

Westminster Gazette



po box 147 westminster vt 05158

Our Community Newspaper @ www.westminstervt.org

Vol. 9, No.3 March 2013

Off the Couch and Onto the Slopes !

Community Contributions & Volunteers Make Winter Sports Program a Success

On the first day at Okemo this year, a Westminster student was overheard exclaiming, "This is more fun than videogaming!"

That is the goal of the program: getting kids off the couch and moving, regardless of the weather. Westminster has a group of dedicated parents, intent on providing opportunities for Westminster students to ski, board, swim and skate.

They asked the School Board to reconsider its decision, due to a combination of academic and financial pressures, to suspend the program for 2013. The group proposed a half-day program, funded through the generosity of local organizations and individuals, and staffed by a combination of parents, community members, grandparents and staff.

The resulting five programs serve every child in the school and provide wonderful opportunities for students to interact with a variety of people in unique ways. Attitudes and confidence get a boost when a child finds he or she can help a teacher learn something new.

About 70 children and many school staff swim at the Edgar May pool in Springfield. All kindergarteners and 1st graders skate at Vermont Academy's rink.

A dozen students participate in Outdoor Adventure: weather permitting, they cross-country ski, snowshoe, hike, or do other activities on school grounds. And 70-80 students go to Okemo, where they downhill ski or snowboard. Each visit includes a lesson given by Okemo staff.



Many thanks to all the many people who have helped plan, staff and fund this year's activities.

Fire Truck Restoration is Moving Right Along

The restoration of the 1952 Studebaker fire truck is well on the way and nearing completion. Thanks to Gib Gay and others who assisted him, a major portion of the project has been completed over the past few months.

The goal at this point is to have it in the Saxtons River parade July 4th. The restored panels have been assembled onto the chassis including the cab, fenders, doors, hood and the rear body consisting of the fire apparatus.

Other items are: all new tires, new glass, new seat upholstery and new interior trim. The electrical system has been converted to 12 volt which involved replacing the generator with an alternator and replacing some of the wiring.

The following have donated money toward the project in the past:

From Mike Fawcett two donations, Stuart Reed, Everett Garland two donations, Pat Haas, Gregory Gay, Ernie & Phyllis Norman, Wendy Cross, Ruth Grandy, George Hurlbert, Joseph Famolare, Bob McIver, The Green Mt Chapter of the American Truck Historical Society, the Dascomb Fund, the Westminster Fire & Rescue Association and two donations from Don Anderson in honor of Hank & Phyllis Anderson.

The following are memorial donations to the project: Jean Semonite in memory of John E. Farr, two donations from Barbara Greenough in memory of Harold Shattuck, Myra Ashcroft in memory of Thomas H. Ashcroft and Arlene Hall Ashcroft, Bruce & Kay Miller in memory of Jeff Miller, two donations from Jim & Coleen Grout in memory of Nick Grout, John Kawaky in memory of Peter Marshall and Marion Wilder in memory of Bill Wilder.



Anyone wishing to contribute to the restoration project, send to: Westminster Fire & Rescue Association Studebaker Fund, PO Box 111, Westminster, Vt. 05158.

Westminster Historical Society Holds Spring Fundraiser Raffle

The Westminster Historical Society is having its first Spring Fundraiser Raffle. Raffle prizes are on display at the Westminster Institute. Librarian Linda Fawcett has tickets for purchase at \$1 each or six for \$5.

Money raised from this raffle will be used to purchase artifacts and to purchase supplies to preserve and protect artifacts in the collection. First prize is a lap quilt, second prize is a one month membership to Greater Rock Fitness and third prize is a gift basket full of wonderful items. The raffle drawing will be held on May 14 at our monthly meeting.

The Historical Society is a non-profit organization run by volunteers. It was organized in 1962 for the purpose of collecting and preserving information and objects relating to Westminster History for present and future historians, students and people of Westminster and beyond. We are always looking for new members to help out with the Society. Meetings are held at the Butterfield Institute at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month. The more members we have the better the Society will be so we would love to see new faces!

At right are some of the prizes offered, on display at the Westminster Institute.



DOG LICENSES AND RABIES SHOTS

2013 dog licenses are due by April 1. There will be a rabies clinic on March 30 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Highway Garage. The cost is \$10.

Last Month's Mystery Photo



Last month's mystery photo in the Gazette had no correct guesses. The question was, when was the Westminster Seal first used, and who designed it? The Seal was designed by John Casselli and first used in 1976.

SENIOR SOLUTIONS SEEKS SENIOR COMPANIONS IN WESTMINSTER

Senior Solutions (Council on Aging for SE VT) is seeking Senior Companions to serve elders in Westminster and surrounding areas. Volunteers must be aged 55+, and will receive a small stipend and mileage reimbursement for providing friendly visits to elders in their area.

Call Abby Eldridge at 257-2338 or e-mail aeldridge@seniorsolutionsvt.org.



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Why change the look?
 In a rural region, many residents don't know public transit exists! The goal of **The Current's** look is to make it difficult NOT to notice us. The more people notice public transit, the more they are likely to get out of their cars and onto a bus!
 When you leave your car behind and ride **The Current**, you decrease your energy consumption, improve environmental quality, and save commuting costs. If you are unable to drive or don't have transportation, you can benefit by riding on our Dial-a-Ride and volunteer network.
 We Provide the Ride... so please tell us how we can improve to make that happen for you. Thank you for riding Connecticut River Transit last year and **The Current** this year.

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Bellows Falls to Brattleboro							Brattleboro to Bellows Falls						
Time	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride	101 Exit 6 Park & Ride						
5:45	6:00	6:02	6:07	6:09	6:12	6:25	6:37	6:44	7:00	7:00	7:02	7:12	7:17
8:00	8:02	8:07	8:09	8:12	8:25	8:37	8:44	9:00	9:00	9:02	9:12	9:17	9:26
1:55	2:10	2:15	2:17	2:19	2:22	2:35	2:47	2:51	3:10	3:10	3:22	3:27	3:36
4:10	4:12	4:15	4:17	4:19	4:22	4:35	4:47	4:51	5:10	5:10	5:12	5:22	5:27

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ARTISTS & ARTS EXPANSION AT COMPASS SCHOOL

Walk in Compass and you will see student art displayed throughout the school. Although Compass has no official "art teacher," art is part of almost every class. In fact, the Vermont Council on the Arts has recognized Compass as a model of integrating art throughout the curriculum.

Compass teachers know how essential the arts are in the 21st century. With the widespread use of computers and smart phones, we become an ever more visual society. Communicating with graphic imagery and thoughtful design complements the traditional skills of writing and speaking. Many students do better accessing information and ideas visually or expressing themselves artistically, and this can lead to greater success with the written word. For others, writing comes more easily, and the artistic representation stretches their thinking.

For example, in a middle school unit on "Who Am I?" students are required to write autobiographical essays and poems and decorate a personalized mask reflecting their "public face." For 7th graders not necessarily wired for self-reflection, creating a mask gives a concrete picture to express themselves. Each student can use his or her mask as a jumping off point for writing, translating the images on their mask into words that convey meaning.

Whether producing an abbreviated, modernized version of Othello for English class, making models of the rock cycle in science, cartooning the history of the world in social studies, or making geometric car logos in math, the arts can be part of every class at Compass.

Beyond the countless opportunities to apply the arts in academic classes, Compass offers a variety of art classes as part of their exploratory program. Courses offered in the past year include: Studio Art, Oil Painting, Figure Drawing, Digital Photography, Clay Sculpture, and Filmmaking.

The quality of arts education at Compass is reflected in students earning National Scholastic Art and Writing Awards 2013 for Vermont.

Gold Key Art Awards:

Ivy Kirby, Photography, Forward
Serena Pellerin, Sculpture, The Boiler Man Marionette

Silver Key Art Awards:

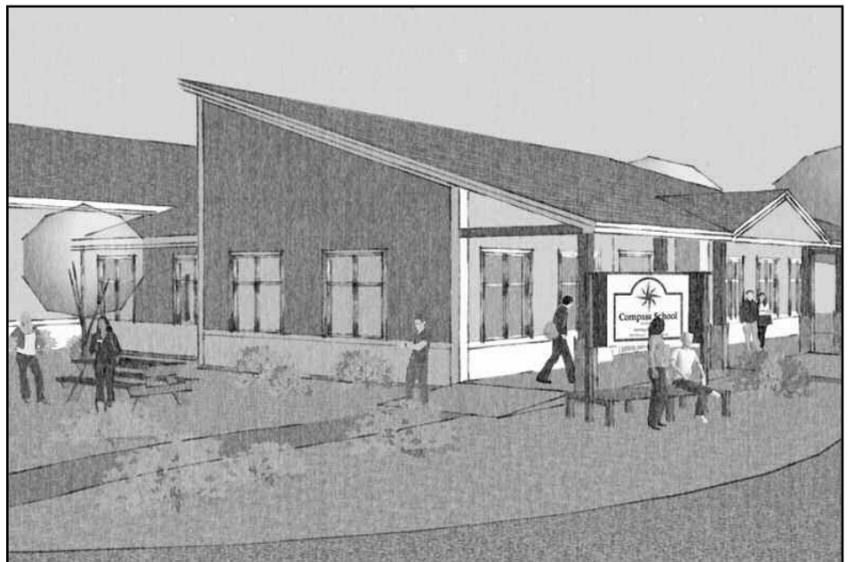
Ivy Kirby, Photography, Heels

Honorable Mention:

Ivy Kirby, Photography, Swimming
Ivy Kirby, Photography, Smudge
Serena Pellerin, Drawing, Crazy Monkey
Writing Awards:

Silver Key Awards:

Rachel Drinker, Poetry, Earth Believes in Space, Saltwater, The Invention, Optimist, Believe



In top photo, from left, Ivy Kirby, Rachel Drinker, teacher Hillary Newton and Serena Pellerin. Below, one view of the new addition to the Compass School and the arts room section to be completed this summer.

Amazingly, Compass has incorporated the arts throughout the curriculum without a dedicated art room and this will change by next September. As part of Compass' school expansion, there will be new art lab and a new science lab ready for the start of the 2013-14 school year. These new facilities will help the arts continue to flourish at Compass, helping every student develop as learners and communicators for the 21st century.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS TOWN HISTORY TO SCHOOL LIBRARY

The Westminster Historical Society presented a copy of the new Town History to the Westminster Center School's library on Dec. 6. In photo at right, school librarian Liz Bourne shows the old 1941 Town History to the students at the monthly All School Meeting in the gym.

Dan Axtell, center, and author Jessie Haas of the Historical Society were there to present the new book. Copies are available at the Town Hall and town libraries for \$39.99.

Photo courtesy of Pat Gomez.



NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares, Inc. Board of Directors met February 6th at the Westminster Fire House at 4:30 PM with President Connie Sanderson presiding. The following board members were present: Susan Clifford, Pete Harrison, Nan Blanchard, Reggie Borden, Barbara Carey, Don Dawson, Kathy Elliot, Susan Harlow, Miriam Lanata, Director Ronnie Friedman and Assistant Director Donna Dawson. Heidi Anderson 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 care-giving organization is a way for all of us to take care of our friends.

Services provided: Meals on Wheels -23 different WC volunteers delivered meals throughout the month to 16 people on a daily basis. Transportation – During the month of January, 14 rides were provided by 6 different volunteers who drove 3 different Westminster residents to medical appointments, shopping or programs for a total of 330 miles.

Nursing program: During January our nurse made 5 visits to 2 different homes in Westminster for a total of 4.5 hours.

Equipment loan – several pieces of equipment loaned out in January and several pieces were donated. We have received donations of an electric wheel chair and an electric scooter which we would be happy to lend to someone who could make use of it [batteries will be needed for both]

Equipment needed. We still are in need of walkers with wheels and seats, bed rails, four prong walkers, shower chairs, lift chairs and crutches with arm support. Thank you to our past and present donors.

Equipment available: Walkers, commodes, shower chairs, wheel chairs, hospital beds.

Meetings attended in January included: bookkeeper, Gazette, Programs during the January included: 2 Secrets of Healthy Aging session, 2 Yoga classes, 24 Strength Training classes held and five Artist in Each of Us classes.

Assistance and Referrals: Many hours of assistance to Westminster residents and their families, working with social services agencies, Senior Solutions, the VA, Red Cross, Adult Protective Services and the Visiting Nurses.

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 Ronnie Friedman at 722-3607 or by email at wecares@sover.net.

Memorial Donations February: In memory of my sister, Patricia Jennison, from Betty Miller

- In memory of Jeff Walsh from Fran Walsh
- In honor of all the Westminster Cares staff and volunteers from Anonymous
- In honor of Mark Porter from Susan and Russell Seguin
- In memory of Gary Kurkul from the families of:
 - Wellman Muzzey
 - David & Charlene Muzzey,
 - Gary & Karleen McKenney,
 - Paul & Lisa Muzzey
 - Scott & Penny Muzzey

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 March 5 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.

March Prudential meetings: 11th & 25th.

Number of calls in January: 27

Number of calls through Feb. 27: 17

Number of calls calendar year to Date: 44

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 222

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular monthly meeting February 5th with President Greg Holton presiding. There were 26 members present and 4 members excused. Currently there are 43 members of the volunteer fire department. Restoration on the 1952 Studebaker Fire Truck continues. Check the article in this issue for further information.

Thin Ice: Due to the recent rise in temperatures, the once safe ice has become unsafe. Be careful when using ponds and lakes for skating or cross country skiing. The ice may be very thin. Be very sure of the thickness before venturing out on them. Inform and educate your children often about the dangers. And never snow mobile on frozen water.

Flooding: Because of the excessive amounts of rain this winter and the probability of an early spring, 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.

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 in unavoidable, be sure to drive toward the center when possible. The shoulders are apt to very soft, adding to the chances of getting stuck or tipping over.

Cell Phone and 911: Be aware if you call 911 from your cell

phone, you will be connected first to the New Hampshire State Police. They will ask you a series of questions just in case they lose your call. They will then transfer you to the Vt. 911 where you will be asked a series of questions, probably the same ones. Vt. 911 will then transfer you to our dispatch center, the Southwestern New Hampshire Mutual Aid who needs to get the call to tone our department and an ambulance. This all takes time. Our suggestion is, if you have to call 911 using a cell phone, call Mutual Aid directly at 1-603-352-1100. This number works better and quicker from a regular phone also.

Have that number in your cell phone memory. It could save a life.

Shelter: The Fire Station will be open for shelter in case an event occurs where shelter is needed. Contact the Chief or any member of the department in case of any emergency needs.

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

Donations made by the association in February:

The AAU Boys Basketball program.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: From time to time there is a need for food to be brought to the Fire House. During calls when the fire fighters are out for an extended period of time, having something to eat or drink when they return is a huge compliment. Also, once in a great while there are special events which require feeding a large number of people.

If you are available and are willing to be on a call list for these occasions or if you just want more information, call Chief Cole Streeter or June Streeter at 802-722-3178 and let them know. This is a great way to help the people who help the community in so many ways. Thanks in advance.

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 needed to utilize that equipment during calls.

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

The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association, Inc. operates independently from Westminster Fire District #3.

WESTMINSTER CARES ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR, JUNE 29 AND 30

Westminster Cares will hold its twelfth annual Garden Tour on Saturday and Sunday, June 29 and 30. The tour will again feature the gardens of Mary and Gordon Hayward, nationally known garden designer, writer and lecturer.

Four other Westminster gardens are also on the tour. The tour will be 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sunday.

Come celebrate with us – this is Westminster Cares' 25th anniversary year!

For more information on the tour, check our Web site for updates: www.westminstercares.org. E-mail us at wecares@sover.net or call 722-3607.

Proceeds from the tour support the services and programs of Westminster Cares, a volunteer organization whose purpose is to create opportunities for seniors and disabled adults to live with independence and dignity in the community.

Gardening Gifts

by Babs Lynde, a Vermont Master Gardener

A friend of mine was asking what he should get for his wife this year for a birthday present. I know she loves gardening as much as I do, so I suggested that he buy her some good quality gardening handtools. Just got a "thank you" from him the other day, so I guess it was a good call! Spring is on its way, so now is a good time to buy your special someone a gardening gift.

If you're going to give someone a gift in gardening, either pick something of good quality that will last for years or an interesting chat-piece or eye-catcher. You can find a whole variety in a hundred different catalogs or you can find what you're looking for right here locally at our neighborhood nurseries and gardening shops.

If you are looking for gardening tools or aids, you will be wasting your money if you don't buy good quality. Many hand tools such as spades, shears or forks tend to bend or rust. Test out the tool before your purchase, read the attached information and look for imperfections or tiny and thin pieces. Look to see if similar tools have the same construction materials and are less apt to bend, break or fall apart.

Some outdoor tools are now coated with a protective layer that either deters or prevents rusting. Every gardener needs a spade, and it's great to have measuring indentions on the spade to show the depth of holes for bulbs or tubers. Small hand rakes are perfect for digging out weeds that grow too close to vegetable rows, and shears are handy for every garden for clipping, pruning or detailing.

Kneeling pads are oh! so important for protecting our kneecaps when we have to get down close to the soil. Check for a good thick pad that cleans off easily with a wet paper towel and won't split easily from small sharp objects. There are also small seats available on wheels with a handle similar to a child's wagon. These are great for weeding when it's difficult to get down on your hands and knees.

Look for a gardener's apron made from heavy duty material with several pockets for sticking in tools, seed packets and gloves. And speaking of gloves, there are so many kinds out there now that maybe it would be nice to buy more than one kind for your recipient to experiment. Some gloves have rubber tips on the fingers for gripping while others are 100% cotton for easy washing. Be sure to check the stitching for broken or missing threads.

Is your gardener a collector? I love watering cans - all kinds from different materials, shapes, sizes and colors. Many avid gardeners have some type of theme that radiates from their flower patches such as whir-a-gigs and other animated objects, ribbons and silk flyers or statues of mushrooms, gnomes and woodland animals. Any size may do, but look to see if colors play a theme as well.

There is such a vast variety of eye-catchers out there now that it's nearly impossible to name them all, but every garden needs a little something extra to catch the eye of a passerby. Wind chimes can be beautiful as well as pleasant to the ear. Many wind or sun catchers have mirrored pieces that can be hung from branches or archways or stakes to glitter in the sunlight.

Some bird baths are extremely ornate as well as bird and bat houses. Rain and outdoor temperature gauges are now very decorative and blend beautifully into any garden, vegetable or flowers.

Consider a small, comfortable chair or bench as both a decorative idea as well as practical for the home gardener who may occasionally need a place to rest!

Would you like more information on gardening ideas? The Master Gardeners of Vermont are trained to help you with all your gardening needs. Call their Helpline toll-free at 1-800-639-2230, send questions by email to master.gardener@uvm.edu or visit www.uvm.edu/mastergardener/ for extensive information.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

A PET CAN MAKE YOUR LIFE BETTER PART TWO:

In January, Aged in Vermont looked at how pets can help seniors with the aging process. This month, we discuss how companion animals may help them deal with some of the physical and sensory changes that come with aging.

Vision: With proper correction of visual deficits, seniors can watch fish swim in an aquarium, or watch wild animals in the yard or birds flying. Important sensory stimulants like these keep an older person connected to the environment.

Hearing: Hearing loss is the third most frequently reported chronic condition of people over 65. A companion animal can alert its owner to both guests and intruders. And in taking a pet for a walk, a senior often starts conversations with others.

Touch: Sensitivity to touch, which helps us perceive and express feelings, is reduced with aging. At a time when there is a greater need for tactile stimulation but there are fewer opportunities to touch or be touched, pets can fill that need. "The cold wet nose of a faithful canine friend, the velvet feel of a cat's sleek coat, the softness of a bunny's ears, the gentle peck of a budgie can be the stimulus that connects the older person to reality."

Smell and Taste: Changes in olfactory and gustatory systems are less noticeable but play an important role in the health and well-being of older persons. The diminished sense of smell may indirectly affect appetite and be accompanied by a gradual loss of taste buds so that a senior can't enjoy the flavor of foods as much.

Good nutrition is critical to the overall health of older persons. Food intake is also influenced by the social environment so, for an older person living alone, having to prepare food for a pet may encourage them to prepare food for themselves. Often, pets can substitute for other social contact during meals.

Also, if a senior is less able to smell smoke from fire or toxic odors, pets can often alert their owners to those dangerous changes in the environment.

Cardiovascular System: Companion animals can make an important difference in promoting quality of life for seniors with cardiovascular disease. Watching or petting a pet can help them relax and lower blood pressure. Walking a pet or playing catch may be just the stimulus an older person needs to engage in activity.

Having to walk or care for pets becomes a reason to get up in the morning.

Musculoskeletal System: Changes in the musculoskeletal system directly affect how well older persons can move about in their environment. Disuse impairs many functions. Companion animals can play a very important role here: Brisk walking, easily done with a dog, is the simplest form of weight-bearing exercise. Throwing a toy or holding an object for a cat to paw provides an opportunity to exercise arm and shoulder joints.

A pet can help an older person, not only with better physical health, but with dealing with loss, improved social attitudes, mental health, and happiness. All good reasons to own a pet!

Excerpted from "The Role Animals Play in Enhancing Quality of Life for the Elderly."

"Old age ain't no place for sissies," Bette Davis said. Well, sissies or not, we're all headed for that place. And the better we know the geography, the easier it will be to navigate.

"Aged in Vermont" is a monthly article on aging issues, organized by Westminster Cares. We're asking local professionals and residents with an interest in these issues to write them.

The articles are not just reading material for the "aged." Young, old and middle-aged readers – anyone with an elderly parent, relative or friend, or who just wants to learn about these important issues that affect us all – is invited to take a look. Remember: "It's not how old you are; it's how you are old."

We address such topics as losing a pet, sleeping problems, supplements, advanced directives and creativity. We explore questions such as should I move to town? and decision making: whose life is this anyway?

Ideas for future columns? Would you like to write one? We'd like to hear from you. E-mail Ronnie Friedman at wecares@sover.net.

CORRECTED DATES FOR "SPEAKING OF AGING" PROGRAMS

The "Speaking of Aging", Westminster Cares' 25th Anniversary Speaker Series will be held at the following dates and places:

Jane Brody: Kurn Hattin Homes, Tuesday, April 16

Vickie Wilk: Westminster Institute, Tuesday, May 28

Dennis McCullough: Westminster Institute, Tuesday, Aug. 6

Willem Lange: Westminster Institute, Tuesday, Sept. 17

All speakers are from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

Sponsored by the Fanny Holt Ames & Edna Louise Holt Fund, Bank of America, Trustee.

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.gb4hisglory.com/.

WESTMINSTER MYSTERY PHOTO



What is in this picture and where was it once located?

You may e-mail your answer to westminsternews@gmail.com or wminster@comcast.net or phone Babs Lynde at 722-9516. The answer and the winners will be announced in the next issue. Last Month's Answer: On Page 3.

If you have pictures you think would make a great mystery photo stop by the town office and see Babs Lynde.

We are looking for more mystery pictures. Have any?

**Send Your News To:
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KURN HATTIN CELEBRATES DIVERSITY



Percussionist Todd Roach, shown playing with students during Kurn Hattin's Diversity Week.

Last week Kurn Hattin Homes for Children celebrated its 2nd annual Diversity Week, a 4-day event on Kurn Hattin's campus in Westminster. Featured activities include lectures, presentations, performances, discussions, and workshops focused on diversity-related themes such as the impacts of stereotypes, prejudice, racism, discrimination, class and gender bias, the use of inclusive language, and restorative justice, as well as diversity in art, music, and poetry.

Kurn Hattin's School Principal, Scott Tabachnik, who oversees the Diversity Week coordination, is the former Diversity Coordinator of Brattleboro Union High School and is a recipient of the World of Difference Institute Teacher Recognition Award, given by the Anti-defamation League New England Region. Tabachnik explains the guiding principles of the event. "Diversity Week gives us an opportunity to consider and discuss the positive aspects of human individuality, as well as to highlight examples of it both here at school and around our country. The overarching aims for our students are heightened self-awareness, empathy for others, and problem-solving skills. Skills they can apply here on campus and beyond."

This year's event kicked off on Martin Luther King Day with an assembly devoted to Dr King's legacy. Throughout the week, local talent shared their time and expertise. Guest presenters and performers included award-winning New England Youth Theater co-founder Stephen Stearns, who worked with students to write and perform an anti-bullying play. Dr. Robert Fay, photographer, poetry teacher, and professor emeritus at Landmark College, presented a lecture and discussion on the Harlem Renaissance.

Mike Szostak, Brattleboro School District's Restorative Justice Coordinator, guided students through an introductory restorative justice training, and representatives from the Women's Freedom Center led workshops on healthy relationships. The week culminated with interactive multicultural-themed performances from musical artists Moonlight and Morning Star with Vermont Jazz Center founder Eugene Uman, and percussionist Todd Roach.

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 & Thursdays at the First Congregational Church in Westminster from 9 to 10 a.m. or at the Westminster West Church from 6 to 7 p.m. 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.

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 (UCC Church)

The Congregational Church of Westminster West (United Church of Christ) 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.

GOT ANY INTERESTING STORIES ABOUT WESTMINSTER AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE? WANT TO SHARE SOME LOCAL HISTORY, OR REMINISCE ABOUT SOME OF OUR TOWN'S INTERESTING PEOPLE? THE GAZETTE IS LOOKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR READERS, AND IF YOU HAD PHOTOS TO GO WITH THE STORY, ALL THE BETTER. CONTACT US BY E-MAIL AT WESTMINSTERNEWS@GMAIL.COM.

COMPASS BLUEGRASS BENEFIT CONCERT

Compass School of Westminster is proud to present the Corey Zink Band, one of the premier baritone voices on the Northeast bluegrass circuit, and the Seth Sawyer Band on Sunday, March 17 at 1 p.m. at the Bellows Falls Opera House in downtown Bellows Falls.

Seth and Candi Sawyer are Compass School parents and have created this event to support the Global Connections Program. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards the Junior Class immersion and service learning trip to the Dominican Republic.

The Seth Sawyer Band has years of experience entertaining people with classic bluegrass music. Seth Sawyer is the gentle giant of New England bluegrass music. His soulful yet powerful tenor voice combine with the strength of his conviction in the lyrics he sings evoke a powerful response in those who know his work. Seth's songs have been recorded by The Gibson Brothers, David Davis & the Warrior River Boys, and the Pine Hill Ramblers. Songs like Long Forgotten Dream (which went to #10 on the Bluegrass Unlimited charts), Engineer Without a Train, One More Time I Must Rise, Old Leather Bag, and Spread Your Wings are well known through recordings and Seth's renditions of them with his band. Fans in New England call for him to sing his own songs as well as his versions of Gibson Brothers songs and bluegrass classics.

Tickets - \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door - are available at Compass School, c/o Candi Sawyer, P.O. Box 10, Westminster Station, VT 05159 or online at <http://compassschool.ticketleap.com/>.

Meetings

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

Planning and Development

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

1st Wednesday of every month, at the Westminster Fire Station at 4 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

Tuesday, March 26 at 7:30 a.m.

Westminster Recycling Committee

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

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:

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The Deadline for The April 2013 Issue of the Westminster Gazette is Wednesday, March 27 by 5 p.m. Publish Date is Tuesday, April 2

To Contact the Westminster Gazette E-mail

westminsternews@gmail.com

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN - SPRING TREE PLANTING TIPS

When you plant a new tree, it is hard to imagine the growth that will take place in the years to come. The truth is that most new trees will outlive the person who planted them. Proper tree and site selection are important to insuring the health and problem-free enjoyment of your landscape.

The International Society of Arboriculture member and Certified Arborist Kevin Shrader of All Seasons Tree Service suggests that homeowners carefully choose trees based on this criterion: the location in which the tree will be planted, the correct species for the environment, and long term maintenance needs. A local nursery or tree farm should be able to assist you in finding the best tree for your property based on these guidelines.

The best measure for insuring your new tree will thrive is to plant it correctly and pay careful attention to its early maintenance. "Planting a tree properly is making an investment in the future," says Shrader. "It is important to care for and nurture young tree if you want a return on your investment."

Tree Planting Tips

For bare root trees, neatly cut away any broken or damaged roots. Soak the roots for a few hours prior to planting to allow them to absorb water. Container-grown trees should have the plastic or metal containers removed completely. Carefully cut through the circling roots. Remove the top half of pressed peat/paper containers.

Balled and Burlapped, "B&B", trees should have all the ropes cut. Pull the burlap at least 1/3 of the way down; slit the remaining burlap to encourage root growth. If in a wire basket, cut away the top of the basket. Remove all tags and

PUT HEALTHY FOOD ON THE TABLE WITH 3SQUARESVT

The high cost of food, fuel and health care is making it tough for many elders to make ends meet. Since good nutrition is extremely important, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers the 3SquaresVT program to help eligible Vermonters access dollars for healthy food.

3SquaresVT is open to everyone who qualifies, including individuals, families, seniors, and people with disabilities. Eligibility is based on household income and household composition.

The benefits come on an EBT card that looks like other credit or debit cards used at stores; there are no "stamps" anymore. If everyone in the household is 65 or older or gets SSI, then the benefits may be distributed as cash, deposited directly into the family's bank account.

Applicants can maximize their benefits by claiming every applicable deduction. Anyone who is over 60 or who has a disability will be allowed to claim many medical expenses.

For more information on 3SquaresVT, call the Vermont Senior HelpLine at 1-800-642-5119.

This message is funded in part by the USDA, an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CIRCUS TERRIFICUS SCHOLARSHIP EVENT

The Women's Community Club of Grafton announced its plans to bring a special circus to the Connecticut River Valley area this May.

The circus, titled Circus Terrificus, will be the club's major fund raising effort for its scholarship awards this year.

The club has secured the services of Troy Wunderle's Big Top Adventures of Rockingham to present two performances on May 25 at the Bellows Falls Opera House. The circus will be in the style of the Cirque du Soleil, and will feature some of its former stars as well as performances from the Paris troop, Sequence 8.

A special children's matinee at 2 p.m. is planned for children under 12 years old. Another performance is scheduled for the general public at 7:30 p.m. The evening performance will also feature VIP tickets that will include a pre-circus reception at 6:30 p.m. in the lower level of the Bellows Falls Opera House, priority seating for the evening show, and a post-show meet-the-performers event.

Tickets will go on sale April 1 and can be purchased at local stores, at wctickets@aol.com, through www.BrattleboroTIX.com or call 843-1180.

The Women's club has set its goal to award \$15,000 in scholarships for 2013, which it awards in June each year. It has been awarding scholarships for higher education since the 1950s.

labels. Dig the planting hole shallow and broad. The width should be 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball, and the depth only as deep as the root ball.

Gently place the tree in the hole insuring it is perpendicular to the ground. Once you begin to backfill, it will be difficult to reposition the tree.

Partially backfill with the soil from the hole, using water to settle the soil. Finish backfilling the hole while gently but firmly packing the soil. Be sure that you leave the trunk flare (where the roots spread at the base of the tree) visible above the soil. Soak the soil well, making sure no air pockets form between the roots. Wait until next year to fertilize.

New Tree Maintenance

Do not stake unless the tree has a large crown, or if the planting is situated on a site where wind or people may push the tree over. Stake for a maximum of one year. Prune only the damaged branches. Spread 2"-3" of mulch over the planting area, but do not place it up against the trunk. Be sure the root ball has plenty of water throughout the year by keeping the soil moist, but not soaked.

For additional information on proper planting technique and maintenance of young trees visit www.treesaregood.org. Shrader can be reached at 376-4909.

STRONG LIVING CLASSES FOR OLDER ADULTS

Join Westminster Cares every Monday and Thursday for any of our three Strong Living Classes: 9 to 10 a.m. at the First Congregational Church in Westminster, 11 a.m. to noon at Greater Rock Fitness in Bellows Falls, and 6 to 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Church.

Strong Living is a safe and effective way to increase strength, improve balance, and maintain healthy bones. Experienced instructors lead each class through a series of exercises and provide guidance to help participants modify exercises for their individual level of ability and fitness.

Adults ages 40+ welcome, with clearance from their physician. Classes meet twice a week. Dumbbells and leg weights are provided. Wear comfortable clothing and low-heeled, sturdy shoes. There is a \$2 donation per class.

For more information call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 or e-mail wecares@sover.net.

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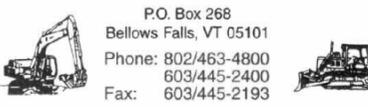
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You can reach Floral Beautiful Things to Wear at 387-3011 or elisa@floral.net.

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GREATER FALLS INSURANCE**

Greater Falls Insurance is in its 18th year of business. Bridget Kelly, owner, has worked hard to continue her mother's tradition of being a small town, locally owned Insurance Agency.

The agency strives to be the best in customer service our area has to offer. Our staff consists of Brenda Breslend as our Customer Service Representative. She answers the phones and questions with a smile on her face.

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Expand your family's horizons this summer by welcoming a student from Spain into your home through the STEP-to -U.S.A. program. These boys and girls, who range in age from 14 to 17, arrive Wednesday, June 26, for a 3 1/2 week home stay. Host siblings are welcome to join the students in a variety of weekly activities.

Host families also needed for students from over 75 other countries who will be attending Brattleboro and Bellows Falls high schools this fall.

To learn more, please contact Ann Newsmith at 257-4710 or exchangevt@gmail.com.

CABIN FEVER SUPPER & STORY TELLING

The 8th Annual Fundraising Dinner for the Westminster West Congregational Church will be held on Saturday, March 9 at 6 p.m. at the church.

Know a good story about life in this neck of the woods? Over a hearty, varied gourmet meal provided by Tristan Toleno, owner/chef of Entera Catering, join your neighbors in celebrating our little patch of the planet. Bring a strong appetite and be prepared to share or enjoy short tales highlighting the quirky country life of our village and its environs.

Adults: \$15 -12 sliding scale. Kids: \$8. Under 4; free. Household max: \$40. Wine for sale by the glass.

Call 387-5694 or watch the Brattleboro Reformer for further details. Sorry, no reservations.

Our Monthly Community Newspaper March 2013 Vol. 9, No. 3

Westminster Gazette

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