



ALMA BEALS NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

“AGING GRACEFULLY BUT BARELY SLOWING DOWN” - WESTMINSTER HONORS ONE OF ITS TALENTED CITIZENS.

The Westminster Selectboard honored Alma Beals with the 2022 Citizen of the Year Award at the annual Town Meeting April 30.

Donna Dawson, director of Westminster Cares, said Alma “is the definition of ‘aging gracefully, but barely slowing down.’ She is a quiet force in the community and has been called on throughout the years to volunteer with many organizations.”

Alma is a talented Master Gardener and naturalist. She loves the outdoors and has a vast knowledge of plants, flowers, birds, and other local wildlife. She is a member of the Westminster Conservation Commission.

One of her talents is sharing her knowledge with others. She is treasurer of the board of the Westminster Gazette and writes a monthly nature column for the



Gazette, “Nature Notes.” She also helps pick up the Gazettes from the printer in Keene and deliver them to the Town Hall and businesses in Westminster and Bellows Falls.

Alma and her husband, Waldo, started the recycling center in Westminster, before it was transferred to the Town of Rockingham.

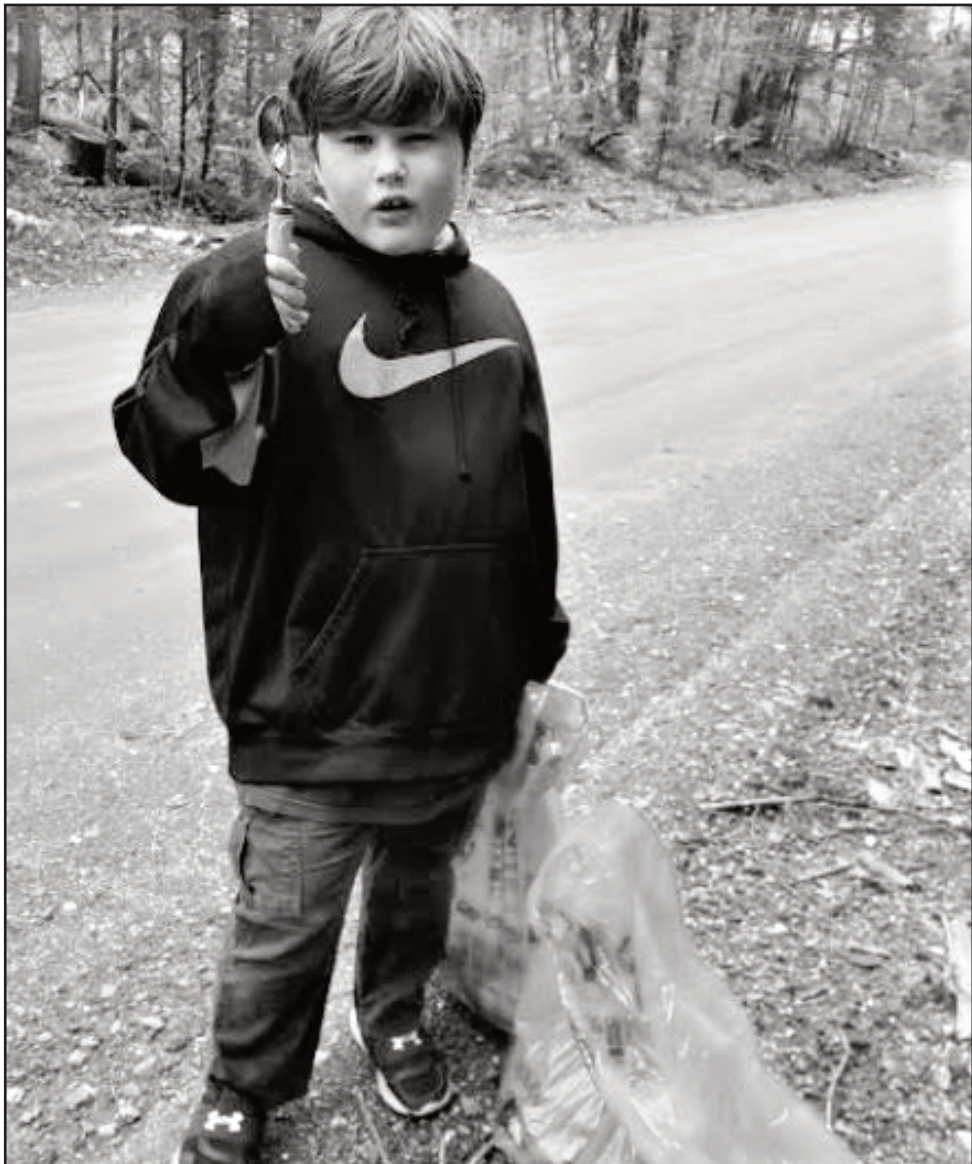
Alma served on the board of Westminster Cares. She hosted her lovely gardens on several early Garden Tours for the organization and still volunteers at every Garden Tour.

She doesn’t confine her activities to Westminster. Alma works part-time at the Rockingham Library and has served for years as the secretary for the Bellows Falls Rotary Club. She is a long-time member of the Ascutney Mountain Audubon Society and assists with the annual hawk counts on Putney Mountain each year.

For many years, Alma coordinated the Herricks Cove Wildlife Festival each spring. She also coordinated registrations for the Springfield Chapter of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of Vermont.

In photo, Alma Beals with her 2022 Citizen of the Year award.

WESTMINSTER IN ACTION - GREEN UP DAY & TOWN MEETING



IT’S BEEN A BUSY SPRING IN WESTMINSTER, WITH A GREAT TURN OUT FOR GREEN UP DAY, LEFT PHOTOS, AND ANOTHER OUTDOOR TOWN MEETING ON THE LAWN BEHIND THE WESTMINSTER INSTITUTE, AT RIGHT.

Our Monthly Community Newspaper June 2022 Vol. 18 No. 6

Thank you to everyone who came out to pick up roadside litter and keep Westminster green for Green Up Day. And many thanks to the Westminster road crew for taking care of the bags. They disposed of about 200 Green Up bags and 10 old tires.

Westminster Gazette

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CREATING BEAUTIFUL GARDENS PROGRAM



Julie Moir Messervy will be at Butterfield Library on Wednesday June 22 at 7:pm for a program on Designer's Way - creating gardens and lives of beauty and meaning.

Throughout her long career as a garden and landscape designer, author and presenter Julie Moir Messervy, has always sought to create landscapes that resonate with beauty and meaning.

In this talk, she shares the principals and processes she lives by for visionary designing and building personal and private landscapes.

Using her firm's projects as case studies she interweaves personal stories with design theory and perspectives, as well as before and afters with tips that apply to creating a beautiful garden and living a joyful life.

She will have some of her books on hand. Refreshments will be served.

For more information call the Library at 802-722 4891.

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 Page 8 - approx. 2.5"x3.25" - \$175 a year

New Sections Introductory Rates:
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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.westministervt.org

THE WALPOLE PLAYERS ARE BRINGING BACK A CLASSIC

On Friday June 17 at 7 p.m. The Walpole Players will open its second production of Alan Bennett’s adaptation of *The Wind in the Willows*, the children’s novel by Kenneth Grahame. It will continue June 18, and 23, at 7 p.m.; Sunday, June 19, at 2; and Saturday, June 25, at 8.

Their first production of this play was in 1993 and was not only the US premiere of that show, it was the premiere for the entire Western Hemisphere! At the time, the original production was still on stage at the National Theatre in London and we were not allowed to reference that fact. Directed by Jane Skofield with the assistance of her husband Herman, they spent months retaining the rights to produce the play here after learning about it during a trip to London.



While it’s the same story, with a slightly shortened script from the original, this year’s production will be different in several ways, from the costumes and set design to the music. However, it is the same charming story with the same delightful characters, and many cast members from the 1993 production are either reprising their original roles or appearing in new ones.

We are dedicating our 2022 production to Jane, who not only directed this and other plays in the early days of The Walpole Players, but was instrumental in making the Players a successful organization and a permanent part of our community. We hope Jane would approve of what we’ve done in her honor!

Tickets will go on sale on May 18, available to purchase online through our website, TheWalpolePlayers.org. Tickets will also be available at Galloway Real Estate and at the door. Ticket cost is \$15 for ages 12 and over, \$10 for children under 12.

NEWS FROM THE TOWN GARAGE: TIME TO EAT AN INVADER

Hello Neighbors,

I have good news! Japanese Knotweed (the bamboo weed that grows beside the roads) is ripe for the picking.

Knotweed is an herb. The whole flowering plant is used for medicine. Knotweed is used for bronchitis, cough, gum disease, sore mouth and throat. It is also used for lung disease, skin disorders and fluid retention. So the more knotweed that is consumed the healthier we will be. And who knows, it may be the secret cure to covid. Either way, it will help keep it at bay.

Just as with Knotweed, Poison Ivy is also coming in strong. Even though it is cousin to cashews, mangos and pistachios, I would not recommend eating it! We have found mixing a cup of salt, 1 gallon of water and a tablespoon of dish soap is a safe and effective way to kill it when applied on a good hot day. It may take more than one treatment. We have also used this on woody vines and found it to be effective.

We have been awarded a grant for Windmill Hill So. To upsize a culvert and stone line the ditches leading up to it. This is a Better Roads Category D Grant. We also have been awarded Grants in Aid to work on Bump Road to make it compliant with Act 64.

Grading is still going on between rain drops as well as shoulder work and ditching. We will also be putting out Safe-Bind for dust control. Don’t be alarmed by the unpleasant odor, it usually only lasts for a day or two. This is a safe alternative to calcium chloride which was historically used.

Be safe! Thank you for your support.

Chuck & Crew

Japanese Knotweed Bars – Wild Food Recipe
Sweet and Tangy Japanese Knotweed Bars Recipe
From *The Forager’s Feast: How to Identify, Gather, and Prepare Wild Edibles*, by Leda Meredith
100% of the tanginess in these yummy bars comes from the Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum* a.k.a. *Fallopia japonica*). This is a highly invasive weed (in other words, very successful plant) that is delicious when prepared correctly. Eat the invasives!

Frozen knotweed works just as well as fresh here; just measure it frozen and then let it thaw completely before proceeding with the recipe.



Makes 16 bars

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups peeled and finely chopped Japanese knotweed stalks
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, divided
- 4 tablespoons water, divided
- 4 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 5 tablespoons butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Lightly grease an eight-inch square baking pan with butter or coconut oil.

Combine the chopped knotweed stalks, 1/2 cup of the sugar, three tablespoons of the water in a medium

pot. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat and simmer, stirring often, until the knotweed softens and starts to fall apart.

Stir the cornstarch and remaining tablespoon of water together until you have a smooth paste. Stir the cornstarch into the knotweed mixture. Raise the heat to high and cook, stirring constantly, until it thickens. Remove from the heat and set aside.

In a large bowl, stir together the oats, flour, salt, and remaining 1/4 cup of sugar. Add the butter and stir until you’ve got a crumbly but well-combined mixture.

Press half of the oat mixture into the baking pan. Spread all of the knotweed filling over the top. Top that with the rest of the oat mixture.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the top is golden brown.

Cool completely on a rack, then cut into bars.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met May 4th via WebEx with President Lori Larue presiding.

The following board members attended: President Lori Larue, Regina Borden, Miriam Lanata, Pat Goodell, Don Dawson, Cindy Moses, and director Donna Dawson.

Unable to Attend: Kathy Elliott, Pete Harrison and Doug Oftedahl.

Programs & Services Provided in APRIL

Meals-on-Wheels: One new resident was re-started in April. WC volunteers delivered meals five days a week to 27 different people; which is the highest number we’ve ever served. Those in need of weekend meals received two frozen meals each Friday.

Transportation Program: Currently back “on hold” while COVID case numbers are high and to allow residents time to get second booster shot.

Healthy Aging Programs: Both of our Strong Living exercise classes, (Karen W. and Ronnie F.; instructors), are happening two times per week on Zoom. Gentle Yoga and Tai Chi classes are also being offered online as well.

The Secrets of Healthy Aging Group was on hiatus.

Assistance and Referrals: Volunteers picked up prescriptions three times at local pharmacies and delivered them in April.

Friendly Visiting – ON HOLD, however, friendly phone check-ins are happening via the Director and our Community Nurse.

Medical Equipment – In April we loaned out nine pieces of equipment and accepted returns of eight pieces of equipment. Five pieces of equipment were donated to us.

Community Nurse Program – In April our Nurse continued to consult with clients by phone and advise the Board on protocols for re-opening.

Memorial and Honorary Donations Received through May 16th:

- In memory of Laura Leonard from Nancy Dalzell
- In memory of Almon Flagg from Ken Flagg
- In memory of Alice & Howard Shattuck from Barb Greenough
- In memory of my mom, Evelyn Aubuchont on Mother’s Day, from Judy Harrison
- In memory of Walter Allbee from:Theresa & Steven Kelsey, Bill Smidutz, George “Butch” & Elizabeth Wright
- In memory of the following from Charlotte Kurkul: Percy & Eunice Muzzey, William & Marguerite Muzzey, Walter & Anne Muzzey, Gerald & Constance (Muzzey) Kelton,Wellman & Shirley Muzzey



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Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers & Other Woodpeckers

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

Many years ago, before birding was accepted as a hobby, birders were made fun of as little old ladies in tennis shoes wandering around looking for yellow-bellied sapsuckers. I have to admit I was one of those, but yes, the yellow-bellied sapsucker is a real bird.

Recently I was sitting in my backyard observing the birds when I realized the woodpecker drumming I was hearing was different from the usual drumming of the downy and hairy. This drumming sounded like rapid drums on a hollow tree trunk slowing to a stop.

Being sure I had a sapsucker in the area, I started quietly watching and soon discovered one drilling holes in an ash tree right beside me. Further inspection of this tree looked like it had been used many other years by sapsuckers.

There are four species of sapsuckers in the world, all in North America, but ours is the yellow-bellied. The male is black and white with a white vertical bar on the wing and red on the top of his head and throat. The female looks the same except she has a white throat.

David Allen Sibley in his book, *What it's like to be a Bird*, states,” the name comes from their distinctive habit of drilling rows of shallow holes in trees and regularly returning to drink the sap and to eat any insects that have been attracted. They drill two different kinds of sap wells: shallower rectangular holes and deeper, smaller, round holes. These tap into different layers of the tree tissue, which carry more or less nutritious sap at different seasons.”

Other birds or animals are attracted to the sap in the holes. While other woodpeckers look for insects or grubs in infected trees, sapsuckers choose healthy trees to drill holes. Some articles I’ve read claim that no harm is done to the trees while other articles say that insects or fungus can infect the wounds. One thing is certain that they get themselves in trouble by drilling holes in expensive landscaped trees and damaging them.

The other woodpeckers in our area are the downy, hairy, red-bellied, pileated and flicker. It’s hard to think of the



flicker as a woodpecker because he usually can be found on the ground looking for ants instead of being in the trees foraging. Flickers have the tendency to drum on objects that make a loud noise such as flashing on roof ridges, road signs or metal siding.

Sapsuckers and red-bellied also do this but not usually downy, hairy or pileated. All woodpeckers drum to defend their territory and drum through the breeding season.

Sometimes I have been asked, “how can I stop woodpeckers from drumming on my house and why are they doing it?” There are three reasons for the drumming: foraging for food, claiming territory, and excavating a cavity for a place to build a nest.

Try to scare off the woodpeckers by using predator de-



photos by Don Clark

coys like balloons with big eyes, reflective or colorful items such as old DVDs that spin in the wind, or loud noises. These will work for a while but remember that once they get used to them, you will need to find other ways to discourage them.

Be sure to leave a few dead trees or snags in your backyard if you can do so safely. We used to think that dead trees or snags needed to be removed, but we no longer think that way. My woods have several trees and snags that I’ve left.

Woodpeckers are the first birds to take advantage by starting to excavate cavities a few years after the trees die. After they finish using the cavities, swallows, wrens, bluebirds, kestrels, wood ducks and small owls can nest in them.

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: EAST, WEST, HOME IS BEST

We often think the division, geographic and sometimes political, between Westminster West and Westminster dates from modern times—the 60s and 70s, Windham College, the Experiment in International Living. It's true that the back-to-the-land movement and the two educational institutions drew more people to Westminster West than to the rest of town, but the division goes way back.

The flat, fertile land near the river was the first settled by colonists from Massachusetts and Connecticut, starting in earnest in 1760. (One notable exception is Windmill Hill, settled by the teenaged Holden brothers in 1759.) A few other farms were begun at that early date, but for many families, the western part of town was where their young sons took up homesteads as they came of age.

Ranneys settled near present-day Allen Brothers, but their sons ended up on Westminster West Road, for instance. The land in the western part of town is hillier and fields aren't as broad, though there is a streak of sweet limestone soil known as The Chicken Yard Line going all the way down to East Dummerston which made those good places to farm.

Originally people in the west—including those high up on the Pinnacle ridgeline and Windmill Hill—made the trek to Westminster to attend church services. But when the population grew large enough, they wanted a church of their own.

They planned to build one at Crook's Mills (corner of Patch Road; it had a grist and woollen mill, a store, and an tavern) in 1784, but when land was given where the present church stands, the society accepted; eventually a village grew up around it and Crook's Mills disappeared. A meetinghouse was finished in 1792, and was shared by the Congregationalists and

the Baptists until 1799.

The parish division was made legal by the legislature in 1797, which in 1800 further decreed that town meetings should alternate between the parishes. The line runs from just east of Kimball Hill Road to just east of the former Peter Marshall orchard, makes a dogleg to just west of Streeter Road, and continues south to the Putney line.

At that time people began to refer to Westminster W.P. (West Parish) and Westminster E.P. (East Parish), which later was shortened to 'the East Parish' and 'the West Parish.' Later the West Parish began to be called Westminster West; the current abbreviation for that is "West West."

Westminster voted to divide into two towns in 1803, and to call the new town 'Westbury.' The legislature was meeting in Westminster that year, the last time that it did so. The effort to split the town did not succeed.

For the first 25 years after the division the town clerk was always from the East Parish. From 1810 through the 1860s they alternated, and for 30 years the post was held by the ministers of the two churches, Timothy Field from the West, and Sylvester Sage from the east.

With a steep ridge between the two parts of town, parallel institutions flourished in the days of horse-drawn transportation; two Grange Halls, separate social functions. For the West Parish, Putney and Saxtons River were easy places to get to; for the East, Walpole and Bellows Falls.

Even after the automobile and paved roads, the division remained. Well into the 1980s, Westminster West kids spent their first two or three years at a separate school. The West has been seen as more radical

since the time of the Revolution, and sent many Minutemen to fight at Bunker Hill; while there were plenty of pro-separation Whigs in the East, they stayed home from that battle.

Because of recruitment patterns, men from the two halves of town often served in different military units during the Civil War, and shared different experiences. One East Parish group suffered several deaths from camp diseases, while a West Parish group of recruits served disproportionately at Gettysburg, and bore the brunt of Pickett's Charge.

The difference remains. One historical society board member who grew up in Westminster confessed recently that she didn't exactly know where the Westminster West library was. Her active social life just didn't take her in that direction.

Historical Society Grand Opening

The Historical Society will hold its Grand Opening on Saturday, July 2nd, from 2 to 4. p.m. We'll be serving ice cream outdoors, and both exhibits will be open.

In the Town Hall, we have an exhibit titled "O! Horrid Scene," about the Westminster Massacre. The Bradley Law Office will be set up as it would have been when William Czar Bradley was working out of it in the first half of the 1800s.

Masks may be required depending on Covid, and are always a good idea in the Law Office, where you get to breathe the dust of centuries.

Check out our website, www.westminstervthistory.org, for more information, and video previews of both exhibits. And become a member. Your neighbors are all doing it!

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 is June 7 at 7 p.m.

The Prudential Committee normally meets once or twice a month. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Number of calls in April:
Number of calls through May 18th: 26
Number of calls calendar year to date: 181
Number of calls fiscal year to date: 411

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting May 3rd with President Greg Holton presiding. There were 34 members present and 8 members excused. Currently there are 49 members of the volunteer fire department.

The department welcomed Jared Atkin as a full member from a junior member having turned 18 and Alex Morcillo as a full member having successfully completed the 6 month probation period. Also a new application for membership was submitted and accepted for Justin Ruggiero under the guidelines of the 6 month probation period.

As happens every May, Chief Streeter handed out longevity pins and certificates to the following: Austin Taylor, 5 years; Roy Williams 10 years;

Kevin Ticino 25 years; Jon Taylor 30 years.

Also in May the deputy chiefs are voted on and Mark Lund remains as 1st deputy and Real Bazin as 2nd deputy. Next month captains and lieutenants and association officers and trustees will be voted on.

Emergency responses: We are having another busy month in May with 26 total calls as of the 18th. The breakdown goes like this: 14 rescue /medical calls; 1 motor vehicle accident; 2 Mutual aid calls: 1 to Putney, 1 to Vernon; 1 with alarms sounding ; 1 for a potential hazard because of a propane tank into the water; 3 smoke investigations; 1 brush fire; 2 calls that were cancelled enroute; 1 lift assist. Also there were a couple of training classes during the month of May

Filters fans and coils: It's the time of year for cleaning filters on air conditioners, blowing out or vacuuming fans and cleaning the coils under or on the back of refrigerators and freezers. With the warm weather approaching they will work much better and more efficiently when clean. Also if you have rain gutters they may need cleaning.

Walkers: We see more people than usual walking out on the roads these days and a lot of them are walking and running with the flow of traffic. That can be very dangerous.

Be sure to always walk or run facing traffic. There have been some pedestrian fatalities due in

part to walking on the wrong side of the road. When biking, ride with the flow of traffic, on the right side of the road.

Dispatchers needed: If there is anyone out there living in the village or close to the fire house on Grout Avenue who would like to become a member of our dispatch team, contact Chief Streeter or stop by the fire house on a Sunday morning to find out more information.

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.

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

We are always looking for new members: Anyone interested in volunteering their time to help the community in a time of need, please contact Chief Cole Streeter at 722-3178 or stop by the firehouse any Sunday morning and pick up an application.

We would like to have additional volunteers from the Westminster West area. There is a firehouse, an engine and a rescue vehicle located in Westminster West, and more help is always welcome to utilize that equipment during calls.

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

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

AG FOCUSES ON ELDER CARE

In the last several years, Vermont's Attorney General has focused his attention on some of our key residents, our elders. TJ Donovan launched an Elder Protection Initiative, designed to promote the safety and security of older Vermonters through enforcement actions, legislative advocacy, public education and collaboration with stakeholder agencies and organizations.

Currently, the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) has re-drafted the regulations that govern residential care homes in Vermont.

The Elder Protection Initiative is providing DAIL input on this re-draft based on, among other things, its members' recent experience litigating against the owner/operator of the Pillsbury facilities; investigating and settling potential Consumer Protection Act claims against Woodbine Senior Living LLC relating to Spring Village at Essex and prosecuting the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable adults in long-term care settings.

This initiative produced a guide called "Finding Help: Abuse, Exploitation and Neglect in Later Life." This guide lays out the various help options in Vermont that exist for older individuals experiencing abuse and exploitation, including:

- Elder abuse hotlines and helplines
- Case managers and social workers
- Domestic & sexual violence organizations
- Legal services

Other community-based organizations & professionals, including, health care providers, restorative justice centers, and religious leaders

This new guide is available online at:

<https://ago.vermont.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/HelpGuide.pdf> and explains how to report elder abuse and exploitation to state agencies for response.

Along with this more focused approach on our elders, last June, the Older Vermonters Act (Act 156) was introduced.

"The Act provides that all older Vermonters have the right to self-determination, safety, and protection; to direct our own lives as we age and to be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is critical that we seek to better understand the many factors that affect the safety and protection of Vermonters as we strive to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability – with dignity, respect and independence." Said Deputy Commissioner Tierney-Ward.

DAIL's mission is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or live with a disability – with dignity, respect, and independence.

Together, across DAIL's five divisions, and with hundreds of service providers and community partners, DAIL serves tens of thousands of Vermonters, promoting self-determination, respect for all, and full inclusion in the life of the community.

Learn more at dail.vermont.gov.

REMEMBRANCES

DOREEN B. ALDRICH, 74
7/29/1947 - 5/3/2022
BELLOWS FALLS, VT

DOROTHY MAY ALLEN, 93
1/23/1929 - 5/8/2022
WESTMINSTER, VT

RUTH F. DOUGLAS, 81
12/31/1940 - 5/1/2022

CHESTER, VT

ANDREW LAVALLEE, 35
1987 - 4/27/2022

CALLING ALL 90+ YEAR OLDS

This year Westminster Cares will hold their annual Celebration of Aging in September. The event will be held outdoors on the back lawn of the Westminster Institute.

Residents of our town who are 90 years of age and older will be recognized and celebrated.

If you are 90 or older or know someone who is 90 or older, please call Pete Harrison at 289-3776 or Donna Dawson at 722-3607.

Help us locate as many 90+ residents as possible. We want everyone to be a part of the celebration!

RFPL SUMMER PROGRAMS

This summer the Rockingham Free Public Library's annual summer reading program is expanding like never before – on three wheels! With funding from Vermont Afterschool's Summer Expanding Access grant, the Library will be introducing the Mobile Book Trike and a bigger summer reading program.

"Unlike many summer programs and camps, the Library summer reading program has always been free and open to the public. When we started looking at why some kids were not participating despite wanting to, we discovered that simply getting to the Library can be difficult. With this new program, we will bring all the fun, and – most importantly - the books directly to the kids," says Youth Services Librarian, Sam Maskell.

The new Mobile Book Trike is a "tadpole tricycle," with two wheels in the front and a specially designed crate that opens into book shelving. The trike will be outfitted with a solar-powered electrical "assist" to help get the trike up some of the steeper hills in the area and will provide free wifi at all stops.

The Library will be building a new collection of books, DVDs, and other materials for youth, prioritizing books for birth through middle grade readers, that will be available at the trike. And the Library will be hiring a young adult to fill a part-time position.

The program kicks off in July. The Library will be offering its traditional summer program, which includes multiple weekly storytimes, hands-on STEAM projects, teen programs, special events and presentations, and much more. Simultaneously, the Book Trike will start travelling around the village. Book Trike routes will be announced later in June.

The summer reading program can have a positive impact helping youth avoid "summer learning loss," which is the loss of academic achievement students experience during the summer. It is estimated that students can lose up to two months of reading achievement. As the pandemic enters its third year, recent studies now show that about 1/3 of children in the youngest grades are missing reading benchmarks, up significantly from before the pandemic.

Where will the Book Trike be this summer? The trike's routes will include easily reachable stops in the villages of Bellows Falls and Saxtons River. Go to rockinghamlibrary.org and take the Book Trike Survey to suggest a stop, request a stop, and to suggest locations for programs. Priority will be given to stops where groups of children are available, for example home cares and day cares, youth programs, and specific neighborhoods. The Library is also looking for locations interested in hosting a special event, for example a storytime, book group, or presenter/performance. Have any other ideas for the Book Trike or the summer reading program? Please share them!

WESTMINSTER GARDEN TOUR RETURNS

After two years of event cancellations due to the pandemic, Westminster Cares is excited that our 2022 Garden Tour will be held this summer on the weekend of July 9th and 10th; from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days.

This year's Tour will again feature the stunning gardens of Gordon and Mary Hayward. Gordon and his wife Mary have been developing a 1 1/2 acre garden around their 220-year-old farmhouse in Westminster West for the past 35 years.

Three additional lovely Westminster gardens will be on the self-guided tour: Cheryl Charles and Family, Obe and Lonnie Lisai, and the Westminster Center School's vegetable garden. Attendees will also be able to take a meditative walk in a stone labyrinth and attend demonstrations such as "Container Gardening" and "Saplings: Sculpting, Bending and Weaving".

Another beautiful quilt has been donated for our Raffle by Ann Ashcroft. The Raffle will have many other wonderful prizes as well. Lunch and refreshments



will be available under the tents at the Hayward's. Tickets will go on sale in early June. The Tour is held rain or shine and tickets are good for both days.

Please support our sponsors who make this event possible: Faith's Toyota/Ford; Mascoma Bank;

Silver Forest; 802 Credit Union; Cota and Cota; Savings Bank of Walpole and C & S

Wholesale Grocers.

Proceeds from this event go to support the programs and services of Westminster Cares whose mission is: Creating opportunities for seniors and adults with disabilities to live with dignity and independence in the community.

If you would like to be on our Garden Tour email list, send an email to: westminstercaresvt@gmail.com. You can also visit our website @ www.westminstercare.org and like us on Facebook for updates on the Garden Tour.

AN OPTION FOR GOOD, LOCAL HEALTH CARE

Dr. Vernon R. Temple is a licensed chiropractic physician who has been practicing in the Bellows Falls area for the past 40+ years. In addition to a general chiropractic practice, he has a specialty in chiropractic orthopedics. Dr. Temple also created and practiced in the Grace Cottage outpatient chiropractic program in Townsend for many years.

The Bellows Falls practice currently employs five staff members and another chiropractic physician, Dr. David Parella. The practice sees patients from a wide range of ages and areas. Most come from surrounding towns such as Bellows Falls, Saxtons River, Rockingham and Westminster, but people from Brattleboro and Keene, N.H. seek out his services as well.

Dr. Temple has been very active in public education about the role of chiropractic in health care. There is sometimes confusion about what chiropractic is and what a chiropractor does. Chiropractic is a health profession that cares for a patient's neuromusculoskeletal system – the bones, nerves, muscles, tendons, and ligaments; back and neck pain included.

Chiropractors use a variety of manual and adjunctive therapies to support the spine, improve function and pro-

vide pain relief. Chiropractic also commonly treats headaches caused by neck pain and dysfunction. All with the goal of decreasing pain and increasing quality of life so you can stay more active and healthier.

Along with his busy practice, Dr. Temple has served on both the state and national Licensing Boards for the Chiropractic profession. He has been President of the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards and the VT Board of Chiropractic Examiners. In this capacity he has traveled the country speaking about chiropractic licensure and testing candidates for licensure in the U.S. It takes eight years of education and training to receive a degree and become a licensed Doctor of Chiropractic, D.C.

Dr. Temple lives in Saxtons River with his wife Shelley.

When asked why he advertises in the Gazette, Dr. Temple responded that he does so "in order to educate the public about chiropractic and let people know they have an option for good quality health care locally".

To contact Temple Chiropractic call 802.463.9522 or visit the website: templechiropractic.org. The office is open five days per week and is located at 633 Rte. 121, North Westminster.

NIEMIEC HONORED AT KURN HATTIN

On April 28, National Superhero Day, the Great Falls Regional Chamber of Commerce held an evening of impact, resilience and appreciation. Among the 16 superheroes being celebrated was Kurn Hattin Homes' very own, Shannon Niemiec. Kurn Hattin Homes held its own campus celebration afterward.

Shannon Niemiec, BSN, RN is Kurn Hattin Homes' Director of Health Services. In a typical year, she keeps us all informed about upcoming cold and flu season, and tick and sun



burn prevention. Since 2020, she's been Kurn Hattin Homes' "Dr. Fauci" and guided both the children and the staff through the entire COVID-19 pandemic with calmness and compassion, in addition to all her other duties.

Shannon comprehended and relayed all the CDC and Vermont Department of Health regulations and updates and maintained in compliance with all the state, local, and federal documents for record keeping. She kept the children, their families, as well as the staff, calm and on track to deal with all the changes and issues that came along—protocols for distancing,

masking, quarantining, testing, vaccinating, and what was mandatory and optional. Shannon was, and still is, the go-to person for everyone. This was a BIG expansion of the role of Health Services Director. In the past, the focus was only on the children, but COVID forced Shannon to have to work with everybody including extended family members of children and staff. The goal was to keep everyone, and the campus safe—and she did so with aplomb. She's gone above and beyond, and she truly is our and the community's super hero! Congratulations Shannon!

We also honor Keri Ticino, CMA; Jean Farrell, BSN, RN; and Kelly Maglio, BSN, RN who joins Shannon in our Health Center and all the nurses and health care professionals who work tirelessly every day for the well-being of others.

In photo, Shannon Niemiec with her Super Hero awards.

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

WE NEED HELP FROM OUR READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO UPDATE THIS PAGE.

WHILE SOME ACTIVITIES ARE RESUMING, WE RECOGNIZE THAT MANY WILL NOT BE RETURNING.

IF YOU HAVE ACTIVITIES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE LISTED ON THIS PAGE, PLEASE CONTACT US WITH THAT INFORMATION.

IF THERE ARE ACTIVITIES THAT WE HAVE LISTED THAT WILL NOT BE RESUMING, PLEASE ADVISE US AND WE’LL REMOVE THEM.

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 online by ZOOM every Sunday at 10 am, and church musicians record music to be played at all services. On the first Sunday of every month, everyone provides their own elements for Holy Communion at home, and on the second Sunday, the congregation still collects a special offering for the food shelf at Our Place in Bellows Falls
The congregation is Open and Affirming, and the Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno is the pastor. Monday is Susie's day off, and she holds telephone office hours on Thursday afternoons; she can be reached at 579-8356 or by email at susiewt@gmail.com. The church building is closed for the duration of the pandemic, but it remains wheelchair-accessible: an elevator provides direct access to the sanctuary on the upper floor.
If you wish to get a zoom invitation, check our website where the zoom link is found under CCWWHOME or email Pastor Susie.

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.

THANK YOU!

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.

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 3rd Tuesday at 7 p.m. on the second floor of the Westminster Town Hall

Westminster Gazette Meeting 3rd Monday of the month online, for the time being.

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES
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Please Note:
The Deadline for the July 2022 Issue of the Westminster Gazette is Wednesday, June 22

Publication Date is Wednesday, June 29

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

BLOOMS ABOUND AT WILDFLOWER WALK

On Sunday afternoon, May 8, the Westminster Conservation Commission hosted a successful woodland wildflower walk. The weather was friendly and the bugs hadn't yet started to bother.

Twelve people attended and everyone enjoyed the experience and learned something new.

The Milbery family kindly gave their permission for us to walk on their property, and we chose a relatively flat area which is home to many ferns, mosses and ephemeral flowers.

Though conditions were fairly dry, we noted at least 22 species, including jack in the pulpit, wild ginger, sweet white violet, cut-leaved toothwort, blue cohosh, and tall rattlesnakeroot. If you have seen some interesting plants in your neighborhood, please let us know using the email address below!

If you would like to be notified about upcoming nature programs in Westminster, please send an email to westminstervtconservation@gmail.com.

In photo, courtesy of Kestrel Craig, Sarah Waldo helps to identify a type of yellow violet.



HONORING LOCAL SCHOOL FOOD HEROES, INCLUDING WNESU'S HARLEY STERLING

Two local Farm to School champions were honored this year by the School Nutrition Association of Vermont and Hunger Free Vermont—Ali West and Harley Sterling.

The Outstanding Achievement Award for “Directors or Managers whose efforts exemplify positive attitudes, creativity, and expertise regarding the challenge of providing nutrition services to Vermont students, especially in times of elevated standards, fewer resources, and recently, a pandemic” went to Ali West, Brattleboro Regional Food Service Director for Windham South-east Supervisory Union (WSESU).

The Innovation and Advocacy Award for “any school nutrition employee who has taken an idea, developed it into a goal, and carried out a specific project to help their program expand student access to quality school, afterschool, and/or summer meals as well as elevate their community’s image of school meals and school nutrition personnel,” went to Harley Sterling, Food Service Director for Windham Northeast Supervisory Union (WNESU).

A summary of both nominations follows. Congratulations, and thank you, Ali and Harley!

Ali West is an incredible asset to WSESU. She has worked tirelessly during the pandemic to ensure that all students in our community are well-nourished. In March of 2020, she pivoted her entire operation and sent meals home to students within three days of school closures. She managed teams of volunteers in her kitchen throughout the spring of 2020, creating efficient systems for getting students fed at home daily. Ali maintained a positive attitude throughout all the challenges that presented themselves during the pandemic, from staffing shortages to supply chain issues, finding creative ways to solve numerous seemingly impossible problems.

Ali is committed to serving high-quality, nutritious food to students and staff. During her five-year tenure, the food quality has increased enormously, prioritizing purchasing local food whenever possible given her tight budget and a shift to scratch cooking. Ali tries out bold new recipes on her menus, such as French lentil soup with fennel, carrots, onions, and thyme and Asian chicken salad with crispy veggies, mixed greens, and a sesame ginger dressing.

Her menus always feature a vegan option. For example, when hot lunch is a tuna melt, she also makes a chickpea “tuna” melt. Meal participation among students and staff has increased dramatically.

For example, staffing changes have allowed her to become much more hands-on with managing the BUHS kitchen during the 2021-2022 school year. As a direct result of the changes she has made to improve the food quality and the menu, staff participation has increased by 20%, and student participation has increased by 25% this school year alone.

Ali cares deeply about all students, and she is committed to equity in her work. She strives to make all students feel welcome, no matter where they are from, and that desire inspired her to create the Where in the World are We Eating Program, a monthly program

where the entire school community celebrates diversity through their taste buds.

Ali collaborated with teachers of English Language Learners in the district to compile a list of the 22 different countries students are from. Each month, cuisine from a different country from this list is featured on the menu, and Ali also encourages the entire school community to get involved by learning about the featured country in their art, music, library, and social studies classes.

Ali recently embarked on a new journey, nourishing a group of Afghan refugee families who moved to the Brattleboro area. She is committed to welcoming them with warmth and care through what she does best, food!

She has all pork items in the cafeteria marked haram so that these students know which food to avoid to honor their cultural traditions. She has also translated her menus into Dari to make them accessible to these newest students.

Harley Sterling is laser-focused on one goal—feeding kids the best quality food possible. And when Harley has a goal, he makes it happen. Throughout 2021, we’ve seen Harley feed more students than ever before, increase his already impressive local purchasing, reimagine how school meals can be used to feed families, and continue to value and champion his staff.

In the fall of 2020, students were back in school, but Harley knew families were still greatly struggling from the pandemic and its ramifications. He and his team worked hard to feed students nutritious and delicious meals every day, as he has done for years. But he wanted to do more.

Over the Thanksgiving break of 2020, the food service team offered the first “meal boxes” to the community, modeling the idea off of a program the Burlington School Food Project had undertaken. Anyone in the community who had a child could pick up a meal box, which included enough groceries for 2-3 meals a day (depending on the time of year), seven days a week, for one child.

Boxes were filled per child—so if a family had five children, they could take five boxes. Each box contained fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, milk, and packaged foods and recipe ideas for meals using the boxed ingredients.

On top of all this, Sterling purchased as much local food as possible. Think Bread Shed bread, Miller Farm milk, and Vermont grass-fed beef and produce. This amounted to Sterling’s program spending over \$100,000 on local purchases from Food Connects, his local food distributor, for meal boxes alone.

The first two meal box distributions were a roaring success, with over 700 boxes going home with families over the December break. Sterling and his team knew then they were meeting an essential need in the community and vowed to continue making food available to families in whatever ways possible. The team offered boxes over the February and April vacations and made a plan to continue this service throughout the summer.

During the summer of 2021, Harley and his team sent hundreds of meal boxes home every week—averaging around 500 boxes/week.. They also continued to feed children who were participating in

summer programming at the schools in WNESU.

In addition, Sterling secured a contract to feed the children in Keene summer programs. This meant that approximately 500 additional students a day were being fed scratch-cooked meals with a large portion of fresh and local ingredients. Sterling and his team were serving roughly 2000 meals per day throughout the summer of 2021.

Why would Windham Northeast District be feeding students in Keene? This is where Harley’s exceptional innovation, leadership, and passion combine to allow him to identify and capitalize on opportunities—which leads to benefits not just for students but also for his team, local farmers and producers, and the community. Sterling believes strongly in his team and even more strongly in rewarding and elevating them.

He offers his staff some of the highest kitchen wages in Vermont, alongside great benefits. One staff member reflected “I’ve never made more money in a restaurant. This is the best paying kitchen job I’ve ever had, and I’ve had many.” Harley doesn’t decline requests for time off. Once a staff member is trained, they are trusted and given a lot of autonomy. He is serious about elevating the community’s image of school nutrition personnel. Sterling is trying to inspire a new movement that he believes is just beginning—a movement to transform school food.

Sterling explained, “It starts with taking care of people. Paying them. Giving them great benefits. And elevating them so that people see them and value them for what they are: badass chefs.” He hopes this will motivate others to join the effort.

How can Sterling pay more than “any other kitchen job?” By being innovative, creative, determined, and extremely hard-working. By contracting with the Keene summer program, he nourished more students with high-quality food and secured more funding to pay respectable wages and pay for high-quality ingredients.

Food Connects is honored to work with Harley, and are inspired by his work. Many school food professionals are doing amazing work in Vermont. But his steps towards increasing access to high-quality food, decreasing stigma, and elevating his team prove he is an exceptional innovator and a true School Nutrition Hero.

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

The Food Hub aggregates and delivers from over 150 regional farms and food producers to over 150 buyers in southeast Vermont, southwest New Hampshire, and western Massachusetts. Their educational services focus on Farm to School programming.

Acknowledged as a statewide leader, the program supports over 30 schools to increase local food purchasing, school meal participation, and food, farm, and nutrition education. Together these core programs contribute to a vibrant local economy by increasing local food purchases by schools and improving students’ nutrition and academic performance.

Food Connects is frequently hired to provide leadership and consulting services for efforts to support food systems initiatives throughout New England and act as a catalyst for change.

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BF ART MONTH ENDS WITH OPEN STUDIO EVENT

May, Art Month in Bellows Falls celebrates the artists, events, shops and restaurants that contribute year-round to the cultural richness and economic stability of the community.

The celebration kicked off on May 9 with an exhibition at Flat Iron Cooperative, 51 The Square, of artists who are participating in the 30th anniversary of the Vermont Crafts Council’s Open Studio tour on Memorial Day weekend.

The Bellows Falls celebration culminates with Open Studio Weekend May 28 and 29. 33 Bridge will host a mix of seven artists exhibiting there—along with music and food during the weekend.

Artists participating include: Nick Kekic, blown glass; Clare Adams, painted glass, Teresa Hall, pottery, Mike Lewis, stone; Scott Morgan, paintings on canvas and guitars; Shannon Parker, jewelry; and Jeanette Staley, canvas floor cloths.

In addition, visitors are invited to the studios of Phyllis Rosser, Robert McBride and Mindy Fisher, as well as the River Artisans Cooperative, Canal Street Gallery and Main Street Arts in Saxton River.

For details:www.facebook.com/ArtinBellowsFalls/

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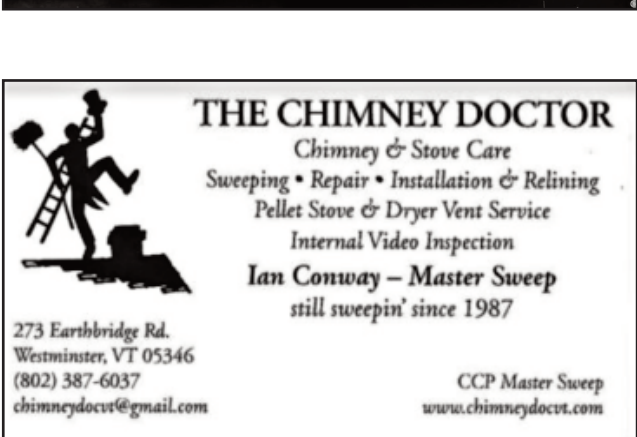
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EMAIL | joatmon.fred@gmail.com



Jessica Fuller
Financial Advisor

57 Main Street
P.O. Box 96
Walpole, NH 03608
Bus. 603-756-2513 Fax 888-215-1621
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JUNE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: R.A.M.P.



For over 25 years, The Rockingham Arts and Museum Project's (RAMP) mission has evolved: integrating artists and the arts in the long-term sustainability of the community by creating effective partnerships that support a creative economy and develop programs that encourage cultural and physical accessibility.

Some of RAMP's projects include affordable housing, artists' town meetings, cable access programs, public art projects, and participating on boards of directors.

RAMP's mantra: Art Makes a Difference!
www.ramp-vt.org.

MEETING HOUSE OPENS



The Rockingham Meeting House will open for the 2022 season on Saturday, May 28th. Visitors are welcome daily through Indigenous People's Day, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Built in 1787 the meeting house remains substantially in its original form and is the oldest public building in Vermont that remains unchanged. It is a designated National Historic Landmark.

It served as both a place of worship and the town hall until 1869, and was then abandoned for several decades. In 1906 the building was restored to its current state -- one of the earliest historic preservation projects in Vermont -- leaving intact its king-post timber framing, finely detailed woodwork and its "pig pen" box pews.

The building hosts an annual pilgrimage in August as part of the town's "Old Home Days" celebrations.

The meeting house is owned by the town of Rockingham and operated as a museum, with skilled docents on hand to offer additional information about the architecture and history of the building.

The adjacent cemetery, which continues in use today, contains more than 1,000 graves, and is a treasure trove of information about the lives and deaths of the town's early settlers as well as some of the finest gravestone art to be found in New England.

The meeting house is located just north of the village of Bellows Falls and Interstate 91 Exit 6, just off Vermont Route 103.

For additional information contact the Rockingham Historic Preservation Commission at clg@rockbf.org.

