

# Town Meeting Day is March 5

## Before the Big Day

**Voter Registration:** at the Town Office Monday through Thursday 9 am - 5 pm, Friday until noon, or at the East Montpelier Elementary School (EMES) polling place on election day. Register online at [olvr.vermont.gov](http://olvr.vermont.gov)

**Early Voting:** Town and school ballots were sent to all active voters in February. Presidential Primary (Democratic or Republican) and Central Vermont Career Center early ballots must be requested separately. Ballots may be hand-delivered to the Town Clerk through Monday, March 4, at 5 pm or deposited in the secure drop box outside the office until 5 pm on Tuesday, March 5. Ballots may be delivered to the EMES polling place until 7 pm on March 5.

**In-Person Voting:** All ballots are available on election day at the polling place.

**Pre-Town Meeting Forums:** The WCUUSD meeting will take place on Monday, March 4 at 5:30 pm in room 128/131 at U-32. Remote access is available at [tinyurl.com/yckpbt48](http://tinyurl.com/yckpbt48)

The Town Forum takes place on Monday, March 4 at 6:30 pm at the Town Office with remote access at [us02web.zoom.us/j/84447068796](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84447068796). Details are available on the East Montpelier town website at [eastmontpeliervt.org](http://eastmontpeliervt.org)

Please check your Town and School Reports to see what will be discussed and voted on.

## Town Meeting at EMES

7:00 am - 7:00 pm Polls are open for voting on school and town ballots

9:30 am Town Meeting begins

End of Town Meeting - potluck lunch begins

No childcare will be offered this year

## Town Potluck: Top 5 Asks

On Tuesday, March 5, following Town Meeting at the East Montpelier Elementary School, we will meet up with friends and neighbors and enjoy an immense variety of home-cooked meals at Town Meeting Potluck Lunch.

Since we will be continuing with last year's format which worked really well, here are my top five asks!

- ☒ **RSVP.** Let me know if you plan on attending Potluck Lunch and, if so, please tell us how many will be in your party. Email: [racanellis@comcast.net](mailto:racanellis@comcast.net). This will help us assure there is food for all.
- ☒ **Eating Well.** Bring a main entrée (no soups) and label it non-vegetarian, vegetarian, or vegan. It would be helpful if you could list the ingredients for those who have nut allergies and gluten intolerance. Please prepare enough to feed at least eight people. Bread, a simple salad, desserts, beverages, and napkins will be provided.
- ☒ **No Cleanup!** Since we will not be using the dishwasher, please bring your own plates, glasses, forks, knives, and spoons as well as a serving spoon for your main dish. When done with your meal, you will take your serving dishes, utensils, and cutlery home with you to be washed.
- ☒ **The Best Deal.** If you are unable to bring an entree, you will be able to purchase a meal for \$5, but you must let me know this when you make your reservation in advance.
- ☒ **Helping Out.** Email me at [racanellis@comcast.net](mailto:racanellis@comcast.net) if you can volunteer to help with setup, serving, and cleanup.

See you at Town Meeting!

—Sue Racanelli, Town Meeting Potluck Chair

The people who volunteer for the *Signpost* wear many hats in our community and in our neighboring communities. One of mine is as the Adult Programs Coordinator for the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier. In that role, I schedule lectures and workshops and organize the library's celebration of National Poetry Month, called PoemCity. When putting this Town Meeting Day issue together, I found all my roles converging.

For example, the library partners with the League of Women Voters every year to host a speaker series. This year, one of the featured speakers was Susan Clark, the town meeting moderator of Middlesex and the author of *Slow Democracy: Rediscovering Community, Bringing Decision Making Back Home*. She made a deep dive into what it

means to see things from opposing views and what to do about it (hint: you don't solve such paradoxes, you manage them). She also reminded us that our access to democracy, our town meetings, and our town clerks, among other things, are Vermont's superpowers—ones that we appreciate now, maybe more than ever.

Finally, in organizing the boxes of PoemCity memorabilia as it gears up for its 15th year in 2024, I came across a 2012 poetry submission from Paul Mascitti of East Montpelier. I've included it in this issue of the *Signpost* in celebration of our town, our town meeting, and everything that connects us.

—Michelle Singer is the managing editor of the *Signpost* and a poet, among many other things.

## PoemCity MONTPELIER | 2024

PoemCity is a month-long celebration of poetry presented by the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. During the month of April, poems by Vermonters will be hanging in storefront windows in downtown Montpelier. Come enjoy this walkable anthology as well as readings, workshops, and events happening almost daily. Visit [kellogg-hubbard.org/poemcity](http://kellogg-hubbard.org/poemcity) for a schedule of events and exhibits.

## Family Tree

My Children Three:

We are root and bark and limb and  
leaf of the same tree,  
But now you are still leaf and a little limb while  
I am limb and bark and trunk,  
Close to root.

When I lie still—and gratefully so—  
A root for you to be the trunk of,  
You will yet be you and not me,  
Though we are root and bark and limb and leaf  
Of the very same tree.

—Paul A. Mascitti, East Montpelier

### East Montpelier Signpost

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[www.emSignpost.com](http://www.emSignpost.com)

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# They Want Your Vote

Job descriptions taken largely from the VLCT Resource Manual and Vermont Law

## TOWN MODERATOR: one 1-year term

*The moderator is the presiding officer of municipal 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:** 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 40 years. We raised our three children in East Montpelier, and we now have two grandchildren who also reside in our town, and attend the East Montpelier Elementary School. I am a retired attorney after 35 years of practicing law, and now spend

my days gardening, 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. It would be my honor to serve as East Montpelier's Town Moderator for another term.

## 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.*



**Ross Hazel:** I am running for the office of Lister. I have been a resident here in East Montpelier since 1991 and have been a Lister since 2003. I have enjoyed the work and challenges of keeping up the Grand List and working with the residents to help keep our town government functioning at its best.

## TOWN AUDITOR: one 3-year term

*Town auditors are responsible for examining and adjusting the accounts of all town 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 voters of the town, presenting an easy-to-understand picture of the town's finances.*

**Edward "Ed" Deegan:** no statement

## SELECTBOARD MEMBER: one 3-year term; one 2-year term; one two years of a 3-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.*

**Seth Gardner, 2-year term:** no statement



**Tom Brazier, 3-year term:** My family has owned property in East Montpelier for over 120 years. We operated a dairy farm until 2008. We continue to operate a trucking business and grow sweet corn.

During my career in business consulting, I've represented non-profit organizations as well as private companies in

various capacities for project management and all levels of permitting including Act 250.

I am the owner and operator of Windyvale Retirement Solutions. As a financial advisor, investment adviser representative, and insurance broker, I provide sound advice to my clients, who are people and businesses in diverse economic situations.

I served on the East Montpelier Selectboard from 1993 to 2008. I was very involved with the creation of the town's first Capital Budget and the largest paving project the town has completed. The result of these efforts has saved the town thousands of dollars over the years. I have been a member of the East Montpelier Fire Department for over 50 years.

*Candidates, continued p. 4*

*Candidates, continued from p. 3*

I am very concerned about the ability of our citizens on fixed incomes to remain in town as costs rise. My philosophy is to listen to all points of view on the issues and try to represent the best interests for the citizens of the town. I am a firm believer in transparency!

I believe as budgets, extreme weather events, and infrastructure needs grow, my expertise and experience will be an asset to the town. I welcome the opportunity to serve the town once again in this capacity. Please vote! Your vote matters!



**Nikhil (Nik) Khosla**, 3-year term: I am honored to have been chosen to fill the rest of Jon Jewett's term. My family and I moved to East Montpelier in August of 2022 and we fell in love with this wonderful community. We plan to make this our home for many years to come. My wife Jada, our seven-year-old twins Niki and Julia, our two dogs Woody and Winona,

and our two cats Ricky and Lucy are all content here. I work as an executive for NorthCountry Federal Credit Union. I have a diverse and rich background in various fields, such as technology, management consulting, commercial construction, and real estate development, to name a few. I appreciate diversity in perspectives and experiences, as I believe it fosters innovation. I am also committed to conserving our beautiful environment while finding ways to expand and attract more people to our charming community. I think that having the right infrastructure, housing studies, and long-term town planning is crucial for our growth and well-being. I will continue to support green and open spaces, safeguard our environment, and find ways to connect our community (through parks and recreation areas). My open-mindedness and pragmatism will enable me to examine all issues thoroughly and to advance the goals of our community.

If I am granted your support for the Selectboard, I will bring my open mindedness and pragmatism to ensure all issues are thoughtfully considered and that the goals of our community are advanced.

**Zoe Christiansen**, 2 years of a 3-year term: Growing up on my great-grandfather's dairy farm, my family was always involved in local politics. Nature, farming, and community are my roots. I aim to protect these things and the climate for all people and continued life on earth. After



graduating from U-32 and the New England Conservatory, I toured as a musician in many diverse countries (Greece, Turkey, Albania, Moldova, Russia, Germany and more), learning from their cultures, communities, and their local systems.

I am a young, low-income, educated woman from East Montpelier. Caring deeply about systemic poverty and the environment, I hope we can address the housing crisis with more than development alone—including a re-examination of the regulations for short-term rentals and creating ways to encourage the occupancy of vacant homes in order to minimize land fragmentation.

If given the opportunity, I would continue on the Selectboard to learn all I can from the incredible experience of other East Montpelierites and apply that to our work on the Board. I live in an apartment in the house I grew up in, where my parents, uncle and dog Ferdy, also reside. In my spare time, I enjoy playing and studying Irish, Turkish, and Greek music.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONER:** *three 3-year terms; one 2 years of a 3-year term*

*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.*



**Ben McCall**, 3-year term: My wife, Birgit, and I moved to East Montpelier about 18 months ago, from the Midwest (Ohio, preceded by Illinois). We'd been wanting to move to Vermont for many years because it seemed to have everything we were missing in the Midwest: people genuinely concerned about the planet, a population density that the local environment can actually support, an authentic sense of community, participatory democracy and local governance, an agricultural system growing food for humans (rather than only for factories and CAFOs), reasonable

*Candidates continued p. 6*



## Town Offices

PO Box 157, East Montpelier, VT 05651  
Phone: 802-223-3313  
Office Hours: Mon–Thurs 9 AM–5 PM  
Fri 9 AM –12 PM

### **Town Clerk**

Rosie Laquerre  
[clerk@eastmontpeliervt.org](mailto:clerk@eastmontpeliervt.org)

### **Town Treasurer**

Michele Pallas  
[treasurer@eastmontpeliervt.org](mailto:treasurer@eastmontpeliervt.org)

### **Town Administrator**

Gina Jenkins  
[manager@eastmontpeliervt.org](mailto:manager@eastmontpeliervt.org)

### **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**

Deborah Fillion  
Ross Hazel  
Chris Racanelli  
223-3313 x206  
[listers@eastmontpeliervt.org](mailto:listers@eastmontpeliervt.org)

### **Health Officer**

Ginny Burley 272-4045

### **Service Officer**

Rachael Grossman 223-3177

### **Selectboard**

Seth Gardner, Chair  
[sethbfgardner@hotmail.com](mailto:sethbfgardner@hotmail.com)  
Zoe Christiansen Carl Etnier  
Scott Hess Nikhil Khosla

### **Planning Commission**

Zach Sullivan, Chair, [zsullivan@gmail.com](mailto:zsullivan@gmail.com)

### **Development Review Board**

Steve Kappel, Chair  
[sjkappel@gmail.com](mailto:sjkappel@gmail.com)

### **WCUUSD Board**

Amelia Contrada, [acontrada@u32.org](mailto:acontrada@u32.org)  
Flor Diaz Smith, [fdiazsmith@u32.org](mailto:fdiazsmith@u32.org)  
Zach Sullivan, [zsullivan@u32.org](mailto:zsullivan@u32.org)

### **State Representative**

Ela Chapin, 552-0242  
[echapin@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:echapin@leg.state.vt.us)

# Green Up Day is May 4<sup>th</sup>



As we enter the spring thaw, it's time to start thinking about that time-honored and uniquely Vermont tradition we all know and love: Green Up Day! Saturday, May 4, is the big day, and the collection site will be at the East Montpelier Elementary School from 9 am until 1 pm.

The iconic green trash bags will be available starting the last week of April at locations across East Montpelier including Dudley's Store, Bragg Farm, Morse Farm, and Fox Market. Regular updates will be posted on our town's Front Porch Forum site, including last minute details, trouble spots, and volunteer requests.

In addition to seeking out-of-place trash on our beautiful roads, there are other ways that you can participate. We need volunteers at the collection site at EMES to help sort recyclables and deposit bottles from trash, as well as helping to transfer trash to the trucks graciously provided by the town. Green Up is open to folks of all ages, so please come down to help, even if only for a short time. We always have a great time, and it's a wonderful way to get to know your neighbors better.

Though we will not be hosting a Green Up lunch this year, we will have snacks and bottled water at the sorting site for our intrepid volunteers. Interested in volunteering? Email Erin Borland at [GreenUpEastMontpelier@gmail.com](mailto:GreenUpEastMontpelier@gmail.com) or call (970) 631-3789.

—Erin Borland, Green Up Coordinator for East Montpelier

## GET THE KIDS INVOLVED

In advance of Green Up Day, there are three contests open to K-12 students:

- Writing Contest: write a creative essay or poem about what the environment means to you. Deadline is March 1.
- Video Contest: create a 60-second video about the importance of Green Up Day. Deadline is April 1.
- Jingle Contest: compose a 30-second radio jingle using your own lyrics. Deadline April 1.

More information is available at [greenupvermont.org](http://greenupvermont.org) including contest rules and submission details.

## DONATE WITH YOUR TAXES

When completing your tax forms this year, remember that you may donate to Green Up Vermont on Line 23 of your Vermont tax return forms. Your generous contributions to this program help keep Green Up Day alive.

## HELP VERMONT CLAIM A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD—VT TOP TO BOTTOM GREEN UP!

Green Up Vermont is looking for volunteers to claim a mile along a route running from Canada to Massachusetts so that we can claim the world's longest litter pickup team. This event will cover 223 miles from North Troy to Stamford. While the actual route does not go through East Montpelier, it does include close neighboring towns. Visit [greenupvermont.org/vt-t2b/](http://greenupvermont.org/vt-t2b/) for details and to claim your mile!

*Candidates, continued from p. 4*

prospects for resilience to our changing climate, and, of course, natural beauty. We feel so lucky to be here!

I've long had a strong interest (personal and professional) in renewable energy. When I learned that the town was (re) starting an energy committee, I eagerly volunteered and have been serving as facilitator for the committee for about a year. One of the committee's main tasks is to develop a proposed amendment to the Town Plan that would qualify us for "substantial deference" with the Public Utilities Commission for siting of large renewable energy projects. This work will require close coordination with the Planning Commission, so it seemed natural for me to stand for election to the Commission to assist with that coordination. I also value the opportunity to assist with the upcoming revision of the Town Plan, and to better familiarize myself with our community's culture and members in the process. I would be honored to serve East Montpelier in this capacity if elected.

**Zoe Christiansen**, 2 years of a 3-year term: I am interested in serving on the Planning Commission, primarily to learn more about how best to serve East Montpelier. I am still in the process of learning on the Selectboard, and I've found that I'm particularly interested in learning more about the town's zoning and conservation. [see biographical information and photo under selectboard candidates.]

**Two 2-year terms: no candidates**

## WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT (WCUUSD)

*The WCUUSD consists of the elementary schools of the five towns of Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, and Worcester and U-32 Middle/High School. A single school board with representatives from the five towns is responsible for the entire pre-K through 12 school system. Voters from the five towns elect all members of the board, as well as a moderator, clerk, and treasurer for the school district.*

*In keeping with time and space limitations, the Signpost will continue to publish statements from those running as board members from East Montpelier, as well as the non-town-affiliated positions of moderator, clerk, and treasurer. It is hoped that information on other candidates will be available on the WCUUSD website.*

### WCUUSD SCHOOL DIRECTOR (East Montpelier):

*one 3-year term; one two years of a 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.*



**Zach Sullivan**, 3-year term: I've lived in East Montpelier since 2014 with my wife, Helen, who teaches social studies at Montpelier High School, and my two kids—a first grader at EMES and a five-year-old who will be starting kindergarten next year. I was appointed to fill a vacancy this past August and am now running to fill that seat on a permanent basis.

I have served on both the finance and education quality committees. This experience has given me a well-rounded view into how our whole district can restructure to both become more efficient and to improve the quality of the education we provide. I think that the most pressing question for the board is the need to figure out how to configure our district to best meet the needs of all of our students in a way that our communities can afford to support.

Reconfiguration gives us a lot of opportunities. We can ensure that we have enough students in each school so that we operate mixed-grade classes (e.g. combined first and second grades) only when it makes educational sense. We can run large enough classes so that all students can find educational and social peers—a challenge in some of our smallest schools. We can provide all of our students with the same opportunities at the elementary school level. And we can do this at a lower cost than our current configuration requires. I hope to be able to continue that work, and I commit to doing it in a way that always keeps the needs of our students front and center.



**Amelia Mendes Contrada**, two years of a 3-year term: I believe that a quality public education system creates and sustains healthy, peaceful, and well-resourced communities. This approach is needed now more than ever as the backbone of democracy in the face of current political polarization. I acknowledge that thriving learning environments promote an increased capacity for people to view issues from multiple perspectives in order to arrive at the most reasonable reconciliation of seemingly contradictory postures.

Regarding decision making, I value critical thinking, empathy, compassion, and willingness to have effective discourse. My goal as a school board member is to model these values, while respectfully serving students, staff, and the community.

My passion for public education, democracy, equity, diversity, and human rights is rooted in my relationships and life experiences. I am a second generation Brazilian American and a first-generation Vermonter. My father, a labor union activist, health and human services administrator, and college educator, immigrated to the United States from the city of Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil, in 1975. My mother, a Vermont transplant from Western Massachusetts and a fourth-generation American with ancestors from French Québec, worked in the non-profit sector.

I studied psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I then helped to organize the United States Social Forum before embarking on a bicycle journey from Alaska to Panama to learn more about grassroots activism and peace building. I have a master's degree in psychology and am an expressive arts therapist. I live in East Montpelier with my husband, Dave, and baby Desmond Mateo.

**WCUUSD MODERATOR:** *one 1-year term*

**No candidate**

**WCUUSD CLERK:** *one 1-year term*

**Melissa Tuller:** I started working for Washington Central in 2019 as a financial clerical assistant and have been the administrative assistant to the Superintendent for the past three and one-half years. For those of you who are not familiar with what the district clerk does, this person organizes and does all the legwork relating to the election of school board members, works with the town clerks and the mailing company to ensure all ballots for the school district are correct, commingles the ballots during town meeting time, and many other behind-the-scene tasks. I am running for the clerk position because I feel that in my time working for the school system and alongside the school board daily, I have acquired the knowledge and skills that are critical to the position. I am organized, reliable, and a quick learner. I live with my husband and two sons in Calais, VT. Please consider voting for me as the next district clerk for WCUUSD.

**WCUUSD TREASURER:** *one 1-year term*

**Mary Ormsby:** no statement

## EMES Students Are Grateful

Envision 220 students working together to create a chain of gratitude. This is what happened on a Wednesday afternoon in November in our PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) groups. These groups are facilitated by all adults who work at EMES. Each small group is made up of students from kindergarten through 6th grade.

Each week the teams work together to read stories, work on mindset strategies, and, most recently, be grateful for experiences and people in our lives. In addition, our youngest students in preschool wanted to show gratitude to the Central Vermont Humane Society. They worked to collect items to support the animals. Ms. Fecura's first and second graders wanted to show gratitude to the first responders from the East Montpelier Fire Department. They created posters and encouraged the students to bring non-perishable Thanksgiving items to school. The fire department then picked them up to help with the distribution of the Thanksgiving boxes donated to East Montpelier and Calais families.

EMES is a community of children and adults who are truly grateful for each other, our town, and our world.

—Beth Parker is instructional interventionist and professional development coach at EMES.



Top, Mrs. Fecura's 1st & 2nd graders.  
Bottom, EMES Preschoolers.



**DEATHS**—survivors living in East Montpelier are listed when known

- Marcia Pauly, wife of John (Jack) Pauly, died in December
- Erik Esselstyn, husband of Celina Moore, died in December
- Donald Cote, husband of Barbara Cote and grandfather to Jason Cote-Wong, died in January

*The following are excerpts from minutes of EM's and WCUUSD's governing boards. Complete minutes are on the town and school websites. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings were held in person with a remote participation option available.*

## SELECTBOARD

**November 20, 2023**

### Motions Passed

- to authorize town attorney to review town records to determine all the persons entitled to notice of the discontinuance Right of Way on Parcel 10-024.000 hearing and site inspection
- to appoint Jennifer Zollner to the Emergency Planning Committee
- to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matter. Entered at 8:46 pm and exited at 9:07 pm
- to offer compensation to minutes takers for the Development Review Board, Planning Commission, and Selectboard at the budgeted rate

**December 4, 2023 (U)**

### Motion Passed

- to accept the 2023-2024 Winter Operations Plan as presented
- to appropriate \$100 in the FY25 budget for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force
- to accept an amendment to the existing contract with Avenu to convert to the cloud version for land records management
- By consensus, adopted a resolution that the Town and the East Montpelier Historical Society will collaborate in the observance and activities to be held to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, with a paragraph stating that the town may provide funding for the planning and implementation

## PLANNING COMMISSION

**December 7, 2023**

### Discussion

- Census Data Training and discussion of the Town Plan work plan

**December 21, 2023**

### Discussion

- Overview of powers and duties of Planning Commissions
- Overview of work done previously and outstanding items in Town Plan

**January 4, 2024**

### Motions Passed

- to accept the resignation of Maia Stone, effective March 1, 2024

## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

**December 5, 2023**

### Motions Passed

- to enter into executive session to discuss personnel update. Entered at 7:08 pm and exited at 7:20 pm

## WCUUSD

**December 4, 2023**

### (Virtual Meeting Only)

### Motions Passed

- to go into executive session for the purpose of considering matters related to the discipline of students. Entered at 7:01 pm and exited at 7:51 pm
- to accept the administration's recommendation regarding the related discipline in the confidential student matter for the remainder of the school year
- to go into executive session for the purpose of considering matters related to the discipline of students. Entered at 7:54 pm and exited at 8:02 pm
- to accept the administration's recommendation regarding the related discipline in the confidential student matter

**December 6, 2023**

### (Virtual Meeting Only)

### Motions Passed

- to authorize the final budget allocation of \$151,000 from the capital reserve funds for the refurbishment of the U-32 baseball field to be completed in FY25 and approve the District moving forward with bid document development and bidding as necessary

- to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing labor negotiations. Entered at 8:19 pm and exited at 8:23 pm
- to approve the Educational Support Personnel (ESP) collective bargaining
- to approve the ESP agreement for the 2023-24 – 2025-26 school years

**December 20, 2023**

### Motions Passed

- to approve awarding the Doty Generator Project contract to Local Electric, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$81,400
- to establish the recommended pre-qualification criteria that contractors must meet to be included on a selected list of pre-qualified bidders for the 2024 Security System Project

**January 3, 2024**

### Motions Passed

- to increase annual stipend for Clerk to \$1000, Treasurer to \$6700, Directors to \$1200, Chair to \$2400
- to approve mail-in ballots for the five towns of WCUUSD
- to approve the policies as presented
- to approve long-term substitute for the 2023-24 school year, Anna Gerretson - U-32 English
- to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters. Entered at 7:36 pm and exited at 7:55 pm

**January 17, 2024**

### Motions Passed

- to amend the motion [to approve the FY25 budget as presented and recommended], to restore nurse positions at Doty and Calais for \$93,546
- to amend the motion [to approve the FY25 as presented and recommended], to increase the budget by \$80,955 to restore counseling positions at Calais and Doty
- to prequalify Local Electric, LLC, Safety Systems of Vermont and ENE Security, LLC as bidders for the WCUUSD 2024 Security System Projects
- to approve the budget warning
- to approve policy F26 - Security Cameras



- to approve the following: extended leave of absence request: Christine McGrath – 2/20/24-5/28/24; Long-Term Substitutes (2023-2024 School Year) Patty Gaston – LT Sub for EMES; Change in Position (2023-2024) Carrie Fitz-Interventionist to Special Educator-EMES
- to accept the resignation of Meaghan Roy, superintendent, with much gratitude for her service
- to approve Deweese & Deweese LLC to consult with the WCUUSD Superintendent search
- to go into executive session to consider a student residency request Entered executive session at 9:10 pm and exited at 9:28 pm
- to grant the residency requisition through the end of the 2023-24 school year

#### IN MEMORIAM

We note with sadness the death of frequent *Signpost* writer, Erik Esselstyn. We will miss his unique contributions.



#### EAST MONTPELIER RABIES CLINIC FOR DOGS & CATS

Saturday, March 9  
9 am - 12 pm  
East Montpelier Fire Department  
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East Montpelier Dogs  
\$9/spayed animals  
\$13/unaltered animals

Special thanks to the  
Mitzvah Fund  
for helping us host  
this year's event.  
*themitzvahfundvt.org*

# EM Trails: It Takes a Village

As a good many *Signpost* readers know, East Montpelier is fortunate to have an extensive network of trails—well over 10 miles the last time someone with a pedometer walked all of them and reported their findings. The vast majority of those trails are found on private property, so a big thank you for the generosity of those many landowners. For any landowner in town interested in allowing a trail on your property, please contact any of the members of the East Montpelier Trails Committee or talk with any of the landowners with a trail on their property.

## 1. Recap of Notable Trail Activities in 2023

- Beautifully handsome new bridge construction on Bobolink Trail and completion of the Pratt-Bobolink trail from Minister Road to Towne Hill Road
- The trail is now open and plans are underway for a new trailhead on Towne Hill Road and an upgrade for the parking area on Cherry Tree Hill Road. The trail connecting Towne Hill Road to Cherry Tree Hill Road is about 1.5 miles long.
- Scouting and trail construction on Sparrow North Loop Trail
- Storm recovery and clean-up from the December 2022 windstorm, July 2023 flood, and other high wind and heavy rain events throughout 2023. Also, tree removal, tread repair, and re-routing on a few trails including Ormsbee Trail, Mallory Brook Trail, and Sparrow Farm Trail
- Re-location of 200 feet of trail heading west from Center Road, away from the electric fence
- Re-blazing several trail sections with white paw signs; more to be redone in 2024
- Mowing of five trail segments and one trailhead parking area in June and again in August

## 2. Call for Volunteer Vegetation Cutters in 2024

Certain trail segments are too difficult and inaccessible for a mechanized mower to reach. The Trails Committee is seeking volunteers living nearby who use these segments to commit to cutting back vegetation on an as needed basis (2-3 times during the summer). Cutting back vegetation not only makes trail use more enjoyable but also keeps the trail tread open/visible and reduces human-tick interaction. The Trails Committee can train and provide manual pruning tools. Volunteers are needed in these segments:

- 300 feet of Horseshoe Loop (starting at signed junction, Ormsbee Trail);
- 100 feet of re-routed Ormsbee Trail along western edge of crop field;
- 200 feet of Ormsbee Trail to the north of the crop field starting at the signed junction with Horseshoe Loop;
- 100 feet of trail heading west of Center Road parking area;
- Mallory Brook Trail starting from the edge of the old log landing/meadow and extending down the trail for about 250 feet.

## 3. Call for Volunteers (Part Two) in 2024

National Trails Day (the first Saturday in June) is a day when the Trails Committee has typically identified a needed trail construction project and where the notion of “many hands make lighter work” comes into play. Volunteers of all ages and abilities are welcome. The committee also schedules additional trail workdays later in the summer and in the fall. Activities may include hauling/cutting lumber, hammering nails, raking, shoveling, tree trimming, and rock placement. All activities are intended to make the trails

*EM Trails, continued p. 10*

more enjoyable and more resilient to weather and user traffic.

As of this writing, the Trails Committee believes the focus for 2024 will be work on Sparrow North Loop Trail and preparing the site and staging materials for a new bridge over Mallory Brook. Contact any member of the Trails Committee to learn more about these and other efforts and/or get your name added to the volunteer list. Volunteer trail work is a great way to give back or pay it forward—your choice!

#### 4. Need for new trail steward(s)

Whether you live near a trail or you have a favorite trail on the other side of town you regularly use, the Trails Committee relies on trail stewards to assess trail conditions,

do minor clean-up, and report on the existence of problems. Trail Stewards are the direct, on-the-ground eyes and ears for the committee and indirectly benefit all trail users. The Trails Committee is looking for a trail steward for the section of trail at the Johnson Road parking area to Mallory Brook (about 0.5 miles).

If you have interest in becoming a Trail Steward for this segment of trail—or joining other designated trail stewards elsewhere please contact the East Montpelier Trails Committee.

*—Rick Hopkins is a longtime EMTI member who enjoys the outdoors—especially EM's trails network*



## Paulie's Recipe

### Maple Syrup Cake

Submitted by Walter Bothfeld, Sr.  
to the Recipes and Remembrances, Twin Valley Senior Center Cookbook 2018

#### INGREDIENTS

½ cup shortening  
½ cup white sugar  
2 eggs (beaten light)  
1 cup maple syrup  
¼ cup water  
2 ½ cup cake flour  
¼ tsp. soda  
2 tsp. baking powder  
½ tsp. ginger

#### DIRECTIONS

Cream the shortening, gradually add sugar. Add the eggs without separating the white and yolks. Add maple syrup, then the flour which has been sifted, measured and sifted again with the ginger, soda and baking powder added. Bake in a tube loaf pan about 50 minutes at 325°. Cover with maple icing, decorate with halves of walnuts.

#### MAPLE SYRUP CAKE ICING

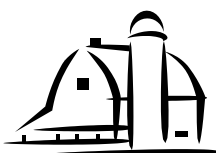
##### INGREDIENTS

1 cup maple syrup  
2 egg whites  
Pinch of salt  
1 tsp. vanilla

##### DIRECTIONS

Cook syrup until it forms a firm but not hard ball when tested in cold water. Let stand off stove while you beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff but not dry. Add syrup in a fine stream, beating constantly with rotary or electric beater. Continue to beat until the frosting holds its shape. Add vanilla and frost.

*Paulie's comments: This cake and frosting have a maple flavor—so good. The darker the syrup, the stronger the maple flavor. Making this egg white frosting was lots of fun.*



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## IMPORTANT DATES

**Mon. Mar. 4, 5:30 pm, WCUUSD Forum**, room 128/131 at U-32, remote access at [tinyurl.com/yckpbt48](https://tinyurl.com/yckpbt48)

**Mon. Mar. 4, 6:30 pm, Pre-Town Meeting Forum**, at the Town Office, remote access at [atus02web.zoom.us/j/84447068796](https://atus02web.zoom.us/j/84447068796), see town website for details

**Tues. Mar. 5, 9:30 am, Town Meeting**, EMES, polls open for town and school ballots, 7:00 am - 7:00 pm

**Tues. Mar. 5, after Town Meeting, Potluck Lunch**, EMES

**Sat. Mar. 9, 9 am - 12 pm, Pet Rabies Clinic**, EMFD building, \$20 per pet

**Mon. Mar. 18, 6 pm, Meeting of the EM & Calais Historical Societies**, Calais Town Hall, potluck supper, sugar-on-snow party and maple talk by Henry Marckres, VT Ag Dept. Free and open to the public. Contact Sandal Cate: [sandal.cate@gmail.com](mailto:sandal.cate@gmail.com)

**Mon. Apr. 29, 6 pm, Meeting of the EM & Calais Historical Societies**, Old Brick Church, EM Village, potluck supper, program by Ken Matzner featuring travels to the Antarctic Ocean. Free and open to the public. Contact Sandal Cate: [sandal.cate@gmail.com](mailto:sandal.cate@gmail.com)

**Sat. May 4, Green Up Day, 9 am - 2 pm**, collection site and snacks at EMES

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee  
Development Review Board (DRB)  
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)  
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  
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

contact: [blusig@aol.com](mailto:blusig@aol.com) / 229-5441  
Town Office Building  
EMFD Community Room  
Four Corners Schoolhouse  
Town Office Building  
Elementary School  
Town Office Building  
one of the district elementary schools  
Old Brick Church/E. Calais

## ONLINE ISSUES AVAILABLE



The *Signpost* website contains a full, searchable archive of all issues dating from 1990 when the first issue was published. If you would like to read the *Signpost* online only, please notify Jennifer Boyer at [vtspots@gmail.com](mailto:vtspots@gmail.com) and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

*Thank you for your support*

NANCY COUCH

KEN HERTZ

HARRIET HAGGETT

LORING STARR

**SUBMISSIONS FOR  
MAY-JUNE 2024 SIGNPOST DUE  
April 3, 2024**