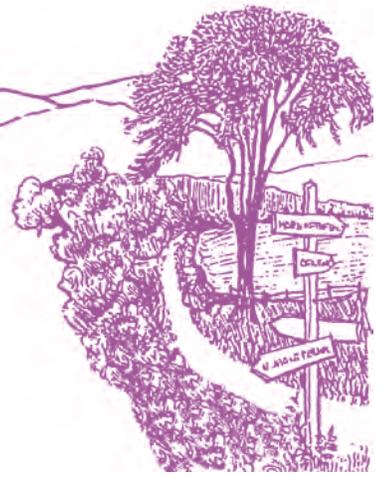


# EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST



Volume XXX—Number Four March/April 2020

## Town Meeting Day: Tuesday, March 3



Photos by Alex Brown

### Voter Registration

Register at the Town Office Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. – noon or at the polls on voting day. Register online at [mvp.sec.state.vt.us](http://mvp.sec.state.vt.us).

### Early or Absentee Voting

Ballots may be requested from the Town Office at 223-3313, ext. 202, or picked up at the office. All ballots must be returned to the office by 5 p.m. on Monday, March 2 or returned to the polling place by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 3.

### Town Forum

Saturday, February 29, 9:30 a.m. at East Montpelier Elementary School. Come discuss all the articles in the Town Warning, including the budget items that are to be voted on by Australian ballot. The candidates for offices will be introduced. Remember to bring your copy of the Town Report.

### WCUUSD School Meeting

Monday, March 2, 6:30 p.m. at U-32. Due to the merger, the district is providing a separate report to participating towns.

### Town Meeting Day

East Montpelier Elementary School

Polls open 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Australian Ballot voting will be in the library.

Town Meeting begins at 9:30 in the gym.

Potluck lunch will be at noon (or immediately following Town Meeting) in the cafeteria.

Due to decreased utilization over the last few years, childcare will not be offered this year.

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## Top of the Signpost

Here we go again! Town Meeting will be held on the first Tuesday, March 3, as it has been ever since the first one in 1849. That one met at the Methodist Meetinghouse (now the Old Meeting House). This one will be held in the gym of East Montpelier Elementary School, at 9:30 a.m.

Some things never change, or they change gradually. In this space back in 2005, Wes Cate scolded us: “What is happening to our sense of civic responsibility? Is that ‘freedom’ the politicians talk about so frequently something we are simply happy to take for granted? Are we so engrossed in our own lives, our pursuit of self interest, possessions and the bottom line that we no longer are active participants in our own government?” At that point, only the School Board and U-32 Board seats were contested. This year, all seats are uncontested. Although Wes was worried about losing Town Meeting altogether, we continue to gather to vote on certain items, debate others, visit with neighbors too rarely seen, and enjoy eating together. Budgets are now voted on by Australian ballot, a contested change that took a special meeting to institute but which allows ailing or elderly citizens and those who can’t take a day off work to have their say on money matters.

Then there are the big changes. Because of the merged school district, we no longer have a local school board. This year, for the first time, the school section of the meeting will be one big meeting, the Monday night before Town Meeting, at U-32, in room 128/131 at 6:30 p.m. These meetings have been sparsely attended in the past, when they covered only the U-32 shared high school. We need to “citizen-up” and get there, not only to hear the merged board’s report, but to get a gander at the folks who do not live in our town but who now share a district-wide school budget with us. We need to start thinking of them as neighbors also.

Finally, there are the sad changes. We lost Wes’s voice, and his historical perspective, 10 years ago. This past month, we lost Marty Miller. Marty served as Moderator for the town and school meetings for 13 years, beginning in 1992. I might disagree with a few of his rulings, but I never stopped admiring his poise and his gentle way of leading. The September-October *Signpost* featured Marty and Edie Miller on the front cover, under the title “Individuals Count.” Marty celebrated the opportunity we have in East Montpelier to do some good and to have some influence. These were his motivations for serving. We, in turn, celebrate and are grateful for all that he contributed. We also are grateful and celebrate the candidacy of those who are running for office this term. Readers, all, how will you do your part: coming to Town Meeting, voting, serving on committees, running for office in the future? We need all of us to keep our town humming along.

—Ann Stanton is a longtime volunteer of the Signpost

## Eating at Town Meeting

Tuesday, March 3, at Town Meeting around noon, all discussion is laid aside as we gather in the school cafeteria to share a meal with our neighbors and friends.

Town Potluck goes hand-in-hand with Town Meeting. So, bring a dish—appetizer, salad, main course, sides, bread/rolls, or dessert—and we will have one fine buffet, showcasing the very best of home cooking! Label your food: vegetarian, vegan, or meat, and tell us if it’s gluten-free or has nuts. Your dish should adequately feed 8–12 guests.

Drop your dish off between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. and collect your lunch ticket. And, when dining is done, don’t forget to take your serving dish home with you—we cannot be responsible for dishes left at school. If you are unable to bring a dish, but would like to join us, \$5.00 will buy you an outstanding lunch!

At Town Potluck, we will need help with set-up, preparation, serving, and clean-up. To volunteer, contact Sue Racanelli at 225-6032 or [racanellis@gmx.com](mailto:racanellis@gmx.com). See you at Town Meeting!

# Half A Century of Greening Up!

Green Up Day, Saturday, May 2, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at East Montpelier Elementary School



2020 marks fifty years that Vermonters have been involved in Green Up Day, the annual community-wide spring cleanup of roadside litter. Launched by Governor Deane Davis in 1970, the first Green Up Day closed interstate highways from 9 to noon so volunteers could pick litter. Although we don't close the highways anymore, Vermonters pay special attention to litter around their neighborhoods. Last year, in East Montpelier, we collected 5,200 pounds of trash.

As you plan your cleanup in May, get your Green Up bags from either the Town Office, Dudley's Store, East Montpelier Elementary School, or North Country Federal Credit Union. Spend a few hours collecting trash—be sure to contact me about hazardous waste (dead animals, needles, suspected toxic materials) and pull any large items to the side of the road. Pay attention to safety. Dress in bright colored clothes and be tick smart—wear long sleeves and pants, use insect repellent, check for ticks.

After dropping off your trash, stop by the school cafeteria for lunch. The Lunch Committee will have put together an assortment of sandwiches, beverages, and cookies!

The Green Up crew always seeks volunteers to help sort and recycle trash at the school. If you have a few hours to spare, call Chris Racanelli at 802-793-6687. The Green Up Lunch Committee could use help organizing and serving lunch, so please get in touch with Denise Roy, 603- 860-8231 or [denise.roy@comcast.net](mailto:denise.roy@comcast.net).

Thank you and see you on Green Up Day!

—Chris Racanelli is the Green Up coordinator



## Support Green Up Vermont on your State Income Tax Return

Did you know you can donate to Green Up Vermont through your state income tax return? Make a charitable contribution in any amount to Green Up Vermont on Line 23a of your state tax form, IN-111. Your gift supports Green Up Day, a unique Vermont tradition that brings together families, neighbors, and communities to keep our towns clean and restore the natural beauty of our state.

Already filed your taxes? Send in your check to Green Up Vermont at P.O. Box 1191, Montpelier, VT 05601-1191 or make a secure donation online at [www.greenupvermont.org](http://www.greenupvermont.org). Your donation is instrumental in helping keep Vermont clean and green! For additional information about Green Up Day, call 802-229-4586 or email [greenup@greenupvermont.org](mailto:greenup@greenupvermont.org).

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# They Want Your Vote

*Descriptions of offices taken largely from the VLCT Resource Manual and Vermont Law*

## Town Moderator

*one 1-year term*

*The moderator is the presiding officer of municipal and school meetings and shall decide questions of votes taken, except if Australian ballot is used. The moderator shall preserve order in the conduct of business and meetings.*



**Michael Duane:** 1-year term: I am running for re-election for the position of town moderator. My wife Ellen Knoedler and I have lived in East Montpelier for the past 38 years. We raised our three children in East Montpelier, and we now have two grandchildren who also reside in our town. I am a retired attorney after 35 years of practicing law, and now spend my days babysitting, skiing, hiking, traveling, and cutting wood. I have been the town moderator since 2015. As moderator, it has been my practice to attend the Selectboard meetings when the annual Town Warning is being prepared so that I have an understanding of what issues may arise at the upcoming Town Meeting. I believe I have a pretty good grasp of Robert's Rules of Order and Vermont state laws as they pertain to Vermont town meeting procedures. I am also a member of the Board of Civil Authority. It would be my honor to serve as East Montpelier's town moderator for another term.

## Selectboard Member

*one 3-year term; one 2-year term; one year of a 2-year term*

*Selectboard members are responsible for general supervision of the affairs of the town and are responsible for seeing that all duties, not assigned by law to any particular officer, are carried out. The Selectboard convenes Town Meetings and may enact ordinances and rules that regulate areas such as roads, traffic, waste disposal, animals, and nuisances as examples.*



**Casey Northrup,** 3-year term: I am running for the 3-year term on the Selectboard. I was a member from 2011 until 2017. Kim Swasey recently vacated her position, and I was able to fill her position for the remainder of this year. It has been enjoyable to be involved in the selectboard again. I have maintained a position on the Capital Improvement Committee since its inception and have been on the Village Committee, with oversight on the upcoming sidewalk project, since 2012. I own KC's Performance Auto Care on Route 2, and my wife, Amanda, owns the K&A Leasing storage business. I enjoy using my abilities to help town business operate smoothly. I would appreciate your support on Town Meeting day.



**Jon V. Jewett,** 2-year term: Sylvia and I moved to East Montpelier in 1982. I have 40 years in government service, in both municipal and state settings. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education from Johnson State College and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Vermont.

We spent the last 40 years (they went really fast) working and raising our family. Although the jobs I had took me to many places and often involved night meetings, in between everything I was able to coach elementary sports with my two boys and to attend many of their activities. Now both boys, Brennan and Jordan, have moved away and have good jobs. I retired last year from my position as Town Manager for the Town of Hardwick after eight years of service. After a year off, it came to me that I had some free time and might be of service to our own town. I noticed that there was going to be an opening on the Selectboard and thought my experiences might benefit the town where I live.

I am particularly interested in the municipal capital fund as these funds are intended to provide for the necessary equipment and buildings we benefit from on a daily basis. A properly budgeted capital fund can help keep the town budget more stable and reduce unforeseen budget increases. I am a management consultant and am also interested in the town's management processes and structure. I hope you will vote for me on Tuesday.



**Amy Willis,** 1 year of a 2-year term: I am pleased to be running for a second term on the Selectboard. As a relative newcomer to East Montpelier (I moved here in 2009), I've found that involvement is key to really getting to know your community. I've also learned a lot about the challenges we face in rural Vermont. I've been especially interested

in environmental regulations and issues, as well as the increased cost of providing services.

In my first Selectboard term, I've met hundreds of people involved with making the town better. We not only have excellent and committed town employees, but dozens of volunteers ready to roll up their sleeves and serve on boards and committees, improve our trails and conservation efforts, and raise money and awareness for interests ranging from upgrading the recreational field to helping out neighbors in need. I love not only knowing what's going on in East Montpelier, but also supporting people who make things happen here.

I come to you with a professional background in finance and economics. In addition to the Selectboard, I serve on the board of Montpelier Alive, the downtown promotional and development organization.

## Lister

*one 3-year term*

Listers are responsible for determining the value of the real and personal property in town. This is the value the Selectboard or the town will use to set a tax rate necessary to raise the money to operate the town in the next year. It is also the basis for the determination of the property wealth of the municipality for purposes of setting state education property taxes.



**Robert Chickering**, 3-year term: I have been an East Montpelier Lister for several years. The lister position is a technical job which requires knowledge of how the listed property values are determined, using formulae created by a Vermont state agency. I believe that East Montpelier will benefit by having my knowledge of the system available.

Thank you for considering my continuing work in this role.

## Town Auditor

*one 3-year term, one 2 years of a 3-year term*

Town auditors are responsible for examining and adjusting the accounts of all town and school district officers and all other persons authorized by law to draw orders on the Town Treasurer. Secondly, they are to report their findings in writing to the legal voter of the town presenting an easy-to-understand picture of the town's finances.



**Carla Occaso**, 3-year term: Hello East Montpelier voters. My name is Carla (Neary) Occaso, and I am seeking my second full term to serve as auditor for the Town of East Montpelier. I enjoy editing and proofreading the Town Report each year as part of my auditing duties. It is a pleasure to work with fellow auditors Deb Fillion and Ed Deegan, as well as Town Clerk Rosie Laquerre and Administrator Bruce Johnson. I am an English teacher, and a professional writer/editor as well, having been managing editor of *The Montpelier Bridge* newspaper from 2014 to 2017. I am now a teacher interventionist (literacy and math) for Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools.

I attended kindergarten, elementary, and secondary school in East Montpelier, where I got an excellent education—thanks to the wonderful teachers who worked in our town.

Before I moved back home to East Montpelier (where I grew up), I lived in Kirby, Vermont, and served as Town Auditor from 2001 to 2007. I am interested in continuing to serve as auditor because I think it is important to contribute to your town

government if possible. Thank you in advance for your vote, if you decide to choose me. Please feel free to email me at [nekvoice@yahoo.com](mailto:nekvoice@yahoo.com) with any questions.

## First Constable

*one 1-year term*

The constables serve as animal control officers and may be called on to serve civil or criminal process and to aid first responders when necessary. East Montpelier has voted to prohibit constables from exercising any law enforcement authority.



**Jonathan Boucher**, 1-year term: My name is Jonathan Boucher. I have lived in East Montpelier since 2001. Previously, I served the town as an Assistant Chief for the East Montpelier Fire Department. Prior law enforcement service includes working as a patrol officer in Montpelier. I feel I bring a calm and patient energy to this position,

which translates into positive results for everybody. Thank you for your consideration and this opportunity to serve our neighbors.

## Second Constable

*one 1-year term*

*Same description as First Constable.*

No candidate

## Planning Commissioner:

*three 3-year terms*

The Planning Commission is responsible for preparing and maintaining a current Town Plan and zoning regulations. It reviews significant developments and makes recommendations on issues including land development, transportation, economic and social development, historic, wetland, and scenic preservation.



**Clarice Cutler**, 3-year term: Hi, my name is Clarice (pronounced to rhyme with Paris), and I'm a proud new resident of Brazier Road. I have both formal training and professional experience in land use planning and regulation, however, I've spent 95% of my time as an appointed member of the Planning Commission and Development Review

Board, listening to and learning from fellow members and residents. I feel very fortunate to live in such a special place and to have been warmly welcomed by the East Montpelier community. My goals for my term on the Planning Commission are to continue to learn about the landscape, history, and residents of East Montpelier and to support a long-term vision of sustainability for the town. If you would like to say hello, I can be found walking or running on or around Brazier Road every day, and I'd be glad to meet you.



**Scott Paul Hess**, 3-year term: I am running for re-election to the Planning Commission. My nine years of service on the commission have been very rewarding. Highlights of my most recent term included examining potential changes to zoning and working on the East Montpelier Town Plan. I would like to continue working on both these efforts, in addition to other issues related to development. The input, feedback, and work with various town committees has been invaluable. I have practical experience in several industries, including organic foods, commodities, commercial real estate, and retail stores. I am currently the president of the Hunger Mountain Coop council and serve on a variety of other boards and working committees.



**Siu Tip Lam**, 3-year term: My name is Siu Tip Lam. I am running to be on the Planning Commission and seek your support. I have been a resident of East Montpelier since 2009. In March 2019, I was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Planning Commission, which has been in the midst of updating the town's zoning regulations. During this past summer, the Planning Commission held three open houses to share with the public proposed changes to the zoning districts and to seek their feedback. With the public's feedback, the Planning Commission continues to work collaboratively and diligently to review and update the draft zoning districts and regulations. Through this process, I have learned a lot about the town and the community vision described in the 2018 Town Plan. I hope to continue to contribute to this effort in helping to shape the development of the town while maintaining its natural beauty and resources.

I am a lawyer by training. I run a program at Vermont Law School called the U.S.-Asia Partnerships for Environmental Law, which implements capacity building and advocacy programs to help strengthen environmental governance in China and Myanmar and in the Southeast Asia region. Prior to moving to East Montpelier, I worked as an Assistant Attorney General in the Environmental Protection Division of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office.

### Washington Central Unified Union School Director

*one 3-year term*

*School Directors are responsible for managing the general affairs of the school district by developing policies and hiring able administrators to assure the soundness of the physical assets as well as the educational content and methods presented in student classrooms. They are responsible for convening School District Meetings*



**Stephen Looke**, 3-year term: I want to focus my efforts as a school director on student academic performance in the key areas of math, writing, and science. We have had a performance gap among students from varying socioeconomic groups, and I want the gap eliminated. Let's support our students, educators, administrators, and parents to make sure all our students are performing well in the most important areas of study.



## Rabies & Dog Licensing Clinic

### Vaccinations for DOGS & CATS

Thursday, March 12, 2020 • 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.  
EM Fire Department Station #2 – 54 Village Acres

Vaccines: \$20.00 per animal

East Montpelier Dog Licenses:  
\$9.00 for spayed/neutered;  
\$13.00 for unaltered

*Please plan to pay for licensing and vaccinations separately.*

## Town Offices

PO Box 157, East Montpelier, VT 05651  
Phone: 802-223-3313  
Office Hours: Mon–Thurs 9 AM–5 PM

### Town Clerk

Rosie Laquerre  
clerk@eastmontpeliervt.org

### Town Treasurer

Don Welch  
treasurer@eastmontpeliervt.org

### Town/Zoning Administrator

Bruce Johnson, manager@eastmontpeliervt.org  
Hours: Mon–Fri 9 AM–5 PM

### Fire Permits

EMFD 225-6247

### First Constable

Jon Boucher 917-4855

### Animal Control Officers

Lead: Carl Etnier 552-4343  
Assistant: Amber Perry 498-5140

### Listers

Rob Chickering,  
Ross Hazel, Chris Racanelli  
223-3313 x206,  
listers@eastmontpeliervt.org

### Health Officer

Ginny Burley 272-4045

### Service Officer

Rachael Grossman 223-3177

### Selectboard

Seth Gardner, Chair  
sethgardner@hotmail.com  
Carl Etnier Gene Troia  
Amy Willis Casey Northrup

### Planning Commission

Julie Potter, Chair, 262-6119

### Development Review Board

Steve Kappel, Chair  
sjkappel@gmail.com

### WCUUSD Board

East Montpelier Representatives:  
Lindy Johnson, Flor Diaz Smith

### State Representative

Kimberly Jessup, 249-9306  
jessupkimberly@gmail.com

## Update on Final Approved Warning: Town Meeting Votes Brought by Selectboard

By Amy Willis and Carl Etnier

*NOTE: This article is a follow-up on information presented in the Signpost's January/February 2020 issue. It reflects final changes to the ballot, as approved at the January 20, 2020 Selectboard meeting.*

The Selectboard is planning to bring two articles forward for discussion and vote on the floor at town meeting in March. One, to be handled by non-binding vote, would shift the timing of the annual pre-town meeting informational forum, and the other would establish a Conservation Commission in town.

Vermont statute requires that towns hold informational forums within ten days of a local election. The pre-town meeting informational forum in East Montpelier, traditionally held on the Saturday morning before Town Meeting on Tuesday, has suffered a steepening decline in interest and attendance. The unfortunate fact is that, with few exceptions, the handful of people who attend the East Montpelier Forum are selectboard members and others who are already well apprised of the balloted issues.

The proposed change would allow the pre-town meeting informational forum to take place at either a regular selectboard meeting or special selectboard meeting during the week. The hope is that more people will participate in the forum if they don't have to sacrifice a Saturday morning to be there.

Voters will also decide on whether to approve a Conservation Commission. As reported earlier in the *Signpost*, more than 100 towns have a Conservation Commission, according to town resident and former state naturalist Charles Johnson. The commission can inventory natural resources in town, recommend land purchases for conservation, assist the Planning Commission and Selectboard with a wide range of conservation-related activities, and more. Johnson said at a December 1 Town Forum that the idea of creating a Conservation Commission had been discussed since the 1980s, and he and others thought it was time to bring it up for more formal discussion and a vote. At the forum, Planning Commission Chair Julie Potter said the Planning Commission would welcome a Conservation Commission to take on important work that neither the Planning Commission nor the Selectboard has time to prioritize. Town resident Gianna Petito, manager of Winooski Natural Resources District, said a town Conservation Commission would make it easier to procure conservation funding and would help inform and shape priorities in the whole district. The twenty or so residents at the forum had a long history of working on conservation-related issues, and their consensus was that a Conservation Commission would be helpful, and that it's important to allow existing conservation-related committees (e.g., the Conservation Fund Advisory Committee and the Forest Committee) to continue their work.

In developing the final Town Meeting warning, the Selectboard decided not to request a vote that the constable become a position appointed by the Selectboard. Jon Boucher, who was appointed constable in 2019, will run for the one-year constable term. As of this writing, nobody has expressed interest in running for the one-year second constable term. The Selectboard may revisit this "elected versus appointed" issue in the coming year.

Twin Valley Senior Center is ready to start booking your free tax appointment. Please call 802-223-3322 to book an appointment to have your taxes prepared free of charge by qualified AARP tax volunteers. Any low-income person can have their taxes done at the center. Be sure to inquire about necessary documents to bring when you make your appointment.

## 100 Years of Women's Votes!

August 26, 2020, will be the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. To commemorate this historic event, the East Montpelier Historical Society would like to honor the town's first women voters.

In 1920, 44 women in East Montpelier took the Freeman's Oath for the first time in order to vote in the upcoming presidential election. Two years earlier, eight women had registered because Vermont lawmakers had granted taxpaying women the right to vote at Town Meetings in 1917.

Records of the Freeman's Meeting held on November 2, 1920, indicate that Jesse N. Sibley, wife of town clerk, Clark Sibley, was the first woman to place her vote in the ballot box. We cannot be sure if all the women who registered actually voted, but we do know that 144 votes were cast in East Montpelier in the U.S. Senate race that year.

The following women took the oath in 1920. Perhaps one of your ancestors is listed here:

Nettie M. Abbiatti	Mary C. Clark	Belle Dudley	Rachel Kelton	Ina B. Pray
Jennie M. Arbuckle	Ette C. Clark	Lena W. Dudley	Susie M. Kelton	Laura Sanborn
Jennie S. Badger	Flora D. Clark	Francie H. Fitch	Alice S. Little	Inez G. Sibley
Edna Bean	Julia Clark	Jennie Gladding	Minnie M. Lyford	Jessie N. Sibley
Nellie M. Benjamin	Elsie Clark	Laura Gould	Ella McKnight	Ida L. Sparrow
Annie G. Burnham	Belle Coburn	Ethel Gray	Maude K. Morse	Addie E. Thayer
Cleora A. Buchanan	Hattie B. Collins	Alice S. Hammett	Ruth G. Paine	Mabel C. Townsend
Azubah Cate	Bessie B. Conant	Clara C. Hillie	Mae Wilson Porter	Bertha A. Whita
Agnes Jean Chandler	Maydean Dix	Mary Kelton	Bertha Pitkin	

—Lyn Blackwell, a founder of the East Montpelier Historical Society, co-authored *Across the Onion: a History of East Montpelier, Vermont, 1781–1981*

## League of Women Voters Helps Prepare a New Generation of Voters

The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWVVT) is beginning a statewide effort to go into Vermont high schools to register 17- and 18-year-olds to vote. The LWVVT is part of the nonpartisan national organization that does not support candidates or political parties. U-32 was one of the first schools visited. Twenty-one eligible voters registered in the atrium at U-32 in November 2019 with assistance from LWVVT members Anne Mixer and Madeleine Mongan.

In preparation to meet with Vermont students, LWVVT reached out to school administrators, teachers, and students for input and recommendations. LWVVT also contacted the Office of the Secretary of State, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and Town Clerks for guidance to ensure compliance with Vermont election laws and procedures. Rosie Laquerre, East Montpelier Town Clerk, provided much appreciated information regarding standard practices in East Montpelier and other municipalities.

Students were informed in advance that if they were born on or before November 3, 2002, they could register. Seventeen-year-olds can vote in both the March Presidential Primary and the August State Primary, though they cannot vote at Town Meeting until they are 18. The U-32 students were enthusiastic and prepared the day of voter registration. Their comments reflected a readiness to take on the responsibility of voting and an eagerness to participate more fully as members of the community. The students' energy and level of interest were inspiring.

For more information, please contact Anne Mixer, High School Registration Project Coordinator, at [amixer@comcast.net](mailto:amixer@comcast.net).

—Anne Mixer is an eight-year East Montpelier resident and former school administrator from Ann Arbor, Michigan

## A New Generation Speaks

Yesterday I registered to vote. I am 17 and a junior at U-32, and I'll be 18 by the next election. That means that when the time comes, my vote will be placed alongside all the other adult Americans who want to contribute to the decisions of our country. That's a pretty adult thing to do for the not-so-adult person I am. For me, this all came about on Monday, November 4, when over the speakers at school they announced that any student born before November 2002 could register to vote this week in the atrium. With a little jolt, I realized that applied to me! Previously, I hadn't even thought about when or how I was going to register to vote.

So for that week, the thought of voting was in the back of my mind, burning away. It was a big step to take, so of course I procrastinated until Friday. The time finally came. Friday, November 7, on my way to lunch as I passed by the table, with all the voting signs and the nice ladies, I finally stopped by. The League of Women Voters were very nice and understanding when I was confused about something on the form and also when I came back as they were cleaning up for a sticker and pin. With their help I was officially registered to vote. With the red pin proudly displayed on my backpack, and surprised by the ease and small enormity of what I had done that day, I went to lunch to brag to my friends, of course.

—Ruby Singer is an 11th grader at U-32 high school, active in theater, yearbook, First Lego League, and softball. She lives in East Montpelier with her family.



## Growing and Giving

Mark Cannella, an Extension Associate Professor at UVM, has a unique way of taking his work home: he grows potatoes at his home on Valentine Farm. This past year he planted a total of 3000 row feet (about 0.25 acres) of Yukon Gem white potatoes and Russian Banana Fingerling spuds, along with a couple of sacks worth of German Butterballs (which he calls his all-time favorite: they have

unbeatable flavor and can be baked, roasted, or mashed).

A quarter of an acre produces a lot of potatoes! He reserves the German Butterballs for his family. About half of the remainder is produced for different uses and markets. Most interesting to me, though, is that roughly half of the potato crop from Valentine Farm will be donated to non-profits around the area. A big load goes to Twin Valley Senior Center every couple of weeks, and, working with volunteers through the Old Meeting House, potatoes also get delivered to the Onion River Food Shelf in Marshfield. As he notes, "Right now, I also donate to events, holiday donations, and personal requests to support individual community members in need." He expects to be donating potatoes on into March, depending on the supply.

This is the fourth year that Valentine Farm has grown potatoes for donations in Central Vermont. As of December, plans were not finalized for whether and how much to plant this upcoming season. He might need to scale back, but if *Signpost* readers would be interested in volunteering to help, that would be a powerful motivator. Let's help to keep those potatoes coming!

If you would like to inquire about receiving donations or volunteering to work alongside Mark, he can be reached at [mpcannella@gmail.com](mailto:mpcannella@gmail.com)

—Ann Stanton is the coordinator of East Montpelier Eats



Photo by Mark Cannella

Megan Canella is helped by neighbors Heidi-Marie and Steve Holmes-Heiss

## Paulie's Recipe

From *East Montpelier Elementary School Cookbook, Favorite Recipes of Parents and Teachers*, a school fundraiser in the 1970s, submitted by Elaine Hudson.

### Chicken Breasts Savoyarde – Serves 8

1. Cook one package white & wild rice; put rice in bottom of 15" casserole.
2. Have butcher bone, skin & halve 4 or 5 chicken breasts. Sauté chicken breasts for 15 minutes, turning once, in:
  - 2 tablespoons oil
  - 1 tablespoon margarine or butter.Add one medium onion, sliced. Sprinkle chicken with:
  - ½ teaspoon thyme
  - 1 teaspoon tarragon
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - dash of pepperAdd ½ cup dry white wine, cover and cook over low heat 5 minutes. Arrange chicken over rice in casserole.
3. For sauce, melt 1 tablespoon butter or oleo  
Add:
  - 1 tablespoon flour
  - ¾ cup white wine
  - ½ cup chicken bouillon  
(dissolve 1 chicken bouillon cube in ½ cup boiling water)
  - ½ cup sour creamHeat just to boiling.  
Add:
  - ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
  - 1 tablespoon mustard
  - dash of pepper
4. Spoon sauce over chicken.
5. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 – 40 minutes until bubbly.

*Paulie's Comment: Hope you will enjoy this recipe – I did. I made it with scallops and that was good too.*

## CREATURE FEATURE

"I've never had bluebirds so late in the Fall, (at least not seen one) and was wondering if they are starting to winter over this far north. I had one before the cold snap, (passing through?) then saw him today sitting on a deck railing. I took some pictures in September and early October. There were a couple of days when I had a yard full of them. They take your breath away."

— Judith Hunter



Eastern Bluebirds. Photo from Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

### **Nona Estrin, our resident naturalist, comments:**

We have often seen them in Putney, Vermont, in winter. They may linger in the Champlain Valley given available food and water. Wintering over likely gives them an advantage in claiming the best breeding sites come spring, and in avoiding the hazards of migration. But it's a gamble with increasingly deep cold snaps and other severe weather events. They must find shelter and a reliable source of food and water. I know people who buy and keep mealworms on hand to feed them and other birds like robins during cold months.

Are they pushing their winter range? You can best follow this by signing up for "eBird," a free, citizen science bird reporting site by location, like our Front Porch Forum, but about bird sightings. That said, some of you may remember the first cardinals in Central Vermont. They wintered in Plainfield, in Marion Metcalf's backyard, and didn't stray far from her well-stocked feeders!

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## Town Weathervane

### **Births**

- Paityn Tillie Minor, a daughter, born to Stephanie & Christopher Minor in September, 2019
- Mason Liam Avery, a son, born to Celeste Quintanilla & Bernard Avery in December, 2019
- Luca Romolo Masé, a son, born to Lisa & Ryan Masé in January, 2020
- Ciara Kelly Green, a daughter, born to Erin & Zachary Green in January, 2020

### **Marriages (as names appear on licenses)**

- India Kathryn Gilbert and John Stuart Haywood II in November, 2019

### **Deaths**

- William "Bill" George, husband of Julie George, died in January
- Martin "Marty" Miller, husband of Edie Miller, died in January

### **Land Transfers**

*Transfers relative to estate planning are not included*

- Thomas Witzemberger to Jennifer Witzemberger, a dwelling and 0.78 acres on Maplewood Rd
- Kenneth & Stacy Beaulieu to Kurt Poulin & Christine Dutil, 10.10 acres of open land on Chickering Rd
- Ryan & Kara Sexton to Shawn & Jennifer Gorden, dwelling and 40 acres on North St
- Roger & Rose Ehret to Ryan & Kara Sexton, dwelling and 75 acres on VT14N
- Charles Wanzer & Lydia Faesy to Hobart Guion, Jr. & Abigail Faulkner, an easement on Kelton Rd
- Brown Living Trust to Jeff Stetter, 6.75 acres of open land on VT14N

- Duane Wells to James & Erin Malloy, multi-family dwelling and 2.7 acres of land on Cutler Heights
- Gregory & Roxanne Blake to GRJCR Properties, commercial building on 0.97 acres
- Gloria A. Biron Living Trust to Harper Properties, LLC, commercial building on US2
- Damian Taylor to Edward & Linda Radzvilla, dwelling and 3.40 acres on Horn of the Moon Rd
- John Clement & Callie Buck to Robert Phillips, dwelling and 5.10 acres on Mays Way
- Ronald & Adelaida Edson to 1900 Capital Trust II, dwelling and 1.85 acres on Old Railroad Ln
- Charles E Hale & Grace E Hall, Trustees, to Hester Manning, 4.40 acres off Horn of the Moon Rd
- Herschel Prenalger to Steven & Elizabeth Martel, dwelling and 3.49 acres on Center Rd

**Excerpts of minutes from governing boards are available on the Signpost website and complete minutes are on town and school websites.**

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## CALENDAR

**Thur. Mar. 12, 6–7:30 p.m.** Rabies Clinic for Dogs and Cats and Dog Licensing Clinic, East Montpelier Fire Department

**Mon. Mar. 16, 6 p.m.** Meeting of the East Montpelier & Calais Historical Societies, East Calais Recreation Ctr., annual sugar-on-snow potluck with sugaring tales.

**Mon. Apr. 20, 6 p.m.** Meeting of the East Montpelier & Calais Historical Societies potluck supper, Adamant Community Club, discussion by the Calais Historical Commission about Adamant Village.

**Sat. May 2, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.** Green Up Day, lunch at East Montpelier Elementary School

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Sat. Feb. 29, 9:30 a.m.** Town Forum at East Montpelier Elementary School

**Mon. Mar. 2, 6:30 p.m.** WCUUSD School Meeting at U-32

**Tues. Mar. 3, 7 a.m.–7p.m.** Australian Ballot voting, East Montpelier Elementary School library

**Tues. Mar. 3, 9:30 a.m.** Town Meeting, East Montpelier Elementary School, potluck lunch immediately following

**Mon. May 25** Town Office Closed for Memorial Day Observance

*The deadline for the next issue of the Signpost is March 30*

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee  
Development Review Board (DRB)  
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)  
East Montpelier Historical Society  
East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative  
Four Corners Schoolhouse Association  
EMES Parent Teacher Neighbor Org. (PTNO)  
Planning Commission (PC)  
Recreation Board  
Selectboard  
WCUUSD Board Meeting

as needed  
1st Tues. 7:00 p.m.  
Every Tues. 7:00 p.m.  
3rd Mon. 7:00/6:00 p.m.  
as needed  
2nd Wed. 7:00 p.m.  
2nd Wed. 6:30 p.m.  
1st & 3rd Thurs. 7:00 p.m.  
2nd Mon. 7:15 p.m.  
1st & 3rd Mon. 6:30 p.m.  
3rd Wed. 5:30 p.m.

contact: blusig@aol.com / 229-5441  
Town Office Building  
EMFD Community Room  
Four Corners Schoolhouse/E. Calais  
contact: rhazel@ezcloud.com  
Four Corners Schoolhouse  
Elementary School, Art Room  
Town Office Building  
Elementary School  
Town Office Building  
One of District Elementary Schools