

How We Got Here

Twelve Miles and Growing

By Nona Estrin

It was a perfect storm of good luck. The pieces that became opportunity were many, but they all fit together. Without any one of them, it might not have happened.

First, there was the snowmobile club—the Gully Jumpers—and its wonderful trails. I was a skier. I loved those trails, and they were all around town. Though not a snowmobiler, I joined the club around 1980, the same year my kids and I built our home on Towne Hill Road, and I freed up some time by taking a shared, part-time management position with the state. I was the snowmobile club's non-motorized, skiing secretary for years. I started dreaming of trails—four-season trails all around town.

In the fall of 1983, I mapped out a trail loop from one end of town to the other, called the landowners for permissions, packed for a three-day hike—including packs for my two dogs—and set off. Three days later the dogs and I arrived back home, after a multi-day backpacking loop, having never left our town. That route was the basis for today's East Montpelier trail network.

Over the next few years, the pieces started to fall into place. Act 200 in 1988 supported town committees in planning what we wanted the town to look like in 30 years. Jean Cate led the Community Affairs Committee. Janet McLeod, Madeleine Mongan, and I were the trails sub-committee. We got to work surveying townspeople and landowners about trails. People wanted trails, and the Agriculture Committee found that the voters didn't want to keep losing farms, so they conducted an analysis of farm productivity potential and ranked them. I got to work mapping “my” trails and talking to each of the landowners. No one minded our



Nona keeps a keen eye on our trails.

Michael Dougherty, VTDigger

printing a map of a possible route—a dream for the future. It went into the Town Plan as a town trails idea, with the actual route TBD.

After nagging the Gully Jumpers for a couple of years, I convinced its leader, Sandy Woodbeck, to join our effort to create permanent winter snowmobile trails. Working together, skiers and snowmobilers helped bring the town together.

More luck came, and it was financial. The Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board began working together to preserve farmland. Through rigorous competition for limited grants, farmers could sell the development rights for their land, while the land itself remained in their ownership and under their control—as

Nona, continued on p. 12

It Takes A Town

In 1988, Vermont passed Act 200, which updated the 1967 Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act. Among other things, Act 200 provided funding for town planning.

While some towns angrily resisted any planning regulations, East Montpelier jumped on the idea and used the funding wisely. Jean and Wes Cate, and others, started town planning groups which got right to work. They asked what we wanted our town to look and be like in 30-40 years. Thousands of hours later—hours of meetings, discussions, surveys, more meetings, reports, etc.—we had committees, subcommittees, and ideas. These extraordinary committees created some of the amazing things which make our community what it is: the *Signpost*, the Conservation Committee and Fund, Rally Day, the Town Meeting Potluck, the Recreation Committee, and East Montpelier Trails. Now our trails are a wonderful thing: a network throughout our town, with more trails being planned. It took a clear vision, inspiration, energy, dedication, connections, and always, respect for different views. Speaking of views, check out the views from the four trail benches scattered about town.

In their guidebook on planning for town officials and volunteers, the Vermont Land Use Education and Training Collaborative said, “Community planning as a democratic exercise takes time and effort. It involves reflecting on history, current assets and challenges, accurately identifying trends and agreeing on a vision for the future.”

In this issue of the *Signpost*, you will read about the history of East Montpelier’s trails, what it takes to make a trail, what it takes to take care of the trails, ideas for what comes next, and much more.

We are the beneficiaries of the gifts and dedication of so many people—in the past, now, and looking into the future.

—Loring Starr is an active member of EM Trails, Inc., steward for the Ormsbee Trail, and the primary organizer of the materials in this issue.



Rick Hopkins

“Vermont is a state defined by its natural beauty. Our trails, and the community that sustains them, allow people to get closer to the essence of what makes this place special. Especially during the last 18 months, walking those trails has been a life-line for me.”

—Tim Klein spent much time this past year on his phone participating in business meetings while hiking EM trails

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How to Make A Trail

By Loring Starr

What does it take to make a trail? It takes lots of hard work and, above all, time. It takes years of neighborly conversations, building relationships, making plans. And it can take lots of money.

Maybe it starts with informal permission from a landowner for folks to walk or ski or bicycle or snowmobile on their land. Then it can take years—sometimes decades—of talks with a landowner about creating a formal trail. Then maybe you build a trail. But that trail is vulnerable: landowners change their minds, or a new landowner posts the land, and the trail is lost.

So, you need a way to protect the trail and the land it's on. This is often a conservation easement. Conservation easements are complex transactions. They often start with years of quiet discussions, and then involve negotiations among the landowners and a group of different organizations. Easements require lots of expertise: legal work, financial management, mapping, finding funding to pay for that work, and for the management of the easements. They are sometimes donated—an extraordinary gift—but they are generally sold, usually requiring major funding from the town, conservation and land trusts, and other donors to make them happen. So, you research funding, write grants, partner with other groups, and call people to ask for money. Then you call more people and ask for more money.

Somewhere in the process, you design the trail. This takes walking, flagging a possible route, re-designing. Where are the steep parts, the wet parts? Is there a beautiful ledge of spring wildflowers, an old hemlock stand, a huge oak tree, or a cellar hole we want to include? Can we create a view? Where should the trail cross the stream? Where will we need steps, or a boardwalk? Where might we put a bench?

Finally, you actually build the trail. This means cutting trees and brush, moving rocks, and building steps, boardwalks, maybe bridges, then brushing out the path. Can we do it with volunteers and chainsaws, and maybe a local Eagle Scout who makes part of the trail building their Scout project? Can we partner with snowmobilers and mountain bikers? Do we also need professional trail builders with the skills and the know-how to move boulders? Don't forget to plan and create the parking.

And there's more. We need signs—putting up the paw-print white markers; installing the tall signs with directional arrows; designing, printing and installing the trailhead signs.



Mary Stone

Rick Hopins, Dave Webb and others work on the trail off County Road.

We need to create the trail maps and descriptions, print them, post them to the EM Trails website, bring them to the Town Clerk's Office, and maybe make them available to schools, stores, and local B&Bs.

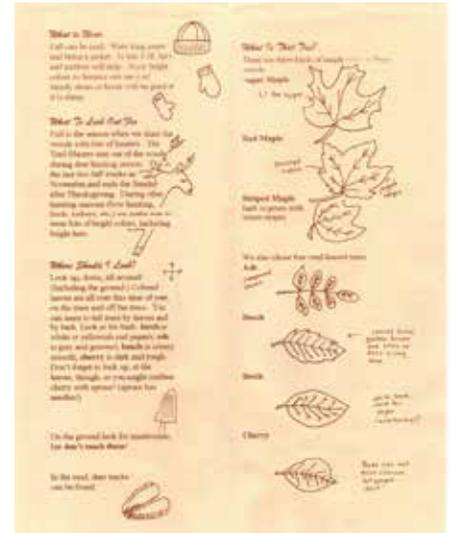
And always, there's stewardship, and this goes on forever. We have been asking for maintenance funds from the Town, and this has been generously given. Stewardship and maintenance include: finding and cutting up downed trees, pruning back brush, mowing, repairing steps and bridges, monitoring the legal easements, and updating the maps and the EM Trails website. Overall, wow.

“Once upon a time, in a state that shall go unnamed, my access to the outdoors was limited to playing in culverts under four-laned roads and climbing in perfectly manicured trees in subdivision cul-de-sacs. I jokingly say this place had a motto of “pave it, don't save it,” which I credit with cultivating my passion for protecting and exploring our natural resources and spaces. The EM Trails network that has been built by and through our community is an absolute gem of a resource that I enjoy year-round. Not only has it enabled my commitment to our town, but the trails have also allowed me to make good on a childhood declaration I made long ago to live in a place with “real nature” (actual childhood quote). I am overwhelmingly appreciative to the landowners, volunteers, and each of you for supporting our trails and creating this space for all generations to gather, explore, and escape into the quietude nature offers each of us.”

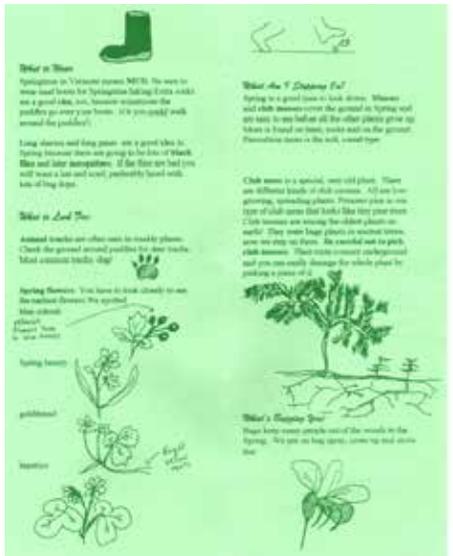
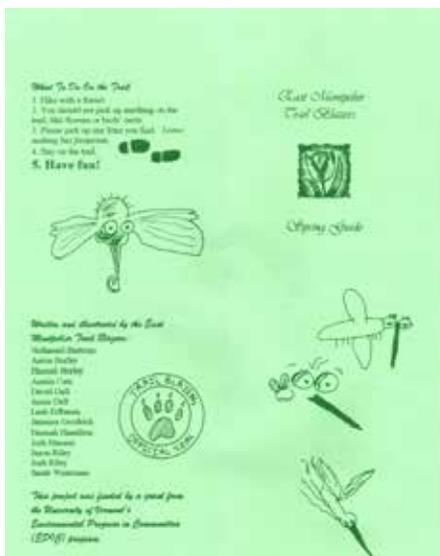
—Lauren Oates

Trail Brochures by EMES Kids

In late 1993, Carolyn Shapiro was awarded a grant to work with kids at East Montpelier Elementary School (EMES) to produce booklets about one section of trail. She and Ginny Burley recruited a group of EMES students to research scientific and historical information and make the brochures. They called themselves the East Montpelier Trail Blazers. They made four brochures, one for each season, and they are delightful. Scanned versions will be available on the EMTI website at emtrails.com. These small illustrations are from those brochures.



EMES Trail Blazers, 1993: Nathaniel Bartrum, Aaron Burley, Hannah Burley, Austin Cate, David Dall, Jessie Dall, Leah Erlbaum, Jamaica Goodrich, Hannah Hamilton, Josh Hansen, Jason Riley, Josh Riley, Sarah Waterman



What do we do on our trails?
Biking, bird watching, business meetings, dog walking, horse-back riding, mushrooming, running, skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, walking, wild flower hikes.

Did we miss anything?

U-32 PLAYS ITS PART

We welcome the Central Vermont community to the trail system at U-32. We are beyond excited that over the next two years, they will also be tied directly to the Cross Vermont Trail through two trails up from the river area.

- We don't allow pets or other non-service animals on campus, so trail users are asked to leave them home.
- Between 2:45-4:45 pm the trails can be fairly crowded due to our teams practicing. The trails are not closed during that time, but 'share the road' definitely applies.

- Bikes are ok on the trails but we ask that they not be used between 2:45-4:45, due to many runners/walkers, or when the trails are wet/muddy.
- We suggest checking our calendar for major events such as cross-country and Nordic ski races. The trails are not open on those dates.
- Pack in, pack out.
- Parking is available at the WCUUSD building or the main parking lot.

Leave No Trace

By Rick Hopkins

What’s all this about “leave no trace?” With all this splendidly rich and oh-so-green space readily accessible to us, it’s easy to forget how lucky we are to live, work, and play in East Montpelier. Heck—even driving on the roads in our town, seeing the sights can leave us shaking our heads in calm, joyful wonderment. When we use the trails established and maintained by East Montpelier Trails, it’s important to consider and apply a few important principles about minimizing any impact. Here are four basics about why we should leave no trace.

Know before you go: A few days of heavy rain can turn the trail tread wet and soggy. Too many footprints or even a few bike tires in those conditions result in mud spots and channels for runoff. When you get out on the trails, it’s important to be aware of the likely trail conditions, including whether the trail might be closed.

Don’t be a party pooper: No one likes to encounter pet waste on the trail or even in the parking areas, whether it’s by sight, smell, imagining the bacteria, or simply stepping in it. Please clean up after your pet and then dispose of pet waste in a suitable manner involving a garbage container. Bring a doggie bag on your walks! Better yet, have your pet carry the empty bag around his collar or tied to his leash before it gets used.

Trash talk: Same as above—no one I know likes to encounter litter or someone else’s trash. Trash and litter both come from people so both should be easy to do away with especially while we use the trails (any trail or outdoor place really). Said another way, carry out what you carry in.

Better together: We are better together when we see the outdoors and the trails in town as a special, shared resource. Using the trails with this and the three other above basics in mind can keep them enjoyable for everyone. When we, and our four-legged friends, apply these basics, we also show respect for the owners of the land we are enjoying. Giving back always feels good, so the next time you notice a volunteer trail effort, come on out and roll up your sleeves. These are the basics behind enjoying and wondering while wandering our trails—and the other outdoor spaces that surround us. And they are part of practicing the **Seven Principles of Leave No Trace:**

- Plan Ahead & Prepare
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find (exception: pick up litter)
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors/Trail/Outdoor Users



Rick Hopkins

On the Ormsbee Trail with helmet

- Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Minimize Campfire Impacts*

**Note: campfires & camping are not allowed on land anywhere within the East Montpelier trail network.*

Enjoy your time and experiences when getting outside and using the trails in our great little (and growing) network. Appreciating the basics and principles behind “Leave No Trace” only enhances our good fortune to live and play where we do. See you on the trails!

—Rick Hopkins is an EMTI board member board member and lives close to the trails on County Road. Adapted from outdoor ethics materials prepared by the wise folks at Leave No Trace, int.org.

“As one who graduated from college right into the Great Recession, I’ve had the mixed fortune of getting to move around a lot thanks to temporary positions studying and conserving some very wild and very beautiful locations. As a competitive runner of 20 years and a lifelong naturalist, I quickly realized that having a soft and inviting network of trails and wildlife close to my front door will always be a critical factor in deciding where to live, set down roots, self-actualize, and contribute. So, when I first saw the map detailing 13 miles of trails crisscrossing the forests, fields, hills, valleys, dirt roads, and streams of East Montpelier (plus the ever-enticing proposed/under construction routes!), I had a good feeling about the place. In the three years and 2,779 miles since seeing that map and moving to Brazier Road, that feeling has gotten better with every run. Sure, the ice can be dangerous, and the mud can feel endless at times; but I’ll continue to listen for the chickadees cheering me on, watching for the deer always excited to race, and experiencing rare bear encounters. These will be forever memorialized in my heart rate monitor spikes.”

—Jonnie Dunne

Time Flies When You Are Having Fun



EMTI board: Richard Brock, Matt DiGiovanni, Mary Stone, Lauren Padilla, Dave Webb, Jennifer Boyer, Allan Serrano (kneeling); Board members not present: Sue Chickering, Nona Estrin, Jody Striker, Rick Hopkins, Madeleine Mongan.

by Mary Stone

Was it really more than 20 years ago when Nona suggested I join the East Montpelier Trails (EMTI) board? And 15 years since I fell into the position of president when Jamie Shanley stepped down for a sabbatical in Puerto Rico? I chuckled when I recently looked back at the 1994 EMTI Bylaws which prescribed a two-year term for each board member. Clearly an update is long overdue. In reality, a new board member needs time to learn the relationships and responsibilities associated with landowners, the easement requirements, and the maintenance needs of existing trail segments. Developing new trails can span decades, or fall into place in the matter of a few years.

Over the years I have come to see my role as the “one who keeps things moving forward,” responding to the minor or major crises that arise, and delegating the various tasks and projects by matching the job with the interests and strengths of the individual board members and other volunteers. I can’t honestly say that my tenure as president has been all fun. We have had our share of wash-outs, blow-downs, trail reconstruction and re-routing, as well as set-backs on new trail construction plans.

I can say that I am honored to work with such capable board members, trail stewards, work parties, and the trail users—all volunteers dedicated to creating a durable trail system for the enjoyment of present and future generations. It is gratifying work for all of us thanks to the generosity of landowners and the vision of the founders.

—Mary Stone is third and current chair of the EMTI board.

Trails have helped us find our way to making EM home for the past 28 years. When we first arrived, I picked up a few volunteer stints—one at NRCS. This led me to meet Bruce Chapell, who learned we were neighbors on Center Road, where we were renting an apartment in the Parley Davis house. Bruce connected me with Nona Estrin, who was in need of a grant writer to apply for funds for the Sparrow Farm trail. Lo and behold, that project was successful and led to a deep and dear friendship.

Even after we moved to County Road, our favorite walk was the town trail from Center Road to Dodge Road. Every winter at least once we skied the “big loop” connecting VAST trails and EM trails to make an all-day circuit. After purchasing the farm on Center Road, we pondered how to help our then five-year-old son prepare for moving to a new house. We showed him that it was, indeed, just through the woods and a meadow from our current house. We headed out the back of our land, through the woods, and crossed the Strong field (with permission, I think) to Center Farm, our new home. That bushwhack is now mostly the Ormsbee trail. Once we settled into the farm, life’s twists gave Kevin some time to write the Mallory Brook Trail grant! We are forever grateful to our neighbors for envisioning and managing the trails, granting trail access, and preserving these most beautiful parts of our town.

—Erica Zimmerman, Center Farm

EMTI Mission Statement

East Montpelier Trails, Inc. (EMTI) is a non-profit volunteer organization working to responsibly build and maintain a local network of EM trails. EMTI was established with the mission of working with willing landowners to create and maintain a permanent network of multi-use trails on private and protected lands in East Montpelier. Our goal is to provide healthy recreational opportunities while connecting the community and its schools and neighborhoods. We currently have 12 miles of marked trails and 10 trailheads with informational signs at the parking areas.

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This question came in August 2021, from our neighbor Owen Myka Smith, who was visiting us just before he went off to college: “What are all those insects, flying up into the air?”

Answer: The air was hazy with swarms of flying ants, rising, up, up, up, and out of sight, and then, within an hour it was over!

What we were seeing was the reproductive flight of ant colonies. Flying ants come from eggs the queen lays, and are both males and females. The females are larger and are destined—after mating and if they land well—to become the queens of new colonies.

These specialized ants grow wings, and, on a dry windless day, often following a heavy rain, they emerge from the ground in huge swarms. The temperature and humidity that trigger swarming and flight is different for each species of ant so the timing of these flights will vary. Queens mate with males during this spectacular dispersal in what is referred to as nuptial flight. After this flight, they either shed or bite off their wings, and the queens attempt to find a suitable place to start a new colony. At this point you may find winged ants crawling all over trees, buildings and grass. The swarming behavior is usually synchronized among colonies of the same species, so that vast numbers of them can suddenly appear in the air and on the ground, over an area that may well encompass many miles. The synchronization of flights is not yet understood, although it is being researched.

These flights can happen at any time from June through the end of summer, though I have only seen it in August or September. One of those times, we were on a large lake, and, suddenly, the air above us erupted with gulls and other species of birds diving and calling, frenziedly snapping up all the protein-rich insects they could before it was over. And just as suddenly, it was quiet, the birds were gone, and it could have been just any calm, late summer afternoon.



Nona Estrin

—Nona Estrin is East Montpelier’s resident naturalist.

EAST MONTPELIER

“ Bruce Chapell is owner of Templeton Farm, one of East Montpelier’s oldest operating farms dating back more than 233 years, and one of the first to be conserved (1994), through the Vermont Land Trust with town conservation funds. Today, seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-generation Templeton family descendants still live and farm here in town. Recently recalling his earliest thoughts on trail conservation easements, Bruce noted that when first approached about allowing trails to cross their farm, he and his father, Roger, were not sure how this would all work out with privacy, maple sugaring lines, and cattle in the fields. The East Montpelier Trails Committee secured funds for fencing along their southern border with the Butlers; and, somewhat reluctantly, the Chapells allowed the trail access to go forward. Twenty-seven years later, he says the trails across the farm are a success and enjoyed by all, including many from outside town. Bruce relates that, neighbors—known and unknown—approach him at Dudley’s, on the trail, or in Montpelier to thank him for allowing them to hike, ski and/or otherwise enjoy his beautiful property. He is pleased and proud to be able to share the beauty and enjoyment of his land with the broader community.

“I feel the trail system across properties in town has done a great deal to promote land conservation and has been a worthwhile use of our land conservation funds. Few towns have the productive farmland, forestland, and trail system that East Montpelier possesses.”

—Bruce Chapell,
transcribed by Signpost volunteers

“ What I love about East Montpelier trails is their variety. “What will I see this time,” I wonder each time I set out. After a lapse of 20-plus years, the dog and I recently walked down the trail from Sparrow Farm to Montpelier. (Either the trail has been rerouted and is much longer or my legs are showing their age; probably both.) It was a beautiful day, the air clear of smoke, and puffy clouds floated in the deep blue.

Amazing trail work has been performed: drainage systems, bridges across streams, and long stretches of boardwalk through the wetlands. And so much to see and hear: gorgeous green fields bordered by blooming wild flowers, open woodland sprinkled with different-colored mushrooms, two thrushes singing mightily in their respective territories, and the ubiquitous noisy crows. This trail ended on Montpelier’s North Branch Trail, so I turned right and made my way to the North Branch Nature Center, where David was waiting to ferry us home in the car. Another option would be to turn left, cross the bridge, and arrive at the Montpelier pool.

My phone clocked the distance at 2.6 miles—almost all downhill, sometimes steeply. I will probably stick mostly to the Dodge Road and Powder Horn Glen trails for everyday walks, but this one was a treat that I won’t wait 20 years to repeat.

—Ann Stanton



Mary Stone

Sue Chickering & others admiring their work on a new boardwalk off County Road.

Existing Trails: - - - - -

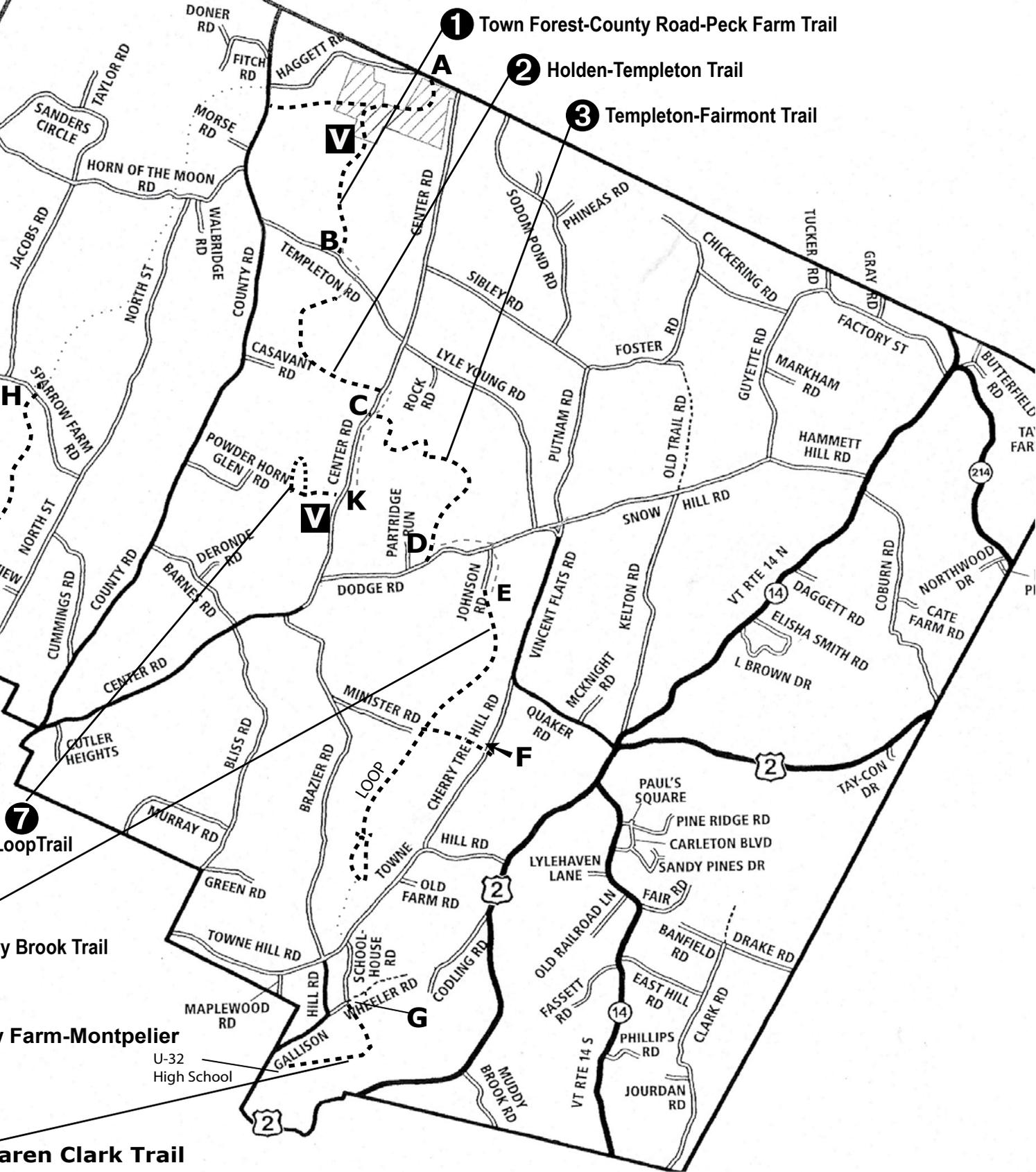
Segment of Trail follows road: - - - - -

Proposed/Under Construction:

(All Routes Approximate)



Revised
5/11/2021



1 Town Forest-County Road-Peck Farm Trail

2 Holden-Templeton Trail

3 Templeton-Fairmont Trail

7 Loop Trail

Brook Trail

Farm-Montpelier

U-32
High School

aren Clark Trail

Segments in Planning Stages)

EM Trails: The Future



Rick Hopkins

Ginger Hopkins, with dog Amalfi, take in the view.

By Loring Star

Connections Coming

Trails grow and change, and we're always seeking new ideas. Would you like a trail on your land? Let any member of the EMTrails Committee know. We would love to find a route to connect trailheads to make a loop around the town or to establish connections between roads, for example.

Current projects include extending the Sparrow Farm Trail along an easement across Sparrow Farm Road and

“Living on County Road, it is great to be able to walk across the street and down Powder Horn Glen to hop on the trails to walk or ski for hours, away from traffic. About half the time we see someone we know and have a nice chat. We're particularly lucky to be between two trail systems since we can go through our backyard to reach the Onion River Nordic and North Branch trails for skiing in winter. We've enjoyed helping with trail work on both trail systems over the last year. It's truly a year-round part of our daily life. During the gloomier months when weather can be a tad bleak, Helen loads a cozy mystery audiobook onto her phone and goes for a walk on the trails to get fresh air plus entertainment. Yeah, I know, she's supposed to just enjoy nature in silence—but she figures whatever cheers up the gray days. FYI, the VT library system has a free audiobook app if you haven't subscribed before.”

—Helen and Lawrence Miller, *County Road*

constructing a short section of trail across the Bobolink Farm on Towne Hill Road. This will connect the Mallory Brook Lollipop Loop with the Clark Trail via Schoolhouse Road leading to U-32. Plus, next year the Cross Vermont Trail Association plans to build the trails down from U-32 to their new bridge across the Winooski. If all that happens, you could go all the way from Haggett Road to Wells River.

Well, not quite yet, but it's in sight. An amazing new bridge across the Winooski River has recently been set in place. But note that more work needs to be done on the bridge and at both ends of it before it becomes open for trail users. In years to come, the Cross Vermont Trail will be re-routing the next section east, away from Route 2 and Route 14 South, back to the old railroad bed. And right now, you can park at the Route 14 trailhead of the Cross Vermont Trail and hike or bike on the old rail bed east to Country Club Road—because the big washout on that section of trail is fixed. As of July, there's a new section of trail, with its own 50-foot trail bridge. The Route 14 trailhead is north of the Humane Society—but please do not park in their parking lot.

Other connections with Montpelier trails

We are already connected with Montpelier trails via the Sparrow Farm Trail. And in a year or two, the Montpelier Bike Path and 'Siboinebi Path' east from Stonecutters Way along the Winooski will connect to the new Cross Vermont Trail Bridge, and to the planned trails up to U-32. And, just across another town line, Calais trails are expanding as well, with a new trail off Max Gray Road, above North Montpelier Pond, and a big network of trails around Longmeadow Hill Road and Robinson Hill Road. Google "Calais Trails Committee" to see their new maps and trail descriptions.

Other future thoughts

How about signs? Could we put up some neat interpretive nature signs? Maybe history signs about old cellar holes? Maybe a sign by the enormous white pine on the Mallory Brook Trail? What about climate crisis? We are already seeing the results of huge new floods on the Mallory Brook Trail—that beautiful big bridge is gone. Are there other steps we should take to protect our trails from bigger floods and an increasing number of blowdowns?

Do you have ideas for new trails? Can we help connect your neighborhood to the trails network? Do you have other suggestions? We welcome your thoughts. Please see the EM Trails committee at: emtrails.org and [facebook.com/EastMontpelierTrails/](https://www.facebook.com/EastMontpelierTrails/)

BIRTHS

- Malcolm Andrew Hubbs, a son, was born to Kristin & Steven Hubbs
- Warren Sheldon Hutchins, a son, was born to Logan Elizabeth Amell & Logan Austin Hutchins
- Aurora Kim Ledwidge, a daughter, was born to Rachael & Thomas Ledwidge

MARRIAGES

- Christina Gilbert & Daniel Lipner, were married in July

DEATHS—survivors living in East Montpelier are listed when known

- Barbara Eniti, mother of Sari Wolf and grandmother of Indigo Wolf, died in April
- Patricia Gathright, mother of Julie Tucker, died in June
- Millicent Seguin, mother of Paula Perry, died in March

LAND TRANSFERS

Transfers relative to estate planning or corrective deeds are not included in this listing. For further info on land transactions, please contact the Town Clerk.

- Janet Allen to Horan Pacheco Revocable Trust, 4.87 acres of open land on VT14N

- David Antonovich, et.al. to Samantha & Erik Powers-Narvils, 3.4 acres of open land
- City of Barre to Joshua & Ashley Demers, 53 acres of open land off US2
- Richard Czaplinski to Betsy & Richard Barstow, 29 acres and dwelling on Sodom Pond Rd.
- Irwin & Justine Franco to Randall & Ann Chapman, 14.3 acres and dwelling on Jacobs Rd.
- Jonathan Ignatowski to Dudley Harrison, a mobile home on Sandy Pines Rd.
- Thomas & Ann Johnson to Barclay Johnson, 8.2 acres and dwelling on Wheeler Rd.
- Samira Kadric to Laura Garcia, a mobile home on Robinson Rd.
- David Lupes & Jennifer McKnight Lupes to Patrick Sullivan, 7 acres of open land on Horn of the Moon Rd.
- Neil & Nancy Martel to Laurie Morrill, 1.9 acres and dwelling on Pine Ridge Rd.
- MaWeMa, LLC to Adam Galler & Allie McCann, 3.79 acres and dwelling on Coburn Rd.
- Brad & Lori Millington to Rebecca Olmstead & Robert Millington, 3.10 acres & dwelling on VT14N
- Sharon Peck to Karen Meisner & Par Winzell, 13.8 acres & dwelling on Coburn Rd.
- Laurie Pecor to Samira Kadric, a mobile home on Robinson Rd.
- Soren Pfeffer & Irene Facciolo to Gina Jenkins & Kimberly Meeks, 31.63 acres and dwelling on Lyle Young Rd.
- Delia Robinson to Josephine Lovasco, 1 acre of open land on Sparrow Farm Rd.
- State of VT Agency of Transportation to Richard and Gaye Christiansen, 0.32 acre easement on US2
- Duane Wells to Harper Properties, 3.14 acres open land on Captain Kidd Rd.
- Duane Wells to Winterwood Timber Frames, LLC, 3.04 acres open land on Captain Kidd Rd.

The excerpts of minutes of East Montpelier's board are available on line at the Signpost website: www.emsignpost.com. They have been omitted from this issue to make room for the text and photos commemorating the 30th anniversary East Montpelier's trails.



Rick Hopkins

There is a **memorial boulder** on the Town Forest--County Road--Peck Farm Trail dedicated to Esther Salmi. A generous gift in Esther's memory helped establish our trail conservation fund. Esther was a Montpelier resident, but was a passionate advocate for the outdoors, a master athlete, and deeply enjoyed our EM Trails.

Trail Partners

EM Trails appreciates our many partners, the generous local donors to the trail projects, a ton of volunteers, and of course, the generosity of East Montpelier landowners who allow us to build and enjoy trails on their land.

Some of our Partners are Cross Vermont Trail Association, Town of East Montpelier, Vermont Land Trust, Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, East Montpelier Gully Jumpers, Josh Ryan and Timber and Stone LLC, Trail builder extraordinaire Greg Western of Cross Vermont Trails Association, U-32 Cross Country & Ski teams, (at least) two Eagle Scout projects by Sam Dworkin and Brian Lusignan.

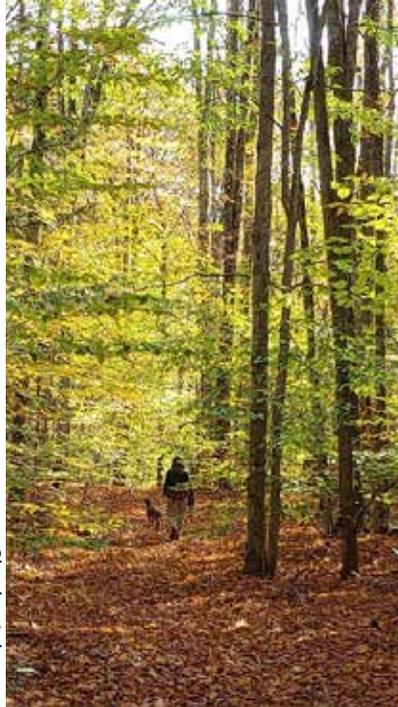
Nona, continued from p. 1

long as they did not develop it. There were farmers all around Vermont who saw this as a way to remain in farming.

Then the vast fortune of the Freeman family became the Freeman Foundation, with money for conservation in Vermont. I got a tip and called Graham Freeman before the Foundation's articles of incorporation were even filed. I talked and talked. He did not sound impressed. The next morning Darby Bradley, head of the Vermont Land Trust, called and said, "I don't know what you did, Nona, but I just got a call from Freeman. He said, 'Fund whatever trails you come up with, just don't ever have that woman call me again!'"

The Trails Committee was hot with ideas. The consolidation of the Cleaves and Hall farms into Fairmont Farms created our first permanent trails, for both walking and snow-mobiling. This, along with an old town road, became the Fairmont Farm trail from Dodge Road. This was swiftly followed by the conservation of the Chapell's Templeton Farm,

Charles Johnson



Nona and granddog

bringing us to Center Road; and from Templeton Road via the Bair Farm took us all the way to the Town Forest. Trails were an embedded part of these land conservation packages. Landowners were generous in offering outdoor opportunities in town, and hosting the trails increased their competitiveness when seeking grants. East Montpelier was in just the right position to boost scores on these applications for conservation dollars because the town was supportive (through its Conservation Fund), and the hoped-for trails were included in the Town Plan with permission of the landowners. The inclusion of public access raised the score of these East Montpelier grant applications.

As we rolled along, more and more townspeople became involved. East Montpelier Trails, Inc. (EMTI) became a nonprofit with Sandy Woodbeck as chair. The board had (and still has) a lot to do—writing grants and articles, building trails and bridges, putting up signs, managing the website, contacting landowners, as well as the ongoing recruitment of volunteers to accomplish all of this. One last piece of luck was that Mary Stone became president many years ago, when our second president, Jamie Shanley, stepped down; she remains in that position today. You will find her comments elsewhere in this issue.

I am the lucky lady who had the dream, talked a lot, put the pieces together, and became part of the magic. I plan to be a board "lifer" and, as I come around to my 82nd birthday, I can happily say to our wonderful board, still led by Mary, and with both old and young new members, "Carry on, good friends; well done, East Montpelier!"

—Nona Estrin is the visionary founder, energizer bunny, and board-member-for-life of East Montpelier Trails, Inc.

“Happy 30th anniversary, East Montpelier Trails! I have enjoyed our town's ever-burgeoning trail system for roughly 25 of those years, and value our town's trails as our community's top year-round recreational resource.

Soon after moving to East Montpelier my then-partner and I became trail stewards of the Dodge Road-Center Road section, which at the time was the closest section to our Barnes Road home. Those green, underused trail comments boxes? We put those up originally. Back then, I was more a mountain biker, and looked forward to June 1 when conditions once again permitted riding. But I ran the trail frequently enough to know when blow-downs needed clearing, and to read over user comments in the notebook housed at the trailhead boxes. I was always impressed how much use the trails got!

More recently, I'm so fortunate that Loring Starr and Michael Dworkin opened up their forest backyard for the Ormsbee Trail section. Since it's closer to Barnes, it's replaced that Dodge-Center section as my go-to trail. My Strava app log certainly must show it as my most frequent walking route over these last few years. The route, going by roads, and then going by trail to cut through from Center Road to Powder Horn Glen, is an exact hour-long loop walk from home. As a mid-day break from work-from-home this past pandemic year, that hour walk has literally been a sanity saver. Thank you thank, you East Montpelier trails; may they endure for many generations!

—Dave Kissner, Barnes Road



Mary Stone

Tales from the Vault

Schools, and churches closed, and a statewide ban on public meetings was announced. Workers were told to stay home if they were ill. Does any of this sound familiar? It was September 1918, and the illness was known as the Spanish Flu. The flu or “grip” moved through the state quickly, taking some victims in days, others in weeks. While Montpelier and Barre were hit particularly hard, East Montpelier lost four souls to influenza and two more to pneumonia, a secondary infection caused by the flu. The Spanish flu travelled swiftly through Vermont and was over by the end of the year. Throughout the State, total deaths numbered 1,772.

The Vermont Historical Society shares a great deal of information on the Spanish Flu at vthistory.org
East Montpelier Spanish Flu Casualties:

- Ellen Barney, stillborn due to maternal influenza
- Priscilla Barney, housewife
- Leroy Bliss, milk team
- Fred Sibley, farmer

The town vault contains a plethora of information, including birth records from 1849 to present day and death records beginning in 1790. Research is permitted in person, limited to one person at a time. Call or drop by.

—Rosie Laquerre is EM town clerk.



Terry J. Allen

Twin Valley Senior Center is Back

The turnout for the reopening of Twin Valley Senior Center (TVSC) on July 14 was heartening. It was wonderful to see old friends and neighbors in addition to meeting new people. Denise Wheeler of East Calais was the winner of a raffle for a handmade quilt. Many thanks to art class students who donated wonderful work for viewing and selling. The proceeds from the sale of handmade notecards and paintings, as well as the raffle, benefit the center. Many thanks to class leaders for the demonstrations and to cook Sarah for her delicious lunch.

The following activities are now taking place at the center. You're invited to participate at no charge though we're always grateful for contributions to the donation box to help cover operating costs.

- **Tuesdays 10 am:** Fall Prevention Tai Chi—Pat Boyle, instructor
- **Wednesdays 10:30 am:** Fall Prevention—Susan Crampton, instructor



Terry J. Allen

- **Wednesday 11:20 am:** Sun 73 Tai Chi—Dyne Sapp, instructor
- **Fridays 10:00 am:** Beginners Fall Prevention—Dyne Sapp, instructor
- **Monday & Wednesday 9:00 am:** Bone Builders in person & also on Zoom—Sue Carey, instructor

We encourage your suggestions and thank you for your good ideas.

Please continue to send us your thoughts by emailing twinvalleyseniors@myfairpoint.net or by calling us at 223-3322.

—Rita Copeland is TVSC executive director.

Local and Made from Scratch

Plainfield Hardware is going all out to feature local meat, so I made an appointment to see for myself and learn more about their deli. Arriving a little early, I looked around to see a very well-stocked grocery department, and freezers full of local Vermont meat: Heinz Hill Farm pork, Vermont Salumi, Templeton Farm beef, and Misty Knoll chicken. Then Julie appeared to explain all about the deli.

Retiring from her 18-hour-a-day job as executive chef, Julie came to Vermont six years ago (“It was either Vermont or Florida; I’m glad I landed here!”) But, she explains, “I don’t like to sit still,” so the deli fits the bill for filling her days—“only five 10–12 hour days a week.” Julie makes everything from scratch, where “everything” includes cakes, pies, and cookies, made fresh daily; as well as quiches, breakfast sandwiches, lunch wraps and sandwiches, and, often, grab-and-go dinners. (The deli menu is on their Facebook page.) All the sandwiches are assembled on-site by hand, and Julie saves the meat trimmings as treats for visiting dogs.

Wednesday night’s grab-and-go dinner was chicken marsala and garlic mashed potatoes. Its Facebook page pictures



Terry J. Allen

orange ginger chicken over pork fried rice; Julie says the meatloaf and mashed potatoes dinner regularly sells out. Call Plainfield Hardware at 454-1000 to find out if there is a grab-and-go dinner that day and then get right over to grab it. The deli is open Mondays through Saturdays from 7 am to 2 pm. More good eating in East Montpelier!

—Ann Stanton is coordinator of East Montpelier Eats.

Paulie’s Recipe:

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (9”) pie crusts
- 8–9 c. apples (at least 2 varieties for flavor)
- Scant 1 c. brown sugar
- ¼ c. white sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ginger
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- 2 T. arrowroot
- Butter
- Lemon juice
- Egg wash

DIRECTIONS

Roll out one crust and place in a 9” pie plate. Chill in the refrigerator. Combine apples, sugar, spices, and arrowroot in a large mixing bowl. Pour into the pie plate and chill in the refrigerator while you roll out the second pie crust. Dot with butter or a few squeezes of lemon juice, if desired. Place second crust on top of apple mixture and crimp edges decoratively. Brush an egg wash on top, if you wish. Bake at 450 for 15



minutes on a rimmed baking sheet on the lowest oven rack. After 15 minutes, lower the temperature to 350 and bake 40-50 minutes.

—Contributed by Mary Bonhag to the 2020 Old Meeting House Cookbook.

Mary’s comment: I once won an apple pie contest in the NY Hudson Valley with this recipe, honed over many, many pies I used to sell at the farmer’s market while a graduate student. My favorite apple varieties for pie are Bramley’s Seedling and Northern Spy, but any combination would yield a flavorful, delicious dessert.

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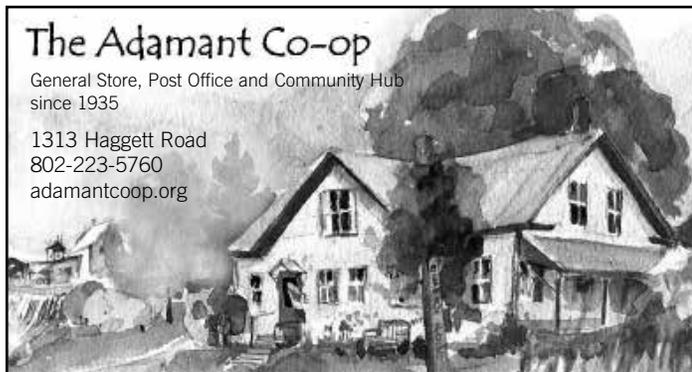
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Terry J. Allen

CALENDAR

Mon. Sept. 20, EM & Calais Hist. Soc., 6 pm potluck
Mon. Oct. 18, EM & Calais Historical Soc., 6 pm potluck supper & program
For both events: Location & program TBD. Look for local FPF notes or email sandal@sover.net to be included in monthly emails.

IMPORTANT DATES

Mon. Sept. 6, Labor Day—Town Office Closed
Mon. Nov. 15, First installment of property taxes due at Town Office by 5 pm.

NOV.-DEC. SIGNPOST DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: OCTOBER 4

TAKE A BOOK, LEAVE A BOOK Thanks to Doug Kievit-Kyler, EM now has a Little Free Library on Brazier Rd., just off Town Hill Rd. A few months ago, Doug spotted a cupboard at the ReStore. Many of us might have just seen an old, used cupboard. Not Doug! He saw possibility. Using his woodworking skills, Doug transformed the cupboard into a book exchange. Paul Erlbaum did some grunt work to help install it and Bonnie Pollard Allen's beautiful lettering and artwork sealed the deal.

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
 TBD

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 contact: rhazel@ezcloud.com
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