



SALLY RYEA NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



Sally Ryea was presented the 2019 Citizen of the Year award by the Westminster Selectboard at the February Town Meeting. Sally has been involved in several town organizations and volunteered in many capacities. She has been a volunteer for Westminster Cares for 27 years, delivering Meals on Wheels during all that time. When Kurn Hattin closes, Sally made the meals at her house.

Sally was on the board of Westminster Cares for eight years. Her love of cooking and baking has benefited many local organizations.

Sally was a bus driver in town for 32 years until her retirement eight years ago. She is still driving the school bus as a substitute this year!

At left, Sally and award; above, Sally surrounded by some of her family: children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

STAY SAFE WHILE HELPING NEIGHBORS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC - SIX COMMON SENSE RULES WE CAN ALL LIVE BY

From Mark Bosma,
Vermont Department of Public Safety

While Vermonters are staying home as much as possible to slow the spread of COVID-19, some are stepping up to ensure their neighbors have what they need. This type of community support is crucial, but we need to make sure our helpers and volunteers are still using social distancing practices to protect our most vulnerable Vermonters.

The Vermont Department of Health recommends any volunteers bringing items to those who need to stay home:

- Keep a distance of six feet away.
- Avoid entering the recipient's home.
- Wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your face and cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- If you feel sick or learn that you have had contact with someone who is sick, stop doing community support work immediately.

port work immediately.

- Keep a list of anyone you come into close contact with in case contact tracing is required.
- Wear clean gloves when handling items that may be given to people with a weaker immune system, and when you are close to someone who may be sick.

Common sense practices can go a long way while Vermonters take care of each other!
Visit healthvermont.gov/coronavirus for resources and information.

WESTMINSTER RESIDENT SHANNON FULLER NAMED NEA-NH EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



Shannon Fuller, a resident of Westminster, has been awarded New Hampshire's Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year designation for 2020.

Shannon was nominated for her mental health and wellness work by Megan Tuttle, the New Hampshire President of the National Education Association.

Shannon works as a paraprofessional in the Keene School District and is president of the Keene Paraprofessionals Association. She will represent New Hampshire as the nominee to be recognized nationally as the NEA ESP of the Year. As New Hampshire's ESP of the Year, Shannon will be recognized at the NEA National ESP Conference and awards ceremony in March.

This issue struck right at home as Shannon's husband was hospitalized several years ago during a mental health crisis. After being released from the hospital Shannon was unsure of what to do or how to care for him.

"He was released to me and I was given his personal belongings and told I could take him home. How was I supposed to treat him? What was I to do for him?, etc... There was no guidebook."

A couple of months later when Shannon heard Justice Broderick speak it came to her that this would become her mission: to educate others about mental health, it's stigma and journey of healing and getting

well. Shannon heard through co-workers that there were NEA grants out there for this type of work.

Shannon and a grant writer collaborated on a grant and submitted it with the hope that she might receive some funding. To her surprise, weeks later not only did she receive notification that she was receiving money, but she was receiving \$10,000 to pursue her passion in educating children and their caregivers about the importance of mental health and wellness.

In the years that followed she would obtain two more grants of \$12,000 and \$2,000 respectively. This funding has allowed Shannon to keep presenting her message throughout the SAU29 school district and beyond.

The National Education Association (NEA) Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year Award recognizes the contributions that Education Support Professionals make toward their schools, communities, and professions.

The award is presented to a member of the NEA who demonstrates outstanding accomplishments and reflects the contributions of ESP to public education. The award is presented jointly by the NEA and NEA Member Benefits.

Congratulations Shannon!

WESTMINSTER FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONDS TO VIRUS OUTBREAK

The Westminster Fire Department would like to let the community know that we are keeping up with the current response recommendations pertaining to the novel-corona virus outbreak.

We would like the community to stay calm and take basic steps to help slow the spread of the virus, most important being hand hygiene and staying home if you do not feel well.

This is an event that is evolving daily and we recommend that people either go to the Department of Health website at www.healthvermont.gov/infectious-disease/2019-novel-coronavirus or Brattleboro Memorial Hospital at www.bmhvt.org/coronavirus, or cdc.gov to get the most accurate and up to date information.

Westminster Fire & Rescue wants to remind everyone that if you are having difficulty breathing for any reason, please call emergency services right away. For cold and flu-like symptoms please consult your pri-

mary care physician for guidance before calling the emergency services.

Our Monthly Community Newspaper April 2020 Vol. 16 No. 4

Westminster Gazette

Town of Westminster
PO Box 147
Westminster, VT
05158

DELIVER TO ADDRESSEE OR
CURRENT RESIDENT

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WESTMINSTER GAZETTE WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK THE COMMUNITY FOR APPROVING THE RATE INCREASE FOR US AT THE RECENT TOWN MEETING. WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT!

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Underwriting Support is a donation of at least \$300 annually and does not include advertising. Underwriters are listed in the box on page 6 each month.
 We also welcome article submissions that would be of interest to the community. We ask for a maximum size limit of 500 words, and reserve the right to edit for content and length. Thank you!
 On-line at: **www.westminstervt.org**

AREA SCHOOLS PROVIDE FREE LUNCH TO ALL CHILDREN

School nutrition programs in Windham and Windsor counties responded quickly to the state-mandated closure of all schools. Districts in both counties have created an alternate delivery model for school meals, utilizing a combination of school- and community-based distribution sites and bus delivery routes.

The following districts are providing free breakfast and lunch to all children ages 18 or under in their community, regardless of enrollment or free and reduced meals status. No paperwork or identification is necessary, but the children must be present to receive their meals. Districts request that participating families provide the number of children to ensure enough meals are prepared.

Windham Southeast Supervisory Union

Windham Southwest Supervisory Union

West River Education District

Windham Northeast Supervisory Union: Springfield School District: Call (802-885-5133) with meal orders

Visit the websites associated with each Supervisory Union for Informational Flyers and Sign Up Forms.

Families are encouraged to reach out directly to their schools for additional information or questions regarding meal distribution.

The Hunger Council of the Windham Region is coordinating a community response to the COVID-19 outbreak in partnership with the VT Foodbank and area food shelves. The Hunger Council encourages community members interested in volunteering and organizations with developing needs to utilize United Way's Get Connected platform.

Those looking for additional information or resources should call 2-1-1. For more information on the work the Windham County Hunger Council is doing, contact Margaret Atkinson at margaret@winstonprouty.org.

FINANCIAL FOCUS: DON'T LET CORONAVIRUS INFECT YOUR INVESTMENT STRATEGY

As you know, the coronavirus has become a major health concern, not just in China, but in other parts of the world, too – and it's also shaken up the financial markets. As an individual investor, how concerned should you be?

The impact of the coronavirus on the markets isn't surprising. China is the world's second-largest economy, and when it experiences factory closures, supply chain disruptions and city lockdowns, the ripple effect on the world's other economies is considerable. Plus, the financial markets simply don't like uncertainty – and there's a lot of that associated with this outbreak and the efforts to contain it.

Nonetheless, instead of worrying over events you can't control, try to focus on what you can do in this investment climate. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Don't panic.** The coronavirus may well cause continued market volatility over the next several weeks, or even months. But it's important for investors to take a long-term view. Market corrections – typically defined as a drop in investment prices of 10% or more – are a fairly common occurrence, and we may have been overdue for one even before the coronavirus scare. In any case, it's generally a good idea not to radically revamp your investment strategy unless you experience a major change in your personal life – a significant career move, medical condition, change in family situation, etc.

- **Be aware of history.** The coronavirus is certainly serious, but it's not the only viral outbreak we've seen in recent decades. During these earlier pandemics, the financial markets also took a hit, but they bounced back. For example, from late April 2003, in the midst of SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) until late April 2004, the S&P 500 rose about 21 percent.* And other large gains were recorded following the outbreak and decline of the Ebola and Zika viruses. Of course, the past performance of the markets in pandemic situations can't necessarily predict future market developments; every situation is different, and over the next year, returns might be modest, as prices have already soared in the 11 years since they bottomed out during the financial crisis of 2008-09.

- **Don't try to time the market.** We may well see coronavirus-based volatility in the near future – but volatility implies “ups” as well as “downs.” If you try to time the market by guessing at highs and lows, and then “buying high and selling low,” you might get lucky once in a while, but you could just as easily miss the mark.

- **Keep a diversified portfolio.** In addition to avoiding efforts to time the market, you should also stay away from trying to pick “winners” and “losers” among individual investments in the marketplace of viruses. Instead, try to build and maintain a diversified portfolio, consisting of an array of different asset classes, with the allocation of these assets based on your risk tolerance and time horizon. Diversification doesn't prevent losses or guarantee profits in a declining market, but it may help reduce the impact of volatility on your portfolio.

You may not be able to totally quarantine your portfolio from this serious virus in the short term, but by following a consistent, long-term investment strategy that's appropriate for your individual needs, you'll be doing what you can to help yourself move toward your financial goals.

*The S&P 500 is unmanaged, not available for direct investment and is not meant to depict an actual investment.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Jessica Fuller of Walpole, NH.

RFPL OFFERS SERVICES DURING CLOSURE

Recently the Rockingham Free Public Library made the decision to close to support the overall health and wellness of our community, and for the safety of our patrons and staff, to help minimize the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19.

While the Library may be closed to the public, the librarians are all still working and are here to help. The library has provided multiple ways for the community to get in touch. Call (802)463-4270, visit on Facebook and message us, chat on our website (go to rockinghamlibrary.org and click on the blue chat bubble to start a live chat with a Librarian), or email reference@rockinghamlibrary.org. Your helpful librarians will be available to you Monday-Friday to answer any questions.

Parents who are suddenly finding themselves as homeschool teachers can contact the Library for help finding information and resources and can get assistance organizing fun activities on subjects for them to do with their children.

Visit rockinghamlibrary.org online-activities-for-children-families to discover resources to support their families, or email the Youth Services Librarian directly at youthservices@rockinghamlibrary.org. Keep an eye on the website soon for information about virtual storytimes and Library programming.

The Library would like to remind patrons that during this time, the Library book drop is closed and we ask patrons to hold onto materials. No fines will be accrued during this time and all due dates have been extended.

Visit rockinghamlibrary.org to see all that the Library offers online, including downloadable eBooks and audiobooks, free online classes, online reference information, and much more.

For more information call (802)463-4270 or email reference@rockinghamlibrary.org

SOUPER WEDNESDAYS CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Souper Wednesdays are canceled through and including April 1 following Gov. Scott's announcement regarding restaurants.

If cancellations end, Souper Wednesday normally happens every Wednesday through May 6th from noon to 2 p.m.

The First Congregational Church of Westminster will serve at least two choices

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Care. Board of Directors met March 4th at the Westminster Institute with President Lori Larue presiding. The following board members attended: Miriam Lanata, Regina Borden, Doug Oftedahl, Don Dawson, Heidi Anderson, Kathy Elliot and Director Donna Dawson. Pete Harrison and Pat Goodell were unable to attend.

Westminster Cares creates opportunities for seniors and adults with disabilities to live with independence and dignity in the community. 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 email at wecares@sover.net. Check us out on the web@ www.westminstercares.org and like us on Facebook.

Programs & Services Provided in FEBRUARY 2020:

Meals-on-Wheels: WC volunteers delivered meals five days a week to 11 different people. In addition, two frozen entrees were delivered each Friday to seven people for weekend meals (14 total weekend meals).

Transportation: During the month, 16 rides were provided by six volunteers who drove seniors to/from various doctors and specialists, BMH, grocery shopping, and our Healthy Aging Group.

Programs: two Secrets of Healthy Aging group, three Gentle Yoga classes, 22 Strength Training classes; four Chair Yoga classes; six Intermediate Tai Chi classes and three Beginner Tai Chi classes.

Assistance and Referrals: One Meals-on-Wheels intake and home visit were completed; referrals made to Our Place Drop-In Center, Area Food Shelves and SEVCA for supplemental meals, food and 3Squares application.

Friendly Visiting – Two volunteers made four friendly visits in February.

Medical Equipment – In February we loaned out three pieces of equipment and three pieces of equipment were returned to us; one piece was donated.

Community Nurse Program – Our Nurse was away in February.

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

MEMORIAL & HONOR DONATIONS RECEIVED THROUGH MARCH

20th: In honor of all Westminster Cares' volunteers from Bill Smidutz

In honor of Pete Harrison's birthday from Bruce and Lee MacDuffie

In memory of my brother, Wellman Clark Muzzey from Virginia (Muzzey)

Cryan

In memory of Joan Smidutz from David and MaryJo Robbin

In memory of Artie Aiken from Bill Smidutz

In memory of Fred Robling II, and in honor of his 91st birthday, from Deb and Fred Robling III

“WHAT'S UP AT THE TOWN HALL” - UPDATE ON DEADLINES

LAND FOR SALE: The Town has 19.1 acres of land for sale off Pine Banks Road. If you are interested, please contact the Town Hall or Buffum Realty. This is a great opportunity at a great price.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: The Selectboard are looking for residents to fill the “Appointments of Record” positions within the Town. The following positions are needed: Windham Regional Commission Representative and Planning Commission Member

FOOD SCRAPS: Just a reminder that after July 1, 2020 we are not to throw food scraps into our trash. You have many options to comply with this State mandate in Westminster. Here are a few:

Create an individual contract with our Town Hauler (Ruggiero) to pick your food scraps at intervals that work for you and Ruggiero.

Backyard Composting

Bring your food scraps to the Rockingham/Westminster Transfer Station

Bring your food scraps to the Windham Solid Waste Facility in Brattleboro

Bring them to a neighbor that has created a backyard composting system

DOG REGISTRATIONS: Because of the COVID-19 lockdown of our Town Hall, the Town Clerk has decided to give our dog owners until May 1st to register your dog(s). Also, Please note that the rabies clinic scheduled for March 28th has been postponed. A new date will be established and posted when certainty of this situation is over.

TAX SALE: The Town of Westminster has established a date to send all properties that owe two years in back taxes to legal counsel. This year's date is April 8th. All taxpayers who are in this situation should be in contact with the Town Manager/Delinquent Tax Collector immediately to figure out a plan to avoid additional costs and hardship. The Town wants you to keep your property and will do everything we can to help.

After Hour Appointments: Please feel free, if you have the need to make an appointment for either the Town Manager, Zoning Administer, or the Town Clerk after or before normal business hours. Both Alison Bigwood and Russell Hodgkins are willing to make these arrangements with you if needed. Please feel free to call us and we will set up your meeting.

As always, please feel free to call the Town Manager's Office regarding concerns, issues or comments.

CAPTAIN RICHARD PHILLIPS FUNDRAISING EVENT RESCHEDULED

The May 1st Kurn Hattin Fundraising Event to support technology upgrades and the new STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) lab, featuring Captain Richard Phillips, has been postponed until October 2nd. Captain Phillips was the center of an extraordinary international drama when he was captured by Somali pirates who attacked and boarded his ship. The event was later made into a motion picture by Columbia Pictures starring Tom Hanks.

A STEAM curriculum was recently introduced at the Kurn Hattin school, and has also been incorporated in Kurn Hattin's Summer Rec Program. A STEAM-based curriculum allows students to feel comfortable with technology and hands-on learning, and also provides an understanding as to how science, technology, math and the arts work together.

Tickets to the event can be purchased at kurnhattin.org/CaptainPhillips, or by contacting Heather at (802) 721-6916. Tickets are also available for purchase at these locations: Vermont Artisan Designs, Brattleboro, VT; Brattleboro Savings & Loan, Brattleboro, VT; The Threaded Trunk Boutique, Bellows Falls, VT; The Village Blooms, Walpole, NH; Off the Wall Framing, Northampton, MA; Beeze Tees, Keene, NH; and Village Square Booksellers, Bellows Falls, VT.

Thank you sponsors:

Captain Phillips: Savings Bank of Walpole.

Navy Seals: Whitney-Blake Company.

Life Boat: Woodland Ridge, Steve Ryder/TrueNorth Networks, Prime, Buchholz & Associates, and Faith's Ford/Faith's Toyota, Jayson and Marcie Dunbar, and Monadnock Radio Group.

Additional sponsorships available. Contact Kim Fine at kfine@kurnhattin.org.

of soup (including a vegetarian choice) and warm bread. Take-outs will be available. Donations are appreciated but not required.

While the threat of COVID-19 is with us, please check Facebook, the Brattleboro Reformer, the Vermont Shopper and Journal, or notices posted on the First Congregational Church door for up-to-date information.

Winter Into Spring for the Birds

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

What a strange winter this has been for the birds. Starting in the fall, I would get questions, "Where are the birds?" My answer would be that they are finding their own food by foraging in the fields and woods. I expected the birds would show up as the winter got colder and food was harder to find, but this didn't happen. I had only a handful of birds and this was mostly on snowy days. The birds that spend the winter eating seeds under my bird feeders are the juncos and tree sparrows that come down from the north, but even they were in short supply.

The juncos have a dark gray hood and back with a white belly. When they fly, you notice the white outer tail feathers. They don't usually eat at the feeder but prefer eating on the ground. They arrive in the late fall and stay for the winter. Although most have gone back north by spring, a few do stay year round.

The tree sparrows spend the winter and by spring they are gone. It is easy to confuse the tree sparrow with the chipping sparrow, but the give-away is that the tree sparrow spends the winter with us and the chipping sparrow doesn't. It is the spot on the breast that you notice as you look at the rusty cap, two white bars on the wing and striped backs.

I always have several northern cardinals around my feeders every winter. The males sometimes come to the sunflower feeder, but the females eat on the ground. I found it hard to believe that I had 14 all winter in my yard, 8 males and 6 females. As the time gets closer to breeding and nesting, the crowd will thin out. Over the



last few days I have seen more cardinals chasing one another. Eventually I will have only one pair left to nest.

My attention is moving now from my feeders to Allen's Marsh. With Allen's Marsh having been iced over, I hadn't spent much time there this winter other than watching the say's phoebe. Colleen discovered the bird which is a western bird that resembles our eastern phoebe (**in photo**), even to the flicking of the tail.

None of us expected him to survive because phoebes are flycatchers that eat insects. The say's phoebe is only slightly bigger than the eastern phoebe and also is gray/brown. The difference is that the say's phoebe has a tan/rusty belly.

The first time I saw him, he was on the edge of the road picking up grit. The sun was just coming up and shone on his chest which looked "peachy". What a thrill it was to see him. We don't know what he found to eat, but he appears healthy.

As I write this, tomorrow is the first day of spring. Some of the early birds have come back. The ones I have seen are the red-winged blackbirds, the turkey vultures, the grackles, wood ducks, hooded mergansers and the Canada geese.

There are others which I haven't been in the right place at the right time to see. Other birders have seen black ducks, American widgeons, a ring-necked duck and an otter.

Beside the birds, other harbingers of spring are the dead striped skunks in the road. During warm spells late in the winter, the skunks wake up and are out and about searching for mates. But more than birds and skunks, the real harbinger of spring for me is the sound of spring peepers. It won't be too long before they will stir from the leaf litter and start their chorus of high-pitched whistles.

"Mary Holland" from Naturally Curious writes that spring peepers tend to gather and sing when trees and shrubs are standing in or near water and start singing to attract mates when the temperature reaches 30 degrees.

Whether we are watching birds returning, looking at skunks in the road or listening for spring peepers, spring is on its way.

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: WESTMINSTER GRAND DRAPE

Submitted by Pat Haas & Jessie Haas

Upstairs in the Town Hall is a wonderful painted stage curtain with two side panels, which belongs to the town. The Westminster Historical Society has cared for the curtain ever since we became tenants of the upstairs space.

The Westminster curtain, technically a "grand drape" because of the two side panels, was painted by Charles Henry of Guilford. Between 1885 and 1915, Mr. Henry and his family traveled around Vermont by horse-drawn wagon, putting on programs that Henry wrote himself, and painting stage curtains, which are found in many theaters of the period. The Westminster scene, a Roman chariot race, features at least twelve horses. Ironically, having lived with horses on the road for many years, Henry loathed them, but they certainly add dash and excitement to the Westminster Grand Drape.

When the Historical Society moved into the upstairs of the Town Hall, the curtain was found to have deteriorated. The Society investigated restoring it, but the cost was beyond our means. To the rescue came the Vermont Painted Curtain Project, which has restored curtains around the state. Some fourteen organizations including the town of Westminster raised the restoration funds.

The Vermont Painted Curtain Project experts did the serious repairs on the curtain, which is made of heavy muslin. Historical Society volunteers did the cleaning, beginning on May 23, 2005, on an array of tables borrowed from the Armory.

After much hard (and fast) work the curtain was



re-hung on June 2. In July the Gannon family, grandchildren of Charles Henry, came to view the curtain. They had grown up not knowing that their grandfather had done this kind of work, and were thrilled to see it.

The curtain can be seen on the televised select board meetings, and will be on view whenever the museum is able to re-open, not something we can predict at this moment. One special feature seen only

by Historical Society volunteers is the graffiti on the back of the muslin curtain. Young Westminster people who were acting in plays and performances wrote their names on the heavy muslin fabric. The name of the current Historical Society president can be found there by those in the know.

The curtain is board member Pat Haas's favorite item in the museum, though it does not belong to the Historical Society.

BDCC RESPONDS TO COVID-19 EFFECT ON LOCAL BUSINESSES

A Note from Adam Grinold, Executive Director, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation:

Economic and business partners and fellow community members across Windham County and Southern Vermont:

We are all experiencing significant uncertainty and stress as a result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 response. This communication contains important information intended to help prepare your business response to COVID-19. Employers and employees should be sure to keep current on the latest information and guidance from the Vermont Department of Health and the CDC.

The primary objective of the BDCC is to create and retain a flourishing business community that supports vibrant fiscal activity that improves the quality of life of all its residents. A crisis of this magnitude creates new challenges for the people, businesses and communities that we all serve. BDCC understands that the state and regional economic response to COVID-19 will need to be on par with those typically seen following a natural

disaster. Significantly, the COVID-19 impact is not hitting just pockets of our state, as Irene did, but will be impacting every community across the state and nation.

The good news? In 2011 and 2012, with other local, regional and state partners, BDCC helped implement a three-year, Southern Vermont \$3-million dollar federally funded disaster recovery program in the months and years following Tropical Storm Irene. We know how to dig in with our state and federal partners to deliver a regional recovery plan and response.

Our commitment to BDCC's mission - creating and retaining a flourishing business community that improves the quality of lives of all its residents - will dictate our response to COVID-19. BDCC will therefore focus on supporting businesses through BDCC's COVID-19 Business Resiliency Program. Dedicated, full-time staff will fight tirelessly for regional, state and federal resources to be targeted to existing sectors and businesses that have demonstrated strength and viability in the regional economy.

Additional direct support to small businesses will

provide services and resources to support their resilience, such as:

Access to working capital through BDCC directly or other local, state and federal partners

Conducting INSTIG8 Rapid Financial Forecast to support statement of need

Assistance with narrative formation for various applications

Access to distributed technology tools through INSTIG8's Amazon Activate program

Virtual teamwork guidance

General business support and assistance

Please visit BDCC's COVID-19 Business Resiliency Program for details on small business support. Part of this effort will be to help collect regional impact data to be shared with the ACCD. This data is essential to ensure we access federal assistance, please be sure to take the time to complete the survey tool and needs reporting portions.

We will get through this together- We are Vermont Strong!

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire and 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 April 7 at 7 p.m. The Prudential Committee normally meets twice a month. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting. Number of calls in February: 43

Number of calls through March 18th : 17

Number of calls calendar year to Date: 93

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 323

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting March 3rd with President Greg Holton presiding. There were 26 members present and four members excused. Currently there are 35 members of the volunteer fire department.

Last month I failed to include the news that Hunter Smith has become a full member having turned 18 in

February. Hunter has been very active and a valuable Junior Member for the last two years and has become a huge asset to the department.

Also at this meeting the department welcomed back Bill Muzzey as a full member. Bill had taken a leave of absence in 2017. Tyler Westney was also welcomed as a new member under the six month probation guidelines.

Emergency responses: We are having another busy month so far in March with 17 calls by the 18th of the month.

The breakdown goes like this: 19 rescue /medical calls; one motor vehicle accident; two smoke investigation; one alarm activation; one tree down blocking road; one lift assist; two brush/grass fires. Also there were a couple of training classes.

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

Donation received in March: In memory of Bob Haas

from Barbara Konopka.

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 at www.westminster-fireandrescue.org.

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

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

WESTMINSTER CARES CONTINUES TO OPERATE WITH LIMITATIONS TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES

During these extraordinary times, Westminster Cares is committed to continue service to older residents of our town, and those with special needs. Due to escalating health concerns of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and recommendations issued by public health authorities, the Westminster Cares Board of Directors, in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, Senior Solutions and our Community Nurse have worked to put protocols in place to keep clients, volunteers and our community as safe as possible during this public health emergency.

Given that everyone we serve is in the high risk category due to age and/or underlying medical conditions as of March 16th we put the following programs and services on hold temporarily: all healthy aging exercise classes including Strong Living; Gentle Yoga; Chair Yoga; Tai Chi; Secrets of Healthy Aging Groups; Monthly Senior Lunches; Medical Equipment Loans; Transportation Program; and In-Home Friendly Visits.

These programs and services will be on hold through April 10th when the Board of Directors will meet again to determine next steps.

We are focusing our resources and volunteer efforts on continuing to serve older adults and those with special needs through our home-delivered Meals-on-Wheels Program. We have instituted a “no contact” meals delivery system in order to protect the safety of both our clients and volunteers. We will continue to provide this service as long as we have healthy volunteers and the state says it is prudent to do so. If you are a Westminster resident (60 years or older) in need of Meals, please call the office.

In addition to home-delivered meals, Westminster Cares is organizing grocery and pharmacy assistance so those most vulnerable can remain at home. We are currently establishing a list of community members who are willing to assist with pick-up and delivery of necessary items.

If you are an older adult in need of an essential item and are unable to have family or a neighbor assist with pick-ups, please call the office – either with a service request or to volunteer.

In place of in-home visits, Westminster Cares is organizing “friendly phone visits” for those in the community who would like to be contacted periodically by a volunteer. In addition, the Windham County Sheriff’s Office runs the “Are You Okay? Program,” which is a

community program providing check-in calls that is operated free of charge. To register, call the dispatcher @ 802-365-4942.

Our Community Nurse, Debbie Brookes, is available to answer questions and provide support regarding COVID-19 and a wide range of topics. Determinations regarding home visits will be made on a case-by-case basis. Please call the office to be put in touch with Debbie.

For reliable information during this public health emergency, (for those with access to the internet), we recommend the following websites:

Vermont Dept. of Health – <https://www.healthvermont.gov>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) – <https://www.cdc.gov>

World Health Organization (WHO) – <https://www.who.int>

The Vermont 2-1-1 is an excellent resource that can provide callers of any age with information and referral services. They can be contacted by dialing 2-1-1.

The Senior Help Line is coordinated by the Vermont Area Agencies on Aging and can provide information and referrals by calling the Springfield office @ 802-885-2669.

Please be aware that a number of scams related to COVID-19 have been reported. These include offering opportunities to be tested or sent a free test kit. These are scams. There are no home test kits and all legitimate testing in Vermont is by doctor’s request ONLY.

In closing, the words of Dan Smith, President and CEO of the Vermont Community Foundation, seem especially poignant: “We are determined to prevent this pandemic event from overcoming our desire to help, support and protect each other. In its path we find ourselves motivated out of urgency and uncertainty, but also ultimately out of decency and the desire to protect one another. We don’t yet know the full extent of the disruption that will be caused by this virus, but we can be sure that each of us will feel its effect in some way and it is our most vulnerable neighbors who will feel its effects most strongly.”

In Westminster, “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” has never been more important.

To request assistance; speak to the Nurse or volunteer, please contact Donna Dawson, Westminster Cares’ Director in the office: 802-722-3607.

TRAIL CAMERA CAPTURES BOBCAT IMAGES



After Alma Beal’s article about spotting a bobcat in her yard a couple of issues ago, we got the above photo from Diana Kentfield. She wrote, “I am responding to your article in the Westminster Gazette. We have had a bobcat on our trailcam a few times last year. We live about a mile west of Kurn Hattin. He came through on Feb. 5, May 22 and Dec. 26—soon after your sighting.”

NEWS FROM THE TOWN GARAGE

Hello neighbors,

As the threat of COVID-19 knocks on the door and mother nature is unsure whether she is going to give us a break with the weather, we are trying to deal with mud and rough roads and not make them worse.

It seems every time we get rain or snow, it puts us a day or two behind as we wait for things to dry out. Good news is Spring is around the corner, and we have been able to grade roads that get good sun.

As soon as things dry out, we will work in two shifts to get the roads back into shape. In the meantime, we will be out sweeping sand with the tractor and fixing plow damage.

*Thank you for the support
Chuck & Crew*



A LITTLE BIT OF NORMALCY - SUGARING SEASON STARTS AT KURN HATTIN



A special thanks to Kristie Lisai for these timely photos of the beginning of sugaring season at Kurn Hattin Homes.

MAY 2 GREEN UP DAY

Green Up Day is Saturday, May 2. Westminster residents, please clean up a Westminster road or street and help keep our town clean.

Green Up bags will be available at the Town Hall in Westminster and the Westminster West Library later in April. You may also pick up bags at the Westminster Center School on Green Up Day, Saturday, May 2, from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

You can also use some trash bags of your own. The town will pick up any bags on Monday morning, as long as they are left beside a Green Up bag on the side of a town road. Please do not leave them on private roads.

Here’s a safety reminder: Do not remove dead animals or suspected toxic/hazardous waste. Don’t disturb needles or questionable debris. If you have a safety concern, inform the proper local authorities or contact VT State Road maintenance personnel (<http://vtrans.vermont.gov>) or the State Police <http://vsp.vermont.gov/>

Questions? Call Susan Harlow, Green Up Day coordinator, at 722-3373.

COMPASS SCHOOL WELL POSITIONED FOR REMOTE LEARNING

While obviously the closure of schools is tremendously disruptive for all, Compass School feels as well positioned as any school to adapt to current circumstances.

Thankfully, Compass students have experience working independently with undertakings such as Project Week where each student pursues their own interests, and with a lot of project based learning in classes which require student skills with problem solving, adaptability, and critical and creative thinking. These experiences and skills will serve students well in engaging with the remote learning we have planned.

Compass is also grateful to have such talented educators who are embracing these required changes with optimism and excitement. We appreciated having school on Monday to support an orderly transition to school closure.

It has always been the “Compass way” to face hard things together. It was so valuable to have input from the students on how to plan ahead. I think it was grounding for us to know we were supporting each other and would get through this together.

I most appreciated our closing circle, where everyone had the chance to share their thoughts and much wisdom was expressed.

Three perspectives that resonated with me seem worth sharing:

One teacher spoke about the different parts showing up for them. One part was anxious about being home with family, another part was looking forward to time to go on long walks with the dog, and another was excited about the challenge of designing new learning experiences and working with colleagues. I think we will all do well to acknowledge how we all have these different parts showing up and hopefully we can honor each without any of them totally overshadowing the others.

Another teacher added a story from a mentor who reminded him “the sun is always shining.” It may be on the other side of the globe or obscured by clouds or storms, but it is still there. It can be reassuring for me to remember there is much light even in darker times and much to feel grateful for even as we face these unusual times.

And as a student added, “Take care of yourself, be patient, be kind, and keep connected.”

While Compass is closed, we will be checking phone messages and email regularly. All our staff will have regular designated “office hours” going forward. We continue to enroll students for next year. We offer our help for anyone in the community for any educational or emotional support we may be able to provide. We wish you all the best in these challenging times.

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

WHILE WE ARE LEAVING THESE ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS AND SERVICES LISTED ON THIS PAGE, OUR READERS SHOULD ASSUME THAT ALL PUBLIC EVENTS ARE CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

WE HAVE ALL BECOME AWARE OF HOW VITAL SOCIAL DISTANCING IS AT THIS TIME AND FOR THE WEEKS AND PERHAPS MONTHS TO COME.

WE THANK EVERYONE FOR COOPERATING, AND IT IS OUR SINCERE HOPE THAT, IF EACH ONE OF US DOES OUR PART, WE CAN MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS AS MUCH AS HUMANLY POSSIBLE.

PLEASE NOTE THE ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE PROVIDING OFFICIAL DIRECTIONS AS WELL AS THOSE SHOWING WHERE WE CAN GO IF WE NEED HELP DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

OUR BEST WISHES TO EVERYONE, AND PLEASE WATCH OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Scottish Country Dance Classes

Every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Westminster Center School Gym. 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.

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.

Chair Yoga

Every Friday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the First Congregational Church in Westminster. 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 Book Group

The Westminster West Library has a book group meeting every third Monday from 7-9. Call the library if you are interested in getting a list of the books we are reading. Contact Lise Cavanaugh at 387-4682.

Tai Chi Classes

Wednesday's at the Institute Beginner Class 9:45-10:45 a.m. Intermediate Class 11 a.m.- noon

The Living Earth Action Group meets most Fridays at 5 p.m. at the Westminster West Congregational Church. For actual schedule e-mail Caitlin Adair at pcadair@sover.net.

Souper Wednesday

Every Wednesday from January 8 to May 6 from 12 to 2 p.m, The First Congregational Church of Westminster will serve at least two choices of soup (including a vegetarian choice) and warm bread. Take-outs will be available. Donations are appreciated but not required.

Faith Community

The First Congregational Church of Westminster

Rev. Sami Jones McRae, Pastor. 3470 Route 5, Westminster, 722-4148. The church is handicapped accessible. Sunday School is available; call to register your children. We are an Open and Affirming church; all welcome.
Sunday, April 5, 10 am – Worship, Palm Sunday.
Thursday, April 9, Maundy Thursday. Stone Soup, served at 5:30 pm. Service and Communion begins at 6:00 pm.
Friday, April 10, 6:00 pm, Good Friday Service.
Sunday, April 12, 6 am. Easter Sunrise Service at Kurn Hattin Homes
Easter Breakfast to follow at the church.
Sunday, April 12, 10 am, Worship, Easter Sunday
Sunday, April 19, 26 10 am, Worship
Saturday, April 25, 5:00 pm and 6:15 pm, Roast Pork Supper

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. 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 wheelchair accessible, and the congregation is Open and Affirming. Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno is the pastor. She currently holds office hours on Monday and Thursday afternoons, and people are welcome to drop by. She can be reached at 387-2334, via cell phone at 579-8356 or e-mail susiewt@gmail.com.

Walpole Bible Church

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

Walpole Unitarian Church

The corner of Union and Main Streets, Walpole, NH
Services begin at 10:am with Rev. Elaine Bomford. www.walpoleunitarian.org.
First Sunday of each month is Circle Sunday with visiting presenters.

Meetings

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

Planning Commission 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Conservation Commission meets every 4th Thursday at Town Hall at 7:15

Westminster Activities Commission

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

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 6:30 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 Institute at 4:30 p.m.

911 Committee as needed.

The Westminster Fire and 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. on the second floor of the Westminster Town Hall

Westminster Gazette Meeting Monday, April 20 at 5 p.m. at the Flat Iron on The Square in Bellows Falls.

Westminster Institute Board will meet on Tuesday, at 7 p.m. in the Institute.

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE

Editor: Robert Smith

Board of Directors:

Charmion Handy -

Chairwoman

Donna Dawson

Alma Beals - Treas.

Joyce Sullivan - Sec.

Jennifer Skrocki

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Town of Westminster

Sojourns Community Health Clinic

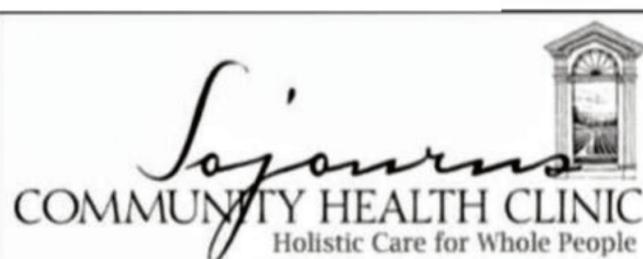
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**Please Note:
The Deadline for
the May Issue of the
Westminster Gazette is
Wednesday, April 22**

**Publication Date is
Wednesday, April 29**

**To Contact the
Westminster Gazette
E-mail:
westminsternews@gmail.com**

SEVCA REMAINS OPEN AND ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO SERVICE DELIVERY IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

SEVCA is committed to serving Windham and Windsor County residents to the best of our ability under all circumstances. But, effective Wednesday March 18th, we have changed the way we provide services, at least through April 3rd, and possibly longer, to be determined at a later date.

As a response to growing concerns about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and in order to keep community members and staff safe, SEVCA will revise program delivery for all programs, as follows: All requests for services and appointments will be handled strictly by telephone or other methods not requiring in-person contact, and all SEVCA offices and program sites will be closed to the public.

Family Services staff will continue to offer fuel and housing assistance and other crisis intervention services, and Economic Development staff will provide Micro Business, Financial Fitness, Matched Savings, and Ready for Work services, all by phone. The VITA program will continue to provide Income Tax Preparation Assistance at our Westminster, Windsor, and White River Junction sites, but it will now be done by having clients drop off their tax documents at their assigned site, and then clients will be contacted by phone for further service instead of sitting with the preparer as it has been done in the past.

In-home Weatherization program services are temporarily suspended, except for requests for Emergency Heating System Repair and Replacement, which will be handled by phone. Home Repair will also be suspending its in-home services, except for completion of jobs already started.

Head Start classes and facilities are closed in compliance with the statewide school closing mandate but will continue to offer services directly to enrolled families via phone, internet, and social media. SEVCA's Good Buy Thrift stores are closed, except by appointment for fulfilling emergency vouchers prepared by Family Service staff. Inquiries for services and appointment requests may continue to be made by calling (802) 722-4575 or (800) 464-9951, or by calling any of our satellite locations in Brattleboro, Springfield, White River Junction, and Windsor. For information about our program phone numbers, visit <https://www.sevca.org/contact/sevca-locations>. Stay connected to www.sevca.org for updates about services and timelines.

SEVCA works to find solutions to the deep-seated problems of poverty, largely by empowering and collaborating with those whose lives are affected by it daily. The agency can assist in addressing people's immediate needs for fuel, housing, food, and other essentials to help stabilize their lives in the short term, and provide further tools and support to help them achieve greater financial independence in the longer term. SEVCA recognizes that this is a time of great need and challenge for our communities. Every member of this area is impacted by the actions that we take today. SEVCA will remain diligent and proactive in serving our communities and meeting the growing and changing needs, while keeping both our customers and our staff safe.

GROWING LOCAL FOOD MARKETS WITH FOOD CONNECTS

Food Connects is launching its "Growing Local Food Markets in the Monadnock Region" crowdfunding campaign, through The Local Crowd Monadnock, this March. The goal of this online campaign is to raise \$10,000 to go towards building Food Connects' infrastructure and capacity to sell to larger, wholesale customers.

Food Connects partners with local farmers and food producers throughout the Monadnock Region to deliver their bounty to schools, grocery stores, hospitals, restaurants, and other businesses. Their work creates a vibrant food economy with a vision to make local food accessible to all community members. And to achieve this goal, food producers need access to larger markets, allowing them to scale up production and increase their revenue.

But it's not as simple as selling to larger customers. "Many large-scale, wholesale customers in the community can only purchase from a limited number of approved vendors," says McKenna Hayes, Food Connects Food Hub Operations Manager. "It is difficult, if not impossible, to become an approved vendor for small-scale, family-owned operations."

"One of the neat things about dealing with Food Connects is having a single point of contact for the farmers," says Troy Bellot, Executive Chef at Keene State College. "They're a single point of ordering and have one portal to order, making things so much easier."

"The restrictions to growing my business is the access to the marketplaces," says Linda Rubin, owner of Frisky Cow Gelato. "I can't get into larger markets as a little guy. I need a distributor that not only will work with me but has that third-party certification, so it is easy for stores to bring in, not just my products, but lots of local Vermont and New Hampshire products."

With the Growing Local Food Markets in the Monadnock Region campaign, Food Connects will become an approved vendor for larger customers, allowing schools, grocery stores, hospitals, and restaurants to easily purchase from over 70 local farms and producers that sell through Food Connects.

Funds from this campaign will go towards portable hand washing stations, shelving and storage, staff training, and a third-party food safety certification and audit. As an approved vendor, Food Connects can distribute local products to larger customers—meaning local food is consumed by more community members across the region.

"Third-party food certifications are important to us for traceability of our food," says Bellot. "That's what it all boils down to. Knowing exactly where every cucumber, every tomato, every piece of fish we order—where that came from, the farmer who picked it, the boat that brought it in, everybody who handled it. The traceability of food is key to accountability and safety."

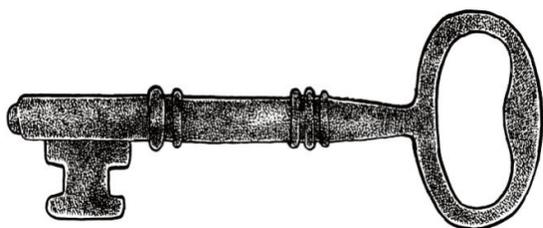
"This money will have a major impact on our day-to-day operations," says Hayes. "We will gain operational efficiencies, purchase required equipment, and formally integrate food safety procedures and record-keeping into our distribution systems. But, more importantly, this funding will enable us to overcome the barriers farmers and producers face when entering larger wholesale markets, and ultimately, grow our local food economy."

Find more information at <http://bit.ly/3aKEate>.

Food Connects is an entrepreneurial non-profit that delivers locally produced food as well as educational and consulting services aimed at transforming local food systems.

The Food Hub aggregates and delivers from over 70 local farms and food producers to over 140 buyers in southeast Vermont, southwest New Hampshire, and western Massachusetts. Their educational services focus Farm to School programming. Acknowledged as a statewide leader, the program supports over 30 schools to increase local food purchasing, school meal participation, and food, farm, and nutrition education.

Together these core programs contribute to a vibrant local economy by increasing local food purchases by schools and improving students' nutrition and academic performance. Additionally, Food Connects is frequently hired to provide leadership and consulting services for efforts aimed at transforming local food systems in the New England region.



ELLEN WOOD JOINS KURN HATTIN AS DIRECTOR OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICES



Kurn Hattin Homes welcomes Ellen Wood as its new Director of Residential Services. Ellen joins us with 27 years of experience working in various positions in all aspects of residential life at Landmark College, most recently as Resident Dean and Director of Transition Planning.

"I'm excited to join the wonderful Kurn Hattin community and be a part of an organization with a focused mission helping children learn both in and out of the classroom. The students, staff, and faculty here have given me such a warm welcome which has made my start this past January feel like I've been here for years and not just a few weeks," said Ellen.

"We are delighted to have Ellen join our Kurn Hattin team as Director of Residential Services. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in residential life that will continue to enhance the experience of every student on our campus. Ellen's warm, compassionate, and nurturing presence is a fantastic addition to our community and we are thrilled to have her with us!" remarked Sue Kessler, Assistant Executive Director.

Since 1894, Kurn Hattin Homes for Children has helped thousands of children and their families by offering a safe home and quality education in a nurturing environment. Its mission: Kurn Hattin transforms the lives of children and their families forever. Follow their journey: kurnhattin.org

Above, Ellen Wood, Director of Residential Services

GMP HONORED FOR INNOVATIONS

Green Mountain Power (GMP) announced it is among Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies in the World for the fourth year in a row, with the influential magazine highlighting GMP's commitment to groundbreaking programs that reduce carbon emissions and costs for all customers. Other companies on the 2020 list include Snap, Shopify, Tesla, and Microsoft. GMP is the only utility honored in the top Ten for Energy category, landing at number three, up from five last year. GMP has made the list in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

"This is an exciting honor for GMP and our state and we are grateful to be able to partner with customers and with communities on so many innovative projects that help to lower their costs and carbon emissions at the same time," said Mari McClure, GMP's president and CEO. "We continue to focus every day on finding new ways to increase affordability for customers through innovation."

In its March/April issue, Fast Company highlights GMP's innovative energy storage programs which lower costs for all customers and provide resiliency in the face of emergencies and increasing severe storms due to climate change. "The Vermont utility is pushing hard to create a more distributed energy grid in the state by offering incentives for customers to buy batteries... Green Mountain Power was able to drastically reduce energy costs during a summer heatwave, taking the equivalent of 8,000 homes off the grid."

"This is great for team Vermont and says a lot about the leading-edge work that happens in this state. GMP is collaboratively delivering solutions to critical issues facing Vermont businesses today – costs and climate change. It does not surprise me that GMP made the list again, showing a continued and strengthened commitment to making progress and helping improve our state through innovation," said Lisa Ventriss, president and CEO of the Vermont Business Roundtable.

GMP launched multiple initiatives in 2019 that break the mold while advancing the goal of increasing reliability and helping customers cut carbon emissions and costs. They include a commitment to having a 100% carbon-free energy supply by 2025 and being 100% renewable by 2030, well ahead of utilities its size around the country. GMP also helped more than 600 customers switch to driving electric through rebates and other incentives that both help to lower costs for all GMP customers and will offset more than 28 million lifetime pounds of carbon.



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GENIUS LOCI, LLC
 Ecological 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 Westminster. Many of you have walked through my gardens during a Westminster Cares Garden Tour, or perhaps noticed the spring bulb display as you drove or peddled by on Route 5. I have lived in Westminster for 47 years, 25 of those in business as a landscape designer and gardener.

Genius Loci has designed, installed and maintained over 100 gardens throughout New England, and continues 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 masters degree program at The Conway School of Landscape Design + Planning, and am trained in whole systems, ecological design and practices. This translates as using the history, context of the bigger picture, and 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 and planting beautiful and ecologically healthy gardens. With 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.

Are you dreaming of a stone terrace, or perhaps a swimming pool or pond for our increasingly hot summers? A butterfly garden? Or maybe your drive and entryway could be more welcoming?

We offer a wide range of services from designing acres of property to jazzing up your landscape for one special event. If you're a gardener yourself, and need a fresh perspective or inspiration, we're happy to help with a consultation.

Genius Loci also supports the local economy by purchasing plant material from nearby growers whenever possible, employing 6 to 8 gardeners, and hiring specialized contractors.

To learn more about Genius Loci, call us at 802/376-7275, follow us on Facebook, visit our website www.geniuslocidesign.com, or my own gardens by appointment. As always, we offer a 20% discount on your first hour of consultation...look for our promotional postcards at Café Loco in Harlow's Farm Stand.

APRIL BUSINESS OF THE MONTH:
JUDD'S POWER EQUIPMENT
 Judd's Power Equipment opened June 1, 2019 located right next to Allen Bros. Farm Stand. Owners, David and Elaine Judd have been residents of Westminster for 25 years. David was the former co-owner of J&W Auto for the past 20 years. Elaine had been employed by the school district for 22 years in various positions.

We are a full service automotive repair shop, Vermont State Inspection Station, small engine repairs and just recently added U-Haul rentals.

Our business hours are Monday – Friday 7:30 am – 5:00 pm, Saturday 7:30 am – 3:00 pm. No appointment necessary for Inspections. You can find us on Facebook.

Stop by and say Hi! We look forward to seeing you!

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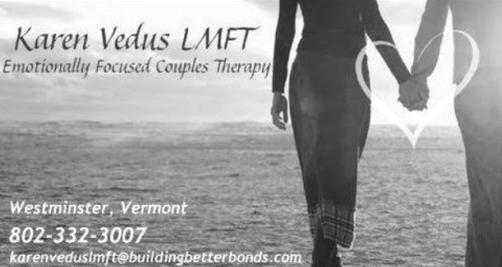
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