



KURN HATTIN STUDENTS WIN PATRIOT’S PEN CONTEST

Richard Campbell, State Commander from the Brattleboro VFW–Post 1034, presented awards to three Kurn Hattin Homes’ students who had submitted essays for the 2023 Patriot’s Pen Veteran Essay Contest.

The theme was, "My Pledge to the Veterans."

Tegan Kilburn, who won 1st Place and 2nd Place at the District Level, wrote, “I pledge to make sure that nobody forgets our Veterans. They have taken huge risks to ensure tranquility and everyone's safety. We wouldn't live in as much peace as we live in today if it wasn't for our Veterans. I will continue to learn about the amazing things they did just so people today could live in peace. I pledge to make sure others know that

without our heroic Veterans we wouldn't live in peace like I do now.”

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: www.kurnhattin.org

In photo from left, Richard Campbell, Tegan Kilburn, grade 8, who won 1st Place, and 2nd Place at the District Level; Trace Kline, grade 8, who won 2nd Place; and Oluwambamise Precious Adedji, grade 8, who won 3rd Place.



GREEN UP VERMONT DAY IS SATURDAY, MAY 6TH

Join us on Green Up Day, Saturday, May 6, and help clean up a Westminster road or street.

Green Up bags are available at the Town Hall in Westminster and the Westminster West Library. Please do not use them until the week of May 1 (so the bags aren’t left along the road for long periods of time).

You may also pick up bags in front of Town Hall on Green Up Day, Saturday, May 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

On Monday and Tuesday, May 8 and 9, the Westminster Town road crew will pick up bags, including any of your own trash bags used for Green Up. Please do not leave them on private roads.

GREEN UP SAFETY REMINDERS:

- DO NOT REMOVE DEAD ANIMALS OR SUSPECTED TOXIC/HAZARDOUS WASTE.
- DON'T DISTURB NEEDLES OR QUESTIONABLE DEBRIS.
- IF YOU HAVE A SAFETY CONCERN, PLEASE INFORM THE PROPER LOCAL AUTHORITIES, OR CONTACT VT STATE ROAD MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL AT VTRANS.VERMONT.GOV OR THE STATE POLICE AT VSP.VERMONT.GOV.

GREEN UP VERMONT

GREEN UP DAY
Saturday May 6, 2023

2023 Challenge: Help Your Town
What's Your Impact

Logos: SUBARU, VERMONT AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, Greenbacker CAPITAL, casela, VSECU, Lawson's, CO-OPERATIVE INSURANCE COMPANIES, VGS, hogan, shaw's, Efficiency Vermont, American Chemistry Council, CABOT, SKI VERMONT, Sheehy, GREEN LIGHT REAL ESTATE, GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER, med, VERMONT MUTUAL, DARN TOUGH, FARRELL, VELCO, UNION MUTUAL, National Life Group.

greenupvermont.org
#togetherwecan #greenupvt

BAILLY IS NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Following a search, Henry Bailly has been named Principal for Bellows Falls Middle School, beginning in July 2023. Bailly has been serving as the Interim Principal since fall 2022.

Bailly’s career prior to Bellows Falls Middle School included 15 years as a classroom teacher at Westmoreland School (NH), after having received two bachelor’s degrees from Keene State College (education and biological sciences) and a master’s degree in educational administration and supervision from the University of Phoenix.

Living and working in the Bellows Falls community, Bailly joined the staff of the Bellows Falls Middle School as Assistant Principal in 2022.

The search process for the middle school principal position included opportunities for community and student input and a search committee made up of school staff, community members, and school board members.

20TH ANNIVERSARY GARDEN TOUR JULY 8 & 9

This summer’s Westminster Garden Tour is scheduled for the weekend of July 8th and 9th.

Plans are underway to make this year’s Garden Tour extra-special in celebration of the 20th Anniversary. The Garden Tour is the largest fundraising event for Westminster Cares.

Interested in supporting the event? Individuals can support the event by purchasing tour tickets, raffle tickets or by volunteering to work a shift during the weekend. Businesses can support the event by becoming a sponsor, purchasing an ad in the event program booklet, or donating a raffle prize.

Tickets will be available for purchase online June 1st on our website: www.westminstercares.org.

Tickets can also be purchased the Tour weekend. For more information email westminstercaresvt@gmail.com or call 802.722.3607.

For more information contact Donna Dawson in the office at: 722-3607.

In photo, visitors at the Hayward’s gardens in a previous garden tour.



Westminster Gazette

Town of Westminster
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05158

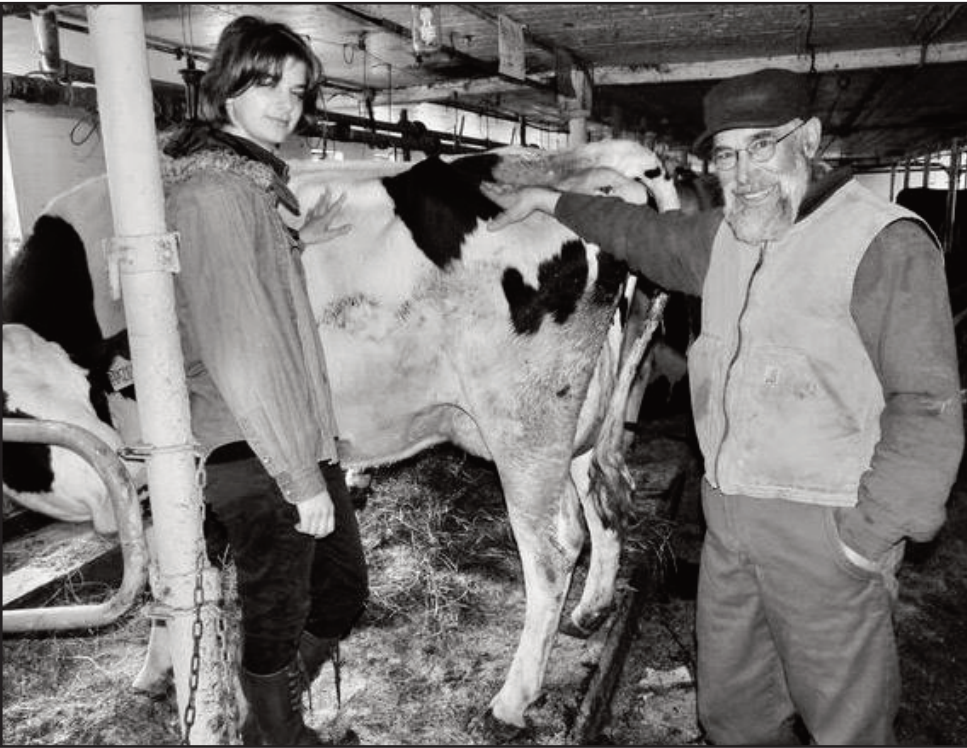
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OUR WORKING LANDSCAPE

Westminster has many farms and businesses which work the land to create products (mostly edible) and jobs, while making the landscape that we see today. The *Gazette* will be highlighting this part of our economy with short articles and letters which explain and recognize the importance of our working landscape.

OUR VETS GREAT & SMALL



A good local vet is essential to farming, particularly dairy. Our Green Mountain Bovine Clinic is run by Dr. Stephen Major, a vet for 34 years, and his associate Dr. Dayna Locitzer. Spending time at the practice is Jasmine Cavanagh, with small experience but great love of animals.

Jasmine lives in Westminster West and is home-schooled, so Stephen accepted her as a job-shadowing student when she turned 17. Jasmine has always wanted to be a vet, and aims to go to veterinary school.

Jasmine assists Stephen on his rounds one day a week, traveling to dairy herds and farms from the Green Mountains into New Hampshire and as far south as Holyoke, MA. She began in Nov. 2022, so she says now she is mostly observing and learning to be around cattle. She fills syringes, and helps hold the cow's head up while Stephen inserts a tube.

She has observed major problems such as a calf with a serious leg injury, and explained about ketosis resulting from a twisted stomach. She has been there when animals had to be put down, including several horses and cows.

She says both Stephen and Dayna have taught her a lot on the long drives to various farms.

Stephen says that the practice is about 60% dairy cows, 20% sheep and goats, 10% beef herds and also camelids like alpacas. It only deals with farm animals. Regular health and pregnancy checks are very satisfying, as is tending to cows' comfort issues.

When there is a problem, not only is the animal suffering but the farmer is losing money. Stephen does a lot of nutritional advising, since dairy animals have different needs at different points in their cycle from pregnancy to milking to dry.

He enjoys knowing the farmers. The Clinic visits five bi-centennial farms including one 14th generation farm dating from 1686.

Stephen says that being a vet is now regarded as a 'glamor profession' due to the TV series *All Creatures* - even though a certain amount of time is spent with his arm inside a cow!

In photo, Stephen explaining dairy conformation to Jasmine at the Putney School. The current herd of mostly Holsteins and Jerseys has been developed by Putney School Farm Manager Pete Stickney of Stickney Farm in Saxtons River.

Hey Windham County Business Owner...

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TWO EASY STEPS:

1. Registration (Starts May 1st)
2. Come pitch your idea at one of the 2023 events

June 1st Bar 580 Brattleboro 4 - 5:15 pm	June 6th Great Falls Chamber Bellows Falls 4:30pm
June 7th The White House Wilmington 4:30 - 6:30pm	June 8th New American Grill Londonderry 2 - 3:15 pm



Register at: <https://brattleborodevelopment.com/competition/>

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Bobcats in My Yard

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

I looked out the window this morning and saw a bobcat sitting in my driveway. He then moved toward me and crouched down watching a gray squirrel that was peacefully eating under the bird feeder.

He was in the shadows as the sun was just coming up and was camouflaged in the old leaves. Wild animals blend into their surroundings so well that often we notice them only when they are moving.

He stayed there for about half an hour before getting up and moving closer to the feeder to look at the squirrel which was up the tree teasing him.

Several bobcats have been seen in town lately. I have wondered if they were drawn in by all the rabbits we had here last year. Rabbits are their favorite food followed by squirrels, mice, small deer, small dogs, cats, snails and lizards, poultry, sheep and goats. Although they seldom do so, they are capable of killing full-grown deer.

Bobcats are not aggressive toward humans and do not attack. Their eyesight and hearing are excellent but their sense of smell not so much. They are active year-round and do not hibernate. They are good climbers and will climb trees to rest or to chase prey, or to escape predators.

They hold onto their territory and each night will travel two to seven miles along the same run and change their shelter daily using caves or rock shelters, hollowed out or



Photos by Don Clark



fallen trees, abandoned beaver lodges and earthen burrows.

Fish and wildlife biologists estimate that Vermont has 2500 to 3000 bobcats. They are fairly common but are rarely seen because they are shy and solitary. They are more active around sunrise and sunset, although they can be seen during the day. Many of their prey are also out eating at dusk and dawn.

Their predators are mountain lions, coyotes, wolves and humans. They are the best pest you could hope for, being attracted to rabbits and squirrels.

Some of us have heard what sounds like a woman screaming. This can be heard as far as a mile away. This was best described by Edmund Jaeger in “Wild Cats of the World” as “being awakened near midnight by an in-

terrupted series of ferocious hisses, shrill screams, harsh squalls, and deep-toned yowls. No alley strays could ever have half-equalled this cat concert. . . the loud and ludicrous serenade was kept up for almost half an hour, and it ended with a dual climax of discordant, frightening squalls as mating took place.”

Bobcats have two to four young that are born between late April and mid-May. They weigh between one half and three quarters of a pound, are about 10 inches long and have spotted fur. They are weaned when they are about two months old but remain with the mother for almost a year.

A group of bobcats are called a clowder, clutter or pounce. These are all names I am not familiar with, probably because we see them one by one and not in a group.

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER ON SCHOOLGIRL SAMPLERS

By Jessie Haas

The work of some Westminster schoolgirls is about to be cataloged with The Sampler Consortium, an international membership organization dedicated to the study of samplers and other schoolgirl needlework.

The 1200 members representing 18 countries and all 50 states includes museum curators, genealogists, needleworkers, designers, collectors, and other professionals and enthusiasts. The Sampler Archive Project aims to document all known American samplers in an online searchable database.

To date Vermont is under-represented in the archive, but that is changing. According to a press release from the Shelburne Museum:

“The Vermont Sampler Initiative has launched a statewide effort to locate, photograph and document all American samplers and related girlhood embroideries held in the public and private collections of Vermont.

This initiative is a collaborative effort with local museums, historical societies, historic homes, private collectors and descendants, and seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of the state’s early history and the women who devoted their lives to educating Vermont’s daughters.”

Several Sampler I.D. days were held in 2022, and the effort has continued this year. On July 14, the Historical Society will bring our five samplers over to the Sampler I.D. day in Newfane to be photographed and cataloged..

The initiative aims to create an online searchable database of American schoolgirl needlework called the Sampler Archive. All samplers documented in Vermont will be included. In addition, future programs will include an exhibition and a book about Vermont schoolgirl samplers and early female education in the state.

American schoolgirl samplers are vital artifacts of early female education, providing insight into family dynamics, local history and community values. They are made by daughters from all socio-economic levels, all racial and ethnic populations, all religions and all geographic regions of the nation. Unfortunately, samplers made by girls and young women living in Vermont are less well known and less frequently studied than those of any other New England state.

Among the samplers in the Historical Society collection include one of our oldest artifacts, stitched by Ann Ruggles in 1761. Ann, born in 1750 in Roxbury, Massachusetts, married Mark Richards, a Revolutionary volunteer, merchant, and farmer. The family moved to Westminster in 1780, where Ann became the mother-in-law to William Czar Bradley.

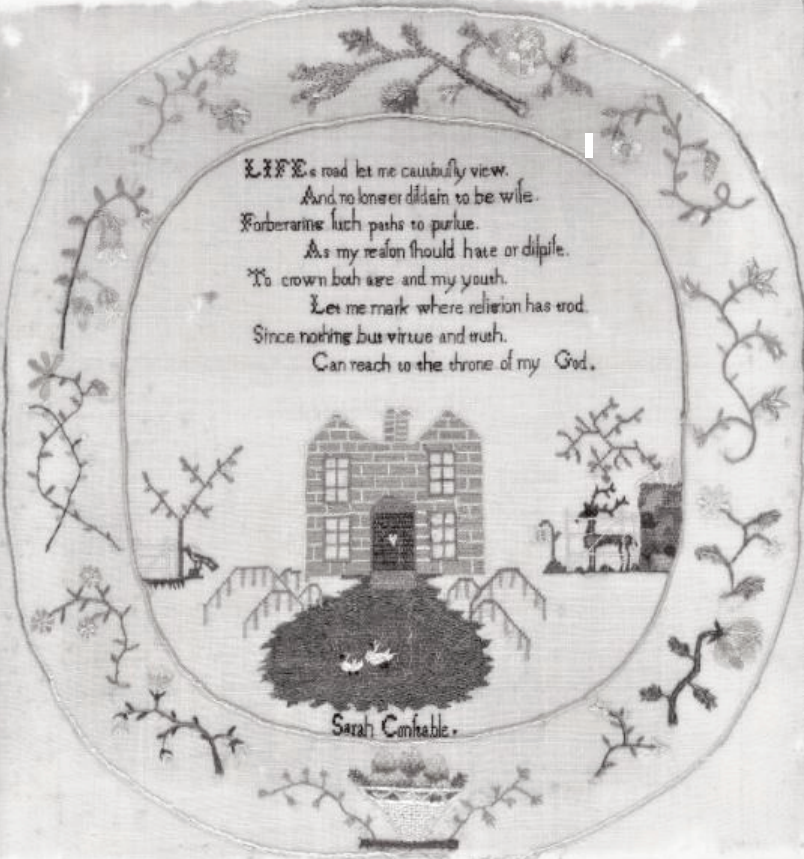


Another Westminster sampler was stitched in 1828 by Lousia Wright, daughter of Salmon Wright of Westminster, and granddaughter of Azariah Wright.

We have recently been contacted by Grace Knight of Perkinsville, Vt., who has a sampler crafted by Almeda Verilla Albe, who was born in Westminster in 1815 and grew up at the Albe Tavern/distillery near Allen Brothers. She has done a lot of research on family ties here in Westminster, and plans to visit the archives this summer to do more.

Do you have an old pre-1900 sampler that’s been passed down in your family? Or one you found at a yard sale? This is the time to get that artifact cataloged, and acknowledge the craft, effort, boredom or delight of the girl who stitched it. It’s time to find out more about her. If she was a Westminster girl, you may be able to learn more through the Historical Society. Contact us through our website, www.westminstervthistory.org, to ask a question or set up a time to visit the Archives.

There will be three more “ID Days” this year: May 12 & 13 at the Vermont Historical Society, Barre; July 14 & 15 at the Windham County Historical Society in Newfane; and Sept. 29 & 30 at the Henry Sheldon Museum in Middlebury. For more information or to make an appointment for your sampler(s) contact Ellen



Thompson at samplersvt@gmail.com. There is no charge for this search and you will receive via email a professional photograph of your sampler.

Above, a sampler, and at top an up-close detail from that sampler, from the Shelburne Museum collection.

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 May 2 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 March: 60:

Number of calls through April 21st: 27

Number of calls calendar year to date: 181

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 450

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting April 4th with President Eyvonne Martin presiding. There were 28 members present and 8

members excused. Currently there are 48 members of the volunteer fire department.

Emergency responses: We had another very busy month in March with 60 total calls, possibly a record. The breakdown goes like this: 28 Rescue/medical; 8 motors vehicle accidents; 1 for a blood draw; 6 for subject fallen; 1 domestic; 1 structure fire; 9 for trees/wires down; 1 welfare check; 1 box alarm; 4 mutual aid, 1 to Alstead, 1 to North Walpole, 2 to Walpole.

Walkers: We see more people than usual walking out on the roads these days and a few of them are walking and running with the flow of traffic on the right side of the road. That can be very dangerous. Be sure to always walk or run facing traffic on the left side of the road. 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.

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.

Donations in April: Kevin Hughes, Ellen Jones, Bruce Mickle.

As always, we would like to thank the members of the community for their continued support of the fire department. Check us out on our website www.westminsterfireandrescue.org

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

PREVENTING & CORRECTING MEDICARE FRAUD, ERRORS & ABUSE

If you are a Medicare beneficiary it is important to be on the lookout for potential fraud, errors and abuse by reviewing your Medicare summary notice and being very careful about providing personal information to callers including Medicare numbers.

But what should you do if you accidentally give your number to a caller who isn't someone you contacted at the Medicare office? What happens if you see a test or service billed on your Medicare Summary Notice that you did not receive or you do not recognize?

What if you discover charges on your summary that aren't from your service provider? What if you receive a knee brace or other durable medical equipment in the mail and you did not request it?

For all these examples call Vermont Senior Medicare Patrol, (VT SMP).

To get started the VT SMP representative will need to collect information such as name, phone number, email, address, date of birth, and Medicare number. We also need to know if you are the Medicare beneficiary or calling on someone's behalf.

Additional information is collected on each beneficiary to help improve the national SMP program, such as how the beneficiary learned about SMP and demographic information such as race, gender, income and primary language.

Our counselor will now ask you to explain the issue that's causing you concern.

Often an extra charge on your Medicare Summary Notice is an error that can easily be fixed with a call to the service provider. Other times it is a fraudulent charge.

If you aren't comfortable calling the Service Provider, SMP can help by facilitating a group call. Other times there is a misunderstanding about how Medicare functions. In these instances the VT SMP representative will connect you with the Vermont State Health Assistance Program (SHIP).

Both VT SMP and VT SHIP are funded through federal grants through the administration of Community

Living, part of the U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

If the issues appears to be fraud or abuse, the SMP representative will need documentation to file a report with the U.S. Inspector General. That varies case by case. For example, cases that involve receipt of unrequested COVID test kits or durable medical equipment might require pictures of shipping labels or packing slips.

We will advise Medicare beneficiaries to contact Medicare to report compromised Medicare and have a new number issued. Only the beneficiary can request a new Medicare number.

Once all the information has been received VT SMP will file a complex interaction case with the Office of the Inspector General. These cases take time to resolve and often the money billed and paid is difficult to recover, which is part of the reason Medicare loses more than \$60 billion a year to fraud, errors and abuse.

The best way to prevent Medicare losses is to follow a few simple guidelines:

Never provide your Medicare number to a stranger. If a caller states they are from your doctor's office, service provider, Medicare, or even Senior Medicare Patrol, hang up and call a trusted number for that service.

Medicare will never call asking for your Medicare number.

Carefully review all Medicare Summary notices. If you see an unusual item or a medical service you did not receive listed, contact the service provider immediately to correct the error.

If fraud or abuse is suspected, call VT SMP immediately.

If you have questions, need help with a billing error, or suspect Medicare fraud or abuse, contact VT SMP at 802.229.4731.

Michelle Kessler is SMP Director for Vermont Community of Elders.

REMEMBRANCES

MARY BRANDT, 90
1/15/1933 – 4/7/2023
BELLOWS FALLS, FLORIDA,
NORTH WESTMINSTER

CLARENCE E. GOCHEY, 85
7/10/1937 - 2/15/2023
BELLOWS FALLS, VT

ERIC LAMBERT, 33
8/26/1989 - 3/26/2023
ROCKINGHAM, VT

SHEILA J. LAWRENCE, 77
8/24/1945 – 3/22/2023
DUMMERSTON, FORMERLY
WESTMINSTER, VT

REGINALD A. MCGIVERN SR., 75
8/2/1947 - 3/18/2023
WESTMINSTER STATION, VT

NATALIE A. PATRICK, 94
5/25/1928 - 4/3/2023
WESTMINSTER, VT

LEAH ROSIN-PRITCHARD, 36
1986 – 4/3/2023
WESTMINSTER WEST, VT
FORMERLY RHODE ISLAND

\$5 THRIFT SHOP BAG SALE



The Community Closet at Immanuel Episcopal Church at 20 Church St. in Bellows Falls is holding a \$5 Bag Sale on Saturday, April 22 and Saturday, May 13 from 9 a.m. to noon.

The Closet is full of winter clothing from new children's jackets, long sleeve jerseys/blouses, fleece vests and jackets, and sweaters. Stock up now for next winter.

The Closet is open most Saturdays from 9 a.m. until noon. We accept donations of clean, gently used clothing. At this time summer clothing is preferred. All proceeds from sales are returned to the community to support those families in need.

KH KIDS ENJOY EASTER EGG HUNT

The Kurn Hattin Homes children enjoyed an Easter egg hunt on campus this past weekend. Scattered were colorful, plastic eggs filled with candy, Caught Being Good coupons (used to purchase goodies in the campus store), and small sums of cash. The child collecting the most eggs won a special prize of \$20. Congratulations Precious on your win! Everyone had a fun time.



NOTES FROM WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS: APRIL 2023

94% attendance in March.....While we always wish for 100%, this is good.

Also good news, results from state testing for PCB's in the Westminster schools came in last week. None were detected. Meanwhile comprehensive air quality testing will be carried out between May and December this year, to set the air quality baseline ahead of installation of new HVAC systems this summer.

On March 24th we had our first in-person "Glow Party" after school at the Westminster Center. It was the first since Covid. Lots of kids and their families attended. There was music, dancing, games and plenty of snacks.....

In Early March we had a visit from Brattleboro fiction writer Ann Braden to our 4th – 6th grade classes. Students had read her book Flight of the Puffins before her visit and were prepared to ask questions about the plot and the meaning of her story.

Ann writes children's and young adult books about kids learning to stand up for themselves even when it's hard, and in her talk she emphasized themes of love and inclusion and peace.

This year the summer program for K-6 student throughout the WNESU will be held at the Westminster main campus. The 2023 program is free to all WNESU students thanks to special one-time funding from a federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant.

We have space for 150 students. Students will par-

ticipate in a mix of academic support and tutoring, art and projects, games and weekly field trips and swimming. The program will run from 8 AM – 4 PM from July 5th through August 4th.

Also on the agenda for the summer will be an upgrade of building security at both Westminster campuses as well as roof maintenance at both buildings. This work is also funded through the federal ESSER grant. The school board will begin making detailed plans for this work and other building improvements at their meeting on April 20th, and at subsequent special meetings on the 3rd Thursdays of the month through the summer as needed.

Please note that the regular school board meeting is on the 1st Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to the public in person at the Westminster Center School at 6 PM or on zoom at the same time.

Over the next month Westminster Center School will be implementing the Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program (VTCAP) in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science in grades 3-6.

These are no-stakes tests for the individual students but, as with all our annual assessments, the purpose is to get an objective measure of overall progress or learning recovery across each grade group and topic, compared to other groups in different places and over time.

*Charlie Hutchison Westminster School Board
Liz Hartly, Principal*

MEET YOUR LEGISLATORS

Drop by the Rockingham Free Public Library in Bellows Falls to chat with your Windham County Senators Nader Hashim and Wendy Harrison and your Windham-3 (Brookline, Rockingham and Westminster) House Representatives Michelle Bos-Lun and Leslie Goldman the third Saturdays of the month from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Upcoming dates are May 20.

For more information contact Rep. Michelle Bos Lun at mboslun@leg.state.vt.us or 802 289-2495.

RIPARIAN BUFFERS DISCUSSED

On Tuesday, May 2 at 7 p.m. at the Rockingham Library, join Cory Ross, District Manager for the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, for a presentation on riparian buffers, their conservation values and how to establish them along Westminster's waters.

Vegetated buffers along shorelines are the simplest and most effective way to improve water quality, enhance and protect wildlife and the values of rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands.

Ross will provide information on funding opportunities to help landowners plant buffers on their property at little or no cost. This presentation is sponsored by the Westminster Conservation Commission.

For more information, contact Alma Beals (802) 722-3355 or Sarah Waldo (802) 387-6036.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL PLANT SALE

The First Congregational Church of Westminster is having a Plant Sale on May 20th. Plants will include flowers and vegetable starts, Geraniums, perennial plants, several bushes (including Rose of Sharon and white forsythia).

As in previous years there will also be a food sale, offering many yummy baked goods, a craft table of handmade decorations and useful items, and a table of puzzles. Come and join us. Visit with friends and neighbors. Browse the plants and baked goodies.



Book Discussion at RFPL

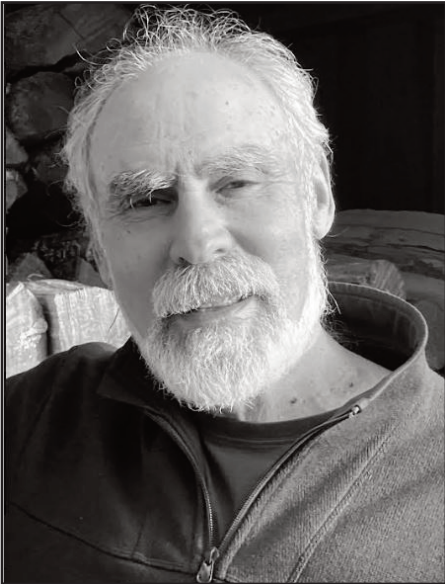
Pick up a copy of Horodno Burning by Vermont author Michael Freed-Thall (in photo) at Rockingham Library’s front desk today. Then join the discussion with the author in person on Thursday, May 18, at 6 p.m.

In the 19th century Russian Empire's Pale of Settlement, Esther Leving, a brilliant young bibliophile, chafes at male dominance, religious dogma, and anti-semitism. Bernard Garfinkle, a religious Jew and the son of a vodka distiller hides a shameful secret—in a culture that worships books, he can't read.

Despite their differences, they fall in love. Esther teaches Bernard to read, and he, in turn, builds her a bookshop. They start a family, but when ferocious pogroms target Russian Jews, they must confront violent oppression.

Vermont author, Michael Freed-Thall, will read from this work, share his research about the region’s Jewish history, and answer questions about the novel-writing process.

Horodno Burning was recently selected as a finalist in the Independent



Publishers of New England Book Awards of 2022 and is well-loved by Rockingham Library’s program coordinator Anne Dempsey.

For more information, visit rockinghamlibrary.org, email programming@rockinghamlibrary.org, call the Library at (802) 463-4270 or stop by the Library at 65 Westminster St. in Bellows Falls.

Mystery Photo



It will likely take an old time resident to identify who is driving this sleigh in this 1968 Westminster photo.

Cliff Watts sent us this information identifying last month’s Mystery Photo: “I think the building (being built rather than repaired) is the present Westminster West Church. I imagine the photo was taken from the steeple on the west side, before enclosure. The view is WSW with the cemetery on the left along TH62. In October 1989 my wife and I rented the house, seen (middle/right) on West Road, from Marie and Norm Wright. Late Fall, the new foundations for the church were being completed, so I suspect the photo was taken early Spring 1990. Have a great day!”

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

We’ve updated all the happenings entries. Please let us know when things change or when something should be added. Thank you!

Faith Community

The First Congregational Church of Westminster

As stated last month, the First Congregational Church has a new Pastor. We have welcomed Rev. Richard O'Donnell into the fold, and in return been regaled with wonderful, heartwarming sermons. We welcome all to come and join us in worship on Sunday mornings at 10:00. The following is a list of church events for May.

- Wednesday, May 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st, Bible Study at 10 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 3rd, Souper Wednesday Cook out to end the soup season.
- Saturday, May 7th, Worship and Communion, 10 a.m.
- Week of May 8th to 12th, Green Up at the church. A signup sheet with work times, most of which start at 10 a.m., is at the Church.
- Saturday, May 13th, Mary Brandt's funeral service, 3 p.m..
- Sunday, May 14th, Worship, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, May 20th, Spring Sale, including plants, puzzles, crafts, baked goods, cookout.
- Sunday, May 21st, Worship, 10 a.m.
- Sunday, May 28th, Worship, 10 a.m. followed by a Deacon's meeting.

The Congregational Church of Westminster West

Worships every Sunday at 10 a.m. We are using Facebook Live to stream our weekly services. Just go on Facebook to the church's page. If you are with us in person we ask you to wear a mask when conditions warrant it. (Masks are available at the church.) We are an Open and Affirming Church and fully accessible.

On the first Sunday of every month we celebrate Holy Communion. For those watching on Facebook, please provide your own elements for Holy Communion. On the second Sunday, the congregation collects a special offering for the food shelf at Our Place in Bellows Falls. Each dollar donated buys \$10 of food for Our Place from the Vermont Food Bank.

Our Pastor is Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno. She keeps office hours (either in the office itself or by visiting parishioners) on Thursday afternoons and is available by appointment at other times. She keeps Mondays as her Sabbath observation. She can be reached at susiewt@gmail.com com or (802)579-8356.

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:a.m. with Rev. Elaine Bomford. www.walpoleunitarian.org. First Sunday of each month is Circle Sunday with visiting presenters.

Activities

Gentle Yoga with Lisa Nigro

On line - call Westminster Cares 722-3607

Living Strong with Ronnie Friedman, Karen Walter

On line - Mondays & Thursdays 722-3607

Tai Chi new beginners’ class forming Tuesday 11 a.m. - noon at Westminster Institute Call Westminster Cares 802-722-3607

Souper Wednesdays

Homemade soups at Congregational Church Rt. 5 Noon - 2 p.m. By donation For deliveries Tina 802-376-7330

Putney Contradance

Last Sunday of month at 3 p.m. Pierce's Hall, 121 East Putney Falls Road Vaccinations, boosters & K95 masks contradanceputney@gmail.com

Scottish Country Dance

Not meeting at present 802-387-2601

Knitting Together

An Enjoyable Experience! Wednesdays 1- 3 p.m. Village Square Booksellers, Bellows Falls Bring your needles, we have yarn and casual instruction - all products donated locally. Contact: Caroline 802-463-4653

Melody Mornings

Music for Toddlers & Parents A Joyful Mix of singalong, rhythm & more Thursdays 10:30-11:30 a.m. Westminster West Library Free but parent attendance required Contact: Sarah or Stu 443-756-1274

Meetings

Town of Westminster - 802-722-4091

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 by ZOOM every 4th Thursday at 7:15 p.m.

Development Review Board 1st Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The A.R.P.A. Committee is scheduled to meet on the third Wednesday of each month, provided there is content to discuss. The meetings will start at 6 p.m. at the Westminster Institute. Interested community members are encouraged to attend. Contact pebanik@comcast.net.

Butterfield Library hours are Mon., Tues. and Thur. 1 - 6 p.m. and Sat 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Westminster Fire and Rescue Dept. 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. 802-722-3178

911 Committee as needed

Westminster Cares Board 802-722-3607 1st Wed., 4:30 p.m., Westminster Institute on-line & in person

Westminster Historical Society Board 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m. Town Hall 2nd floor

Westminster Institute Board 2nd Tues. 6:30 p.m., Westminster Institute jimmatteau@gmail.com

Westminster Gazette westminsternews@gmail.com 3rd Monday, 5 p.m., Westminster Institute

Westminster West Library Board 802-387-4682 2nd Wed. 7 p.m. at the WW Library Lib Hours Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 1- 6 p.m., Saturday 10 - 2 p.m.

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association 3rd Thurs. 7 p.m., Main St. Arts, Saxtons River whpatrails@gmail.com

The Living Earth Action Group most Fridays at 5 p.m. Westminster West Congregational Church Contact: Caitlin Adair pcadair@sover.net

Early Deadline:

The Deadline for the June 2023 Issue of the Westminster Gazette is Wednesday, May 17 Publication Date is Wednesday, May 24 To Contact the Westminster Gazette E-mail: westminsternews@gmail.com

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:

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westminsternews@gmail.com

MOTHER’S DAY WEEKEND EPHEMERAL WILDFLOWER WALK

Join the Westminster Conservation Commission in search of woodland wildflowers on Saturday, May 6 from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

We will meet in Westminster West village and car-pool to local deciduous forest trails where these short-lived blooms are plentiful and varied. (Exact location TBD).

Registration is required, and maximum number of participants is 12. To register, please email westminstervtconservation@gmail.com, or call Rachael Shaw at (802) 869-3184

Photo of Wild Ginger bloom at base of fuzzy heart-shaped leaves by Rachael Shaw.

THINK YOU MAY HAVE A DRINKING PROBLEM?
HCRS CAN HELP

Have you wondered whether alcohol is beginning to negatively impact your life, or that of a loved one? Are you concerned about the number of drinks you are consuming each week, or perhaps you’re bingeing on alcohol on the weekends? Are you worried about the impact of alcohol on your relationships, your work, involvement in the criminal justice system, or about your overall health?

Vermonters consume more alcohol than the national average, according to the Vermont Department of Health’s website. Alcohol is the most abused substance in Vermont, and Vermont deaths due to the overuse of alcohol doubled from 2017 to 2021 (<https://www.wcax.com/2023/02/08/vermont-alcohol-report-shows-increase-deaths/>).

Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS), Southeastern Vermont’s community mental health agency, provides substance use services and is available to help residents of Windham and Windsor counties who want to reduce their alcohol use.

According to HCRS CEO George Karabakakis, Ph.D., “We have seen an increase in people seeking services since the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members have experienced increased stress due to anxiety, isolation, and other impacts of the pandemic, resulting in their turning to alcohol.”

There are a variety of risks associated with excessive alcohol use, including: injury from vehicle acci-

dents, falls, etc., violence, and poisoning, just to name a few. Long term health risks include high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, depression, anxiety, and memory problems.

HCRS works with clients to look at how they think, make decisions, engage in relationships, address self-care, and set boundaries with others, opening people up to possibilities for change.

Experienced and licensed HCRS counselors are available to help people examine how alcohol use affects their life. In a respectful, confidential, and non-threatening manner, staff help clients to set their own goals, create strategies to achieve them, and help them to understand and change their relationship with alcohol.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Organized by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence in 1987, this awareness event was designed to educate people on the dangers of alcohol as well as reduce the stigma which often prevents people from seeking help.

To receive alcohol services in southeastern Vermont, reach out to HCRS by calling one of their toll-free lines: Hartford area: (855) 220-9430, Springfield area: (855) 220-9429, or Brattleboro area: (855) 220-9428. You can also view their website (www.HCRS.org) for more information.

WHY A DECLARATION OF INCLUSION?

At the Selectboard Meeting on April 12, an attendee posed a question. “If we have signs which say “WELCOME to WESTMINSTER (or Westminster West)” why do we need to say more?

That question is at the core of the statewide Declaration of Inclusion campaign to have conversations about what we mean by “welcome” in the second whitest state in the nation, at a time when finding new employees is difficult. It is also essential as we seek both a new Town Manager and Town Clerk, as it begs the question of our vision for who we have been and want to be together as we live into the twenty-first century.

Over the next few months, and until the Town Meeting in March 2024, we will have important conversations about these very questions and about the following statement which was drafted by a group in town:

The Town of Westminster welcomes all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, differing ability, socio-economic status, and education.

The Town of Westminster commits to being a place where individuals may live freely and express their opinions without fear, where kindness and respect are valued, and where all persons feel safe and welcome.

As a town, we condemn discrimination in all its forms and will strive to ensure that all our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment.

All residents will be invited to give input, to add (eg, “veterans” as some towns have done), to edit as seems right and, ultimately, to vote for a statement of who we hope to be for each other in years to come.

For more information go to <https://vtdeclarationofinclusion.org/> or contact Lise Sparrow at lisemsparrow@gmail.com.

BOOK DONATIONS SOUGHT FOR PUTNEY LIBRARY GARDEN FUNDRAISER

While it might still be a little early to weed your garden, it's a perfect time to weed your books! Do your spring cleaning and support the library's new tree and garden planting with a donation to the Garden Fundraiser Book Sale!

The Putney Public Library seeks book donations to support our Garden Fundraiser Book Sale, which will take place on Saturday, May 20th 9am-1pm and Sunday, May 21st 11am-3pm.

While books of all kinds are welcome, we are unable to accept encyclopedia sets, magazines, textbooks, Reader's Digest condensed books, DVDs and CD and anything that is musty or moldy. Donations of this kind will be sent back with you so please donate responsibly.

Donations cannot be left outside the library after hours. Please bring donations only during library hours: Monday-Friday 10:30am-6pm and Saturday 10am-1pm. We may have to limit or stop accepting donations later in the month. For more information please call 802-387-4407 or email emily@putneylibrary.org

Putney Public Library is located at 55 Main St.

2023

Westminster West Perennial Plant Sale

AT THE WESTMINSTER WEST LIBRARY

3409 WESTMINSTER WEST RD

Saturday, May 20, 2023

9 am - 1 pm

And Bake Sale Too

AFTERNOON ENGLISH TEA

SUNDAY, MAY 7TH

2-4 P.M.

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BEEKEEPING WORKSHOP

" Charles F. Andros, former NH/VT Apiary Inspector, will hold a beekeeping workshop from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 29. Topics of discussion will be early spring management, locating apiaries, equipment, handling bees, feeding syrup and supplements, making nuclei, reversing, and requeening.

Look for the "BEE" sign on the south side of Walpole Valley Road (18 MacLean Road, 1st on right, Alstead, NH) Bring a veil, if you have one, as we shall be opening some colonies. Water and sunscreen are also a plus.

Registration required. Email: lindenamel@gmail.com or call 603-756-9056."

SIGNS

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**MAY BUSINESS
OF THE MONTH:
HARLOW FARMSTAND**



We're excited to welcome you back to Harlow Farmstand on Saturday, April 29, for our 32nd year as part of the community. Stop by and let us know how your winter went.

Say hello to Dan Harlow (bottom photo) and his staff, Cherie, Lori, Ethan, and Andrew (top photo), and say farewell to Dee, who leaves for her well-deserved retirement in June.

We'll have all the usual great spring stuff: flower and vegetable starts, annuals and perennials, as well as hanging baskets for Mother's Day, all organically grown, of course.

We'll be well-stocked with everything else: fruits and veggies, dairy products, Harlow Farm eggs and frozen chickens, meat, wine and beer, Orchard Hill bread, and preserves such as jams and salsa.

We're open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day. Michael Lenox will be opening Cafe Loco that weekend as well, serving delicious breakfasts and lunches. Outside dining as soon as the weather warms up! Please note: Cafe Loco will be closed on Tuesdays this season.

You'll find more on our website, harlowfarm.com, and please like us on Facebook.

**NELSON NEW FOOD
CONNECTS MANAGER**

Food Connects is excited to welcome Kris Nelson as its Farm to School Program Manager. Kris joined the team at the end of 2022 and is bringing her experience in experiential education and service learning to guide the Farm to School program through its next phase of growth.



Kris's professional background focuses on fostering collaborative efforts between innovative community-based endeavors and K-12, higher education, and adult literacy programs. She brings a unique perspective to the organization and is committed to building a firm foundation for the Farm to School program.

Having recently completed a Doctorate in Education, researching college students' responses to climate change, Kris is thrilled to have landed in an organization committed to strengthening vital relationships among farmers, communities, young people, and the land. "I knew I wanted my next job to be connected to supporting regional food systems, and the Farm to School Program Manager position looked exactly right to me," says Kris. "The more I learned about Food Connects, not only the work it does but also the kind of organization it strives to be, the more I was sure I wanted to work here."

When asked about her goals in her new role as Program Manager, Kris says she hopes to help create a firm fiscal and structural foundation for the Farm to School program so it can continue its tremendous work. "How can we keep the momentum going as a student moves from the awesome Farm to School activities they are doing in elementary school to equally awesome programming in the higher grades? That strikes me as a pretty exciting project."

Food Connects is an entrepreneurial nonprofit that works to transform the regional food system into one that is community-based to realize its vision of healthy families, thriving farms, and connected communities. Its Food Hub aggregates and delivers from over 125 local and regional farms and food producers to over 280 customers in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

In photo Food Connects welcomes Farm to School Program Manager Kris Nelson.

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