



COMPASS & WCS PLAN FOR RE-OPENING



Compass School Spanish teacher Liz Jackson and science teacher Whistle Barkan.

Westminster Center School is thrilled to welcome a new principal; Liz Harty. Liz Harty comes to WCS with 18 years in education: the first 16 as an elementary school teacher and more recently as an administrator.

Liz is a Westminster resident and a mother of two children who both attend Westminster Center School.

"To serve in the community where I live and am raising my family is a dream come true" Harty said. "I have been a part of the school community as a parent for the past five years and I am thrilled to join this stellar group of educators. WCS is an absolute gem and I am excited to join in the growth of this school community."

At right, Liz Harty, new WCS Principal



SOCIAL DISTANCING MADE SIMPLE



Community members Pete and Judy Harrison, created a public health and safety display about social distancing on their front lawn! That's what 6 feet apart looks like.

TWO IMPORTANT REMINDERS

You Count! Windham County Census 2020

The census counts every person living in the U.S. every ten years.

It's Important
The census helps secure a fair allocation of more than \$675 billion in federal funding.

Federal funding supports:

- Education
- Job Training
- Business Loans
- Disability Services
- Transportation
- Children's Health Insurance
- Public Safety
- Housing Assistance
- Medical Research
- Services for the Aging
- Food & Nutrition Programs
- Addiction Treatment and Prevention

The census is mandatory under the Constitution and ensures accurate legislative representation for your community in the local, state, and federal government.

It's Safe
By law, your responses are anonymous and the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, even to law enforcement agencies.

It's Easy
Online at www.2020census.gov or call 1-844-330-2020.

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Visit the My Voter Page on the Vermont Secretary of State's website: mvp.vermont.gov.

- Confirm your mailing address
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For questions, contact your town clerk.

WINDHAM VOTES!
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Compass School is busily preparing for full in-person education this fall, while also providing parallel remote and hybrid learning options for students.

The school building and campus provide ample space for daily classes (masked, socially distanced) that follow the numerous elements of State health guidance, while the curriculum will be laid out in a hybrid and remote-friendly format to integrate remote learners and to provide the flexibility to respond to the ongoing health guidance. The teachers and students are embracing the challenge of maintaining our vibrant learning community amidst the unique circumstances of 2020.

The school welcomes two new full-time teachers to the faculty. Spanish teacher Liz Jackson brings her experience teaching Spanish and running programs at numerous area schools (including a previous stint at Compass) as well as extensive experience leading international trips.

Science teacher Whistle Barkan joins the school after a decade of teaching science and environmental education as well as working as a scientific researcher (botany and entomology) and recently completing a masters program at Antioch.

"We are so pleased and excited to have Liz and Whistle join our full time faculty," remarked Compass director Eric Rhomberg. "Liz is one of the outstanding Spanish educators and trip leaders in our region, and we are so psyched to have her back at Compass, not only in terms of the strength for our Spanish program but also for all the other things she brings educationally."

"Whistle interned with us last year, and was an instant great fit and excellent teacher," said Rhomberg. "The students all loved working with her. She is an experienced science and outdoor educator in her own right, and brings such a positive energy and a rich, interdisciplinary skill set to our school."

Compass is accepting students for the fall, and welcomes students looking for a small school setting responsive to the needs of each student and the changing conditions impacting schools.

Compass School is a state-approved independent school in Westminster, Vermont serving students grades 7-12. www.compass-school.org

STATE COVID RELIEF FUNDING RENTAL AND MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

State funding for relief programs for renters and homeowners experiencing hardships due to COVID-19 are open for applications.

Rental Stabilization Program: Vermont State Housing Authority is accepting applications from tenants and landlords in need of rental arrearage assistance due to COVID-19 to avert tenant eviction. Total available funding is currently \$25 million. VSHA will accept applications on a rolling basis now through December 20th.

Vermont COVID Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program: Vermont Housing Finance Authority is accepting applications from homeowners July 13-August 31st. The program is limited to Vermont households which have missed 2 or more mortgage payments and with incomes in the last 90 days of \$15,000 or under.

More information on the programs, eligibility, and applications can be found on the VSHA and VHFA websites.

The Windham and Windsor Housing Trust office on 68 Birge Street, Brattleboro will have a dedicated computer station for those who require access to internet and a computer. Please call (802) 254-4604 for scheduling an appointment. Appointments are available Mondays and Wednesdays 11:30am-1:30pm.

VOTING FOR THE VERMONT PRIMARY ELECTION IS TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2020.

IN PERSON VOTING WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE WESTMINSTER INSTITUTE FROM 10:00AM UNTIL 7:00PM

Our Monthly Community Newspaper August 2020 Vol. 16 No. 8

Westminster Gazette

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Annual Rates:
 Pages 2-3 - approx. 4"x5" \$275 a year - \$30 for one month
 Pages 4-7 - approx. 4.7"x6.8" \$525 a year - \$80 for one month
 Page 8 - approx. 2.5"x3.25" - \$175 a year

New Sections Introductory Rates:
 A&E Events Section \$50 a month
 New & Seasonal Businesses Section \$200 for 3 months

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**

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met July 1st, 2020 at 4:30 via WebEx with President Lori Larue presiding. The following board members attended: Pete Harrison, Miriam Lanata, Regina Borden, Don Dawson, Doug Oftedahl, Pat Goodell, Heidi Anderson, Kathy Elliot and Director Donna Dawson.

Due to continuing public health concerns of COVID-19, the rising number of cases in other states and the closed status of buildings where our programs are held, the Board of Directors extended the hold on our in-person programs and on-site services such as Senior Lunches; Home Visits; and the Rides Program especially as they pertain to adults aged 60 and older.

Our Meals-on-Wheels, Errands and Equipment Loan Programs are operating! The Healthy Aging Group and one of our Strong Living exercise classes are being offered on Zoom online and by WebEx phone call. Our Community Nurse, Debbie Brookes, is available for phone support and consultations, (call the office to make a request). Our Director, Donna Dawson is available by phone for information and referral.

We are also working on plans to re-start other programs and services while complying with the guidelines issues by the VT Dept. of Aging and Independent Living. The plans will be implemented in phases when it is safe to do so.

While it seems that COVID-19 levels are very low in our area, we still need to follow public health guidelines: wear a mask, physically distance, wash your hands, and avoid touching your face. Are you in need of a face mask? We have procedure masks and fabric masks that have been sewn and donated by several volunteers. These are washable, cloth masks. All Vermonters are encouraged to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth any time they are interacting with others from outside their households, including in congregate outdoor settings where it is not possible to maintain physical distancing.

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

MEMORIAL & HONOR DONATIONS RECEIVED IN JULY

In honor of Karen Walter, for all she does for the community, from her sister Patty Attig.

In honor of a certain community member, and the many years she has cooked and donated weekend meals for those in need, from Allison Deen.

In memory of Dorothy Perry, our "Aunt Dot" from Susan Harlow and Lori Larue Also in memory of Dorothy Perry, from Wendy Hart.

Donna Dawson is transitioning back to the office. The office voicemail is checked daily; leave a message for Donna at 802-722-3607 or by email at wecares@sover.net. Check us out on the web@ www.westminstercares.org and like us on Facebook.

NEWS FROM THE TOWN GARAGE

Hello Neighbors,

As I promised, we have been out grading after it rains. With our new/used firetruck, it has been a gamechanger allowing us to grade in drier conditions when we previously could not.

When the air is cool in the mornings, we have been out and about cutting dead trees and doing minor road maintenance and repairs. As the day heats up we have been mowing road sides, cleaning ditches and grading when we can.

We have just submitted a grant for a new K-12 saw which we use to cut asphalt and steel culverts. The current one is 25 years old and gets worked on more than we use it. This is a safety grant through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

We are ditching Hartley Hill which is also being made possible through a grant. Kimball Hill Road South, Davidson Hill and Daigel Road are still on the list for getting the ditches cleaned out. Once the trees are cut we will start replacing some of the culverts that are getting rough.

I hope you stay safe and sane!

*Thank you,
Chuck & Crew*

INVITATION TO RETIRED EDUCATORS

Newly retired educators are invited to join the Windham County Retired Educators Association.

It's a nice way to connect with former colleagues and be informed about issues impacting retirees statewide.

Please contact Joanne Corey at jkgall@sover.net for more information.



Edward Jones
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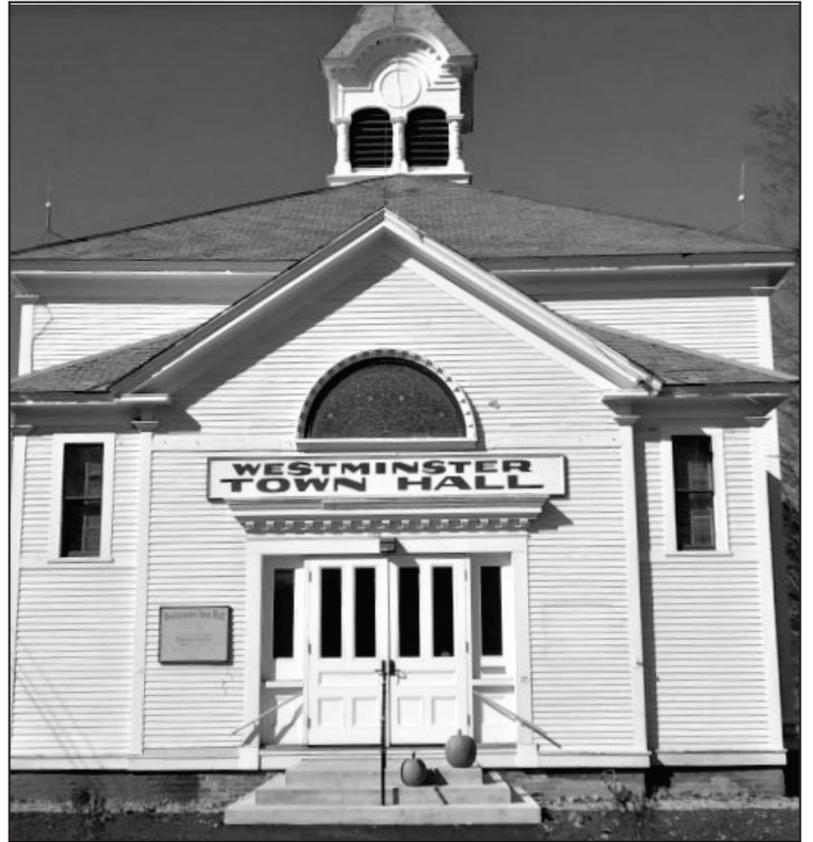


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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

WHAT'S UP AT THE TOWN HALL? VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



APPOINTMENTS OF RECORD: 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 a Lister.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: The Selectboard is requesting that a committee be formed to investigate the possible uses for the North Westminster Community House on Route 121. This Committee will be looking into whether it's feasible to renovate this building to a point of social need or the possibility that the Town lets the building be sold. If you are interested, please call the Town Hall and let us know that you are interested.

FOOD SCRAPS: After July 1, 2020 we are not allowed to throw food scraps into our trash by State order as we all know. We have had a few calls asking questions about process, timing, services and contents of composting. I will try to summarize some of the answers given to these concerns.

Process: You have many options to comply with this State mandate here in Westminster. Here are a few as I have mentioned before:

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

Backyard Composting.

Bring your food scraps to the Rockingham/Westminster Transfer Station for a fee.

Bring your food scraps to the Windham Solid Waste Facility in Brattleboro for a fee.

Bring to a neighbors that have created a backyard composting system.

Timing: You should have already started, and it is not too late to change your option to compost. If what you are doing presently isn't working for you, then you have several other choices listed above.

Services: Choose one that works for you. There is no right or wrong method of compliance.

Contents: Bones, meat, and grease are still able to be thrown in the trash as they are not easily compostable. Hint – Use a lot of leaves, small sticks and brown items to enhance your composting and it will be amazing to what you create for your garden, plants, and shrubs.

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.

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My Summer Gardens

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist



The hot and dry weather conditions have given me a chance to observe what flowers in my gardens do well and what do not. The daylilies and hostas look great, the bee balm and phlox not so much.

This year a lot of black-eyed Susans have shown up in one of my gardens which I have encouraged because they hide the brown daffodil leaves. I did some research to see if they are natives and found them to be natives of the prairie states. They grow up to 3 feet high and have hairy stems with yellow blossoms that have black or brown centers. They have a tendency to flop over.

Many people do not like the wild orange daylily which is not a native, but I do. It came to America from England after having arrived there from China.

The plants grow up to 3 feet tall with multibranching stalks that each have many flowers. They prefer sun but do fine in shade and are care-free. Being tall, they give an airy look to the other flowers showing through them.

Many of mine have been purchased as left-overs at the end of the Rockingham Library annual plant sales. What a treasure when I find a different daylily among them. This was the first time that their plant sale has

been cancelled, but it should be back next year.

Daylilies are a favorite of many gardeners because they come in many brilliant colors, tolerate heat and frost, last many years, require little care, aren't fussy about weather and are not troubled by disease and pests. They like at least 6 hours of sun a day but will do well in partial shade.

They are natives of Asia, primarily of China, Japan and Korea and are not true lilies. They belong to the genus *Hemerocallis*. The blossoms open in the early morning and wither during the following night, usually replaced by another blossom the following day on the same scape (stalk). Each scape often has a dozen buds, so the plant blossoms for weeks. By planting a mix of early, middle and late daylilies, you can extend the flowering season for most of the summer.

Bee balm is a native. It is in the mint family with square stems, grows to 4 feet tall and is topped with crowns that have lipped flowers. They blossom from summer to fall and attract hummingbirds, butterflies and bees.

A lot of my bee balm looked dead, so I have cut

them back and hope for next year. They spread by shallow roots, so I can understand why they haven't liked the hot and dry conditions this summer. The ones that have survived didn't get the needed rain so that the blossoms aren't full. I just hope there is enough nectar in the blossoms for the hummingbirds.

I have many hostas in the shadiest parts of my gardens. There are hundreds of varieties with some growing in sunny conditions and some in deep shade. Their leaves can be small or large, narrow or broad, smooth, puckered or quilted.

Colors range from chartreuse to deep green, golden to blue and many have gold, cream or white edges. Flowers on leafless stems are white or lavender. They are easy-care and have done well in the hot, dry conditions we are facing this summer.

My gardens are a blaze of color right now. You are welcome to pull into my driveway and admire my flowers. Maybe I can share some knowledge and a glass of lemonade.

Daylily photos by Joyce Sullivan.

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: HOW RESIDENTS HAVE FED THEMSELVES FOR 10,000 YEARS

By Jessie Haas for the Westminster Historical Society

Empty store shelves; curbside grocery pickup; coronavirus outbreaks in slaughterhouses: The pandemic proves that local food is crucial. It also makes us wonder—how did our forebears get food?

Arrowheads in the Historical Society collection from this area dating to the Archaic period, (10,000-8,000 years ago.) show that people were here hunting food. A stone pestle found near the Grout Station shows that Native Americans were grinding nuts or corn.

From the time of English settlement in 1735 into the 1930s, most people in Westminster raised most of their own food. For home consumption, people grew flint corn, oats, buckwheat, and potatoes, garden vegetables, apples, beef, lamb, pork, and chickens for meat and eggs.

Dried beans were a staple. Gretta Wood remembered that 'Not many farmers would think of going to the store to buy beans. Any small corner of plowed land that was too poor soil to grow much else would grow beans...if there was more than was needed at home, one could always exchange them at the store for goods. People who did not grow their own were always in the market for beans.' Pork was smoked or salted and kept in barrels; chickens were fresh-killed on Sundays; venison and brook trout supplemented home production.

What farmers couldn't raise for themselves they bought at one of the local stores. Rev. Joseph Bullen opened Westminster's first store in his small plank house on School Street in 1774. In 1784 two Revolutionary War veterans, Thomas Craige and Pliny Pomeroy, opened a store on the King's Highway. The ell of the former David Wright house is likely the original store building. Lemuel Cone started a store near the present Goodell Farm down on the Flats.

By the 1790s there were two stores in Westminster West, one near Livewater Farm and one at the corner of Patch Road, where mills formed the nucleus of a small village called Crook's Mills. When land was donated for a church, a second West Parish Village grew up around it, and the Crook's Mills store was moved there, where it operated until the 1970s; it was last known as Seymour's Store.

Craige and Pomeroy closed in 1800, and Eleazer May started a store in the front part of his house at the corner of Grout Avenue. He soon put up a building next door. There would be a store on that site for the next 200+ years, with the Weeks family being the last operators.

These local stores took beef, lamb, eggs, and maple syrup from farmers as credit items, then sold them to customers, along with items like sugar, hardware, and sewing supplies brought in from outside. Neighbors also bartered for food between themselves. Surviving records show that they kept meticulous track of who owed what to whom.

It was common for farm families to "peddle" their surplus, taking it out on the road to sell to housewives. As a boy, Hollis Rhoades peddled milk in Gageville and Bellows Falls, in the mornings before school started, and sold wild berries.

Ernest Bemis of Westminster West peddled meat and butter out of a horse-drawn van. Chan and Belle Beebop



Alice and Harold Shattuck in 1969 celebrating 25 years of service in their Westminster store.

North Westminster, sold turkeys, vegetables, hulled corn and collie pups out of a wagon with glass windows.

Farm stands were also important to the local economy and food supply. Route 5 was the main north-south road, and farm stands clustered along it, especially on Westminster Flats, where there were 17 farms in the early 1900s, and at least four farm stands.

I-91 killed many of these small businesses. Tourists swept right by Westminster, and locals with jobs in larger towns now shopped at supermarkets. Fewer and fewer people raised a pig, a beef critter, or even a large vegetable garden.

Then came the pandemic. Westminster's remaining farms became an important local source of food when it felt risky and chancy to go into a supermarket. Livewater Farm, which has been in agriculture since the 1700s, is now seeing a surge of new customers for its milk, meat, eggs, cheese, maple syrup, and garlic.

Livewater also sells bread and vegetables produced by others, reviving the tradition of a store in that vicinity. Two popular CSAs on the Earth Bridge Community Land Trust provide vegetables on a weekly basis. Harlow's Stand and Allen Bros. Market, family businesses operating in Westminster for three generations, sell locally grown food and vegetable seedlings. It's all part of our heritage as a farming town, and it all seems vitally important in the interesting times we're living through.

Corn and some rye were grown, and had to be taken to a gristmill to be ground into meal. In the very early days, settlers took their corn all the way to Northfield.

We have always been an agricultural town, in part because we have some excellent soils. In the early days everyone farmed; that was how you ate, by hunting, fishing, and farming. As late as 1884, when *Hamilton Child's Windham County Gazetteer and Business Directory* was published, 260 Westminster heads of household were farmers or retired farmers (including four women), while only 40 worked for wages.

Then, as now, the biggest farm was just below Court House Hill. At that time the owner, John Leach, farmed 1200 acres. Four Leach siblings built houses there, and the area was known as Leachville. Many readers will

remember Gretta Wood, who was a granddaughter of John Leach, and grew up in Leachville.

Other large farmers included the Morse family (Morse Brook Road) and George Campbell's sons on the Westminster West Road. But the vast majority of Westminster farmers worked under 250 acres. They had dairy cattle, beef, sheep for wool and mutton, and hogs, and many had sugar orchards. Food was sold directly to neighbors or through the stores.

Vegetable and dairy farming on a large scale began to take over in the 1900s, and the large flat fields along the river were especially well-suited. At one time W.S. Fenn, down in the former Leachville area, had the largest onion field in Vermont.

The Fenns also had a milk-route to Bellows Falls, Walpole and North Walpole in New Hampshire, and Saxtons River beginning in 1910. At first they ladled milk out of cans on the customer's doorstep, but by 1914 started using glass bottles; refrigeration and pasteurization were introduced in the 1920s.

In 1917 the Williams Brothers, on the corner of Sand Hill Road, began wholesaling groceries including their own produce, to stores, hotels, and restaurants. Meanwhile Alonzo Lewis, a former partner of Carroll Williams, opened his own grocery store to sell his produce.

Around this time there was an influx of Polish immigrants, many from farming backgrounds, who provided farm labor and later became farm owners themselves. Farm stands flourished, and locals who didn't grow their own vegetables had many to choose from.

The farm families who have stands today, the Harlows and Allens, arrived in the early 1900s, the Allens in 1906, the Harlows in 1917 (though Harlows have been farming in Westminster since 1758. Frank Harlow was born and raised in Massachusetts.) The Harlows opened a vegetable stand called the Log Cabin Market, which ran through the 1940s, was revived in the 1970s by Paul Harlow, closed in 1983, and was revived again in 1991 by Dan Harlow.

The Allens farmed on Back Westminster Road and peddled locally, then pounced on what Tim Allen has called "the worst farmland in the area" when it became clear it would be adjacent to Exit 5 of I-91. Though tourists make up much of their customer base, both these farm stands have been important during the pandemic when locals turned to them as a small, safe place to shop for good local food.

English settlers brought mixed agriculture of the type they'd developed in Massachusetts and Connecticut. In the early days game was abundant. That changed as settlers chopped and burned trees to make into potash, which they sold down-river. In doing so they shipped out a great deal of soil fertility; potash was, however, one of the ways to make money here, and in producing it they cleared fields in which to plant crops like corn, and to graze cattle.

Yet one could go hungry, unless one was ingenious. An old story was told in Westminster West Village of a single lady whose only companion was the pig she raised each year.

She was known for taking her pig for twilight walks near her neighbors cornfields, and without visible means of support, the pig always reached a good size by butchering time.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

MRS. GARRISON: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

By Don Dawson

As a teen, my parents “asked” me to cut the grass for the four elders who lived in our neighborhood (meaning that they told me what I was going to be doing; no discussion, no argument, and clearly no options).

None of these yards was particularly large. But as a 12-year old with baseball on the brain, the last thing I was interested in was spending my Saturday mornings sweating bullets while Mrs. Miller watched my every move from her living room window.

After I’d finished, I’d knock on the door and check to make sure everything was alright. Normally, this led to more chores. Changing light bulbs, taking out the trash, moving a chair the size of a Volkswagen to the garage – knowing that if I didn’t comply, baseball would be removed from my future for an interminably long time, once I got home.

The house directly across the street, belonging to Mrs. Garrison, was the scariest house on our street. A large, scraggly hedge with towering cedar trees hid the house from view. However, the view from a 12-year old mind is sometimes quite different from reality.

Mrs. Garrison was a lovely grandmotherly-type, regardless of her scary house. She waved to you as you walked to the school bus. You’d find her talking with her neighbors at the mailbox as they passed; she was as nice as she could be.

Until I finished cutting her lawn. When it was just the two of us, the gloves came off, and she was closer to Simon Legree, than Mrs. Cleaver (of *Leave it to Beaver* fame). She wanted the hedges clipped and all the clippings picked up; she wanted her screens removed and washed and put back up. She wanted to know when I could wash her shutters and then sweep out her garage. The list was endless and, a very extensive for a 12-year old. Fortunately, I could demur and say I had to check with my Dad. What she really needed was a handyman and, at 12, I wasn’t so handy.

One day I had just finished cutting her lawn and went to knock on her door, but before I even reached her steps, she dashed out the door and stood in front of me. She was all of 4’ 5” tall and, as I was only 4’ 10” at the time, she struck an intimidating figure with intent in her step.

“WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU’RE GOING?,” she demanded. Stopping on her sidewalk I said, “Checking with you to make sure everything is okay.” “Well things are not okay!”

I didn’t know what to do or what to say. Baseball was waiting and this was clearly not part of the original bargain. “What’s wrong?” I asked. She looked at me for a very long time. And then she turned on her heels and went back inside. It was very disconcerting. I knocked on her door but she didn’t come back.

I gathered my lawn mower, gas can and amenities and headed back to my house. Both my parents were part of our volunteer First-Aid Squad so I tracked down my Dad and told him what happened. Two minutes later he was across the street. I then hopped on my bike and hurried to the ball park for a day filled with baseball.

When I got home that evening, my parents sat me down and informed me that Mrs. Garrison had had some type of attack when I was at her house. They said that I had done the right thing to get them because she was rushed to the hospital not long after I had left to go play baseball.

That moment sticks with me. Even now, I think about my parents “asking” me to tend the lawns of our aging neighbors. Although I was providing a needed service and my parents were teaching their 12-year old about work, what I believe they were actually doing was watching out for their neighboring elders, especially those who had no one else. I could report back to my parents if there was a concern and they could address it from there.

Mrs. Garrison ended up moving into a convalescent home. I used to see her when my friend and I played music there on weekends. Today, nearly 50 years later, I’m so grateful to my parents for “asking” me to cut those lawns and for instilling in me a sense of compassion for others.

During this unique time in our history, it’s never been so important to be aware of people in our community. We all have neighbors that might not have anyone to check in on them.

Take a moment and think of someone you might know that falls into that category. A knock on a door or phone call can go a long way in the life of someone who needs it.

GRANDPARENT SCAMS ON THE RISE IN VERMONT

While the grandparent scam has long plagued older Vermonters, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a new twist that scammers are exploiting.

Scammers, posing as the grandchildren of unsuspecting grandparents, call and pretend to be in the hospital, in jail, or stranded overseas and in urgent need of wire transfers, gift cards, or cash. By presenting an emergency in which their “grandchildren” need help, scammers pressure panicked grandparents into acting before they can realize it’s a scam.

The Attorney General’s Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) has received 93 reports of the grandparent scam since the beginning of the year, of which 34 have been logged since June 1.

“These scenarios are designed by scammers to be emotional and high pressure,” said Attorney General Donovan. “It can be difficult to untangle and identify these scams as many older Vermonters experience physical and social isolation due to COVID-19. If you are presented with this type of scenario—pause; hang up the phone; and, call a friend or family member to verify.”

As reports of the grandparent scams rise, CAP has found that scammers are becoming more sophisticated in their contacts and appear to be using internet searches and public social media profiles to research locations of

grandchildren and grandparents. By searching telephone numbers and addresses on the internet and scanning popular social media sites, scammers can learn about familial relationships, ages, and geographic locations. Scammers then use this information to make the scam seem credible.

Here are some tips from the Federal Trade Commission to help avoid being scammed:

- Resist the urge to act immediately – no matter how dramatic the story is.

- Verify the caller’s identity. Ask questions that a stranger couldn’t possibly answer. Call a phone number for your family member or friend that you know to be genuine.

Check the story out with someone else in your family or circle of friends, even if you’ve been told to keep it a secret.

- Don’t send cash, gift cards, or money transfers – once the scammer gets the money, it’s gone!

If you, or someone you know, have lost money to this scam, please contact the Consumer Assistance Program right away at 800-649-2424.

For more information on the Attorney General’s efforts to support and protect older Vermonters, visit the webpage of the Attorney General’s Elder Protection Initiative.

JOIN ZOOM BOOK DISCUSSION AT RFPL

Readers can pick up a free copy of *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas at these Bellows Falls locations:

Lisais’ Market
Best Dressed Laundromat
Shell Station (at Red Light Hill)

Or call the Rockingham Library at 463-4270 to schedule a curbside pickup.

You can then join the 4-part Zoom discussion facilitated by Dr. Dottie Morris that began on July 27 at 7

p.m. Subsequent discussions will be held at 7 p.m. on the next consecutive Mondays.

July 27 – discussing pages 1 -135
August 3 - discussing pages 136 -278
August 10 - discussing pages 281 - 370
August 17 - discussing pages 373 - 444

In order for you to receive a zoom invite to the discussion, supply your email and phone number by emailing programming@rockinghamlibrary.org or call.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire and Rescue Department holds its 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 Aug. 4 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 June: 16
Number of calls through July 24th: 30
Number of calls calendar year to Date: 217
Number of calls fiscal year to date: 30

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting July 7th. There were 32 members present and two members excused. Currently there are 42 members of the volunteer fire department.

The department welcomed back Roy Williams after a five month leave of absence. Emergency responses: We are having another busy month so far in July with 30 calls by the 25th.

The breakdown goes like this: 10 rescue /medical calls; three motor vehicle accidents; one false alarm /activation; one tree on wires; one mental health emergency; five mutual aid, one to Rockingham, two to Bellows Falls, one to Alstead and one to Westmoreland; one underground fire, two separate propane leaks, one telephone pole fire, one to assist other agencies, one for traffic control, one welfare check and two false calls. Also there were a couple of training classes including driver training.

Gas Grill Safety: Keep your gas grill clean and in good condition. There is a vent at the back of the grill that releases head smoke and at times, flames. There have been cases where vinyl siding has melted because the grill is positioned too close to a wall.

Many grills will have a label listing clearance recommendations. If not, 24 inches is a good standard. Propane cylinders can also be dangerous. Be sure they are not stored indoors, but outside in a well ventilated area. And for extra safety, when cooking has been completed, turn off the gas at the cylinder

REMEMBRANCES

FRANK CUOMO, 95:
OCTOBER 8, 1924 - JUNE 2020
CLAIRE GOODELL, 76:
MAY 15, 1944 - JUNE 23, 2020
WILLIAM (BILL) LYON III:
UNKNOWN - JULY, 2020
DOROTHY (DOT) PERRY, 99:
JAN. 14, 1921 – JUNE 25, 2020
RICHARD (DICK) TAYLOR, 77 :
JULY 9, 1943 - JULY 22, 2020

WESTMINSTER CARES RECEIVES UNITED WAY GRANT

Westminster Cares is thrilled to announce that they are the recipients of a \$1,500 grant from the United Way of Windham County’s COVID-19 Response Fund.

Donna Dawson, Westminster Cares’ Director, submitted the application in late May.

The Director of Development and Community Impact, Ruben Garza, stated in the award letter, “for your dedication and commitment to creating hope and for making Windham County an awe-inspiring place to live and work”.

The funds may be used to best suit the organization’s needs and were given to ensure that our critical mission can continue throughout the pandemic. Westminster Cares’ mission is “to create opportunities for seniors and adults with disabilities to live with independence and dignity in the community”.

Lori Larue, Board President noted, “The support of United Way is especially impactful given our difficult decision to cancel this year’s Garden Tour and other fundraising events scheduled for this fall. This grant will help us continue to adapt to safety recommendations and provide critical services such as Meals-on-Wheels and our Community Nurse without interruption.”

Many individual donors contributed to the COVID-19 Response Fund, as well as the Thomas Thompson Trust and the Crosby-Gannett Fund, with whose support all this was made possible.

Westminster Cares is truly grateful for community collaborations such as the United Way’s Fund and for the many donations and wonderful support they have received since March.

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION SUPPORTS KURN HATTIN

Donor Advised Funds are becoming more and more popular with philanthropic individuals. Kurn Hattin Homes for Children recently received a grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation’s Peter and Elisabeth Roos Fund.

The grant will further Kurn Hattin’s Mission providing children a safe home and quality education in a nurturing environment. Kurn Hattin transforms the lives of children and their families forever. Follow their journey: kurnhattin.org

Kurn Hattin is thankful to the Roos and the many supporters who choose Kurn Hattin as the recipient of their Donor Advised Funds through the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation manages nearly 2,000 funds created by generous individuals, families and businesses, and awards nearly \$40 million in grants and more than \$6 million in scholarships every year.

The Foundation works with generous and visionary citizens to maximize the power of their giving, supports great work happening in our communities, and leads and collaborates on high-impact initiatives. www.nhcf.org

APPRECIATING ALMA & JESSIE

(Editor’s note: We don’t usually run letters to the editor in the Gazette, for a number of reasons, but with this short note from David Rohn I decided to make an exception. It makes a point that I am entirely in agreement with!)

Dear Editor:

I particularly enjoy Alma Beals’ articles, and how delighted I am to find Jesse Haas in the *Gazette*. Thanks for the good work.

David Rohn

as well as the burners.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS FOR SALE: Anyone want to buy a fire extinguisher? We have them for sale and there are four sizes available. See the Chief or stop by the fire station for more information if interested.

Memorial / honor donations received in July: Allison and David Deen in honor of our firefighters.

Other donations: From Peg Aiken: Continuing Education. Thank you to those who donated to the continuing education fund recently.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember or honor a loved one or a friend. As always, we would like to thank the members of the community for its continued support of the fire department.

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

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

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

WHILE WE ARE LEAVING THESE ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS AND SERVICES LISTED ON THIS PAGE, OUR READERS SHOULD ASSUME THAT MANY 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 AND CHANGES AS VERMONT BEGINS OPENING UP.

OUR BEST WISHES TO EVERYONE, AND PLEASE TAKE CARE OF 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.

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.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been worshipping online. Many of us enjoy getting together virtually Sunday at 10 a.m. and some of us enjoy a recorded service.

If you would like to participate in our digital services, which include a fellowship meeting the first Tuesday of the month and Bible study on Wednesday mornings, please contact Pastor Sami McRae or Deacon Christina Smith via email at westminstercongoline@gmail.com for more information.

See our Facebook page for our recorded services. Watch the Brattleboro Reformer, the Vermont Journal and Shopper or notices posted on the church door for up-to-date information.

Activities at the church building will not happen until further notice.

Thank you for your support of the First Congregational Church.

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 3rd Monday of the month at the Flat Iron on The Square in Bellows Falls.

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

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:

Kurn Hattin Homes
Town of Westminster
Sojourns Community Health Clinic
Westminster Cares
Westminster Fire and Rescue Association
Burtco Inc.
The Dascomb Trust
K Beebe Inc.

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Printed by Sentinel

Printing, Keene, NH

Pictures and Articles

Provided by the

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Please Note:
The Deadline for the September Issue of the Westminster Gazette is Wednesday, Aug. 19

Publication Date is Wednesday, Aug. 26

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

AUGUST BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: HEIDI BERNIER, REALTOR, CBR BERKLEY & VELLER GREENWOOD COUNTRY REALTORS

As a lifelong native of Vermont, with 25 years' experience as a Real Estate Agent, licensed in both Vermont and New Hampshire, I offer my customers and clients a keen familiarity of the area and the local real estate market.

I take pride in providing personalized service, catering to the individual requirements of my clients and customers, along with a creative marketing approach. Trained in representation of homebuyers, as well as sellers, I earned my CBR designation (certified buyer representative) in 1996.

Many people and services are required to bring a transaction to a successful closing, including: Mortgage Brokers, Engineers, Building Inspectors, Insurance Agents, Attorney's and Title Companies. My years of working full-time in the field of Real Estate have gained me the contacts and experience needed to guide my clients and customers through the process. If you are considering selling or buying property, I would welcome the opportunity to be of assistance. (c)802-380-1585; (w)802-254-6400 x135 or email: heidi.bernier@berkleyveller.com



GMP'S SOLAR SHARING PROGRAM

Green Mountain Power (GMP) customers can now enroll in Share With Vermont Green, a pioneering pilot program empowering solar net metering customers to share their credits with other customers. The shared energy credits will go to small businesses and nonprofits in Vermont recovering after the COVID-19 shutdown.

Solar net metering customers, who are not already in a group share, can download an app to set the maximum amount of energy credit they'd like to share on a daily basis, and small businesses and nonprofits can sign up online to receive those credits on their monthly energy statements.

"This is a great new way for neighbors to help neighbors – which we have seen Vermonters do in so many different ways since COVID-19 hit the state," said Josh Castonguay, vice president of innovation and engineering at GMP. "This app lets you share new credits you generate to help the local economy, and you can adjust the amount you share – or stop sharing – at any time. By using an app, customers can turn it on or off – or just set it and forget it, knowing their generosity will make a difference for other customers!"

GMP launched this program as an Innovative Pilot that helps explore new ways to provide savings and services to customers. The amount a business receives as a credit on their energy statement each month will vary depending on how many solar net metering customers sign up to participate in the program, how much energy they generate and share, and how many businesses enroll to benefit from the pool of shared credits.

Signing up to share solar credits is done by filling out a form on GMP's website www.greenmountainpower.com/vermont-green/. Businesses and nonprofits interested in enrolling to receive credits should email business@greenmountainpower.com, and GMP's Business Team will work with you.

The Share With Vermont Green Program is just one part of GMP's larger initiative Go, Save & Share Green, which launched last month to help customers save money, reduce carbon emissions, and help one another during this difficult time. As part of that, rebates were enhanced and extended through the summer on heat pumps, electric mowers, and electric bikes. Another pilot program, which allows customers to reduce their energy usage while benefiting the Vermont Foodbank, is set to launch next week. You can learn more about GMP's Go, Save & Share Green initiative at <https://greenmountainpower.com/news/go-save-share-green-with-gmp-launches/>.

Green Mountain Power (GMP) serves approximately 266,000 residential and business customers in Vermont and is partnering with them to improve lives and transform communities. GMP is focused on a new way of doing business to meet the needs of customers with integrated energy services that help people use less energy and save money, while continuing to generate clean, cost-effective and reliable power in Vermont.

EIGHT STEPS TO REWILDING

Fed up with invasive species and sterile landscapes, ecologist Douglas Tallamy of Pennsylvania urges Americans to go native and go natural --- and remake every backyard, office park and traffic island. Basically every square foot of land not paved or farmed. He wants to see it replanted with native North American flora, supporting a healthy array of native North American butterflies, moths and other arthropods, providing food for a robust population of songbirds, small mammals and reptiles. The intention is to unite fragments of land scattered across the country into a network of habitat. To Tallamy, the nation's backyards are more than ripe for a makeover. Here are some of his suggestions to help rejuvenators hit the ground running.

1) Shrink your lawn. Tallamy recommends halving the area devoted to lawns in the country--- reducing water, pesticide and fertilizer use. Replace grass with plants that sustain more animal life. He says: "Every little bit of habitat helps."

2) Remove invasive plants. Introduced plants sustain less animal diversity than natives do. Worse, some exotics crowd out indigenous flora. Notable offenders: Japanese honeysuckle, Oriental bittersweet, multiflora rose and kudzu.

3) Create no-mow zones. Native caterpillars drop from a tree's canopy to the ground to complete their life cycle. Put mulch or a native ground cover such as Virginia creeper (not English ivy) around the base of a tree to accommodate the insects. Birds will benefit, as well as moths and butterflies.

4) Equip outdoor lights with motions sensors. White lights blazing all night can disturb animal behavior. LED devices use less energy, and yellow light attracts fewer flying insects.

5) Plant keystone species. Among native plants, some contribute more to the food web than others. Native oak, cherry cottonwood, willow and birch are several of the best tree choices. Flower choices include joe-pye weed, aster, marsh marigold, skunk cabbage, clover, wax myrtle and snakeroot.

6) Welcome pollinators. Goldenrod, native willow, asters, sunflowers, evening primrose and violets are among the plants that support beleaguered native bees.

7) Fight mosquitoes with bacteria. Inexpensive packets containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* can be placed in drains and other wet sites where mosquitoes hatch. Unlike pesticide sprays, the bacteria inhibit mosquitoes but not other insects.

8) Avoid harsh chemicals. Dig up or torch weeds on hardscaping, or douse with vinegar. Discourage crabgrass by mowing lawn 3 inches high. Don't use glyphosate (Round Up.)

This article is brought to you by the Living Earth Action Group which meets weekly in Westminister West, now by zoom. To get on their mailing list, email CaitlinAdair@sover.net.

(Article based on Smithsonian's 50th Anniversary issue.)

WESTMINSTER WEST PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTOMATES & CATALOGS COLLECTION



An old photo of the Westminister West Public Library donated by Polly Harlow Hartiel. The library was built on donated land, and cost \$1500 to build from a Sears prefabricated kit. Gov. George Aiken spoke at the library dedication in October 1936.

The Westminister West Public Library is embarking on an exciting new endeavor: automation! We are actively planning for and raising funds to catalog our collection, join the Catamount Library Network, and provide an electronic interface for our patrons.

What is automation?

Automating the library means electronically cataloging all of our items and patron records, so that our entire inventory and system is managed online.

How will automation benefit our patrons?

During the COVID-19 lockdown, we know that one of the challenges to curbside pickup was that patrons could not see what books we had available. When this project is complete, patrons will be able to search the library's catalog online from their own homes, place holds on materials, and see what items they have checked out.

As part of this project we will also join the Catamount Library Network, which will connect us to 20 other libraries in the state. Our patrons will have access to over 500,000 materials through the shared catalog that they can easily request to have sent to West West!

What will this entail?

It will take a lot of work, but we are up for the challenge! There are also many costs associated with this project: we need new technology like barcode scanners and receipt printers, supplies like barcodes and patron account cards, and extra staff time to make it happen. We estimate the project will cost around \$7,000. We have been actively seeking grant funding, and have obtained about \$2,000 so far.

How can I help?

The Book Sale on September 12th has been designated as fundraiser for this project, with all proceeds beyond what is budgeted for operating expenses set aside for automation. We also welcome donations through our website, <https://www.westminsterwestlibrary.org/donate>

Thank you so much to the Westminister West community for your continued support; we can't wait to provide you with this expanded service! Feel free to reach us at westminsterwestlibrary@gmail.com with questions or if you're interested in volunteering.

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SMALL EXCAVATION, PLOWING, SANDING FULLY INSURED

**AUGUST BUSINESS OF THE MONTH:
 JESSICA FULLER, FINANCIAL ADVISOR
 EDWARD JONES, WALPOLE, NH**



As an Edward Jones Financial Advisor, I partner with individual investors and families in Walpole and neighboring towns to offer tailored investment solutions designed to help them reach their long-term goals.

Growing up in Northfield, MA I attended Northfield Mount Hermon before earning a bachelor's degree from the Stern School of Business at New York University. From there, I became an investment banker in New York City before returning to New England to be closer to family.

Upon my return, I opened, operated and brought to market a fast casual restaurant that prided itself on sourcing locally grown food and promoting the arts by serving as a venue for local musicians.

As a financial advisor, I thoroughly enjoy being able to leverage my experience in finance and my firm's abundant resources to help families and individuals reach their financial goals while striving to provide them with the exceptional, personalized service that they deserve.

I am committed to knowing our clients and their families, and understanding what they want, need and value. I accomplish this with the support of my branch office administrator, Jennifer Skrocki. She is able to draw upon her years of experience in the insurance industry to provide exceptional client service in a professional, personal and friendly manner.

Please contact us at (603) 756-2513 for a complimentary investment portfolio review.

(See our other business of the month profile of Realtor Heidi Bernier on page 7.)

Vermont Shepherd Cheese



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