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MOUNTAIN GAZETTE

Vol. 20 No. 8

Serving Bolton, Cambridge, Jeffersonville, Jericho, Underhill, and Westford, VT

October 15, 2020

Discussions continue on how to repair and preserve Old Red Mill retaining wall

Mountain Gazette staff

It's complicated.

The September 17, 2020 edition of the *Mountain Gazette* included information about the effort to repair storm/high water damage to the retaining wall in the stream channel between the Old Red Mill itself and the VT Rt. 15 bridge over the Browns River. That reporting was based on phone interviews and written communication among the *Gazette*, Jericho Town Administrator Todd Odit, the engineering firm DuBois and King, Inc. which has estimated the work that will be necessary and its cost, members of the Jericho Historical Society, and concerned citizens.

There are differing opinions on what the character of the work should be, how much it should cost, who will pay what portion, and what will be the role of the town of Jericho.

Everyone seems to agree that the town of Jericho would sponsor a grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources (Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] grant), and this has happened. As the *Gazette* reported on September 17:

"The Town of Jericho was eligible to apply as a sponsor to the Federal Emergency Watershed Protection program to draw federal funds to be used to make improvements to private property, in this case, the Old Red Mill. Jericho Town Administrator Todd Odit says that program provides 75% of the projected cost from federal money, but requires a 25% local match. The Selectboard applied for the grant under the condition that the Jericho Historical Society (JHS) would provide the local match. For this grant, Jericho has been awarded a maximum of \$222,534.75 in federal funds, which would require \$74,178.25 in local funds. JHS has said they can contribute \$40,000... The town of Jericho will not provide any funding for the project." — the source of this information was Jericho Town Administrator Todd Odit, who was working from a signed agreement between the Town of Jericho and the Jericho Historical Society (see below).

Tim Nulty, current chair of the Jericho Selectboard, has objected to the *Gazette* reporting's lack of "nuance" about the Town's position on contributing funds to the streambank repair. While the *Gazette* accurately reported the information provided by the Town Administrator — and the content of the agreement signed by the Town and the Historical Society — a review of the minutes of Jericho Selectboard meetings introduces the complex context Nulty seems to be referring to. The minutes of the July 2 meeting, attended by all three Selectboard members and the Town Administrator, include these points airing concerns and conflicting considerations:

- Selectboard member Catherine McMains said Jericho citizens have "previously voiced concern about the Town contributing to a private enterprise." (221) The Old Red Mill is owned by the Jericho Historical Society, a private non-profit. Selectboard member Wayne Howe voiced concern that "if they (JHS) can't afford it, the Town would be obligated to pitch in, and he doesn't think he could explain that to the citizens." (259-260)

- The NRCS's goal is to stabilize the stream bank (Town Administrator, 227); Selectboard member Nulty says "that's not the Town's concern, stream banks fail all the time. The building is what we're worried about." (228)

- Nulty wants to go back to the engineering firm and ask them to "reevaluate based on the minimum goal of stabilizing the building and protecting the public safety — it could be concrete, not stone." (239, 240)

- McMains "noted that the Town tried to do the right thing ... by applying for the grant, but if they don't want to put any Town dollars toward it, then they should withdraw the application." (245, 246). Nulty said "he's not opposed to spending Town money toward it, he objects to being forced to accept the \$300,000 estimate." (247)

- Nulty is "reluctant to go along with the federal grant parameters" and "suggests that they have an engineer provide an estimate for the minimum stabilization of the bank." (255) Odit replies that would be "up to the Historical Society to arrange." (256) Nulty says he is he is "much more open to the Town helping to pay for that work" (257) and that "he is willing to consider that the Town might have to contribute some dollars" (264-265) but that if "asked to commit to contributing \$75,000, he would vote against it." (290)

The minutes of the July 16 Selectboard meeting (Selectboard members McMains and Howe present; Nulty absent; Todd Odit, Town Administrator present) include these facts:

- Odit said, "If the bids come in too high for the Historical Society's maximum match amount, the project won't move forward" but "that doesn't preclude donations." (267-268)

- Odit said "that the agreement between the Town and the His-

torical Society is that the Town will not be contributing any of the match money. It will have to come from the Historical Society and any donations they can raise." (279-280)

- McMains said "she hopes it works out, because the heavy rains they've had recently has resulted in further erosion of that bank." (297-298)

And with that, the agreement, as shown below was signed.

The Old Red Mill is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. According to Louise Miglionico of the Jericho Historical Society in a Front Porch Forum post, that means that the repairs must meet the requirement that they "maintain the historic authenticity of the property" and thus must be "historically accurate" in order to keep the National Register listing. If the Mill loses that listing, the "ability to gain grants in the future" for the Mill "would be destroyed." Former JHS member Gary Irish says, "A poured concrete wall would likely be structurally adequate, and a lot cheaper than replacing the stone wall, but would be totally out of place in this historic setting."

The engineering firm DuBois and King, Inc.'s project engineer Galen Hagen told the *Mountain Gazette* that the final design package is being reviewed by the appropriate parties, but the most recent Opinion of Probable Construction Cost (OPCC) is \$328,243.

Louise Miglionico stated that the Jericho Historical Society will raise approximately "\$75,000 which is 25% of the total cost of the repair" and that JHS has "currently raised \$39,000... and (has) far from exhausted possible sources."

Jericho Historical Society's GoFundMe page can be viewed at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/old-red-mill-gericho-vermont-restoration>.

Below is the text of the signed agreement between the Town of Jericho and the Jericho Historical Society, on which the Jericho Town Administrator relied for the information he initially provided to the *Gazette*. Please note paragraphs 3, 4, and 5.

AGREEMENT RE STREAMBANK STABILIZATION FUNDING

This Agreement is made on this ___ day of June, 2020 by and between the Town of Jericho, Vermont, a Vermont municipality having its municipal offices located at 67 Vermont RT 15, Jericho, Vermont, 05465 (hereinafter "Town") and The Jericho Historical Society, Inc., a Vermont non-profit corporation, having a principal place of business at 68 Vermont RT 15, Jericho, Vermont 05465 (hereinafter "Society")(collectively also referred to herein as the "Parties").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Society is the owner of a historical building in the Town of Jericho, Vermont that is named the Old Red Mill;

WHEREAS, the streambank adjacent to the Old Red Mill building is eroding and in need of stabilization;

WHEREAS, the Town has applied for grant funding from the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") and the Natural Resources Conservation Service ("NRCS") for the stabilization of the streambank (the "Project");

WHEREAS, the Town was recently awarded Two Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand, Five Hundred Thirty-Four Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents (\$222,534.75) from the USDA and NRCS for the Project;

WHEREAS, the Project requires a non-federal funding contribution of Seventy-Four Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Eight Dollars and Twenty-Five Cents (\$74,178.25);

WHEREAS, the Town and the Society now wish to set forth their respective contributions to the Project;

NOW THEREFORE, for good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Parties hereto covenant, agree and bind themselves as follows:

1. The Town has applied for and been awarded Two Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand, Five Hundred Thirty-Four Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents (\$222,534.75) from the USDA and NRCS for the Project.
2. The Project requires a non-federal funding contribution of twenty-five percent of the project construction costs.
3. The Town will contribute to the Project the funding it has applied for and obtained from USDA and NRCS; however, it will not contribute to the non-federal portion of the Project.



Devin, 13, and Logan, 10 with wood they and their father Eric Axelrod have processed for their Wood For Good project.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Wood for Good: a family project

By Phyl Newbeck
Special to the Mountain Gazette

It all started last winter when Eric Axelrod of Jericho discovered he had more wood than the three to four cords his family usually needs for the winter. He posted about the excess on Front Porch Forum and was happy to be able to donate wood to people who needed some. "Our yard was overflowing," Axelrod said. "We found that there were people in Jericho who needed wood so we were happy to help, and we called it *Wood for Good*."

A few months later a woman in Richmond offered to let Axelrod take some trees from her property, so he headed out with his sons Devin (13) and Logan (10). "It was a really warm March day with no snow," he said, "and we felled the trees, cut them up, and loaded our trailer." Initially Axelrod thought he might keep some of the wood, but soon he decided to give it all away. After he began advertising his Wood for Good on Front Porch Forum, people donated money to help the cause and Todd Barrett of Barrett's Tree Service donated one load of wood with a promise to donate a second one, as well.

In addition to contributing money and wood, people also wanted to volunteer their time. Axelrod purchased a splitter, which he keeps on the Davis Farm. People offered to use it but they didn't want to be in a remote area with heavy equipment by themselves, so Axelrod started a GoFundMe page to purchase a second splitter which would allow two people to work side by side. One man who saw the request decided to donate his splitter, which he was no longer using. In a twist of fate, he had often used it to help out a neighbor. Since the family was no longer in need of a splitter, Axelrod decided to use the GoFundMe donations to purchase a conveyor to move the wood. He also bought a dump truck to replace the trailer and truck combination he had been using. After reading about the family in VTDigger, the owner of North Star Leasing Company offered to donate funds for the conveyor purchase and to organize a work day with his employees to help process the wood.

Devin and Logan enjoy the opportunity to work outside with their father and the fact that their efforts are helping other people. "Dad runs the heavy equipment," Devin said. "I'll throw the wood onto the pile and move it around and Logan helps with the loading and cleaning up after us." Axelrod is immensely proud of his boys. "The kids work really, really hard," he said. "They both realize we have a unique opportunity to help people."

Axelrod finds working with wood to be meditative. "It's actually quite peaceful," he said. "It's an opportunity to quiet your mind. It's good exercise and it gives me and the boys a chance to enjoy the fresh air and get away from some of the challenges of COVID. We can focus on the importance of doing good work and being together."

Since Wood for Good has taken off, Axelrod is in the process

Wood continued on page 8

A familiar voice with
a new perspective.
Please Vote!

Thomas Chittenden



Democrat for State Senate

Background & Qualifications

- 3 Term South Burlington City Councillor
- University of Vermont Faculty Senate President
- Green Mountain Transit Board Chair & Vice Chair
- Deep Rooted Vermont Values
- Lifelong Community Volunteer

Priorities

- Affordability
- Helping Vermonters
- Keeping Vermont Green
- Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth
- Opportunity for Current & Future Vermonters

Endorsements

- "He listens to all viewpoints and forges a conciliatory path forward."
— John Killacky
- "He will be a great addition to the Chittenden County Senate."
— Ann Pugh
- "His legislative priorities are very timely and reflect what Vermont needs."
— Martin LaLonde
- "He's an intelligent, measured, and independently-minded representative who takes seriously his commitment to citizens."
— Lisa Ventriss
- "Thomas has a proven public service track record and represents the next generation of civic leaders."
— Jamie Heins
- "Tom Chittenden is a leader for both working people and the environment in everything he does."
— Curt McCormack
- "Thomas is the right person to help us move forward in a positive way."
— Ernie Pomerleau
- "Tom's logic and opinions are based on a solid moral foundation resulting in ideas and decisions that benefit our common good."
— Phil Pouech
- "Vermont faces many challenges, and I support Tom because he approaches them with optimism, practical ideas, and a can-do attitude."
— Lisa Groeneveld
- "Thomas Chittenden is an earnest Vermonter and a humble man... a highly capable multi-talented professional."
— Pramodita Sharma
- "We need leaders like Thomas now more than ever."
— Jane Knodell
- "Thomas is a Vermonter for our times, with proven elected leadership at UVM, GMT and in South Burlington."
— Chris Shaw
- "We need someone like Thomas to bridge our differences in a civilized, compassionate and rational way."
— William Cats-Brail

thomaschittenden.com

Paid for by Thomas Chittenden for State Senate

4-H NEWS

Youth Environmental Summit for grades 6-12

UVM Extension 4-H is offering its annual Youth Environmental Summit (YES) again this year, but with a twist. This year's Summit will run for three weeks, with a kick-off on Friday, October 30, and stay open until November 20. This will allow youth to attend when it works with their schedule — perfect for remote learning days!

Using *Flipgrid*, we are building a virtual community learning space with keynotes, workshops, "Be the Change Audio Wall," and more to make sure the sharing, learning, and networking that usually happens at YES will still happen. Open to all youth in grades 6-12, the Summit is free but registration is required to gain access.

Learn more at the 4-H Announcements page, www.uvm.edu/extension/youth/announcements.

Zoom a scientist!

A fall webinar series from the UVM Extension and Lake Champlain Sea Grant Education team.

The series addresses a range of topics and challenges related to watershed science in the Lake Champlain Basin. It features scientists from the University of Vermont Rubenstein Ecosystem Science Laboratory, SUNY Plattsburgh, the Lake Champlain Research Institute, and partner organizations. Sessions are free and open to learners of all ages! Learn more at <https://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/education/k-12-watershed-alliance/virtual-learning>.

Upcoming sessions:

Tuesday, November 10: Managing Lamprey in the Lake Champlain Basin, with Stephen Smith from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (<https://uvmextension.zoom.us/j/92012121212>). Participants will hear from Stephen Smith, a fish biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office in Essex Junction, about what is being done to control sea lamprey populations in Lake Champlain.

Friday, December 4: Impacts of Road Salt in the Adirondacks, with Brittany Christenson from ADKAction (<https://uvmextension.zoom.us/j/92012121212>). Brittany Christenson will describe the work that her organization, ADKAction, has done to address pollution of waterways by road salt runoff, including developing recommendations for reducing road salt pollution and promoting alternative deicing products, and techniques and best management practices to protect water resources.

Registration required for these events: <https://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/events/upcoming-events>
Contact watershd@UVM.edu with any questions!

College news

Emma Edgley of Jeffersonville, VT has enrolled at St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY in the class of 2024.

Jacob Mount of Westford, VT has earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Nathan Schwartz of Jericho, VT has earned a Bachelor of Science in Video/Television at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Alexandra Pendo of Waterbury, VT has enrolled at St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY in the class of 2024.

Marcello Souza of Jericho, VT has qualified for the Spring 2020 Dean's List at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ.



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- Sarah Sliva

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Lamoille County Republican website

Have you ever voted for somebody or something that you really did not know? The Lamoille County Republicans would like to introduce you to the candidates and the platform by offering a resource either through Google or this web site: www.lamoillerepublicans.com. If you would like further information, please contact the candidate directly or someone on the contact list.

A REPUTATION FOR RESULTS!

 <p>Westford - \$550,000 Private and exclusive homesite on 8 acres in Westford just over the Essex border. Enjoy sharing the great pond that attracts wildlife year round. 1872 sq ft with 3 bedrooms and 2.5 baths with our to be built open floor plan, contemporary colonial with a full farmers front porch. Great location private and pristine.</p>	 <p>Underhill - \$425,000 Two bedrooms, one bath furnished Log home overlooking breathtaking mountain views. Bright sunny living room & eat-in kitchen with a central fireplace featuring a slate surround. Enjoy the seasons from your front porch or hiking around 11 acres of paradise. 2 car detached garage, a wonderful place to call home!</p>
 <p>Westford - \$412,000 Under construction now! Our new Colonial sits on 1.75 acres with 24 acres of Common Land. Rolling open sites with wooded fringe adding shade and character. 3 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath open design. Full walkout basement, energy efficient heat and large 2 car garage complete this great home. Still time to pick options.</p>	 <p>Fairfax - \$174,500 Priced to Sell! Two bedroom, 1.5 bathroom townhome at Mill Hill in Fairfax Village. Close to schools & stores. Open Floor plan with large eat-in kitchen, oak cabinets and lots of counterspace. Ample closet space, washer & dryer hookups, partially finished lower level. Attached garage, front porch & back deck.</p>

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COMING EVENTS

Ethan Allen Homestead offers Wabanaki Ethnobotany course

You can still register for a seat in the Wabanaki Ethnobotany class! This online course provides a unique perspective into the plants that share our home state, and the relationship that the indigenous people of what became Vermont had with their living plant landscape. Information about the course and registration may be found online at <https://ethan-allen-homestead-museum.ticketleap.com/wabanaki-ethnobotany/details>.

The course consists of eight sessions, one per month from October-May, on two Tuesdays each month. Each session will have an informational video released to participants two weeks before a Zoom discussion meeting. Participants may register for the full series of eight sessions (\$60) or for individual sessions (\$10).

The first program in the series, *Introduction to Indigenous Ethnobotany*, introduces the discipline of Ethnobotany including its intellectual focus, history, methodologies, and techniques. The informational video was released on Tuesday, October 6; the Zoom discussion meeting will be Tuesday, October 20. The full series includes these topics:

- *Indigenous North American botanical materials and world view*. Informational video release November 3; Zoom discussion meeting November 17. The basics of ethnobotanical (and allied) Native healing culinary and industrial arts; spiritual doctrines of animism and metaconnection; crop and wild-collected plants as relatives or allies; the idea of place-based healing using botanical and geomorphic strength/power inherent in specific areas such as cornfields or the "monte."

- *Bark, Wood and Root: Wabanaki Industrial Ethnobotany*. Informational video release December 1; Zoom discussion meeting December 15 at 6:00 PM. The tourist craft arts of basketry, bark craft, root clubs, and other forms have defined a large portion of Wabanaki identity and resistance. These are just a small part of the complexity of industrial materials produced for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and ceremony.

- *Wabanaki Botanical Medicine*. Informational video release January 5; Zoom discussion January 19. Wabanaki medicine is a very subtle and complex discipline that requires years of apprenticeship. The spirituality and metaphysical characteristics of plants and their habitats, as well as nuances of wild and cultivated plant species selection, time of harvest, even the side of the plant to harvest, must be understood before venturing into nature's pharmacy.

- *Chasing Seeds*. Informational video release February 2; Zoom discussion February 16. The comprehensive Wabanaki seed catalog, including stories of chasing down the seeds, how they turned

out in cultivation. Of the 54 currently known species and varieties in the catalog, perhaps 30 are significant and will be discussed individually; including their taste and nutrition and tips on how to properly grow them together.

- *The Lost Wabanaki Garden*. Informational video release March 2; Zoom discussion March 16. Learn how to create fields and crop mixes that support and enhance each other to produce larger crops of more nutritious foods. Explores the role of minor agricultural ritual such as anchoring and singing the crops to germination, growth, and ripeness. Will also focus on the types of edible/ medicinal trees (plums, etc.), shrubs (hazelnuts), subshrubs (sweetfern), vines (grapes), and herbaceous perennials (Jerusalem artichokes), and herbs (white sage) that may be organized as a "garden forest," organized by canopy height, stratum by light, water, and nutrient requirements, to optimize production.

- *The Wabanaki Harvest*. Informational video release April 6; Zoom discussion April 20. The Harvest, the most comprehensive Vermont Abenaki Ethnobotanical manifestation, incorporating field, village, community, and spirit. The harvest includes gathering of late summer and early fall wild plants, migratory and local animals, and the ripening agricultural crops. Origins of the Late August Green Corn Ceremony that seem embedded in half-forgotten legends of the Abenaki Creation Time and encoded in the controversial Corn Song. Will also discuss the current Green Corn Ceremony revitalization program at the Vermont Indigenous Heritage Center, and the Center's October Harvest Celebration, a tradition of community gathering together with story, music, song, and dance to bless the botanical medicines, fish and game, wood and bark, corn, beans, squash, sunflowers, Jerusalem artichokes that have been processed and safely stored away for the winter. Discussion of Wabanaki foodways, those rituals and protocols that accompany the eating of the harvest.

- *Wabanaki Ethnobotanical Spirituality*. Informational video release May 4; Zoom discussion May 18. The Wabanaki Peoples, which include the Abenakis, Penobscots, Passamaquoddies, Maliseets, and Micmaqs, consider personal and community well-being intimately tied together. We examine written and oral Indigenous stories, songs, foods, and medicines as insights into health and wellbeing. We will discuss the three types of medicine people. Plant-based ritual not only reminds people of the passage of the agricultural clock, but also informs and structures the types and availability of healing and wellbeing options available, as well as the role of ceremony.

Coming Events

IN-PERSON, and VIRTUAL AND SOCIALLY DISTANCED Saturday, October 17

Waterville 6th Grade Pumpkin Yard/Craft Sale, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Waterville Town Hall. This annual event will feature crafts and yard sale items. (No food vendors.)

Sunday, October 18
Bootlegger Bikes Class IV Ramble, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Bootlegger Bikes, Jeffersonville. Route to be published via RideWithGPS one week before the event. This will be a 50 mile adventure on northern VT's best gravel Class IV roads, woods paths, and such. Wheels down from Bootlegger Bikes in Jeffersonville at 9:00 AM. The ride is self-supported. BYOB for safe, 6' social distance, post-ride discussion on the porch.

Friday, October 23
Blue Spruce Grange informational meeting, 4:00 PM, on Zoom. The Grange is a family and community organization in Essex Town with roots in agriculture and a current focus on community service. If you would like to learn more about the Grange from the comfort of your home, email Ann Gray, grayann8@aol.com for information on connecting to the Zoom meeting.

Saturday, October 24
Wild Game Dinner, 6:00 PM, Cambridge Christian Fellowship, 1154 N. Main St., Cambridge. The dinner will feature venison, wild boar, pheasant, and antelope. Speaker Craig Jaques will speak on *Behind the Scenes with the Benois*. Seating will start at 5:30 PM. Because of COVID policies, only 50 tickets will be sold; to assure your safety, face masks, social distancing, and temperature checks will apply upon entry. Door prizes will be drawn and the feature prize will be a wild boar hunt in North Carolina for two people (does not include transportation or housing). Tickets \$10; to purchase please contact 644-5771 or kenandsue@hoepner.com.

Wednesday, October 28
Westford: Meet the Candidate (or vote) Q&A Forum, 7:00 – 8:30 PM, on Zoom. The Westford Library is proud to impartially inform the community on its choices for local government. Meet the three people running for our local state representative: Robert Bancroft (R), Alyssa Black (D), and Andy Watts (I). Each candidate will have time to introduce themselves and speak about their priorities for the upcoming term. They will also answer questions. The zoom audience will be muted, maximizing time for candidates to answer submitted questions. Questions can be submitted to the library (westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com) starting October 16. Zoom information: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87139642595?pwd=U2pieWVQZlNCWW9NOXFOYlRlYkZkdz09>, passcode: Vote.

Our Community Cares Camp annual meeting, 7:30 – 9:00 PM

Events continued on page 5

WORSHIP SERVICES

Virtual services at MMUUF

Join us for virtual Sunday services at the Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship!

October 25, 9:30 AM: "Engage or Shelter?" In this service, long-time member Dana Baron will explore the role of our spiritual community in addressing the social and political chaos that is unfolding around us. Many of our members and friends are taking action individually, but is there or should there be a role for our Fellowship as a whole? Should we engage in the struggle collectively? Or should our Fellowship provide shelter — spiritual, emotional, and even physical — from the storm?

Mount Mansfield Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Sunday Services — Worship, reflect, and sustain one another, within an inclusive spiritual community, built on values of honoring and affirming the worth of every person, striving for justice, participating in the world community, and respecting the natural web of existence. Please email info@mmuuf.org for how to join us on Zoom. Learn more at www.mmuuf.org and www.uua.org.

Jericho United Methodist Church outdoor worship service

With optimism for cooperative weather throughout the month of September, Jericho United Methodist Church is hosting its weekly worship service outdoors and in-person. All are welcome! Bring your mask and lawn chair and join us behind the church on September Sundays at 10:00 AM. We are located adjacent to Jericho Town Hall, with a shared driveway and parking. There will be music, prayer, and message from our new pastor, Rev. Sean Delmore. If weather challenges our gathering outdoors, we will revert to Zoom virtual worship, a decision made on Fridays. Feel free to email for updates or a Zoom invitation ~ Jen (luitjens@yahoo.com)

Weekly Peace Vigil welcomes Black Lives Matter too

The Peace Vigil is back from 5:30 – 6:00 PM on Thursdays at Richmond Congregational Church, 20 Church St., Richmond. Our church would like to extend a hearty welcome to the community to share signs and waves of positivity, peace, diversity, justice, and inclusion such as "Black Lives Matter" and "Love Your Neighbor."

Please bring a sign, wear a mask, and stand physically distanced on our front lawn as we share the message of the type of community and world we all hope to live in. I hope to see you there! Peace, Rev. Katelyn Macrae

Bell Ringing at United Church of Underhill

The United Church of Underhill has been ringing their church bell each morning to let everyone know that they are being thought of during these extraordinary times. We have changed the time to 10:00 AM because we have changed the Sunday worship time to 10:00 AM.

As you hear the ringing let it be a time to pause, reflect, and be thankful for all we have.

Online church services in Jeffersonville, Waterville

By Rev. Devon Thomas

Hey all, the folks at the Second Congo Church in Jeff and the Waterville Union Church would like to invite all who feel called to join us for our online church services Sunday at 10:30 AM. We are now having weekly Zoom services and any who would like to watch can do so via our Facebook pages. You can find those linked below.

So, as we like to say at the church: know that no matter who you are or where you are in life's journey, you are welcome at our church; or in this case, our web-space!

Peace
<https://www.facebook.com/watervilleunionchurch>
<https://www.facebook.com/SecondCongregationalUCC>

Jericho Congregational Church is here to help

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our lives in numerous ways that we never could have imagined. Many of us are now working from home, home schooling, and in some cases, separated from those we care deeply about. We at Jericho Congregational Church want you to know that we are here for you during this unsettling time. If you need a listening ear or someone to pray with about any of the impacts of this crisis, please contact us at 858-5452 or jcchelps@gmail.com. You are not alone, and we are here to help.

Online worship service at Good Shepherd

Please consider joining us for online worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church starting 9:00 AM every Sunday morning. You can connect with each podcast/video service from Sunday morning through Wednesday of every week. Centering Prayer Meditation Practice is now available on Fridays. Thanks to Alan's leadership and Zoom-genius, you can now take part in Centering Prayer Practice from your own home every Friday at 8:30 AM. Everything you need to know is at goodshepherdjericho.org. Click on *Menu* and then *Weekly Centering Prayer Meditation*. It is easy to join in. The Practice is geared for beginners through established meditators.

We are an open-minded Christian community where people from different faith traditions, along with those who aren't sure where they belong or what they believe, seek the support of a non-judgmental, all-embracing spiritual home. Join us at goodshepherdjericho.org. No matter who you are, how you are physically or spiritually, or where you are on life's journey, we welcome you in the name and love of Christ. Please contact Rev. Dr. Arnold Isidore Thomas, Pastor, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for more information or with any questions, at pastorthomas@goodshepherdjericho.org or 802-503-9666.

Zoom a scientist!

A fall webinar series from the UVM Extension and Lake Champlain Sea Grant Education team.

The series addresses a range of topics and challenges related to watershed science in the Lake Champlain Basin. It features scientists from the University of Vermont Rubenstein Ecosystem Science Laboratory, SUNY Plattsburgh, the Lake Champlain Research Institute, and partner organizations. Sessions are free and open to learners of all ages! Learn more at <https://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/education/k-12-watershed-alliance/virtual-learning>.

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Registration required for these events: <https://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/events/upcoming-events>

Contact watershd@UVM.edu with any questions!

HikeVT this fall!

The Green Mountain Club wants to help you HikeVT! Find hikes of varying ease or difficulty, every week through October. We have descriptions, directions, and places to visit along the way so you can explore Vermont by trail. Each week, we share information about a different trail.

For more information, go online to <https://www.greenmountainclub.org/hiking/hikevt/>.

Wood continued from page 1

of forming a board of directors and becoming a full-fledged non-profit. A woman who received some donated wood is building a website for them. "We're always looking for more customers," Axelrod said. "There is no means test. We don't ask any questions. If you think you can use the wood, we want to help you." This year's 20 to 25 cords are already spoken for, but Axelrod plans to have at least twice as much wood to give away next year. Some of the wood is seasoning at the Davis Farm in Jericho, and some is on the property in Richmond.

"This is about a higher purpose," Axelrod said. He noted that his day job as a recruiter of engineers in the medical device industry also provides him with the opportunity to help people. "During the day I contribute to people's careers," he said, "but this is about bringing people a bit of warmth and a smile." Axelrod said some people assumed there had to be a catch to the wood donations, but that's not the case. "We're doing this because we're part of this community," he said. "We're privileged to be in a position where we can help people and we're glad to be able to help as much as we can. It's about being part of something bigger than myself."

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HEALTH NEWS

Lamoille County COVID-19 testing options

In the Lamoille Valley area, the VT Department of Health is offering COVID-19 testing in Hyde Park every Wednesday through the end of October. The Hyde Park VFW Post 7779 has been a gracious partner with the VT Department of Health and hosting pop-up clinics all summer. Testing clinics are Wednesdays, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the VFW in Hyde Park. Please register online to secure your spot at <https://vermont.force.com/events/selfregistration>.

Walk-ins are accepted but expect a longer appointment and you may have to wait a bit.

If you are unable to register on-line, please call 2-1-1 for assistance.

If you do need testing and can't make a Wednesday clinic, look for another pop-up or pharmacy that offers testing near you, online at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-covid-19>.

Another option for testing is through Copley Hospital. If you need COVID testing, your primary care provider must order the test for you and schedule a time to be tested. If you do not have a primary care provider and you are concerned you should be tested, please call the hospital's COVID testing hotline, 802-888-8642.

To learn more about current activity in Vermont, go online to <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/current-activity-vermont>.

To learn more about Vermont's travel recommendations, go online to <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/traveling-vermont>, or the ACCD website <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>. Please note that counties with very low raw case counts may see high percent changes from week to week due to relatively higher variability. See the DFR Modeling Methodology paper for more information about how this map was created, online at https://dfr.vermont.gov/sites/finreg/files/doc_library/dfr-travel-map-methodology-071620.pdf.

Older Vermonter and family caregiver surveys

We want to hear from you to learn about older Vermonters' needs and aspirations. Two surveys, one for Vermonters 60+ and one for Family Caregivers of those 60+, will provide vital information to help the organization Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) develop Vermont's next State Plan on Aging, a guiding document that outlines how the State of Vermont and the network of Agencies on Aging and service providers will strive to meet the needs of older Vermonters over time.

Vermonter Age 60+ Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/vermontage60>

Family Caregiver Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VTfamilyCG>

Survey on current community health and wellbeing

United Way of Northwest Vermont is asking for your input on our current community health and wellbeing. What are our priorities right now? We are collaborating with the Larner College of Medicine at UVM and other United Ways across the state in asking Vermonters to share perspectives on their communities and their priorities for improving health and wellbeing for all people.

The more responses we get from this area, the better we will understand our needs in rural communities.

United Way is a community-driven organization; we respond to what's needed and what people feel is most important. As we work with partners to help our community recover from the impacts of the pandemic, we are looking for your help in prioritizing the focus of attention and resources in the coming year.

Please share your input by completing this survey: <https://redcap.med.uvm.edu/surveys/?s=YD3AEMKFN>.

We hope to hear from as many Vermonters age 18+ as we can. I encourage you to pass it along to your families, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and social networks. We have extended the survey deadline to allow for more responses.

We are grateful to the faculty and students at the Larner College of Medicine who are leading this survey project and making it possible for us to get input from our community during such important times. This is also a great learning opportunity for the medical students who will analyze the survey data and provide summary reports. Survey results will be shared widely with local organizations and community members in December.

October is a great time to get your flu shot

The Vermont Department of Health has an important message: This year, it's more important than ever to get your flu shot, when both flu viruses and COVID-19 will likely be spreading at the same time.

A flu vaccine won't protect you from COVID-19, but it can do a lot to help keep you healthy. It can prevent the flu, reduce the severity of your illness if you do get flu, and lower your chances of being hospitalized due to flu.

October is a great time to get your flu shot, whether that's at your provider's office, local pharmacy, or a clinic near you. Everyone six months and older (with rare exceptions) should be vaccinated. It's especially important for anyone in a high-risk group, or who has underlying health conditions, to get vaccinated.

Wondering if it's safe to get a flu shot in a pandemic? It is! Providers are following COVID-19 safety precautions to make sure you can visit safely. And if your provider's office doesn't have the flu shot available yet, keep checking back. Vaccine is still being distributed to practices around Vermont.

Find out where to get a flu shot near you at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/flu>.

3SquaresVT in a Snap!

VT Dept. For Children And Families • State Dr, Waterbury
An easier way for older and disabled Vermonters to get and keep 3SquaresVT benefits – a program that can help put healthy, nutritious foods on the table.

You may qualify to use this new, easier process if *everyone* applying is:

- at least 60 years old or getting disability benefits; and
- not earning income from a job or self-employment; and
- buying food and making meals together.

If you qualify, you'll get to:

- apply using a simpler, shorter application; and
- keep your benefits for three years with no added paperwork.

To get benefits, you will have to meet the eligibility criteria for 3SquaresVT. Learn more at <https://rebrand.ly/3SquaresVTSNAP>.

Upcoming Lamoille Valley prevention events and news

Healthy Lamoille Valley Coalition Meeting, Tuesday, November 3: Please mark your calendars and plan to come to the kickoff meeting of our new coalition format. Healthy Lamoille Valley will meet on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00 – 7:00 PM. The format of these meetings will include: introductions, announcements, a short topic presentation, and then an action discussion on how we can work together to address that topic. Meetings will continue to be held virtually on Zoom. Read more and register at www.healthylamoillevalley.org/nov-coalition-2020.

Photovoice 2020 Extended Submission Deadline: Healthy Lamoille Valley and Lamoille Area Youth Council Are Proud to Announce the LAYC Fall 2020 PhotoVoice Project: MIXED MESSAGING. Our Fall Art Call features a photovoice project to highlight the impact of media and messaging relating to alcohol and drug use from a youth perspective. Artwork submissions will be accepted from now until Friday, October 23, 5:00 PM. Read more on our website www.healthylamoillevalley.org/photovoice-2020.

Survey and Raffle for Volunteer Youth Coaches and Administrators: Healthy Lamoille Valley (HLV) in collaboration with the HLV Youth Sports Workgroup seeks input from all volunteer leaders, coaches, parents, and interested community members of youth sports. We received a grant to assess the training needs of volunteer youth coaches and administrators across the Lamoille Valley to help support their roles as protective factors in the lives of their players, while also helping to sustain our youth sports programs into the future. Even if you are not currently a coach, and you think that you might consider coaching in the future, we want to hear from you, too. Read more at www.healthylamoillevalley.org/coaches-survey.

National Prescription Drug Take-back Day: DEA's next National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is Saturday, October 24, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications. Read more on the DEA website at www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback. In the Lamoille Valley, you can drop off your unwanted medication (pills only) at six year-round sites. These drop-boxes are self-service, call for normal business hours: Copley Hospital, Morrisville, 802-888-8888; Cambridge Kinney Drugs, 802-644-8811; Hardwick Police Department, 802-472-5475; Lamoille County Sheriff's Department, Hyde Park, 802-888-5244; Morrystown Police Department, 802-888-4211; Stowe Police Department, 802-253-7126. Healthy Lamoille Valley has a supply of free prescription drug mail back envelopes. Proper disposal of unused, unwanted, or expired prescription medications is a one way that you can keep your home, community, and environment safer. Please contact jessica@healthylamoillevalley.org to request your envelope today!

Westford's Goodrich Trail step-by-step

Some folks have expressed interest in hiking the Goodrich trail from Machia Hill Road but are unsure of how to access it. There are some step-by-step photo instructions to get you from trailhead to trailhead. The colors are absolutely fabulous this fall. We highly recommend getting out there:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UzdAwbns30-LSPVxHBOzhEXIcolf_U92/view?usp=sharing

Our general advice? The WCC yellow diamond trail markers will guide you. As always, wear blaze orange and be loud during hunting seasons. Goodrich, like most Westford trails (except school trails), runs through private property.

Happy hiking, folks. Email us with questions at westfordcc@googlegroups.com or check our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/WestfordCC> for updates.

Richmond Rescue third quarter statistics

By Michael Chiarella

Director of Operations, Richmond Rescue

Each quarter I will be posting a number of statistics about Richmond Rescue to help you stay more informed about our business.

In the third quarter of 2020 we went on 177 calls and transported 113 patients for a transport rate of 64%. Our average for this period in the last three years was 172 calls and 107 transports and a transport rate of 62%.

We had 36 volunteers actively participating in our operations. They contributed a total of 5994 hours on duty. Most of those hours are spent at the station so that we can provide a quick response. On average we left the station in two minutes 12 seconds, and arrived on scene in 13 minutes. We spent about 19 minutes on scene and then another 27 minutes transporting our patient to the hospital. Prompt activation of 9-1-1 is vital when someone has a serious medical problem. By calling for an ambulance we can begin to provide care that would normally have to wait until you arrive at the hospital.

We went on 12 calls in Bolton (one of those was at Bolton Valley), 80 in Richmond, 16 in Huntington, three in Jericho, and 10 on I-89. We also traveled out of our area to Essex, Hinesburg, Underhill, and Williston to assist other agencies. The busiest day of the week was Friday (40) and the quietest day was Tuesday (18). Daytime (6:00 AM – 6:00 PM) accounted for 115 calls, while nights had 63 calls.

In the third quarter, we were able to respond to one call with our second truck while the primary truck was on another call. This means that instead of waiting for an ambulance from Williston or UVM, we were able to respond with no delay. Many other times we had a crew standing by for a second call. This is a testament to the depth and dedication of our volunteers.

Of our 113 transports, we only transported 21 patients with our lights and sirens activated (19%). We reserve the use of lights and sirens for the most critical patients. The difference in transport time with lights and sirens is only about three minutes faster. Please pull your car to the right and stop at a safe place if you see us approaching with our lights on.

Since we began the E911 sign program, we've sold 830 reflective address signs. They have been making a great difference for us in being able to quickly locate addresses. You can order yours at <http://www.richmondrescue.org/E911sign.html>.

COMMUNITY COLUMNS

I Wonder As I Wander**

By Suzanne Kusserow

Special to the Mountain Gazette

I am driving home from assorted errands with varying degrees of importance and urgency. The route is one I have done many times in the past 60 years. There are the usual demands of coming and going: a bill with the wrong payment date; a gas station stop; change-of-season dry cleaning overdue; no time for dalliance at either end. I am getting tired of the monotony of the road; I find myself wondering about minutiae that heretofore haven't drawn much interest.

But here is a plain wooden sign with clear black letters: "Child Care Available"... and I wonder how does a new mother make a judgment regarding the quality of care, remembering that an increase in quantity does not mean an increase in quality.

I speed by a small pasture where a single horse is munching down some healthy greens. But he doesn't have a companion... not even a friendly dog to sit near his water bucket and snooze in this last bit of summer. But I don't even spy a water bucket; must check next time. And I wonder how one could nicely inform the owner that horses are social creatures that require some smaller creature, like a goat, to keep them both happy.

A biker pedals furiously through the last edges of Essex, wearing a brilliant lime-green jacket. I wonder if this an "official" jacket, since so many seem to be wearing this color... and, if this is so, who mandates such universality?

On the corner is a hairdresser. My grandson went there once and the haircut was just right. I wonder why he doesn't go there anymore, but his reply was: "There were only women there, Gram."

It is near the time of last year's Harvest Market, and my whole trip seems to be dotted with Lawn, Garage, Moving, Neighborhood Sales. Some are quite practical, with Gramma sitting in a chair behind a small table, knitting plain mittens for the Essex Library Sale in November. (I wonder if they will still have it this fall?) The larger sales have tables, tents, a surfeit of cars parked crookedly near the white borderline. My sense of wonderment jumps from reflective to watchful driving. Right next to one of the tents are three piles of pumpkins: small and easy to carve; the popular mediums, and some huge ones, which, all summer have been drenched with vitamins and plenty of water. I wonder how much they cost?

I stop for a red light, and see a mother awkwardly holding onto a stroller and two small barking dogs on leashes. The child in the stroller is whimpering the same message: "Home!" One quick look at the mother's face and I don't need to wonder about what the message is: I have been there, too, a long time ago. I send her vibes of sympathy.

The hills come into view, speckled with cloud shadows... so many memories of walks and weather combining in endless patterns, covering the named and unnamed ripples from Mount Mansfield. I wonder at what created the sudden slash of red beyond that tightly-formed Balsam. A small whip of wind flips the whole canopy into a kaleidoscope of color. As I turn my corner, I see an Ash in the most vivid coronation purple I have ever seen. There is no rust brown or lavender to spoil the traditional deep color of imperial robes. There is another memory to add to my list of wonders!

I rumble onto my drive, greet the plump dogs who are trying to plead instant starvation, and realize that it has been a refreshing

Community Columns continued on page 5

- Gentle Head to Toe Care
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Dr. Mary H. Kintner

Communitycolumn continued from page 4

trip, made more interesting by all the questions I have asked along the way. Monotony is caused by a lack of curiosity. Wonder, with a ready answer or not, is the most effective cure.

** "I Wonder as I Wander" is a slow-paced carol coming originally from Old World melodies. It is best sung as it is: without musical training or rhythm to spoil its simplicity. It sighs with a beautiful discord end-note and fades away... a reminder that there are questions that will not ever be answered, no matter how far we travel... "out under the sky."

How little we know and how much we ask!

Selling business and moving back to Vermont

By Douglas Boardman
Special to the Mountain Gazette

Sandy and I had no real honeymoon! We got married when I came home on a short leave after tech school in the Navy. I became a third class petty officer and graduated second in my class. This led to my being able to have choice of duty and to be able to take Sandy over to Malta. We had to get married in order to facilitate this plan, which we were so excited to carry out and be together again. Unfortunately, I only had a ten-day leave in order to get married, so not enough time for a proper honeymoon.

Twenty-five years later we were finally able to have a great honeymoon in Nassau and Paradise Island. After our first island vacation, we started going to various islands in the Caribbean in February of many years. Sandy was working full time at IBM in East Fishkill, and I was still owner at Eureka Supply Co. I still had a silent investor that owned half of the business. My son worked for me then and was living in the apartment over the store.

We always wanted to get back to Vermont. We never considered that it would take so long, but after Sandy got her IBM job, she put her name in to transfer to Vermont. Finally, after almost ten years, she got approved for a transfer in December of 1984. As soon as we heard of this, I put my business up for sale. My "silent" partner didn't want to sell, but I told him I was selling my half regardless, so he decided to sell also. He said he couldn't or wouldn't carry on without me. It turned out that another wholesaler in Connecticut was interested in having another branch in Poughkeepsie. We had a verbal commitment within a week, although it took almost three months to get things settled and move to Vermont. Sandy moved to a motel in Vermont and started working at the Essex Junction IBM facility in January 1985. But I didn't move up until the spring of 1985, after selling the business and our home in Lagrange. Our family threw us a surprise party and our neighborhood had thrown us another party earlier. My son stayed on with the new owner for a while afterward.

Meanwhile on weekends, Sandy and I switched driving to see each other. I would drive up to Vermont to look at houses with her, and she would come down to help with paperwork for our old house which, ultimately, we sold to IBM. The housing market was down during that time, so we didn't get as much as we wanted for our house at that time, but we had to sell and couldn't wait in hopes of getting a better price. On the other hand, we got a discounted price on our house in Underhill Center, VT. We had been in our house in Lagrange since 1962. I had finished our floors the night before we moved in. We moved out in spring of 1985. When we went to take our clothes out of our master bedroom closet, we found that we had never painted the sheetrock!

Those who know me realize that I have reason to worry about what is coming around the bend. While we were waiting for the movers to arrive at our house in Underhill, we got a call from the realtor that the owner hadn't got final approval for a subdivision of an adjoining piece of property from the town board. They expected to get approval at their next meeting the following week. We had already moved in, but were still waiting for our furniture, etc. We immediately had a conference call with the seller, and she agreed that we could move in "rent free" for as long as it would take to get final approval for the subdivision from the town.

We went ahead and moved our furniture in, although it took a long time due to the ice on the driveway — even after sanding. The moving company was very thorough, and they even delivered two big bags of garbage that we had set aside to be picked up by our trash hauler! It seems they kept my commercial push broom however, maybe to "get even" with us for having such an icy driveway. I said to Sandy, "We are moving all our stuff in today and we aren't moving out even if the subdivision gets postponed. We will buy the extra property if we have to!" Luckily, everything worked out.

Next column: Back to Vermont after 30 years!

Monotony is caused by a lack of curiosity. Wonder, with a ready answer or not, is the most effective cure. — Sue Kusserow

Finding community through Emergency Medical Services

By Chelsea Dubie

A quote frequently used by my father is one that describes the culture of a place where he spent most of his 25-year military career. Serving as an F-16 pilot, and later as Adjutant General, he would often say, "The Vermont Guard is a family tradition." With three generations of my family serving in the Vermont Guard, the description has a literal meaning to it. But growing up around the base and spending countless hours with my dad's colleagues and their families, the quote also has a figurative meaning as well. The Guard became a second family, and as I grew older, I found myself drawn towards activities that could offer a similar sense of camaraderie. I engrossed my time in joining team sports, Greek life, class council, and other volunteer-based services. Each organization was unique and meaningful in its own way, and each one instilled a sense of teamwork, service, and leadership. Even through my volunteer work, something still felt like it was missing. I wanted to belong to a team that serves their community in a more powerful capacity. Rather than participating in the occasional, few-hour-long volunteer gig, or donning a sports uniform before taking the field, or wearing matching sorority pins with 75 other women, I knew that I could do more. I wanted an experience where I could work closely with colleagues during intense situations, even life and death situations. In this way, I knew I could truly make an impact on someone's life, while also building strong, lasting bonds with a community of individuals with similar motivations as my own.

I ran into a college classmate in 2012 who informed me that she had joined a local rescue squad. She expressed both her enjoyment and her fulfillment from the experience. She felt close with the people she ran rescue with, and enjoyed the intensity and the challenges that come with running on a rescue squad. She suggested I come by the station one day to check it out, just in case it was something I would be interested in joining. I initially didn't think much of it; I was both working and in graduate school full-time and thought it would be too much to take on. But as time progressed, I thought more about the positive experience she had described to me, and the prospect of becoming involved in emergency medical services became increasingly more appealing. After trading some emails and a tour of the station, I decided to apply to the rescue squad my friend was on. I was accepted and quickly enrolled in an emergency medical technician (EMT) course at UVM. I was hooked. Eight years later I continue to find myself heavily involved in emergency medical services, not only through my job at the Vermont Department of Health, but also through my volunteer positions with Essex Rescue and Georgia First Response.

I'm often asked by friends and family, "Why do you do rescue?" Their questioning is genuine, even asked with perplexity. They sincerely wonder what motivates someone to be away from their family at all hours of the day and night, waiting for emergency calls on a 12- or 24-hour shift. Recently, the question of "why" comes up more frequently. As a new mother of an infant with special health needs, I occasionally find myself asking the same question. Sleep deprivation, losing family time, and stress can all play into this important question of "why?" After working a 40+ hour week at the Vermont Department of Health, and sometimes missing out on family gatherings or events, why do I continue to respond to 9-1-1 calls in the middle of the night, helping and providing aid to strangers I have never met?

My response is always the same: service. This is how I always envisioned my path in service to others. This is how I have found my niche. I spent most of my childhood living in and attending schools in Essex Junction. It is then only fitting that I find myself volunteering in the town that I grew up in. As many Essex residents know, the Essex Rescue station is directly next to the high school. Each time I turn onto Educational Drive I am reminded of Friday night football games, school dances, and lacrosse practice. As someone with diverse volunteer experiences, being in emergency medical services is the most unique and rewarding one of all. What makes it more special is that I can do EMS in my hometown. Emergency medical services gives me the opportunity to use a different skill set; to work with my hands and apply my training to think quickly and critically to manage emergency situations. As I shared before, the challenges and intensity of this line of work play a large role in my motivation to serve, but the most vital piece that drives me is the camaraderie that I find among my crew. The complexity and intimacy of emergency calls sometimes cannot be expressed in words; they are simply shared experiences that bring crews closer together.

While I was unable to join the military due to asthma, I ultimately found what I had been searching for all along in the first responder community. I encourage anyone interested in a unique volunteer experience that makes an impactful difference in the community to explore joining Essex Rescue. We are a dedicated group of individuals — your family, neighbors, friends, and co-workers — who all share the same desire to serve others.

Talking politics with your children

With Election Day approaching, parents have been campaigning for me to help them help their children better understand what the presidential election, or any election, is all about.

Talking about the issues that are in the news around an election, especially those that can affect your family, helps your children better learn about these issues and think about them critically. These conversations enable you to clear up misperceptions your children might have heard or read about a candidate or issue. Here's what I suggest:

Don't force a political discussion with your children — instead take your cues from them. These may range from questions such as, "What does the president do?" or, for a younger child, "What does it mean to vote?" An older child might ask a more sophisticated question about national or international policy.

Keep it positive. This is a great opportunity to show your children how to share your differences of opinion with respect, rather than with anger or negativity. Focus on the positive attributes of the candidate you are favoring and the issues they stand for rather than the negative attributes of the opponent.

Encourage your children to get involved in a cause, especially if they are interested in issues and elections. By getting involved, they become empowered and feel they are making more of a contribution to the issues that concern them.

Explain how our democracy works. This is an excellent time to review how voting works, how government works, and to reinforce how every person's opinion counts through voting. If you are not voting by mail, take your children with you on Election Day so they can see how the democratic process works. Going between 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM might be easiest, since that is when the polls tend to be less busy and you can ensure good physical distancing. Having your children join you enables them to see how much you value the right to vote, and in turn they will too.

Hopefully tips like these will get your vote when it comes to helping your children better understand what is happening during election season and on Election Day.

Lewis First, MD, is Chief of Pediatrics at UVM Children's Hospital of Vermont Children's Hospital and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at UVM's Larner College of Medicine.

League of Women Voters for nonpartisan voter education

The League of Women Voters of Vermont offers voters their VOTE411 nonpartisan election resource, <http://www.vote411.org>, in preparation for the general election on Tuesday, November 3. This "one-stop-shop" provides simple, helpful tools to assist Vermonters navigate the voting process.

VOTE411 provides candidate information, allows voters to compare positions of candidates who responded, and view side-by-side responses for any two candidates running for office. Visit Vote411.org, click on "See what's on your Ballot" and enter your address to get a list of all the races in your area. In addition, VOTE411 provides voter registration, polling places, and other election-related resources.

"Voters need simple, accessible tools to help them navigate the voting process before Election Day," said Johnna Ferguson, Manager.

"Vermont already has an excellent resource in the My Voter Page at <http://mvp.vermont.gov/>. Through VOTE411, the League provides an additional way for voters to access the information they need, anytime they need it. We are pleased to provide this important nonpartisan election resource to all Vermont voters."

The League of Women Voters of Vermont encourages voters to use VOTE411 or Vermont's own mvp.vermont.gov if they would like to register to vote, check their voting status, or make a voting plan so they are prepared to cast their vote confidently on November 3.

For more information on Vote411 contact Johnna Ferguson, jferguson@lwvofvt.org.



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Send your news to mtngazette@gmavt.net

Events continued from page 3

Backyard Composting Workshop, 5:00 PM, on Zoom. Learn the joy of home composting in a FREE online workshop. Discover the benefits of "closing the loop" with your own household food scraps in this lively, online demonstration of a healthy compost system. Our compost gurus will show you short video clips of: What type of bin is best for you, Where to locate your bin, What to put into your bin (and what to avoid!), How to manage your bin, Troubleshooting, and Harvesting your compost. Each video section will be followed by live Q&A sessions. Register in advance for this webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8122555555>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Sunday, October 31

Halloween Trunk-or-Treat, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, St. Thomas Church parking lot, Underhill Center. Cars will be parked strategically in the lot, trunks open, with volunteers dispensing candy and treats. Pandemic precautions will be observed: masks are required, and people should stay six feet apart from those who are not in their household. The event is especially for kids, but anyone can participate. Want to volunteer? Contact Sarah Bahr, rdnckviolinist@aol.com.

Thursday-Friday, November 5-6

UVM Extension Master Gardener State Conference Gardening for Resilience: Feeding our Soil, Seeds, Habitats, and Communities, 12:00 – 2:00 PM, on Zoom. Have you ever asked yourself if something is compostable, or if you're composting correctly? Have asked yourself what Vermont's new composting law means in practical terms? Please join us online to hear Natasha Duarte (CAV) and Cat Buxton, Vermont soil and compost experts, speak about the new composting law and to learn how to promote the healthy soil so important to abundant growth in the garden and to healthy ecosystems. Speakers also include: Sylvia Davatz, expert seed saver and founder of Solstice Seeds; keynote speaker Dan Jaffe Wilder, Horticulturalist and Propagator for the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary; and Jamaica Kincaid, award-winning writer, novelist, and Harvard professor. Register online; the \$40 fee includes access to both days, and to a live recording of the conference. Partial scholarships are available. To learn more or to register please go to <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener/state-conference>.

Sunday, November 8

Varnum Library Holiday Portraits Fundraiser, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Varnum Memorial Library, Jeffersonville. Holiday portraits by Visual Artisan Photography, by appointment, with 10-minute mini-sittings. All proceeds of \$25 cost go to the library.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Legislative session end

By George Till, State Representative, Chittenden-3

The legislature has finally adjourned. It was by all accounts a unique and challenging year. Despite horrifying fiscal forecasts at the height of the pandemic, in the end we passed a balanced budget with full reserves over \$200M and no significant increase borrowing. The final House vote on the nearly \$7.2B budget was strong and bipartisan at 141-5. At a time of unprecedented polarization in national politics, Vermont legislators were able to come together to deal with enormous challenges in a constructive and balanced way. We are not out of the woods from the effects of the COVID pandemic, but no state has done a better job dealing with the unexpected crisis to this point. There will be significant budgetary challenges for FY2022. The future effects of COVID-19 both on public health and Vermont's economy are uncertain. The future of any further federal financial relief funds remains uncertain. At this time, we are in far better shape than anticipated six months ago.

E-cigarettes and Tobacco 21: In 2019, the first year of our legislative session, the Vermont Legislature passed three bills related to one of my highest personal priorities. We passed S.86, which raised the minimum age to legally purchase tobacco or vaping products to age 21. The critical need for this comes from the fact that the younger an individual is when trying tobacco, the more likely they are to become addicted and the more difficult it is to quit. Additionally, we know that 90% of tobacco products supplied to younger teenagers came from those who were 18-20 years old. If an individual does not start smoking before the age of 21 they are quite unlikely to become an everyday smoker. At the time of passage, there were an estimated 10,000 kids alive in Vermont destined to die from tobacco related illnesses. In the U.S., one-fifth of deaths are still related to tobacco and on average smokers die 10 years earlier than non-smokers. We passed H.26, which outlawed Internet sales of vaping products into Vermont. These products must be sold, as tobacco products are, through licensed distributors and retailers in Vermont. The data about how successfully children were able to obtain these products online was shocking, simply checking a box saying they were 21 years old. As with regular tobacco products, the earlier one starts, the more likely one is to become addicted. The third bill, H.47, placed taxes on vaping products equal to that of other tobacco products, or 92% of wholesale value. We know that raising the price is a significant deterrent to both youth and low-income individuals purchasing tobacco/vaping products. From my prospective these were some of the most important population health changes we could have made.

Women's issues: In the 2019-2020 Legislative session, we addressed a number of issues important to women. We increased access to hormonal contraception in H.663, allowing pharmacists to provide contraceptives without requiring a visit to the doctor's office or prescription from a physician. In H.83, we outlawed female genital mutilation in Vermont and

transporting a child out of state to have this procedure performed, protecting the estimated 650 Vermont girls at risk of being subjected to this despicable procedure.

We added specific prohibition of sexual exploitation by a law enforcement officer in H.19. In H.132 discrimination in housing for victims of sexual abuse or domestic violence was outlawed. We allowed convictions of domestic abuse which occurred in another state to be considered in subsequent sentencing for domestic abuse convictions happening in Vermont. We also passed an increase in minimum wage in S.23, which is very much a women's issue, as the vast majority of minimum wage workers are females. Lastly, we insured integrity of women's reproductive rights in H.57.

Older Vermonters: H.611 established a "Bill of Rights" for Older Vermonters, laying out a plan that ensures our elders are "aging well" across the state. H.611 details a system of services, supports, and protections for Vermont residents 60 years of age or older that would ensure their self-determination, safety and protection, coordinated and efficient system of services, financial security, optimal health and wellness, social connection and engagement, housing, transportation, and community design, and family caregiver support. The aim is to put Vermont on a path to become the best state to age in. (In just 10 years, one in four of us will be over the age of 65!) The legislation requires the Department for Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) to administer officially all programs related to the Older Americans Act, as well as to establish a State Plan on Aging. The legislation set up a process for registering all business organizations providing in-home services to older Vermonters not covered by Medicaid. The law creates a Self-Neglect Working Group to provide recommendations regarding adults who, due to physical or mental impairment or diminished capacity, are unable to perform essential self-care tasks.

Energy efficiency: This session, the Legislature passed S.337, a bill that allows Efficiency Vermont and Burlington Electric Dept. to expand the money-saving services they deliver to Vermonters. It broadens their energy efficiency mandate to include helping Vermonters save on their heating and transportation costs, not just electricity bills. It expands the concept of energy efficiency to encompass greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions rather than only reduction in electric usage. As such, it allows the testing and development of new strategies to achieve the overall goal of mitigating climate change. These strategies will be tested in small pilot programs for three years, and funded out of existing revenues with no increase in electric rates. Though targeting GHG, S.337 stipulates that programs must have a nexus to electricity — essentially this means spurring "beneficial electrification," or replacing high-GHG fossil use with low-GHG electric. The programs must maximize cost-effective GHG reductions, and must be delivered statewide and be reasonably proportionate to electric efficiency charges collected in each utility territory.

Clean water initiative; children's issues

By Trevor Squirrel

State Representative, Chittenden-3

The first year of the 2019-2020 legislative session feels decades away. There were a number of important things done in that year before we ever heard of COVID. One of the issues we addressed in the legislature was funding for cleaning up the waters of Vermont.

After many years of work and smaller incremental successes, in 2019 we finally established a dedicated long-term funding source for the Clean Water Fund. We allocated 6% of the existing rooms and meals tax to the Clean Water Fund, resulting in almost \$12 million yearly.

The rooms and meals tax, a property transfer tax surcharge, and the escheats (unclaimed bottle deposits) will all go into the Clean Water Fund and will be distributed through a watershed-based structure intended to identify projects that reduce the most pollution for our investment. Along with the appropriations through the Capital Bill, the Transportation Bill, and money in the General Fund budget, the total available for Clean Water will be \$55 million a year.

Why are these investments so important?

Increasingly severe storms resulting from climate change harm homes, farms, businesses, and buildings. Storm waters scour unprotected topsoils, sending sediment down rivers and streams and into our lakes, which feed algae blooms, lower water quality, threaten the survival of the fish and wildlife that depend on clean water, impact access to clean water and recreation on and in water for Vermonters, and lower not only the fair market value of properties bordering water but the value of grand lists for the towns in which those properties are located.

Clean water building projects mean economic growth measured in jobs and in the positive ripple effects on the economy that those jobs create. Clean water building projects mean farmers can prevent phosphorus and

nutrient run-off into streams, rivers, and lakes. The projects mean Vermonters with camps on waters can continue to enjoy the places that have been special to their families for years or generations.

Clean water building projects mean Vermont can make progress on its path to meet its agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency to meet the Lake Champlain Watershed's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to reduce phosphorus runoff into all of the basin's waters.

Children's issues: In the 2019-2020 legislative session we passed multiple bills to increase protection of the children of Vermont. We passed legislation requiring testing drinking water for lead in all schools and daycare centers and to provide remediation where needed. We also passed H.218, a bill requiring safe work practices that prevent lead from entering buildings or the environment, when working in target housing, child-occupied facilities, public facilities, commercial facilities, and bridges, or other superstructures built before 1978.

We passed H.936 expanding protection against sexual exploitation of children and also removed the statute of limitations for civil actions related to child sexual abuse, in H.330.

We supported childcare in Vermont. More than \$50 million in federal coronavirus relief funds were allocated since March to support childcare through stabilization payments, restart grants, operational relief grants, and temporary school-age child care hubs.

The state's Frontline Worker Hazard Pay program was expanded to include early childhood educators who worked during the early days of the pandemic during the *Stay Home, Stay Safe* order to care for children of essential workers.

The Child Care Financial Assistance Program will see another boost in reimbursement rates and eligibility, keeping up with the state's five-year child care redesign plan.

changes to how the state handles youth offenders and automatic expungement for low-level marijuana possession records, and established a safe recreational marketplace for adult use cannabis.

We pushed hard for police reforms, including diverting resources to have more mental health workers at law enforcement agencies, banning choke-holds and other excessive use of force tactics, and barring these from being part of trainings. We also mandated body cameras, race data collection, and put citizens in the driver's seat of the training council and discipline process.

We managed to override the Governor's veto of a significant climate bill that sets Vermont on a path to correct our outlier status in New England. We have the highest per capita carbon footprint and have been the slowest to reduce our emissions compared to neighboring states. We are now aimed at meeting the Paris reduction targets as a start.

Your Chittenden County Senators have worked effectively as a team across a broad range of issues and I am proud to be a part of that work. As always, please be in touch (cpearson@leg.state.vt.us) with questions or comments.

Chittenden 8-3

Legislative Report week 29

Robert Bancroft, State Representative, Chittenden-8-3

The Vermont General Assembly finally adjourned for the year after meeting for a record 29 weeks, nine of which were held in Montpelier and the remainder remotely. The House dealt with and passed a total of 19 bills last week. I voted in favor for all, except S.119 and H.926. Seventeen of the bills dealt with Senate and/or House amendments to bills, which one of the two bodies had already taken up and passed on to the other. Several of the bills bounced back and forth between the two bodies before being voted on.

One of the 17 bills was the budget, H.969. There were differences (primarily dealing with COVID funding) between the House and Senate versions. A Committee of Conference (CoC), consisting of three members from the House and three from the Senate, was appointed to iron out the differences. The highlights of the compromises and projections of FY22 revenue shortfalls and budget pressures can be found at <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/House%20Appropriations/August%20-%20FY21%20State%20Budget%20Restatement/6.%20Final%20Conference%20Committee%20Documents/H.969-H.969%20Committee%20of%20Conference-Report%20Highlights-9-24-2020.pdf>.

The two bills that came before the House for the first time were S.119 and S.124. Of the two, the body dealt with S.124 first. It addressed law enforcement officer training; officer recruitment and retention; the administration of law enforcement services; law enforcement coverage; and 911 call-taking (PSAPs) and dispatch. It places a moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement and requires the Criminal Justice Council (CJC) to craft a policy on use of body cameras by law enforcement. The bill also stipulates that the CJC have a member from the mental health community and one appointed by the NAACP.

S.119 dealt with the statewide use of deadly force policy by law enforcement. The legislation was rushed through, which many felt they were not given adequate time to address the underlying issues and concerns. The head of the Vermont State Police, police chiefs from S. Burlington and Montpelier, and Vermont's Commissioner of Public Safety Michael Schirring testified about their concerns with the bill. In an email sent to all five of the Essex representatives, Essex Chief of Police Ron Hogue shared his concerns with S.119. He wrote, "First, let me begin by saying that neither I, the Vermont Chiefs' Association, nor the Vermont Police Association are against change and we agree that there should be a model policy created on use of force. However, we are in disagreement with the advocates for this bill in that creating one through legislation is the correct way to arrive at that goal. This bill seems to be hurried to be enacted and an issue as important as this should be decided after careful consideration." He then went on to address his specific concerns with the bill and offered his thoughts on what should be included in such alternative legislation. Vermont's Attorney General T.J. Donovan expressed his belief that the establishment of a use-of-force standard should be evolutionary and not set through rigid legislation.

I could not support the S.119 as written. I certainly endorse the development of a statewide use-of-force policy, but this bill was written hastily and is not conducive to change. I want to remind folks that I was one of six representatives to sponsor a use-of-force bill back in January. Unfortunately, in early February the Judiciary Committee decided not to take it up. The bill was modeled after a recent California bill. It required a broader time frame leading up to the use of force, so that if there was a failure to de-escalate (or an actual provocation), that could be included in a review. It would have changed the standard to being based on whether the force was "necessary" rather than "reasonable" and whether the fear of injury was reasonably based on a police officer's expertise (rather than an ordinary/law person). The Governor is likely to veto S.119.

S.926 proposed to make two significant changes to Act 250. One change, which was not controversial, was to extend the exemption for trails from Act 250 review out through December 31, 2021 and require a working group to come up with recommendations on how to address the different types of trails. The second change, which was controversial and opposed by the Secretary of ANR, dealt with forest fragmentation of wildlife corridors. The Secretary wrote, "There is a clear need for Act 250 process reform, and I believe strongly that the forest fragmentation criteria is an important lever in helping ensure that this process improvement work takes place. Were the forest frag criteria to move forward absent a larger package, I am both concerned about the disproportionate impact this will have on the rural economy and that the motivation to come back to the larger conversation next session will suffer, if not evaporate outright." I could not support the bill due to the inadequacies of the fragmentation portion of the bill. There is good chance the Governor will also veto S.926. The Commerce and Economic Development Committee (CEDC) spent most all of its meeting time discussing where unspent COVID Relief Funds in some programs should be reallocated.

I want to thank my constituents for reaching out to me with their problems concerns and comments during the legislative session. I weigh each person's input and research bills when they come to the committee I serve on and the Assembly. Sitting in the "hot seat" is challenging because no matter who sits there, they will never make everyone happy. While I may oppose a particular bill, it is often the case where I support the objectives of the bill but because the bill was poorly written or missing important aspects, I cannot support its passage. I am grateful to have served the residents of Westford and Essex the past six years. I wish everyone a wonderful fall and good health.

2019-2020 legislative session snapshot

By Christopher Pearson

State Senator, Chittenden District

Friday (September 25) afternoon your legislature wrapped up after an extraordinary session. Normally we finish in mid-May. But the pandemic meant we needed time to react, stimulate the economy, and help families cope with the COVID emergency. Here's a snapshot of our work:

We directed \$1.25B in COVID-relief aimed at helping small businesses, sole proprietors, health facilities, farmers, front-line workers, childcare providers, unemployed workers, higher education, municipalities, food shelves, broadband build-out, and more.

Beyond reacting to COVID-19, we guaranteed women the right to an abortion, boosted the minimum wage to \$12.55, passed gun safety measures, dedicated clean water funding from existing revenues, boosted base pay for mental health workers, and protected consumers from predatory standard-form contracts.

We passed a range of criminal justice reforms including progressive

Legislative update: 2019/20 session adjourned Legislative update

By Theresa Wood

State Representative, Washington-Chittenden

The historic 2020 legislative session has come to a close, finally! This will be my last legislative update of the session. I normally make that statement in May of each year but this year nothing has been normal, as you all already know. Also, this is a pretty lengthy update and is certainly not all-inclusive. I've tried to highlight the legislative action on areas of interest expressed by you through your emails and calls to me.

During the last week of the session a number of bills passed the finish line. A brief overview is included below:

S.24; S.119; S.124 – These three bills deal with various aspects of racial and social justice; all three bills made it through the legislative process and went to the Governor's office; it is unclear what action he may take/have taken on some or all of them.

S.24 – an act relating to a report on racial equity in the Department of Corrections (DOC), requires the DOC to develop a plan to address systemic racism, racial bias, and diversity and inclusion in the department. This bill impacts employees and individuals in the custody of Corrections.

S.119 – this is an act relating to a statewide use of deadly force policy for law enforcement, including chokeholds and other restraints. The bill also amends the state's "justifiable homicide" statute.

S.124 – an act relating to governmental structures protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. This bill creates a moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology and expands the role and membership of the Criminal Justice Council. The Council membership is expanded to

include people with lived experience with mental health disorders and people representing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The Council is responsible for developing a statewide policy on the use of body cameras.

H.611 – Older Vermonters Act; this bill has made it through the House and the Senate and went to the Governor's desk, and he was expected to sign it. The bill provides an essential bill of rights for older Vermonters; sets up a task force to address self-neglect; puts in law certain reporting requirements around adult abuse; begins the process to develop a master plan on healthy aging in Vermont; and begins to address the rates paid to providers like home health agencies, adult day programs, area agencies on aging, etc., for people who receive Medicaid. I was a lead sponsor of this bill.

H.954 – an act relating to miscellaneous tax provisions. The item of note in this bill is more about what it did *not* contain than what it did. In the end, a provision to tax certain cloud-based software was *not* included in this bill.

H.926 – an act related to changes to Act 250. Vermont's land use law, Act 250, turned 50 years old. A lengthy public process was undertaken over the last two years to consider modernization of this law. In the end, at least for this year, only two provisions of the original bill made it across the finish line. The two provisions relate to preventing forest fragmentation and changes to the provisions around Vermont's recreation trail system.

H.795 – an act relating to hospital price transparency, hospital sustainability planning, provider sustainability and reimbursements, and regulators' access to information. This is a continuing effort to make information available to the general public to compare prices of health care and to make health care costs more transparent to the public.

S.354 – an act relating to emergency provisions for the operation of

(local) government. This bill authorizes a local "legislative body" (think select board or school board), to make the decision about whether the business to be conducted at the 2021 annual or special meeting of the municipality or school district will be done by Australian Ballot. In other words, items that are customarily voted on "from the floor" and require gatherings of large numbers of people, may be enacted by Australian ballot in 2021 if the select board or school board so decides. This is temporary, only for 2021.

H.969 – an act relating to making appropriations for state government, otherwise known as "the big bill," or the budget. The VT House gave final approval to the \$7.17B state budget bill on Friday, September 25. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's budgeting process was longer and more complex than any in recent history. The FY 2021 budget expedites relief to those in need, and puts us on a strong financial footing to continue our recovery efforts when the legislature reconvenes in January.

Key items of interest include:

- authorizing the final round of federal Coronavirus Relief Funds (to see a full accounting of the \$1.25B allocated, visit this webpage: https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Uploads/179293d737/All_CRF_appropriations_by_category.pdf).
- bridge funding for the VT State Colleges (\$28M total) as the state college system, working with the Governor's administration and the legislature, plan for the future of the state college system.
- resources to make child care more affordable, provides dollars for vulnerable Vermonters looking to start businesses, expands hazard pay for frontline workers, directs financial assistance to Vermonters left out of federal stimulus payments, and supports the reopening of school. It

Legislative continued on page 7

Legislative continued from page 6

also funds the Global Warming Solutions Act and strengthens public transportation and incentives to reduce the cost of electric vehicles.

• the budget does *not* use the State's "rainy day" funds to achieve a balanced budget; all reserve funds are intact to help address uncertain times that will be faced as we plan for the uncertainty that confronts us in the coming months. However, unlike normal times, both the Governor and the Legislature did utilize "one time" funds to balance the budget.

I hope these updates throughout the session have been helpful, and please know that you can continue to reach me at twood@leg.state.vt.us.

Hazard pay expanded on last day of legislative session

By Michael Sirotkin, State Senator, Chittenden District

On Friday, September 25, right before the legislature adjourned its longest session in history, we agreed to extend the previously enacted \$2000 (\$1200 for part time workers) hazard pay bonus to approximately 15,000 additional Vermonters who worked in essential jobs from last March to May.

Previously, in late June, the legislature had granted \$28M in hazard bonus pay to 16,000 frontline workers, primarily to health care related workers earning less \$25/hr.

On Friday we greatly expanded the workers covered to include the following jobs, which were essential in meeting Vermonters' needs at the height of the pandemic. The new law expands coverage to Additional Employees by making employees of the following types of employers potentially eligible:

- lodging establishments that housed homeless individuals during the eligible period;
- traveling nurse and nurse contracting agencies that provided services to healthcare or residential care facilities in Vermont;
- cleaning or janitorial services that provided services to healthcare or residential care facilities in Vermont;
- food service providers that provided services to healthcare or residential care facilities in Vermont;
- grocery stores;
- pharmacies;
- other essential retailers identified in the Governor's Stay Home/Stay Safe order (Addendum 6 to Executive Order 01-20);

- wholesale distributors making deliveries to essential retailers;
- trash collection, waste management, and septic services;
- privately owned wastewater pollution abatement and control facilities;
- child care facilities that provided care for the children of essential workers pursuant to Directive 2 of Executive Order 01-20;
- vocational rehabilitation service providers;
- funeral and crematory establishments;
- security service agencies that provided security services to other covered employers.

These added grants will total \$22.5M more in recognition for the risks taken by these workers at the height of the virus, bringing the total amount of hazard pay awarded in Vermont to over \$50M.

Vermont stands out as a national leader in recognizing our essential workers. Special acknowledgment needs to go out Senators Kitchel and Ashe, without whose leadership this clearly would not have happened.

The application process for the expanded grants should be ready to go in the next few weeks. For all the program details, and there are many that could not be listed above, go to <https://dvha.vermont.gov/front-line-employees-hazard-pay-grants>.

Legislative update/Washington Chittenden District

By Thomas Stevens

State Representative, Washington-Chittenden

As you may have read from other Representatives and Senators, the Legislature has finally adjourned on Friday, September 25 after an historic and unprecedented session. The pandemic upended all of our lives and our work, and the Legislature was no different.

This concluded an historic two-year session in which COVID-19 tested our state, causing numerous disruptions including the closure of schools, workplaces, state parks, and Vermont's State House. Through it all, we have worked collaboratively to move forward Vermonters' priorities, never losing sight of those who have been harmed or left behind by the global pandemic.

The ripple effects of the public health crisis prompted rapid action, and we responded. We have led with our values and fought to provide crucial support to Vermonters in need. Following the closure of the State House, lawmakers immediately transitioned our work online and set up a system for remote meetings. Daily briefings began to collect information

and develop priorities. Hundreds of millions of dollars were rapidly authorized for emergency needs.

Relief efforts continued through the spring and into the summer. The House worked collaboratively with our state and federal partners to advocate for additional resources to help us rebuild strong, healthy communities. All told, we authorized more than \$1.2B of aid to individuals, small businesses, our schools and public colleges, and the frontline workers who have kept us safe.

In addition to aid, our swift actions to mobilize and work at the community level have suppressed the pandemic to manageable levels. By any measure, Vermont is recognized as a national leader in Coronavirus mitigation. Our all-in approach limited the harm and has helped ensure our healthcare system is strong as we prepare for the possibility of another wave of the virus.

At the same time, we have advanced priorities to address long-term challenges. Over the course of the two-year biennium, we passed a law to connect more Vermonters to broadband, established a permanent funding source for clean water, increased support for childcare, protected reproductive rights, and began a process to reform our criminal justice system. This year, we passed a Paid Family and Medical Leave package to help Vermonters in their time of need, and overrode the Governor's veto to increase the minimum wage and give thousands of Vermonters a raise.

In the one-month session that began August 25, we enacted the Global Warming Solutions Act, over the Governor's objection, to lower our carbon footprint and meaningfully move us toward our climate goals. We advanced meaningful police reform and measures to address systemic racism in our corrections system. And, we created a COVID-19 Equity Stimulus package to ensure women and minority-owned businesses can access the resources they need to build back better.

These are challenging times for our nation and state. Vermont has faced its share of hardship and tragedy, through war, floods, and the Great Depression. But 2020 has brought a set of challenges that are uniquely fraught with uncertainty. I am proud of all we have accomplished together as Vermonters. Our work will continue into the winter as we prepare for the next legislative session, in January.

My focus is on the needs of our community and on ensuring no one falls behind during this pandemic. If you need any assistance, please reach out. I can always be reached at tstevens@leg.state.vt.us or 244-4164.

VOTING INFORMATION**November election ballots — Bolton information**

By Amy Grover, Bolton Town Clerk and Treasurer

There seems to still be some confusion around the Tuesday, November 3, 2020 election. Although this is lengthy, PLEASE read on for important information.

Ballots have been mailed by the State to every active registered voter in Vermont, whether the voter requested a ballot or not. This is being done for the first time in Vermont in response to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on public health and safety during the 2020 election, in an effort order to help protect the health and safety of voters and poll workers. Think of this as "contactless" voting. The state ballot mailing was based on the active registered voter list as of September 2. If a voter registered/registers after that date, the voter will still receive a ballot, mailed by the Town Office, whether the voter requested the ballot or not. This means you do not need to request an absentee ballot to receive one, as every active registered voter will receive a ballot.

Unfortunately, we have already had ballots that were generated by the state mailing returned to the Town Office due to mailing address issues. If you were an active, registered voter in Bolton by September 2, and did not receive a ballot by October 7, please contact the Town Office to notify us. With your help we will correct any mailing address errors, and get your ballot to you!

PLEASE make sure that you follow the directions for returning your voted ballot — including signing the certificate envelope, then return your voted ballot to the town as soon as possible. We want EVERY VOTE TO COUNT (a ballot returned after the election will not count, nor will a ballot returned in an unsigned certificate envelope), and because all ballots have been issued by mail, this requires that EVERY BALLOT be checked back in to the online VT Election Management System when received, a process which takes several steps for each and every ballot, and is very time consuming.

As always, return your voted ballot to the Town of Bolton ASAP, either by mail (postage will be prepaid) or leave it in the secure drop box at the Town Office, available 24/7. We are suggesting that if you choose to return your voted ballot by mail, to do so by Saturday, October 24

The polls will be open at Smilie School from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM with COVID-19 precautions in place, in order to accommodate same day voter registration, voters who want to drop off their voted ballot (which still will require that the ballot be checked in to the online VT Election Management System), or voters who did not receive a ballot. HOWEVER, the use of Smilie School could be subject to change depending on the state of COVID-19 later this fall — this is an unknown for us all. Therefore, the State and the Town are HIGHLY ENCOURAGING all voters to take advantage of the "contactless" voting option (remember, you do not even have to pay for the postage to mail your ballot back), for the health and safety of our poll workers and our voters.

IF you come to the polls, and our records indicate that you were mailed a ballot, you will need to bring that ballot with you to vote, or sign an affidavit form that you have not returned a ballot previously issued, or cast a ballot, which the Town has to keep on file for two years. Again, the State and the Town are HIGHLY ENCOURAGING all voters to take advantage of the "contactless" voting option for the health and safety of our poll workers and our voters.

To recap: Be on the lookout for your ballot in the mail, vote, follow the directions on how to correctly return your voted ballot, and then PLEASE return your voted ballot to the Town via mail or drop box, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! If you do not receive a ballot, contact the Town Office!

If you are unsure if you are registered to vote or have any questions about your voter information, including if your ballot has been received, you can check your "My Voter Page" at <https://mvp.vermont.gov/> or contact the Town Office, 802-434-5075.

Westford general election ballot and other voting information

By Nanette Rogers, Westford Town Clerk

The November General Election is fast approaching; therefore we wanted to provide an update and some reminders about how

voting will be handled for this election.

The State of Vermont began mailing ballots to all active voters on September 21. If you were on the Westford checklist as of September 2, you should have received a ballot by October 7. If you registered to vote after September 2 you will receive a ballot directly from the Westford Town Office. In either case, you do not need to request a ballot to receive one.

If you are unsure if you are registered to vote, or have any questions about your voter information (for example, you aren't sure your address is correct), you can check your My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. This page will also indicate if your ballot has been mailed.

In an effort to keep our community healthy and to minimize exposure to poll workers, we are highly recommending you vote using the ballot that is being mailed to you rather than in person on Election Day. To allow sufficient time for mailing your ballot, please mail it by Saturday, October 24. If you prefer to hand deliver the ballot to the Town Office, you can do so through Monday, November 2. If you are delivering the ballot after hours, please utilize the slot located to the left of the front door. We empty the box every morning and throughout the day.

In-person voting will occur at the Westford School on Tuesday, November 3. The polls will be open 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM. Please bring the ballot that was mailed to you to the polls. If you do not, you will be required to complete an affidavit before being allowed to vote. COVID-19 safety measures will be in place NVA such as wearing a mask, maintaining 6' between others, etc. All voters voting in person are expected to comply with the safety measures.

As a final note, please carefully follow the instructions on the ballot as well as the envelopes provided. Unfortunately, every election there are ballots deemed defective because a voter did not follow the directions. It is a shame when a voter has gone through the effort to cast their vote but has failed to follow directions to ensure their vote counts. The instructions on the envelopes are very clear. You MUST seal your voted ballot in the certificate envelope AND sign the envelope. Voters should also fill in the blanks where indicated.

Please contact the Town Office at 878-4587 or townclerk@westfordvt.us if you have any questions.

Jericho early voting

By Jessica Alexander, Jericho Town Clerk

Last Friday (September 25), the Jericho Ballots were mailed in a mass mailing to all active voters who were registered to vote in Jericho by September 1 (over 4000 ballots). These did not come from the Jericho Town Clerk's Office, and were coordinated between the printer of the ballots and the Vermont Secretary of State's Office. These ballots are not able to be forwarded. So if you are temporarily having your mail forwarded, you will need to contact the Jericho Town Clerk's Office to have your ballot mailed to you. (We are receiving back the ballots that are not deliverable.) If you have not received your ballot, please contact me, 899-4936 x100 (this extension is specific for early/absentee ballot questions) or jerichovermont@yahoo.com.

If you have a child away at school and they received a ballot at their Jericho mailing address, please contact me. You can drop the unopened envelope in the Town Hall Drop Box and we will mail a ballot to their school address.

Here is a little video about early voting Frequently Asked Questions: <https://archive.org/details/votingqandajerichorichmond>. It was filmed in August. One clarification that I did not know at the time is that voters registering to vote in Jericho after September 1 will also be automatically be mailed an early ballot. The August 31 deadline ended up being changed to September 2.

If you used a "sharpie" and it bled through to the other side, please contact me to exchange for a replacement ballot. This link will show you the reasons that a early ballot can be "defective": <https://sos.vermont.gov/media/zuxfljen/appendix-j-2020-defective-ballot.pdf>.

Please remember to put your ballot inside the certificate envelope and sign the certificate envelope.

Info about your mail-in ballot

By Jim Beebe-Woodard, Underhill Town Administrator

As you know, the Vermont Secretary of State has mailed a ballot to every active voter on the statewide voter checklist. "Active" voters are any voters who have not been sent a challenge letter that asks the voters to affirm their residency, or who have responded to any such letter and have affirmed their residence. If you did not receive your mail-in ballot by October 7, please call Sherri Morin, our Town Clerk, at 899-4434 ext. 1. If you have switched from a P.O. Box to rural delivery in the past year, it is unlikely you will receive a ballot in the mail. Reach out to the Town Clerk if this applies to your household.

The November ballot has two sides. Candidates for State Representative, High Bailiff, and Justice of the Peace appear on the back side of the ballot. Most races require just one selection, but pay close attention to the following races: for State Senator, you will make six selections; State Representative, you will make two selections; and Justice of the Peace, you will choose nine. Be certain not to overvote these races, as it will invalidate that portion of your ballot. Use a blue or black pen to mark your ballot by filling in the oval next to the name of the candidate you choose. Do NOT use a check mark or X, or circle the candidate's name.

Be sure to carefully follow the instructions in the ballot package and make certain that you fill out the certificate envelope completely! This includes your printed name, town where you are registered to vote, your signature, and the date. Under Vermont law, if a certificate envelope is not filled out completely, the ballot is considered defective and cannot be counted. Further, you cannot correct the defect once you have submitted the ballot.

If you choose to mail your ballot to the Town Clerk, use the postage-prepaid envelope provided with the ballot. To be sure that your ballot is delivered before Election Day, you should put your ballot in the mail no later than Saturday, October 24. You can also deliver your ballot in person by depositing it in the secure drop box that has been installed at the main entrance to Underhill's Town Hall. You may drop your ballot off at Town Hall up until 7:00 PM on Election Day.

We hope that voters will use the mail-in ballot option to protect their health and the health of election officials. Nevertheless, you still have the option to vote in-person at Town Hall on Tuesday, November 3 from 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, provided the voter checklist indicates that you have not returned a ballot or otherwise voted in that election. It is best to bring the mail-in ballot with you; otherwise, you will have to sign an affidavit that you have not previously returned the ballot or cast any other ballot.

Ballots have been mailed; voting has begun

From the League Of Women Voters Vermont

The League of Women Voters wants you to know that voting by mail is safe, easy, and secure.

Early voting has begun as the Vermont Secretary of State's office mailed ballots to active voters between September 21-October 1. Go to SOS website, <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/election-info-resources/> (Mailed Ballots by Town) to find out when ballots to your town were mailed out.

If you have not received your ballot, please call your Town/City Clerk as soon as possible.

Now, it's time for you to complete your ballot and send it in. In order for your ballot to count, you must carefully follow the instructions that come with it. Most rejected absentee or mail-in ballots are rejected because voters forgot to sign the envelope, or they mailed it in too late and the ballot did not arrive in time.

The League of Women Voters wants to make sure that your vote counts, so here's a quick primer on completing and mailing your absentee ballot.

1. Mark your ballot oval with a blue or black pen. Do not use any other color pen or magic marker.
2. Your ballot comes with two envelopes. Place your marked ballot in the Voted Ballot Envelope and seal it.
3. Complete the requested information on the Certificate:
 - Your full formal name. No nicknames.
 - Your town or city of residence.
 - Your signature (super important!) and date.

Vote continued on page 12

LETTERS

What we all need is a good listening to**To the Editor,**

A former colleague and mentor of mine had a framed quote hanging in his office for years: "What we all need is a good listening to." Especially right now, this rings true for me. There's a lot of yelling at one another (not so much in person) and no time being taken to truly listen and hear one another.

When it comes to local politics, it's the best you can do — listen to the people you are representing, and help to make their lives better, their town better. That's why I'm voting for Alyssa Black for State Representative for Westford and Essex. She takes the time to listen. To understand what's important in your life and the lives of your neighbors.

Being a local politician is a thankless job, and it certainly doesn't pay the bills. I think of the many Westford residents that work for the town or sit on a board or volunteer committee (there's about 37 of those) and know that they are trying to make our town a better place. They are there to listen and help, not for a power trip or to help their friends. I want the same when it comes our state representation.

This post isn't about parties or platforms. It's about who will take the time to listen, regardless of the issue, to every resident of Westford. Our current and longtime representative simply doesn't. Maybe it's running unopposed for many years, or maybe you have to be a certain type of resident to get him to call or email you back — but through personal experience and conversation with Westford friends and neighbors, I've heard many stories of unanswered questions.

I've had several personal conversations with Alyssa Black, and she's just getting started. She has simply asked what's important to me, and that matters. Whatever your issue is — could be taxes (it's probably taxes), land use, broadband, rural development, safety — she is energized, ready to listen, and will bring our local issues to Montpelier with her.

I urge you to reach out to Alyssa via her website <https://www.alyssaforvt.org/> and talk to her. And, if you are already planning to vote for Alyssa Black — you can find ways to support her (like donations and lawn signs) at the website as well. Vote for someone who will listen to us and is there for Westford — vote for Alyssa Black for State Rep.

Eric Ford, Westford

CES, COVID, a shout-out to educators**To the Editor,**

I was incredibly disheartened to read (on FPF) a negative post about the CES community earlier regarding one observation the author had about the school and COVID regulations. I was so pleasantly encouraged, however, to see the outpouring support that came directly after it in subsequent posts. I am so grateful to live in Cambridge and know such incredible educators who work at CES. Teachers EVERYWHERE are working their tails off right now to try and make the best of a difficult situation. CES staff and ALL staff in the LNSU district are doing an incredible job of following safety guidelines while still creating a fun learning environment for students. Let's support our teachers and recognize that they are all doing the best they can at enforcing unnatural guidelines among preschool-6th grade students. Also, please do not generalize the school's protocol after noting ONE observation during the FIRST 2 WEEKS OF SCHOOL when students are still learning basic routines and expectations.

Meghann Oquendo, Cambridge

Deposit cans and bottle / pocket change**To the Editor,**

Hello, Scouts is underway. Scouts Latrice and Naomi Love are seeking to collect cans/bottles to collect for Scouts and winter activities. If you have soda/beer cans/bottles/pocket change you'd like to donate, please reach out (gregorylove5@aol.com) and Latrice and Naomi will collect at your address and best time to reach you. All cans collected pay for scouting uniforms/requirements and also approaching winter classes and equipment for winter recreational activities. If you have any odd jobs as well, that could be a great idea to help the girls earn their funds for their scouting journey/ winter games.

Thanks — the Love Family

Gregory Love, Jeffersonville

Loneliness**To the Editor,**

I would just like to make everyone aware that there are several people in town who live alone and may be really struggling during this strange time. One I know very well who would appreciate a little conversation and a kind word if she is sitting outside. Just make sure to remember your distance with your vulnerable population. Trying not to lecture but just to make people aware. Thank you. I'll get off my soapbox now.

Joan Farmer, Westford

Shout out to our educators**To the Editor,**

Our teachers are currently the unsung heroes of our school communities. They show up, work hard, and face challenges they could never have imagined, and this was even before COVID. Now they amaze me. With two kids at the elementary school I am beyond impressed with the level of dedication these educators show. If you have not yet reached out to your child's teacher to tell them they are appreciated, please do. We are lucky to live in a district with such dedicated educators.

THANK YOU TO ALL MMUUSD educators and staff members for all you are doing to get our kids back to school safely. YOU ARE APPRECIATED!

Lindsay Wilcox, Jericho

Westford and Essex state representative**To the Editor,**

I know that everyone has a specific reason to support a particular candidate, so I will not preach. But I feel compelled to make a point.

Vermont is in the process of trying to right itself from an economic and financial crisis, partially caused by the pandemic, but also due to demographics, lack of jobs, high taxes, and previous mismanagement.

So is this the right time to change the Westford and Essex State Representative? I say NO.

Bob Bancroft has served as our representative for six years. He works harder than anyone I have ever seen in that position. He knows his way around Montpelier and he has the right expertise in economics and small business. Bob works closely with Governor Scott and he is ready to help DAY ONE.

If we do not get the economy and finances of the state on a sustainable course, nothing else will matter.

That is why I am voting for Robert Bancroft for our State Representative.

Joseph Franz, Westford

We will miss you**To the Editor,****Dear Jericho Community,**

After 37 years being among the wonderful people in Jericho, we have to take our leave from our home. I have loved teaching your children dance (now mostly grown ups) and living in the historical house next to the town hall (which I could never really keep up with!). Now Mia at Synergy has created a great space for dance and creativity at Synergy so the dance goes on! And we have sold the house to people from the neighborhood who will make it a family gathering place, for which it was intended. You are going to love them and they will contribute to the energy of the village. We're living in an apartment at the top of Camel's Hump for a couple months and then heading to snowbird land for the winter. Now out of the "nest" but hoping to migrate back and visit! Be well! <3

Jean-Marie Milliken, Jericho

Supporting Lucy Rogers**To the Editor,**

This is a letter of support for Lucy Rogers.

Lucy proudly worked to get local broadband for our communities. She worked with a group of rural legislators to pass two bills that supported the creation of Communications Union Districts.

Lucy was founding member of the Social Equity Caucus. This new legislative caucus has taken a leading role on ensuring social, economic, and legal equity for Vermonters.

As member of the Health Care Committee she was one of the first group of legislators asked to respond to the pandemic with legislation. She has made herself constantly available to Waterville and Cambridge residents for help with unemployment insurance and access to other needs during the pandemic. She communicated consistently to the district about available money and support, as well as emergency orders.

Lucy has brought democracy, at its very best, home to us here in Cambridge and Waterville where it belongs. She places people before politics.

Nancy Chapman, Cambridge

Please join me in voting for David Zuckerman**To the Editor,**

I've worked with David Zuckerman for two decades in the course of my non-profit work and I'm very impressed.

At the moment, we have a governor who is a competent day-to-day manager, but the challenges we face are complicated and far reaching and what we really need going forward is strategic thinking. This is what David Zuckerman brings to the table. David has the ability to manage the current health crisis to keep Vermonters safe AND he would bring the power of visionary leadership to the office.

I've worked in finance and entrepreneurial strategy for 40 years, and I recognize in David Zuckerman the special capabilities that make for game-changing leadership. David is successful as a farmer and business owner. As Lieutenant Governor, he questions assumptions, he listens, he makes sure he is looking at accurate and comprehensive data, and he solicits advice from all Vermonters.

Letters continued on page 11

Prepping for Winter?

Use this checklist to prepare your house for winter, plus you'll save energy and get up to \$200 back.

Efficiency
Vermont

efficiencyvermont.com/DIY
888-921-5990

**Do-It-Yourself weatherization**

These DIY projects deliver a bigger bang for your buck.

Complete three or more and get **\$100 back**.

- Air seal and insulate your basement or attic
- Install a new window or efficient storm window
- Weatherize windows or exterior doors
- Air seal HVAC ducts or insulate hot water pipes
- Build or purchase an air tight, well-insulated attic hatch or basement bulkhead door

Thermostat upgrade

- Install a qualifying **smart thermostat** and get **\$100 back!**

LIBRARY NEWS

DEBORAH RAWSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Youth Scary Story Contest — Terrify the DRML librarians with your unique tales of mayhem, horror, and mystery! Submit your scary story for a chance to win a yummy prize pack from Snowflake Chocolates, and join us Friday the 30th (the night before Halloween) at 7:00 PM to read them to each other! Submissions from authors 18 years or younger are open until Friday, October 23. Requirements: Stories should be two pages or less typed, or four pages handwritten. No weapons should be used in the story. Illustrations aren't required, but if you want to include them go for it! Judging criteria: Your librarians will judge the entered stories based on creativity, originality, and hair-raisingness. Illustrations, punctuation, and grammar are not included in judging criteria. How to enter: Email your story in a Word or Google doc or a PDF to youth_librarian@drml.org, OR print your story, put it in an envelope with your name and email address (so we can send you an invite to the reading) and leave it in the library drop box.

While DRML is still closed to the public, we are offering curbside pickup as well as appointments for browsing and use of library computers. Please call us at 899-4962 to arrange for pickup or for an appointment.

DRML has many items that were checked out in March and May that haven't been returned yet. Please return them in our book drop as soon as possible! Our book drop is available 24/7, so drop off items any time. It is emptied every morning. Also, please know that anything returned to us is quarantined for up to seven days after it is returned. It will still appear on your account while it is quarantined and because our notices are computer generated, you will still get reminders sent to you. Check your account eight days after you return items and they should be off your account. If it is still there and you know you returned it please call us! (899-4962) We do not charge fines for overdues and we are quarantining to help keep everyone safe. We do offer curbside pickup and we do have appointments on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Check our website www.drml.org for more information or give us a call!

Curbside pickup hours are: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 7:30 PM; Wednesday and Friday, 1:00 – 5:30 PM; and Saturday, 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM.

Appointments for browsing: Thursday, 12:00 – 6:45 PM; Friday, 10:45 AM – 4:45 PM; Saturday, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

Appointments for computer use: Thursday, 12:15 – 7:00 PM; Friday, 10:15 AM – 5:00 PM; Saturday, 10:15 AM – 1:15 PM.

Adult Programs

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are free and open to all, but registration is required. To register, please email program_assistant@drml.org.

Youth Programs

Curbside Crafts (any age) are available on Wednesdays during curbside pick-up from 1:00 – 5:30 PM, and come with pretty much everything you need to complete the craft. There are only a limited number available, so first come, first served. Extras will be put out each day until they're all gone.

All our online services are up and running on our webpage, www.drml.org. As we find new and exciting things we will post them on the webpage and on our Facebook page.

Our WiFi will remain active and is accessible from the parking lot or other areas adjacent to the building. WiFi is available 24/7. A password is not needed to connect. Please be aware that our WiFi does not offer a secure connection.

For a full list of online resources, including digital e-book and audio book services, classes including language courses, and compilations of filmed programs, please visit <https://www.drml.org/how-to-use-a-closed-library/>.

Contact information: email rawsonlibrary@drml.org; website www.drml.org; phone 802-899-4962.

JERICHO TOWN LIBRARY

JTL is pleased to announce that we are now open for curbside service, following our regular Monday-Friday schedule. Our interim librarian, Loona Brogan, is eager to help with your library needs.

Thanks for your help and understanding during this time of transition! You are welcome to contact Susan Macmillan, JTL Secretary, spmjericho@gmail.com, or any Board member if you have questions.

For more information on programs and library services, please visit our website www.jerichotownlibraryvt.org or call 899-4686.

VARNUM MEMORIAL LIBRARY JEFFERSONVILLE

We are opening beginning Monday, October 19 for appointment browsing! Our new hours will be Monday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Tuesday, 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM; Wednesday, 1:30 – 6:00 PM; Thursday, 11:30 AM – 6:00 PM; Friday, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM; and Saturday, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. We are ironing out protocol, but will require that everyone wear masks — no exceptions. Signups will begin soon.

We are open for curbside pickup Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 – 5:00 PM, and Saturdays, 1:00 – 3:00 PM. To request an item, please search our catalog at <https://staff.kohavt.org/> and send your request to varnumrequests@gmail.com. Inter-library loan services are available.

We still have some unclaimed craft kits and clays kits available to be picked up; email us if you want one or didn't get a chance to pick yours up.

We have lots of free books available; please stop by during curbside service and see what we have for you to take home.

To everyone that participated in the Roald Dahl Youth Book Club at the Varnum, you were greatly missed for the rest of the year. We had one last book to read (and a lot more snacks to eat) so we are going to reconvene, virtually, one last time to discuss our last book, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, in October. Email varnumyouth@gmail.com and we will set out a copy of the book (to keep) during our curbside pick-up hours. If you weren't part of the club but are interested in participating, all are welcome — but let us know so we can order more books! After everyone has had about a month to read it, we will announce a virtual reunion meet-up date and time!

Join the Varnum Memorial Library and co-sponsor, Second Congregational Church of Jeffersonville, for a book discussion on this year's *Vermont Reads* selection, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. This discussion will be held online via Zoom on Sunday, October 18 at 5:00 PM. We have a limited supply of books, so please only request one per household and consider sharing with your friends and family. Please send book requests to varnumrequests@gmail.com.

The Varnum Library, P.O. Box 198, 194 Main St., Jeffersonville, 802-644-2117; thevarnum@gmail.com; www.varnumlibrary.org.

WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Westford Public Library is open for limited in-person services on Wednesdays, 1:00 – 7:00 PM (curbside 3:00 – 5:00 PM), and Saturdays 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM (curbside 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM). The first hour of each day is reserved for senior and immunocompromised patrons. *Curbside service is still the preferred option.* Please see our detailed plan at <https://westfordpubliclibrary.wordpress.com/visiting-during-covid/>. Visits are limited to 30 minutes or less. The children's area will be closed — browsing in main area only. Masks and social distancing are required for patrons ages 2 and up; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

The book drop to return library items is open and ready to accept your Westford Library books and other items. Not for the book drop: books from the school, items from other libraries, book donations. Please note that email reminders will resume for overdue books.

All Zoom links will be on FPF and Facebook, or contact Bree to email them to you.

School has only recently restarted and many of you have questions about resources, especially all you new homeschoolers. The Vermont Department of Libraries, along with several state agencies and groups, has put together an online resource page: https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/children_and_teens/homeschooling_resources. The Westford Public Library has enrichment and homeschooling materials. Let Bree know what you might need. It is best to email or call ahead to discuss your needs. Also, if you are doing an enrichment unit, try to narrow it down with age/grade range and specific titles. The library can also get books from other libraries, but it can take up to two weeks, so plan ahead!

Adult Book Group meets the third Wednesday of the month (via Zoom), 7:00 – 8:00 PM. Print copies available at the library; audiobooks available on Libby. October 21: Summer Hours at the Robbers Library by Sue Halpern. The author will be joining us on Zoom.

Friday October 16, 7:00 PM: *A Very Cheesy Cookbook Club* via Zoom. The theme is cheese! Make your favorite cheese dish and share it with the group, digitally of course. It's more about seeing some familiar faces, so even a plage of local cheese and crackers will do!

Wednesday, October 28, 7:00 – 8:30 PM on Zoom: Meet the Candidates Q&A (pre-submitted questions via FPF). Three candidates running for State Representative will introduce themselves and answer questions: Robert Bancroft (R), Alyssa Black (D), and Andy Watts (I). Each candidate will have to introduce themselves and speak about their priorities for the upcoming term. The Zoom audience will be muted to maximize time for candidates to answer submitted questions.

Sunday, October 31, 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM: Trick or Treat at the library! Come by in costume and get a treat.

Wednesdays: Curbside pickup, 3:00 – 5:00 PM; get your orders in by 7:00 PM the night before. Form on our website and Facebook page.

Thursdays: Early Literacy Storytime, for birth to pre-school! We now have in-person, outside, and socially distant storytime at 11:30 AM on the Common. October 15: Pumpkins. October 22: "Not So Scary" Monsters. October 29: Halloween — wear your costume if you want! Bring a blanket and masks and talk to your kids about social distancing ahead of time. Snacks or a lunch are a good idea, too. We will sing songs, read stories, move, and have fun! If weather is bad, storytime will be sent out digitally. Feel free to watch a "re-run" at <https://westfordpubliclibrary.wordpress.com/story-time/>.

Saturdays: Curbside pickup 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM; get your orders in by 7:00 PM the night before. Form on our website and Facebook page.

Library cards can be renewed or created via email or the phone. Free Downloadable Ebooks and Audiobooks: Libby/Overdrive, free with your library card. Don't know your number, card expired, don't have a card? No problem! Can all be done over email. Here are two helpful links:

- <https://help.libbyapp.com/6144.htm>
- <https://help.overdrive.com/en-us/categories/getting-started.htm>

Like us on Facebook. Bree Drapa, Librarian. 878-5639; <http://westfordpubliclibrary.org>; westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

RICHMOND LIBRARY

Please note, there is lots of new information on our website, <https://richmondfreelibraryvt.org>, on homeschooling resources (on our home page), finding books and more, a long list of online resources, book clubs, and more.

Outdoor Storytime — Wednesdays, 11:00 AM, on the library lawn behind the building, and observing physical distancing and all other safety protocols. Families are asked to bring their own blanket or chairs, and to set up their space on a premarked spot on the lawn. No registration is needed. Storytimes will include books with big, bold pictures, rhymes, songs, stretches, and the opportunity to pickout some picture books to take home. Outdoor Storytime will continue until it grows too cold, or until COVID-19 protocols change.

Book groups are meeting remotely and books are available at the library; please contact the book group coordinator to find out the plan for each meeting.

Mystery Book Discussion Group — Thursdays, 7:00 PM. Group coordinator Maureen Parent, 434-2055 or mparent@gmavt.net. October 15: *Snowblind* by Ragnar Jónasson; November 19: *The Woman in Cabin 10* by Ruth Ware.

(Mostly) Fiction Book Discussion Group — Tuesdays, 6:00 PM. Group coordinator Gwen Landis, 434-5012 or gwenie1972@yahoo.com. November 10: *Britt-Marie Was Here* by Fredrik Backman; December 8: *Emma* by Jane Austen.

Online Resources — Visit the Richmond Free Library Youth Services page to connect with TumbleBooks for a fun, gently animated picture book storytime and Storyline Online to hear great children's authors and other celebrities reading aloud from fabulous picture books. Here you will find links to other great youth sites as well including resources for elementary-aged and older youth.

Remember to browse our catalog at rfl.kohavt.org/! We have more than books to lend — request audiobooks on CD, Playaways, Magazines, and Movies! Log in to your account with your library

card barcode and your last name as the password to reserve items, or call or email the Library. Not sure what to read next? Let us help!

We are again able to offer library patrons access to the physical collection. This includes books, audiobooks, magazines, and DVDs. We cannot allow visitors beyond the outer foyer but you will find that this space has been adapted to serve as a safe and convenient place to pick up your item requests. Book bins in the foyer have been labeled alphabetically. Requested items will be bagged, labeled and placed in the bins according to patron's last name. The door will be left open so visitors need not touch anything except their own bag. Please be mindful of others and wait your turn to enter the space if there is already someone there.

There are three ways to request materials:

- Place a hold on whatever you like through your library account at rfl.kohavt.org. You will need your library barcode number to log in to your account. Your password is your own last name (capital first letter). Please note that the maximum number of holds allowed per account is five.

- Call us at 434-3036. Leave a message if it is after hours.

- Email us at rfl@gmavt.net.

Pick up times are: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM; Tuesday and Thursday, 12:00 – 4:00 PM; Saturday, 12:00 – 2:00 PM. All items can be returned to the outdoor book return bin anytime.

Richmond Free Library, 201 Bridge St., P.O. Box 997, Richmond, VT 05477; 434-3036; fax 434-3223; www.richmondfreelibraryvt.org.

DOROTHY ALLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY, WILLISTON

We don't want technology to be a barrier for anyone. If you would like to join us but need some assistance connecting via Zoom, we are here to help. Please email us at programs@dambvt.org or call us at 878-4918, and we will be happy to help walk you through it.

FAIRFAX COMMUNITY LIBRARY

New curbside pickup hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 – 7:00 PM. The Fairfax Community Library is located at 75 Hunt St., Fairfax.

In light of COVID-19, all programs will be virtual. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for any updates.

All events are free unless otherwise noted. Pre-registration required; contact 849-2420 or libraryfairfax@gmail.com.

For up-to-date information about programs, visit www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org, where you can also find a link to the interactive Google calendar.

The library website <http://www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org> has a new digital resource! In the "Write. Right. Rite." series linked on our website homepage, you can find an exciting program led by writer Jason Reynolds, the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature for 2020-2021. The program is all about young people learning to express themselves creatively through writing and storytelling. Check out the videos and writing prompts in this fun series sponsored by the Library of Congress.

The library will have our annual Halloween Candy Collection this year for trick-or-treating in Fairfax. Please consider a donation of Halloween candy to the library and we will distribute it to downtown residents. Bagged candy donations can be dropped off at the curbside return cart or in the outdoor book return bin until Thursday, October 22. We will follow protocols for safe distribution of the Halloween candy. If you live on or near Main Street and would like to receive candy, please call or email the library with your name and phone number. We will notify you and candy can be picked up during our curbside hours on Tuesday, October 27 or Thursday, October 29.

Youth Events

Tuesday-Wednesday, October 20-21: Candy Catapults. Build your own catapult to launch your Halloween candy straight into your mouth! Pick up your materials at the library on Thursday between 3:00 – 7:00 PM, and watch the Facebook livestream on Friday at 4:00 PM. The video will remain available afterwards, so don't worry if you miss it! Ages 6+ Please register!

Adult Events

Thursday-Friday, October 15-16: Halloween Wreathmaking. Make a cute and creepy Halloween wreath! Materials provided. Younger participants are welcome as well! Pick up your materials at the library on Thursday between 3:00 – 7:00 PM, and watch the Facebook livestream on Friday at 7:00 PM. The video will remain available afterwards, so don't worry if you miss it! Please register!

Fairfax Community Library, 75 Hunt St., Fairfax, VT 05454; www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org, 802-849-2420. Call or email libraryprograms@fwsu.org.

BROWNELL LIBRARY, ESSEX JUNCTION

We are not be hosting in-person gatherings for now; this could change. We will keep you informed of any additional program offerings or program changes on Facebook and our program calendar at <https://brownelllibrary.org/events/calendar>.

The library offers curbside service, Monday-Friday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM.

Place books, DVDs, etc. on hold at <https://brownell.kohavt.org/> by calling us at 802-878-6955, or emailing frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org. Holds and email requests received by 5:00 PM will be available for same-day pick-up. Phone-in requests received by 5:30 PM will also be available for same-day pick-up. We will call you when your request is ready.

Our book drop is open for returns. Because we are still encouraged to stay safe and stay home, all materials will be checked out to you for three weeks.

Downloadable audio books and ebooks are available through Libby or Overdrive: <https://gmlc.overdrive.com/>. For Village residents, we can even offer a temporary virtual card that will provide access to these online services. For a virtual card, contact the library by phone or email.

You can catch our digital programming on our website program calendar: just select the event for details and the meeting link to log on: <https://brownelllibrary.org/events/calendar>.

If you need help using any of these services, email us at frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org. We will also be checking voicemail periodically, and you can leave us a message at 878-6955.

Brownell Library, 6 Lincoln St., Essex Junction. Contact Main Desk 878-6955, Youth Desk 878-6956, Reference Desk 878-6957, or frontdesk@brownelllibrary.org.

NEWS BRIEFS

Grants for VT homeowners, renters, landlords with COVID hardship

By Emma Vaughn

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Are you behind on mortgage or rent due to COVID-19? The Vermont Housing Finance Agency and Vermont State Housing Authority are still accepting applications for grants to help you catch up if you have faced a hardship due to the pandemic.

If you're a homeowner, learn about applying for a VT COVID Emergency Mortgage Assistance grant for up to six months of past due mortgage or property tax payments at www.vhfa.org or 802-652-3421.

If you're a renter or landlord who needs rental arrearage assistance, learn more about the Rental Housing Stabilization Program at www.vsha.org or 802-828-2040.

Utility bill assistance available

By Charlie Van Winkle

District Representative VT Electric Cooperative (#5), Underhill

VEC members: Don't wait to apply! If you have suffered economic hardship due to COVID-19 and are struggling to pay your electric bill, help may be available. The Vermont COVID-19 Arrearage Assistance Program (VCAAP) is offering assistance to utility customers with certain past-due balances.

The deadline to apply is Monday, November 30.

VEC is encouraging members to find out whether they are eligible, and if so, apply before funding runs out. To learn more about the program and apply online, please visit <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vermont-covid-19-arrearage-assistance-program-0> or by calling the VT Department of Public Service, 800-622-4496.

Bolton broadband progress

Bolton Economic Resource Committee

It's been about a month since our last update and we have more good news. The folks at the bottom of Bolton Valley Access road worked super fast and got their neighborhood together and the state awarded funding for fiber at the base of the road. Waitsfield Telecom has started the permitting process as well as some tree trimming to start adding fiber. Waitsfield Telecom has also started this process on Duxbury Road, so if you see anyone trimming trees that is good news as that means fiber is coming your way.

More good news for those not on Duxbury or the bottom of Bolton Valley Access Road — the wireless company that was awarded over one million dollars to upgrade wireless towers is Vtel. The ERC has a contact there and we are working with her to figure out who in Bolton might be able to use this new wireless service. The technology is like cell service, but stronger for better bandwidth. It is our understanding that some locations could get very good service, but of course it is based on the ability to see the tower. We do not have the location of the tower yet, but if you would like to have your physical address checked to see if your location has a possibility of this service, we have created a new form to fill out. You may think the question about the height of your house is odd, but some locations may require an antenna: <https://forms.gle/5wZEEJGTThEio76k8>.

Once we have the response from Vtel for those who request it, we will send you a personal email to let you know if your location is within the tower range that is expected with this upgrade.

If you are unable to respond by Friday, October 2, this does not prevent your access — please email us at ERC@boltonvt.com to let us know you are interested in finding out more about this service.

As soon as we have more information about pricing, we will also let you know what to expect. As with Waitsfield Telecom, we do have a contact so we may have more accurate information than those who answer the phone. Our goal is to streamline communications to enable both of these providers to focus on the urgent and extensive task at hand to improve services in Bolton.

Notes from Westford

Mail-in ballots for Westford voters were mailed from the Secretary of State's office on September 30. If you have not received your ballot, please contact the Town Clerk's office, 878-4587 or townclerk@westfordvt.us.

Westford Selectboard meeting minutes: find out what they discussed by reading the draft minutes for their September 24 meeting online at <https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-09-24-Draft-Minutes.pdf>.

The Town Office is open to the public! The office is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM. Zoning Administrator hours: Monday and Tuesday, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM (by appointment only).

Access to the Town Office is conditional upon the following:

- you are not experiencing a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or any other symptom of a respiratory illness; and
- you have not had contact with a person who has tested COVID-19 positive.

Masks are required; adhere to any signage present. Appointments are required for zoning and are strongly encouraged for other matters. Access is limited to the front counter; zoning matters are limited to the lower level; please use entrance located in the back of the building.

Thanks to grants from the Public Library Association and the Vermont Department of Public Service, there is now fast FREE Wi-Fi service on the Common! Just search for "Westford Public WiFi" on your device.

Senior Luncheon: I hope all our seniors are doing well and that COVID-19 is not affecting anyone in Westford. I'm going to postpone our luncheons indefinitely. As soon as I feel it's safe for you to leave your home and come out again, I'll let everyone know through Front Porch Forum and the monthly newsletter. If you need anything, please call me at 878-3090. Hopefully, we will be back together soon. Please, get your flu shot! If you need a ride to do this, again call me and I will see that you get to a place that is providing them. Carol Howrigan, President

Dog Licenses: If you have not licensed your dog(s) please do so as soon as possible (licenses were due April 1). A current rabies certificate is required. If you are unsure if the current certifi-

cate is on file, please call or email the Town Office (878-4587 or townclerk@westfordvt.us). For your convenience, you may mail or drop off the fee and rabies certificate along with a self-addressed stamped envelope and we will mail the license to you. The fee is \$13 unless your dog is spayed or neutered, in which case the fee is \$11.

The Town of Westford is looking for someone who is interested in serving as Dog Warden. The position receives an annual stipend of \$500 and there are funds available for training, supplies and mileage. The Town also has a doghouse that can be utilized. If you would like more information on helping your community by serving in this position, please contact the Town Office at 878-4587 or townclerk@westfordvt.us. Westford residency is preferred but not required.

Westford Cemetery reminders: artificial flowers, glass containers, and items with wire are not allowed in any of the Westford cemeteries. They will be subject to removal by cemetery officials. Also the planting of trees and shrubs is not permitted. There are signs posted in each cemetery. Thank you for your cooperation, Westford Cemetery Commission

Westford's Turkey Trot: This year, Westford Turkey Trot fans, we're asking you to make your own Turkey Trot adventure. The Turkey Trot would normally be held on Saturday, November 21, but we've chosen to cancel our in-person event this year. Instead, during the week before Thanksgiving, we're asking you to run your favorite route, walk a town trail, or find some other fun outdoor activity you can do safely. At the same time, share some gratitude for the beautiful community and state we live in and make a donation to the Westford Food Shelf. This fall, they're in need of canned tuna/chicken, peanut butter and jelly, pasta sauce, cereal, and toiletries. You can drop donations off at the White Church, Town Office, or at the Library during Saturday curbside service, or mail checks made out to Westford Food Shelf, 82 North Rd., Westford, VT 05494. For more information, go online to www.westfordturkeytrot.wordpress.com.

Food scraps and composting in Westford: Per Act 148, food scraps are banned from landfills. Additionally, the Selectboard recently chose not to include the collection of food scraps in the contract with Myers. This means that residents will need to either compost food scraps or bring them to one of the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) drop off centers (<https://cswd.net/chittenden-county-solid-waste-facilities/drop-off-centers/>). Food scraps are parts of food that are typically discarded rather than eaten: peels, rinds, cores, eggshells, seeds, pits, bones, shells, coffee grounds and filters, loose-leaf tea, and fats/oils/grease. Food scraps are also food that was eaten but not finished: "plate scraps" or leftovers that went bad. Any type of food can become food scraps, including bread, pasta, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauces, meat, fish, dairy, sweets, etc. If you compost in your yard, the law allows you to put meat and bones in the trash so they don't attract animals to your composting bin. If you chose to bring food scraps to a drop-off center, you can include meat and bones with the rest of your food scraps.

CSWD has an abundance of information on their website including answers to questions, ways to reduce waste, and how to compost, to name a few. Please go to <https://cswd.net/scrapfoodwaste/> or call 872-8111 to get more information.

What about bears? Guidance from VT Fish and Wildlife on Composting & Bears: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/living-with-wildlife/living-with-black-bears/composting-in-bear-country/>.

Backyard composting still not for you? You can bring your food waste to Green Mountain Compost or use another disposal service of your choice: <https://cswd.net/chittenden-county-solid-waste-facilities/green-mountain-compost/>.

Westford Town Center Revitalization Projects updates

By Melissa Manka • Planning Coordinator, Westford

During the spring and summer of this year, the Planning Commission wrote in the Westford Newsletter and on Front Porch Forum about the Town's efforts to try to develop a community wastewater system for the village, and its efforts to investigate if and how the Town might be able to be involved with the redevelopment of the 1705 VT Rt. 128 property (Pigeon property). We noted that with regard to wastewater, there is a Professional Engineering Report (PER) being prepared that is necessary in order for the Town to pursue federal and State funding options. We also noted that with regard to the Pigeon property, the Town was considering applying for a \$60,000 Community Development Block Grant to further study that property, its development potential, and how and to what extent the Town may be able to become involved with and/or help direct the development of that parcel.

We are waiting for the wastewater PER to be completed, which we anticipate will be in October. Once the PER is approved by the State, we will become eligible to apply for federal and state funding for construction costs. We anticipate that we will not have any new information on this project until sometime in early 2021.

With regard to the 1705 VT Rt. 128 property, the Town held a productive and informative public hearing on August 27. On September 8 the Town applied for the \$60,000 Community Development Block Grant. We will not know if we are awarded the grant until later this year. If we are awarded the grant, we will use the money to fund additional investigation into the property and create a site plan that will identify limits of construction including, among other things, wetlands, floodplains, setbacks, and parking. We do not anticipate that we will have much in the way of new information about this property until sometime in the late summer/early fall of 2021.

We have updated the Questions and Answers on the Town's website, at <https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Town-Center-development-Questions-Answers-Revised-9.15.20.pdf>.

We will continue to update the Questions and Answers as new information becomes available. If you have questions about either of these projects, please contact the Town's Planning Coordinator, Melissa Manka, at planner@westfordvt.us, or attend a Planning Commission meeting. It is easier than ever to attend a Planning Commission meeting now as they are all done via Zoom. The Planning Commission meets twice a month. Its regularly scheduled meeting is the third Monday of each month. It also holds a meeting on the first or second Monday of each month. Agendas and minutes are available on the Town's website.

Yoga at the White Church in Westford

Come join a great group of folks for a fun, enlivening Yoga practice! All levels welcome. This weekly Yoga class is held on Wednesday mornings, 8:30 AM. The cost is \$12 to drop in; punch cards available.

There is also a Saturday Yoga class, 9:30 AM, on the second and fourth Saturday of the month.

Masks are required on entering/exiting; please set up mats with social distancing. There is plenty of room to spread out!

For more information, contact Erin Menut, erinmenut@gmail.com, or visit <http://radiantenergyforlife.com/>.

Westford Volunteer Fire Department needs volunteers

By Steve Willard

Chief, Westford Volunteer Fire Department

Looking for a way to give back to your community by helping neighbors and others when they most need help? Please think about joining the Westford Fire Department. We are a group of volunteers helping our town deal with fires, auto accidents, and other emergencies. Our call volume is pretty low, so it's not an everyday commitment. Email westfordfire@gmail.com with any questions, or feel free to stop by the fire station at 35 Cambridge Road (the same building as the Town Highway Department) to meet us and see what we are doing.

SCHOOL NEWS

MMUUSD board meeting October 26

The Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District (MMUUSD) board will meet on Monday, October 26 at 6:30 PM. The main focus of the meeting will be to learn about the priorities of district administrators and principals for the upcoming budget year (2021-2022), as this is the beginning of the budget cycle. There were short presentations at the October 12 MMUUSD board meeting from the administrators responsible for district transportation, facilities, technology, special services, and human resources. The school principals will present at the October 26 meeting.

All school board meetings are scheduled to be conducted virtually this school year, based on state of emergency directives.

MMU student participation in Mobbs Bio Blitz

By Bernie Paquette

Special thanks to MMU student Victoria Schinstine, who recorded 92 observations and 67 species during the recent Mobbs Bio Blitz.

I am encouraged by all who took part in recording life forms during the Bio Blitz as well as those who take interest in viewing the posts as well as actively observing nature at various times during the year.

I am particularly encouraged by having an MMU student (Victoria Schinstine) so actively involved in the Bio Blitz. See her bio from *iNaturalist* below.

Victoria Schinstine

Joined: Sep 08, 2020 Last Active: Sep 27, 2020

"My name is Victoria Schinstine and I am a senior at Mt. Mansfield Union High School. I love all things science, but I am most interested in paleontology. While the prehistoric animals have long been reduced to fossils, I still like to observe present-day nature."

The recent Mobbs Bio Blitz postings on *iNaturalist* are worth a look. View up close the many plants, insects, birds, and other animals folks observed at Mobbs.

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/jericho-conservation-commission-mobbs-bioblitz-fall-2020?tab=observations>

Observe nature, a close look offers wonders beyond our imagination.

Extended deadline – essay contest

The deadline for the Vermont Student Essay Contest "Rescuers in the time of Covid-19" has been extended, and is now Tuesday, November 10.

To acknowledge the heroism and sacrifice of Vermont's essential personnel in the fight against COVID-19, the Vermont Holocaust Memorial (VTHM) has launched a comparative essay competition that challenges Vermont students to reflect on those neighbors, relatives, and workers on the front lines against this historic threat, and how their values reflect those rescuers of the World War II Holocaust.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three entries in each of four grade categories, spanning grades 4-12.

For contest information and guidelines, go online to www.holocaustmemorial-vt.org/2020essaycontest.

Free preschool and early ed home-visiting program

Apply for Champlain Valley Head Start's Home-Visiting Program for low-income families with a child or children ages birth to five years old. To apply, call 802-752-9397, email apply@cvoeo.org, or go online to <https://champlainvalleyheadstart.org/apply-now/>.

*Practice social distancing
and wear your mask.*

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Please help us to help others: Rail Trail Ramble 2020

By Mark Schilling
Cambridge Area Rotarian

The pandemic of 2020 has been particularly hard on charitable organizations, especially the Cambridge Area Rotary. As you probably know, most of our fundraisers are social events, and nearly all have been cancelled this year due to safety concerns.

The Rotary Bike-A-Thon has been highly successful in the past, and has been transformed into a distancing-safe program for 2020. I am asking for your help today by going to www.railtrailramble2020.com/TeamMark and making a donation. You can contribute to my team at www.railtrailramble2020.com/TeamMark or to any of the teams shown on the donation page. Your contribution goes directly to our Cambridge Area Rotary Foundation Account, which is used exclusively to provide funds for the many programs we support.

There are many different options for the Rail Trail Ramble 2020, and you can see a complete explanation at www.railtrailramble2020.com/TeamMark. You can contribute, participate, or even form a fundraising team of your own. There are prizes for the highest fundraising teams. (Should my team be eligible for any prizes, I will forward them to my team supporters by random drawing.)

Please support our service projects by going to www.railtrailramble2020.com/TeamMark and helping however you can. You can see a detailed list of our local Rotary programs on that page. Thank you for your support of others in our community, our region, and the world.

Multi-lingual voter information brochures from the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWVVT) has translated its Voting In Vermont tri-fold brochure as part of its outreach to Vermonters with limited English proficiency. The goal is to ensure that new Americans understand voting in Vermont and to introduce the League as a community resource for voter education, advocacy, and policy.

Available in Chinese, Nepalese, and Somali, these brochures provide comprehensive information about voting, elections, dates to remember, and candidates' terms of office. The three languages have been identified by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service as the most predominant non-English speaking immigrant populations who become U.S. citizens in Vermont. Translations were done by the U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants.

LWVVT will have the brochures available to new Americans at naturalization ceremonies and will mail brochures to immigrant resettlement centers, community centers, employment centers, schools, social service agencies, and throughout the state. You can request your copy by contacting the League of Women Voters at league@lww.org.

Children like Steven could use your help

He always starts a conversation with a polite "excuse me" and is ready to involve you in his imaginary world of LEGOs and lots of adventures. Steven has a great laugh and is looking for someone who is ready to move past bad moments to the next interesting thing.

And, yet, sometimes, he needs a little extra help.

He can say things about himself and others that can be upsetting. He struggles with his interactions with adults, children, and animals when he is upset. Steven will need guidance, redirection, and consistency. Like all children, he needs an adult who will recognize his potential, and set good limits and routine for him. He needs someone who will recognize the impact of his history of trauma and will give him lots of attention. He needs a healthy attachment and a family who wants him and will commit to him.

Despite these challenges, Steven brings big smiles along with his sometimes challenging behaviors. When needed, additional services and community supports would be wrapped around the right family to provide extra resources to support you and Steven.

Can you see yourself providing a safe and nurturing home for this active boy? If so, we would love to hear from you. We'll share all the details of how to become a licensed foster care provider and support you every step of the way.

To learn more, go to <http://fostercare.vt.gov>. If you want us to contact you, complete the form at <http://dcf.vermont.gov/fostercare-inquiry>.

You can also call your local Family Services District Office and ask to speak to the Resource Coordinator. <http://dcf.vermont.gov/fsd/contact-us/districts>.

Are you healthy? Are you in a low-risk category for COVID-19? If so, there may be a child or youth waiting who would benefit from your care. Please visit us on the web at <http://dcf.vermont.gov/fsd/contact-us/districts>.

Westford: Meet the Candidate (or vote) Q&A Forum

On Wednesday, October 28, 7:00 – 8:30 PM, The Westford Library is proud to impartially inform the community on its choices for local government, via this Zoom event. Meet the three people running for our local state representative: Robert Bancroft (R), Alyssa Black (D), and Andy Watts (I). Each candidate will have time to introduce themselves and speak about their priorities for the upcoming term. They will also answer questions. The zoom audience will be muted, maximizing time for candidates to answer submitted questions. Questions can be submitted to the library (westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com) starting October 16.

Zoom information: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87139642595?pwd=U2pieWVQZTNcWW9NOXFOYIRFYtJkdzO9>, passcode: Vote.

United Way volunteer opportunities

United Way's Volunteer Connection site is set up to help connect agencies and volunteers. Agencies are working hard to navigate volunteering in this new time, so the opportunities are still limited, but we are starting to see more. Go online to <https://unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com/> to see these and other opportunities. Interested in volunteering from home? Click on *Virtual Volunteering* to see how you can help remotely!

SOCIAL MEDIA & MARKETING WIZ — Brain Injury Association of Vermont needs help in establishing social media platforms and channels to drive increasing engagement and support for their work among Vermont brain injury survivors, family members, service providers, and the general public. Help re-focus the current website and email marketing. Also develop and deploy new tools to educate and involve our community about brain injury prevention, advocacy, and treatment. Contact Jessica Leal, support@biavt.org.

HELP BUILD A HOME — Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity is looking for volunteers to help build from late September into the fall at their 225 Elmwood Avenue site in Burlington. Shifts are Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, with some select Saturdays. Must be 18 years or older. Visit their online calendar, <https://www.volunteerup.com/ProjectCal.asp?o=309>, to register.

GREAT ACTIVITY TO DO WITH KIDS! — Toys for Kids is looking for volunteers to monitor the red barrels placed throughout Chittenden County. Volunteers will be assigned one or more barrels to check from November 1-December 18, with most of the toys coming in the last couple of weeks of December. Collected toys are then dropped off at the Salvation Army in Burlington or at a Williston collection site. A great job for a family! You do need your own transportation to barrels and to collection sites. To volunteer, contact John Welsh, 802-872-0354.

VIRTUAL/REMOTE EDUCATORS — Alzheimer's Association Vermont Chapter is recruiting for volunteer community educators to use their public speaking skills to help raise awareness, provide education, and expand the reach of educational offerings in the community. These volunteers deliver presentations in their own communities using prepared training materials on topics related to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. To learn more, contact Emily Vivyan, evivyan@alz.org or 802-316-3839 ext. 8011.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION HELP — The Vermont Foodbank's Farmers to Families Food Box Program is launching its third phase of distribution starting in October. For those of you who don't know, Farmers to Families is a federally funded program that was created as part of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The USDA funds distributors from around the country to source, pack, and distribute boxes full of fresh foods, including produce, dairy, and meat products. During the upcoming phase, the Foodbank won't have the support of the National Guard, so we are issuing a call for volunteers to help get this food to people in need. Specifically, we are looking for people who can consistently lift 32 pounds. Events in our area seeking volunteers include Tuesday, October 27 in Barre, and Friday, October 30 in South Burlington. To sign up, please visit Volunteer Hub at <https://vtfoodbank.volunteerhub.com/>. Once your application has been approved, please visit our event calendar to view and register for Farmers to Families food distribution events. If you have any questions about volunteering, please reach out to Kate Steward, Volunteer Services Coordinator, ksteward@vtfoodbank.org or 802-498-8323.

Restart VT Technical Assistance Grant Program

By John Mandeville, Executive Director
Lamoille Economic Development Corporation

Governor Phil Scott and Lindsay Kurrle, Secretary of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, have announced the distribution of \$2.5M in federal CARES Act funding for Restart Vermont Technical Assistance. This funding will deliver robust support to Vermont businesses impacted by the economic downturn due to COVID-19. The funding, allocated by the Vermont General Assembly in Act 137, leverages existing statewide and regional assets to reach a broad range of companies in every sector and region.

The Regional Development Corporations of Vermont (RDCs of VT) were among five organizations selected to implement Restart programming. The RDC program *Restart Vermont Technical Assistance* (ReVTA) will leverage a regional and statewide network of for-profit and non-profit technical assistance providers to help small businesses. Each RDC will deploy a Recovery Navigator to work one-on-one with businesses and determine the best form of technical assistance to help each business on its path to recovery. The Navigator, client business, and technical assistance provider will develop a scope of work appropriate to solving the client's issues. The cost of the work will be covered by the grant. The program is expected to assist over 250 businesses with grants averaging \$3000.

In Lamoille County the RDCS ReVTA Program will be administered by the Lamoille Economic Development Corporation. Businesses that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and would like to receive technical assistance and businesses that can provide technical assistance should register to participate in the program at www.VermontEconomicDevelopment.com.

About 250 businesses are expected to receive technical assistance through the ReVTA program between now and December 20, the deadline to expend CARES Act funds. Technical Assistance providers and impacted businesses are encouraged to register now. Links to registration, webinar training, and more information on the RDCs of Vermont's Restart Vermont Technical Assistance Program can be found at www.VermontEconomicDevelopment.com.

Cub Scout Pack 839 dens forming now

Cub Scout Pack 839 is looking for new scouts to join us on our adventures! (Cambridge/Jeffersonville area.) We welcome girls and boys kindergarten to fifth grade.

For more information or to check out one of our events, contact Cubmaster Chris, clenox@gmail.com, or 802-849-0691.

We are also seeking adult leaders to join us on our adventures. If you're over 21 and love campfire skits and songs.

Letters continued from page 8

He assembles knowledgeable teams and drills down to common goals. He understands the equation between spending and revenue. He will hold our institutions accountable for policies that imply bias. You won't hear tired excuses or outdated assumptions from David. He will help us move forward deliberately to build expanded economic opportunities and resilience for Vermont. Whether you are concerned about the cost of education, climate change, unemployment, housing, or responsibly managing the state's finances, you can be confident in voting for David Zuckerman. See more at www.zuckermanforvt.com. Please think carefully about your choice. I am happy to talk to anyone in our community who would like to learn more.

Betsy Walkerman
Underhill

Cambridge Cares does it again

To the Editor,

The beautiful colors everywhere we look and the wonderful fall aromas remind us of why we choose to live in Vermont.

A couple of weeks ago I visited Peg and Howard Davis. They are neighbors on our hill. They also have an incredible apple orchard and as we were all (my wife Susan, Howard, my LNA Emily, and myself) chomping on freshly picked Cortlands, Howie asked me how our wood supply was doing for the upcoming cold months.

Now, Howie knows I have MS, which has worsened to the point of needing a wheelchair to get around and help from others for just about everything.

I told him it wasn't looking good this year since we usually get wood from our property ourselves.

Before I finished that delicious apple, Howie started planning and arranging for Cambridge Cares to come to our house and spend a day cutting, splitting, hauling, and stacking about two cords we had marked for them. We ended up with about 15 people — neighbors, friends, and folks we barely knew who worked with their equipment and ours like a seasoned team. They brought tractors, splitters, saws, wagons, trailers, and anything else needed for the job.

Yes the colors and mountain air are good reasons for living here, but I can't think of a better reason than the sense of community exhibited last Friday by our own Cambridge Cares organization.

Information about Cambridge Cares can be found through Front Porch Forum listings. I hope you will be able to read more about these individuals with pictures from that day in an article I plan to write in our local newspaper.

Thank you, Cambridge Cares, from our hearts for the work and fun and a job very, very well done.

Dan Demay, Jeffersonville

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**IN LOVING
MEMORY.**

**GONE BUT NOT
FORGOTTEN**

*Daniel Henry,
born April 27, 1981,
passed away
October 4, 2016.*

Halloween Pumpkin Glow is on!

Yes, the Pumpkin Glow is on for Halloween on Saturday, October 31 and the night before Halloween, Friday, October 30. Thank you once again to Anne and Dick Squires for growing beautiful pumpkins — and for working with a handful of volunteers to scoop out the seeds and carve them into a magic performance to celebrate Halloween.
(Actually Anne does most of the carving.)
Everyone is most welcome to enjoy by car, or feel free to walk. The only way this lovely event will work is if:
1. We all wear masks — even those in cars;
2. We respect social distance; and
3. We avoid gathering in groups.
Please enjoy the wonderful pumpkins and move on!

DRML Youth Scary Story Contest

Terrify the DRML librarians with your unique tales of mayhem, horror, and mystery!
Submit your scary story for a chance to win a yummy prize pack from Snowflake Chocolates, and join us Friday the 30th (the night before Halloween) at 7:00 PM to read them to each other!
Submissions from authors 18 years or younger are open until Friday, October 23.
Requirements: Stories should be two pages or less typed, or four pages handwritten. No weapons should be used in the story. Illustrations aren't required, but if you want to include them go for it!
Judging criteria: Your librarians will judge the entered stories based on creativity, originality, and hair-raising-ness. Illustrations, punctuation, and grammar are not included in judging criteria.
How to enter: Email your story in a Word or Google doc or a PDF to youth_librarian@drml.org, OR print your story, put it in an envelope with your name and email address (so we can send you an invite to the reading) and leave it in the library drop box.



*Who says
Halloween has to
be store-bought?
PHOTOS BY
SARA RILEY*

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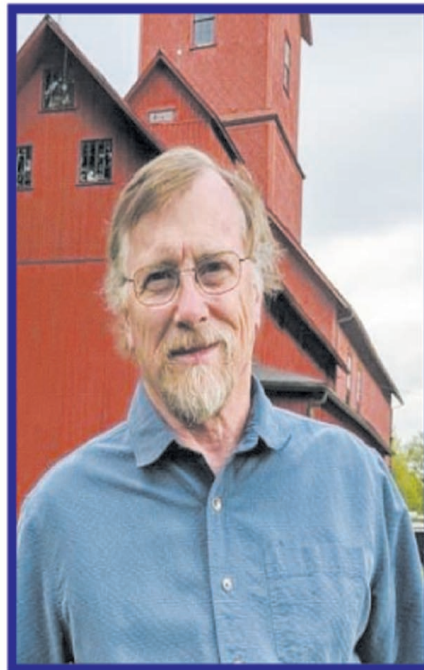
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Elect Paul Gross

to Vermont House of Representatives
Chittenden 3 District

**There's always reasons
for how we vote.**

**What reasons will direct
your vote this election year?**



- Are you going to continue to vote for incumbent politicians who support policies that increase taxes?
- Are you going to vote to return politicians to Montpelier who have voted TWICE to create a 23-seat, UNELECTED committee to oversee and ENFORCE a bill: a bill with overly aggressive goals which open the State to expensive lawsuits at a time we can least afford them?
- Are you going to vote for incumbents who rejected a reasonable amendment that would have required the committee to get House review and approval?
- Are you going to vote to keep only one voice in our State House with no alternative ideas heard?
- Are you going to vote to continue over-regulation that discourages business in Vermont?
- If you are a teacher or state employee, are you going to vote to continue to deepen the black hole into which your pension has fallen?
- Or will you vote to try another direction?



Vote to restore balance in the House!

Vote to keep **YOUR** voice heard! **Vote Republican!**

Website: <https://www.gross4house.com>
Paid for by Gross for Vermont House, PO Box 161, Jericho, VT 05465. Ned Dubois, Treasurer

Vote continued from page 7

If you forget to do this, or if you do not complete all of the required information, your ballot will be disqualified and not counted. And we do not want this to happen, *ever!*
4. Place the voted ballot envelope in the outer envelope and mail it, or drop it off at your Town/City Clerk's office. To ensure that your ballot gets to the Clerk's office in time, mail it before Saturday, October 24. Otherwise, you can personally drop your ballot off at the Town/City Clerk's office before the close of business on Monday, November 2, or you can take your ballot to your polling place before 7:00 PM on Election Day.
5. Track your ballot — visit your "My Voter Page" on the Vermont Secretary of State's website. It will show the date your ballot was received by your Town/City Clerk.
Vote early, vote safely, vote by mail. Or, if you prefer to vote in person, polls open anywhere from 5:00 – 10:00 AM and close at 7:00 PM.
If you have questions, please call your Town/City Clerk.

Will you Button Up this fall?

Button Up Vermont is an annual, statewide effort to cut energy use and keep you warm and healthy this winter. As part of Button Up, you can tackle a handful of DIY weatherization projects (and get \$100 back from Efficiency Vermont), or attend free *Weatherization Wednesday* online events, including *Women in Weatherization* on Wednesday, October 21, 12:00 PM — teaming up with *Vermont Works for Women* to talk about women in the weatherization business.
For a full list of *Weatherization Wednesday* events, visit <http://buttonupvermont.org/events>.

**Halloween Trunk-or-Treat,
St. Thomas Church, Underhill Ctr.**

By Sarah Bahr
The St. Thomas Church has generously agreed to allow the Halloween Trunk or Treat in their parking lot on Halloween — Sunday, October 31, 6:00 – 7:30 PM. It should be a lot of fun, and we thank the wonderful people at St. Thomas for this opportunity!
How it will work: There will be cars parked strategically in the parking lot, trunks open, with people dispensing candy and treats. Who it's for: Well, anybody! But we are doing this especially for the kids, so that they can have a memorable Halloween despite the difficulties they've had to face this year during the pandemic. Anybody can participate.
What we need: We need some altruistic people who have cars and would enjoy handing out candy. Please contact me if you would like to do this. It would be even more fun if you could come in costume. Just keep in mind, it's a Vermont Halloween, so it'll probably be cold.
We will be following responsible social distancing guidelines: masks are required, and we ask that people stay 6' apart from those who aren't in their household.
Thanks again to the wonderful people of the St. Thomas Church, and thanks in advance to those who would like to help!

Lights Out to protect migratory birds

Every spring and fall, billions of birds migrate through the U.S., mostly under the cover of darkness. This mass movement of birds must contend with a pervasive but largely unrecognized threat: light pollution. Find out how artificial light endangers migratory birds and learn how you can help with Lights Out Project Coordinator Julia Wang.
You can find a link to the 30-minute webinar and to many, many others — all of great interest to those concerned with the natural world and the birds in it — at <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/live-events/>.