



Westminster Gazette



po box 147 westminster vt 05158

Our Community Newspaper @ www.westminstervt.org

Vol. 11, No. 4 April 2015

SUGARING SEASON IS HERE - FINALLY!



The sugaring season got off to a bit of a late start this year in New England. Every February for the past 120 years, the children at Kurn Hattin Homes have taken part in the Vermont tradition of maple sugaring on the Kurn Hattin farm, but this year it began in March.

“The sugaring and our other farm activities are an important piece of our experiential learning curriculum,” explains Acting Principal Tom Fontaine. “We have a great sustainable agriculture program that not only provides fresh food for our children, but allows them to learn first hand where it comes from.” For many of the students, helping on the farm is their first exposure to agriculture and the farm-to-table experience.

Guided by Farm Manager Pat Barry, their teachers, and other staff, students assist with every aspect of the sugaring process; from tapping trees and gathering sap, to running the evaporator, and bottling the syrup. As reward for their hard work, the children enjoy the finished product.

Students at Kurn Hattin not only enjoyed tasting the new crop of maple syrup, left, but in a long school tradition, students and staff have been boiling their own sap for the past 120 years, right.

“Mr. Pat” says that each year, they typically tap at least 800 trees or more. However, this season, the unusual amount of snow and cold pushed the collection process back. “This year, it is like it used to be in the old days, with the gathering and boiling taking place almost as late as April.” Nonetheless, he expects a good season. The children kicked off the evaporating and boiling of the first batch, each enjoying their first drops of the of the delicious 2015 syrup.

To signal the end of winter, Pat and his young volunteers went around with samples for all of the Kurn Hattin staff members. “Tastes like Spring to me!” shouted a smiling student.

WESTMINSTER COMMISSION/COMMITTEE SEATS AVAILABLE

In a hectic environment juggling work, families, school events etc. the Town of Westminster Select Board is thankful for those people who volunteer their time to serve on a town commission or committee. Your assistance fills a need in our community. Thank you to those currently serving or have served.

Have you thought about serving on a commission or committee? If you have the town has an opportunity for you. If you are willing to listen, be involved, take action we can use you on one of the following commissions or committees:

Planning Commission: 1 Seat Open

The Planning Commission is responsible for many municipal documents, including but not limited to the town plan, subdivision regulations, and the zoning ordinances. They meet on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

Conservation Commission: 1 Seat Open

Community Improvement Program: 2 Seats Open

This Committee is appointed by the Select Board and is charged with man-

aging the Town's home improvement revolving loan fund. Under this program, qualified residents can apply for low interest home improvement loans. This three member committee reviews applications, assists homeowners in preparing loan materials, and presents lending proposals to the Select Board for action.

CRVC Wantastiquet Region River Subcommittee: 1 Seat Open

Council on Aging Representative: 2 Seats Open

Windham Regional Planning Commissioners Commission: 1 Seat Open|Windham Regional Planning town commissioners are appointed annually by the Select Board of each town and serve from April 1 to March 31 of the following year.

Citizen interest commissioners are elected by town commissioners to one-year terms. The Full Commission meets the last Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at various locations throughout the region.

If you are interested in any of these commissions or committees contact the Town Manager's office Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 722-4255.

GREEN UP VERMONT – SATURDAY, MAY 2

Participate in Green Up Vermont on Saturday, May 2 by calling the Town Hall at 722-4255 or stopping by to pick up Green Up bags and/or posters.

It takes very little time and the benefits are fresh air, low impact exercise and less trash on the roads when driving in the community. This is a good program to get children involved by educating them early in recycling and keeping our earth green.

You fill up the bags, leave them on the side of the road with other discarded items found and our town highway crew will gather them up Monday, May 4. Green Up can commence the day you have bags through the weekend of May 3. Stop by the Town Hall and grab your bags.

For more information go to “How to Participate” at www.greenupvermont.org. or contact Woody Fuller, Green Up Coordinator for the Town of Westminster at 722-4114.

WESTMINSTER CARES OPEN HOUSE & VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION

Westminster Cares will host an Open House & Volunteer Recognition Celebration at the Westminster Institute on Thursday, May 7 from 2 to 6 p.m.

The community is invited to stop by to see our new office, meet our board members, and help us celebrate our incredible volunteers. Light food and refreshments will be served.

The film, “Alive Inside”, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and highlights the power of music on patients with Alzheimer's disease, will be shown.

No r.s.v.p. necessary – just come! For more information, call Donna Dawson at 722-3607.



LAST WEEKEND IN APRIL IS PRIMED WITH PINNACLE PROGRAMS

On Saturday, April 25, a Walk to a Vernal Pool will be led by Catherine Cooper-Ellis and Bill Clark. Sponsored by The Pinnacle Association and Putney Mountain Association, the walk will go to a newly mapped vernal pool off the Sugarbush Trail and Bemis Hill Road.

Those interested should meet at the Westminster West Church, 44 Church Street, at 11 a.m. to carpool to the limited parking on Bemis Hill Road in Westminster. Participants should wear boots that can get wet and bring water. Cookies and fruit will be provided.

Contact ccoopere@gmail.com for more information or registration. This walk will be of special interest to any volunteer who may want to consider participating in the vernal-pool monitoring project. The walk's rain date will be Sunday April 26, same time and meeting location.

On Sunday April 26, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., Silos Roberts will lead a two-mile Athens Dome Hike up to Creature Rock (a collection of house-size boulders) and the shelter near the summit view. The return portion of the hike will go past an old beaver pond and tumbling Ledge Brook.

Hikers should meet at the Ledge Road trailhead parking, which is one mile in from Route 121/35 in Grafton and contact 869-1388 for more information or registration. Hikers should wear shoes or boots that can get wet and bring water.

Then at 4 p.m. the Pinnacle Association will host its Annual Meeting at the newly renovated Main Street Arts facility at 35 Main Street in Saxtons River.

Enjoy refreshments, view maps and materials, and get a brief Pinnacle update on the year's plans and accomplishments.

During the program section, after the brief business meeting, local artists will discuss their artistic process and the Pinnacle properties that have inspired them. A good number of their works, by both student and professional artists, will be on display at MSA, with a reception for the Art Exhibit from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Sale of works will benefit both the Pinnacle Association and Main Street Arts. The exhibit will be open to the public during MSA hours and run until May 22.

Artists who wish to exhibit their works associated with Pinnacle lands should contact Camilla Roberts at camil@vermontel.net or 869-1388.

For more information about these and other upcoming Pinnacle Association programs, please visit www.windmillhillpinnacle.org.



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PARKS PLACE HOSTS GARDENING EVENT ON HERBS



Learn how to grow herbs and how to cook with them at the Parks Place fifth annual gardening event on Sunday, April 12th from 2 to 5 p.m. at Alyson's Orchard in Walpole, NH. This year the theme is, "Better Herbs, Better Flavor, Better Health". Admission is by donation.

Herbs are magical plants. For years humans have used them for food and as medicine. The wonderful tastes of herbs can encourage even the most jaded palate to enjoy good food again. And the more good food we eat the less we want the stuff that is not so good for us.

Growing herbs can be one of the most satisfying projects. Guest speaker Misha Johnson will share his experiences in the wild and enchanting world of herbs. A farmer, photographer, and herbalist, Johnson manages the Free Verse Farm, specializing in naturally-grown tisanes and culinary herbs, as well as

medicinal and herbal remedies.

He will discuss the importance of wild and cultivated herbs in landscapes and how herbs can be used to support healthy environments, communities, and bodies. He will share some of his personal journey into becoming an herbalist.

Chef Susie Crowther will explore and demonstrate healthy cooking featuring unique herbs from the Free Verse Farm. Author of *The No Recipe Cookbook*, she embraces the philosophy of Fare Well - Fresh, Ripe, Whole and Local - and on preparing foods in ways that maximize nutrition. Her creative approach to preparing meals focuses on the basics: philosophies, ingredients, and procedures. Crowther takes the intimidation factor out of cooking.

Donations in support of the event and also food-related silent auction items are needed. Please contact our offices at 463-9927 ext. 109. Silent auction items can be previewed at 1:30 p.m. the day of the event. A cash bar will be provided. All contributions go to support Parks Place.

Major sponsors of the event include: Burtco, Inc., Cota & Cota, Chroma Technologies, Will and Laurie Danforth, Durand Toyota/Ford, Greater Falls Insurance, MJS Landscape, Harlow Farm, Savings Bank of Walpole, Silver Forest, SoVerNet Communications, Vermed, Inc., The Vermont Country Store, and the Whitney Blake Company.

Business and individuals who gave at the supporter level include: Eric Anderson and Elizabeth James, Carols Scoop Shop, Dick and Holly Doyle, Brianne Dunleavy, Dr. Timothy Johnson, Miriam and Larry Lanata, Nancy and Jim McAuliffe, the Richards Group, and Vermont's Local Banquet Magazine.

Parks Place provides access to a wide-array of health and human service programs, from parenting classes to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, from mental health counseling to employment programs. In addition, Parks Place formed Lead Safe Homes in 2005 in response to an alarming rate of childhood lead poisoning in the area. Thirty-five regular programs are offered at Parks Place.

THE PERFECT WINTER FOR POND HOCKEY!

Westminster hockey fans took advantage of a terrific winter for outdoors sports, playing pond hockey on the swamp off Henwoods Hill almost every weekend. Next winter, get your skates sharpened and come on by. Everyone is welcome.

Photo by Lori Larue



NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares, Inc. Board of Directors met March 4th at the Westminster Institute at 4:30 PM with the following board members attending: Kathy Elliott (facilitated meeting), Susan Harlow, Don Dawson, Barbara Sherrod, Miriam Lanata, Heidi Anderson, Regina Borden and Director, Donna Dawson. Connie Sanderson, Pete Harrison and Sally Ryea were excused.

Westminster Cares creates opportunities for seniors and disabled adults to live with independence and dignity in the community. Your support to this caregiving organization is a way for all of us to take care of our friends.

Anyone interested in learning more about Westminster Cares, volunteering to deliver meals on wheels or driving neighbors to doctor appointments, working on a committee, making a contribution or attending a workshop may contact Donna Dawson at 722-3607 or by e-mail at wecares@sover.net.

Check us out on the web@ www.westminstercares.org and like us on Facebook.

Services provided:

Meals On Wheels – In February, 22 WC volunteers delivered meals one day a month to 14 different people who are now on meals. In addition, two frozen entrees were delivered to eight people on Fridays for weekend meals (16 total per week).

Transportation – During the month of February, six rides were provided by three different volunteers who drove three different Westminster residents to medical appointments, shopping or wellness programs for a total of 85 miles.

Nursing Program—During February, our community nurse made eight in-person visits and three phone check-in calls on behalf of five seniors for medication management, blood pressure checks, foot care and hospitalization follow-up. She also attended one blood pressure clinic at the February Senior Lunch.

Meetings Attended by Staff in February included – Cares Groups Quarterly Mtg. and Senior Lunch; met with Nurse and Treasurer; Gazette Board, Graphic Designer, Programs Committee, Evaluation Consultant, PR Committee, Funding Committee and Mtg. with board president.

Programs in February - Two Secrets of Healthy Aging sessions, two Yoga classes, 18 Strength Training classes, four Artist in Each of Us classes.

Assistance and Referrals - Assistance provided to several Westminster residents and their families, collaborating with social service agencies, Senior Solutions, the V.A., Friends of Veterans, SEVCA, Red Cross, VCIL, the Sheriff's Dept. and the Visiting Nurses.

Friendly Visiting - One volunteer made a friendly visit to one senior.

Medical Equipment - In February we loaned out eight pieces of equipment; two pieces of equipment were returned to us and two pieces were donated to us. Thank you to our past and present donors.

Westminster Cares welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember or honor a loved one or friend.

Memorial donations for March:

In memory of Laura Leonard from Phyllis Anderson.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month and a combined drill on the third Tuesday of every month. Rescue training is the second Tuesday of the month.

Next association meeting is April 7 at 7 p.m.

The Prudential Committee meets twice a month on the first and third Monday after the first Tuesday at 7 p.m. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Number of calls in February: 22

Number of calls through March 26th: 24

Number of calls calendar year to Date: 76

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 270

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting March 3rd with President Paul Millman presiding. There were 20 members present and 6 members excused. Currently there are 41 members of the volunteer fire department.

Mud Season: Although the worst of mud season is yet to come, it is always a good idea to limit travel on muddy roads as much as possible, giving them a chance to dry out. If using a muddy road is unavoidable, be sure to drive toward the center when possible. The shoulders are apt to be very soft, adding to the chances of getting stuck or tipping over.

Flooding: Because of the excessive amounts of snow this winter, dangers of high water and flooded cellars becomes an issue. Residents should check the workability of sump pumps and drains. Be sure to keep watch of the cellar for incoming water. Water in the cellar can be very dangerous, especially if it comes in contact with anything electrical.

The Fire Department does not have the equipment to pump water that is less than 4 inches deep. Avoid driving through puddles on the road. Their depth can be deceiving. Watch the children around potentially deep water. And don't forget the pets.

Burn Permit Alert: We have had an abundance of snow this year and doing an outside burn may seem to be permissible, but things can dry out very quick-

ly in the spring especially if we have a lot of wind. Anyone wishing to do an outside burn must get verbal permission from one of the fire wardens before starting a fire. You must speak with one of the wardens. Leaving an answering machine message will not count as a permit. When calling for your permit, be sure to ask what materials are acceptable and which ones are unacceptable to burn.

If the Fire Department is called to respond and the fire ends out being an illegal burn, the fire will be extinguished and a fine may be imposed. In case there is a complaint from someone about the fire, the fire department is available to investigate and extinguish the fire if necessary.

All burn piles should be a least 100 feet from any building. Some of the items not allowed are: Trash, building material, anything with paint on it, cardboard. Keep in mind that there may be times when permits are not given out due to sudden changes in the dryness and wind conditions. Always be aware of open dry areas and windy conditions before considering a burn.

The wardens are: Warden :

Cole Streeter 722-3178

Deputy Warden: Mark Lund 463-9355

Deputy Warden: Pat Haas 387-5778

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember a loved one or a friend.

We are always looking for new members: Anyone interested in volunteering their time to help the community in a time of need, please contact Chief Cole Streeter at 722-3178 or stop by the Firehouse any Sunday morning and pick up an application. We would like to have additional volunteers from the Westminster West area. There is a Fire House, an engine and a rescue vehicle located in Westminster West and more help is always welcome to utilize that equipment during calls.

As always, we would like to thank the members of the community for its continued support of the fire department.

Check us out on our web-site www.westminsterfireandrescue.org.

Nature Notes: Can an Owl Rotate Its Head 360 Degrees?

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

The owls we have are: the Barred, Eastern Screech, Great-Horned, Saw-Whet, Long Eared, Short-Eared, Snowy, Barn and Northern Hawk Owl with the Barred Owl being the most common.

The Barred Owl is large with a wingspan of 38 to 50 inches. The beak is yellow and the eyes are dark. The head is round with no ear tufts. They eat small meadow voles, shrews, rabbits, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates.

When we hear them, their hoots are a series of eight or nine hoots which the birders say is like "Who-cooks-for-you, who-cooks-for-you -all". They also yelp, bark, cackle, gurgle and caw. We often see them sleeping during the day and hear them hooting at night.

A snowy owl had been spending a few weeks at Wellwood Orchard in Weathersfield. He could be seen on top of a barn roof, on a fence post or as a lump in the meadow as you drive by.

The last few years have seen many Snowies in the winter that have come south from Canada looking for food.

Both last and this year's irruption was large. It is believed that the large group of Snowies that swept south is triggered by a record nesting season with an abundant food supply of lemmings.

Very little is known where they go when they travel back north. Naturalist and author Scott Weidensaul has helped organize Project SNOWstorm to put solar-powered data loggers on Snowies to track their movement.

The Snowy is easy to recognize due to its white color and large size. The size is 20 to 28 inches long with a wing span of 49 to 59 inches. They have yellow eyes and a dark beak. The majority seen here are young males. Older males are virtually pure white. Females and young birds are white with dark scallops so they appear darker.

Snowies eat mostly lemmings and other small rodents during the breeding season but in the winter, they feed on what is available such as mice, rabbits or squirrels. They eat roughly 7 to 12 mice a day and can eat more than 1600 lemmings a year.

They swallow their small prey whole. The stomach juices digest the flesh, while the indigestible fur, feathers, teeth and bones are compacted into oval pellets that the owl regurgitates 18 to 24 hours after feeding.



It is interesting to take a pellet apart using tweezers to pick out the bones to see what the owl has been eating.

Many times I receive a call to help identify a bird. Usually the only information is the color of the back and undersides and if it is Chickadee or Robin size. While the bird is there in front of you, don't run for your bird book because by the time you get back, the bird is gone.

Use that time to observe what it is doing. Is it on the ground eating seeds, in the brush eating berries or on the suet? Watch it fly. Do you see another color under its wings? How does it fly, a rolling flight or straight up in a tree? Is it doing something like flicking its tail or holding its tail upright? Many times it isn't close enough to see the shape of its bill, eye rings or wing bars but what it is doing is the most important part for me to help with its identity.

We think of the birds beginning to return north as "our birds" but actually they are only here for the breeding season and spend most of their lives in southern United States and South or Central America.

Back to my original question, can an owl rotate its head 360 degrees? Owls have 14 neck vertebrae whereas humans have only 7. Owls can only rotate their heads up to 270 degrees.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

THE FINE LINE

By Pete Harrison

(Note: We ran this article in the Westminster Gazette five years ago. It was so popular and is so full of common sense and wisdom that we decided to rerun it.)

This article is for the adults who have parents or loved ones in their life who have shown signs of giving up on the future. There is a fine line between wanting to help someone stay active and positive and allowing them to be comfortable with their position in life.

It's not unusual to hear someone complain because their elderly parents have become uninterested in life. "All they want to do is sit around and watch TV." "They never want to go anywhere." "They won't leave the house." "What's the matter with them?"

To the active adults in the family this seems to be intolerable, and the nagging can't be much fun for the elders. Obviously it is very unhealthy to be idle and to be disconnected socially. Depression sets in. Physical health is impaired. So we try to encourage activity. We try to encourage socializing within or outside the family. And we do it with the best intentions.

However, is this in the best interest of Mom and Dad? Every family is different. Every situation requires thoughtful consideration. In some cases magic can be performed and the parents can become happier and healthier with the smallest amount of encouragement. In other cases we could be adding to the pain of growing old that many are experiencing.

So what is the answer? There isn't a one-size-fits-all conclusion. But here is a suggestion. Have you noticed how much more improved parenting has become over the years? Today's parents are masters at disciplining their children while at the same time considering the child's self esteem. Try it on the elderly. Give them your best advice. Share with them all you know. Gently remind them how important they are and how valuable their lives are, not only to themselves but to others.

But be careful not to take away any more of their self-esteem than the aging process has already. Remember, many of their friends are gone, much of their energy has diminished, and the horizon is getting closer and closer. Encourage positive living while maintaining understanding and dignity.

Pete Harrison, a resident of Westminster for more than 40 years, is a long-time board member and former president of Westminster Cares.

SEVCA ANNOUNCES FREE FINANCIAL FITNESS CLASSES

Southeastern Vermont Community Action has space available in the upcoming Financial Fitness program. This eight-part workshop series will help participants discover how to use the money they have and take steps towards prosperity.

Participants will learn to improve their relationship with money, increase cash flow and experience financial security. Other topics covered include; saving, spending, credit, paying for college, purchasing a home, purchasing a car, insurance and retirement. Instructors can review participants' credit reports and recommend steps to build healthy credit or resolve credit issues. This financial coaching is designed to help families and individuals develop strong financial habits.

The workshop is free. The 8-part workshop will begin on Wednesday, March 25 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., and continue each Wednesday thru May 13. The workshops will be held at SEVCA Main Office at 91 Buck Drive in Westminster.

Pre-registration is required. Please call Karen Woodcock to register at 722-4575, ext. 151, or e-mail kperlberg@sevca.org.

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE SEEKS BOOK KEEPER

Join a great team in helping to spread the Town of Westminster news! This volunteer position creates financial transactions and reports to the Committee from that information.

The creation includes tracking deposits, paying invoices from vendors, and issuing advertising and underwriting invoices to the Gazette's customers. Other duties include; reconciling the sole bank account, attending the monthly planning meeting, and participating from time to time in fundraising activities.

This role is a chance to participate locally, and there are always opportunities to mold it as you see fit. Members of the Gazette Committee look forward to hearing from you, please e-mail westminsternews@gmail.com with any questions, and your interest in the position.

BEEKEEPING WORKSHOP APRIL 18

Charles Andros, former NH/VT Apiary Inspector, will hold a beekeeping workshop from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 18 at 18 MacLean Road in Alstead, NH. Look for the "BEE" sign on the south side of Walpole Valley Road.

Topics of discussion will be early spring management: locating apiaries, equipment, handling bees, feeding syrup and supplements, making nuclei, reversing, and requeening. Bring a veil, if you have one, as we shall be opening some colonies. We'll be inside if it is a rainy day. Registration required. email:lin-denap@gmail.com or call 603-756-9056.

WESTMINSTER MYSTERY PHOTO

**WE NEED
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If you have pictures you think would make a great mystery photo, send them to westminsternews@gmail.com

**When Mystery Photos are available, E-mail your answer to westminsternews@gmail.com
The answer and the winners are announced in the next issue, page 3.**

HERRICKS COVE WILDLIFE FESTIVAL - SUNDAY, MAY 3

Celebrate spring and wildlife at the Herricks Cove Wildlife Festival in Rockingham on Sunday, May 3 from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m.

The Festival includes nature presentations, activities and programs featuring live animals, guided nature walks, crafts and activities for children, food, workshops, birding and much more.

GET READY FOR WORK PROGRAMS

"Ready for Work," a new program held at Community College of Vermont in Brattleboro this past fall, is now being offered in both Brattleboro and Springfield, thus expanding access to training and support for unemployed, disadvantaged workers in Windsor County.

"Ready for Work" consists of a free, 8-week employment readiness course along with intensive, one-on-one support to help participants solidify skills such as resume writing and interviewing, overcome employment barriers, search for and apply to jobs, and transition successfully into the workforce.

The program was developed through a partnership involving CCV, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), and the Windham Workforce Investment Board (WWIB) with funding from a Regional Workforce Partnership Grant from the Vermont Department of Labor. A grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to CCV also supports the program. "Ready for Work" was successfully piloted with 16 participants this past fall.

The course focuses on the core skills most requested by Vermont businesses, and upon completion, participants will be eligible to receive the Governor's Career Ready Certificate and the National Career Readiness Certificate – both of which are recognized by many Vermont employers as indicators of proficiency and workforce readiness.

"The combination of classroom learning and individual support the program offers enables participants to obtain the core workplace skills and self-assurance they need to get and keep good jobs," SEVCA's Executive Director Steve Geller said. "The partnership between CCV, SEVCA and the WWIB is just what's needed to support not only workers, but employers as well, who are always looking for reliable, job-ready employees."

Enrollment for the program is now open, and space is limited. Interested applicants should go to <https://apply.ccv.edu/career/> to fill out an online application. For more information about the Brattleboro program contact Karen Clark, 254-6389, karen.clark@ccv.edu.

For information about the Springfield program, contact Debra Grant, 885-8360, debra.grant@ccv.edu, or Denise Mason at SEVCA, 800-464-9951, dmason@sevca.org.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

TOWN OF WESTMINSTER TOWN LISTER(S)

The Town of Westminster, Select Board is soliciting resumes to fill positions of three vacant Lister positions.

Elected positions are defined by statute. Following appointment by the Select Board the successful candidate(s) will be required to run for election on the ballot in March 2016.

Candidates must be Westminster residents. Please submit a resume or letter of interest to Russell R. Hodgkins, Town Manager, Town of Westminster, P.O. Box 147, Westminster, VT 05158. Deadline for receiving resumes is May 1, 2015.

For detailed job descriptions, see the Town's Web site at www.westminstervt.org or contact Karen Astley, Administrative Assistant at 722-4255 for a copy.

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

Scottish Country Dance Classes

Every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Westminster Center School Gym. Bernard McGrath, instructor. All skill levels welcome. Contact Michael Daley for more information at 387-2601. No charge.

Putney Contra Dance

Last Saturday of every month at Pierce Hall on East Putney Falls Road, off Rt. 5 in East Putney. A beginner's workshop is taught at 8 p.m., and the regular dance goes from 8:30 to 11. A donation at the door will benefit the Pierce's Hall Building Fund. For more information call 387-5985.

Senior Potluck Lunch

Every 2nd Thursday of the month at noon. All Westminster seniors are invited to attend a potluck lunch at the First Congregational Church on Route 5.

Bellows Falls Gallery Walk

Downtown at 5:30 p.m. every 3rd Friday of the month.

Secrets of Healthy Aging

A facilitated discussion group and pot-luck. The 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Westminster Fire Station from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information.

Contra Dance

Every 3rd Saturday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall in Walpole, N.H.

Gentle Yoga

Every Monday at 10 a.m. at the Westminster Institute. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information.

Living Strong Classes

Mondays and Thursdays: at the First Congregational Church in Westminster from 9-10 a.m.; at the Westminster West Church from 6-7 p.m.; or at Greater Rock Fitness in Bellows Falls from 11-12. Call Westminster Cares for more information at 722-3607.

Knitting Together

Join us every Wednesday, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Village Square Booksellers, downtown Bellows Falls. Bring your knitting needles, we have the yarn and casual instruction if needed to knit hats, mittens and sweaters for area kids.

All our yarn is from community donation and we distribute our completed work to all area schools and Parks Place. More knitters at all skill levels are wanted and we can promise you an enjoyable experience. For details or to donate yarn contact Caroline at 463-4653.

Westminster West Public Library Trustees

The Westminster West Public Library Trustees meet on the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the library. They welcome visits from the public, but it would be best to check times with Bev Major at 387-5737 before coming.

Bellows Falls Farmers' Market

Stop by the Train Station in Bellows Falls every Friday from 4 to 7 p.m., for our Farmers Market. For details visit www.bffarmersmarket.com or call 463-2018.

Faith Community

The First Congregational Church of Westminster

The Rev. Sami Jones McRae, Pastor. Main Street, Route 5, P.O. Box 122, Westminster, 722-4148. Sunday worship at 10 a.m. Communion is the first Sunday of each month.

Sunday School is held at 10 a.m. from September to May. The church has a ramp and lift for wheelchair access as well as a handicapped bathroom. Westminster First Congregational is an open and affirming church, all are welcome.

The Congregational Church of Westminster West

The Congregational Church of Westminster West worships every Sunday at 10 a.m. The pick-up choir meets most Sundays at 9 to rehearse for that morning's anthem; newcomers to choir are always welcome!

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month, and on the Second Sunday the church collects a special offering that goes to Our Place in Bellows Falls to help fund their food shelf.

The church building is fully wheelchair accessible, and the congregation is Open and Affirming. Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno is the pastor, and musicians are Jennifer Hed and Margit Lilly.

Rev. Webster-Toleno currently holds office hours on Monday and Thursday afternoons, and people are welcome to drop by. However, since "office hours" sometimes means she's out visiting people in their homes, it's a good idea to make an appointment if you really want to catch her.

She can be reached at the church on those days at 387-2334, via cell phone at 579-8356 or e-mail susiewt@gmail.com.

Grace Bible Fellowship Services

The Grace Bible Fellowship holds its Sunday Worship Service at 9:15 a.m. at 38 Elm Street in Walpole, NH.

Find out more about the church at its Web site, www.gbf4hisglory.com/.

Meetings

Selectboard 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Planning Commission 2nd Monday at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Westminster Activities Commission 2nd Monday of the Month at 6 p.m. at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster School Board 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Center School Library.

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association 3rd Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Congregational Church.

Westminster West Public Library Board 2nd Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Public Library.

Development Review Board 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Community Improvement Program Committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Westminster Cares Board - No Summer Meetings 1st Wednesday of every month, at the Westminster Institute at 4:30 p.m.

911 Committee as needed.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Dept. holds their monthly meetings on the 1st Tuesday of every month, at 7 p.m. and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Westminster Fire Station.

Westminster Historical Society 2nd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster Gazette Meeting Monday, April 27 at 4:30 p.m. at the Westminster Institute

Westminster Recycling Committee Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Fire Station.



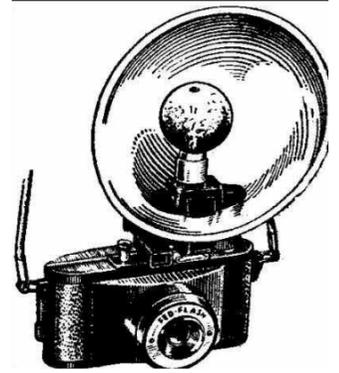
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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE BRADLEY LAW OFFICE?

The Westminster Historical Society took possession of the William Czar Bradley Law Office in April of 2014. It has been a "bee hive" of activity ever since. There have been one or two layers of dust brushed away, a new roof to protect this snapshot of history, an inventory to detail the items inside – and that's just a few things completed.

One interesting article found is a small paper packet perhaps one half inch by three quarters of an inch and sealed with a pin. Gently, the rusted pin was removed, the paper unfolded & opened to find a small scrap of paper with a hand written note wrapped around a one dollar bill, payable by the Bank of Montpelier to the bearer on demand and dated July 1, 1852. The note reads: "A one dollar bill taken as payment while the Hon. William C. Bradley was in the Vermont Legislature after he was seventy years old."

This was just one tiny piece of history that came out of the trunk found under a table in the Law Office. You'll be able to see many more possessions belonging to Attorney Bradley, so watch for our summer museum schedule and plan to step into a time capsule of Westminster History.



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EXPANDING HORIZONS—EXPLORATORY AND HEALTH CHOICES AT COMPASS SCHOOL

One of many ways Compass students extend their learning is through Exploratory classes three afternoons a week and Health classes on Wednesdays. Both of these programs offer students a wide range of choices, which change each quarter.

For the 4th quarter, exploratory options include: Ultimate Frisbee, baseball, rock band, clay sculpture, exploring art materials from history, cooking, fencing, landscaping, diploma art, yoga, performance poetry, making music instruments from found objects, and belly dance.

Thanks to the support from the Holt Fund, Compass has enhanced programming for health and wellness. Like much at Compass, students have been part of writing the grant and designing plans for health education. A key piece to this program is providing student choices in classes to better meet individual interests and needs.

While there are required classes related to substance prevention and sexuality, other options range from mindfulness to weight-lifting and Pilates at Flex Fitness to art therapy to counselor led support groups. Every student is unique and there are so many strategies that contribute to health and wellness. Helping students gain exposure to a wide array of health approaches provides them a strong foundation for making healthy choices into their teens and beyond.

Compass believes strongly in expanding opportunities for students to success in the dynamic world of the 21st century. In academic classes, students investigate issues in our community and around the world.

Travel experiences take our students to Boston, Cape Cod, New York City, and for the 11th graders, to the Dominican Republic for direct experience in our multicultural world. Likewise, through Exploratories and health classes, students are able to explore possibilities for leading more healthy and rewarding lives.



At top, Compass School student Tim Salatin with Compass Chef Cher Anderson in cooking class. Below, Jasmyn Atsalis-Gogel in clay sculpture class.

SENIOR SOLUTIONS OFFERS MEDICARE BOOT CAMPS

At this free class, Senior Solutions staff will provide unbiased information about the Medicare system. Medicare has strict enrollment periods, and this session will help participants make timely decisions about drug plans and supplemental plans as well as many other issues.

This class is appropriate for those who are currently enrolled in Medicare, as well as anyone who will be signing up in the near future. Family members who help elders may also find this class useful.

Space is limited, so please call ahead to register. There is no fee, but donations are appreciated. To register or get more information, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.

Brattleboro: Wed. April 8, 1-3 p.m. at Brooks Memorial Library meeting room, 224 Main Street, Brattleboro

Putney: Wed. April 28, 1:15-3:15 p.m. at the Putney Cares Activity Barn, 54 Kimball Hill, Putney (Co-sponsored by Putney Family Services & Putney Cares)

Springfield: Wed. May 13, 1-3 p.m. The Meeting House at Springfield Hospital (on Ridgeway Road, drive past the hospital entrance and go up the next driveway on the left).

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April Business of the Month: Genius Loci

Sustainable Landscape Design, Installation & Stewardship



By Cyndy Fine, Landscape Designer, Gardener & Owner

Genius Loci (pronounced genius low-sigh), is based out of my home and one acre property in the village of Westminister. Many of you have walked through my gardens during a Westminister Cares Garden Tour, or perhaps noticed the large sapling “nest” (now in the brush pile!), in my front yard as you drove or peddled by on Route 5. I have lived in Westminister for 40+ years, almost 20 of those in business as a landscape designer and gardener.

Genius Loci and my former business, Botanica Santera, have designed, installed and maintained 100 or so gardens in southern Vermont and New Hampshire, and continue to work with many of our original clients from 1996.

Genius Loci is a Latin term meaning “essence or spirit of place,” and the basis of all my landscape design. I am a graduate of The Conway School of Landscape Design + Planning and am trained in whole systems, sustainable design and practices. This translates as looking at the history and context of the bigger picture and using the existing natural systems as a guide in designing a low maintenance landscape for you, local wildlife, bees, birds and butterflies.

When you hire Genius Loci you can rest assured that we are highly trained and experienced in designing, planting and maintaining beautiful and ecologically healthy gardens. With specific, extensive training and education in sustainable design and practices, we offer you the opportunity to effect change in your landscape and in turn, promote and protect biodiversity for the planet.

We offer a wide range of services from designing acres of property to planting a single specimen tree, from having our crew regularly maintain your gardens, to jazzing up your property for one special event. If you’re a gardener yourself and have lost your enthusiasm or just need a fresh perspective and a few suggestions to inspire you, we’re happy to help with a consultation.

Genius Loci works closely with local stone masons, architects and builders of walls, terraces, walkways, trellises, fencing, raised beds, pergolas, water features or just about anything you can dream up! We also support the local economy by purchasing trees, shrubs and plants from nearby growers whenever possible.

If you’d like to learn more about Genius Loci, give us a call at 802-376-7275, or visit www.geniuslocidesign.com and read about our crew, past and current projects or just look through inspiring photographs of our work.

We are again offering a 20% discount on your first hour of consultation...look for our promotional postcards at Café Loco in Harlow’s Farm Stand, Putney Co-op and Allen Brothers’ community boards, and other locations in the area.

And...come see what’s new in my own gardens July 11th and 12th, and support your neighbors through Westminister Cares at the 2015 Garden Tour.

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