

PATRIOT’S PEN ESSAYS & GLASSTASTIC DESIGN: KURN HATTIN STUDENTS SHINE

Kurn Hattin middle school social studies students, once again, participated in the Annual Patriot’s Pen essay contest and had their voices heard. Hosted by the VFW, this year’s essay contest theme was: My voice in American Democracy.

Students were asked to consider the question, “Have you ever wondered if your voice could change the world?” Kurn Hattin Civics Teacher Deborah Velto said this year’s theme was a difficult topic for students as they don’t always feel their young voices are heard or recognized.

In her winning essay, Alana captured that feeling when she said, “Sometimes it is frustrating to not be able to use your voice because you are a kid. Not having a voice means that you can’t tell people what is going on and cannot make changes.”

Despite these challenges, our student essayists expressed hope and optimism. They have big plans about using their voices to make big changes. Emmery wrote, “You can use your voice in so many different ways. Writing, singing, dancing and so many other things too. One of the strongest ways we connect to people is using your voice however you chose to use it. I value my voice and the voices of others because every voice matters.”

Polina, an aspiring writer wrote, “I try to write things that will make people more aware of the problems in our world. If people read things that make them see the problems, maybe they’ll try to fix them. Remember, it doesn’t matter how old you are, anyone can use their voice.”

Congratulations to these outstanding students for rising up and using their voices with power and purpose.

In yet another program where Kurn Hattin students have made an impact, for the seventh time in 14 years, the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center in Vermont has invited artists in grades K–6 to let their imaginations soar for GLASSTASTIC 2025—an exhibition where imaginary creatures are transformed into one-of-a-kind glass sculptures by professional artists.

From a field of more than 1,000 submissions, Kurn Hattin 5th grader Desiree Lake was one of just 20 students selected.

Her colorful cactus character named “Catcus” captured the attention of artist Josh Bernbaum (*bottom photo*), who brought her feline to life in glass form. Bernbaum, who has used cacti in his art before, said something about Desiree’s piece spoke to him. When asked how it felt to see “Catcus” transformed into a work of glass art, Desiree humbly replied, “It felt good.” Congratulations, Desiree, on this incredible achievement!



At top, Kurn Hattin Civics Teacher Deborah Velto, left, proudly poses with Karen Campbell and Richard Campbell, State Commander from the BrattleboroVFW–Post 1034, who presented the annual Patriot Pen Essay Awards to students Polina, 3 rd prize, local level; Emmery, 2 nd prize, local level; and Alana, 1 st prize at the local level and 2nd prize at the district level. Bottom photo, Desiree Lake meets glass artist Josh Bernbaum for the first time at the opening of the Glasstastic 2025 exhibit at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center.

A VERY SUCCESSFUL GREEN UP DAY IN WESTMINSTER

By Rachel Shaw

Just before the black flies and heavy vegetation emerged, Green Up Day made it’s annual appearance on the first Saturday of May. Westminster responded with remarkable enthusiasm and diligence, in spite of rain showers that occurred off and on all day.

The state sent the town two boxes of green bags which come in rolls, as well as some artistic posters to distribute. We also used some bags that were leftover from other years. Kestrel Craig and Rachael Shaw of the Westminster Conservation Commission coordinated Green Up Day for our town, along with former Conservation Commission member Sarah Waldo. Kelley Thayer at the Town Hall helped by folding all the bags up into squares, and handing them out. They were also available at the North Westminster Community House and the Westminster West Library. We brought some to the Westminster Center School as well, for distribution to students and their families. Our deepest apologies to those who came looking for bags and found none available at that moment: we made a few tactical errors in bag availability, and hopefully next year that will not happen again! Keep in mind that the Town Crew will recognize green up trash by the side of the road on the Monday after Green Up Day, even if it’s not in the official green bags, so feel free to use wood pellet bags, bird seed or feed bags, or other trash bags. That said, we hope that everyone who wants an official green bag gets one next year.



other large items, and of course to all of the town residents who made huge efforts to clean up all the roadsides. An unofficial award of “Green Upper of the Year” goes to Sarah Waldo, last year’s Green Up Day Coordinator, who filled nine bags between Barnes Road and Orchard Hill Road along Patch Road, stepping down into deep gullies to retrieve cans and other refuse. Thank you Sarah!

The State has developed an app which we will make an effort to publicize and use next year. It’s called, ap-



propriately, GreenUpVermont, and it can be used for the following things:

1. Start or find a team
2. Manage and invite members, add meeting details and choose areas
3. Information on where to get supplies and leave your trash
4. Drop pins on a map, to show where green up has happened

This could be quite useful, although old school greening up along the road near where you live is also an excellent way to go. Thanks again everyone for what may have been our best Green Up Day ever. Hopefully there will be less trash to pick up next year!

Interested in all things nature and conservation? Consider joining the Westminster Conservation Commission. We are working on some interesting projects this year and are always open to new ideas.

We currently have four volunteer members and could use a few more to get more done. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., alternating between the Westminster Institute and the Westminster West Library, with a Zoom option.

For more information, to sign up to be an occasional volunteer, or to be notified about our programs and events, please email us at westministervtconservation@gmail.com or call our chair Tatiana Schreiber at 802-387-2781.

Our Monthly Community Newspaper

June 2025 Vol. 21 No. 6

Westminster Gazette

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WESTMINSTER CARES GARDEN TOUR, JULY 5 AND 6

Gordon and Mary Hayward’s Westminster West gardens will once again highlight the Westminster Garden Tour, which celebrates its 22nd anniversary this year.

Gordon and Mary helped start the tour in 2003, after a successful garden tour for the Yellow Barn Music Festival.

Over the years the event has become the major fundraiser for Westminster Cares.

The tour will be held July 5 and 6, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Tickets are \$20 for one, or \$35 for two; they are good for both days of the tour. Children under age 16 get free admission to the Garden Tour.

In addition to the Haywards’ gardens, Cyndy Fine’s “Kismet”, The Laughlin’s Family Farm and the Westminster Center School’s garden will be on the tour.

One special program is planned: On Saturday, at 1:30 p.m., Julie Moir Messervy will give a talk, “Landscaping Ideas That Work.” Entry to this talk is included with your ticket.

Tickets are available online June 1st at www.westminstercares.org



They can also be purchased throughout the tour at the Hayward’s garden or at the Westminster Institute.

The Hayward’s garden, begun in 1984, is based on the footprint and the remnants of the Ranney farm, including the milking parlor and a stone wall that ran to the silo. Their garden shed was originally a tobacco barn moved up from Connecticut River Valley.



Mary, originally from the Cotswold region in England, and Gordon, from northwest Connecticut, were teachers who purchased the Ranney Farm, built in the late 1700s, in 1983. Both raised on farms, they treasure the long history of the property.

“The house has been part of the life of the community for 200 years, so it’s also a celebration of the history,” Gordon says.

Sincere appreciation goes out to our corporate sponsors for their tremendous support and community involvement: Chroma Technology Corp.; Mascoma Bank; Allen Bros. Farms; Savings Bank of Walpole; Silver Forest; 802 Credit Union; Brattleboro Bowl; Cota & Cota and C & S Wholesale Grocers for printing all promotional materials.

Throughout the tour, tickets can be purchased for a raffle with over 10 fabulous prizes. Lunch and refreshments will be available for purchase in the garden café under tents at the Hayward’s. Morning Star Perennials & Trees will again have an array of unique and Vermont-hardy plants for sale at the Hayward garden.

For more information visit westminstercares.org; call the office at 802-722-3607 or email westminstercaresvt@gmail.com.

Photos, clockwise from top left, Hayward Gardens, Fine Gardens, and Laughlin Gardens.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: CHRIS HINDS, CSW

Chris Hinds is a Clinical Social Worker offering counseling and psychotherapy to adolescents, adults, families and couples at his Bellows Falls office, located at 39 the Square.

His practice is new to the area, although Chris has 40 years of direct practice experience as a therapist. Chris is the former Clinical Director of six different accredited mental health treatment programs in the northeast and southeast.

Clinical Social Workers provide more mental health services in the U.S than psychiatrists, psychologists and all other helping professionals. Chris specializes in work with teens and “tweeners”, young and older adults as well as both traditional and non-traditional, non-binary spouses and partner couples. He is experienced with helping teens and young adults with life adjustment issues, school or work difficulties and more complex mental health and/or family problems for clients



work with higher-functioning, neurodivergent clients. Chris also has a driving interest in the existential threat of climate change which has brought inter-generational climate anxiety to the forefront of people’s everyday lives and world view.

Chris accepts BC/BS insurance and HSA cards. Parents and adults can always request a 75- minute, confidential consultation only; without a treatment plan to discuss complicated individual, family or life circumstance issues.

of all ages.

With a strong background as a Psychiatric Social Worker, Chris provides diagnostic assessment and treatment for almost all mental health “disorders.” This includes treatment of bipolar and unipolar depression, generalized anxiety, trauma, grief and loss, substance abuse and addictions, identity issues, adjustment problems, divorce, infidelity, and

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK POSITION OPEN

The Westminster Town Clerk is seeking to fill the position of Assistant Town Clerk.

The duties include but are not limited to; assisting the Town Clerk with the maintenance of official municipal records, issuance of various licenses and official documents, administration of election activities, and collection of various municipal funds. This is a permanent, part-time position of 22.5 hours per week.

A full job description is available on the Town Website.

Parties should send their resume and three letters of reference to Mildred Barry, Town Clerk, PO Box 147, Westminster, VT 05158, or by email attachment to clerk@westministervt.org.

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Page 8 - approx. 2.5"x3.25" - \$200 a year

New Sections Introductory Rates:

A&E Events Section \$50 a month

New & Seasonal Businesses Section \$200 for 3 months

Underwriting Support is a donation of at least \$300 annually and does not include advertising. Underwriters are listed in the box on page 6 each month.

We also welcome article submissions that would be of interest to the community. We ask for a maximum size limit of 500 words, and reserve the right to edit for content and length. Thank you!

On-line at: www.westministervt.org

ADDIE BACON NAMED ELKS STUDENT OF THE MONTH

It is a pleasure to announce that Addison Bacon has been selected as the April Elks Student of the Month for Bellows Falls Union High School. A junior at BFULHS, Addie is the daughter of Chad and Melissa Bacon of Westminster, Vermont.

Addie consistently exhibits exceptional academic dedication, completing every assignment with precision and care. She stays on top of her responsibilities and submits high-quality work in a timely manner. Her proactive communication with teachers reflects a strong sense of responsibility and excellent time management skills.

In the classroom, Addie brings a positive, can-do attitude and approaches challenges with determination and a growth mindset.

She leads by example, often inspiring her peers through her perseverance and encouragement. Respectful and driven, Addie continually goes above and beyond to achieve both academic and personal success.

Addie arrives each day ready to engage, actively contributing to class discussions and making the most of every learning opportunity.

Her unwavering commitment to her education is



evident in all she does.

Beyond academics, Addie is an involved and valued member of the school community. She participates in track, assists with organizing classroom materials, and serves as a role model through her leadership and strong work ethic. Outside of school, she gives back by supporting friends and participating in local community initiatives.

Addie’s dedication to excellence—both in and out of the classroom—makes her a standout student and a true example of civic-minded leadership. BFULHS and the Elks are proud to have Addie represent us as a Student of the Month.

THANKS FROM PUTNEY FOODSHELFB

Dear Westminster Residents,

The Putney Foodshelf thanks the voters of Westminster for their resounding approval of amended Article 13 at Westminster Town Meeting on Saturday, March 01, 2025. We are deeply grateful.

To put the amount you approved (\$5,000) in perspective:

- The Putney Foodshelf FOOD budget for FY25 is \$90,700.
- The amount you approved is 5.5% of the total food budget, which is a portion of the true cost of service.
- The amount you approved equals \$2.13 per Westminster resident served.

We deeply appreciate the support of Westminster’s voters. Thank you again.

*Sincerely,
Hannah Pick
Executive Director, Putney Foodshelf*

WINDHAM COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS MEETING

Please join us on June 3 at 11 a.m. (location TBD) to hear a speaker from Vermont Blue Advantage.

Meetings are open to classroom teachers, para educators, librarians, administrators, and anyone who worked in a public or independent school setting.

Contact joycesullivan@myfairpoint.net for more information.

FROM THE TOWN MANAGER’S DESK - APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS

This year, April showers brought May showers. Somewhere in the midst of all that, trees came back to life, baseball games were played and when it was dry enough, lawnmowers got very busy, very quickly.

Thank you to the engaged residents of Westminster for all of your efforts on Green Up Day. Statewide, it’s estimated that over 400 tons of trash was picked up. I’d also like to give special thanks to Kelley Thayer and Sarah Waldo who were both instrumental in distributing our entire allocation of Green Up Day collection bags. Without their efforts, Green Up Day might have been just another Saturday in May.

While we’re on that topic, I attended the Grand Opening of the Windham Solid Waste District’s newly expanded composting facility. Science and en-

gineering have doubled the capacity of the facility.

Previously, it could take eight to ten months for organic waste to be converted into rich compost. A fabric dome and heated oxygenation tubing accelerate the process and reduce the time to complete the process to four to six months. Compost is sold at the Transfer Station in Brattleboro for \$7/bag. There is also pricing available for larger quantities.

This month’s *Gazette* had an earlier deadline, so that the paper could be printed and distributed in advance of Memorial Day. In so many ways, Memorial Day has taken on the meaning of the “unofficial start of summer.” However, the holiday, which started as Decoration Day in 1868, has a deeper meaning than trips to the beach and barbecues.

In 1868, Gen. John Logan ordered flowers placed on the graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers

at Arlington National Cemetery. This was the first official act of “Decoration Day” on May 30, 1868. It was intended as an act of unification and healing as both sides were once again a single nation.

It wasn’t until after World War 1 that May 30th became widely recognized as the day all those who died in war were to be honored, not just those who perished during the Civil War.

In 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act which moved Memorial Day to the last Monday in May, though the first nationwide Monday Memorial Day didn’t happen until 1971.

With the weather warming up, please pay extra attention to pedestrians as you drive around town.

*Louis Bordeaux
Town Manager*

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met May 15 with President Lori Larue presiding. Those attending: Nancy Dalzell; Donna Dawson; Doug Oftedah; Frannie Waldron; Kathy Elliot; and Don Dawson.

Unable to Attend: Pete Harrison and Cindy Moses.

Programs & Services

Meals-on-Wheels: For residents of Westminster, if you are a homebound senior or adult with a disability and would like to learn more about receiving Meals-on-Wheels, please call Donna Dawson in the office for further information; 722-3607.

In Westminster, Meals-on-Wheels are delivered to your home five days per week at lunchtime by Westminster Cares’ volunteers.

Community Nurse Program: Our Community Nurse, Kathy Shuster, held a Blood Pressure Clinic at the SOUPer Wednesday event on April 23. To receive a phone call or schedule an initial home visit with the nurse, please call the office at 722-3607.

SOUPer Wednesday Speakers: On Wednesday,

April 23, we co-hosted the SOUPer Wednesday luncheon with speaker Elliott Greenblott from the Vermont AARP Fraud Watch.

Elliott’s presentation on “Recognizing, Understanding and Preventing Computer Scams and Internet Fraud” was interesting and informative. Participants shared their experiences and had a chance to ask questions.

Westminster Cares is very appreciative of the opportunity to partner with the First Congregational Church of Westminster to host this speaker series for the second year. We’d like to express our gratitude to all the church members and our board members and volunteers for making soups and desserts and assisting with set-up, serving

and clean-up. This would not be possible without your efforts.

Elder Tech Program: The next Elder Tech session is scheduled for Saturday, May 31 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Institute. Call the office at 722-3607 to schedule an appt.

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Nature Notes - Colorful Birds Catch My Attention

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

Right now is a good time to see migrating birds, some just passing through and some staying for the summer to nest. I was sitting by the door during this last rainy spell watching the colorful birds landing in my yard. Indigo buntings, Baltimore orioles, Gray catbirds and Rose-breasted grosbeaks caught my attention. Songbirds begin to start migrating 30 to 45 minutes after sunset with the greatest number flying two to three hours later. Most birds are diurnal, meaning they are active during the day with dawn and dusk being the best time to observe them. Records show that 20 to 60 percent of migrating birds return to the same area for at least two years in a row. I always think they are the same birds for several years, but birds don’t have a long life so two is probably right. The Dark-eyed juncos and Tree sparrows that spent the winter here have gone back north. I miss them.

I keep my feeders out until the end of May because the birds arriving in the spring have flown some distance and are tired and hungry even though I run the risk of bears stopping by. After May, the birds don’t visit the feeders because they eat mostly insects. Caterpillars make up most of the young birds’ diet.

It was such a joy to see the Indigo Buntings. For many years, I didn’t see any and then three years ago, they started coming through. The males are such a vivid blue and the females are brown. I had some cracked corn thrown on the ground and they dug in. I can’t remember ever seeing a nest here.



*Baltimore oriole and Baltimore oriole nest
photos by Don Clark*

The catbirds headed for the suet and will stay to nest. Northern mockingbirds, Brown thrashers, and catbirds are known for their mimicking songs of various other birds, animals, or even human voices. It’s such a joy to hear them.

The orioles are singing non-stop. I hope they will again nest in a tree near my house. Their nests are such works of art. This year I have put out oranges for them. I was curious what other birds find oranges attractive



and discovered catbirds, tanagers, woodpeckers, mockingbirds, robins, thrashers, and waxwings do. Some people feed grape jelly and have found orioles, catbirds, grosbeaks, waxwings, chickadees, and hummingbirds like it.

Finally the Ruby-throated hummingbirds have arrived. The feeders are out and ready!

WESTMINSTER SAMPLER - WESTMINSTER AT BUNKER HILL

By Jessie Haas

Two hundred and fifty years ago this June, about a dozen Westminster men were with the New England Army in Cambridge, Mass. Colonial militia-men had General Gage's army bottled up in Boston, following the bloody retreat from Lexington and Concord.

Gage had 6,000 British Regulars under his command; the rebels were 10,000-13,000 strong, occupying the low hills close to Boston. Their numbers fluctuated continually as militiamen came and went. They had not come prepared for a long enlistment.

Back in April when they flocked to this encampment, most had brought food for a three-day stay, and it was time for spring planting. Many went home, including Jabez Perry and John Wise of Westminster. Another who went home was Billy Crook, probably sent back by his father. There was man's work to do at the farm and mill at the end of Patch Road, and a military camp was no place for a 15-year-old boy.

It could barely be called an army. Men would only obey their own officers. The Continental Congress took action on June 14 to create a unified Continental army with George Washington in command. But word took time to travel from Philadelphia. In the rowdy camp, composed of wigwams and rickety cabins, no one had the authority to make anyone else dig latrines, and men had begun to die of disease. Others were having a beautiful time drinking rum, skinny-dipping, and generally carousing.

The British government put pressure on Gage. From across the ocean it seemed quite doable to defeat these colonial amateurs. Three British Generals, Burgoyne, Howe, and Clinton, arrived May 25th bringing orders for Gage to break out of Boston. The four generals concocted a plan to take the Dorchester and Charlestown Heights, a set of low hills overlooking Boston.

Anyone occupying these heights could rain down artillery fire on Boston and the harbor. Presently the heights were no-man's land. Any move toward them was bound to trigger a reaction from the opposing army.

The British planned to attack the hills on June 18. But the colonials got wind of the plan and marched 1500 men to Charlestown on the night of June 16th.



They built a crude fortress, called a redoubt, on Breed's Hill, only 3,000 feet from the Boston shoreline. This work took place between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., but did not go undetected. General Clinton, walking off a bout of insomnia, heard the activity on the heights, and alerted Gage.

The British changed their plans. They must attack the redoubt immediately. Sporadic cannonfire came from the ships in the harbor, and by 1:30 on a very hot afternoon 2000 Regulars began rowing across to Charlestown. Up on the heights, more militiamen, including most of the group from Westminster had arrived, and began transforming a rail fence near the redoubt so it at least looked like a fort. They built a second fence close to the first and stuffed recently mowed green hay between the two fences, creating a sort of shelter.

The Westminster men working here at the rail fence, with nothing to drink or eat under the blazing sun, were Gideon Badger, John Abbey, John Wells (who owned the present Haas farm), John Sweetland, and Nathaniel Doubleday, all from Westminster West. Meanwhile three of the Chaffee brothers and Reuben Robinson with General John Stark, leader of the New Hampshire militia, marched through cannonfire to Breed's Hill, where Stark ordered them to tear up some of the stone walls and make a breastwork reaching down to the shore. Once this wall was made he stationed his 100 men behind it in triple ranks, and positioned a marker rock 50 yards from it. Nobody was to fire until the attackers had passed this point.

When the Welch Fusiliers attacked the stone wall,

Stark's men waited as ordered, then fired at close range, to devastating effect. The three ranks took turns shooting, laying down what was described as "a continued sheet of fire." With close to 100 men killed, the Fusiliers fled back to the boats.

Along the rail fence the British attack was disorganized due to the long hot climb through tall grass. The colonials, with the advantage of high ground, could rest their musket barrels on the top rail and choose their targets. They focused on officers, distinguished by their coats, and killed many. This continued for over half an hour, and had the colonial army had enough gunpowder and more coordinated command, they probably would have repulsed the Regulars.

However, shelling from the gunboats, and the bravery and discipline of the British troops, eventually won the day. The fighting at the redoubt ended when the colonial powder ran out, and those who didn't flee were massacred by the British. Though they were technically the victors, the British Army was deeply shaken with many officers lost.

Of the wounded, many required leg amputations, the colonials having deliberately aimed low; those were soldiers permanently lost to the British Army. Bostonians, who watched it all from the hills and the rooftops of the city, also had their eyes opened to the horrors of war as the city of Charlestown was torched by the British and completely destroyed.

We have no record of any Westminster man being wounded at Bunker Hill. This was the bloodiest battle of the Revolutionary War, a shocking event that upended Joseph Warren's idea that there limits to the violence Britain would use against her colonies. Warren did not live to profit from the lesson. He was shot while defending retreating militiamen at the redoubt.

For those wanting to learn more, check out Bunker Hill 250 | Celebrating Charlestown's Revolutionary Heritage | Nonprofit Events & History, or Nathaniel Philbrook's book *Bunker Hill, A City, A Siege, A Revolution*. Visit www.westminstervthistory.org for more Westminster history.

John Trumbull's painting of the Death of Gen. Warren at Bunker Hill.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of the month and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Rescue training is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Next association meeting Tuesday, June 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.

Unless otherwise called for a special meeting, the Prudential Committee meets on the 3rd Sunday of every month at the Fire House on Grout Ave at 10 a.m.

Number of calls in April: 39
Number of calls through May 15th :15
Number of calls calendar year to date: 189
Number of calls fiscal year, July 1st to date: 442

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting Tuesday May 6th with Vice President J.T. Tabolt presiding. There were 30 members present and 5 members excused. Currently there are 47 members of the volunteer fire department.

The voting for captain, lieutenants and association officers and trustees will take place at the June 3rd

meeting. The members voted for the current deputy chiefs, first deputy Mark Lund C2 and 2nd deputy Gary Cobb, C3, to continue for another year.

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.

Motorcycles: We have all noticed that there are more and more motorcycles on the road each summer and that it has become a very enjoyable pastime for many. Motorcycles can be difficult to see as a part of oncoming traffic and their distance is often difficult to judge. Give at least a double look and even an exclusive look for the possibility of an oncoming motorcycle when pulling out into traffic.

Off Road: The department is looking for names of anyone who has an off-road vehicle 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 willing and able to make available.

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.

Westminster Responses: April turned out to be another very busy month with 39 calls for the month. Here is the breakdown for the 39 calls: 29 rescue/medical calls; 4 motor vehicle accidents; 2 for tree on wires/power line down; 1 service calls; 1 brush fire; 2 false alarms;

Donations The Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember or honor a loved one or a friend. All memorial donations go into our scholarship fund to be given out at graduation. Open donations are also appreciated: Send donation to: Westminster Fire & Rescue Association, PO Box 111 Westminster, Vt. 05158

Donations received in May:
Long View Forest, Nik Rudy/ Dale Good, 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 web-site www.westminster-fireandrescue.org.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

VOLUNTEERS: STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY ONE MEAL AT A TIME

By Susan Harlow

Wondering if volunteering for Westminster Cares might be for you? Ask George Blake or Bruce MacDuffie.

George has been volunteering for Westminster Cares for 10 years, delivering Meals on Wheels and driving folks to medical appointments. He wants you to know that volunteering isn't time-consuming: a few hours a month can be a big help. And you'll feel good about it.

"It's making a difference – you help people not be hungry and to be safe in their houses. Anything I can do to be kind and supportive is rewarding," he says.

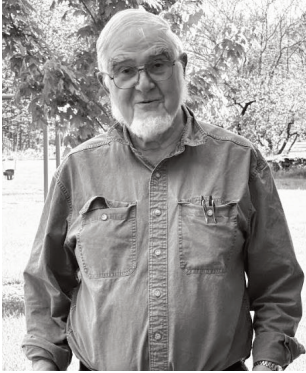
When George first retired, he volunteered at warming shelters in North Walpole and Bellows Falls, and with reading groups at Westminster Center School. When he heard about a Meals driver who was leaving the area, he decided it was time for him to jump in.

"I enjoy working with people, although I'm not a big crowd person," George says. "Maybe it's good karma!"

Sometimes it's challenging, if the weather is bad or trying to find the right house. But it's almost like a little adventure, George says.

Bruce also started volunteering for Westminster Cares 10 years ago, very soon after he and his wife, Lee, moved back into the area at the end of 2014. Pete Harrison, whom he'd known for years, immediately grabbed him to pitch in to the community. "'Come on!,' he said to me." And Bruce did. He has been driving Meals on Wheels and providing rides ever since.

Lee, who accompanied Bruce on his deliveries, dpassed away last year. "You say hello and have a little conversation and get to know someone better," he says. "It's just a thing that's binding the community together. It allows people to stay in their residences and get some



nourishment, because it's hard for seniors to get by alone."

Sometimes it's a challenge, he says. The first time he drove down Orchard Hill on a warm, muddy spring day? "It was white-knuckle all the way," he says.

As an Episcopal minister, Bruce worked in many places in the country, and that taught him much about caring for those on the margins of society. Now "retired," he has been the pastor for St. Luke's Episcopal Church for the last three years.

His advice for anyone thinking of volunteering? "Heavens! Go see if there is some help needed. Go right in to see Donna [Dawson, director of Westminster Cares] and say 'I want to be of service to the community.'"

Meals drivers typically drive twice each month. Other volunteers may drive folks to medical appointments or grocery shopping, pick up pharmacy orders, deliver pet food and equipment, or make friendly visits. Some have helped stack firewood, make minor house repairs, or shovel a walkway—whatever expertise a volunteer may have time to offer.

While seniors and disabled adults in town get a healthy meal, a friendly face, and a helping hand, the volunteer is equally rewarded with a sense of community. "They get a wonderful boost in their self-esteem because they're doing something for others, and they feel happy and fulfilled," Bruce says.

"Research shows if people volunteer it has a positive effect on their physical and mental health. And there's camaraderie. So if you want to feel good and you're sociable – you need to volunteer!"

In photos, George Blake, left, and Bruce MacDuffie. (Photos by Susan Harlow and Lori Larue)

REMEMBRANCES

JUNE 2025:

WILLIAM "BILL" BATES, 79
11/15/1945 - 5/11/2025
WESTMINSTER, VT

CHARLES BASHAW SR., 89
3/5/1936 – 4/11//2025
BElLOWS FALLS, VT

LAURA WEST, 93
8/19/1931 - 2/16/2025
FORMERLY GUILFORD, VT

PATRICIA CHAFFEE, 79
7/10/1945 - 4/17/2025
FORMERLY BElLOWS FALLS, VT

KAT'S BENEFIT UPDATE

Amber Parson

@Amber-Parson-53



venmo

Last month we ran a front page article about helping 8-year-old Kat Parson attend a diabetes camp this summer. This QR code was supposed to be with the article. Donations for Kat to go to summer camp can be made via this, her mother's, Venmo account.

Thank you!

HUNTER SMITH EARNS CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEGREE



Hunter Smith, formerly of Westminster, graduated Cum Laude from Husson University in Bangor, ME with a bachelors degree in Criminal Justice on Dec. 20, 2024 and was able to walk with his class May 10, 2025.

Hunter also obtained a fire certificate in fire science from Southern Maine Community College where he was a live-in firefighter student under the direction of Fire Chief Howard Rice Jr, another Westminster native.

In addition to college, Hunter recently attended the Maine State Police academy for 18 weeks, graduated Dec. 20, 2024, attended six weeks of recruit trooper training and graduated Mar. 14, 2025 and recently completed his 400 hour field training in order to become a certified Maine State Trooper on May 12 and is stationed in northern Maine.

Hunter is the son of Marcy and Jason Smith and grandson to Mark and Jan Lund. His family asks that you please keep him in your thoughts and prayers while he embarks on a new career path.

90TH B'DAY CELEBRATION FOR RED DAWKINS

Help us celebrate Red Dawkin's 90th birthday!

We will be hosting an Open House on Sunday, June 22 at the Bellow Falls Moose Club.

Stop by between 2 - 4 p.m. to share your birthday wishes for Red, also known as, Pearson, Mr. Dawkins, Jr. and Pa. Send a card C/O Ginger Cook P.O. Box 88 Westminster, Vt 05158.

THE WESTMINSTER GARDEN TOUR
JULY 5TH & 6TH
WESTMINSTERCARES.ORG

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE ONE SMALL STEP?

The Westminster Inclusion Committee combined forces with Compassionate Brattleboro and Amy Zielinski of Vermont Public to host a pizza night and training on April 27 at the Butterfield Institute. VPR is connecting civic organizations, churches, and other community groups and leaders to spread the word and connect Vermont residents from all backgrounds who are ready to take One Small Step.

Karen Anderson, along with being trained to facilitate One Small Step conversations, is the Director of Radio Programming and Operations for Vermont Public.

Anderson asked over 50 participants to write a simple four sentence biography who were then paired off and encouraged to ask each other simple questions beginning with:

- 1) what made you want to do this conversation today?
- 2) questions about the biography they had written
- 3) the most influential person in your life
- 4) a brief description of your political views

If time allowed they were encouraged to go deeper



with other prompting questions such as first impressions when they read each other's bios, an experience or moment that helped shape their beliefs, things they don't agree on but can respect, when they each feel misunderstood by others and fear or concerns about the future of the country.

Most participants barely got to the first four questions as they had so much to share. There were people who came from as far north as Windsor and as far south as Vernon, and everywhere in between, and clearly there were plenty of differences, shared curiosity and much eagerness to carry conversations forward.

The facilitators encouraged everyone to use the questions to get to know their neighbors better.

The event is part of a series carried forward by the One Wonderful Westminster campaign intended to help the citizens of Westminster get to know and appreciate each other.

Information can be found regularly on the Westminster Town website <https://www.westministervt.org/>. or by calling Lise Sparrow at 802-345-3982.

SUMMER BEEKEEPING WORKSHOPS


My name is Charles Andros. I put on four Beekeeping Workshops per season at my home from 1-4 p.m. Look for the "BEE" sign on the south side of Walpole Valley Road - 18 MacLean Road, 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 by emailing lindenap@gmail.com or calling 603-756-9056.

A former NH/VT Apiary Inspector, I will hold a beekeeping workshop on Saturday, July 19.

I will also hold a beekeeping workshop on Saturday, Sept. 20.



Temple Chiropractic

Dr. Taronté Venable
DC, DACNB

Dr. Vernon R. Temple
DC, DABCO

633 Route 121
Bellows Falls, VT 05101

802-463-9522

TheOffice@TempleChiropractic.org
www.TempleChiropractic.org

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DR. VERNON TEMPLE PASSES THE TORCH TO DR. TARONTÉ VENABLE



Dr. Taronté Venable

After more than 46 years of dedicated service to the Bellows Falls community, Dr. Vernon Temple is announcing the transition of his chiropractic practice to new ownership.

A trusted name in Vermont health care, Dr. Temple's legacy of compassionate, expert care will continue through the capable hands of Dr. Taronté Venable, a highly trained and deeply committed board-certified chiropractic neurologist.

Dr. Temple will continue to work on a limited basis of two days a week at Temple Chiropractic, in order to continue care with his established patients as well as providing operational guidance and support to Dr. Venable's ownership.

Dr. Temple, a graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic and a post-graduate specialist in chiropractic orthopedics, has been actively involved in both local care and national licensure leadership. His numerous accolades include fellowship in the Academy of Chiropractic Orthopedics and status as a Diplomat of the American Board of Chiropractic Orthopedists.

Beyond his clinical practice, Dr. Temple has served in leadership roles with the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and the Vermont Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

His successor, Dr. Taronté Venable, brings a breadth of advanced training and a passion for addressing root causes for ailments that involve any joint or muscle of



Dr. Vernon Temple

the body through a patient-centered care approach. A graduate of the National University of Health Sciences, Dr. Venable is a diplomate of the American Chiropractic Neurology Board. He is certified by the Prague School of Rehabilitation as a DNS Certified Practitioner and holds credentials from the National Academy of Sports Medicine as both a Performance Enhancement Specialist and a Corrective Exercise Specialist.

Dr. Venable started his career in New York City and maintained a sterling reputation for the entire eight years he lived in Queens and practiced in various locations throughout Manhattan. In the search of opportunities further north, closer to the outdoor activities he enjoyed in his youth while earning the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America program, he decided to leave the city in search of a lifestyle that resonated with his passions; kayaking, hiking and snowboarding.

Circumstances lead to Dr. Venable coming in contact with Dr. Temple in Spring of 2024 and with the support of various Vermont-based non-profits, Dr. Venable's dream to become an owner of his own practice became a sooner than anticipated reality.

Dr. Venable has been working as an associate to Dr. Temple since April of 2024, as a means to earn enough financing to obtain a business loan for the purchase of the practice.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact the office via phone at (802)463-9522 or go to www.templechiropractic.org.

WINDHAM FOUNDATION GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Windham Foundation, a nonprofit based in Grafton that works to enhance Vermont's economic, cultural, and civic life, is pleased to announce the recipients of their most recent round of grants.

Thirty-one Vermont-based nonprofits received a total of \$98,500 in financial support. The Spring Grants cycle was open to projects focused on (1) agriculture, food, land, and the natural world, and (2) arts, culture, and education.

Funded projects included youth education programs, land conservation, food security and musical experiences. The full list of recipients includes: Art Bus, Barre Opera House, Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, Brattleboro Music Center, Brattleboro Words Project, Bull Creek Common Lands, Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Governor's Institute, Green Mountain Club, GroundWorks, HatchSpace, Intervale Center, Latchis Theater, Meals and Wheels, Monteverde Music School, Music Will, New Music on the Point, NOFA-VT, Robert Frost Stone House Museum, Sandglass Theater, Smokey House Center, Southern Vermont Arts Center, Saint Brigid's Kitchen, The Civic Standard, The Landmark Trust, Vermont Granite Museum, Vermont Studio Center, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, Vermont Youth Orchestra, Winston Prouty Center for Child and Family Development, and the Young Writers Project.

"The Windham Foundation is very pleased to support these excellent organizations, all of which make a demonstrable impact in their communities," says Dan Lerner, Ph.D., Executive Director of The Windham Foundation.

The second of two funding cycles this year will close September 15th, 2025. Organizations with projects focused on (3) preserving and developing resilient communities, or (4) healthy and vibrant communities are encouraged to apply. For more information on qualifying projects, visit our website, www.windham-foundation.org, or contact Meg Gonzalez, meg.gonzalez@windham-foundation.org.

Headquartered in Grafton, Vermont, the Windham Foundation is an operating foundation engaged in philanthropic, charitable, and educational activities. Since its inception in 1963, its mission has been to promote the vitality of Grafton and Vermont's rural communities through its philanthropic and educational programs. Its subsidiaries, the Grafton Village Cheese Company and the Grafton Inn, contribute to these endeavors as mission-driven businesses.



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JUNE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH:
ROCKINGHAM ARTS &
MUSEUM PROJECT



Since 1995, the Rockingham Arts and Museum Project's (RAMP) mission has evolved: integrating artists and the arts into the long-term sustainability of the community by creating effective partnerships that support a creative economy and develop programs that encourage cultural and physical accessibility.

Some of RAMP's projects include affordable housing, artists' town meetings, cable access programs, public art projects (*like the one in the photo above*), and participating on boards of directors.

RAMP's mantra: Art Makes a Difference!

RAMP collaborates to Benefit the Miss Bellows Falls Diner restoration initiative.

Upcoming events sponsored by RAMP:

July 29, Pizza Night
orchardhillbreadworks.com

August 6, Crepe Night
scottfarmvermont.com/crepe-night

September 4, Meet & Greet
GuilfordWelcomeCenter.com

For more information about RAMP, its programming and to donate visit www.ramp-vt.org.

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