



LOOK! UP IN THE SKY! IT'S...IT'S - OH MY! IT'S A FLYING CHAINSAW!



By Robert Smith, Photos by Lori Larue

In early August, Westminster residents driving along Route 5 near Harlow's one morning were treated to quite a spectacle. In what one might describe as a Vermont teenager's dream machine - a helicopter dangling a long cable with a 15-foot chainsaw attached to the

end - was trimming the tree branches on either side of the railroad track that runs parallel to the highway there. Cars and pickups pulled over to the side of the road, and folks were piling out to take in the sight. Between the chopper and the chainsaw, it was a noisy and rather spectacular display of piloting skills. Jaws dropped in astonishment, quickly replaced by

smiles and laughter as people realized what was happening and they pulled out their phones to record the scene. Thanks to our friend Lori Larue for capturing these photos of the day. I must say, it turned a rather mundane weekend morning drive down Route 5 into a capital-E Event!

KURN HATTIN STAFF HONORED FOR DEDICATION TO CHILDREN



Thirteen staff members were the recipients of awards at the Kurn Hattin Homes for Children All Staff Meeting on August 19th during Training Week.

Eleven were recognized for the longevity of their service. 25 years: Susan Kessler, Assistant Executive Director; 20 years: Thomas Fontaine, Science Teacher; 15 years: Suzanne Peltier, Houseparent, and Heather Longe, Development Office Manager; 10 years: Rory Longe, School Custodian; 5 years: Keri Newton, former Dean of Students, John Reed, Assistant to Residential Life, and Houseparents: Robert Siegel, Meranda Chandler, Wendy Burke, and Daniel Barile.

Two staff members received "Above and Beyond

Awards" for stepping up to take on responsibilities outside of their normal role: Carol Bazin, Co-Assistant Director of Residential Life, and Clint Plante, Co-Assistant Director of Residential Life.

Through these awards, Kurn Hattin Homes for Children expresses sincere appreciation for loyalty, diligence, and dedicated service during these staff members' tenure. We could not offer a safe home and quality education in a nurturing environment without our exemplary staff!

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 at kurnhattin.org.

Above left, from left, staff recipients of Service Awards at Kurn Hattin Homes: Suzanne Peltier, Daniel Barile, Robert Siegel, Meranda Chandler, Tom Fontaine, Heather Longe, Rory Longe, and Sue Kessler. Missing from photo: Wendy Burke, John Reed, and Keri Newton. Above right, staff recipients of "Above and Beyond Awards" at Kurn Hattin Homes: Carol Bazin and Clint Plante.

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Our Monthly Community Newspaper September 2020 Vol. 16 No. 9

Westminster Gazette

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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**

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met August 5th via WebEx with President Lori Larue presiding. The following board members attended: Pete Harrison, Miriam Lanata, Regina Borden, Don Dawson, Doug Oftedahl, Pat Goodell, Kathy Elliot and Director Donna Dawson. Heidi Anderson was unable to attend.

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, Gentle Yoga 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. Anyone in need of a face mask, please contact the office as we have them at no cost.

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

MEMORIAL DONATIONS RECEIVED IN AUGUST:

In memory of Dick Taylor from Bill Smidutz In memory of Claire Goodell from Ellen Jones In memory of Joan Smidutz from David and MaryJo Robbin.

Donna Dawson is once again working from the office; however the Institute still remains closed to the public. To reach Westminster Cares, call 802-722-3607 or email wecares@sover.net. Check us out on the web at www.westminstercares.org and like us on Facebook.

WHAT'S UP AT THE TOWN HALL?

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.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE: The Selectboard is forming a committee to formally investigate additional sources of social media to enhance the ability to inform our residents of news and events within the Town as well as people looking to move to Westminster. This newspaper is delivered to every household in Town but is still not being read as frequently as first established. So, we are trying to look into what is available and what is popular that is within the Towns grasp. Please call the Town Hall if you are interested in joining the committee.

FACE MASKS: The Town of Westminster received 700+ face masks through a grant opportunity offered by the State of Vermont. These masks are free and available at the Town Hall. The masks have copper and silver stitched into them for bacterial containment. Please feel free to come by and receive one of these masks. It will be one per person and first come first served.

TRASH & RECYCLING: Please remember that both trash and recycling need to be placed at the street in covered containers. This has not changed since the start of the program 5 years ago. It also needs to be mentioned that "FREE" items placed on the side of the road are still your responsibility to remove if they do not find a new home and such items should be displayed on your land, not the Towns or your neighbors without consent. The Road Crew is constantly cleaning the sides of our roads from these unwanted items and are requesting help in this matter. If you see illegal dumping please report it to the Windham County Sheriff's Department or the Town Hall.

TAX SALE: The annual tax sale of delinquent properties will be held on August 27, 2020 at 11:00 AM at the Westminster Fire Station. Please call the Town Hall for details if you plan to attend and bid on a property.

TOWN HALL: The Town Hall will be closed on September 7, 2020 to observe Labor Day.

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.

USDA GRANTS FOOD CONNECTS FUNDS FOR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded \$99,990 in funding to Food Connects in its latest round of awards. One of two Vermont grantees, Food Connects will leverage these funds to develop new supply chains focused on meeting the needs of school nutrition programs.

To increase the impact of the project, Food Connects is collaborating with three Farm to School partners—Vital Communities, Green Mountain Farm-to-School, and VT FEED. This collaboration connects local food systems to larger regional networks, allowing for the creation of new supply chains and specialty products to move throughout the state.

Food Connects will amplify its current outreach efforts, reaching more schools and developing a broadened customer base for local farms and producers. In partnership with VT FEED, Food Connects will also increase its support to school nutrition professionals (SNPs) through new professional development opportunities and procurement training.

"This grant is a natural next step for Food Connects and will help us grow to meet the needs of the moment," says Richard Berkfield, Food Connects Executive Director. "Interest in the Food Hub—and local food in general—skyrocketed in the wake of COVID-19 and we continue to see unprecedented demands placed on school nutrition professionals working to cope with an unpredictable future."

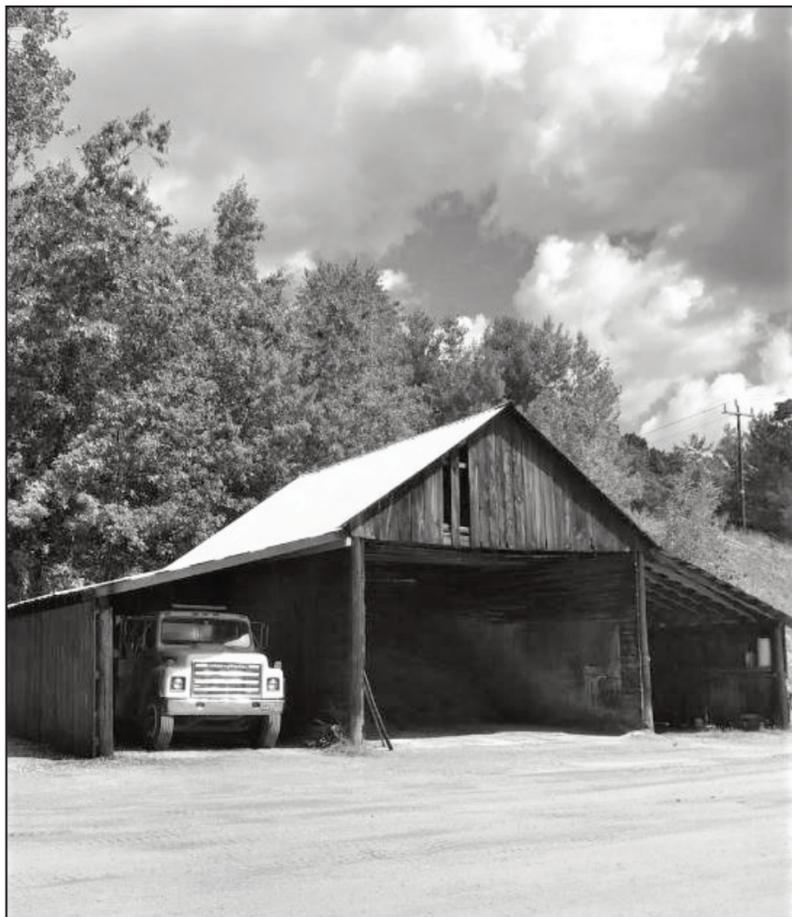
COVID-19 greatly changed the landscape Food Connects operates in since originally writing the grant. While the grant goals remain the same, implementation will likely vary and need to be flexible in order to remain relevant. Notably, SNPs throughout the state are grappling with new restrictions and limitations put in place in response to the pandemic. To-go meals and delivering multiple days worth of food at a time have become the new norm.

Food Connects has also seen positive changes post-COVID: a new value placed on local food, consumers more concerned about supply chain resilience, and an appreciation for the role school nutrition plays in children's lives. With this project, Food Connects and its partners will lay the groundwork for a decentralized, regional alternative to the national monoliths, enabling schools and consumers to buy a variety of products locally, sustainably, and easily.

To learn more and follow Food Connects' work, go to www.foodconnects.org.

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.

NEWS FROM THE TOWN GARAGE



Hello Neighbors,

I hope all is well on the home front. I would like to congratulate Corey on his new baby girl, Elizabeth Riley Noyes (Corey is the red headed kid that works for the Town).

We have started ditching on Davidson Hill. When we are done it will get graded. Then we will move on to Kimball South to do the ditching and Act 64 work there. We have cut trees on Daigel Road and are getting ready to install culverts and drainage, then we reshape and grade the road to help reduce spring mud.

I just got a hydraulic study back for the culvert that crosses Morse Brook Road by Goat Hill, so at some point that will get changed this summer.

The grader is still out and about, so please be patient when you get stuck behind him, when grading it's not as simple as just pulling to the side of the road when cutting the grade. He must get to the right spot, so you see honking the horn and giving him the finger won't help much.

The mower is out making a second trip around town. The Act 64 work on Hartley Hill has been completed. In our spare time we added on to the old sand shed with lumber that was donated and some used roofing to house the tanker that the fire department gave us. (See the photo above.)

Be safe. Be Well. Thanks for your support,

Chuck and Crew

FINANCIAL FOCUS ESTATE PLANNING DURING A PANDEMIC: STEPS TO TAKE

The coronavirus pandemic has certainly caused havoc and concern for many people, particularly in regard to their health and their finances – and these two areas intersect in estate planning. So, if you haven't drawn up your estate plans yet, or you think they may need to be revised, now may be a good time to act.

This suggestion is not strictly based on issues of morbidity – after all, the vast majority of people who contract COVID-19 will survive. However, even if you never become ill or need to be hospitalized, wouldn't you be glad to know your affairs are in order? If you already have estate plans, you may need to revisit them if your family situation has changed because of marriage, divorce, remarriage, new children, new financial goals, and so on.

Of course, estate planning can be complex, so there's not a "one size fits all" approach. Nonetheless, here are some of the most commonly used documents and arrangements:

Financial power of attorney – A financial power of attorney is a legal document that gives someone the authority to conduct your financial affairs – pay bills, write checks, make deposits, sell or purchase assets – if you were unable to do so yourself. You can establish the financial power of attorney without giving your representative any ownership in your assets.

Last will and testament – With a last will and testament, you can choose how you want your assets distributed, appoint an executor to oversee the distribution and name a guardian to take care of minor children. If you don't have a will, a court might assume these functions, with results you might not have wanted.

Living trust – A living trust allows you to leave assets to your heirs without going through the time-consuming, public and often expensive probate process. Also, a living trust gives you significant flexibility in dispersing your estate. You can direct your trust to pass your assets to your beneficiaries immediately upon your death or to distribute the assets over time and in amounts you specify.

Health care surrogate – A health care surrogate, sometimes known as a health care proxy or health care power of attorney, is a legal document that appoints a person to act for you if you become incapacitated. Your surrogate has the authority to talk to your doctors, manage your medical care, and make medical decisions for you if you cannot do so.

Living Will – A living will, also known as an advance health care directive, lets you specify what end-of-life treatment you do or don't want to receive if you become terminally ill or permanently unconscious.

All these estate planning tools can be complex, so before taking action, you'll need to consult with an attorney and possibly your tax and financial advisors, too.

However, during a pandemic, you may encounter a special challenge: Documents such as wills and powers of attorney typically need to be notarized and witnessed – and that may be difficult during a time of social distancing and self-imposed quarantines. But this problem may be solvable because many states have now enacted executive orders or passed laws that permit "virtual" notarization and witnessing of legal documents.

In any case, if the coronavirus pandemic has raised your concerns about the legacy you'd like to leave, take the time now to launch or update your estate plans – you'll be glad you did.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Jennifer Skrocki.

Dragonflies and Damselflies

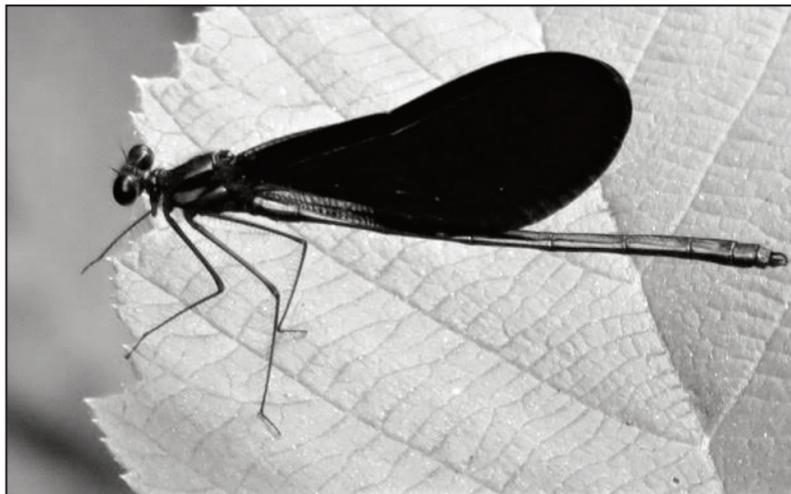
by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

A pond can be many things, a fishing hole, a place to watch the ripples and shifts of the winds and seasons and a chance to see wildlife. Many of you know that I spend a lot of time visiting ponds, swamps and rivers to look for birds but it isn't always birds that catch my attention.

If you want an opportunity to investigate one of nature's most impressive predators, the dragonfly, visit a pond early on a cool summer morning. Watch for dragonflies perched on vegetation along the edges of the pond. Most of these will be males because the females usually only visit the ponds during the short time they are ready to mate and lay eggs.

If the morning is cool, the dragonflies won't move because their body temperature must warm to 85 to 95 F. Sometimes they can raise their temperature high enough by vibrating their wings and exercising their flight muscles, but usually the sun is needed. They are most active from mid-morning to mid-afternoon on sunny days.

How can we tell the difference between dragonflies and damselflies? They both are in the order Odonata. The dragonfly's wings are held straight out to the sides while resting, the body is larger and stouter and it is a strong flier. The damselfly's wings are pressed above the body while resting, the body is delicate and it is a weak flier. From a distance, the first thing you will notice is that dragonflies are usually flying and damselflies



are usually perching to pick insects off leaves and flowers.

Their great bulbous eyes are so large that they press against one another in

the center of the face. They are globular clumps of thousands of smaller eyes that point in all directions, above, below, forward, backward and sideways. This ability is useful when looking for food or watching out for hungry birds. They can rotate their heads almost 360 degrees and can see objects up to 30 feet away and can detect movement up to 60 feet away.

They can hover as well as dart quickly after prey. As they fly, these hunters catch mosquitoes and other insects by making a basketlike trap using their legs. They depend on their eyesight and strong jaws to crunch and chew insects, as well as their flying ability, to capture prey.

Dragonflies have two life stages – one aquatic and one terrestrial (living or growing on land). While we think of them flying around, they actually live most of

their lives in the water. After mating, the female lays eggs in the water on the stems of water plants. Nymphs (larvae) emerge from the eggs and molt several times as they grow.

The nymphs crawl out of the water after a couple of years and attach themselves to plant stems. They become winged adults after undergoing the last molt and live only a few days or months. Occasionally I have observed a skeleton clinging to vegetation above a pond.

I usually notice dragonflies and damselflies in late summer but they can be seen from mid-April to October. Due to suspected climate change, we are moving into a period of warmer winters and springs. We don't know yet if this will affect them.

With social distancing on our minds, many of us are spending more time outdoors with our binoculars and cell phones or cameras. Just sit and enjoy.

(Naturalist Donald Clark sent us several excellent photos of dragonflies to go with this article, including the two above, and you'll find more in other spots in the paper. Thanks, Don!)

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXHIBIT

By Jessie Haas for the Westminster Historical Society

Between construction at the Town Hall, wallpaper conservation at the Bradley Law Office, and the pandemic, the Westminster Historical Society has been unable to present any new exhibits—or even our old exhibits—in many months. But finally we have something fresh to share; the new on-line exhibit, "Fashioning Bygone Fashions," available on our website, www.westminstervthistory.org.

It's the work of Sonia Scott, formerly of Westminster, who created it as a summer internship project with Johns Hopkins University's degree program in digital curation. Scott photographed, studied and measured three garments found in the Bradley Law Office, as well as two in the WHS collection; created downloadable patterns for them in two formats, free on our website; drafted downloadable sewing instructions; and made five video tutorials of techniques needed to complete the garments.

The combination should be uniquely useful to people wanting to make authentic period clothing, who will be able to take a close look at details of the real thing as they work on their own garments.

Most of us won't do that, but we can all enjoy photographs of this historic clothing, created and worn approximately 200 years ago in our own town. Scott writes, "Clothing is among the most intimate set of belongings an individual can leave behind when they die. It reflects their personality, their likes and dislikes, how they lived and the work they did, and the space they held in society. It can retain their smell, how their body sweated, and if they bore children. One's clothing is present at every moment, next to the skin, supporting the body and working to keep it from the ravishes of the environment. After death, a person's political and physical story can be read in their clothing. Indeed for most of human history, textiles were among the most costly and cherished worldly goods a person carried throughout their life."

That enormous pair of pants, for instance, walked down Main Street with William Czar Bradley inside them. Take a look at how big they are, and then put yourself mentally inside the Bradley Law Office as you



consult your attorney, Squire Bradley. Not much space for you, is there?

Now take a closer look at the pants. They've seen a lot of wear and have been meticulously mended using fabric out of the waist facing. This mend tells us a lot about life in Westminster 200 years ago. Instant Fashion was not a thing.

The same item of clothing was worn day after day, for years. Clothes were well made, and had to be, to stand up to hard use. If you examine the seams on this pair of pants—which you can do thanks to the photos in the exhibit—you'll see that Sally Bradley never took a shortcut in her sewing. Everything that should be reinforced is reinforced. Worn places are mended, and the mending is as good as the original work.

Why wouldn't she mend these pants? They likely represented many hours of her working life—not spent over a sewing machine, not lit by electric light. Every-

thing was stitched by hand, and by natural light or candlelight. She must have taken great pride in her sewing. She could send her husband to Washington, to serve in Congress, in clothes she'd made for him herself, and take her place beside him at society functions knowing she was dressed as well as anyone.

She had other people to dress; two daughters, and a son who went to Yale wearing the ruffled white shirt in the exhibit. She had her fancywork, and a household to run, which at times included a number of law students. For a time she had elderly parents living across the street, on the south corner of Grout Avenue, who had a claim on her time and care.

She and her husband adopted their own granddaughter and raised her as their own; when the child's mother died a few years later, they also took in their grandson. Sallie Bradley's hands must never have lain still in her lap. There was always something to do.

One detail about the exhibit needs explanation; the name 'Billa.' In the late 1700s and early 1800s, it was common to form a nickname with 'a' on the end. We're familiar with 'Emma' and 'Anna', which exist alongside Emmie and Annie. Less familiar are the nicknames 'Fanna' (we would use 'Fanny') and 'Billa,' sometimes spelled 'Bela.' There were many men in early Westminster known as 'Bela,' which adds a puzzling Hungarian overtone to our history until you realize the secret of the nickname.

As a child William Czar Bradley was known, at least within the family, as 'Billa Czar,' sometimes shortened into one word, 'Billaczar.' Throughout his life he was known locally as 'Squire Bradley,' 'Lawyer Bradley,' and for much of his life, affectionately, as 'Papa Bradley.'

As we have worked with his personal effects in the Law Office, and learned more about his difficult childhood and young manhood, many of us in the WHS have come to think of him by his earliest nickname, 'Billa'—though clearly the gargantuan pair of trousers in the new exhibit are from the 'Papa Bradley' period.

We hope you'll visit the 'Fashioning Bygone Fashions' exhibit on our website, and let us know what you think. And please consider joining. Preserving the history of our unique town can be fun and rewarding.

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 September 1 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 July: 35

Number of calls through August 20th: 24

Number of calls calendar year to Date: 241

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 59

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association had to cancel the August meeting because most of the members were out on calls with trees and wires down due to the storm that night.

Chief Cole Streeter and Deputy Chief Mark Lund did approve the full membership for Nathan Fairbrother having successfully completed his six month probation period. Otherwise all other business and reports will be taken up at the September 1st meeting.

Emergency responses: We are having another busy month so far in August with 24 calls by the 20th. The breakdown goes like this: nine rescue/medical calls; two false calls; six tree on wires; one mental health emergency; two mutual aid, both to Putney; two smoke investigations; one gas can fire and one brush fire. Also there were a couple of training classes.

Chimneys: Before you fire up your wood stove or furnace, take a look up the chimney to see if it needs cleaning or that something has built a nest inside and plugged it up.

Back to School: As of this writing we are not sure of the status of schools being in session, however at some point there will be a lot of students walking to and from school and to and from their busses.

There are no sidewalks in many areas forcing students to walk in the roadways. Walkers should remember to always walk on the left side of the road facing traffic and bike riders need to be riding with the flow of traffic on the right side.

As it is getting darker earlier each day, walkers and bikers will need to wear light colored clothing and reflective vests when traveling in the dark or diminished light. And because

of the Covid, there are a lot more bikers, many of them adults and drivers should be extra cautious. You will see bikers and walkers on both sides of the road.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS FOR SALE: Anyone want to buy a fire extinguisher? We have them for sale and there are 4 sizes available. See the Chief or stop by the fire station for more information if interested.

Memorial / honor donations received in August.

From Betsy and Sheldon Beebe in memory of Justin Beebe [Hot Shot].

Other donations: Bottled water from Peter Romano

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 CARES PLANS “DRIVE-BY” CELEBRATION OF AGING FOR SATURDAY, SEPT. 26TH



Guests of Honor at the Westminster Cares' 2019 Celebration of Aging.

Traditionally on the first weekend in November, Westminster Cares invites the community to honor those residents in our town who are 90 years and older.

This year however, nothing is traditional. A crowded indoor gathering is not allowed and certainly not safe. Yet, Westminster Cares could not cancel this important event! How could we acknowledge and celebrate our town's elders while also safeguarding the health of our guests of honor and those who would come out to honor them? Westminster Cares has planned a “drive-by” celebration and parade and everyone is invited to participate.

On Saturday, Sept. 26 from 2 to 2:45 p.m. the community is invited to a Drive-By Celebration and Parade honoring residents in town who are 90 years and older. Guests of honor will be lined up (in their cars) along the back parking lot of the Westminster Institute stretching to the parking lot of the Fire Station.

Westminster currently has 13 residents who are 90 years of age or older. Dot Allen, Phyllis Anderson, Charlotte Kurkul, Judith Berkley, Jo(anne) Crocker, Bob Gay, Ben Hutchins, Barbara Holton (lives in Florida), Lee MacDuffie, Libby Mills, Ruth Morse, Lois Woodard, and joining this esteemed group are Pauline Kissell and Bill Smidutz.

We couldn't decorate inside the Fire House, but you

can decorate your car! Add balloons, streamers, or make signs to send greetings to our town's elders. Although it's fine to slow down your car to greet each guest of honor, we are asking that everyone remain in their cars. If you need to exit your car for any reason, remember that masks are required.

At 2:45 p.m., following the drive-by, the guests of honor will be led in a short parade down Main Street, making a loop in their cars as they head south on Route 5, back up to School Street, turning around in the WCS parking lot and returning back to Main Street.

Those residents who live along Main and School Streets are encouraged to come out, wave and give a shout-out. If you park in a lot and stand along a street to wave, please wear a mask and keep proper six foot social distance.

In order not to interfere with traffic along Route 5, if you arrive early please line up in the parking lot of the First Congregational Church on Route 5. Please do not arrive at the Institute early. The Westminster Institute parking lot will be closed from 1 to 2 p.m. for set-up.

Help us spread the word – tell your family, friends and neighbors about this event.

In case of bad weather, the rain date is Sunday, Sept. 27. If you have questions, please call the Westminster Cares office at (802) 722-3607.

HOSPICE SUPPORT IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

Brattleboro Area Hospice is pleased to announce a new offering, to assist people in our community during this challenging time. We are broadening our grief and spiritual support to include issues of loss and transition related to the Covid crisis, by offering a support group that will commence in early September.

The pandemic has brought with it alterations in our circumstances that were unimaginable just months ago. How is Covid Time affecting you and those you love? Have there been losses? How are you managing? Would you like some help?

This new group will be co-facilitated by Muriel Wolf, BAH's spiritual companion, and Rick Willhite, a BAH volunteer with a professional background in spiritual care and social work. We will offer opportunities to learn simple, non-religious spiritual practices as well as practical tools that have helped many find their way through times of difficulty and change. There will be times for journaling, shared reflection and conversation

about our experiences. We'll emphasize attentive listening, compassion, and mutual trust—all of proven value in difficult times like ours.

The group will meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 5:30 to 7 PM, beginning on September 8th. We will use the Zoom platform—Don't know how to use Zoom? We can help you learn how before the first session, just ask us when you register. We will meet for eight sessions; the first of which you can attend with no obligation to continue. After this point we ask that you stay with us for our remaining time together.

This is not a drop-in group; registration is required. Membership is limited to eight participants. For registration or more information, please email Muriel at [muriel.wolf@brattleborohospice.org](mailto:amuriel.wolf@brattleborohospice.org) or call the office at 802-257-0775 and ask for Hilary at ext. 105. She will take your name and phone number and have Muriel return your call.

WALPOLE UNITARIAN CHURCH PRESENTS FORUMS ON FACING RACISM

In light of the recent increased focus on race and racism in our country, our church has formed a task force on facing racism.

The task force will present three Thursday evening Zoom forums this fall. Each forum will feature an open conversation, facilitated by Reverend Elaine Bomford and members of the congregation, focused on recommended readings and viewings.

Those interested should email wuuch@myfairpoint.net to be put on the email list for Zoom attendance details.

Feel free to attend one, two, or all forums.

Facing Racism I

“Talking About Race: Personal Responses”

September 24 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Please read *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo in advance of the meeting.

Facing Racism II

“Racism and Criminal Justice”

October 15 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Please watch *13th*, a documentary by Ava DuVernay (Netflix and YouTube), as well as *Why Fixing the U.S.*

EVERYONE EATS WILL BE COMING VERY SOON TO AREA

Everyone Eats is a new federally funded program supporting restaurants, farmers, food producers, and the local economy while also feeding the community. Local restaurants, currently including Jamaican Jewelz, MKT: Grafton, Wunderbar, Allen Brothers, Leslie's, and Smokin' Bowls will be making to-go meals for people in Rockingham, Westminster, Athens, and Grafton impacted by Covid-19.

Restaurants will be reimbursed for the meals, and meals are free to those requesting them. Restaurants use at least ten percent locally produced food or products for each meal made. The goal of this program is to help stabilize communities by nourishing Vermonters and providing economic support to restaurants and farmers.

To join the program, fill out the Everyone Eats form online at rockinghamlibrary.org. Applicants can also call the Library at 802.463.4270 to fill out the form. When the program begins, pick-up locations will be an-

nounced. At each pick-up, households will receive one meal for each person in the household. Recognizing that transportation can be an issue, a household can pick up meals for up to 3 other households.

Everyone Eats is made available by a partnership between Rockingham Help & Helpers, Our Place, Rockingham Development Office, Rockingham Free Public Library and Windham Northeast Supervisory Union. Chester Helping Hands is submitting the grant as the food hub for several towns in Windham and Windsor County.

The grant is made possible through the VT Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD) and Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA).

For more information, contact Sam at the Rockingham Free Public Library at 802.463.4270, go online to rockinghamlibrary.org, or email sam@rockinghamlibrary.org.

WESTMINSTER CARES AWARDED GRANTS DURING PANDEMIC

Westminster Cares is thrilled to announce that they are the recipients of two recent grants; a \$1,500.00 grant from the United Way of Windham County's COVID-19 Response Fund and a \$2,000 Community Action Grant from AARP Vermont.

United Way's 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.

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 this year”.

AARP Vermont selected seven small organizations with big plans to receive Community Action Grants in support of their efforts to make their communities more livable as they respond to the many impacts of COVID-19. The initiative is part of an AARP Vermont program aimed at preparing Vermont cities and towns for the rapidly aging demographic shift that recognize the assets and opportunities in the areas of housing, mobility and community engagement.

The funds received will combat food insecurity and assists Westminster Cares as they respond to the increased demand for food delivery through the Meals-on-Wheels program among food insecure seniors and people with disabilities.

Donna Dawson, Director, commented, “We're truly grateful to AARP for awarding us this grant. The funding will allow the organization to purchase 50 new insulated meal delivery bags which will expand the distance we can deliver hot and cold meals and ensure the food arrives at a safe temperature.”

“This pandemic has heightened the importance of social networks and community support and services as key ingredients for community resilience,” said Kelly Stoddard-Poor, AARP Vermont outreach director. “This program is a way to encourage and support grassroots action to make Vermont communities more livable. Community support is more important now than ever. We hope these grants will inspire and support grassroots groups that have a vision for their neighborhood or community and how it can be improved to the meet the needs of all residents.”

Westminster Cares is truly grateful for community collaborations like the United Way's COVID Response Fund and AARP Vermont's Community Action Grants and for the many donations and wonderful support they have received from individuals, businesses and private foundations since March. These include: The George A. Dascomb Charitable Trust; The Woodtiger Fund; Chroma Technology; and American Wealth Administration Group, LLC.

ABCDEFGHI DONATIONS NEEDED FOR WESTMINSTER WEST FAIR

We all know this year is different!

Did you know there will be no in-person community fair this year? The Westminster West Community Fair is our largest fundraiser annually for the Congregational Church of Westminster West, a sanctuary and gathering place for people of all ages, in times of joy and sorrow, celebration and contemplation, rest and renewal.

No community fair this year means no silent auction! No raffle! No golden elephant sale of stuff large and small!

But the church needs us!

So let's fix this. Look in your closets, barns, and under the bed! Find treasures small and large that you could part with for a great cause: Here's what you do:

Find something valuable to donate.

Take a digital picture of it. (If you don't have the equipment to take a picture, contact Cheryl Charles for help arranging for someone to take it for you.)

Send the photo via email to Cheryl Charles by Thursday, October 1 with 1) a one sentence description; 2) estimated value; 3) minimum bid.

Cheryl's contact information: cherylcharles01@gmail.com; 802-376-8093 or text to 505-603-4607.

We will put all the donation photos and descriptions into an online fundraiser flyer to send out via email, and will also post the information on the church website, with instructions for bidding.

People may submit one bid for each item. The highest bid gets the item. But we can't start the bidding process until we have wonderful items to offer!

So, find something, take a picture, and send it in!

Let us hear from you by October 1 with your photo, description, value and minimum bid.

The results and “winners” will be announced by Indigenous Peoples Weekend (October 10 – 12, 2020).

Thank you!!!

Members of the Westminster West Community Fair Online Auction Fundraising Committee;

Karen Blanchard, Cheryl Charles, Nick Keil, Alison Latham, Adrienne Major, David Mulholland, Laura Bryant-Williams and Betsy Williams

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 CANCELLED 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
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Please Note:
The Deadline for the October Issue of the Westminster Gazette is Wednesday, Sept. 23

Publication Date is Wednesday, Sept. 30

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

OUTDOOR FUNDRAISER CONCERT

Hello friends and neighbors,

After such a successful response to the fundraising concert (which raised over \$1,300!) by The Seymour Sisters back in July for the Westminster West Community Church, the friends of The Seymour Sisters wanted to bring you some more outdoor music summer fun!

In two weeks, on Sunday, August 30th, from 5 to 7 p.m., Laura and Betsy Williams will be hosting another outdoor concert on their property, 1197 Westminster West Road, Westminster West, featuring The Bluebird Orchestra!

Formed in 2010 and born out of the Bluebird Marionette Theater from Southern Vermont, The Bluebird Orchestra features Donald Saaf on vocals, guitar and pump organ, Matthew Sharff on standup bass, and Ric Contino on pedal steel guitar.

Their original music explores the territory between Kurt Weill, Tom Waits and The Incredible String Band. Their live show also includes music from the American Songbook, as well as folk, country and gospel tunes. Here is a link to their first album (though they have since paired down to a smaller, quieter ensemble): <https://thebluebirdorchestra1.bandcamp.com/releases>

As before, this is an outdoor venue, bring something to sit on, maybe a hat, and whatever you'd like to eat and drink. Or, enjoy some tasty treats from Livewater Farm, while you listen to the music and take in the beautiful evening air!

****COVID-19 safety precautions will be in place and we ask people, and/or small groups, to practice social distancing by sitting 6 feet apart, wear your mask when moving about as well as when using the outhouse (hand sanitizer will be provided to use on the way in and on the way out).****

Plenty of parking will be available on site and across the road (just follow the signs). Suggested donations are \$10 to \$50—remember this is a fundraiser!

The Seymour Sisters and friends, want to thank you all for your generous support and hope to see you August 30th!

This concert is sponsored by friends of The Seymour Sisters and not by the Westminster West Community Church or its officiates. The event is a fundraiser to help offset the lost revenue canceling the annual Community Fair brought about, due to COVID-19.

PLANT SALE & MORE

Activities inside the church building will not happen as of this writing. However, the Women's Fellowship will be holding a plant sale (mostly perennials, bushes, house plants) on the church lawn on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

We are holding the "second half" of our annual plant sale with perennials from several gardens. Come and find just the right plants for your garden as you ready your gardens for the fall and winter season.

On Sunday, Sept. 13, we are having our first "Bring a friend to church" day. Parishioners will ask family or friends to join in on our digital service. If you would like to join us, reach out to a parishioner and ask to be invited, or contact Pastor Sami McRae or Deacon Christina Smith via email at westminstercongoline@gmail.com for more information.

COMPASS SCHOOL PREPARES FOR IN-PERSON LEARNING

Compass School, located in Westminster, announced to students and families that it will open for in-person learning five days a week for the 2020-21 school year.

"After carefully measuring and mapping our physical spaces, looking at class sizes, evaluating our air handling capacity, and assessing our ability to follow State health guidance, we believe we can offer on-campus education to our full student body," said the new school director, Eric Rhomberg. Rhomberg recently took over for former long-time director Rick Gordon, who retired in June.

Compass will also offer parallel remote instruction for families and students who have expressed the need to work from home based on health status and family conditions. Students can participate in classes, do their school work from home, and stay connected to their classes and to the school community.

"We honor parents' decisions on what is best for their children," Rhomberg said. "We anticipate that home-based students will have a mix of synchronous online class times, asynchronous assignments and learning activities, and online individual learning support."

Faculty at the school are embracing the challenge of creating community-centered education during the public health crisis and offering both in-person and remote learning amidst the uncommon circumstances of 2020.

"Compass is in a really unique position to offer a comprehensive learning environment in spite of the challenges the pandemic created," said Compass board President Randi Solin. "We have enough space in our building and our grounds to resume classes safely and in compliance with state directives. We don't have to resort to a split schedule, offering working parents the schedule they need for their children."

Recently the Governor announced a directive for a state-wide school reopening date of September 8th. Compass School will follow this date and has told families to plan for a September 8th start to school.

ADOPT A COTTAGE AT KURN HATTIN

Children, ages 5-15, live in residential cottages at Kurn Hattin Homes for Children. For the last six years, Kurn Hattin has been offering a special partnership with businesses and individuals called Adopt a Cottage.

The goal of the program is to not only have funding for the unbudgeted needs of a cottage, but also have the sponsors spend time with and get to know the children their support helps.

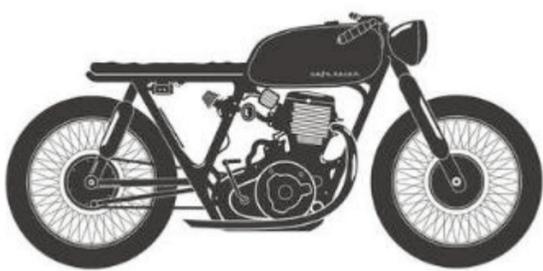
This year, Adopt a Cottage sponsors are supporting the purchase of two desktop computers in the cottages for students to access their homework and for houseparents' digital access to information.

Kurn Hattin has begun work on a dedicated STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, math) lab. This will be a resource for all Kurn Hattin students to engage in Project and Inquiry Based Learning to sharpen creative thinking and problem solving skills.

Sponsors, along with their family members and business associates, attend a special dinner with their cottage each year as well. The dinner, which is usually in September, has been postponed due to the pandemic.

Thank you to the 2020/2021 Adopt a Cottage sponsors: Cota & Cota, Deb Hamel and Doug Gay, Keene Elm-City Rotary and Dave and Lisa Therrien; Elizabeth Woodhull Maiola, Dawn Woodhull Ranney and Joel Woodhull Maiola and Richard Gasset; Mascoma Bank, Savings Bank of Walpole, Streeter Contractors, LLC, True North Networks, and Whitney Blake, Co.

Kurn Hattin Homes also offers Adopt a Classroom and Adopt a Horse programs. For more information contact Kim Fine at (802) 721-6914 or kfine@kurnhattin.org.



NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR ROCKINGHAM OLD HOUSE AWARDS 2020

Nominations are open for the Rockingham Old House Awards 2020. "In The Age of Covid the Commission is excited to continue our annual Old House Awards program," says Dr. John Leppman, Rockingham Historic Preservation Commission chair. "This is an excellent opportunity to celebrate with property owners their restoration and renewal of historic homes and commercial buildings."

There are multiple award categories with multiple awardees. Categories include awards for best private residence, commercial building, apartment building, and curb appeal.

"With folks staying close to home during the Coronavirus pandemic hammers have been pounding and paint flowing," says RHPC coordinator Walter Wallace. "Patting yourself on the back or acknowledging your neighbor's efforts at restoring and preserving our town's historic landscape is quick and simple, giving credit where credit is due."

Eligible properties are older homes that have been renovated, painted, or otherwise enhanced on the exterior in the past five years. Properties must be located within the Town of Rockingham, including the Villages of Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, Bartonsville, Cambridgeport, Brockways Mills, and the town's rural areas. To qualify, properties must be at least fifty years old and may be residential or commercial.

Nominations may be made by calling the Rockingham's Development Office (463-3964, extension 1112), sending an email to clg@rockbf.org, or writing to Rockingham Historic Preservation Commission Coordinator, Town of Rockingham, PO Box 370, Bellows Falls, VT 05101. All nominations should include the property's address and, if possible, the owner's name.

Deadline for nominations is 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2020. The Commission will select winners at its October meeting. Awards will be announced October 15th, celebrating the winners with Old House Awards plaques.

This program is supported by a grant from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

RFPL OFFERS LIBRARY VISITS

The Rockingham Library is pleased to offer half-hour Library visits for Library card holders. To learn more or to book a visit, go to the Library's website: <http://rockinghamlibrary.org> or call (802) 463-4270.

To keep patrons and staff safe, the visit will be limited to 30 minutes. Masks must be worn at all times by everyone over age 2. Sanitizing hands and social distancing is required.

Youth age 15 or under must be accompanied by an adult. Visits aren't allowed if patrons are sick or have been in contact with someone who has Covid-19.

Limited seating is available to avoid congregating. Copier, printer and limited computer access are available. When possible, please limit the number of household members attending.

For safest transactions, use our curbside service and online resources, downloadable ebooks and audio books (Overdrive & RBDigital).

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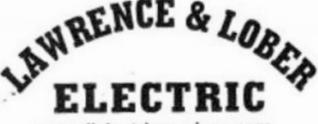
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Auctioneer Sharon Boccelli of S.B. & Company Auctioneers is a fully licensed and bonded auctioneer in both Vermont and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This year S.B. and Company Auctioneers celebrated their 41st year in business.

Sharon graduated from the International Auction School, which provides an intensive course of study in auction methodology and psychology. This training combined with Boccelli's sense of integrity has resulted in S. B. & Company Auctioneers becoming one of the best organized and most successful auction houses in New England.

S. B. & Company Auctioneers was chosen as one of the five auction houses to be featured in The Journal of Antiques and Collectibles "Women in Auctioneering".

S. B. and Company Auctioneers applies an honest approach to auctioning. We are praised by both buyers and sellers for our above-board practice, our accurate researching, and comprehensive representation of the goods being sold.

We stand behind our word, which engenders trust with our new and returning buyers who learn to trust the quality and characterization of the merchandise sold. All items are cataloged and advertised extensively, thus attracting competitive bidders.

S.B. and Company Auctioneers policy of handling estate merchandise has also contributed to the success of the auctions. A majority of the items in our auctions come from private homes. Thus, our customers know that the goods are fresh to the antique market. This results in stronger bidding.

We welcome you to visit our next auction and compare our company with other auction houses. If you prefer, we are also pleased to supply references from former clients. Customers often find attending an auction to be an educational introduction to the antique world. We feel this is the best way to judge the caliber and competence of our organization. Feel free to contact me directly with further questions at sbauctioneers.com, 46 Canal St. in Bellows Falls, or at 802-460-1190.

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