

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST



Volume XXVI—Number One

September/October 2015

Top of the Signpost

The short pieces submitted for this issue in response to the *Signpost's* query "Where are you now?" bear out the feeling that many of us share—that East Montpelier, as a place to grow up, can't be beat.

Our sampling comes from a good variety of folks: those who have lived their whole lives here, others who left for years and later returned, and some who have made their lives elsewhere after spending their early years here. What they all seem to have in common is a deep fondness for East Montpelier and the memories of growing up here.

That this small town has maintained its beauty, character, and its appeal for generations is a tribute to all who have, through the years, made up the fabric of our community.

Contributions, large and small, and of all sorts, are made by each and every citizen; it's that sense of "community" that makes East Montpelier a place we want to keep coming back to.

— Edie Miller

Where Are You Now?



Kate Clayton

Ummm, why Minnesota? I get this question a lot and usually answer with either: "I moved here for grad school and just stayed." Or, jokingly, "My grandfather was born here so I guess I got the mid-west gene."

Both are true in their own way, but there is more. I was born in East Montpelier in 1980. Half of me will always be in East Montpelier where I go to regain my balance and connect with those who have always known me. After a time, the other half gets antsy. Adventure is waiting, new experiences, new challenges! St. Paul seems to be able to embrace the adventurous side and still keep me in one place. The city itself has a divided soul, a metropolitan area that can feel like a small town. The popula-

tion is "big city," but many would love to go camping for the weekend. It's a place where, when I need extra adventure, all I have to do is end up in Minneapolis, ten minutes away.

I currently coordinate youth programs for a small environmental nonprofit and live in a duplex with a roommate, a cat, and a dog on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, surrounded by friends and neighbors. All I can say is, right now, I am in the place I need to be. Who knows what may come next?

Eventually, I may return to central Vermont. Perhaps it will call to me when I need to find a new phase of my life or even when I retire. Until then, I know Vermont is where I am grounded, the place I start and restart. Minnesota is the place where my life lives.

Douglas Bair

As a seventh-generation Vermonter and, more to the point, a seventh-generation East Montpelierite, while growing up I never thought I would live anywhere else. My family roots run deep into East Montpelier soil and I was a country boy who loved the woods and fields. I thought city life was not for me. As a teenager, I caught the adventure bug and a taste for the circus life (fault lies with Circus Smirkus). After graduating from UVM, I continued my quest to become a circus performer by attending The National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) in Melbourne, Australia back in 2002. I

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The historical societies of East Montpelier and Calais met for their annual croquet/ice cream social at Chris Reed's home on July 20. Calais was the big croquet winner this year thanks to the energy of newcomer Alan Dale who arrived at the gathering on his vintage 1950s bike.

Thanks and Good Luck

For several years Mike and Patty Hambro have managed the financial affairs of the *Signpost*. Mike has done a wonderful job of organizing the information so that it can be updated easily, and we can readily report on the state of our finances at any time—especially important now that the *Signpost* receives funding from the Town. Now the Hambros are making a major life change and are moving to Washington state to be closer to children and grandchildren. Patty has already left, and Mike will be following in the coming months.

We thank them for their outstanding service to the *Signpost* and to East Montpelier. They will be greatly missed.

Sometime in the near future we will be seeking a new volunteer to take over Mike's excellent work. If you are a QuickBooks user and willing to spend a couple of hours a month to record income, pay bills, and other related tasks, the *Signpost* would like to hear from you. Contact Edie Miller at signposteam@comcast.net.

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loved Melbourne so much that I did everything in my power to stay in the country after graduating. Since then I have worked in many different shows all around the US and Australia, as well as countries such as Hong Kong, India, Singapore, and on cruise ships in the South Pacific. During my adventuring I fell for an Aussie girl and as the story goes, the rest is history! I am now married with two children, living in Melbourne, and on the best adventure to date. To keep me home I have combined my performance skills with my biology background and am now a presenter at the Melbourne Aquarium. Vermont is always calling me back and the thought of returning with my family for a tree change is enticing. My only challenge is convincing my warm-blooded Aussie wife to weather an entire Vermont winter!

Anne Campbell



After a series of many roads taken and not taken and fifty years away, I finally ended up, quite unexpectedly, right back where I started here in East Montpelier.

Morse School (the former one-room school house on the County Road), Montpelier High School and Vermont College launched me into a successful academic career. After completing two degrees at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, which was also the birthplace of my daughter, Robin, I went on to train teacher aides through the University of Georgia. I then completed my Ph.D. at the University of Illinois, but not before taking a year off to live and work and ski (mostly ski) in Switzerland and to tour Europe. I accepted a visiting professorship with the University of Maine at Orono, and later took a position at the University of Southern Maine to be closer to civilization.

After completing a postdoctoral program in Boston, I combined university teaching and administration with a private practice specializing in child and family therapy. My husband, Ken, and I both retired early from university teaching. (Ken calls us "recovering professors.") We're both still active mental health counselors. We moved to Vermont in 2001. Eleven years after

looking for our dream house throughout northern Vermont, we finally found it in East Montpelier on Barnes Road. Much to our delight, we also found the perfect community and church for us here in East Montpelier Center.

Although never dreaming I'd end up back where I started, I'm so pleased to be back home in East Montpelier and to have the chance to reconnect with old friends and to make many new ones as well.

Kelley Fielder Charland



I grew up on the County Road with my parents, Malcolm and Diana Fielder and my three siblings, Kerry, Shannon, and Joel. At that time, it was still called Calais Stage, and that was our mailing address. My parents still live in that home and I still consider it my true "home" as it fills my memories in such a wonderful way. My home in Essex Junction is also my "home" but with a very different sense of meaning.

I left East Montpelier initially in the fall of 1985 to attend the University of Vermont. After graduation, I landed my first dental hygiene job in Essex Junction and have lived in this area ever since. While I would have loved to move back to East Montpelier, I married a Burlington police officer very settled in his job, and I knew my salary would not be the same if I left Chittenden County. So, we decided to make Essex Junction the place to settle with our daughters. However, there is no big field surrounding our house, no tractors cutting and baling hay, no deer in the field (or the garden). The Burlington area is not the same in any way, but it is nice, too, in its own more city-type of way.

Ultimately, my husband retired from the City of Burlington after 23 years of service there, and I left my Essex Junction dental hygiene job after 27 years and we both have new jobs in the same fields of expertise

East Montpelier will always feel like my true "home." Or, it may just be that home for me will always be wherever my mom and dad are. East Montpelier is a special place, as you all know.

David A. Coburn



Larned Coburn came to what was then the Town of Montpelier in 1812 to live with the family of James and Susanna McKnight Allen. In 1823, he married their only child, Louisa, and began to acquire land on which to build a house and barn and start a farm. The house is next to the covered bridge he had built for the town in the 1850s.

Their son, Joseph, after a brief time in Elgin, Illinois, took over the farm from his elderly parents and in 1870 added to it the adjacent land and buildings of the Hammond family. The house, dating from 1812, is where I was born in 1934 and in which Paulie and I still live.

Over the next century the Coburns included Lewis, Carroll, and me. Along the way we married or associated with the Davis, Hollister, Snow, Corliss, Cate, Kelton, Ellis, and Keith families of East Montpelier and Calais.

I attended the No. Montpelier and E. Montpelier elementary schools and high school in Montpelier. It was there that I met Pauline Greaves. We married in 1956 and she has given me six wonderful children who have added six superb grandchildren.

Except for four years in college, two in the army, and ten in Berlin, I have been here in this home and plan to stay here. When I sit on the side porch on a warm summer evening and watch the shadows creep up the Plainfield hills, I can think of no place I would rather be.

Jeffrey Cueto



As I write this, I am recognizing that I have become one of the old timers of East Montpelier. I grew up from age ten in East Montpelier. Prior to that, my family lived on the hill part of Berlin Street in Montpelier next door to my grand-

parents' house. My grandfather had bought the Murray farm on Murray Road in East Montpelier in 1946 in order to expand his herd of beef cattle. In 1959, we moved into the split-level house that my parents had built on the farm and in which my mother continues to reside. My father worked with my grandfather operating a meat market on Barre Street and a slaughterhouse on the farm, but never encouraged me to follow in his footsteps.

Instead I went to UVM to get a degree in civil engineering, working summers at what was then known as the Vermont Highway Department. Following graduation, I worked two years with the U.S. Geological Survey in northern New York, Georgia, and Virginia. Then I had my "there's no place like home" rev-

elation and moved back to Vermont in 1973, after getting a job working for the Vermont Department of Water Resources (now, Environmental Conservation). Vermont had recently passed Act 250 and created the Agency of Environmental Conservation, and I had a strong interest in getting into the environmental field. I retired from the Department in 2010 after working on water quality, streamflow, and lake level and dam-management issues for 36 years. I now do contract consulting work for a national non-profit that certifies green hydroelectric projects. When I'm not doing that, I'm working on our home, the 1816 Elijah and Rachel Cummins farmhouse, a true relic, and keeping an eye on my mom next door.

Joe Davidian

There's something in the water. While I'm not sure exactly what it is, with all the talent that comes out of Vermont, I'm convinced we must have an extra hydrogen atom. (That's H₃O, right?)

Although chemistry was never my strong suit, I did excel in music and was able to gig around Vermont while attending U-32. I knew from experience that there would be plenty of places to play if I moved back to Vermont after my jazz studies at the University of Miami from 1999 to 2005. Miami had its perks, no doubt. But the tranquility and unrelenting quaintness of my home state beckoned.

So I returned to Vermont after college and reconnected to the jazz scene, which, as I suspected, was still going strong. I was hired to teach at UVM for the 2006-07 academic year, and was also playing four to five gigs per week. I felt right at home. I suppose I expected to stay longer than two years. Fate, however, in Her typical perplexing fashion, had Her own designs.

My "significant other" at the time was offered a full-time position at a university in Nashville in 2007, so we jumped at the opportunity and moved south. I've been in Nashville ever since, and for the most part, I hate to admit, I enjoy living here.

While I miss all the things that make Vermont so special, I do not miss driving twenty minutes to the nearest bank. I've learned that any place you live will have its downsides, which in Nashville means that I have to tolerate country music.

And there's nothing special about the water.

Alice Starr Dworkin

Here's a poem I wrote for my brother this past winter, my first living back in East Montpelier since moving away ten years ago:

*See our parents fall in love hiking mountains,
choose Vermont to build and serve.
Children grow up in apple trees and fall in leaves.
Chew gum on the yellow school bus past snow banks
and cow fields and houses burning firewood.
Fight over fireworks games and cards, rules and sandwiches.
Fight affection.
Hide and seek and bring me home now.
We find our family.*

Here are some kid memories:

- In the '90s, throwing crabapples (painful!) at EMES playground. Rally Day fireworks blazing. Midnight trips to Trojan Pond skinny-dipping.
- Flaking green and white paint on Powder Horn Glen signpost. A handful of kids rode bikes to the dirt road's beginning and spruced up the post, but our paint brushes only reached five feet up :)
- Twenty years later, I now live on Center Rd and walk a half mile to work at VT Compost. I notice two more green signposts needing some love. Give me a bucket of paint and a ladder.

My future plans:

- Join Volunteer Fire Department.
- Join Planning Commission to learn from Jean Vissering.
- Help all neighbors see that creating soil is the greatest boon to any biotic community.
- Join five women named Alice with a grave marker (stone or tree) in Cutler Cemetery.

Gareth Hinds

I'm the son of Judith Hinds, who still lives in East Montpelier, and Steven Hinds of Montpelier. I was in the U-32 class of 1989. I was known as a kid who drew all the time and did a weekly comic strip in the U-32 Chronicle during my junior and senior years, so it was no surprise to anyone that I decided to pursue art. I attended Parsons School of Design in New York City where I majored in illustration. During my senior year I took my portfolio around to the art directors at many magazine and book publishers, but I wasn't getting much work. Then I stumbled into a job at a video game company in Boston. I moved there and worked in the game industry doing digital art for more than a decade. In my spare time I drew and self-published three graphic novels based on fairy tales and classic literature. After my Beowulf graphic novel got some very good press, a real publisher picked me up, and I've been a full-time graphic novelist ever since. I now have seven books in print. In 2009 I got married, and since my job is 100 percent portable I've moved to follow my wife Alison's career in the children's book industry—first to New York and then to Washington, DC, where we've lived for the past two years. To learn more about my work, visit www.garethhinds.com, and to learn about the literacy non-profit where my wife works, visit www.firstbook.org.

Robert Lavin

After growing up in East Montpelier and graduating from U-32 in 1988 (go Zoo!), I took a few classes at Community College of Vermont. As I decided what I wanted to do, I also realized that I wanted a change of pace from the relaxed country life that I had always known. (When you're 18, who wants to drive 30 minutes to get to a movie theatre?) I ended up attending Central Connecticut State University (close to my sister and her family, who lived in Manchester, Connecticut, at that point) where

I majored in management systems with a concentration in entrepreneurship. While at CCSU, I also joined the Connecticut National Guard as a medical specialist. Immediately after graduating, I found an IT job with Pratt & Whitney and now work as a network manager in a community college.

I really enjoy having roots in East Montpelier and like coming back on summer weekends or winter holidays to spend time with my family. While many of my neighbors have changed, a few die-hards remain, and it is always great to see them as well! Iconic landmarks like the Cate Farm, the Coburn Bridge, Dudley's, and the Old Brick Church are always great to see when coming home, and I proudly describe them to my friends in Connecticut when they ask (as they frequently seem to do) about growing up in Vermont. I am very proud to be from East Montpelier, as I'm sure you are too.

Gina Pastore



I grew up in East Montpelier, completed EMES, and graduated from U-32 in 1993. After earning a degree in zoology from Connecticut College, I ventured to the west coast with fellow East Montpelierite Katie Rob, spending the next few years in Seattle. I met my future husband in Seattle and made the decision to pursue a career in veterinary medicine. I spent 2000 through 2005 in London, England, studying at the Royal Veterinary College. After finishing my veterinary degree, I returned for a few years to East Montpelier, practicing as a veterinarian at Onion River Animal Hospital. I got married in 2008 in Groton, VT, and quickly afterwards my husband and I moved back west to Washington. We currently live in a small mountain town in northcentral Washington state called Winthrop where I've run into several other Vermonters, including Gabe Spence (also U-32). We have two children (Adelina, 6, and Finnbar, 3), and I continue to work as a veterinarian at a small local practice. We have a wonderful community here, much like where I grew up. We enjoy all sorts of outdoor recreation with our kids and our dog, Okie, whom we adopted from Central Vermont Humane Society. We enjoy having Nana (Carolyn Pastore) come and visit for a couple of months each year.

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Town Weathervane

MILESTONES

The summary of minutes from town boards has been omitted this time due to lack of room, but is posted at www.emsignpost.com.

BIRTHS

- Eden Swenson, daughter, born May 7, 2015 to Kayla Pearce
- Anthony Shattuck, son, born May 29, 2015 to Peter & Brenda Shattuck
- Julia Williams, daughter, born June 20, 2015 to John Williams & Colleen Purcell
- Adler Cate, son, born June 21, 2015 to Austin & Kathleen Cate
- Everett Gill, son, born June 25, 2015 to Peter Gill & Catherine McLinn
- Anne Zabriskie, daughter, born July 13, 2015 to Benjamin & Krysta Zabriskie

DEATHS

- Gretchen Hudson died June 24, 2015
- Frances Donaghy died July, 5, 2015
- Phyllis Martin died July 10, 2015, wife of Richard Martin
- Timothy Hudson died July 16, 2015, husband of Sherri-Gina Hudson

MARRIAGES

- Zachary Sullivan & Helen Wilbur were married June 20, 2015
- Nicholas Van Den Berg & Laura Stone were married July 11, 2015
- Sarah Katz & Elissa Johnk were married August 1, 2015

LAND TRANSFERS

- David & Darlene Grundy to David, Darlene & Matthew Grundy, single family dwelling & 14.9 acres, Clark Rd
- Randall Goodall & Sloan Goodall to Andrew & Marianne Perchlik, single family dwelling & 3.79 acres, Coburn Rd
- Harvey & Joyce George to Maureen Dougherty, single family dwelling & 2.9 acres, Quaker Rd
- Dana & Cecile Barber to Scott & Katrina Kilpatrick, single family dwelling & 5.7 acres, North St
- Rhonda Prenskey & Jason Neimark to Margaret McDowell & David Lowther, single family dwelling & 77.8 acres, Horn of the Moon Rd
- Paul Mascitti to ABG Corp, multi-family dwelling & 0.4 acres, VT14S
- Eugene & Patricia Pettinato to Nicholas & Kristine Brink, single family dwelling & 2.5 acres, Horn of the Moon Rd
- Brian & Wanling Jollota to Wanling Jollota, mobile home, Robinson Rd

- Gretchen Hudson to Judith Hudson, Michael Hudson, Cathy Hudson, Patricia Spry, Matthew Hudson, & Barbara Dustin, single family dwelling & 0.25 acres, US2
- Cary & Virginia Breer to Virginia Breer, single family dwelling & 3.3 acres, Taylor Farm Rd
- Christopher & Rebecca Crandell to David Abrahamson & Denise Roy, single family dwelling & 3.4 acres, Powder Horn Glen Rd
- Andrew & Marianne Perchlik to MaWeMa LLC, single family dwelling & 3.79 acres, Coburn Rd
- Marjorie St. John to John & Tamara Haywood, single family dwelling & 1.1 acres, Putnam Rd
- John & Donna Bouthillette to Matthew Sellers & Kelly Iverson, single family dwelling & 14 acres, Perkins Rd
- Timothy & Diana Meehan to Michael Staab, single family dwelling & 10 acres, Casavant Rd
- Peter & Frances Weinbaum to Peter & Frances Weinbaum Rev Trust, single family dwelling & 10.6 acres, Bliss Rd
- Jane Staudt to Upper North Holdings, LLC, single family dwelling & 117 acres, North St
- Richard & Jane Staudt to Upper North Holdings, LLC, 5.21 acres open land, North St
- Justin Worth & Kacie Cordia-Worth to Kaili Kuiper & Thomas Fisher, single family dwelling & 1.33 acres, Sanders Circle



All of East Montpelier joins together to mourn the violent death of our neighbor, Lara Sobel. The community is shocked and horrified by the manner of her death and diminished by the loss of her compassion, joyfulness, and love. Our hearts go out to her husband, Tim Faryniarz, and daughters, Julia and Elahna Sobel-Faryniarz.

Kenneth St. John

I attended the Four Corners School (1st grade), Center School (2nd–4th), Morse School (5th–7th) and East Montpelier Elementary (7th–8th), graduating in 1967. Ours was the last class not to attend U-32 High School at all. I graduated from Montpelier High School in 1971, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1975, and Clemson University (M.S.) in 1977. I then worked in the medical device and pharmaceutical industry until 1989.

Upon leaving industry, I joined the faculty in orthopedic surgery at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, an appointment I still hold. I later decided to work on my Ph.D. in biomedical engineering and received it in 2001 from Mississippi State University. In 2004, we formed the Department of Biomedical Materials Science, in which I am the graduate program director for the masters and doctoral programs. In addition I still conduct medical device and biomedical materials research.

When I was in high school, I had intended to pursue a medical degree but Phillip Morse, who was already attending RPI, told me about the new biomedical engineering program and, since I had an interest in computers and engineering, I changed my focus to biomedical engineering. I have changed my direction a little because I never intended to be a university professor, and I now have been a faculty member for 26 years.

Marjorie St. John

I moved to East Montpelier from Middlesex in May, 1944 when I was ten years old. I was just in time for the school picnic for the Four Corners School children at Sibley's Pond where I met my future husband, Stanley, who was clowning around jumping off the diving board. At that time Sibley's Pond was a local attraction. For a small fee one could go swimming and use the bathhouse. My parents bought my grandparents' farm where John and Donna Hall now live. My other grandparents had also lived there previously. When I married Stanley St. John, we moved into an apartment in Montpelier for two years and then to an apartment in East Montpelier Village. Three years later we built our home next door to the Four Corners School, where we lived for 57 years. Our four children attended schools in East Montpelier, the oldest child going to first grade at the Four Corners School when it had all eight grades. The following year busing started, with two grades in each of the four one-room schools. They attended Montpelier High School and then U-32 when it was first built.

Stanley was a builder and built several houses, barns, and garages in East Montpelier and around central Vermont. After my children started school, I went back to work as a school secretary in Marshfield and Plainfield, and later as secretary in the superintendent's office in Moretown. I also worked as executive assistant at Cabot Creamery during the last eight years of my career. East Montpelier was a great place to raise a family. I recently sold my house and moved to Chittenden County to be closer to my family.



Fred Strong

At the intersection of Dodge and Center Road is my home which is the farm where my younger sister, Alice, and I grew up. My mother traveled by sleigh from here to Heaton Hospital in time for my birth one December day in 1932.

I completed my elementary education at the Center School next to the Old Meeting House. Active in 4-H, I recall a fund-raising dance that

coincidentally fell on V-J Day, and people flocked to celebrate at what is now the Parish House of the Old Meeting House.

After graduating from Montpelier High School in 1950, I continued working on the farm until embarking on a 26-year career in the USAF, and later a 14-year career with ITT, providing support for USAF communications systems.

Early in my Air Force career my friendship with Nancy Stevens, whom I knew at Montpelier High School, grew, and we were married in 1957. At the time, I was stationed at Mountain Home AFB in Idaho, where our son was born. Subsequent assignments took us to Ethan Allen AFB in Winooski and bases in Massachusetts (where our daughter Nancy Jean was born), Mississippi, Newfoundland, Maine, Nebraska and Labrador.

Throughout my working years I had a goal of returning to the family farm. Thus, in 1994 I returned and have since renovated the home which has been in the family for generations.

I also serve on the East Montpelier cemetery commission.

Suzanne Waterman

Greetings from sunny San Diego, California! I moved to San Diego in July 2014—specifically to Coronado Island. I love Coronado because it reminds me of home; it's quiet, small, and has a community feel much like East Montpelier. The longer I live outside of Vermont, the more I appreciate where I came from. East Montpelier Center shaped so much of who I am as an adult and a community member. I take great pride in my status as a Vermonter and love telling all my California friends about it. After graduating from U-32 in 2007, I left for a taste of a new place, initially just around New England, and then all the way across the country. I love living on the West Coast but I will always be a New Englander at heart! Even though my license plates say California, I make sure my "802" bumper sticker is always visible.

I'm currently working as an academic advisor at an online university. My passion is in counseling at the secondary level and hope to have my dream job as a high school guidance counselor someday. I owe so much of my success to my support systems back home, especially my parents and sister.

This Christmas I will be heading home for the first time since moving. I am most excited for a classic Vermont Christmas and to spend time relaxing and enjoying all that Vermont has to offer!

Inside EMES

An email discussion with EMES Principal Alicia Lyford and School Board Chair Rubin Bennett
by Hilari Farrington

Hilari Farrington: Can you describe how and why the school's administrative structure will be changing compared to last year?

Alicia Lyford: Six years ago the EMES School Board made the decision to establish an assistant principal position due to the complexity and amount of work that needed attention. When I was hired as assistant principal in 2010 my main responsibilities included school climate, student support systems—such as educational support teams and special education—and the facility. My attention to these matters allowed the principal to focus



attention on instructional leadership, the most critical component of a school leader. The principal and I equally shared the duties of supervision and evaluation of staff.

While it was an unpopular decision for some community members, the board stayed strong through this current and most difficult of budget seasons. Since coming to EMES, I have always had the mindset that it is my obligation to “work myself out of a job,” so to speak. Knowing the controversial nature of the position, as well as the tough economic times we all face, I believed it to be my duty to ensure the goals of the board and community were being met through my work as efficiently as possible. And while the principal and I had mapped out our work together for next year, we believed it would be the final year that two administrators would be necessary for EMES.

When I was hired as principal in April 2015, the board asked me what supports I thought would be necessary to continue on our positive trajectory. After re-evaluating what was already in place and looking at the strengths of individuals within the school, I recommended the board create a teacher-level position to support me with the pieces of the work that are critical to the continuous improvement of the school, yet no longer need administrative attention. With full support of the board, I feel very fortunate to have Michael Sherwin serve in this position. His duties will include overseeing our multi-tiered system of support around school climate and behavior, scheduling, busing and some facility work. Michael will not take on any

supervision or evaluation of staff. I am looking forward to what these changes will mean for the school and am optimistic that they will allow us to continue the great work we are doing here!

HF: What are the fiscal ramifications? Will it cost less, more, or roughly the same as the previous management structure?

Alicia Lyford: There is approximately a \$30,000 savings with this new model. It should be noted however that the money will go back into our general fund balance as the budget had already been voted on.

Rubin Bennett: The only thing I'd have to add would be that the board asked about other options and the best way to get the outcomes we need, and the answer was this is the most cost-effective way to address the various needs and challenges in the school.



HF: Are there any other elementary schools with similar enrollment which have adopted your new administrative model (a principal and behavior coach)?

Alicia Lyford: Many schools have teacher-level positions that deal with behavior and other managerial tasks such as busing, scheduling, duties, and building needs. Berlin Elementary School, which is slightly smaller than EMES, employs a full-time behavior analyst.

HF: I met someone who works for a neighboring town who told me that a number of people had moved to that town from East Montpelier because they felt that school spending was too high at EMES and that they could no longer afford to live here. Is the school board concerned about the perception of East Montpelier as a high-tax community which discourages lower and moderate income families from wanting to live here?

Rubin Bennett: As a board we're always concerned about the balance between school spending, outcomes, and the burden on taxpayers. The inherent tension between high quality education (and spending) and keeping the tax burden tolerable frames every discussion we have around budgeting and school operations. Climbing property values as measured by our Common Level of Appraisal are responsible for a significant portion of our tax increases in the past couple years. Higher

tax bills can certainly be a contributing factor to a decision to move elsewhere, but one of the reasons that property values in town are climbing is that we offer access to an excellent public education system. So in a way it's a double-edged sword—the other side being that I know of several families who have moved to town specifically because of the benefits of the school system here and in spite of (or even because of) the high property values and the solid investment that those property values represent. In short, if a family elects to sell their property, their property is worth much more than it used to be, and that's partly due to school spending.

HF: In the coming year, what is the predicted enrollment in the Pre-K and K-6 programs and how does this compare to last year?

Alicia Lyford: As of today, we have 39 students registered for our 3- and 4-year-old Pre-K and 176 students registered for K-6. Our numbers this year are very similar to last year.

HF: You have been at EMES for a number of years. Now that you are in the principal position, what are your primary goals for your first year? Is there anything you would like to change?

Alicia Lyford: I think my biggest challenge will be to not want to “take it all on.” Marion and I had very distinct roles and none of those pieces will magically disappear with just one principal. There are things I've enjoyed doing in the past that I will need to let go of in order to focus on instructional leadership, but feel so fortunate to have qualified individuals to take on responsibilities such as the behavior and the building.

—Hilari Farrington, former director of KHL, now spends much of her time steeped in Irish music, teaching, and playing. She and her husband Benedict have a grown son in Montreal and two cats still living at home.



TERRY J. ALLEN

Thank You All Around

To U-32 Seniors Who Volunteered

I would like to thank the following seniors and chaperones who worked hard on the projects I wanted to get done. Last June they took down some portable garages and righted another one for me. The following are the seniors who came to my house: Nik Killoran, Henry John, Ohan Fillbach, Avery Tait, and Ethan Fielder. Also I would like to thank the chaperones Mr. Scott Stroh and Mr. Shaun Fielder who worked right along with the seniors doing my projects. Thank you Kevin McCollister for coordinating with Paula Emery, student council advisor, to get the projects scheduled. A job well done!

—Gary Hudson, Brazier Road

From the Twin Valley Senior Center

Thank you to all residents who have responded to our earlier requests “to plant a row for TVSC.” We are enjoying the bounty you are sharing with us as the season progresses. To date we have enjoyed tomatoes, peas, lettuce, beet greens, summer squash, zucchini, kale & Swiss chard. They are delicious and so good for us. Again, thank you for listening to our request and acting on it!

To Signpost Contributors

**Joyce Bean
Dale Ferris Phillips
Minnie Lane**

Dogs Can Be Volunteers, Too

Carol Johnson loves children and dogs. She enjoyed teaching school in Calais and had also enjoyed teaching her Airedale, Caleb, the basics of good behavior as well as agility skills. Upon retirement she had much more time for dogs and brought home Clara, a young golden doodle puppy. At puppy class when given free time Clara went around the room greeting the other humans instead of playing with the other puppies. It was then that Carol had the inspiration to teach Clara to be a therapy dog.

Clara is now a full-grown dog with soft, curly blonde hair, and is about the size of her Airedale “brother.” Carol said that after she had trained her in the basics of good behavior, it was time to think about therapy work. They took some training in Williston and were tested. The dog needs to be obedient, but really the “test” is 95 percent observation of the dog’s temperament. She needs to be friendly, calm, and gentle, traits Clara was born with. Later, while being evaluated at Woodridge Nursing Home, Clara was introduced to a woman in a wheelchair. She went over to her and gently leaned against the chair. The woman was pleased and remarked, “Look, she really likes me.” Clara,



TERRY J. ALLEN

of course, completed the entire process successfully and became a Certified Therapy Dog. (Details about the process are at www.therapydogs.org.) When Clara wears her official therapy-dog scarf and heads out the door with Carol, she has a special dignity knowing she has a “job” to do.

Many therapy dogs work in nursing homes and hospitals, but Carol chose to go to libraries and schools so she could enjoy the children there. They have been to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, River Rock School, the Marshfield Library, and Norwich University. At the libraries Clara lets the children read to her. With a non-judgmental dog to read to, children read better and enjoy it more. One boy said, “Clara is the nicest dog I ever met.”

Recently the KHL library had a special reading program with Clara. Afterwards, the children were invited to draw pictures of her on fabric which was sewn into a quilt. The quilt remains in the library, and whenever Clara goes to visit, she and the children who read to her can sit on it.

—Barbara Ploof and her husband live on Barnes Road.
Barb is a longtime Signpost volunteer.



Here's lookin' at you: a young coyote on Brazier Rd.

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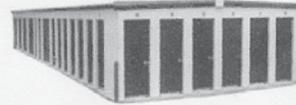
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CALENDAR

Important Dates

- WED. SEPT. 2** DRAWING FOR MALLORY BROOK HUNTING PERMITS
- MON. SEPT. 7** LABOR DAY - TOWN OFFICE CLOSED
- MON. NOV. 16** PROPERTY TAX INSTALLMENT DUE BY 5:00 PM
 (PENALTIES DUE ON LATE PAYMENT)
- THURS. NOV. 26** THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – TOWN OFFICE CLOSED
- FRI. NOV. 27** THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – TOWN OFFICE CLOSED

NEXT SIGNPOST DUE DATE OCTOBER 1



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee	as needed		<i>contact: blusig@aol.com /229-5441</i>
Development Review Board (DRB)	1st Tues	7:00 p.m.	Town Office Building
East Montpelier Elementary School (EMES) Board	3rd Mon	5:30 p.m.	Elementary School
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)	Every Tues	7:00 p.m.	EMFD Community Room
East Montpelier Fire District No. 1	2nd Wed	7:00 p.m.	EMFD Community Room
East Montpelier Historical Society	3rd Tues	7:00/6:00 p.m.	Four Corners Schoolhouse/E. Calais
East Montpelier Sr. Living Initiative	as needed		<i>contact: rhazel@ezcloud.com</i>
Four Corners Schoolhouse Association	2nd Wed	7:00 p.m.	Four Corners Schoolhouse
EMES Parent Teacher Neighbor Org. (PTNO)	2nd Wed	6:30 p.m.	Elementary School, Art Room
Planning Commission (PC)	1st & 3rd Thurs	7:00 p.m.	Town Office Building
Recreation Board	2nd Mon	7:15 p.m.	Elementary School
Selectboard	1st & 3rd Mon	6:30 p.m.	Town Office Building
U-32 School Board	1st Wed	6:00 p.m.	U-32 School