

WESTMINSTER HONORS ITS REVOLUTIONARY PAST

Story and Photos by Lonnie and Obe Lisai

The Sons of the American Revolution met on Sept. 16 at the East Parish Cemetery in Westminster for a grave marking ceremony.

The Westminster Revolutionary War Veterans honored were Atherton Chaffee, Ephraim Ranney, Joseph Gilson, Joseph Willard and Benjamin Howard. The solemn ceremony was presented by Vermont Sons of the American Revolution, New Hampshire SAR, Ann Story Chapter (Vermont Society), Molly Stark Chapter (New Hampshire Society), Daughters of the American Revolution and the General John Stark Society of New Hampshire.

Robert Stoecklin of the Nevada SAR Society provided the five SAR Bronze markers. The Westminster Historical Society was the host and provided a reception following the ceremony at the museum in the town hall.

In that old cemetery alone, 43 Revolutionary soldiers are buried. Westminster Proud. The New Hampshire SAR Color Guard gave the musket salute.

George Washington said, “The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.”



WESTMINSTER CARES CELEBRATES OLDEST RESIDENTS

On Sept. 17 Westminster Cares and town residents recognized Westminster’s 90-plus-year-old citizens during the annual Celebration of Aging.

The event was held outdoors, on the back lawn of the Institute with over 60 people in attendance including guests of honor, their families and members of the community. The event was moved to the rain date and Sunday’s weather cooperated for a beautiful, sunny day to honor our oldest community residents with lunch and a presentation.

The highlight of the event was the presentation by Pete Harrison, vice president, addressing each of the honored guests. The lively presentation included interesting family history, places they’ve lived, companies they’ve worked for, and stories about their lives in the community. The audience also got to hear each guest of honor’s favorite song.

Westminster currently has 10 residents who are 90 years of age or older. Nine still live independently in the area: Bob Gay, Charlotte Kurkul, Johana Crocker, Lee MacDuffie, Bill Smidutz, Polly Kissell, Randy Major and “newcomers” Don Nowers, Bill O’Connor and Keith Gallup.

This year, nine residents were able to attend the event. The group’s ages are as follows: two are 90, one is 91, one is 92, two are 93, two are 94, one is 99 and one is 101!

Many attendees and family members had not seen one another in several years and in some cases their friendships go back as far as grade school. They enjoyed reminiscing and catching up on their lives. It was wonderful to witness the strong connections that our community inspires.

Westminster Cares board and committee members decorated tables with mums and gourds; served the light lunch and made the gingerbread dessert. (Thank you to Sarah and Smokin’ Bowls catering for the delicious soups.) Honorees were thanked for their contributions to the community and given mums and a gift bag to take home.

Next fall we will include anyone born in 1934 or earlier - if that’s you or someone you know, please give a call @ 722-3607 to let us know.

In photos, clockwise from top: Pete Harrison giving the presentation; Don and Maggie Nowers (center) with board members Doug Oftedahl and Pat Goodell; Pete Harrison with Keith Gallup and his son Bob Formanson; Bill and Marlene O’Connor with Bill Smidutz.



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IN THIS ISSUE:

TOWN REPORTS - PG. 3&4

NATURE NOTES - FOX - PG. 4

REMEMBRANCES - PG. 5

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES - PG. 8

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Our Monthly Community Newspaper October 2023 Vol. 19 No. 10

Westminster Gazette

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OUR WORKING LANDSCAPE: IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE WEATHER

Westminster has many farms and businesses which work the land to create products 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.

By Mary Scherbatskoy

This year Westminster had two extreme weather events, the freeze of May 17-18, and the rain on July 10 and 11. Here are some of the effects that were noticed by farmers both down on the Westminster fields and up in the hills of the West Parish. It was a bad summer, with a lot of discouraging outcomes.

The Freeze

Many farmers escaped major damage from the freeze, mainly because field crops are often started in greenhouses or tunnels to be transplanted when they are big enough, and so were under cover when the temperature dropped so quickly in May. Some crops already in the field were saved by using spray irrigation systems - as water turns to ice, it releases heat which can be just enough to keep the crop from freezing. They use this technique in Florida to protect the citrus crop also. Some strawberries were lost. The corn mostly dodged a bullet: if the freeze had been a little later - or the farmers earlier - in planting corn, the emerging shoots would have frozen, and the fields to be replanted. I'm afraid we all have heard about catastrophic losses in the apple orchards.

The Rain

The rain was not just a downpour on July 10 - 11, it also was much more than usual for the rest of the month (8.5"); it began in mid-June (almost 6") and followed into August, (5.5"). On September, 10 there was 3" at the Westminster / Putney line. (See photo)

With too much rain, of course crops don't grow

well for lack of sun or air to their roots. But the worst problem is access to fields - when the ground is too soft, cultivation equipment would damage the ground or get stuck. Potatoes are a demanding crop anyway, requiring high fertility and much cultivation; in some places they were strangled by weeds.

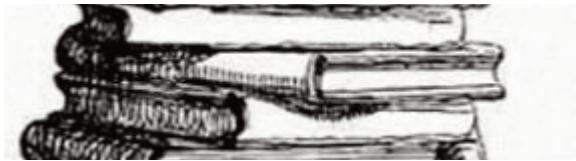
Squash in raised beds did well, but elsewhere was wiped out. Crops that survived are difficult to harvest when the ground is still too soft.

Another problem from heavy rain is that the soil may be so compacted from the pressure that seeds already sown cannot break through the surface; this happened to carrots and lettuce in particular. Crops may have to be planted all over again. Kale is a very slow crop so it will be late.

When there is standing water in a field, the law often requires that the whole crop be plowed under, since it could be contaminated with toxins or mold etc. There are also bacteria that infect the soil, so for example peppers cannot be grown there for several years.



Watch out for a shortage of hot sauce!
So the rains cost our farmers lot of time, labor, money and frustration. Let's hope for a good autumn to give everyone a break!
Thanks to the Westminster farmers for this information.
In photo, clearing up after the monsoon.



BUTTERFIELD LIBRARY BOOK SALE

The Butterfield Library Annual Book Sale will be on Saturday, Oct. 7 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. behind the Westminster Institute building.

The rain date is Oct. 8.
We will be accepting books until Oct. 5 during regular library hours.

Do not leave textbooks or books in poor condition.
Call 802-722-4891 for more information.
Do not leave books outside on the porches.

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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**

UNEXPECTED
VISITORS

PIGS BREAKOUT FROM KESTREL FARM
TOUR VILLAGE’S HIGH SPOTS

Eleven slippery pigs escaped their freedom for long. Owner Paul Harlow and several local farmers – Seth Holton, Real Bazin Sr. and Jr. and workers from Old Athens Farm -- rounded up the roving porkers and herded them safely home.

The adventurers did not enjoy their Kestrel Farm pasture on Sept. 18. They scampered up Grout Avenue and explored the grounds of Westminster Institute for a while.



SO WHO WAS THERE AT THE WESTMINSTER WEST COMMUNITY FAIR?

On Sept. 9, 31 children ages 3 - 14 carried out a Survey at the Westminster West Community Fair to learn more about the people enjoying the day. There were also some very dedicated parents steering the youngest ones! Here is what they found out:

1. Which food do you like best? The winners were apple pie (18) and steak (10) with kale far behind (1).

2. Where were you born? Brattleboro (5), Vermont/here (4), New York (3), New Jersey (2), and one each in Westminster, Putney, Keene, Greenfield, Northampton, Massachusetts, New Haven, Boston, Washington DC, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, San Antonio, Jerusalem, either Verona or Vernon, and ‘in the bath’.

3. Do you have brothers and sisters? Most people had 2 brothers or sisters. 7 people were only children, and 7 were in families of 5, 6 or 7 children.

4. Do you do any volunteer work? 16 people volunteer, with organizations such as the WW Library (6), the Church (2), at Westminster Cares, the Food Shelf, the School, the Hospital, on a farm, at Arroyo Vista, and ‘at home’. (2)

5. What do you like to do for fun? This was a pretty thoughtful group, with 4 enjoying reading, knitting/sewing (4), going for walks (3), swimming (4), and one each for listening to music, singing, acting, and laughing. On the active side, 4 people liked to bike, 2 to hike. Also mentioned were skiing, sailing, riding (2), and tag. One person liked to go to car shows, and one to make crazy-loom bracelets.

6. What is the longest walk you ever went on? Where? There were a lot of big hikes: Into the Grand Canyon (3), 200 miles in the Himalayas (3) (or maybe the same person was questioned 3 times!), 260 miles in Montana, the Cascades, and Rapid City to Mt. Rushmore were the longest ones. Nearer home were Putney Mtn. to the Pinnacle, Pinkham Notch to Tuckerman’s, WW to Putney, and at Okemo. Shorter hikes were: 6 miles, West Road to Cross Rd, from the house to the pond, and 15 minutes.

7. Almost everyone knew where Maple Grove Grange is (across from the Church) but only half knew that it was originally the Town Hall.

8. Only 4 people were found who make maple syrup. They boil it at the Putney School, at home (2) and ‘in a pan’.

9. Only half of the people knew that the WW Library was built in 1936.

10. Where do you buy eggs? Livewater/Acquaviva Farm (6), own chickens (4), Coop (4), Trader Joe’s (3), on a farm (3), Farmer’s Market (2), Some-such Farm (2), Hannafords (2), at the store (2) and from neighbors or next door.

This was a very informal survey with kids roaming around with paper and pencil and choosing who to question. The average age of the ‘researchers’ was 7.5; they came from Westminster West (15); Westminster (2); Putney (7), Saxtons River (2), and Bel-lows Falls, Brattleboro and ‘Vermont’.

Not all questions got answered completely; more than one reply may have come from the same person, so those with a very friendly face may be over-represented. Still, the results tell us a lot about our community today.

And everyone got a prize!

NEWS FROM THE TOWN GARAGE - ROAD GRADING

Hello Neighbors,

"Why haven't the roads been graded this summer as much as last summer? Have you clowns forgot how the grader works? I spilled my beer all over the inside of my car!" This was last week's phone message!

The reply is that the road has a hard crust that has been formed by months of compaction and grading would loosen up that surface and make it more vulnerable to the heavy rain events that we are getting more frequently. This would increase the odds of a major washout during a flash flood.

On Sunday, Aug. 3 on the south end of town we received a shipment of 4 to 5 inches of rain, depending on where you were, in less than an hour. The damage was minimal.

We have been cleaning culverts, cut outs, plunge pools and ditches throughout town and it seems to have paid off this time. We all know when you make mother nature mad anything can happen.

The grader is out of the shop, it had some computer issues, and we will be out doing a final grade and rolling before the winter months. Grading in the rain just makes mud so please bear with us. We appreciate the patience that all have displayed this far.

We will be on the West Road doing Act 64 work, which entails ditching, berm removal, re-shaping with some stone ditches as well as some grass. This is all part of a Better Roads grant through the State. I wanted to be a little further along than we are. I am going with my ever-growing popular excuse, "It's been too wet."

The drill press at the highway is one that came from Tractor Supply six years ago and is worn out. In a conversation with Don Lennon, owner of Len-Tex in North Walpole, I stated that we would love to get our hands on a Bridgeport milling machine someday. To my surprise he replied with "I have a mill you can have."

The day I went and looked at it, Dick, the head of maintenance was still using it. He disconnected the power and loaded it in our truck.

Thank you, Don, the residents of Westminster will benefit from this gift for years.

Thank you all for your support,
Chuck and Crew

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met Sept. 6 in person and via WebEx with President Lori Larue presiding. The following attended in person: Lori Larue, Pete Harrison, Pat Goodell, Cindy Moses, Nancy Dalzell, Frannie Waldron, Doug Oftedahl and director Donna Dawson. Those attending via WebEx were Don Dawson and Kathy Elliott. Miriam Lanata and Regina Borden were unable to attend.

Meals-on-Wheels: June - August: Between 24-26 residents received home-delivered Meals on Wheels five days per week.

Transportation Program: June – August: 11 rides were given for medical appointments; pharmacy pick-ups; shopping and banking; and dropping off for surgery.

Assistance and Referrals: Volunteers dropped off monthly pet food to seven residents participating in the Foxy Fund program through Senior Solutions.

Medical Equipment: June - August: 10 items borrowed; seven items returned; two pieces of equipment donated; one donation of supplies.

Community Nurse Program: Our Nurse continued offering risk assessment and wellness education via phone support for 12 clients and one in-person client visit from June - August.

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

Donations Received in September 2023:

In honor of Joni Morse on her 80th birthday from Elizabeth Mooney and Teagen Kosut.

In memory of Laura Leonard from Nancy Dalzell

In memory of Lois M. Woodard, our beloved mother, grandmother and friend, from the families of Howard Reed and Richard Reed.

Programs & Services Provided in August 2023

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Nature Notes - Gray and Red Foxes

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

My daughter has lived in Keene for several years and has seen more wildlife there than I thought she would. She regularly sees bears and deer and once a bobcat in her back yard. Recently, she and a neighbor have watched two young gray foxes playing when she takes her dog out in early morning or evening.

I asked her how she knew they were gray fox and not red fox. Most of us look for the white on the end of a red fox’s tail while the gray fox’s tail is black. Then I started wondering what other differences there are. The gray fox’s den site is a hollow log or tree, a rock crevice, a pile of wood or a brush pile while a red fox is apt to have a burrow underground. Would you believe gray foxes can climb trees?

I have seen a woodchuck climb a tree when confronted by a group of kids surprising him. But never having seen a fox in a tree, I thought really? Google says, “grays have rotating wrists and semi-retractable claws that help them climb up high to den, forage, and escape predators.” The reds do not have retractable claws so they can’t climb trees. When escaping enemies or hunting prey, the fox can shinny up the trunk of a tree to a limb and then jump from limb to limb. How I would love to witness that.

The red fox is more adaptable than the gray fox. Ted Levin in his book “Backtracking” said, “gray foxes tolerate hot, dry conditions better than red foxes do and range much farther south but where the two foxes meet, the red fox has the upper hand. Both foxes prefer a di-



photos by Don Clark

versity of habitat but the gray fox, a tree climber, needs big woods with leaning trees. So, when the timber fell, the gray suffered.”

The reds are rusty orange above and whitish below, legs reddish above and black below, tail bushy and white-tipped. The grays are gray above, throat and mid-belly white, lower sides, legs and sides of tail rusty, top and tip of tail black. The grays are slighter smaller than the reds.

Their diet is pretty much the same made up of rdents,



rabbits, birds, insects, berries and fruit. When prey is plentiful, they may eat only a small amount of their kill, cache the rest and go hunting for more. In a year where there are a lot of meadow voles, their diet may consist almost entirely of voles.

Foxes begin hunting at dusk and prowl until dawn. During the day, they may remain in the den or sleep in an open area on higher ground where they can hear, smell, and see anything around them.

Now that I know a fox can climb a tree, I have to start watching.

A WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: A WESTMINSTER GIRL

By Jessie Haas

The Westminster Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. at the Firehouse on Grout Avenue. A brief business meeting will be followed by a talk by Barbara Greenough, author of the local bestseller, “A Girl In Westminster In the 1940s and 50s.” The talk will be cosponsored by the Butterfield Library.

Barb was born here in 1937. Her father, Harold Shattuck, was milking cows for the Fred Fenn farm, making \$13/week. Fenn loaned him the money to buy the Metcalf store in the center of the village in 1944. The store sold pretty much everything, from Crowley cheese to comic books to Mrs. Shattuck’s canner full of baked beans, which sold out every Saturday.

The Post Office was in the store which also sold bus tickets for Vermont Transit. The store also played an important role in the early days of the fire department. People would call the store to report a fire. One of the Shattucks—usually Barb—would run outside to push a button on the telephone pole, which set off the siren. Then it was her responsibility to tell the firemen where the fire was.

When not at the store, Barb was painting, or at the swimming hole south of the Village, or at the Institute, or playing in the cemetery and in every attic in town. Shattucks' Store sold and cut window glass, which came in handy as Barb batted a ball at least three times through the windows of the Richmond house (now Lucy and Jim Matteau's) while playing with Sam Streeter.

Barb told a lot of these stories in her book, and we all have our favorites (who else loves the flaming bean story best?). But they aren't the only stories she has to tell. She's working on a second book, and her presentation on Oct. 19 will preview some of that. It will be an interview format with plenty of opportunity for questions and comments from the audience.

As the Institute approaches its 100th anniversary in 2024, we'll talk a lot about its role in village life, and we'll learn a little Butterfield history from librarian Linda Fawcett.

Barb is an artist, and we plan to exhibit a number of her paintings. Also on exhibit will be a signature quilt



made for the retirement of Reverend Helen Lyman. She was the pastor at the Congregationalist churches in both the East and West Parishes. The signatures on this quilt will stir up memories for many of us.

Some Important Details

At this historical moment, we are experiencing another surge of Covid-19 infections. Rather than cancel our annual meeting or move to Zoom, as we've done in the recent past, we are holding it, with a few changes.

Masks will be handed out at the door, and we hope

you'll wear them. There's an important wedding in town the week after the Annual Meeting and we all want to go, so let's not share any viruses!

After the meeting we hope you'll linger over the quilt, and Barb's scrapbook of her time as Vermont's Dairy Queen, and meeting Eisenhower. No refreshments this year, to keep ourselves and the quilt and scrapbook safe.

We will have Barb's book for sale, as well as the village map of who lived where, compiled by Barb and Ruth Grandy. Additionally we'll have two other small books by and about Westminster girls available, Fanny Grout's Diary, and Gretta Woods' “Long Ago In Westminster.”

Fanny Grout grew up on Grout Avenue in the 1840s and 50s. She kept a diary in 1855-56, a time when she was transitioning from being a student to teaching school herself. Her diary is

full of village social life. Gretta Woods grew up at the bottom of Court House Hill and on Morse Brook Road in the 1930s. Her book covers farm life and gives a great sense of how things were done in earlier times.

The Firehouse is handicapped-accessible.

For more information call 802-490-4281, or email kjh@sover.net.

In photo, Barbara Shattuck meeting President Ike Eisenhower in June 1955 in Rutland, VT.

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 Oct. 3 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 August: 35
- Number of calls through September 21st: 25
- Number of calls calendar year to date: 387
- Number of calls fiscal year to date: 116

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting September 5th with President J.T. Tabolt presiding. There were 24 members present and 12 members excused. Currently there are 48 members of the volunteer fire department.

The department welcomed Abigail Joslyn as a new member under the 6 month probation guidelines.

Emergency responses: August turned out to be another busy month with 35 calls for the month. Here is the breakdown for the 35 calls for August: 4 mutual aid, 2 to Alstead, 1 to Springfield, 1 to Walpole; 24 rescue/medical calls; 1 motor vehicle accident/ incidents;

2 false alarms/ box alarms; 1 fuel spill; 2 service calls; 1 first alarm.

Storing and disposing of batteries: There was a fire recently that might have been caused by a 9-volt battery igniting items being stored in a drawer. Batteries are hazardous and should be stored and disposed of properly.

Fire wood: Be sure your fire wood is well cured and not too green before using it. Green or uncured wood can create creosote and possibly cause a chimney fire.

Also when covering your wood pile, cover the top only and leave the sides to be exposed to the air and sunlight. Wood that is completely covered can actually rot instead of drying.

Back to School: Now that school has begun, there will be a lot of students walking to and from school and to their busses. There are no sidewalks in many areas forcing students to walk in the roadways.

Walkers should remember to always walk on the left side of the road facing traffic and bike riders need to be riding with the flow of traffic on the right side. As it is getting darker earlier each day, walkers and bikers will need to wear light colored clothing and reflective vests when traveling in the dark or diminished light. And having a flashing light on both front and rear of your bike is a very good idea even during the daylight. Drivers should be extra cautious with more pedestrians and bikes

on the roads.

Off Road: The fire department is looking for names of anyone who has off road vehicles that they would be willing to operate in case of an emergency requiring off road or 4-wheelers. Contact any member of the department if this is something you are able to make available.

Chimney: Before you fire up your wood stove or furnace, take a look up your chimney or hire a professional to see if it needs cleaning or something has built a nest in it and plugged it up .Every year it seems a home is damaged or completely destroyed due to an avoidable chimney fire.

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 or honor a loved one or a friend. Send donation to: Westminster Fire & Rescue Association PO Box 111 Westminster, 05158.

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 web-site www.westminsterfire-andrescue.org.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

“I’M OLD ENOUGH TO DO...”

by Helen Neswald

“...whatever I want...” These words, uttered by my rebellious brother-in-law, eight years older than I, struck me as ironic at the time, since I had always thought of him as someone who had done just that all his life. For me, however, that phrase became a sort of internal mantra.

As I approached my 80s, I began to feel a new sense of freedom from constraints, real or imaginary, that was empowering.

Such empowerment had, of course, to take into consideration the existential constraints of aging -- sensory and muscle loss, cognitive, shall we say, bumps in the road, and for some, financial limitations.

For me, newly exalted (megalomania being a propensity of the weakened brain), all these were a piffle, compared with my nifty lodge -- good health, happy relationships, engagement in satisfying volunteerism, and financial means sufficient to afford me my simple and -- I hoped -- resourceful lifestyle.

This new posture affected everything, from what I ate for breakfast, my recreational choices (appropriately tailored to exclude activities of high risk to brittle bones) and indulgences in my favorite creative activities -- home cooking (co-eaters being happily available), painting, poetry writing and scribbling brief and trivial essays about aging in general.

Once I had wanted to write something meatier than poetry and even, at a critical juncture in my life, had spun out a 500 page memoir ("Grandma, you wrote 500 pages?" "Easy " said I, "one page a day for a year and a half..."), which I later trashed because I no longer

shared some of its perceptions

Admittedly, I'm lazy in my choices. The memoir I later wrote and published only for the eyes of family and close friends, is modeled on Kipling's, and is a mere 70 pages.

My culinary skills are strictly applicable to family dining, my style of painting is splashy and exuberant, my poetry sporadic and short. But I'm happy being lazy.

My daily walks are no more ambitious than my shortness of limbs and needs for outdoor breathing and viewing require. I've never skied, tho I swam and still swim, in brief but restorative sessions in my very own swimming pond -- only in summer, of course.

I plow my way through sometimes formidable winters and indulge my love of outdoors all summer long, tending grounds and vegetable gardens, enjoying the company and productions of my flock of chickens, worshipping living things of all ilk, even those I do my best to keep away, reading outdoors under an unproductive apple tree whenever the fancy takes me and bidding a sad farewell to summer when it is indisputably over.

Though I've sometimes, fleetingly, considered becoming a snow bird and moving into a site of eternal summer, I know better. Warm locations have been hard hit by climate change and here in Vermont we have been blessed with milder winters and sufficient rainfall for growing things, albeit with also a loss of valuable flora and fauna.

In any case, I am hopelessly spellbound by the all-season beauty that surrounds me in my rural home.

In short, I do whatever I want to and am proud to confess as much!

KURN HATTIN WELCOMES NEW SCHOOL YEAR

It's an atmosphere filled with anticipation and excitement as Kurn Hattin Homes for Children opens its doors to welcome students back for the start of the 2023-2024 school year. As the academic term begins, Kurn Hattin is embarking on a journey of growth, learning, and success in its mission to provide a nurturing environment for children in need.

In his remarks to students, School Principal Will Gardner said, “Welcome, students! Get ready to embrace new challenges and seek fresh opportunities as you begin a new academic year. We promise that you will have an enriching experience this year, making great progress in your classwork while making new friends, trying new things, and learning what it means to persevere and to never give up! We are excited to learn with you and help you accomplish your goals. You inspire us to come up with new ways to overcome challenges. It's your enthusiasm that helps us get better at what we do. Give everything you do your best shot this year and stay positive!”

The school year ahead promises to be a dynamic blend of rigorous academics, character development, and enriching extracurricular activities. Kurn Hattin Homes' holistic approach to education ensures that stu-



dents excel in traditional subjects and acquire essential life skills that will serve them well beyond the classroom.

What sets Kurn Hattin Homes apart is its sense of community and its commitment to providing not only a quality education, but a home and family for its students. Staff and supporters are prepared to work with students, guiding them through challenges and celebrating their achievements.

This year promises to continue the legacy of shaping bright futures for the children it serves.

In photo, Super Swell of School Spirit -- Kurn Hattin Homes' academic, residential, and administrative staff are ready for a super successful 2023-2024 school year.

FIRE CHIEF RECALLS FAMOUS FIRES

On Saturday Oct. 21, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the Chester Town Hall Auditorium, 556 Elm Street, Arnold P. Stoddard -- the last Fire Chief of Chester's Firehouse #2, the historic and distinctive twin-towered firehouse, known familiarly as the Yosemite Firehouse (photo), located on Route 103/Depot Street in Chester -- will show and discuss pages from his album containing photos and newspaper articles of fires in Chester and surrounding towns.

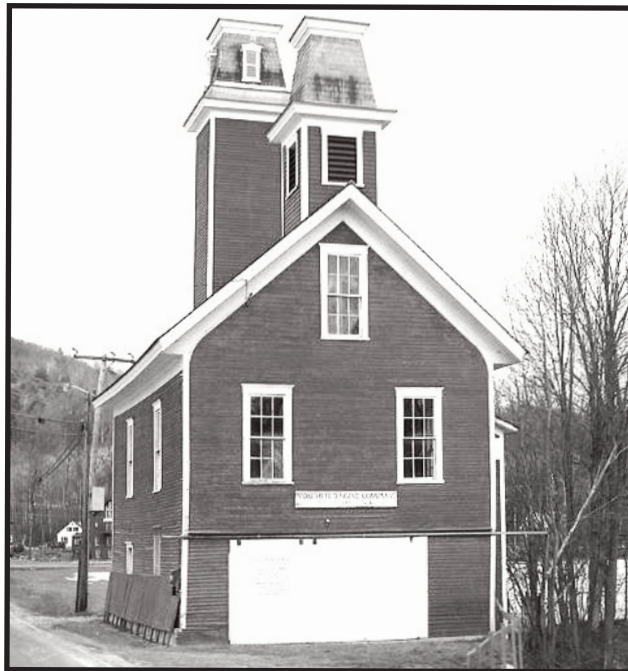
Chief Stoddard will tell side stories and details of some of the memorable blazes in the album, covering almost 30 years of fires from 1955 to 1983.

The public is invited to attend the event to hear Stoddard's firsthand accounts and to examine the pertinent album pages, which will be displayed on tables for viewing both before and after the program.

Past firemen and local residents may want to share their own memories of those blazes at the end of the program. Plans for the revamped museum structure will also be displayed.

In 2022 Chief Stoddard donated his two albums of photos and clippings regarding fires, firemen, and fire equipment to the newly formed Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization working with other entities to rehabilitate the building into a fire museum.

The firehouse is on both the State and National Register of Historic Places and still houses several antique fire vehicles. The new Friends of Yosemite has a broad mission to preserve and enhance the historic Yosemite Firehouse Museum of Fire District No. 2 by working with public and private partners to protect Yosemite's equipment, records, and memorabilia and to educate the public about fire safety, the evolving history of fire



fighting, and the dedicated volunteer and professional firefighters who serve Chester and its surrounding communities.

Through educational programs and fundraising events, the Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum is committed to moving the museum project forward. The Friends group invites the public to become involved in this important process and welcomes tax-deductible donations, contributions of pertinent memorabilia, and volunteers.

For further information, please contact Friends of Yosemite Firehouse Museum, PO Box 318, Chester, VT 05143.

REMEMBRANCES

MARY BARBER, 76
8/15/1947 - 8/31/2023
CONCORD, NH PREVIOUSLY
BELLOWS FALLS, VT

ELIZABETH “BETH” BRASSEL, 59
7/28/2023
LOWELL, MA

CAROL CHURCH
WESTMINSTER WEST, VT

LENA CUOMO
WESTMINSTER WEST, VT

SALLY DAVIS, 76
6/13/1947 – 9/10/2023
WESTMINSTER WEST, VT

OLIVER WILLIAM HUTCHISON, 21
6/12/2002 – 8/30/2023
BRATTLEBORO AND
WESTMINSTER WEST, VT

ROB HAAS

ALLAN SHEPARD, 74
12/27/1949 – 8/29/2023
NORTH WALPOLE, NH

BURTON ALLEN NOWERS, SR.
AUG. 15, 1930-JULY 28, 2023

INTERESTED IN LEARNING TAI CHI?

Beginner Tai Chi classes are forming at the Westminster Institute, co-sponsored by Westminster Cares and Oriental Healing Arts Association.

Tai Chi is a mind-body exercise from China with roots in Traditional Chinese Medicine and martial arts. Studies show it can improve health and reduce the risk of falling. All are welcome. If you're 50 and up, consider attending.

Tai chi has been called meditation in motion. It can act as preventive medicine. Benefits can include: improving balance and flexibility; lowering blood pressure; enhancing relaxation and calmness; and improving muscle strength.

Possible times: Tuesdays, 11 am and/or Tuesdays, 6:30 pm

Start date: yet to be determined

Cost \$10 per class; partial scholarships available

Taught by Leslie Lassetter, OHAA senior instructor.

Students love her Qi Gong warmup. OHAA Tai Chi is designed to be senior safe.

Interested? Contact Donna Dawson of Westminster Cares: 802-722-3607, wecares@sover.net

ACCESSIBLE YOGA FOR ALL BODIES

Westminster Cares is co-hosting a new yoga class which started Sept. 11.

This class is taught by Lisa Nigro, who has over 30 years of teaching experience. For the past 10+ years she has been focused on teaching yoga in an accessible way for people whose bodies have varying needs and abilities due to aging and/or injury.

Lisa is able to work safely and expertly with students of all levels of fitness and experience. Class is taught with ample opportunity to challenge yourself as desired.

The focus is on balance, mobility, range of motion, core strength, and mindfulness. Individualized attention is given to help you learn what works best for your body.

Classes will be held at the Westminster Institute on Monday's from 10 to 11:15 a.m. The fee is \$18 for a drop-in or \$200 for a 15 week session.

FLANNEL FEST OCT. 14&15



Coming in October from the Greater Falls Regional Chamber of Commerce The Southern Vermont Flannel Festival, on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 14 and 15 at the beautiful Rockingham Hill Farm.

Celebrate Fall the Southern Vermont way with live music, pies, cider, craft beers, food, flannel and fun.

Join us as a vendor, enter your favorite family recipe in our Flannel Festival Pie Bake Off or just come and enjoy all that Fall has to offer.

Check out the details on our website or on Facebook, www.gfrcc.org.

MYSTERY PHOTO

This is a black and white photo of a colorized souvenir post card of a well-known geographic feature on the edge of Westminster.

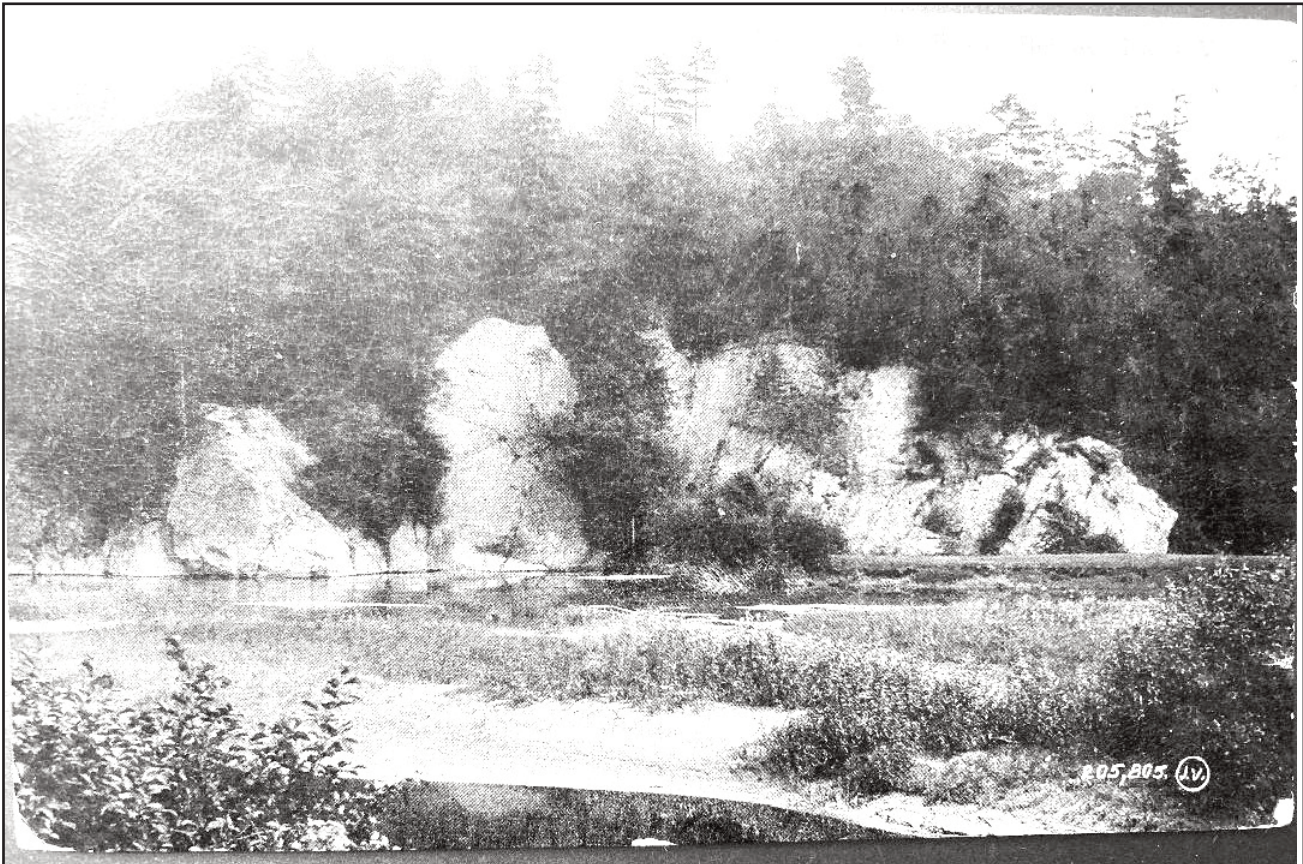
The postcard was printed in Great Britian, published in Boston, and sent by someone in Lowell, Mass. to a friend in Albany, NY.

The postcard was mailed in August 1910, so the photo of this site was taken at least 113 years ago.

It might be a little hard to make out, so we'll give another hint. This geographic spot is on a river that forms one of the borders of Westminster.

The spot is a favorite swimming hole for locals, and still looks very similar to this a century after the picture was taken.

Email us if you want to guess where this is.



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

Rev. Richard O'Donnell serves as our pastor and we are located on Rt. 5 in Westminster. We are handicap accessible, all are very welcome to join us. Sunday service starts at 10 a.m. with a coffee hour that follows.

Oct 1 Service with Communion Corem Deo will follow. This is a light soup lunch with a personal and interactive lesson. This month is on the Beatitudes

Oct 7 LINNER Crockpot (lunch early dinner.) 2 until 6 p.m. Meatballs, chili, vegetarian and much more. \$12 for adults \$5 for children and children under 5 eat free.

Oct. 8 - Service

Oct. 14 - Blessing of Animals at 2 p.m. at the church. Bring your family pets, farm animals and stuffed animals for the traditional blessing. Each pet receives a special gift for coming

Oct. 15 Service with blessing and dedication of the Memorial Wall in the Fellowship Hall. Individual pictures of members who passed away will be blessed at the end of the service with a light reception to follow.

Oct. 22 Service with Deacons Meeting to follow

Oct. 29 Service

We hope to see you! If new or returning, our congregation looks forward to meeting you!

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. 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.

Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno 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 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.

United Church of Bellows Falls

Deadline:

The Deadline for
the Nov. 2023 Issue of the
Westminster Gazette is
Wednesday, Oct. 18
Publication Date is
Wednesday, Oct. 25
To Contact the
Westminster Gazette
E-mail:
westminsternews@gmail.com

Worship service is at 10 a.m. every Sunday at 8 School Street. ALL are welcome to attend.

Following the service, we host a time of refreshments where you can get to know other members of our community. We offer many other services throughout the week, so there's something for everyone.

To learn more, call us at (802) 463-4323 or visit us. Also find us on Facebook! We're always happy to meet new people and welcome them into our church family.

ACTIVITIES

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

Westminster West Lib Hours Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 1- 6 p.m., Saturday 10 - 2 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Lisa Nigro
On line - call Westminster Cares 722-3607

Accessible Yoga Class with Lisa Nigro
Monday's 10-11:15 a.m. Westminster Institute

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

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

Coffee Mornings - Coffee, Community, Conversation Westminster West Library, Saturdays from 10 to 2. All welcome, please drop in!

Zumba Fitness at Westminster Institute: Latin and world rhythm music, set to easy-to-follow choreography, with a focus on cardiovascular and muscular conditioning, flexibility, and balance. Hybrid Classes: Tuesdays & Thursdays at 4:30 p.m Pre-registration and status review is required; contact: ZIN Certified Instructor: Pauline Blake O'Brien, 802-376-5397, paulineblakeob@outlook.com.

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES
THE SUPPORT OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:

Stacey & Tim Allen
Kurn Hattin Homes
Town of Westminster
Westminster Cares
Westminster Fire and Rescue Association
Burtco Inc.
The Dascomb Trust
K Beebe Inc.
American Wealth Adminstration Group

MEETINGS

Town Clerk - 802-722-4091

Selectboard 2nd and 4th Wednesdays 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 American Rescue Plan Act Committee is scheduled to meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Westminster Institute, provided there is content to discuss. Interested community members are encouraged to attend.
Contact pebanik@comcast.net.

The Westminster Fire and Rescue meet on the 1st Tuesday every month, at 7 p.m. and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday at the 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

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

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE

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westminsternews@gmail.com

WESTMINSTER’S WILD WATERWAYS

A LOOK INTO THE PAST - PART 2 OF THE WESTMINSTER BEAVER PROGRAM SERIES

by Michael Daley, member Westminster Beaver Working Group
Photo by David Mulholland

The second public education event about Beavers in Westminster will take place on Sunday, Oct. 1 at 3 p.m. at the Westminster Fire Station.

The first program describing the seasons of a beaver’s life was attended by over 25 people who enjoyed Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center naturalist Patti Smith’s heartwarming story of spending several years in close company with Willow, her mates, and descendants along the stream behind her home.

In this second program, we travel into the distant past with engineer and river scientist Dr. Denise Burchsted who has studied natural river systems—the way rivers behaved before Europeans arrived.

What she has learned will surprise you, and yes, beavers were an important part of the picture. What was the landscape and streamscape of Westminster like in the days before the fur trade?

Dr. Burchsted has mapped the town and will share her conception of what the watery world of Westminster was like long ago. Are there problems caused by the way we manage streams today? What might a future look like that accommodates the needs of people and natural rivers?

Beavers and humans have a lot in common. Both species live in family groups and build houses of wood. Both rearrange the environment to meet their needs. Beavers are made for the water and they can't live without it. That is why they are so dedicated to building dams to keep it in place.

As beavers move and create new ponds, the areas they leave behind become meadows and shrub lands. These are important habitats for many plants and animals, from moose to mink. This makes beavers a "key-

stone" species—one that is essential for other species to thrive. But, when beavers' plans conflict with ours, they can cause us a lot of trouble.

Because beavers are so important, the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center has received funding to work with two towns to seek solutions that work for people and beavers.

Westminster has been chosen as one of the towns and a Westminster Beaver Working Group has formed. This fall, they are bringing you opportunities to learn more about the beavers in our midst. A third program is planned and will be of special interest to any of our two-legged neighbors who find themselves in close relationship with our four pawed water stewards:

Deceiving Beavers— In the field with Skip Lisle Date and Location TBD

Skip Lisle has devoted his career to solving beaver conflicts. He has installed his pipe and fence systems across the country. They save taxpayer dollars, road crews frustration, and keep beavers and their wetlands in place.

He will be installing a beaver deceiver at a conflict



site in Westminster. On this evening outing, we will meet Skip at the site and learn about how beaver deceivers work. If we're lucky, we'll see what the beavers and other wildlife think too.

There will be more! Stay up to date on the program events at <https://www.beec.org/westminster-beavers/>. Sarah Waldo, Kathy Kingston, Lisa Merton, and Michael Daley are members of the Westminster Beaver Working Group. They welcome your questions and suggestions.

PUTNEY PUBLIC LIBRARY EXHIBIT: PORTALS, PAINTINGS BY LIZ HAWKES DENIORD

Portals, a series of abstract paintings by Liz Hawkes deNiord, is on exhibit at The Putney Putney Library through Dec. 2.

Liz’s dynamic paintings reflect her immersion in the physical process as well as her love of saturated, radiant color and luminosity.

The paintings are both dreamlike and grounded. Her process is one of multiple layering, scraping, covering up, and building up heavily textured surfaces with palette knife and paint. The paintings emerge layered with pure colors creating an iridescent quality.

She says, “What lies beneath each one is essential to what one sees on the surface. Working mostly on large vertical canvases, the vertical alignment resonates as a physical presence.....The paintings evolve through layers, through rotation of the canvas and through a suspended trust in the outcome to 'pay attention' consciously and unconsciously.”

Liz is a painter, ceramic artist, and educator - having taught for 38 years in Vermont, Connecticut,



Iowa and Virginia.

Locally, she taught Ceramics at The Putney School, and Drawing at Landmark College.

For over two decades she taught Foundations in Art, Sculpture and Ceramics at Brattleboro Union High School. A Studio Art major and Asian Studies minor in college, Liz took two masters degrees in Education, one in Learning Disabilities, which enabled her to tutor and or teach in schools, prisons or psych hospitals, and the other in Art Education.

Liz works in her Westminster West studio and currently shows her work regionally in Manchester and Burlington, Vermont.

For more information on Liz and her work see: www.lizhawkesdeniord.com

Putney Public Library is located at 55 Main St. Open Monday-Friday 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday in September and October 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturdays in November 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TAX PREP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED SEVCA WILL TRAIN

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) will provide free tax preparation for lower income taxpayers for the 2023-24 tax filing season through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

SEVCA is now recruiting volunteers to help as many families as possible claim the tax credits and refunds available to them.

A volunteer orientation meeting will be held in the late fall at our SEVCA's main office, 91 Buck Drive, Westminster.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who are low to moderate income, persons with disabilities, elderly and limited English-speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free federal and state income tax return preparation with electronic filing.

Don’t know that much about taxes? Don’t worry — you’ll receive specialized training from a certified VITA instructor plus IRS online courses.

We are looking for individuals who are willing and able to commit 3 to 4 hours per week, or even preferably a full day or more as necessary from the last week in January – April filing deadline.

Although prior tax preparation experience is not necessary, a commitment to training and certification is required. Training sessions will be held in Westminster beginning in early November and at your convenience using online IRS self-study training materials as well as on-site training and supervision once or twice a week is provided during the tax preparation season by the SEVCA Tax Site Coordinator.

If you do not wish to prepare taxes, there are other VITA volunteer roles available as well.

To learn how you can become a VITA volunteer contact Leslie Wood at lwood@sevca.org or (802) 722-4575, ext. 1603.

SWING & TANGO LESSONS AT MSA



Pivot into autumn with swing and tango dance lessons with Matt Peake and Friends at Main Street Arts in Saxtons River. The lessons will be held on Thursday evenings Oct. 12 and 26, Nov. 9, and Dec. 14., starting at 6:30 p.m.

Cost is \$5 for one lesson, \$10 for two. No experience is necessary and a partner is not required. Bring dance shoes or wear clean shoes you can pivot in.

“Because the interest continues to be high for swing dancing and tango dancing, Matt Peake and Friends will be offering another series of back to back lessons in East Coast Swing and Argentine Tango on Thursday evenings,” said Peake.

“We hope to use the same format of a short lesson to begin each hour, then continue dancing for the rest of each hour,” he continued.

This will be a mixed levels series, so for those who have no Swing or Tango experience, we will meet with new swing dancers from 6:30 to 7 p.m. to learn some basics ahead of the swing lesson. Likewise, for tango, we are doing the lesson at 8 p.m. and then can help catch up new tango dancers afterwards and from 9 p.m. to whenever for those who want to stay longer.

For more information or questions contact MSA at 802-869-2960 or info@mainstreetarts.org.

In photo, instructor Matt Peake, right, dancing with Shanti Brubaker during dance lessons over the summer at Main Street Arts in Saxtons River.

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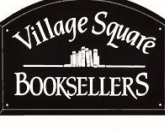
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OCTOBER BUSINESS OF THE MONTH:
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Auctioneer Sharon Boccelli of S.B. & Company – Antiques & Auctioneers is a fully licensed and bonded auctioneer in both Vermont and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

This year S.B. and Company celebrated their 43rd year in business. Sharon graduated from the International Auction School, which provides an intensive course of study in auction methodology and psychology. This training combined with Boccelli's sense of integrity has resulted in S. B. & Company Auctioneers becoming one of the best organized and most successful auction houses in New England.

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

S.B. and Company specializes in purchases of single items or entire estates as well as probate appraisals. Clean out services are also available.

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We stand behind our word, which engenders trust with our new and returning buyers who learn to trust the quality and characterization of the merchandise being sold and appraised.

Feel free to contact Sharon directly with further questions at sbauctioneers.com, at 46 Canal St. in Bellows Falls, VT or by calling 802-460-1190.

GUIDELINES FOR
GAZETTE SUBMISSIONS

Readers who submit articles and releases to the Gazette often wonder what style they should use for various things like times, dates, numbers, and various other odds and ends. The following is a list of the most frequent style issues you might encounter.

We use the Associated Press Stylebook, or at least do our best to. The latest edition, the 56th, is over 600 pages long. Here's a much shorter style cheat sheet. Cut it out and refer to it when you're writing a release or story.

Time: For time, it's 10 a.m. or 10:30 a.m., not 10:00 AM or am. **People sending in a list of events with times, please take notice.**

It's noon or midnight, not 12 noon or 12 midnight.
Capital letters: Put nothing in all caps, including in headlines. NOTHING.

The Ampersand: Spell out "and," do not use & unless it's in an official company name, or the rare B&B, etc. Lists of names are notorious for ampersands, ie: John & Jane Doe. Don't use the ampersand in those lists. Use and.

No Double Spacing: Single space between sentences. Do not double, or heaven forbid, triple space. This is really hard for those of us who learned to type a while ago, when double spacing between sentences was the standard. That went out when computers replaced typewriters, which is a few decades ago at this point!

Unnecessary information: There is no need to write "free and open to the public" for an event. We assume all events published in the paper are free and open to the public unless the article states otherwise.

Parenthesis: Do not use unnecessary parenthesis, and almost all parenthesis are now considered unnecessary. This is also a change from past practices, when parenthetical comments were the norm. If words are important enough to be in the sentence, then put them in the sentence.

Numbers: Spell numbers one to nine, use figures for 10 and above or when referring to units of measure or age. ie: "There were three different meetings. We had 22 in attendance at the first one, including a 7-year-old boy, and a girl who is 5 years old."

Days and Months: Days are spelled out in full. The months from March to July are spelled in full, all the rest are abbreviated. ie: Saturday, July 9, 2023 or Sunday Aug. 6, 2023.

Those are the current basic AP styles for newspapers, and the majority of editing issues we run into are covered there.

We hope these few style rules will be helpful. We'll try to email a copy to regular contributors, and have it available online on the Westminster Town page where you find our online edition as well.

Christopher Hinds
LICSW, ACSW

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