a proper introduction. Cats are way too exciting for me and I shouldn't live with any. I am strong with a lot of energy to burn and would like to go on lots of adventures with my new family. I also like to ride in the car, snuggle my humans and I know a couple of basic commands.

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Long

“New members have to learn how to use their time and take care of themselves,” Long said. “It’s long days and long nights. You have to know the process. You have to learn rules. You have to know how to deal with not just your own policy priorities, but how to balance the needs of your constituents.”

Constituent needs can change a legislator’s mindset, Long said, explaining that when the lawmakers began their run for office, they were addressing one narrow set of constituents — Democratic voters — and they “ran on their own values.”

“But once they’ve been elected, they realize that they’re representing a lot more people than just the ones who elected them in their district,” she continued. “There are a lot of competing priorities there,” Long said. “So they have to learn how to deal with all of them.”

Long is good at answering questions and teaching the process.

“You have to make sure people understand how things work in committee, how things work on the floor, how to interact with lobbyists, how to respond to constituents, how to use social media, how to report a bill, how to read a bill, how to redress legislation, how to do research, and how to get support for their bills,” she said.

“There are so many layers of things. How do you draft a piece of legislation? You have to know who to go to. And how do you get co-sponsors? You have to know the deadlines for submitting bills. Every single day, there are so many layers of things for new legislators to learn,” Long said.

Life with a supermajority

The Democrats have a strong majority right now. Their priorities are not surprising, and housing — especially affordable housing — is a huge issue for the legislators.

“I went up to a legislative breakfast at Grace Cottage Hospital, and one of the things they told us is that they were able to attract a primary care doctor, but the person couldn’t find housing and didn’t take the job,” Long said. “Housing is a huge barrier to bringing in workforce here.”

A lot of the housing conversation centers on Act 250, Vermont’s notoriously strict land use and development law.

“We love the culture of Vermont, and Act 250 has helped us preserve Vermont and the rural nature of our state,” Long said. “But without some growth, we can’t provide the housing that’s needed for the workforce.”

She enumerates some ideas. “So is there a way we can help expand downtown growth? There’s some legislation that’s been proposed to try to allow more growth in downtown. Will we allow accessory dwelling units? Can we change our zoning laws to allow a little more concentrated growth in our downtown?” she asks.

Last year a great deal of federal money came into the state; much of it was diverted to the housing crisis.

“We put something like \$300

million into housing,” Long said. “We put money into helping out first-time homebuyers. We [made] rehabilitation and rebuilding money available for buildings that already exist to turn them into housing. We have put quite a significant amount of money into folks who are currently unhoused. We’re trying to get them into housing. So we’re working on that.”

Gov. Phil Scott vetoed “our idea of a statewide rental registry,” Long said. “But we would love to see us continue to get a better understanding of the rental housing that we have in the state.”

A rental registry would be a good way to get a handle on the situation of short-term rentals for vacationers. Many units that once were available for long-term, stable housing have been taken off the market and made available for visitors, driving up costs for those trying to live and work in the area.

“That’s not to say that there’s anything wrong with that,” Long said. “Short-term rentals are an important part of our state. But how many homes are short-term rentals? And how many are long-term rentals?”

“What are the challenges around rental housing? It’s very hard to find rental housing. Windham County is particularly difficult.”

Climate policy is also on people’s minds.

“It is a big issue, much more than it ever was in the past,” Long said. “And that’s good, because we are all dealing with it all the time. So we’re working on that, trying to figure out what is the best path forward.”

The Senate is now also working on child care legislation; Long anticipates seeing that body’s bill after crossover, the midpoint in the legislative session when laws originating in the House go to the Senate and vice-versa. She knows that workforce development and continued funding of the universal school meals bill are also in the hopper.

“That’s been on the minds of a lot of folks, and we funded it through this year,” Long said. “Now there’s a lot of conversation about whether we’re going to be able to continue funding it. The newly reconstituted Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency and Forestry is taking testimony on universal school meals.”

Flexible leadership

Unlike other representatives, Long does not serve on a committee.

“We’ve debated quite a bit about that,” she said. “Every majority leader has a really hard time finding time to be in committee. The demands of the job are pretty great.”

Typically, a committee member sits in meetings and hears testimony on the bills under its jurisdiction.

“But I can’t vote on a bill if I haven’t been there for the testimony,” Long said. “So it was very hard, as majority leader to be a member of a committee. In the last biennium I was assigned to the Health Care Committee, and I didn’t vote on bills in there because I didn’t have the time to be in committee day after day.

FROM SECTION FRONT

Frankly, when you’re sitting in a committee, your focus is there. It’s very intensive work. I know. I did it for many years. You’re really focused on your narrow policy area; you have to make an effort to find out about other legislation.”

Long does sit on two committees, the House Rules Committee and the Joint Rules Committee, but these are process committees designed to help legislation flow. They do not write legislation.

The joint committee — the House and the Senate — decides, for example, when crossover will occur.

“Every year about this time we meet to decide the date that bills need to be finalized in one body so they can cross over to the other body,” Long said.

“We have to finalize our work by a certain date and get it over to the other body so that they have time to work on it. The budget starts in the house, and we need to get it to the Senate.”

This year, policy bills will cross over on March 17, and March 20 is the money bill crossover date.

“We always give an extra week for bills that require money committees to review them because they contain implications for either appropriations or revenue,” Long said. “The four bills that are exempted from these dates are the ‘big’ money bills — the budget, the revenue bill typically called the ‘miscellaneous tax bill,’ the transportation budget bill, and the institutions bill, called the ‘capital bill.’”

When Long first started in leadership, a meeting of the House Rules Committee was rare.

Then came Covid. “When I first got on House Rules, we only met as needed, when we needed to make changes to our rules,” Long said. “When Covid came, it just blew up the Rules Committee. We were meeting constantly. In fact, right after Covid, we were generally meeting daily trying to figure out how we were going to keep government working.”

This year, the many retirements in the House gave leadership the opportunity to restructure part of the process.

Long said the leaders “tried to look at the retirements as an opportunity as well as a loss of institutional memory,” she said. “So we restructured some of the committees and actually reduced the number of committees by one. So we had 14 last year and 13 this year. It made it a little easier for me to not be assigned to a committee.”

Long must still make herself familiar with all the legislation wending its way through the committees. The rest of her time is taken up with her constituents’ needs.

“My constituents are no different than anyone else’s,” she said. “Housing is probably the biggest challenge for folks. Trying to find housing is really hard. And businesses are struggling to find employees. Education is always at the top of the minds of our rural communities. We talk quite often about paid family leave. Child care is a constant challenge for folks. These are issues for my constituents, but they’re also issues for all all Vermont

Lawmakers seek public comment about housing issues in Vermont

Public hearing on Feb. 16 will be streamed on YouTube

MONTPELIER—The Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs and the House Committee on General and Housing will hold a public hearing on Thursday, Feb. 16, starting at 5 p.m.

The committees will hear testimony concerning the state of housing in Vermont.

The hearing takes place in Room 267 of the Pavilion Building at 109 State St. It will

be available to watch live on YouTube at bit.ly/702-housing-hearing.

Written testimony is encouraged and can be submitted at testimony2023@leg.state.vt.us or mailed to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs, in care of Scott Moore, 133 State St., Montpelier, VT 05633.

communities.”

More specific challenges are traffic calming in Newfane, where people tend to speed through the town center, and concerns about whether remote voting will continue.

Zoom has changed the world; even the legislators are interested in remote voting, something that House leadership must consider, Long said.

“There’s been a growing request for us to be able to allow some remote voting,” she explained. “Right now, if a legislator is sick, whether they have Covid or are sick with something else, or if their roads are bad and they couldn’t get in that day — because, you know, some people commute every day — if they can’t come physically into the building, they could still participate.”

“With Covid, we’ve created a whole new system of technology that allows us to Zoom into our committee meetings. Right

now we allow members to participate. So if you’re in a committee, and you have a question, you can raise your hand and get your question answered. You can hear witnesses and participate fully.

“But you are not counted as part of the quorum of the committee, and you cannot vote in a committee when you are participating remotely,” she said.

“That’s the way our past practice was, prior to Covid. So there’s a growing initiative out there, and a growing request to be able to allow at least some limited voting.”

The leadership is not considering voting from the floor of the House, however.

“We did do that, of course, during the pandemic,” Long said. “It was the only way we got anything done. But a hybrid model is a much harder thing to navigate. And, frankly, in a committee you’re taking testimony to develop legislation to recommend to the full body of the House. That’s a different layer

of voting, as opposed to voting on the floor, where you’re actually enacting laws.”

There is a lot of talk this year about Democrats having a “super majority” that can override any veto from the governor if the party members all vote affirmatively. But Long is seeing it a different way.

“The goal of having an expanded majority is to work with the governor and his administration and hear their input while we’re drafting legislation,” she said.

“This gives both branches of government the opportunity to collaborate where we can,” Long continued. “I believe that is what Vermonters expect of us.”

“We could still pass legislation that doesn’t have the governor’s support, and he could still veto legislation, but at least we would hear about those concerns during the process instead of reading about them in a veto letter.”

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In partnership with SEVCA, Energy Works is offering a no-cost Weatherization technical training that will include:

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- Opportunities to speak with employers & participate in job shadows

Contact Jeff Nerney
jnerney@vtadulthoodlearning.org / (802) 779-0057

Transportation and childcare stipends available while training

Principal

new principal. The proposal includes an “aggressive campaign for advertisement, then doing e-surveys and focus groups,” Haas said the plan would cost the district \$8,000.

Other officials cautioned attendees on the price tag.

“We haven’t agreed to spend anything — he was just doing his homework,” said high school board chair Molly Banik. “We’re not going to spend \$8,000 to try to find somebody. The board can a la carte from there and choose different pieces.”

Former BFUHS board member Colin James confronted Haas about the number at the Jan. 31 meeting and requested further clarification about where the money would come from. “We voted on a budget [...] you don’t even have [principal search] as a line item,” James said.

Former BFUHS Principal Christopher Hodsden said at the Jan 25 meeting that members of the board “might see the opportunity” presented by Broadley’s letter, but he made it clear that he thinks it’s “not at all” likely that the board will be able to find a replacement with the same level of commitment to the community and school.

The criticism of the district and Haas continued into the WNESU board meeting the following evening, at which more than 50 people showed up online and in person to comment on the district’s funding priorities.

Most comments were critical of the superintendent, and many people said the board wasn’t focusing its priorities on the school.



BFUHS Principal John Broadley, in an image from the administrative page of the school’s website.

“You’re hearing about students with broken desks, and there’s no tissues in the classroom, and we can’t supply certain things to our students,” said Samantha Simonds, mother of a current BFUHS junior.

Shawn Gailey, a stepparent to a student in the elementary school, complained of bullying and a lack of disciplinary enforcement within the district.

“When enforcement isn’t being done, what do we do at that point?” he asked. “They’re coming home with different attitudes and taking it out on us.”

In addition to disciplinary concerns, Gailey echoed in questioning the district’s decision to increase Haas’s compensation when “there’s numerous teachers

FROM SECTION FRONT

in the school system who work their butts off that barely make ends meet themselves.”

His concerns were echoed by fellow parent Jeremy Haskins, who said he noticed “a few concerning things evolving over the last year and a half in how the administration has been [run].”

“On a family issue we’ve dealt with multiple problems in the school district at the middle school. We still have a lot of things unresolved and are still working through that,” he said. He feels a lack of support from the district and is “still awaiting communications.”

WNESU board chair Jack Bryar also took a moment to clear up what he called misinformation surrounding the compensation of Haas, disputing a rumor that Haas would receive a \$70,000 raise.

“The average salary for a superintendent of schools, for a district of about 1,000 people, ranges from 146 [thousand] to 157 [thousand],” he told the board. He did not directly comment on how much the school was paying Haas, but he said he wanted to clarify that any adjustment to Haas’s salary would not be so extreme.

Despite the complaints leveled against Haas, for whom the board approved a \$152,000 contract in 2021, members voted unanimously in their confidence in him and his ability to perform his role.

The matter of his compensation wasn’t addressed at the closed session, and the board expects it to be on the agenda at their next meeting.

“A Photo is Worth a Thousand Words”

How to create compelling images/video that tell a story



Media Mentoring Workshop
 Wednesday, March 1st,
 7 p.m. via Zoom

Photo journalists offer tips on the art of imagery and storytelling supported by examples.

Moderator: **Joyce Marcel**: writer of award-winning cover stories for Vermont Business Magazine.
 Panelists: **Kelly Fletcher**: documentary photographer.
Kris Radder: photographer/videographer for Brattleboro Reformer.
Ziagul Azimi: journalist/executive for AWNA (Afghan Women News Agency).

Topics discussed will include:

- Choosing a compelling topic
- Angles and framing
- Light, color, composition, subject
- Capturing images in volatile situations



Register to attend by emailing geoffburgess2@gmail.com.

This event is free. Donate to support Media Mentoring at commonsnews.org.



Ray Plummer, a BFUHS Senior, is learning diesel truck mechanics with the Advantage Truck Group in Westminster, via the Work-Based Learning Program.

Work-Based Learning

FROM SECTION FRONT

students develop concrete career goals,” Waryas explained. “The key to that is supporting our students as they explore possible avenues of work that interest them.” This approach rejects the old paradigm that intellectually gifted students should be put on the fast track to college, leaving students who may be struggling in a school setting to find work in the trades or services — a model that often doesn’t consider the skills and interests of the individual student.

Excellent paying careers

Giving students a much broader view of what careers are open to them has become increasingly attractive in recent years as the wages for manual and technically skilled workers have more than held their own. Pay rates for skilled workers with on-the-job training often start higher than for many college graduates.

In many skilled labor and technical fields, interns and apprentices are paid as they learn, so they develop a career while earning a good living and without the burden of student loan debt.

Such occupations include construction managers, power line workers, machinists, electricians, masons, welders, heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) technicians, building inspectors, mechanics, plumbers, and others in dozens of technical fields. In general, they make far above median wages, and six-figure incomes are not unusual.

Many of these trades also offer them greater opportunities for launching their own businesses.

Springfield Fire Chief Paul Stagner is a strong supporter of the Work Based Learning Program, bringing students into his department to work with EMTs and firefighters.

“It’s something I’ve been trying to do for a while,” Stagner said. “The pilot program this year kind of fell together very nicely. It gives students a chance to experience what it’s like to be in the emergency services.”

With a serious shortage in firefighting and emergency medical staff, Stagner said, “I think this program is critical to our future.”

“Starting pay here for a firefighter/EMT is \$22 an hour,” he said. “And your training is paid for. A five-year employee makes a \$55,000 yearly base pay with excellent benefits. With overtime there is no limit, and the overtime available is insane.”

Tyler Sprague, a senior attending BFUHS and an intern at Springfield Fire Department, said he has accumulated just over 250 hours of experience since September. He attended the Windham Regional Career Center’s protective services program last year.

“My daily routine involves station duties, truck checks, and running emergency calls,” said Sprague, whose career goal is to become a full-time firefighter and paramedic.

He said that the department has also been very helpful in getting him involved with trainings and department-related activities, like parades. His colleagues also have been very helpful with supporting him in taking continuing education such as an EMT class and Firefighter 1 preparation.

“The Work-Based Learning program is absolutely one of the most important programs available at our school,” Sprague said. “I’ve gained incredibly important experience at an earlier age than most people do.”

Stagner noted that the program is also beneficial to local businesses and services such as the fire department.

“As far as the fire department goes, getting young people involved with daily operations and training makes them that much more of a prepared candidate for hiring,” he said. “It has also helped me build a far more extensive network of mentors and peers that will last me my entire career.”

Jim Smith, owner of J & M Auto in Bellows Falls and a Rockingham volunteer firefighter, said that his fire company has four BFUHS seniors in the program, most of whom are on track to become full members once they turn 18. He also has two seniors working at his garage.

“They have done an outstanding job,” Smith said. “This is a very impressive group of young guys.”

Smith said that the students ask questions, which is a positive sign. “It’s a beneficial program if the kids’ hearts are in it.”

He noted that the opportunity for skilled trades people “is huge nowadays. All these kids need to realize you can make a really good living learning a skilled trade and getting really good at it.”

Training limitations

Smith said that he and other employers in the program are limited in what he can have the students do. Some of the limitations

are defined by law, depending on a student’s age and the field; others are just common sense and good business practices.

“I’m limited in what I can have them do hands-on,” Smith explained — but the program is working fine for him.

“Auto mechanics is changing rapidly,” he said. “One-to-one training is the best.”

He noted that no one wants anyone not fully qualified and fully supervised working on their vehicle, and the businesses cooperating with the Work Based Learning Program all realize that.

Nate Leslie, service manager with Advantage Truck Group in Westminster, said that the program has been a real help for his diesel repair company.

“This program has been helpful for our location here in Westminster,” he said. “We have two full-time employees who came out of this program and are currently working in the shop generating revenue and enjoying a fulfilling career.”

Leslie compared the training to teaching medical students in a hospital, and he agreed with Smith that the one-on-one approach is key.

“Students start by observing the techs,” he said; after evaluation, if a student shows interest and aptitude, “they will quickly be working on the vehicles with the technician.”

Leslie said the company’s work with the school program has been a success.

“The Work Based Learning program is an excellent program,” he said. “It gives the students that know they will be involved in the trades an early experience of what it is all about in any given field.”

“A heavy-duty diesel technician is not [as] easy to find these days as they once were,” Leslie said. “This program allows students to decide whether or not this is a good fit.”

Waryas agreed, and said that students learn that “a successful experience now doesn’t mean you’re going to like it all” or that there won’t be parts that are not so enjoyable. Another real-world lesson.

Real-life working skills: more than turning a wrench

Jenna Dolloph is a senior at Bellows Falls Union High School. She is planning on studying automotive body work after high school while also working on a business degree.

“In December of 2022 I shadowed for a day at Key Collision in Keene, New Hampshire,” she said. “I had such a great day learning about each of the steps in the process, each person’s part in the process, as well as learning more about body work overall.”

She said it gave her the opportunity to grasp the overall concept and see what a day in the job was like, and whether she could see herself doing it in the future. “All the employees were so kind and supportive,” Dolloph said, “and gave me good advice as a female looking to get into a typically male-dominated field.”

Dolloph sees a lot of value in the Work Based Program. “I definitely think the Work Based Program is a very beneficial thing,” she said, “as it allows students to get exposed to new jobs, figure out their likes and dislikes. I see no problems with Work Based Programs and I think more students should utilize it to see what’s out there for jobs they may be interested in; it’s overall a great opportunity.”

Both school personnel and the employers remarked on the key skills they want to develop in the kids — skills that can be hard ones to teach: how to be a good employee and how to excel in customer relations.

Classes in job readiness skills cover such topics as demeanor and dress, interacting socially, and building confidence. Employers put emphasis on developing the students’ people skills.

J & M Auto also runs a busy towing service, and Smith said the students go on the road with his tow truck crew. “It teaches them to have an interest in people,” he said. “I think that’s more important — how to deal with the public.”

Smith noted that going out to an accident scene, often when people are at their worst, is an education all on its own. It’s a chance to “go out there, see what’s going on, and learn how to react,” he said.

Leslie stated that effort, attitude, attendance, and punctuality are vital work skills that the students need to develop.

“If no effort is given, then what’s the point, right?” he said.

“Attitude is a huge part of our business, where there is a lot of stress,” he said, noting that a customer whose truck is in the shop is unable to work and make money with the vehicle. So for the employee, “a poor attitude will not help anything.”



Heather Waryas runs the Work-Based Learning Program at Bellows Falls Union High School.

Attendance is a huge factor for workers, Leslie said.

“The student needs to learn that not only are they here to learn, but also to help,” he said. “Poor attendance would not help.”

“If we are left waiting around for the student to show up and they are late, we treat it as if they are an employee,” Leslie added.

The effort pays off.

“Many students become paid employees even while still in their work-based program,” Leslie said.

And work-based students soon learn a valuable real-world lesson: Not showing up, or showing up late, doesn’t just mean a poor grade or warnings for being tardy. It can mean you are out of the program and out of a paying job.

“It teaches them real-world, real-time work ethics,” Leslie said. “Just waking up to go to school and going through the motions isn’t enough. Being depended on to show up for work to increase uptime for our customers give the students drive to show up and help get the truck out of the shop.”

He said he knows from experience that these types of programs are “very” effective. In high school, he was involved in a co-op/work release program where he was able “to get to work two, sometimes three, class blocks early.”

“I figured out at a young high-school age that this was the career I was going to pursue,” Leslie said. “Fast forward 18 years later. I’ve got 10 years on the floor and now eight as a manager.”

“I have no regrets and really have to thank these types of programs for an early start,” he said.

Embedded learning

Students in the Work Based Learning program can take a number of elective courses, either at the school or at the workplace.

Alexander Leonard, a senior at BFUHS, is a volunteer firefighter in Rockingham and is in the work-based program at J & M Auto, where he spends half of every school day. He said that for every 100 hours of work in the program, students are credited with one elective.

Some programs that use a lot of math or English or writing skills can also help satisfy some of the elective requirements.

“This is a great opportunity,” Leonard said. “You can get a good idea of career options with hands-on learning.”

“Being a mechanic has always been an interest of mine,” he said. “And after I graduate, I’m going to attend the Southern Maine Community College Fire Science Program.”

Noah Cherubini, a Green Mountain Union High School senior, is in the Health Sciences Program at the River Valley Technical Center in Springfield.

“I think it’s an amazing program,” said Cherubini. On this day, he was at the Springfield Fire Department, doing observation with the EMT staff there.

“You get a real taste of what the job is all about,” he said. “I think it’s amazing. You’re going to class every day knowing that you’re going to have so many opportunities to go out and get hands-on experience.”

Cherubini’s plan is to become an EMT following graduation. Chief Stagner said he wishes he could take on more students, but is limited by “extreme understaffing.” He had high praise for Sprague, who has worked for hundreds of hours with his department. He said he would be looking for “feedback from Tyler” to make the program even better.

“I am excited for the future of developing the program and recruiting the next students who will get the honor of working with the department,” Sprague said.

“I think that creating an interview process with several candidates would be highly beneficial for the department to get a chance, and for the kids who don’t get accepted, a valuable experience with rejection at an interview,” the fire chief added.

Another real life lesson.



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COLUMN | Arts Notebook

'There is always more'

St. Michael's congregation and extended community honor the service of retiring Episcopal church Music Director Susan Dedell, who has used the arts to reach out and expand a music ministry

FOR NEARLY 32 years, Susan Dedell has pumped the organ, plied the piano keys, and shaped the choirs — and musical landscape — of St. Michael's Episcopal Church. And now she's moving on, after a rousing, big-hearted sendoff.

The St. Michael's community was joined Jan. 14 by many from the region and beyond to celebrate more than three decades of Dedell's music directorship at the 170-year-old church on Bradley Avenue. Among familiar faces from a rich past were the Rev. Jean Jersey, who had been interim pastor at St. Michael's before the tenure of Rt. Rev. Thomas Brown, now bishop of the Diocese of Maine, who was also present with his husband, the Rev. Thomas Mousin. Beginning with an hour of Taizé-style chanting in the

Sanctuary, the gathering then moved to the ground level of the adjacent Bradley Wing, where photographer/parishioner Christine Triebert had led a team to transform a space better known for housing coffee hours and tag sales, community meetings, and events into one well-suited to Dedell's farewell dinner: decked with fairy lights and lovely place settings, warm hues, and an intimate air. Every 5 feet or so on each long table sat a cube of tissues. And they were needed.

Following a dinner buffet and desserts prepared and served by volunteers, the evening then turned to tributes emceed by St. Michael's priest associate, the Rev. Philip Wilson.

Often warm and poignant, sometimes more in roasting style, more than a dozen individuals and groups gave tributes to Dedell, inspiring laughter, tears, and memories.



Susan Dedell, retiring music director of St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Brattleboro.



The St. Michael's community and guests participate in a Taizé service for Susan Dedell's retirement as the church's music director.



ANNIE LANDEMBERGER is a freelance writer who contributes regularly to these pages; she has been a parishioner of St. Michael's Episcopal Church since 1996 and is serving as senior warden in the Vestry until 2024.

Universally, Dedell was praised and thanked for her innovative spirit. Never one to stick with chart toppers from the standard Episcopal hymnal, she had each pew stocked with copies of *Lift Every Voice and Sing: An African American Hymnal*; she introduced early music, shape note singing, ancient chant, and more.

In his remarks, Brown spoke first of the wholesome character of St. Michael's and of Dedell's indelible mark on that.

"Susan," he said, "something you taught me early on is that there is always more" than what the 1982 Hymnal has to offer, and that there is always more beyond the traditional.

"I have carried that with me ever since," he told her. "You were having us sing spirituals long before George Floyd's assassination; you had us singing shape note. [...] We were, at one time, the only church I know of that introduced and integrated styles of music and texts for singing that were not typical

— and we are the stronger and the more faithful because of it."

"There's always more," Brown said.

Among myriad words of praise and thanks, perhaps the most poignant were those of younger choristers and youth choir alumni. They thanked Dedell repeatedly "for the growth she nurtured, for her teaching, for wise counsel that would nudge youth out of their comfort zones to try something new."

"The impact of Susan Dedell's ministry on St. Michael's and our wider community is inestimable," said the Rev. Mary Lindquist, the church's rector. "Her passion, intelligence, creativity, and drive helped St. Michael's create so many opportunities for people to enter into the awe and love of God's presence."

"We are deeply grateful for her ministry and how God's grace shined through it all," Lindquist continued. "We trust that God will lead and guide us

in this next chapter of our musical leadership."

SINCE DEDELL first interviewed at St. Michael's with then-Rector Paul Thompson, she has been initiating new programming and collaborations with guest musicians, poets, and visual artists.

Among these works: Paul Winter's *Missa Gaia/Earth Mass* on the Feast of St. Francis; presentations of yearly performance art co-designed with Dedell's musical colleague, Charles Mays Jr., during Black History Month; and, last spring, a Holy Week exploration of new ways of perceiving the Stations of the Cross, using sculpture of Susan Wilson inspired by experiences of migrants at the Mexican border wall.

In addition, she and husband Paul Dedell, co-founded and grew *Winged Productions* — an entity separate from the church but clearly an asset to it. Through that avenue, Dedell and collaborators expanded St. Michael's offerings weaving in music, drama, art, and multimedia with original works, all aimed at exploring matters of the human/divine spirit connection but with broad secular appeal.

DEDELL REVEALS her passion for using the arts to reach out and expand a music ministry. For most churches, she observes, the standard hymnody does not go far enough in its outreach.

"In general, churches today are experiencing more people coming from different backgrounds and traditions," she said, and the liturgy and music can create an opportunity to celebrate and reflect that diversity.

"I'm kind of a musical omnivore, and St. Michael's has been open to that," Dedell said. "It wasn't a hard sell, and I credit that to the openmindedness of staff, choirs, and clergy over the years. I'm also a musical opportunist, so when I'm fortunate to have someone come with new insights and gifts, I have been excited!"

Seeking both earthiness and holiness, Dedell is quick to add that she still loves a lot of traditional Anglican music, not to mention the enormously rich canon of classical composers of both choral and instrumental music.

However, in the end, no matter what the style or the era that art springs from, "my goal has been to uplift, inspire, reflect, probe," she said. "And

SEE DEDELL RETIRES, B4

arts & community CALENDAR

THURSDAY
16
Music
BRATTLEBORO "Fiddler on the Roof": The BUHS Music Department announces its 50th annual musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*, book by Joseph Stein, music by Jerry Brock, and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. The story centers on Tevye, a milkman in the village of Anatevka, who attempts to maintain his Jewish religious and cultural traditions as outside influences encroach upon his family's lives.
▶ 2/16 and 2/17: 7 p.m., 2/18: 2 p.m. in the Auditorium.
▶ Through Saturday, February 18.
▶ \$10, \$6 seniors. BUHS students (show I.D. at box office) and all BUHS, BAMS and WRCC staff get one free ticket.
▶ Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Rd. Information: buhs.wesdvt.org, 802-451-3511.
BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Music Center Chamber Music Series: "Celebrating Valentine's with Love Songs Old & New": Featuring British baritone Roderick Williams, OBE, accompanied by

pianist Yi-Heng Yang. Williams is one of UK's most sought-after baritones w/ repertoire from baroque to world premieres. In 2016, he won Royal Philharmonic Society's Singer of the Year award. Yang's work includes collaborations on period instruments with visionary artists such as Grammy award-winning tenor Karim Sulayman in their acclaimed/timely album, "Where Only Stars Can Hear Us" (Avie Records).
▶ 7 p.m. Concert includes works by Robert Schumann, Josephine Lang, Roger Quilter, Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn, Sally Beamish, Caroline Shaw, Cheryl Frances Hoad, Benjamin Britten, Gerald Finzi. N95 or equivalent masks must be worn at all times at our concerts.
▶ \$30. We recommend purchasing tickets in advance - we cannot guarantee seats will be available at the door.
▶ Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysé Way. Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/3kzkaajc>; 802-257-4523; bmcvt.org.
Recreation
BRATTLEBORO Thorn in My Side - Hooker Dunham Theater's Original Game Show: Created by Ben Stockman, Jesse Tidd, James Gelter, Shannon Ward. Each month, 3 contestants compete in bizarre challenges that fit that month's theme.

THURSDAY CONT.
▶ 8 p.m. *Third Thursday of every month. Show is for adult audiences. Check out award-winning episodes on BCTV. All audience members must be masked for performances. Be prepared to present a vaccination card or a picture of the card at the door.*
▶ Pay what you can.
▶ Hooker-Dunham Theater, 139 Main St. Information: 802-281-3232; hookerdunham.org.
Kids and families
BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Recreation and Parks: Parent and Tot Open Gym: Unstructured program or parents and preschoolers ages 5 and under. This is a place for parents and tots to get out of the cold and enjoy playing with playhouses, cars, toys, tunnel, a play kitchen, big rubber balls and more.
▶ 10 - 11:30 a.m. on Thursdays in the 3rd floor Gym. All equipment is disinfected prior to the program. Participants should wash hands before, during and after participating.
▶ Through Thursday, April 27.
▶ \$1 per child per day.
▶ Gibson-Aiken Center, 207 Main St. Information: 802-254-5808; brattleboro.org.

FRIDAY
17
Community building
BRATTLEBORO Meet the Candidates for Brattleboro Select Board: The Boys and Girls Club is hosting this event to highlight public and youth engagement in the political process. All Brattleboro residents and interested parties - voters and youth - are invited to attend this Forum. The Club is actively involved in the town and welcomes the candidates and looks forward to a robust discussion.
▶ 6-7:30 p.m. All are welcome. ASL interpreter available.
▶ Free.
▶ Boys & Girls Club, 17 Flat St. Information: 802-254-5990; bgcbrattleboro.com.
VERNON Vernon Outdoor Recreation Master Plan - Special Meeting for Public Input (In Person/Zoom): The Recreation Dept. has been working with Weston & Sampson, consultants, on a new Outdoor Recreation Master Plan for Vernon. This work is being funded by a grant from the Vermont Agency for Commerce and Economic Development. The planners are looking for your input!
▶ 6:30 p.m. lower level (use "Police" entrance on west side).
▶ Vernon Town Offices, 567 Governor Hunt Rd. Information: Full Agenda: tinyurl.com/2p87y54j; Zoom: tinyurl.com/2p87y54j.

FRIDAY CONT.
Music
WEST TOWNSHEND Bard Owl presents WEST TOWNSHEND Store's Pizza Night: T. Breeze Verdant on guitar, vocals, stomp box, and Annie Landenberger on vocals and percussion. Bard Owl has been playing in the region since 2016 offering sweet harmonies, driving rhythms, and an eclectic mix of old tunes, new, and original.
▶ 5-7 p.m.: The outdoor wood-fired brick pizza oven will also be ready for baking.
▶ West Townshend Country Store and Cafe, Rte. 30. Information: bardowlmusic.com.
BELLOWS FALLS Bellows Falls Union High School Student Composers Concert: This concert is a collaborative effort with Music-COMP, a non-profit pairing young composers with a professional composer mentor to create an original musical work. Students in BFUHS teacher Nick Pelton's music composition course worked with mentor composer Kyle Saulnier and their pieces will be performed by the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Brass Quartet.
▶ 7 p.m. in the Auditorium.
▶ Free.
▶ Bellows Falls Union High School, 406 High School Rd. Information: 802-463-3944; bfuhs.org.

SEE FRIDAY, B2

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FRIDAY CONT.

BRATTLEBORO Latchis Pub Sneak-Preview nights with Live Music: Celebrate Brattleboro's Winter Carnival by opening with a two night "sneak-preview." Performing Friday: Brattleboro-based artists Teddy Martin and Daniel Kasnitz. Saturday features the Frost Heaves duo of Daniel Hales and James Low of Greenfield, MA.

- 5:30 p.m. doors open, 6 p.m. music. Beer and wine, tacos, more other light fare available. Latchis Pub plans to open soon on a regular basis.
- Through Saturday, February 18.
- Latchis Pub, 6 Flat St. Information: 802-380-1369.

Recreation

BRATTLEBORO Youth Chess Classes -- Beginner and Intermediate Classes - Eric Strickland instructs.

- Both classes take place on Fridays. 3:15-4:15 p.m.: Intermediate classes (players must know basic checkmate and a few tactics and strategies).
- 4:30-5:30 p.m.: Beginner classes. (No classes 2/24).
- Through Friday, April 28.
- \$55 Brattleboro residents, \$70 non-Brattleboro residents.
- Brattleboro Recreation and Parks Dept., 207 Main St. Information: Register in person or online: tinyurl.com/4srdtmf.

SATURDAY

18

Music

BRATTLEBORO Johnathan Blake's Trio (In-Person, Facebook Live, Livestream): Heralded by NPR Music as "the ultimate modernist," Blake has recorded with the Modigins, Dave Holland, Pharoah Sanders, Ravi Coltrane, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Tom Harrell, Hans Glawisching, Avishai Cohen, Donny McCaslin, Linda May Han Oh, Jaleel Shaw, Chris Potter, Maria Schneider, and countless other distinctive voices. He appears on three Grammy-nominated albums, one with Kenny Barron Trio (Book of Intuition), and two with the Mingus Big Band (Tonight at Noon, I am Three).

- 7:30 p.m. "Blake's drumming is as bold as thunder and as subtle as the pitter of rain." - The New York Times.
- Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moysse Way. Information: 802-257-4523; bmcvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO Wolfman Jack: Wolfman Jack is a live music project of veteran musicians from the New England area performing the psychedelic and electrifying Live Dead era of The Grateful Dead. A true dance band in the style of such legendary venues as The Fillmore West, Carousel Ballroom and Avalon Ballroom. They recreate those vintage sets from when the Grateful Dead were first cutting their teeth as a live music act.

- 8 p.m.
- \$12 in advance, \$25 at door.
- The Stone Church in Brattleboro, 210 Main St. Information: Tickets: Stonechurchvt.com.

Farmers' markets

BRATTLEBORO Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market: Weekly diverse indoor farmers market. Local farm produce, meats, syrup, fresh baked goods, fruits, cider, preserves, handmade jewelry, pottery, soaps, more. SNAP shoppers turn \$10 into \$40 each week!

- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays through 3/25 in the gymnasium.
- Through Saturday, March 25.
- Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market, 60 Austine Dr. Information: farmersmarket@postoisolutions.org, 802-275-2835.

The written word

Workshop: "Story Structure Part 1" (Online): "In this workshop, led by Barbara Morrison, we will look at ways to structure a story to make it so compelling that a reader cannot put it down. Appropriate for beginning and experienced writers.

- 4-5 p.m.
- \$10. All are welcome even if unable to donate at this time.
- Zoom. Information: To get link, email: info@timetowrite.us. Website: b Morrison.com/events.

PETERBOROUGH Monadnock Writers' Group Speaker Series: Darcy Gohring: "Finding Courage to Write Your Personal Narrative": Gohring leads workshops helping others reveal their often long-hidden stories. "Every single person has their own challenges," and "there is something healing about writing your story." She has found this to be true through her own writing having shared her experience with breast cancer, revealed the impacts of dyslexia on her education and career, and written about how menopause and aging affect her as a woman. She hosts Moms Don't Have Time to Writing Online Writing Co

- 10:30 a.m.
- Free.
- Peterborough Town Library, 2 Concord St. Information: 603-924-8040; peterboroughtownlibrary.org.

Kids and families

W. MARLBORO Southern Vermont Natural History Museum - President's Week Open House: Includes kids activities, live animal encounters and special exhibits added to the Museum's regular exhibits and attractions. Among the guests will be artist Mary Wright leading Observational Drawing and Animal Medicine Card reading. Photographer Nicki Steel will be on site with her photos and a special presentation on the local Eagle Nest.

- 12 noon-3 p.m.: Nicki Steel. 2:30 p.m.: Formal programming wraps up with a guided "Winter Wildlife" hike on Mount Olga.
- Admission is free from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Southern Vermont Natural History Museum, 7599 VT Route 9. Information: vermontmuseum.org.

CHESTERFIELD "Mason Goes Mushrooming" by Melany Kahn: Melany Kahn wrote "Mason Goes Mushrooming" after 20 years of teaching New Hampshire children how to forage for wild edible mushrooms. A first-of-its-kind children's foraging adventure book, future foragers are invited to accompany 3rd-generation mushroom hunter Mason (now age 20), and his 4-legged pal Buddy, on their woodland treasure hunts in search of edible mushrooms. Book's premise is simple: 4 seasons, 4 woodland adventures, 4 wild mushrooms, 4 delicious recipes.

- 11 a.m.-12 noon. Melany quells common fears and puts the "us" in mushrooms by weaving simple education and science through a playful, fungi-finding adventure. Identification guide included for new foragers. Kid-friendly recipes are easy and bring out mouthwatering flavor notes of mushrooms. Melany also brings art supplies to present a clay art session where children shape and paint their own mushroom to take home. She also offers A Read Aloud - an animated reading with commentary - lasting about 8 minutes followed by an interactive session. While this is a book for kids, adults love it too!
- Free.
- Chesterfield Public Library, 524 Rte. 63. Information: chesterfieldlibrary.org/programming.

BRATTLEBORO 101st Harris Hill Ski Jump: Over 40 of the world's top up and coming ski jumpers from the US and Europe will compete. The event takes place on the only Olympic sized 90-meter ski jump in New England. Jumpers launch from the takeoff and soar more than 300 feet at speeds of nearly 60 mph. A festive atmosphere for the whole family with food, music, souvenirs, and a beer tent.

- 11 a.m.-1 p.m. are the Saturday hours Newton will personally be on site. She looks forward to meeting you. The

SATURDAY CONT.

- 2/18: Pepsi Challenge & US Cup: 10 a.m. Gate opens, 11:15 a.m. Opening Ceremonies, 12 noon: Competition begins. 2/19: Fred Harris Memorial Tournament: 10 a.m. Gate Opens, 11:45 a.m. Opening Ceremonies, 12:30 p.m. Competition begins. Awards following events at the base of Harris Hill.
- Awards follow event at the base of Harris Hill.
- Through Sunday, February 19.
- \$20 general, \$15 ages 6-12 (at gate or online).
- Harris Hill Ski Jump, Cedar Street. Information: brownpapertickets.com/event/5624694.

Well-being

BRATTLEBORO Strength and Conditioning with Lissa Stark: Class will focus on strengthening and toning the body, building muscle, improving core structure, stretching and increasing energy and endurance. Open to anyone 16 years old and older and is suitable for all fitness levels.

- 2 p.m.-2:45 p.m. on Saturdays. Arrive a few minutes early to register and sign in. Offered by Brattleboro Rec. & Parks.
- \$8 per class. Pre-registration is not required.
- Gibson-Aiken Center, 207 Main St. Information: Call 802-254-5808 for more information.

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

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

Community building

BELLOWS FALLS Monthly Conversation with Your Legislators: Chat with your Windham County Senators Nader Hashim and Wendy Harrison and your Windham-3 (Brookline, Rockingham and Westminster) House Representatives Michelle Bos-Lun and Leslie Goldman. Subsequent conversations are planned for the third Saturday of the month in March and April.

- 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the top floor meeting room.
- Free.
- Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: 802-463-4270; rockinghamlibrary.org.

Visual arts and shows

BRATTLEBORO Opening Party for Keith Haring: "Subway Drawings": Join us for food, drinks, and a first look at Keith Haring's "Subway Drawings." In the early 1980s, Haring was a little-known artist from Reading, PA, not yet the international art superstar/social activist he would become. During this time, Haring made thousands of unsanctioned chalk drawings in New York City subway stations. Most were promptly thrown away or papered over by subway authorities. Only a limited number survive to this day.

- 5 p.m. (Exhibit closes 4/16.).
- Free.
- Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 28 Vernon St. Information: 802-257-0124; brattleboromuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO Latchis Gallery hosts work by Patti Newton: "Dreamland Circus Taret": Festive installation features large color images from "The Dreamland Circus Taret" - a 100-card artisan deck and book. The artwork is a combination of vintage photographs from the 1800s/early 1900s, and Patti's own photos taken at a nearby contemporary amusement park originally known as "Gallup's Cove" circa 1840 located in Agawam, MA.

- 11 a.m.-1 p.m. are the Saturday hours Newton will personally be on site. She looks forward to meeting you. The

Gallery will be fully lit so the exhibit can be viewed from the outside window 24/7 through 3/31. To purchase a deck or book or for more information visit www.silvermoonvt.com.

- Through Friday, March 31.
- Latchis 4 Gallery, 50 Main St.

Film and video

BRATTLEBORO "Dawson City Frozen Time": Latchis Arts' Spotlight Film Series and Keene State College Curators: February Spotlight: Documentary "Dawson City Frozen Time" In 1978, a bulldozer uncovered a cache of silent films buried in the Canadian permafrost for decades. Dir. Bill Morrison weaves images from this unearthed treasure trove into a mesmerizing and thought-provoking film. It has a perfect 100% on Rotten Tomatoes. Curated in collaboration with KSC Film Society - student organization of film aficionados who meet weekly to share their passion for film and to program weekend screenings.

- 1:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. KSC Film Society members will be on hand for some of the Latchis' Spotlight screenings to share their thoughts on the selections. Series continues 2/25, 2/26.
- Through Sunday, February 19.
- \$10 suggested donation (no one turned away). Proceeds from Spotlight Series films benefit the non-profit Latchis Arts.
- Latchis (Films), 50 Main St. Information: 802-246-1500; latchistheatre.com.

SUNDAY

19

Music

PUTNEY Next Stage Arts and Twilight Music present The Stockwell Brothers and Fellow Pynins: Contemporary folk and bluegrass music from near and far by VT-based The Stockwell Brothers and Oregon-based Fellow Pynins. Bruce, Barry, Alan, and Kelly Stockwell's music spans traditional and progressive styles but their trademark acoustic sound features new singer/songwriter material recast w/ banjo, alternative rhythms, 3-part harmonies. Fellow Pynins is a contemporary folk duo with a keen and bucolic sense of vocal harmony and song craft.

- 7:30 p.m.
- \$20 in advance, \$24 at door.
- Next Stage Arts Project, 15 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-0102; nextstagearts.org.

Well-being

W. BRATTLEBORO "What is Memory?" with Guest Speaker Rev. Jane Dwinell (In Person/Zoom): Rev. Dwinell co-authored "Alzheimer's Canyon: One Couple's Reflections on Living with Dementia." "When my husband, Sky, was diagnosed with dementia in 2016, he set out to learn everything he could about the disease. As years and his disease progressed, we often talked about memory, what it is and what might be important about it. I'll share our thoughts about this important subject given that 6 million Americans - and their loved ones - currently live with dementia.

- 10 a.m.
- All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 29 South St. Zoom: Visit www.ascvt.org shortly before 10 a.m. to join. 802-254-9377; ascvt.org.



MONDAY

20

Kids and families

PUTNEY Sandglass Theater: Winter Sunshine Series - Calling All Young Puppeteers: Led by Sandglass teaching artists Jana Zeller and Shoshana Bass, campers ages 8 to 14 will explore the magic of the marionette circus through puppet building, ensemble and performance games, with a showing for friends and parents at the end of the week.

- 2/20 to 4/24, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. each day. This schedule coincides with Windham County's winter break.
- Through Tuesday, January 24.
- \$300 per camper for the week. All material provided.
- Sandglass Theater, 17 Kimball Hill. Information: 802-387-4051; sandglasstheater.org.

Free Vermont Family Support Programs - Nurturing Skills for Families (Online): Curriculum-based parenting education programs for families experiencing stress. Participants may start up to 2 weeks after class begins.

- 8 a.m. on Mondays. This is one of six programs. All programs are 2 hours a week for 12 to 14 weeks.
- Free.
- Online. Information: pcavt.org/family-support-programs, familysupport@pcavt.org, 1-800-CHILDREN.

Community meals

BRATTLEBORO Vermont Food Bank: Veggie Van Go: Free produce and local food for people to take home.

- 10-11 a.m. in parking lot across main entrance to school (do not arrive before 9:45 a.m.) Stay in your vehicle. If you are walking to get here, see a VT Foodbank associate but make sure to stay 6 ft. back. No income requirements, registration or paperwork to participate. You do not need to be present to get food but can ask someone to pick up on your family's behalf.
- Brattleboro Union High School, 131 Fairground Rd. Information: 800-585-2265, veggievango@vtfoodbank.org.

TUESDAY

21

The written word

BRATTLEBORO Sci-Fi Reading Group Meet Up: Discussion of "Binti" by Nnedi Okorafor: Binti is the first of the Himba people to be offered a place at Oomza University, the finest institution of higher learning in the galaxy. But to accept the offer means giving up her place in her family to travel between stars among strangers who do not share her ways or respect her customs. To survive the legacy of a war not of her making, she'll need the gifts of her people and the wisdom enshrined within the University - but first she has to make it there alive.

- 7:30 p.m. in the Quiet Reading Room. This group meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month and is open to curious minds of all ages, whether or not they've read this month's selection.
- Free.
- Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

Kids and families

BRATTLEBORO Sing & Dance with Robin: This class offers an enriching musical experience for toddlers and pre-

TUESDAY CONT.

schoolers (ages 5 and under). Designed to support healthy cognitive, physical, and social development, children will sing, clap, stomp, dance, and play along with the curriculum of traditional and modern folk songs. Parents encouraged to sing and participate with their child in class.

- 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays in the Community Meeting Room.
- Through Tuesday, April 25.
- Free.
- Brooks Memorial Library, 224 Main St. Information: 802-254-5290; brookslibraryvt.org.

Well-being

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

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

Community building

BELLOWS FALLS Rockingham's Outstanding Resource Waters (ORC): Discussion about Rockingham's Outstanding Resource Waters sponsored by the Rockingham Conservation Committee and Windham Regional Commission. These organizations, with support from residents, are working on nominating 3 sites in the Town of Rockingham as ORC. This discussion will explain what ORC are, identify/describe potentially nominated sites, the impact this designation will/won't have on these sites. Plenty of time for questions/learn how to get more involved.

- 6:30 p.m. on the 3rd fl. Open to the public.
- Free.
- Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. Information: More information: Laurel Green, 802-289-4464.

Dance

BRATTLEBORO Argentine Tango Class and Practice: Guest instructors and DJs, many from Argentinian Beginners and all levels are welcome. No partner needed.

- Tuesdays: 7-8 p.m. Tango; 8-10 p.m. Practica. N95 masks required.
- \$12 Class, \$5 Practica, \$15 for both. First class is free.
- One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Information: 118elliot.com.

Ideas and education

BRATTLEBORO Audubon Program: Birding in the Boreal Forest, Krumholz, and Alpine Zone: Presentation starts w/ photos of birds, wildlife, landscapes observed during Daron Tinsely's hikes on New England mountains year-round. Attention given to Canada Jays in winter. Daron will discuss their food storage strategy, impact of climate change on cached food, reproductive success, range. Also whether to feed certain birds: Is the species at risk? Is the food appropriate/safely provided? Is feeding likely to change the bird's behavior in harmful ways?

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

Heritage Forensics: Rethinking Indigenous Ways of Knowing in an Increasingly Dangerous World (via Zoom): Speaker: Frederick M. Wiseman, Ph.D. Presented by The Two-Eyed Seeing Speaker Series in partnership with Vermont Abenaki Artists Assn. and the Abenaki Arts & Education Center. In this presentation, Dr. Wiseman will demonstrate the ways Indigenous and positivist (scientific) ways of knowing can work together to preserve a legitimate American Abenaki biocultural history and worldview.

- 7 p.m. Dr. Wiseman is a member of the VT Abenaki Artists Assn. and Dir. of VT Indigenous Heritage Center at Burlington Intervale. He's an Abenaki Delegate to the Wobanaki Confederacy and Seven Nations (Canada) Wampum Keeper.
- Donations appreciated: https://www.lcmm.org/vaaa-donate/.
- Zoom. Questions / Accessibility requests: Elisa: abenaki@abenakiart.org or 802-557-7202 Register: tinyurl.com/2ac6za9w.

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RETREAT FARM

Retreat Farm is hiring a Community Outreach Manager!

This position is an integral part of outreach and engagement of communities the Retreat Farm seeks to serve.

The Community Outreach Manager will be responsible for management of Retreat Farm's volunteer and membership programs as well as support of communications such as development of social media and e-blast content.

Full-time position based at the Retreat Farm farmhouse.

Learn more at www.retreatfarm.org/outreach-manager

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employment@cersosimo.com

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The Club is hiring **Outdoor Education Staff** for our program based at Retreat Farm to build fires and snow forts, follow animal tracks, and explore the forest.

Part-Time (2:00-6:00pm) Thriving Wage

www.bgcbrattleboro.org/employment

WEDNESDAY

22

Kids and families

Free Vermont Family Support Programs - Strengthening Families/Teens (Online): Curriculum-based parenting education programs for families experiencing stress. Participants may start up to 2 weeks after class begins.

- 12 noon on Wednesdays. This is one of six programs. All programs are 2 hours a week for 12 to 14 weeks.
- Free.
- Online. Information: pcavt.org/family-support-programs, familysupport@pcavt.org, 1-800-CHILDREN.

Community building

BRATTLEBORO Windham World Affairs Council: Today's Monthly Salon focuses on "The Debate Surrounding Black History Month": Join us for this discussion. Useful sources to prepare for the Salon, if you choose to: NPR - Why Does Black History Month Matter? (www.npr.org/2022/02/26/1082532955/why-does-black-history-month-matter), NPR - 3 things to know about the annual celebration (https://tinyurl.com/yws-fskj7), ACLU - Five Truths About Black History Month: www.aclu.org/issues/racial-justice/five-truths-about-black-history.

- 6 p.m.
- Donations welcome.
- One Eighteen Elliot, 118 Elliot St. Information: windhamworldaffairsCouncil.org.

To submit your event: calendar@commonsnews.org

Deadline: 5 p.m. Friday

Visit commonsnews.org for more listings with more details

AROUND THE TOWNS

Kindergarten registration begins in Brattleboro

BRATTLEBORO — If you have a child who will be five years old by Sept. 1, 2023, it is time to sign up for kindergarten for the 2023–24 school year.

To register, visit wsesu.org and click on Enrollment under Services. All forms are there to print, fill out, and mail back or to fill out online. Registration forms will be mailed to households by request.

Return the printed forms to WSESU Central Office, 53 Green St., Brattleboro, VT 05301. For more information on registration, contact Melissa Cavanaugh at 802-579-1013 or mcavanaugh@wsesdvt.org, or Tracey Drotts at 802-254-3730, ext. 29, or tdrotts@wsesdvt.org.

LGHS Journey Away hosts Mardi Gras fundraiser

TOWNSHEND — Everyone is invited to a Mardi Gras Party, Friday, Feb. 17, from 6 to 8 p.m., in Leland & Gray’s Dutton Gymnasium. Attendees can learn about the school’s Journey Away (formerly Journey East) program while enjoying an evening of drug- and alcohol-free, New Orleans-inspired fun.

Journey Away students are raising money for a field study to investigate the impacts of climate-related disasters across the country. They will travel by train first, to New York City and then,

36 hours on Amtrak’s *Crescent* to New Orleans to collect oral histories and vox-pop style interviews with folks they meet along the way.

At the Feb. 17 party, students will share how they imagine this trip might be transformative and what they look forward to. The itinerary will be on display and donations will be accepted. At a listening booth, they will collect participants’ stories of travel and climate disasters. A small silent auction will also be conducted.

Donations are also accepted at (app.99pledges.com/fund/journeyaway) bit.ly/702-journey. For more information, contact Journey Away Director Jessa Harger at jharger@windhamcentral.org.

High-elevation birding is topic of Audubon talk

BRATTLEBORO — On Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7 p.m. at Brooks Memorial Library, the Southeastern Vermont Audubon Society presents a free talk on “Birding in the boreal forest, krummholz, and alpine zone,” by Daron Tansley.

Tansley regularly ventures into the mountains of New England, often starting a hike at night in order to watch the sun rise and listen to the morning chorus from the summit. When hiking these mountains in winter, he says he is in awe of species such as Canada Jays and Boreal Chickadees that remain at high elevations, living in harsh conditions.

The presentation will start with photos of some of the birds, wildlife, and landscapes observed during his hikes throughout the year. Tansley will discuss birds’ food storage strategy and the impact of climate change on cached food, reproductive success, and range.

Guilford park project raises timber frame pavilion on Feb. 20, 21

GUILFORD—The public is invited to stop by the Guilford Community Park site Monday, Feb. 20 (President’s Day), and Tuesday, Feb. 21, to watch the timber frame Pavilion raised by builders from Vermont Natural Homes, who will be using a large crane. A bonfire will be lit both days, with soups and baguettes provided for all onlookers.

Dunham Rowley is chair of the committee that has worked for over a year on the plans to build a park complete with green spaces, a pavilion, a walking labyrinth, children’s play area with a slide and swings, a basketball half-court and net, and fire pit.

The park is located behind the Country Store, alongside

the Community Church, in the center of Algiers Village.

According to Rowley, anyone who donated \$100 or more during the campaign can pick up their timber peg at that time, sign it, and possibly be able to drive it in the assembly. The rafters were delivered Friday, and site preparation for the timber frame will be underway the week of February 13.

The vision for this park is one in which people of all ages can socialize and foster community through shared recreational experiences, according to Rowley.

“The large and artfully designed timber-frame pavilion will accommodate community events such as concerts, weddings, family reunions, and a host of other activities making

use of the amphitheater seating,” he said.

“Simple, yet elegant,” is how Rowley describes the future park. “A labyrinth will be set into the ground for a meditative walk using the classic seven-circuit design inspired by ancient mystics and used across Europe and the United States.”

To donate to the creation of the park on-line, visit Patronicity.com/GCP or mail a check to Community Collaborative for Guilford (CC4G), 475E Coolidge Highway, Guilford, VT 05301 with “Guilford Community Park (GCP)” in the memo line. Donations are tax-deductible. For more information, call 802-579-4572 or email drowley021@msn.com.

Senior lunch served in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions will present their next Senior Lunch on Wednesday, Feb. 22, with in-house seating at the Grange hall at noon and take-outs available from 11:30 am until 1 p.m. They will be serving either meat or vegetable lasagna, green salad, and garlic bread, with bread pudding for dessert.

Reservations are requested by Feb. 21. Call the Grange at 802-254-1138 and leave name, telephone number, number of meals, whether eating in or taking out, and meat or vegetarian option. A donation of \$3 for those 60 and older and \$4 for the younger folks is requested. The Evening Star Grange is located at 1008 East West Road in Dummerston Center.

RFPL hosts discussion on Rockingham’s Outstanding Resource Waters

BELLOWS FALLS — On Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 6:30 p.m. in the Rockingham Free Public Library’s top floor meeting room, the public is invited to a discussion about Rockingham’s Outstanding Resource Waters, sponsored by the Rockingham Conservation Committee and the Windham Regional Commission.

These organizations, with support from Rockingham residents, are working on the nomination of three sites in the town of Rockingham as Outstanding Resource Waters.

This discussion will explain what Outstanding Resource Waters are, identify and describe the potentially nominated sites, and the impact this designation will, or won’t, have on these sites.

There will be plenty of time for questions and to learn how to get more involved. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Laurel Green at 802-289-4464.

Senior lunch served in Dummerston

DUMMERSTON — Evening Star Grange and Senior Solutions will present their next Senior Lunch on Wednesday, Feb. 22, with in-house seating at the Grange hall at noon and take-outs available from 11:30 am until 1 p.m. They will be serving either meat or vegetable lasagna, green salad, and garlic bread, with bread pudding for dessert.

Reservations are requested by Feb. 21. Call the Grange at 802-254-1138 and leave name, telephone number, number of meals, whether eating in or taking out, and meat or vegetarian option.

A donation of \$3 for those 60 and older and \$4 for the younger folks is requested. The Evening Star Grange is located at 1008 East West Road in Dummerston Center.

Bone Builder class begins in West Brattleboro

WEST BRATTLEBORO — A new Bone Builder exercise class will begin at the West Village Meetinghouse at 29 South Street. Classes will be held twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30 p.m. The first class will be on Feb. 28 if enough participants sign up. Weights are provided on site for the one-hour class.

Green Mountain RSVP trains Bone Builders class leaders, and classes are offered throughout Windham County. Participation has been shown to prevent or slow osteoporosis in older adults; improve balance, strength, and flexibility; and enhance and improve well-being and socialization.

More information can be found at rsvpvt.org. Contact class

leader Bev Miller at bevermont@gmail.com or 802-251-5598. Participants must fill out forms before attending.

Brattleboro Area Hospice seeks items for online auction

BRATTLEBORO — Brattleboro Area Hospice’s annual Treasured Goods online auction is looking for donations of high-quality pieces of furniture, jewelry, designer/luxury china and porcelain, and art.

Contact Ellen Smith at ellen.smith@brattleborohospice.org if you have an item you’d like to discuss donating. The deadline for donating items is April 15. Call 802-257-0775 or visit brattleborohospice.org.

Main Street Arts offers Shakespeare workshops

SAXTONS RIVER—Main Street Arts (MSA), 35 Main Street, will present a series of four workshops in which actors have the opportunity to “play” with the works of the Bard. John Hadden, director of MSA’s *Hamlet* last summer, will hold the workshops on Sunday afternoons in February and March.

The three-hour sessions are open to actors of all levels. Participants will begin with short monologues and move on to excerpts of scenes. The workshops will include work on speeches, simple group exercises, and conversations. Class members are not obligated to work “in the spotlight”; rather, the level of participation is up to the individual.

Sessions are 1 to 4 p.m. at MSA on Feb. 19 and 26, and March 5 and 12.

At the end of the final session, a Shakespeare Tea will be offered to the public, when willing

participants can try out their work in front of a small audience of friends in a relaxed setting. A general conversation about Shakespeare in our time and place will be led by Hadden.

In addition to being a director and actor, Hadden is a writer, builder, and teacher, living on a small farm in Landgrove. He is a founding member of Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts, and ran the Theater Company at Hubbard Hall in Cambridge, New York.

Hadden has played numerous classic roles in regional theaters, including Romeo, Hamlet, Iago, Richard II, and Leontes, as well as roles on film, radio and TV, and directed approximately 50 productions in the U.S. and abroad.

More information about the workshops may be found at mainstreetarts.org/shakespeare, or contact Hadden directly at johnhadden@gmail.com.

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FEBRUARY 17-23

ANTMAN & THE WASP QUANTUMANIA PG-13
 WEEKDAYS 4 PM
 SAT. & SUN. 1:45 / 4:15 PM
 NIGHTLY 6:45 PM

MAGIC MIKE'S LAST DANCE R
 WEEKDAYS 4:15 PM
 SAT. & SUN. 2 / 4:20 PM
 NIGHTLY 7:15 PM

80 FOR BRADY PG-13
 WEEDAYS 4 PM
 SAT. & SUN. 2 / 4 PM
 NIGHTLY 7 PM

WOMEN TALKING PG-13
 NIGHTLY 7 PM

PUSS IN BOOTS: THE LAST WISH PG
 WEEKDAYS 4:15 PM
 SAT. & SUN. 2 / 4:15 PM

WINTER CARNIVAL MOVIES
 MONDAY 2/20 - FRIDAY 2/24
 The Hobbit: 11am
 Tom & Jerry: 11:15am
 DC League of Super Pets: 11:30am

SPOTLIGHT SERIES
 SATURDAY & SUNDAY
 Dawson City Frozen Time: 1:30pm

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For registration questions:

Melissa Cavanagh 802-579-1013 mcavanagh@wsesdvt.org

Tracey Drotts 802-254-3730 ext 29 tdrotts@wsesdvt.org

■ Dedell retires

sometimes — occasionally — even to disturb.”

“Music is not a decorative art: it is an essential one that goes where language simply cannot,” she explains.

REFLECTING BACK on a fruitful career, Dedell assesses reasons to be happy — and proud.

“The congregation as a whole participates in singing enthusiastically. There’s nothing better than to play for people singing their hearts out.”

In recent years, too, she adds that working with Lindquist and even more recently with newly ordained Rev. Adwoa Wilson, the church’s assistant priest, she

finds great gratification in designing liturgy that is “fun, beautiful, and meaningful.”

She also counts among her rewards that the adult choir is “a thriving body — consistently healthy, happy, and willing,” and that she’s also been able to experiment with new forms of music and with music integrated into new forms of art.

The latest example of one such new form is Winged Production’s *Michael*, which featured wild dragon puppets designed by husband Paul Dedell and Finn Campman and created by St. Michael’s parishioners.

“There’s something about

St. Michael’s that allows this ability to learn, grow, evolve — to be in the moment and be what it needs to be,” she adds. “It’s something inexplicable: there’s no place like it. There’s something in that space that is loving and openhearted.”

WHAT’S NEXT FOR St. Michael’s?

“I opted not to be on the search committee” for the next music director, Dedell said. “I don’t want them to be encumbered by my strong views and vision, and I have complete confidence in [those on the committee] to do a thoughtful search.”

“Any successful program

needs a leader who has their own vision and not a copy of someone else’s,” she noted.

“Charismatic leadership is vital, and that has to be supported by the organization. I know St. Michael’s will open their hearts and throw support behind the next music director.”

And for the Dedells? To be determined.

No matter what, though, through their music, Susan and Paul Dedell will continue, as the legendary music director says, “to play in the fields of the Lord.”

Noted British baritone offers ‘Love Songs Old & New’ at BMC

BRATTLEBORO—The Brattleboro Music Center’s Chamber Music Series features “Celebrating Valentine’s with Love Songs Old & New” with British baritone Roderick Williams, accompanied by pianist Yi-Heng Yang, Thursday, Feb. 16.

The 7 p.m. concert at the BMC will include works by Robert Schumann, Roger Quilter, Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn, Josephine Lang, Caroline Shaw, and more.

Williams performs in concerts and recitals, encompassing a repertoire from the baroque to world premieres. In 2016, he won the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Singer of the year award.

He has sung major roles at leading opera houses worldwide, including the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Dutch National Opera, Dallas Opera, and the

Bregenz Festival.

He has been involved in many world premieres including the title role in Robert Saxton’s *The Wandering Jew* with the BBC Symphony.

Yang’s work includes collaborations on period instruments with artists such as the Grammy award-winning tenor Karim Sulayman in their acclaimed and timely album, *Where Only Stars Can Hear Us* (Avie Records).

She is also known for explorations in Romantic and Classical performance practice. She is on the faculty at The Juilliard School Preparatory and College Divisions, where she teaches piano, fortepiano, chamber music, keyboard skills and improvisation.

Tickets are \$30 general admission and available online at bmcvt.org, by calling the BMC at 802-257-4523, or emailing info@bmcvt.org.

Next Stage hosts Stockwell Brothers, Fellow Pynins

PUTNEY—The Stockwell Brothers and Oregon-based Fellow Pynins will perform at Next Stage, 15 Kimball Hill in Putney, on Sunday, Feb. 19 at 7:30 p.m. Next Stage Arts Project and Twilight Music present this evening of contemporary folk and bluegrass music from near and far.

Bruce, Barry, Alan, and Kelly Stockwell’s music spans

traditional and progressive styles, but their acoustic sound features new singer-songwriter material recast with banjo, alternative rhythms, and three-part harmonies.

Featuring 2005 Merlefest bluegrass banjo contest winner Bruce Stockwell, The Stockwell Brothers group has performed alongside artists from Bill Monroe, Doc Watson and

Earl Scruggs to Mary Chapin Carpenter, Jonathan Edwards, and Asleep At The Wheel; recorded with Mike Auldridge and Phil Rosenthal of the bluegrass supergroup The Seldom Scene; and toured throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Fellow Pynins is a contemporary folk duo featuring Dani Aubert and Ian George playing claw-hammer banjo, Irish

bouzouki, mandolin, and acoustic guitar. They sing predominantly original music as well as reworked traditional ballads gathered from their travels.

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

Youth recognized for excellence in art, writing

BRATTLEBORO — Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) is honoring 107 young artists and writers from across the state recognized by the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for their exceptional artistic and literary talent.

The students’ artwork and writing will be exhibited at BMC from Saturday, Feb. 18, to Saturday, March 4, culminating in an awards ceremony at noon. The awards ceremony is free and open to the public.

Visual artist, graffiti scholar, and educator Will Kasso Condry, winner of last year’s inaugural Vermont Prize, will deliver the keynote address.

The award program recognizes aspiring visual artists and writers nationwide. Each year, students in grades 7–12 are invited to submit works in dozens of categories, including ceramics, digital art, painting, photography, poetry, science fiction, and personal essay/memoir.

Submissions are judged on

a statewide level, with the top award winners considered for national awards, including college scholarships, museum exhibitions, and publication opportunities.

Statewide awards consist of Gold Key, Silver Key, and Honorable Mention. This year’s Gold Key winners from Vermont are listed below. A list of all Vermont award winners appears on the BMC website at brattleboromuseum.org/2022/08/29/2023-vermont-scholastic-art-writing-awards. National awards will be announced by the end of March.

Local 2023 Gold Key Winners from the Putney School include Joshua Beckwith, Sam Gottlieb, Isabelle Greenewalt, Iris Morehouse, Scarborough LeWine, Clementine Nicholas, Iona Shaoul, all in grade 11; and Matilda Love and Yishan Hong, grade 12.

From Vermont Academy: Samuel Boxer, grade 11; and

Nadine Doyle, Emma Laroche, and Hannah Sheehan, grade 12.

From Stratton Mountain School, Juliet Ragland, grade nine and Ainsley Goodman, grade 10.

From Brattleboro Union High School, Emily LaClair, grade 10; Genevieve Redmond, grade 11; and Habame Scholz-Karakabakis, grade 12.

Since its founding in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards have nurtured the talents and helped launch the careers of many creative visionaries. Past winners include Truman Capote, Lena Dunham, Stephen King, Sylvia Plath, John Updike, and Andy Warhol.

BMAC has administered the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for Vermont since 2011. According to BMC Director of Exhibitions Sarah Freeman, participation in the program has grown steadily since its inception. This year’s award-winning work was selected from among a total of 468 submissions by 269 students from throughout the state.

BMC BRATTLEBORO MUSIC CENTER
chamber music series



Celebrate Valentine’s:
Love Songs Old & New


Roderick Williams baritone
& Yi-Heng Yang piano

Works by Robert Schumann, Roger Quilter, Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn, Josephine Lang, Caroline Shaw, Sally Beamish, Cheryl Frances Hoad, Gerald Finzi, and Benjamin Britten

Thursday, Feb 16 7:00 pm
BMC Auditorium 72 Blanche Moyse Way, Brattleboro, VT
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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; 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.

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(By Serena Benedict)

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‘The Truffle Hunters’ pairs with culinary experience at Epsilon Spires

BRATTLEBORO—On Saturday, Feb. 18, Epsilon Spires will present a multisensory evening featuring one of the most valuable culinary ingredients in the world — the truffle.

The event begins with a screening of the 2020 documentary *The Truffle Hunters*, which explores the threatened cultural traditions of people in northern Italy who gather the underground fruiting body.

A three-course vegetarian meal will incorporate fresh black winter truffles from southern France and estate-grown olive oil infused with Italian white truffles.

Trufflin, a Black-owned importer based in New York City, works with a collective of truffle hunters and farmers in France and will provide the truffles used in the dinner.

Founders Cornelia Robinson and Liv Woudstra-Robinson, write on their website (trufflin-nyc.com) that they think “it’s high time someone broke down the barriers that tell us that certain ingredients exist for a certain type of people,” adding that this is why they “set out to democratize gourmet food.”

Paired with the dinner will be two wines from the region of Italy where truffles naturally occur, selected by sommelier Rob Forman, new to the board of directors of Epsilon Spires.

The dinner, created by the

Brattleboro-based caterer Forage & Flourish, will be sourced as much as possible from regional, sustainable producers.

The Truffle Hunters has received wide critical acclaim since its release, and it has been an official selection at several film festivals, including Sundance, Cannes, and Telluride.

As described in a news release from Epsilon Spires, “The film takes a warm, intimate approach to its subject, eschewing narration and expert commentary for scenes from the lives of the truffle hunters themselves.”

“Every shot is gorgeously composed and emotionally rich, ranging from humor to devastation as a group of men and their loyal truffle dogs try to navigate the changing landscape of truffle hunting, both literally and figuratively,” the description continued.

Tickets are limited, with advance purchase at epsilonspires.org highly recommended. For the film and popcorn only, tickets are available on a sliding scale from \$5 to \$12. For the film, popcorn, and dinner, tickets are \$45 each, with a sliding-scale option starting at \$25 available for those experiencing financial hardship. The *Food System Series* of documentary screenings and pop-up dinners at Epsilon Spires is made possible in part by a generous grant from the Grassroots Fund.

Tickets on sale now for 19th annual Collegiate A Cappella Concert on Apr. 15

BRATTLEBORO—The Collegiate A Cappella Concert is returning to Brattleboro for the 19th year. This benefit for the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC), will take place at the Latchis Theatre on Saturday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m.

The new lineup features The Dartmouth Sings, Shades of Yale, UMass Vocal Suspects, Vassar Devils, Villanova Supernovas, and Williams College Ephlats.

Traveling to Brattleboro from around the East Coast, the groups will fill the Latchis Theatre with a variety of musical styles, ranging from contemporary pop to music of the African diaspora and beyond.

The Collegiate A Cappella Concert was launched in 2004 by Dede Cummings, then a trustee of BMCAC. Cummings arranged for the Brown University Jaberwocks, of which her son, Sam Carmichael, was a member, and other groups with local connections to perform in Brattleboro.

This year’s concert is generously supported by Brattleboro Savings & Loan, Berkley & Veller Greenwood Country Realtors, The Richards Group, Mary Meyer Toys, and Brattleboro Community TV.

Tickets start at \$10 and are available at brattleboromuseum.org or 802-257-0124, ext. 101.

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VIEWPOINT

New health care bill is right on. It won't pass.

Politicians have already decided that far-reaching single-payer health care reform, which study after study predicts would demand short-term fiscal pain, cannot happen in Vermont

IT WOULD BE inspiring if Vermont were once again a national leader in health care reform efforts. When Peter Shumlin was governor in the 2010s, reform activism was at a high point, and the possibility of Vermont becoming the first state to implement a single-payer system seemed real. When his administration ran the numbers, after costly studies were done, Shumlin decided that it was not politically feasible to move ahead, and health care reform died in Vermont.

A bill now in the Vermont Legislature aims to revive some of those reform efforts — H.156 — states:

“The purpose of this act is to initiate the incremental implementation of Green Mountain Care by starting to provide comprehensive, affordable, high-quality, publicly financed health care for all Vermonters in accordance with the principles established in 2011 Acts and Resolves No. 48.

“The act gradually expands the benefits available through Green Mountain Care over 10 years, beginning with publicly financed primary care in the first year, adding preventive dental and vision care in the second year, and adding the remaining health care services according to a schedule recommended by the Green Mountain Care Board’s Universal Health Care Advisory Group.”

The far-reaching bill would transform health care in Vermont and point the way for the rest of the country.

I would like to champion the bill because it is the right thing to do, but in the world of politics, this bill is D.O.A.

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://www.facebook.com/ly/575_davis)).

THERE HAS NOT BEEN enough grassroots activism on health care issues to make it appear that H.156 embodies the will of the majority of Vermonters. That does not mean that the principles in the bill are not widely accepted by a majority of Vermont citizens, because when polls are done, a majority want the kind of reform that’s in H.156.

The problem is that politicians in the Vermont House and Senate, as well as the Governor, have not put health care reform near the top of their lists of pressing issues. This has been the case for most of the time that Shumlin has been out of office.

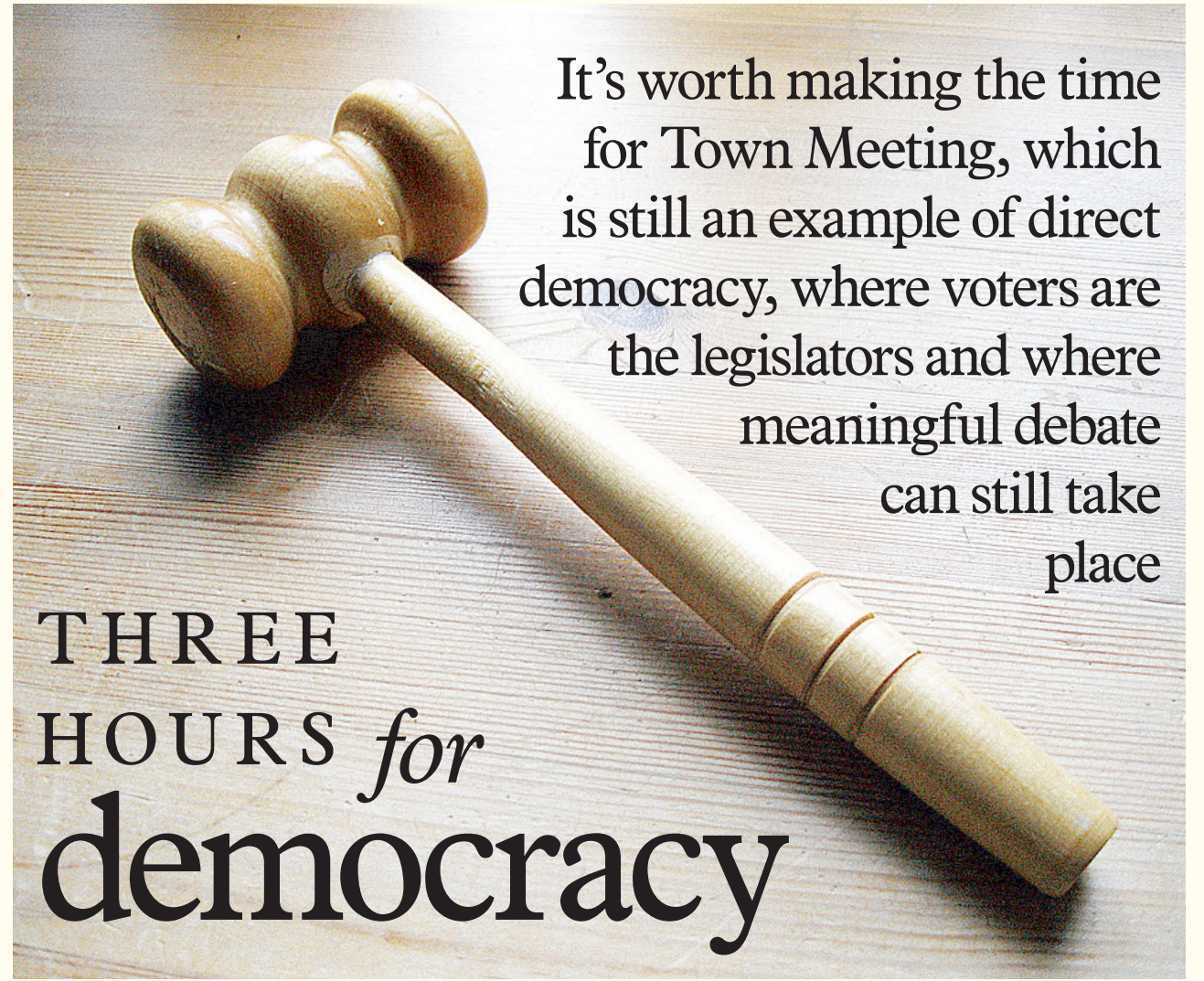
Politicians who understand Vermont’s health care reform history respect the need for change, but when it comes time to act they do not do much, because they have already decided that this kind of reform cannot happen on the state level.

And then there is the elephant in the room. How much will H.156 cost?

I have not seen any cost projections for this proposal, but it is clear that the price tag would make most politicians gun-shy. It is clear that there would need to be new taxes and that there would be high initial costs for implementation.

Politicians need to see the
■ SEE HEALTH CARE REFORM, C3

VIEWPOINT



It’s worth making the time for Town Meeting, which is still an example of direct democracy, where voters are the legislators and where meaningful debate can still take place

THREE HOURS for democracy

NEWFANE WILL return to an in-person town meeting at Williamsville Hall on Tuesday, March 7, and I’m glad of it. The meeting will start at 9 a.m. and most likely end by noon.

Three hours. It’s true that attendance at Annual Town Meeting has been dwindling in recent years, and many voters blame this decline on the time and day of the meeting — a morning in the middle of the work week.

It’s also true that there’s been robust voter turnout for the two Special Town Meetings held during the pandemic. One was to see if the voters of the town would authorize the purchase of a new gravel pit; the second was to correct two administrative errors. One voter told me that this robust turnout proved that weekday evenings were a better time for townwide meetings.

On first blush, this voter seems to be right, but Town Meeting has been the subject of deep study, primarily by Frank Bryan, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Vermont.

Years of data collected at Town Meetings across the state indicate that voter turnout is influenced by the importance of what they are being asked to decide, especially if the issue is controversial. Sadly, as more and more matters of

DEBORAH LEE LUSKIN is moderator of the Newfane Town Meeting.

importance, like education, are determined at the regional and state levels, less and less is left for voters to decide at Town Meeting.

We saw this happen even when Newfane formed a joint school board with Brookline and voters of both towns met to decide on the final budget.

The first year, in-person voting took place on a Saturday. Approximately 40 voters showed up and complained about the time, which conflicted with an important community sports event. The meeting was moved to a weekday evening, and even fewer voters showed up.

Because so much of our local town’s educational budget is already outside local control, voting can’t change much, so most voters don’t bother.

BUT IN-PERSON Town Meeting is still an example of direct democracy, where voters are the legislators and where meaningful debate can still take place. I still see tremendous value in voting in person on how much money to spend on town roads, on running our town government, and on social services.

Road maintenance might be the single item from which every taxpayer

benefits. We all use the roads and bridges. What a great opportunity to discuss what we can do about transportation in our town, something we all need.

Voters will also be asked to appropriate funds to keep our local government operational. At Town Meeting, voters who show up in person can discuss — and even change — the budget proposed by the Selectboard.

Like salaries. While much of town government is powered by citizen volunteers, the town clerk, treasurer, listers, zoning administrator, road crew, and administrative assistant to the Selectboard are all employed by the town.

Additionally, town properties require funding for maintenance, and the town clerk needs a budget to hold elections and maintain property records.

Town meeting is also where we determine how much money we will appropriate for social services, from fire, rescue, and law enforcement, all of which the town outsources.

The warning also includes appropriations for services from agencies that provide health, education, and welfare to Newfane residents. Some of these services serve young children, some elderly people, and some fragile populations facing insecurity in housing and food. Some funding is appropriated for
■ SEE ATM, C2

ESSAY

‘This was supposed to be a true fairy tale’

Love means being in the presence of another who resonates with your soul — but that resonance comes with the risk of loss

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a woman who was single. She had children whom she loved and lived nearby.

Once upon a time, there was a man. He was also single. He was very kind.

One day the woman began a job in a love-enchanted forest of tents. They were made of all the textures of the Earth. Their colors flowed from the cerulean blue of the summer sky to the vibrant orange of the autumn leaves. She kept them clean and tidy for visitors. They shined like jewels.

The man also worked there.

NANCI BERN (in-sighth healing.com) is a reiki master, shamanic and kabbalistic healer, teacher, certified trauma professional, and eco-art therapist.

One day, the golden tent under the oldest and most beautiful oak tree in the land needed repair. Its leaves mirrored the moment when the woman reached up to the man to give him his lucky wrench, and he reached toward her to take it. It was love frozen in time.

They soon became one and
■ SEE LOVE AND LOSS, C2



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ATM

FROM SECTION FRONT

services that enrich community life, such as the local library.

I BELIEVE THAT attending our in-person Town Meeting also enriches our community life.

It's a chance for neighbors to greet one another in person — something we've been largely deprived of these past three years.

It's a time to listen to others' opinions in person and in real time — a rarity in the time of Covid and the cause of diminished civility in the time of social media.

It's a time to remember that we are a collection of individuals who determine our community standards by majority rule.

THESE DAYS, Town Meeting takes about three hours, less than a half-day of work.

In an ideal world, Town Meeting Day — the first Tuesday in March — would be a state holiday, making it easier for everyone to attend. Currently, by state law, Town Meeting Leave enables employees and students of voting age time off to attend their annual town meeting.

Self-employed workers often have the flexibility to rearrange their schedules and work those three hours at another time.

Business owners have a chance to promote democracy by not opening for business until noon.

It's easy to think that each of these choices will cost lost wages or lost earnings. But we must consider the greater cost to our way of life if we don't practice democratic self-governance for three hours a year.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

An exercise in textbook democracy

With Covid receding but still here, a new law provides municipalities with temporary alternative means of gathering for Town Meeting. It isn't subverting democracy. This new technology has made access to government available to more people than ever.

AS SOON AS the 2023-24 Legislative session began, lawmakers started hearing from town clerks, Selectboards, school board members, town school committee members, and other citizens to pass H.42 ("An act relating to temporary alternative procedures for annual municipal meetings and electronic meetings of public bodies," signed into law on Jan. 25) — and do it ASAP.

Please note the key phrase in the title of the bill: "temporary alternative."

These are temporary alternatives to how we recognize health and safety needs predicated by the fact that COVID-19 is receding, but not gone.

Passing H.42 was an exercise in textbook democracy. The public overwhelmingly asked for a law to allow towns to make their own choices about meetings.

The Legislature and the

MIKE MROWICKI represents the Windham-4 district (Putney and Dummerston) in the Vermont House of Representatives. To watch streams of legislative activity, both on the floor of both chambers and in committee rooms, see links and instructions at leg.state.vt.us.

Governor expedited their requests for continued flexibility and did so in time for all concerned to meet their deadlines in preparing for their respective Town Meetings.

THE ROOTS of this bill go back to the onset of the pandemic, when public meeting policy was adjusted to specifically protect the health and safety of the public — most notably, those serving the public. Our town clerks, election volunteers, and board members wanted to continue serving the public, yet they needed to minimize their risk of catching Covid.

Only a small minority of hardcore Covid deniers spoke against these actions, which

included policies for masking. They claimed it was unnecessary and anti-democratic.

Nothing in this year's bill mandates cancelling in-person Town Meeting or any other municipal meeting. Rather, it allows Selectboards to choose how they want to proceed, and most towns are choosing in-person Town Meetings this year. My understanding is that Dummerston is the only town in Windham County that has chosen not to hold an in-person Town Meeting.

AS WE EVALUATE the changes in laws made since Covid, across the state we see increased participation in town, city, and state government. Selectboards, school boards,

and special committees have found that by using hybrid options, more people participate.

Online testimony to the Legislature is used more, especially by people who live far from the statehouse. Online viewing is rising for both Legislative floor action and committee action.

Proceeding cautiously with these temporary measures is warranted. As the Legislative session continues and the 25 House and Senate committees address their respective lists of priorities, this issue will be revisited.

However you feel about the laws, please let your legislators know, so that your input is added to the mix. This bill will "sugar off," depending on that input, to make Democracy more accessible to the most number of people.

ANY ATTEMPTS to paint this legislation as anything other than improving access to democracy is just one more

attempt from the fringe to cast aspersions on our elections and democracy itself.

We have seen similar from those who refuse to admit the damage to democracy from the Jan. 6, 2021 attacks on the U.S. Capitol — along with the ensuing misinformation. ("They were just citizens enjoying a visit to the nation's capital.")

Thankfully, those perspectives were rejected by voters across our county, state, and country. Election denial, climate-change denial, denial of reproductive rights, and the like didn't fool voters in the last election.

Seeing H.42 through that lens isn't going to fool Vermonters now, either.

The new law opens the doors to the process of government at every level, including the crafting of those "temporary alternatives." What's more, it outlines the process of deciding how to do it and lets that happen at the local level.

A win-win for democracy.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Treating property owners like the enemy isn't the answer

RE: "Cause or no cause?" [News, Feb. 8]:

I write as someone who is not a landlord but as someone who has the honor of knowing some amazing local folks who are, in fact, landlords.

In reading about the different perspectives on the proposed charter change, I feel sad and concerned. I am concerned for our most vulnerable citizens, but I am also concerned that this measure will hurt more than it helps.

Let me start by saying that it is categorically unfair and inaccurate to group our local landlords with out-of-state millionaires who might not care about our local population. These two groups are not the same.

The landlords I know are involved in our community through volunteer work, public

service, supporting local community fundraisers, rearing little humans, and being involved community members. And they care about our most vulnerable neighbors.

I think that the risk to landlords is not getting enough attention in these conversations. My husband and I have a restoration business (yes, in addition to barbecue), and we have done a lot of local work. I can't fully explain the level of damage done to so many units without a trigger warning.

Folks should know that our local landlords are spending a lot of time and money just trying to keep units clean and safe, let alone trying to improve them. It's nearly a losing battle, and now we are proposing to make bad situations more difficult and time consuming.

If we don't support our local landlords, they might make the difficult choice to stop renting altogether — the risk may become too great. And then what

happens? Either we have empty units while families live on the street, or they sell their properties to out-of-state millionaires who will want to charge rents that we can't afford.

Don't get me wrong — I want to see all of our community members in safe, secure housing. But treating a group of community-minded folks who happen to be making a decent living (I would assume) like the enemy isn't the answer. Sometimes tenants need to go for the safety of others.

Let's think a little harder on this one. Surely there is a better path forward. This one pits us against one another. We need less of that.

Vote no on the charter change.

Jaci Reynolds
Brattleboro

Look at all causes for rent increases

RE: "Cause or no cause?" [News, Feb. 8]:

I read with interest about Brattleboro's proposed charter change to limit rent increases to 12% per year to avoid throwing tenants out due to rent increases.

I propose an addition to this amendment: since rents may not be increased by 12%, property taxes (which affect renters as well as homeowners) may not go up by more than 12% in a year.

Let's look at causes for rent increases ... all causes.

Sandy Golden
Hinsdale, N.H.

We need data to look at charter question objectively and compassionately

RE: "Cause or no cause?" [News, Feb. 8]:

I have read everything I could find about the proposed "just cause eviction" amendment to the Brattleboro Town Charter. Today, I feel certain I know where I stand; tomorrow, I will stand on the other side.

One day, I am swayed by the arguments of tenants, and the next day I am swayed by the arguments of landlords. Both sides' stories are compelling, but all I've seen so far are stories and anecdotes. The numbers would help me (and perhaps other residents) to make up my mind about how I will vote.

How many people have been kicked out of their apartments by landlords — individuals and corporations — looking to get rich (richer?) by renting to higher income people?

How many leases were not

renewed because of belligerence, drug dealing, damage to property, or disrespecting the rights of others?

If you are on the landlord's side of things, or the tenant's side, please provide some data that would help us look at this situation both objectively and compassionately so that we will make a good decision for our town and our neighbors.

Janice Stockman
Brattleboro

Marlboro voters: keep grades 7 and 8 in town

Dear fellow Marlboro Residents,

We are writing to you as members of the Marlboro community and also as two current members of the Marlboro School Board. The opinions expressed in this letter are ours alone and are not meant to represent the thinking of the entire board.

The ballots have now been mailed for the 2023 Marlboro School District voting, and we hope that you will join us in voting no on Article 10 on the upcoming school district warning. Article 10 proposes that our town stop providing grades 7 and 8 at our school and instead pay to tuition our 7th and 8th grade students to other schools.

There are two overarching

reasons for which we hope you will vote no on Article 10:

- First, after careful financial analysis, Principal Wayne Kermenski and the Marlboro School Board concluded that there would be no financial benefit to tuitioning our 7th and 8th grades at Marlboro to attend other schools. (There are potential additional costs associated with any building renovation or moving to another location for various school structure options, and a study of the tax implications of these options is being published by the School Board and is available by contacting either one of us.)

- Second, we think this is the wrong time to make an important decision like this, given the following:

- The Covid pandemic was socially and academically challenging for many students and teachers, and a challenging time for all schools. Making a long-term structural decision based on the last two or three Covid years is a shortsighted way to make a decision of this magnitude.

- We now have an incredible core of relatively new faculty and staff teaching grades 5 through 8, motivated to create an academically and socially rigorous and exciting middle school. We believe these educators should be given the chance to implement their ideas.

Some town residents have pointed out that they do not have enough information at this point to make an informed decision.

For these reasons we ask that you vote no on Article 10 and allow Marlboro School time to figure out what structure best serves the different needs of our students.

Dan MacArthur
Nelli Sargsyan
Marlboro

White has skills to help Newfane in challenging times

Our community is experiencing many changes and challenges. Lack of workers, rising rent and ownership costs, increased traffic flow, new regulations to incorporate into our lives, health care issues, rising food and fuel costs — the list goes on.

Cristine White has the skills to help Newfane navigate these times. Her business background, lifelong history of community involvement, and her desire to connect with people make her an excellent candidate.

Please vote for Cristine White for Selectboard.

Lorraine Westcott
Newfane

Love and loss

FROM SECTION FRONT

married in great celebration. Each tent was filled with well-wishing family and friends.

They glowed like stars in the evening sky with hopes and dreams. Much food and happiness were shared. The trees held that night in their branches, which were the arms of peace and home. The man and woman had found this in each other.

In time they moved to their own land. There they created a life of community and deep contentment. They supported each other's dreams. Each held the other in the light of their heart and reflection in their eyes. Their hands were never far from one another. Plans were made, and life was appreciated with gratitude for the richness of soul they shared.

But then one day the man whose heart danced with the woman became still. It could no longer sway in swoon to his love. It could no longer laugh around the fires that they so relished. It would no longer be part of the woman's walk.

The woman was to be without the man who was her mate and best friend. All the people gathered around her. They held her tears as she wept and took her hands when they felt too cold from the emptiness of the man's touch.

The wretchedness of a loss like this filled every crevice of her heart. This was supposed to

be a true fairy tale. And scene.

ENTER other fairy tales, Japanese death poetry, and a scream.

Some fairy tale tents are dark and disheveled. Candlesticks are strewn on the floor, broken. Pillows that made for a soft landing are now hardened by the acid of tears. The luster of the silk is muted by tones of wounded hearts.

In one version, the princess does not kiss the frog to get a prince — rather, she bashes him into the wall or chops off his head. Mulan kills herself upon coming home to death and despair. Snow White's liver and lungs are to be a snack for the queen brought by the huntsman.

Japanese death poetry, on the other hand, has a gentleness that is a balm to pain. It softens the breath. Tears become less salty. Time stops its rush and is calmed in the hand of the poetic images. Respite from feelings that disfigure the spirit with grief are gentle comfort.

"Sadly, I see/the light fade on my palm:/a firefly," wrote poet Mukai Kyoari after the death in 1688 of her sister Chine.

And finally — a scream directed to the air:

"What's up with you, universe? What the hell were you thinking?!"

"Why did the man die? What was the point? How can we approach the woman's pain and make it better?"

We cannot make it better. She will feel it forever. Time will lessen the brutality of the grief that now embodies her every second. But it will remain with her.

She will slowly create a nest within her spirit lined with the pain of loss and the joy that was their love.

AND SO, what is on the next page of this tale of the woman and the man?

Love will continue to happen in all its guises. It is a force that surges with surety, trepidation, and everything in between. It can feel surreal until its truth settles into the beat of a heart.

Its poise connects us to something beyond the self. But to connect does not mean to be absorbed.

It does not mean to lose yourself in the other. It is to be in the presence of another who resonates with your soul. This is the gift of each lover. But that resonance comes with the risk of loss.

In the end, may this tale be a wake-up call to appreciate — and hold tight to — and be brave to accept — another's heart and fight like the kick-ass love Ninjas that we all can be.

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VIEWPOINT

Charter change will only exacerbate the problems with the local rental market

For the not-so-good tenants and the safety and comfort of neighbors, property owners need 'no-cause evictions' as a management tool — and as a fundamental right

BRATTLEBORO HAS thousands of rental housing units and hundreds of housing providers.

The providers who bought their units as investments are overwhelmingly local people — middle-class people — who generally own one, two, four, maybe six, units in a building or two. They often depend on the rents as their means of livelihood or as supplements to their Social Security.

The recent publicity about the Westbrook apartment complex, purchased by a Boston-based corporation, in West Brattleboro is an anomaly. While some in town are distraught over the prospect of big corporations coming here and buying all the rental housing, that is not the case, nor will it ever be. Big corporations are not interested in small buildings. Money driven, they only want larger complexes, where they can benefit from economies of scale.

The proposed Article 2 to be voted by the town on Tuesday, March 7 is geared toward the Westbrook development. It is a direct reaction about the people who are being asked to leave Westbrook, but this change in the town charter would ban no-cause evictions townwide. It would punish innocent housing providers because of one bad apple, so to speak.

THE TERM "no-cause eviction" is extremely misleading, describing a non-renewal of a lease at its expiration.

A lease is generally written for a one-year term. It is a contract. At the end of the year, the tenant can choose not to renew. And the landlord can choose not to renew the tenant.

If Article 2 were to be adopted, many housing providers would no longer be able to end a lease at the termination date. Tenants would become tenants for life. Someone equated this to a marriage without the possibility of divorce.

Further, these "no-cause evictions" are not for no cause. Housing providers do not ask good tenants to leave their properties. They want good tenants. Instead, housing providers use no-cause evictions as a tool to remove troublesome tenants from buildings when their leases expire.

No-cause evictions provide a way for housing providers to remove drug dealers, hoarders, tenants who behave beligerently to other tenants, tenants who make loud noise at all hours, smokers, tenants who damage units, and tenants

SALLY FEGLEY is co-owner of Windham Property Management Inc.

who otherwise behave badly. Housing providers have a myriad of anecdotes about bad tenants. The problems are real.

By removing the troublesome tenants, housing providers protect the remaining tenants in the building. Housing providers take seriously the need to provide safe housing for the quiet enjoyment of all residents. The no-cause eviction method of parting ways allows housing providers to do that. This method of parting ways has the added benefit of leaving no negative record on the tenant's rental history.

Beyond protecting the responsible tenants in their buildings, housing providers are protecting the adjacent neighborhood by controlling behavior in their buildings. Aberrant behavior can affect neighbors, who have little or no ability to stop it.

PROponents of Article 2 say that landlords should use "just cause" if they want to ask a tenant to leave.

"Just cause" requires housing providers to go to court, and it takes months — if not a year or more — to get a hearing.

At these hearings, tenants can say, "Prove I deal drugs," "I stopped smoking," or "I don't make noise in the middle of the night."

While waiting for the hearing, the affected tenant can easily exact retribution against the housing provider and the other tenants in the building.

And there is nothing the housing provider can do about it.

If ARTICLE 2 passes, local housing providers would be forced to screen prospective tenants to higher standards, making it even more difficult to get an apartment in Brattleboro. Housing providers would raise rents in anticipation of expensive repairs and court costs.

The passage of Article 2 would create a downward spiral in neighborhood conditions and real estate values.

Local housing providers would lose interest in taking on more buildings. They would look to sell. With local housing providers unable to remove troublesome tenants, neighboring tenants would move out of buildings for their own protection.

The incomes of the properties would be reduced. Then

housing providers might not have the funds to make necessary repairs and buildings would fall into disrepair. The blight would affect neighboring properties — and the town in general.

The fundamental problem with housing in Brattleboro is that there is not enough of it. Alienating housing providers will only exacerbate the problem. It is disheartening and ironic that the very people who are providing much needed housing are being attacked, rather than supported. And it is

a basic economic principle that increased supply lowers prices and provides choice.

Instead of banning no-cause evictions, we should look to creative solutions — real solutions — to the housing crisis. We — the state, the town, nonprofits, attorneys, developers, contractors and housing providers — should work together to develop more housing.

Perhaps there could be a state development fund created for this purpose. Perhaps legal restrictions on housing development could be relaxed. Perhaps

the town could act as the developer. Perhaps there could be tax abatements. Perhaps we could consider new forms of housing, such as dormitory style housing with drop-in kitchens or tiny houses.

ON a broader front, the middle class in Brattleboro is under assault. Our merchants feel it with the vandalism and robberies they have been experiencing. The crime rate in town, including murders, has increased significantly. Now our housing providers are being confronted

with Article 2, which would restrict their ability to control their very own property. Do we really want to drive the middle class out of Brattleboro?

If Article 2 passes, we might as well put out a sign to drug dealers. It could say, "Welcome to Brattleboro, where the police cannot arrest drug dealers and housing providers cannot remove drug dealers from their apartments."

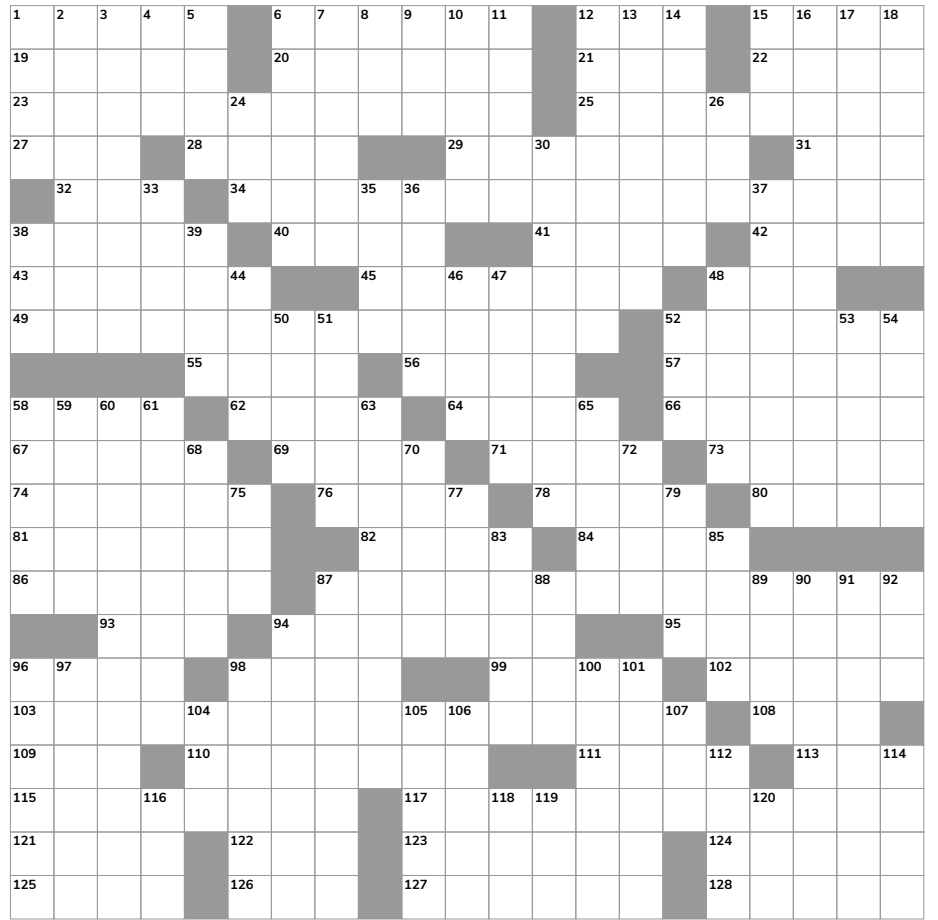
Is that what we want? I implore the voters of Brattleboro to vote down Article 2 on March 7.

THE COMMONS CROSSWORD

"Movie Playback"

Across

- 1. Beginning
6. ___ & Mrs. Miller (1971 Western)
12. Nickname that drops "lory" or "colm"
15. Site of the Nazca lines
19. Syrup source
20. Wilde of "Don't Worry Darling"
21. Candle count
22. Mathematician Turing
23. Movie about a bad doctor?
25. Curly locks
27. Paper nicknamed "the Gray Lady": Abbr.
28. ___ fixe (obsession)
31. Like cameras on phones
31. Compete
32. Warren or Markey: Abbr.
34. Movie about blowing up a pastry?
38. Suit
40. Houston ballplayer, informally
41. London art gallery
42. Part of WPI: Abbr.
43. Serves out of the box?
45. Fervent campaign
48. High-tech food inits.
49. Movie about a 7-10 split?
52. Puts up
55. Train line from NYC to Montauk
56. Modern equivalent of "carpe diem"



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- 57. Makeup exam
58. Common attachments
62. Docking site
64. Heidi of "America's Got Talent"
66. Put bubbles into
67. "The Tonight Show" house band, with The
69. Put your foot down?
71. Oklahoma city
73. Carpentry joint
74. Accustoms
76. "Couldn't agree more!"
78. Action
80. Bruins great Phil, familiarly
81. Not ready to eat
82. Output of mine?
84. Without ice
86. Wife and frequent portrait subject of Rembrandt
87. Movie about a capitalist capuchin?
93. Pepa, to Mirabel in "Encanto"
94. Christmas cake
95. 2010s dance craze
96. Soon, in a sonnet
98. Unconscious state
99. Bumbling sorts
102. 1960s dance craze
103. Movie about a beautifully executed espionage maneuver?
108. Hogs' home
109. Bridge expert Culbertson
110. Six-line stanzas
111. Burden
113. Great distress
115. "Haven't the foggiest"
117. Movie about sunset?
121. Implement
122. 1,000-year European realm that was triply misnamed, per Voltaire: Abbr.
123. Affronted cry
124. Wanders about
125. "The ___ Boat Song" (Scottish ballad)
126. "___ the ramparts

- we watched..."
127. Small plane maker
128. The King, in Spain

Down

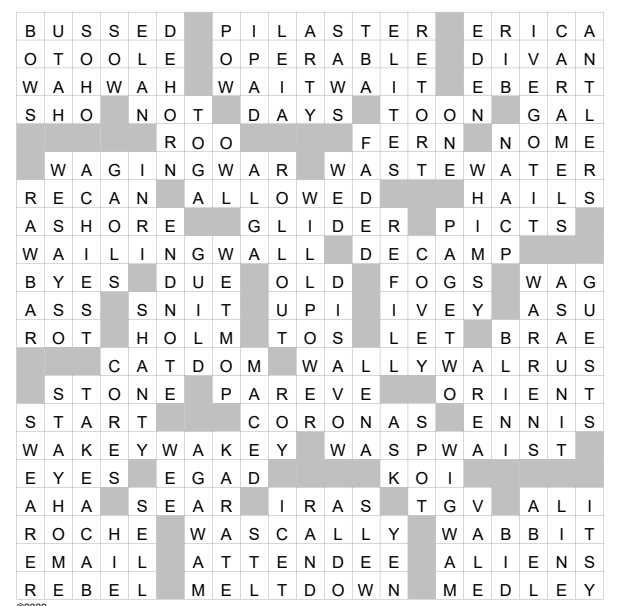
- 1. Sign
2. Special ops force member
3. Malicious
4. Building wing
5. Garr of "Young Frankenstein"
6. Ambles
7. Attorney-___ privilege
8. Spanish hero, with "El"
9. St. crosser
10. Forehead decoration
11. "Weird Al" Yankovic parody of Michael Jackson
12. Grilling preparation
13. Get worked up
14. Delaware people
15. Friend
16. Movie about hydrographic inflation?
17. Numerical comparisons
18. Like e-mail still in the Drafts folder
24. TV announcer Hall
26. Mop & ___ (cleaner brand)
30. Circumvent
33. River dammed at Aswan
35. St. Louis landmark
36. Rick's grandson, on TV
37. Plant in a citrus grove
38. RISD degree
39. Texter's "bye for now"
44. Short cut
46. "All right... I guess"
47. Room in une maison
48. Welcome
50. Pupil surrounder
51. Filmmaker Gerwig
52. Eon division
53. Boston subway station
54. Courtroom figure
58. Toyota hybrid
59. "The Goldfinch"

- author Tartt
60. Movie about a very tall action figure?
61. Hard to ignore
63. Condiment in creole cooking
65. Compartments
68. Old photo tint
70. As such
72. Rick of radio
75. The Red or the Black
77. Diamond of rock
79. "I'm impressed"
83. Hair holder
85. Perfectly
87. Bad advice
88. "I say!"
89. Anchor's offering
90. Sweaters and scarves
91. 2021 Adele hit

- 92. So far
94. "Wait, really?"
96. Spies
97. Like some flashy passes
98. Brazilian author Paulo of "The Alchemist"
100. "Let It Go" film
101. State south of Arizona
104. Upper-left key
105. Work ___
106. In unison
107. Dad joke punchline
112. Bone-dry
114. Handicrafts marketplace
116. Part of IPA
118. Thing, in legalese
119. Hospital drips
120. U. of Tennessee athlete

Last issue's solution

"Sad Trombone"



Health care reform

FROM SECTION FRONT

numbers, and they need to see what those numbers mean for the Vermont economy and for Vermont businesses — including health care — as well as for individuals. Without those kind of concrete facts, nothing can move forward.

THERE IS NOTHING new here. All of the studies done to quantify and justify large-scale health care reform, such as the Lewin and Hsiao reports, make it clear that reform implementation will be fiscally painful for a short time but that the investment will lower health care costs for everyone while improving the access to health care and the quality of people's lives. It is easy for politicians to

sign on to H. 156, but I suspect that most of them will be unable to convince a majority of their colleagues to move ahead and establish Green Mountain Care. Shumlin couldn't make the numbers work, and it seems that those numbers have only reached higher levels over the years.

H. 156 is the right thing to do, but politics is not fueled by good intentions. It is rare for political bodies to be comprehensively proactive — something that H. 156 requires.

Perhaps cutting off a few smaller pieces of the bill so that the numbers are more palatable would revive the beast that has been sleeping since Shumlin left office.

For he who has health has hope; and he who has hope, has everything.

—OWEN ARTHUR

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Advertisement for Brattleboro Time Trade, offering services like Transcribing, Editing and Proofreading. Includes contact info for Elizabeth Julia.

Advertisement for Brattleboro Tire, featuring services like Oil Change for \$74.95 and Snow Tires. Includes contact info and a 'Get your vehicle ready for bad weather!' slogan.

COLUMN | Sports Roundup

Rebels sweep 'Hoops for Hope' games

Leland & Gray held its annual Hoops for Hope fundraiser on Feb. 10 and 11. The event, now in its seventh year, is a fundraiser where all proceeds from the games went toward scholarships named in memory of community members Ann Chapman, Lexy Giallella, and Arthur E. Monette.

Players and coaches in both the games wore the Hoops for Hope T-shirts during warmups, and all proceeds from donations, T-shirt sales, and various raffles during the games went toward the scholarship funds. Over the years, these games have raised thousands of dollars, thanks to the generous support of "Rebel Nation."

Once again, Green Mountain was the opponent for both the Rebels teams. The Rebel girls had the first game on Feb. 10, and came away with a 49-35 victory. This was a physical game from start to finish, but only one team seemed to paying the price for the rough play as Green Mountain picked up 26 fouls compared to 12 for the Rebels.

The disparity in fouls was most evident in the fourth quarter. Prior to that point, the teams were about even on the scoreboard. GM battled back from a 7-0 deficit to take a 12-11 lead at the end of the first quarter, and the teams played to a 23-23 tie at the half.

The Rebels started out the second half with a 7-2 run, but GM again rallied to take a 34-33 lead going into the fourth. Then everything fell apart for GM as their players were getting whistled for fouls and the Rebels all but camped out at the free throw line.

Leland & Gray attempted 16 free throws, but made only six of them. That could have hurt, but Hannah Greenwood scored six points and Sam Morse added four as the Rebels outscored GM 16-1 in the fourth quarter.

Maggie Parker scored 18 points, including a pair of three-pointers, to lead the Rebels. She led the free throw parade in the fourth quarter, going 4-for-8 at the line. Greenwood finished with 13 points, 10 of them coming in the second half, while



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.

Morse added eight points. Mary Sanderson was named the player of the game. She only scored two points, but she spent most of the game diving for loose balls and playing tenacious defense.

Callie Spaulding led GM with 11 points, while Riley Paul added eight points.

Earlier in the week, the Rebels stopped Bellows Falls, 58-37, on Feb. 7 in Townshend. Parker scored 18 points, Morse added 12 points, and Sanderson scored 10 points for the Rebels. Laura Kamel led BF with 16 points. Leland & Gray finished the week at 14-3 and the No. 2 ranking in Division IV.

Boys' basketball

Paul McGillion had a career-high 41 points as he led Brattleboro to an 87-80 overtime win over Mount Anthony on Feb. 9 at the BUHS gym.

The Colonels needed a big night from McGillion as the Patriots came back from a 25-point deficit midway through the third quarter to force overtime. Shemar Sookdar, who scored 23 points before fouling out midway through the final quarter, and Carter Thompson keyed the rally. Finn McRae hit a three-pointer with seconds to play to tie the game at 77-77.

In the overtime, it was the Colonels who rallied as Tate Chamberlin drilled a three-pointer and Cam Frost drove in for another basket to give the Colonels a quick five-point lead in the first. McGillion later added a pair of lay-ups and Frost sank a free throw in the final seconds to close out a dramatic win for the 9-7 Colonels.

It's always a battle when Twin Valley and Leland & Gray get together in any sport, and Feb. 8 was no exception

as they did basketball battle in Townshend. This time, it was the Rebels that came away with a 53-41 victory.

The first half was close all the way, as the defenses dictated play. A three-pointer at the buzzer by Connor McPhail gave the Rebels a 7-4 lead at the end of the first quarter, but a pair of threes by Noah Dornburgh and three inside baskets by center Caleb Dupuis pushed the Wildcats to a 21-18 halftime lead.

The Rebels then turned up the heat on defense and outscored Twin Valley, 21-4, in the third quarter to take a 39-25 lead. After a scoreless first half, Trevor Stillwagon scored nine points in the third quarter on the way to scoring 15 points in the second half, while Alex Parker-Jennings got six of his game-high 19 points in the third quarter.

Twin Valley tried to battle back in the final quarter and cut Leland & Gray's lead to 47-40 with 1:14 left in the game, but ultimately ran out of time. Dupuis led the Wildcats with 15 points, while Cody Magnant and Dornburgh added 13 and nine points, respectively.

With a 66-51 win over Green Mountain in the Hoops for Hope game on Feb. 11, the Rebels ended the week at 7-8.

Earlier in the week, on Feb. 6, Twin Valley got routed by Bellows Falls as the hosts rolled to a 77-28 victory. A 17-0 run by the Terriers in the opening quarter pretty much wrapped up the proceedings at the point. Everyone got into the score-book for BF, which led by Colby Dearborn (13 points), Jamison Nystrom (12 points), Cole Moore (11 points) and Jake Moore and Jaxon Clark (10 points each).

BF also started out hot against White River Valley, taking a 25-4 lead after one quarter on the way to a 63-52 win on Feb. 8 in South Royalton. Walker James led the way with 18 points, while Jake Moore added 10 points. The 11-4 Terriers ended the week ranked No. 4 in Division III.

Twin Valley ended a three-game losing streak with a 56-35 win over Mill River on Feb. 8 in North Clarendon. Dornburgh



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Leland & Gray forward Hannah Greenwood (23) is surrounded by Green Mountain defenders Luna Burkland, Colie Roby (1), and Karen Vargas (20) as she secures a rebound during the second half of their girls' basketball game on Feb. 10 in Townshend.

and Magnant led TV with 20 and 13 points, respectively. The Wildcats are now 4-11.

St. Michael's School closed out its home schedule on Feb. 8 with a 57-20 win over The Academy at Charlemont (Mass.) at the Austine gym. The Saints led 24-9 at the half and kept up the scoring pace in the second half against Academy's full-court press defense. Michael Pierce led the 5-6 Saints with 20 points, while Anthony Bills added 17 points.

Girls' basketball

Fair Haven took a 27-11 halftime lead and went on to beat Brattleboro, 57-32, at the BUHS gym. Izzy Cole had 14 points and six rebounds to lead the Slaters. Abby Henry was the Colonels' top scorer with eight points, while Emily Worden added seven points.

The Colonels fared no better against Rutland on Feb. 10 in a 50-29 loss at the BUHS gym. Anna Moser scored 14 points to lead Rutland. Reese Croutworst was Brattleboro's top scorer with 12 points, while Henry added 11 points. With a 62-42 loss to St. Johnsbury on Feb. 11, the Colonels are now 5-11.

With only seven players available, Twin Valley was overwhelmed by visiting Arlington in a 59-5 loss. The Eagles led 27-0 at halftime. An Alanna Bevilacqua basket in the third quarter and a Bianca Place three-pointer in the fourth accounted for all the Wildcats' points. Sidney Harrington led Arlington with 18 points.

On Feb. 10 against Proctor, the winless Wildcats had their highest point total of the season, but it was not enough in a 46-22 loss to the visiting Phantoms. Isabel Greb had 28 points for Proctor.

Bellows Falls lost to White River Valley, 51-20, to fall to 5-13.

Nordic skiing

In the second leg of the Southern Vermont League Championship, a classic race at Prospect Mountain in Woodford on Feb. 8, Mount Anthony

again dominated.

In the boys' race, the Patriots swept the top four spots, led by Luke Rizio's first place time of 14 minutes, 0.89 seconds on the 5K course, to win with a team score of 10 points, Woodstock was second with 46 points, followed by Brattleboro (83), Burr and Burton (96) and Rutland (100).

In the girls' race, the Patriots swept the top three spots, with Tanis White the winner in 18:13.26. Katherine Normandeau was the only Colonel to crack the top 10, she was fourth in 19:10.64. Mount Anthony's winning score was 11. Woodstock was second with 30 points, and Brattleboro was third with 56 points. The SVL championships conclude with the team relays, which are scheduled for Feb. 15, at 2 p.m., at the Brattleboro Outing Club's trails at the Brattleboro Country Club on Upper Dummerston Road.

Ice hockey

The Brattleboro girls lost to Rice, 3-1, on Feb. 8. Abby Booth scored two goals and Addison Bryan added another for the victors. Willow Romo scored the Colonels' only goal, assisted by Avery Hiner and Maisie Arnold. Goalie Angela Jobin had another busy game in goal, making 32 saves. After suffering an 11-1 loss to U-32 on Feb. 11, the Colonel girls have a 2-15 record.

The Brattleboro boys lost to Burr & Burton, 6-2, on Feb. 8, then got shut out by U-32, 5-0, on Feb. 11 to drop their record to 5-10-1.

Rec. Dept. offers Saturday strength and conditioning class with Lissa Stark

The Brattleboro Recreation & Parks Department announced that Lissa Stark will lead a strength and conditioning class on Saturdays at the Gibson-Aiken Center on Main Street from 2 to 2:45 p.m., beginning Saturday, Feb. 18.

This class will be ongoing and will focus on strengthening and toning the body, building muscle, improving core structure, stretching, and increasing energy and endurance.

The fee per class is \$8. Pre-registration is not required. This class is open to anyone 16 years old and older and is suitable for all fitness levels. Be sure to arrive a few minutes early to register and sign in. For more information, call the Rec. Dept. office at 802-254-5808.

Senior bowling roundup

Week 5 of the winter/spring season of the Brattleboro Senior Bowling League at Brattleboro Bowl on Feb. 9 saw Slo Movers (19-6) have a 5-0 week to move into first place. The Markers (18-7) slid down to second place, followed by Split Happens (16-0), The A-1's (13-12), Trash-O-Matic (12-13), Fab Four (10-15), and 10 Pins and The Strikers (both 6-19).

Deb Kolpa had the women's high handicap game (252), while Doris Lake had the high handicap series (643). Pete Cross had the men's high handicap game (264) and John Walker had the high handicap series (691). Fab Four had the high team handicap game (905) and series (2,570).

In scratch scoring, Walker led the men with a 637 series that featured games of 222, 215, and 200, while Robert Rigby had a 578 series that featured games of 211 and 192. Marty Adams had a 572 series with games of 205 and 199, while Gary Montgomery had a 553 series with games of 201 and 189. Warren Corriveau Sr. had a 552 series with games of 237 and 209, Jerry Dunham had a 519 series with a 181 game, Pete Cross had a 513 series with a 218 game, and Stan Kolpa had a 183 game.

Carol Gloski had the women's high scratch series (490) and game (186) for the third straight week, while Deb Kolpa rolled a 180 game.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT/THE COMMONS

Twin Valley's Steven Oyer (12) tries to muscle past Leland & Gray defenders Trevor Stillwagon, center, and Cody Hescoc, right, during second half boys' basketball action on Feb. 8 in Townshend.

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