

Kindness in the Time of Covid

by Hilari Farrington

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” —Aesop

It has been a strange year, with a pandemic striking us before spring could even find its legs. Smiles have been hidden by masks, and happy gatherings among friends and family are less common. After a summer reprieve, the colder weather is bringing us isolation once again.

But one thing that hasn't changed is East Montpelier's community spirit. Random acts of kindness occur everywhere up and down our country roads, but perhaps never more so than in this time of national crisis. Whether it's a freshly baked loaf of sourdough rye brought over to surprise a neighbor, or a parade of teachers in their cars last spring, honking and waving to students who couldn't come to class, we have not been letting each other down. This article gives us only the smallest snapshot of how we are helping each other get through a hard time.

LIZ FUKUSHIMA began making masks last March. She explains, “Due to some unique circumstances in my background—most specifically training as a clinical bioethicist and experience living in South East Asia—I well understood the likelihood of such a pandemic arriving in our lifetime, and I have no cultural aversion to wearing a mask. Early on, I made it a personal project to help put everyone at ease with mask wearing, trying to make it fun and not stressful.”

As she thought of school starting up in the fall, it occurred to her to make plain white masks that children could personalize. “I knew that kids were going to need quite a few masks, so I thought having one “fun” one would be a



Liz Fukushima

nice addition to their mask wardrobe. And so, I reached out through FPF, and we were able to make 230 masks and deliver them on the first day of school.” Liz added, “Mask wearing, and hence mask making, will be with us for the foreseeable future. Hopefully, this helped the kids get off to a good start!”

JILLIAN ZEILENGA, the kindergarten/first grade teacher at EMES, saw an opportunity during the pandemic, and the community came together to help make it happen. For the last eight years, EMES students and teachers have participated in the Educating Children Outdoors (ECO) program, partnering with North Branch Nature Center. Over the years they created a shared outdoor classroom behind the school.

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Play A Role

As cooler weather envelops us, we are all looking toward a winter different from what we're used to. On the one hand, the cold will eliminate much of the porch socializing many of us have enjoyed and depended on over the past several months. On the plus side, maybe we will be motivated to spend more time outdoors engaging in new or perhaps somewhat neglected activities. I, for one, remember celebrating a friend's birthday in the woods in back of my house with a big fire complete with cook-your-own hot dogs and warming drinks. Why haven't I done that in decades? It was such fun.

I think most of us feel fortunate to live where we do—in this state and in this particular community. The whole mission of the *Signpost* is to foster that sense of community. Our “Acts of Kindness” feature is a perfect example of that. Being involved with our neighbors not only brings its own rewards to us individually, but it's what makes us a real community. In the coming months, think about the following:

- The *Signpost* is always looking for new ideas, for articles, for writers, or for other types of participation. Let us know if you are interested.
- Town Meeting Day is on the schedule for March 2. Although we don't know right now whether there will be any changes in time and/or format due to the pandemic, we do know for certain that the role of local government (mostly volunteers) goes on and is more important than ever in a time of unease. Find out how



Terry J. Allen

EM Senior Center is one of the recipients of Community Harvest

you can use your skills to help out. We elect a moderator, members of the selectboard, school board, and planning commission, in addition to listers, constables, auditors, and others each year.

- In addition, there are important committees for both town and schools that are doing important work day in and day out. A current example is the group dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer.

You'll never regret being part of the greater community effort.
—Edie Miller is a long-time community volunteer.

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476-3164

Bobolink: Name It and They Will Come

by Tracy Loysen

When I agreed to write this profile of my friends Carol Dickson and Bruce Howlett, who own Bobolink Farm on Towne Hill Road, I called Carol who said, “Maybe you and Isak can write it together!” Isak is my 13-year-old son. This is a very Carol way of thinking. She and Bruce like to involve young people in whatever is happening. A lamb that needs to be bottle-fed, sheep shearing, a sheep-moving adventure, all might be good reasons to visit. Isak declined the co-authorship idea, but he did want to go with me for the first interview.

We caught up with Carol and Bruce in the field. It was time to move a group of lambs to a new section of pasture. They have roughly 140 sheep now, and most are identified only by ear tags, but those with distinctive characteristics get names. This day, Carol was talking about a friendly lamb dubbed Nibbles. When Isak asked, “Which one is she?” Carol replied, “Stand there for a minute and you’ll find out!” Bruce was tending to a sick lamb that was lying on its side, too weak to stand. He thought it had a bacterial infection. While Bruce gave the lamb a shot of antibiotics and a primer on managing sheep maladies to Isak, I talked with Carol about the history of the land and how they came to buy it.

For many years the Hawkins’ dairy farm sprawled along both sides of this stretch of Towne Hill Road. After the dairy operation ended in the 1980s, two Hawkins brothers shifted to other farming pursuits and also ran a landscaping business, which continues today with new owners across the street. Parts of the farm were parceled out and sold for building lots. In 2014 Bruce and Carol bought the remaining 82 acres on the northwest side of the road, along with the original farmhouse and outbuildings.

It was not love at first sight. Though there was a lot of open land, the buildings were all in rough shape. So they kept looking at a wide range of properties all the way from western Massachusetts (where Bruce was working) to Craftsbury (where Carol was working). But good, affordable farmland proved hard to find. And they had ties to Central Vermont, having both lived here in the past. They met in 2001 while teaching at Goddard College. They came back for a second look and decided to take the plunge.

After six years, the house is basically the same, and Carol reflects, “People driving by might think, ‘Oh, what a mess!’ But it used to be so much worse.” A big first-year project was pulling down and dismantling an old silo. A listing



Bruce, Carol, and sheep

pole barn is now gone, and a handsome new post-and-beam barn has risen in its place. Eight large dumpsters full of barn wreckage have been hauled away. Less obvious improvements are the result of many hours spent pulling barbed wire out of the hedgerows and digging up buckthorn and burdock from the margins of the fields. And a key early change was replanting the corn fields with perennial forages.

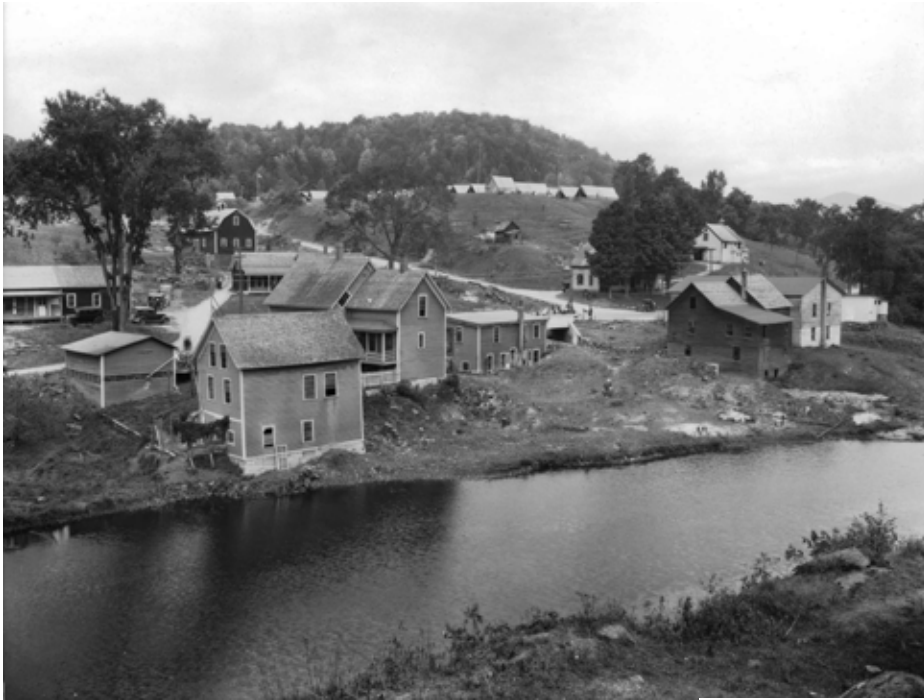
A few days later, Isak and I were back at Bobolink Farm to help move a different group of sheep across Towne Hill Road. In preparation, Bruce and Carol had set up an elaborate series of fences. (After many such moves, they have the routine down.) Carol let the sheep out of their current enclosure, and they ran down a dirt lane, kicking up dust as they went. They had a brief stay in a holding area, while Bruce waited for a good break in traffic. Then he ran across the road with one section of fence while Isak ran across with another. Carol opened the gate on the southeast side, and the sheep bolted through, eager to get to their next section of fresh pasture.

This was a more complicated move than most, but Carol and Bruce move their sheep to new pasture every day. They currently have three sheep groups, which means setting new fencing in three different locations, not all of which are on their own farm. This rotational grazing system, Bruce explained, gives the animals a consistent, high-quality diet and also causes grasses to flourish and less desirable plants to decrease.

It was interesting to learn that Bruce and Carol did not set out to be sheep farmers. In fact, Bruce, who grew up on a 400-acre dairy farm in Addison County, said he prefers cows to sheep. But, he explained, Bobolink Farm has always been as much of an ecological project as an agricultural one. Their mission is to have a positive impact on the flora and fauna

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Wrightsville and Its Dam



Wrightsville Village with Camp Greene

When paddling on the Wrightsville Reservoir, I used to look down into the murky water and wonder if houses from Wrightsville village were still there, maybe full of little fish swimming in and out of the windows. How did it come to be that a whole village was wiped out by the construction of the dam and reservoir? I had my chance to find out about this when I attended an East Montpelier Historical Society meeting a year or so ago. Manuel Garcia and Patty Wiley shared photos and information about the dam.

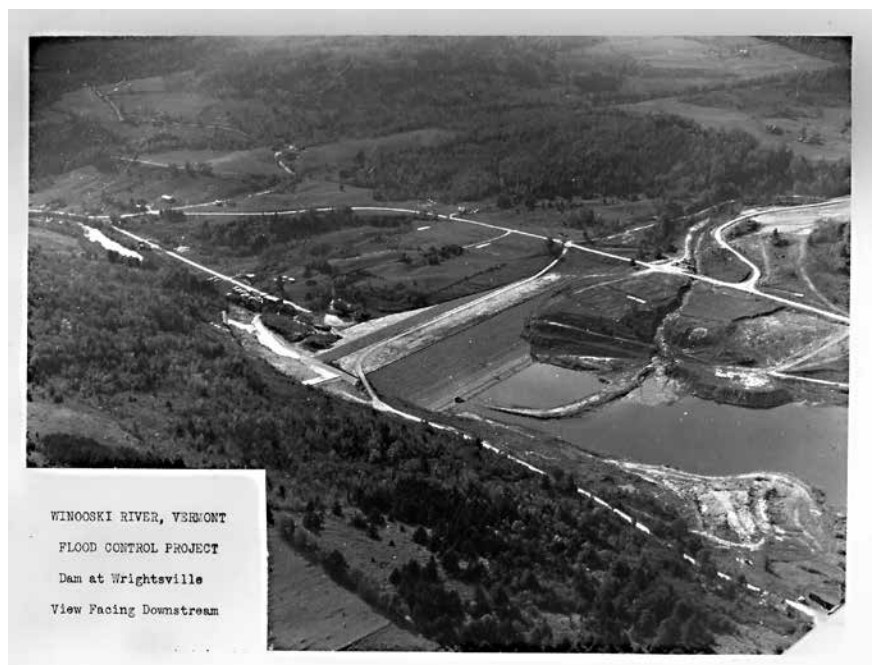
It turns out that the village of Wrightsville began as a settlement around the mills of Medad Wright who located them on the banks of the North Branch of the Winooski in the 1850s where Middlesex, Montpelier, and East Montpelier came together. The village grew and thrived until, eventually, the mills were relocated or shut down. In 1927 at the time of the Great Flood, there were very few houses in Wrightsville, and most of them survived the flood. However, Montpelier and other towns downstream on the Winooski were badly flooded, so the US Army Corps of Engineers drew up a plan to build a flood control dam at Wrightsville.

Funds were not available to create the dam until 1933, when it became one of many Civil Conservation Corps (CCC)

projects established by Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a way to put people back to work during the Great Depression. Some 4,500 men, all veterans of WWI, were brought in to work on the dam as well as the East Barre dam and the “clothespin dam in Montpelier.” Before work could begin, eight dwellings and two businesses had to be removed from the former Wrightsville village. They were auctioned off, and some were moved to other locations, while others were taken down so that the lumber and other materials could be used elsewhere. So, while no houses were covered by the water, some of the foundations could be seen when the reservoir was temporarily drained in 2001.

The CCC workers lived in three surrounding encampments; one in East Montpelier, called Camp Cushing or Camp Comfort, was on land sometimes referred to as the Hull farm, where Ananda Gardens is now located. The farmhouse was used as the office. The water-holding tank that supplied the camp can still be seen through the woods as one travels on the western part of Horn of the Moon Road. At first, the men lived in tents; then rough barracks were built, heated by woodstoves that sometimes used 100 cords of locally sourced firewood in a week.

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The first summer much of the work was done with shovels and wheelbarrows until the machinery arrived. The winters were cold and snowy, but the men made the best of it creating the Wrightsville Winter Sports Carnival attended by over 10,000 people. It included an aerial ski jump and a toboggan chute that went from Hull's field down to the valley where Wrightsville had been. The dam was completed in 1935, but in 1936 the water rose again in the spring. Some up-river houses that were thought to be safe were washed away. The dam narrowly saved Montpelier from flooding. After that, the dam was raised higher, as it was again in 1956-58.

The reservoir is entirely in Middlesex, but the road on top of the dam divides Middlesex from Montpelier, and a

little of the eastern shore is in EM. In 1964 recreational facilities and a boat launch were added. The Wrightsville Beach Recreation District Board, with representatives from Montpelier, East Montpelier, and Middlesex, oversees its operations and use. Kim Kendall is EM's representative.

—*Barb Ploof, longtime Signpost volunteer, wrote this article with help from Manuel Garcia, a Montpelier resident with a serious interest in historical photos, and Patty Wiley and her book, Middlesex in the Making.*



Wrightsville, 1933

2021 Adamant Co-op Calendar

Years ago, Jean Vissering gave a talk about East Montpelier's landscape and how our open lands and agricultural activities give us beautiful vistas. Her words have stayed with me over the years, and as I drive the town roads I am constantly struck by the beauty of the light on the fields and buildings and how the landscape changes with the seasons. It makes me want to paint my small corner of the world over and over. The calendar is a wonderful project because all the proceeds go directly to support the Adamant Co-op and because it is a way for me to share bits of my favorite landscape with my neighbors.

We will again be offering the calendar at the Co-op through a pre-order sign up. If you're interested in the Adamant Co-op 2021 Calendar, you may email me at janetmac@ezcloud.com

—*Janet MacLeod is an Adamant artist and founding Signpost volunteer.*



Janet MacLeod

Bobolink, continued from p. 3

on their land, and raising sheep is a good way of achieving that. When they named their farm, they had not yet seen the namesake bird in their fields. But they trusted that the bobolinks would come. And they have, along with a greater diversity of flowering plants, insects, birds, and other animals.

Like many small-scale farmers, Bruce and Carol do not make a profit from their sales of lamb meat and occasional live animals. They lose a bit less every year, though, and hope they are slowly increasing the value of the property. Meanwhile, in order to afford farming, they both have full-time jobs. Bruce works for the Natural Resources Conservation Service as the Soil Conservationist in Washington County. Carol is a faculty member in Environmental Humanities at Sterling College.

It is obviously challenging keeping up with routine farm chores along with the unscheduled problems that

arise (sick animals, machinery breakdowns, etc.)—all on the margins of their paying jobs. Though they share chores, Bruce does most of the tractor work and much veterinary care, while Carol handles marketing and social media. This division of labor suits their personalities as well as the reality of their lives. Academic responsibilities periodically call Carol away for days or weeks at a time; Bruce is able to keep more regular hours.

The next time East Montpelier has a Harvest Festival, you might find Carol at a Bobolink Farm table playing her fiddle, with grass-fed lamb in a cooler and a hand-cranked grain mill on the table for kids to try grinding corn. Or stop by and say hello if you see them out and about at the farm.

—*Tracy Loysen lives in East Montpelier with her husband Rob, son Isak, two dogs, and six chickens. Their North Street fields were home to Bobolink sheep one fall.*

For Every Question



Nona Estrin

For any naturalist at any level, there are people who keep us honest; they regularly share observations, send pictures or audio clips for identification, and ask “What is this?” questions. My husband and I are regularly the recipients of this interest in our natural world. Not only do our social contacts expand (especially welcome during the pandemic), but questions and shared experiences also expand our reach into the natural world.

One such person for me is Kate Rader. She shares observations or asks me basic questions that send me back, again and again, to the books, specialists, the Internet, or out to observe more deeply. Really great questions have no quick answers, but many of the fun ones do.

Here is a sample of hers, that apply to seasonal change:

Kate: September 28: “The deer in our field have changed their coat color from rusty to tree-bark gray.” And a few days later, “The young still haven’t changed color yet, but are looking very scruffy.”

October 1: “We have ravens in our yard for the first time. They helped themselves to our blueberries this year!”

And last April: “How can the goldfinches change color so suddenly? Within a week they have gone from drab brown to bright yellow!”

Nona: Yes, deer and other creatures molt and change the density and the color of their coats before the cold of winter. The deer’s long, stiff, hollow guard hairs shed water, and protect the dense, soft insulating undercoat. The seasonal change relates both to thermoregulation and camouflage. The deer’s digestive enzyme systems change as well as they

go from eating grasses and leaves to browsing twigs and cedar greenery. This alters their softer summer droppings to the pellets that are so characteristic. Profound changes to be sure!

Ravens ... well, there’s an interesting one! A scant 15 years ago you had to visit ridgetops or cliffs to see ravens. Now this smart, fascinating bird seems to be showing up everywhere! We may be seeing adaptive evolution as they are pressed into finding a niche with enough food and water to survive. Sudden profound changes, such as the droughts we now seem to have regularly in the Northeast, create temporary loss of prey, other foods, and water. Perhaps humans with their watered gardens, fruit

trees, and bushes, provide the only habitat reliable enough to support them.

Goldfinches, like other small songbirds, have a complete molt in late summer before migration and/or winter. Some birds, like goldfinches, also have a partial feather molt, of the body feathers only, in spring. Male goldfinches (and other species) transform into bright breeding plumage, but the wing and tail feathers remain, from the previous fall. When birds are migrating in spring or fall, we see not the same birds each day, but successive flocks as they move south or north. Birds from further north or south may be further into the molt process, so color change can appear sudden from our stationary perspective.

Stay tuned and keep asking us and each other questions.

—Nona Estrin is EM’s unofficial naturalist and founder of EM Trails, Inc. She and her husband, former VT State Naturalist, live on Towne Hill Rd. Kate Rader and her husband (who digitized the Signpost’s archives) also live on Towne Hill Rd. and enjoy the great outdoors.



Terry J. Allen

Delicious Holiday Ideas

Despite the twists and turns of 2020, Thanksgiving and Christmas, not to mention Hanukkah and Kwanza, will arrive on schedule. That means celebrations galore (safely masked, at a distance) and also chores galore: decorating, baking, wrapping presents, etc. East Montpelier Eats has come up with a couple of ideas to help you out.

First is Caroline's Cookies. Caroline Flynn began baking in earnest when she was in the seventh grade, baking and selling cookies and custom cakes to raise money for the U-32 trip to Washington, D.C. She wanted to pursue a non-conventional fundraiser, and baking was something that she really enjoyed. She likes making cookies and seeing people enjoy what she creates. Subsequently, this turned into a small business, which, luckily, works just fine during the pandemic. You can email her at sweetcaroline135@gmail.com or call her at 229-2270. She'll send you an order form (15 different flavors) and make arrangements for delivery. A delicious way to solve the problem of wanting lots of homemade holiday goodies but feeling short of energy or time.

Second is an idea for a gift—maybe for yourself—



Caroline mixes it up.

grounded in years of fellowship and good eating. Unable to host the Parish House Café or to hold its annual chicken pie supper, folks at the Old Meeting House (OMH) understand and appreciate how food nourishes body and soul and builds community, putting us in contact with spirits of the past. Fifty years ago, OMH members published a cookbook, and this holiday season they are publishing another. The new one includes some “classic” recipes from that original cookbook, some from the Parish House Café and chicken pie suppers, and favorites of current members, along with personal notes about each recipe. You can order your copy from Catherine Cerulli at cjcerulli@gmail.com or phone 426-3065 or text 802-249-7071. Cookbooks will be ready on Nov. 22, the Sunday before Thanksgiving, on the Parish

Hall porch (masks in place). Suggested donation is \$20, maybe more to support this fundraiser, or less, if that's what works in these hard times. Above all, the OMH wants to be accessible to everyone.

There you have it: delicious cookies to nibble on as you plan your holiday feast from your new cookbook. Enjoy!

—Ann Stanton, a longtime Signpost volunteer is coordinator of East Montpelier Eats.

Paulie's Recipe: MRS. BUTTERFIELD'S MACARONI MOUSSE, June 1937



- 1 c. macaroni, uncooked
- 1½ c. scalded milk
- 1 c. soft breadcrumbs
- ¼ c. melted butter
- 1 chopped pimento (1 small jar, drained) and/or green pepper
- 1 tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1½ c. grated cheese
- 3/8 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- paprika
- 3 eggs, beaten

Cook macaroni as directed. Blanch in cold water and drain. Pour scalded milk over bread crumbs. Add remaining ingredients and blend all together. Bake in casserole at 325 degrees for 1 hour.

Paulie's Comment

This macaroni and cheese casserole has just a bit of a good twist. I would add more grated cheese (at least 1 c. more) the next time I make it.

—Recipe submitted by Robin Dowling to the cookbook, Country Kitchen Favorites, assembled by the East Montpelier Fire Department Auxillary.

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Announcements

She's a Winner



Shannon Wilson

For the second year in a row, U-32 eighth-grader Clara Wilson has won the Vermont State G3 Slalom Ski Championship. Among the 200 or so girls between eight and 17 who participate in USA Water Ski & Wake Sports-sanctioned tournaments, Clara has consistently been in the top three in the Eastern Region and the top seven in the US. Clara started waterskiing when she was four years old but only began competing at the end of last summer. She practices locally from April to October several times a week. Clara is obviously a talented young woman dedicated to her sport.

Stay Healthy All Winter

Although on a reduced schedule, Twin Valley Senior Center (TVSC) is still helping local seniors enjoy nutritious meals and stay active (See photo on p. 2).

Meals on Wheels are delivered twice weekly, but food for the entire week may be requested. Following state guidelines for Covid-19 prevention, activities offered at the center include Tai Chi three days a week, cribbage, and foot clinics. Bone Builders via Zoom is also offered. If you're interested in playing bridge, let us know. Please check the website or call the center for details and to sign up.

While it does not appear that we will be able to open fully during the winter months, we encourage our members to socialize, eat healthfully, and stay active. Whether or not you participate in activities at the center, think about contacting your neighbors—to play cards, share a meal, or just chat.

We thank all who shared fresh vegetables from their gardens. They were very much appreciated and extras were frozen for ongoing use.

For information, signups, or to request any type of help, visit the website at twinvalleyseniors.org or call 223-3322.

—Rita Copeland is executive director of TVSC.



Sandal Cate

Emerald Ash Borer Update

The Resilient Roads Committee (RRC) continues its progress in removing potentially hazardous ash trees along town road rights of way.

While the fall portion of the U-32 area pilot projects is being done by Vermont Arborists, volunteers will finish the project with new tree planting. After a September hearing about tree removal along Dodge and Johnson Roads, the town crew is working on that as time permits.

The RRC is applying for additional grant monies to support future removal work. For more information visit the EM town website or contact Paul Cate, Town Tree Warden, 223-6466.



Outdoor class at EMES

One of the plans put in place for a safe return to school was to give each classroom an outdoor space of its own.

Jillian already knew where she wanted her classroom to be: tucked in its own corner of the forest. Parents and community members helped with providing wood, clearing the space, buying equipment/materials, and more. Jillian gives special recognition to the Cate family who constructed an amazing hand-washing station that allowed the classroom to have running water in the forest. Austin Cate was also the mastermind behind a rain shelter. When Jillian thanked Katie Cate for their help, Katie replied, “We’re like Disneyland; we make dreams come true.”



Alison Soccodato

Alison Soccodato has also been hard at work making masks. “I sewed about 60 masks for EMES after Mrs. Lyford, the school principal, put out a call over the summer. I had plenty of fabric in my stash from various projects and bought a few more to have a variety that would appeal to students of various

ages and interests. I wanted the masks to be fun and attractive to make them a little more enjoyable to wear.”

BONE BUILDERS, the cheerful group, which used to meet at the Four Corners Schoolhouse twice a week, kept in touch by email for several months. Kate Rader sends a bi-weekly poem (accompanied by a Terry Allen photo) to be read midway through the exercise set by those staying in shape at home. In September, thanks to the dedication of Ann Stanton, the group started meeting, when feasible, out-of-doors.

STEPHEN MIRACLE is evidence that sometimes good deeds can be neighborhood specific. He took down two green signposts on Barnes Road in his neighborhood, one at the

corner of Center and Barnes Road, the other across the street at the corner of Center and Bliss Road. He repainted them a nice fresh green with the road names in bright white and the arrows pointing out the directions. “They help us find our way in this confusing time,” said an appreciative neighbor.



Karen Kane

Karen Kane showed that people in need were not forgotten. She put out a call on Front Porch Forum, reminding folks that they could donate their extra garden produce to area food shelves. Her message read, “I’m starting a Tiny Veggie Movement: organizing local gardeners who would like to share their extra produce this summer with neighbors who are in need.” Onion River Food Shelf Coordinator Diana Fielder said that the produce was just beautiful and so appreciated by their clients. Diana added that winter

months will be a challenge for many in our neighborhoods, so keep The Onion River Food Shelf in mind.

ADAMANT CO-OP It would be impossible to conclude this article without mentioning the staff and volunteers at the Adamant Co-op. When the pandemic first struck, many of us felt a good bit of hesitation about going into supermarkets. Instead, we placed a weekly order with the Co-op, and our groceries were put on the side porch to be picked up—with no human contact other than the friendly voices on the telephone when we called in our order.

Alison Underhill, who lives on the East Montpelier side of Adamant, reminds us that Adamant is “a state of mind.” Filling various roles over the years as manager, volunteer, and staff, she talked about how essential volunteers have been in helping the Co-op fill the needs of the community in this extraordinary time. Alison admits that at times it has been hectic, opening doors to a customer or two at a time while they are on the phone with another customer and/or taking food boxes to the other door. Indeed, they have been so busy that one person could not have done the work without volunteer help. “I think we all feel a sense of responsibility and concern for our (now extended) neighbors,” she added.



Adamant Co-op

—Hilari Farrington is Signpost co-features editor.

Town Weathervane

BIRTHS

- Laura Annalyn Storey, a daughter, born to Daniella Chaloux & Trevor Storey, January
- Isla June Connor, a daughter, born to Emilie & Christopher Conner, June
- River Sebastian Premont, a son, born to Jessica & Craig Premont, June
- Donavin Wayne Thongs, a son, born to Sierra Wells & Russel Thongs, July

MARRIAGES (as names appear on licenses)

- Amelia Alibozek & David Contrada married, July
- Sherryl Byrd & Daniel Towner married, July
- Leslie Drown & Kyle Gomo married, July

DEATHS (survivors living in East Montpelier are listed, when known)

- Loretta Chaples, died in May
- Paul Grant, Sr died in May, survived by wife Emma, daughter Heather, and grandchildren Bridget and Hailey
- Arlene Lamery died, May
- Joanne Chickering died, June and husband Arthur Chickering died, August, survived by brother Robert Chickering and daughters Susan and Nancy Chickering
- Marshall Clark, III died, September, survived by husband Roger McLeon

LAND TRANSFERS

Transfers relative to estate planning or corrective deeds are not included in this listing.

- Shirley M. Granger Revocable Trust to Christin Martin, 0.95 acres and dwelling on Carleton Blvd
- Harper Properties, LLC to Twin Valley Seniors, Inc., 1.6 acres and commercial building on US2
- Janet Atkins to Letitia Fox, 4.9 acres of land on Sanders Circle
- Pauline Coburn to John Benjamins, 28.8 acres and dwelling on Daggett Rd
- Hobart Guion, Jr. & Abigail Faulkner to The Virginia Deganahl Russell Exempt Trust, 7.72 acres and dwelling
- Mark & Hunter Lane to Brianna Lane, 7.74 acres and dwelling on Gould Hill Rd.
- John Pandolfo to Edward Haynes, 51.11 acres and dwelling on Templeton Rd.

- Fairmont Dairy, LLC to Vermont Land Trust, 201 acres of operating farmland off Lylehaven Rd.
- Lynn Burgess to Lynn & Edward Burgess, 7 acres and dwelling on Jourdan Rd.
- Fairmont Dairy, LLC to Cross Vermont Trail Association, 3.74 acres of open land off Lylehaven Rd.
- Sherri-Gina Hudson to Smith Properties 2689, LLC, 0.49 acres and a multi-family commercial building on US2
- Bonnie Lee Burkholder & Steven Lynn Burkholder Trust to Manuel O'Neill and Myrna Miranda-O'Neill, 7.3 acres and dwelling on Horn of the Moon Rd.
- Walter Plant & Deena Lovely to Kenneth Vatz, 9.1 acres and dwelling on Hagggett Rd.
- Ellen Leonard & Janice Walrafen to Benjamin Graham & Adrienne Allison, 10.20 acres off Cherry Tree Hill Rd.
- Lindsay Owen to Robert & Nichol Walbridge, 1 acre and dwelling on Fair Rd.
- Fannie Mae to Win Turner & Laura Bozarth, 17.4 acres and dwelling on Jacobs Rd.
- Richard & Joyce Wolkomir to Benton Boothby, 3 acres and dwelling on County Rd.
- Daniel & Linda McSweeney to Rodney Kovach & Katherine Paine, 10.2 acres and dwelling on Cherry Tree Hill Rd.
- Casey & Amanda Northrup to Michael & Kimberly Brown, 3.16 acres and dwelling on US2
- Emily Leighty to Benjamin & Birgit McCall, 6.2 acres of open land on Stoney Corners Rd.
- Karin Omasta to Elizabeth & Lee Simard, 2.01 acres & dwelling on Center Rd.
- Robert & Diane Tucker to Jodie Engert, 2.94 acres and dwelling on County Rd.
- Amy Thornton to Kenyon Bolton, IV & Amanda Caron, 12.13 acres & dwelling on North St.
- Town of East Montpelier to Malone 3035 US2 Properties, Inc., 45.48 acres of open land on US2
- Caitlyn LaClair & Andrew Carpenter to Kayla Arena, Jason Arena & Kevin Giron, 1.3 acres on Cummings Rd.
- Robert & Lori Rice to Win Turner & Laura Bozarth, 14.34 acres of open land off Jacobs Rd.
- Paul & Julia Haynes to James & Robin McCauley, 3 acres & dwelling on Quaker Rd.
- Ellery Packard to Jennifer Perry, 1.53 acres of open land on Pine Ridge Rd.
- Brenda Kaiser to Erin Bresette, 0.66 acre & dwelling on Dodge Rd.
- Mahalo, LLC to Katherine Rumley & Marc Alperin, 1.85 acres & dwelling on Old Railroad Ln.
- Thomas & Ann Brazier to Cory & Michelle Blake, 3.01 acres of open land off Brazier Rd.
- Robert & Lori Rice to James & Katharine Gascoyne, 9.15 acres & dwelling on Jacobs Rd.
- Duane Wells to Michael & Diane Scolar, 3.00 acres of open land on Captain Kidd Rd.
- Richard Mastelli to Deborah Fillion 12.2 acres & dwelling on Horn of the Moon Rd.
- Virginia & David Burley to Dey Hendrik, 62 acres & dwelling on Sanders Circle
- K & A Leasing to M Bolduc Leasing, LLC, 2.69 acres & commercial building on US2

Following are excerpts from minutes of EM's governing boards. Complete minutes are on the town and school websites.

SELECTBOARD

August 3, 2020

This and subsequent meetings were conducted remotely using the Zoom conferencing platform. Participation options were provided to the public.

Discussion

- Town management in light of Covid-19

Motions Passed:

- to authorize TA Johnson to develop and submit a conforming application to the Vermont Coronavirus Municipal Records Digitization Grant Program
- to set the 2020/21 property tax rates at 2.5381 for homestead parcels and 2.3804 for non-homestead parcels
- to waive the homestead declaration late filing penalty

- to authorize Chair Gardner to sign the letter of intent for the town to participate in the FY2021 Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid Equipment Purchase Program

- to authorize TA Johnson to sign and submit a VLCT PACIF Equipment Grant Program application for a total amount of up to \$2,000

August 24, 2020

- Upcoming State Traffic Committee meeting with regard to proposed US2 speed limit change through EM Village and continuing past Towne Hill Road
- Town management in light of Covid-19

Motions Passed:

- to authorize Treasurer Welch to arrange for an increase in the credit limit to \$4,000 for TA Johnson's town credit card from People's United Bank

September 14, 2020 (Unapproved)

Discussion

- Upcoming State Traffic Committee meeting with regard to proposed US2 speed limit change through EM Village and continuing past Towne Hill Road
- Update on town ash tree management projects
- Conversation with Funding Request Study Committee
- Draft 2021/22 VLCT Municipal Policy
- Consideration of winter sidewalk plowing bid document
- Town management in light of Covid-19

Motions Passed

- to authorize TA Johnson to sign the agreement with Collaboration 133
- to authorize Chair Gardner to designate the town's voting delegate for the 2020 VLCT, PACIF and VERB annual meetings and the VLCT municipal legislative policy conference unless board holds a special meeting on Sept. 21, 2020, in which case designation would be made at that meeting
- [Update on September 18, 2020: The Selectboard decided not to hold a special meeting on September 21, 2020. Chair Gardner designated board member Jon Jewett as the town's voting delegate for all four VLCT meetings.]
- to authorize the collector of delinquent taxes to sign James Barlow's September 8, 2020 proposal for attorney services related to tax sale proceedings

- to approve Access Permit #20-045 and authorize Chair Gardner to sign the permit on behalf of the board

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 6, 2020

This and subsequent meetings were conducted remotely on Zoom with options for public participation

Discussion

- Village Zoning

August 20, 2020

Discussion

- Village Zoning
- Municipal Planning grants

September 3, 2020

Discussion

- Village Zoning

September 17, 2020 (Unapproved)

Discussion

- Village Zoning

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

This and subsequent meetings were conducted remotely using the Zoom conferencing platform. Participation options were provided to the public.

September 1, 2020 (Unapproved)

Discussion

- Rules of Procedure

Motions Passed

- to grant the waiver request for Application #20-034 as presented by Julie Henderson for property located at 219 Brazier Rd.
- to continue the hearing for Application #20-034 to September 8 at 5:30 pm
- to grant large lot survey waiver for Morse subdivision at 918 County Rd.
- election of officers: Steve Kappel, Chair; Jeff Cueto, Vice-Chair
- to appoint Kristi Flynn as the recording secretary with the ZA taking care of the internal responsibilities

September 8, 2020 (Unapproved)

Discussion

- Old Meeting House memory garden

Motions Passed

- to grant the waiver request for the amended Application #20-034

WCUUSD

July 30, 2020

This and subsequent meetings were held by teleconference.

Motions Passed:

- to adopt the following staff leave procedure: During the 2020-2021 school year, and due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the district will adopt the following: In addition to the mandated state and federal statutes for leave the WCUUSD school board will consider the following:

1. Allow WCUUSD teachers to enroll their children in our schools only if their child's school is doing remote learning or a remote learning hybrid.
2. Offer remote learning center(s) for teachers' children so that they can attend their school remotely only if their child's school is doing remote learning or doing a remote learning hybrid.
3. Provide an independent auditor for leave requests.
4. Provide discretionary unpaid leave for staff to submit request by a date determined by the superintendent. The superintendent will set the number of leaves that will be provided so as not to upset the school and still meet the needs of our students. This may need to be held by lottery.

- For staff who are taking discretionary leave, position will be available to them upon end of leave.

- to appoint Sarah Wetzel as Berlin special educator

The board entered into executive session at 7:47 and exited executive session at 9:07

- to support the administration's recommendation regarding the student matter

August 5, 2020 (Unapproved)

Discussion

- Board operations

Motions Passed:

- to nominate Stephen Looke as alternate representative to CVCC Regional Advisory Board
- to authorize the superintendent to spend a total of \$43.3K for the purpose of Central Office renovations
- to approve the following hires: Heather Clark Warner, Kevin Richards, Jessica Abisla
- to approve the change to 1.0 FTE for David Mathies
- to approve the addition of the position of Behavior Interventionist

Weathervane, continued p.12

TRAILS: Keep in mind that the woods and the trails are shared with hunters in November and December. Rifle season for deer is November 14–28, and musket season follows from December 5–13. Bear season started in September and extends to November 22. Wear bright colors, make noise, or delay your outing until later. More detailed information can be found at vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/hunting-and-trapping-seasons

SIDEWALK & BRIDGE: The EM Village bridge and sidewalk project is now complete. The goals included making both pedestrian and car traffic easier and safer. Visit our new village and see how it feels.

SCHOOLS: Our schools opened on September 8 and continue to adjust, as needed, based on pandemic information, learning experiences, weather, and other changing conditions. For the latest info, follow these online sources:

- EMES: wcsu32.org/EMES or follow EMES PTNO on Facebook
- U-32 and WCUUSD including COVID updates: safelearning.u32.org/
- u32chronicle.com/2020/10/09/back-to-school-covid-changes/

Also, follow the *U-32 Chronicle* on Facebook and Instagram.

EAST MONTPELIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY: It will not meet for the rest of 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions and health department recommendations. We hope to reschedule our programs in the near future when group gatherings are safer.

If you have interest or questions about our town history, please consult our website Eastmontpelierhistoricalsociety.org. Stay well, stay warm, stay safe.

Weather vane, continued from p. 11

August 19, 2020 (Unapproved) Discussion

- Community forum on school reopening
- Board operations

Motions Passed

- to reduce student days for 2020-21 school year from 180 to 175, and approve the revised calendar, as recommended
- to authorize leave requests for the 2020-2021 year, without pay, for the: Amber Perry, Jackie Taylor, Robert Reade, Dena Cox, Nicolle Shaeffer, Peter Comtess
- The board entered executive session at 7:46 and exited at 8:03
- to accept eight children of district teachers who live outside the district to attend district schools for the 2020-21 school year at no tuition cost to the parents of these students
- to approve change of school for a student
- to accept a foreign exchange student to U-32, on the condition that the student maintain a quarantine according to state guidelines

August 26, 2020 (Unapproved)

Motions Passed

- The board entered executive session at 6:50 and exited at 7:12

- to appoint Karoline May as Middlesex board representative, as soon as sworn in, and until Town Meeting Day, 2021
- to support proceeding with the Calais ventilation system project
- to approve hire of Sara Ford, Social Studies U-32 and Kerri Zurowski, PE Calais
- to accept resignation of Sherry Newton

September 2, 2020 Discussion

- Board operations
- School reopening update

Motions Passed

- to join Vermont School Board Association
- to accept the following retirements: effective June 30, 2021: Kathryn Christy, EMES classroom teacher; Elizabeth Wirth, WCUUSD Covid-19 coordinator; James Nichols-Fleming, Berlin Special education teacher; Patricia Fair, U-32 admin assistant; Lauren Van Deren, U-32 admin assistant; Mary Ellen Hill, U-32 admin assistant
- to approve the following increases in full time equivalency: Karen Lieberman 0.7 to 1.0 FTE, Heather Clark Warner 0.4 to 0.8 FTE.
- The board entered executive session at 8:15 and exited at 8:57
- to allow superintendent to sign settlement agreement with a designated agency

- to allow the superintendent to sign an employee-related settlement agreement
- to approve the superintendent's recommendation regarding a student matter

September 12, 2020 Board Retreat (Unapproved) Discussion

- Guidelines for participants
- Building board governance
- Student achievement

September 16, 2020 Discussion

- Superintendent's report
- Board Retreat follow-up

Motions Passed

- to approve the Health Reimbursement and Flexible Spending Accounts Budget for FY 2021-22
- to set the Calendar Year 2021 Dental Insurance Rates
- to accept the hire of Honi Bean Barrett as longterm sub
- to accept the following retirements: Janice Hood, Jane Boucher, Lori Garand, Vicki Cook
- to accept Keith MacMartin's resignation

The board entered executive session at 9:01 and exited at 9:48. The board took no action after executive session.

An Unusual Legislative Session



After running four months beyond our regular close and conducting legislative business since March over Zoom, the Speaker gavelled out the Vermont House of Representatives on September 25. The session will surely be one for the history books.

Adjournment came upon passage of the nearly \$7.2 billion FY21 budget, which Governor Scott signed on October 2. Bolstered by strategic use of federal Coronavirus Relief Funds, the budget maintains services to vulnerable Vermonters while also helping to ease pandemic impacts. This includes resources to make child-care more affordable, fund microbusiness supports, increase downtown tax credits, offer direct relief payments to Vermonters ineligible for federal assistance due to immigration status, expand communications with union districts, invest in public transportation, implement pre-K-12 school health measures, provide hazard pay for Vermont's essential workers, and ensure bridge funding for the Vt. State College system.

While negotiations continue in Washington around additional federal funding and large-scale recovery investments (like broadband infrastructure), state preparation starts soon for a challenging FY22. As revenues will be even more uncertain, and needs remain high, Vermont's reserves are likely to prove vital.

Other action taken prior to the close of the biennium include the following:

- By a vote of 103-47, the House voted to override the governor's veto of H. 688 or the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA). The GWSA converts Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions goals into phased-in requirements. To accomplish this, the GWSA sets up a Climate Council—with representatives from relevant state agencies, science and climate experts and other diverse stakeholders—to develop a climate plan. The plan must prioritize strategies that are fair and equitable, that are technologically feasible, and that reduce the energy burden and impact on rural, low-income, and marginalized Vermonters. Rather than monetary damages, the remedy for failure to meet goals is to return the plan to rule-making. The first version of the plan is due by the close of 2021. As the Senate voted (22-8), also, to override the veto, the bill became law.
- H. 611, the Older Vermonters Act, details a system of services, supports, and protections for Vermont residents 60 years or older. The "bill of rights" ensures that policy decisions enhance self-determination, safety and protection, financial security, health and wellness, social connection, housing and transportation, and family caregiver

support. The legislation also directs the development of a Master Plan for Aging to serve as a blueprint for state government, local communities, private organizations, and philanthropy to build environments and systems to promote aging well. The bill is under consideration by the governor.

- The House passed a series of policing updates and Department of Corrections (DOC) reforms that are currently under consideration by the governor. These include:
 - S. 119 establishes a statewide standard for use of force as well as oversight, education, and evaluation of force used. The bill also modernizes 150-year-old parts of state law on "justifiable homicide" and clarifies that an officer has a duty to intervene when observing another officer using a prohibited restraint.
 - S. 124 directs the Vermont Criminal Justice Council (VCJC) to create a process for tracking complaints against officers. It also expands membership of the VCJC to ensure balanced representation between the law enforcement community and civilians. S. 124 further mandates that each law enforcement agency adopt a body camera policy by the start of 2022.
 - S.24 tasks the DOC Commissioner with finding ways to create a healthy work environment and to recruit, train, and retain a diverse and high-quality DOC workforce.
- The House adopted the conference report for S. 54—regulation of cannabis—by a vote of 92-56; the bill is currently under consideration by the governor. The legislation creates a commission to establish a retail cannabis market in Vermont to ensure adult access to tested products. The bill also supports drug impairment training for law enforcement and statewide youth prevention programs. Small growers and retailers are given priority in the new cannabis market, as are women- and minority-owned businesses. A licensed cannabis retailer may only operate in a municipality that has permitted such operations by majority vote.

Resource Available: The Utility Arrearage Assistance Program is still available to provide financial support to customers of regulated utilities who may face service disconnection because of past-due balances. This includes electricity, natural gas, regulated private water, and wired/landline telephone service bills. The link for more information is: <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vermont-covid-19-arrearage-assistance-program-0>

As always, I am happy to connect and can be reached at 802-249-9306 or jessupkimberly@gmail.com.

—Kimberly Jessup is the representative for EM and Middlesex.

And the Trails Go On



Michelle Singer

Following the East Montpelier trails

After two decades of dreaming and planning, local outdoors enthusiasts celebrated the September 18 ground-breaking for a 200-foot-long, \$1.2 million bicycle/pedestrian bridge over the Winooski River—a key connector in the Cross Vermont Trail and link between Montpelier and East Montpelier.

The steel bridge will cross the river at the old railroad abutments in East Montpelier just above the Winooski hydroelectric dam alongside US Route 2. The bridge project received a significant boost from federal highway grants administered by VTrans, which are awarded based on the project's important contribution to non-motorized transportation, healthy lifestyles, connections to schools and trails, the outdoor recreation economy, and the overall quality of life in the Central Vermont region.

The strength of local and regional interest was demonstrated—over many years—when the Cross Vermont Trail Association (CVTA) was awarded federal grants that require a 20% local match (\$250,000) as well as a great deal of work on engineering and legal issues. For a small, mostly volunteer group such as CVTA to be given this responsibility is a real tribute.

According to Greg Western, executive director of CVTA, “The local match fundraising campaign began five years ago with a leadership gift in memory of Esther Salmi and Tom Smith, members of the East Montpelier trails community who are missed by many. From there we’ve had the support of hundreds of local donors, from bake sales all the way up to overwhelming community support from all the U-32 member towns, as well as Montpelier and Plainfield. We still have more fundraising to do to complete the full trail, but the bridge was the hardest part. We’re thrilled it’s coming to fruition. It’s been a big lift, but now we’re ready to go!”

The bridge is the centerpiece of a larger project of the Cross Vermont Trail Association that will roll out over the next three years including extending the Cross Vermont Trail further upstream towards where the rail trail picks up at VT Route 14 in East Montpelier. It will involve side trails

connecting to the U-32 campus, trailheads, signage and parking, access to the river for fishing and boating, and some additional walking and mountain biking loop trails.

The steel bridge and its wooden deck will be assembled offsite then installed with a crane at its planned location, with abutments and other needed construction to be done locally. The bridge is expected to be in place over the river as early as this November, with finish work at the site done during the spring of 2021. No one should enter the construction site. Viewing construction activities and progress can be safely done from a pull-out area on the Route 2 side of the river.

The ground-breaking ceremony was attended by representatives from East Montpelier Trails, Inc., CVTA, Vermont state agencies, National Life Foundation, Winooski Hydroelectric Co., Senator Sanders’ office, city of Montpelier, towns of East Montpelier and Berlin, and the entire U-32 cross country team.

The purpose of the Cross Vermont Trail Association is to join together local trails throughout the Winooski River and Wells River valleys, between the city of Burlington and the town of Wells River, to create a network of community greenway paths across Vermont.

—Greg Western is executive director of CVTA:
Rick Hopkins is a member of East Montpelier Trails, Inc.



Terry J. Allen

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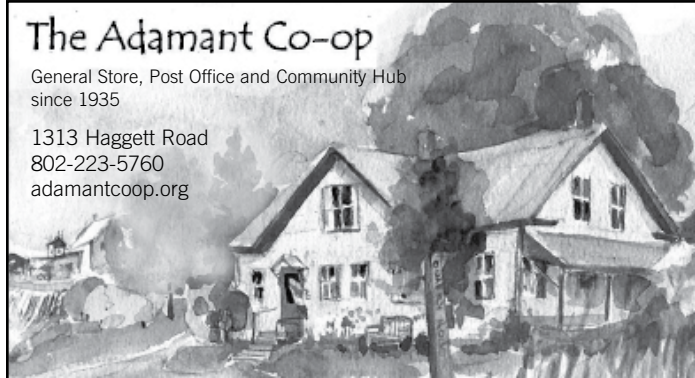
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CALENDAR

Mon. Nov. 16, first installment of property taxes due at the Town Office no later than 5 pm

Thurs. Nov. 26 & Fri. Nov. 27, Town Office closed for Thanksgiving

Thurs. Dec. 24 & Fri. Dec. 25, Town Office closed for Christmas

Thurs. Dec. 31 & Fri. Jan. 1, Town Office closed for New Year's Day

Thurs. Jan. 14, Petitions for articles to be included on Town Meeting Warning due at Town Office

Mon. Jan. 25, nomination petition for public office due at the Town Office



Terry J. Allen

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee
Development Review Board (DRB)
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)
East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assn
Planning Commission (PC)
Recreation Board
Selectboard
WCUUSD Board Meeting
East Montpelier Historical Society

as needed
1st Tues. 7 pm
every Tues. 7 pm
as needed
2nd Wed. 7 pm
1st & 3rd Thurs. 7 pm
2nd Mon. 7:15 pm
1st & 3rd Mon. 6:30 pm
3rd Wed. 5:30 pm
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