

Hazen Stoufer: Tree Doctor

recorded and written by Sandal Cate

On a nice May afternoon, Paul and Sandal Cate hosted Hazen Stoufer to talk about his life growing up in town and establishing a commercial business here. He was appointed as the town tree warden by the selectboard this spring, succeeding Paul Cate, who held that position until recently. His parents are Steve and Maria Stoufer of Manghi's Bread, and he has a sister, Stella.



Photo by Sandal Cate

Paul Cate: Hazen, you've lived in East Montpelier most of your life?

Hazen: Yes, though as a child I lived first in Barre. We moved to the Center Road when I was five and still live there.

Paul: You've been a business person right from the get-go. When and how did you get started?

Hazen: In middle school, I started mowing lawns for neighbors. That rapidly became something I was interested in and good at doing. I used my parents' riding mower, and my dad drove me from house to house. I had eight or ten customers. In my freshman year of high school, I bit the bullet and bought a zero-turn lawnmower and added more customers. By my senior year I had 40 accounts. That year I officially started my business.

Paul: And the name of your business is?

Hazen: HS Landscapes. I bought two more zero-turns and a trailer. From there the business grew. Then I went to Paul Smith's College for two years. Today I have 75-80 weekly mowing accounts, and I now include landscaping.

Paul: Tell us some of the types of things that you're doing in your business now.

Hazen: The key tasks are lawn maintenance and landscaping, including planting. I do some stonework. I went to school to be an arborist, so I do a fair amount of that work, especially in the winter time. I have snow-plowing jobs, too.

Paul: Can you explain what an arborist does?

Hazen: An arborist is a tree surgeon. The role of an arborist is to get into places where you can't get to by felling a tree. We arborists know how to climb trees with ropes. We might need to take the tree apart from the top down. One needs to know the biology and ecology of the tree which includes planting and tree care, not just removing trees. Arborists are like a tree doctor. I also do tree pruning, planting, and overall tree maintenance.

Paul: As of this spring, you are the new town tree warden. How do you see yourself in this role?

Hazen: Townspeople have questions about trees, particularly ones along the road sides. As a tree warden, you're a public servant for the benefit of our town. And, Paul, I have you to thank for that. You've helped me throughout my career so far. I think it's important for people to pass knowledge along to younger generations. It's great for me to gain that knowledge and then to pass it along to others. I'm excited to talk with people in the community and try to relay my knowledge to them. That's a big part of being an arborist. It's not just doing the work, but teaching and helping folks understand the function of trees. Perhaps the thing you do most in terms of public service is education.

Paul: Hazen, it pleases me to see you as East Montpelier's new tree warden. You'll help people understand about trees and their relationship to our town. That's

After an on-again, off-again spring, summer is truly upon us, with its abundance of outdoor activities (do weeding and mowing count?), vacations, and the national observance of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The East Montpelier of 1776 was mostly forested land, but after the Revolution, there was a land rush into Vermont territory. Tim Jerman shares the first section of his three-part story about twin brothers who fought in the Revolutionary War and subsequently settled in East Montpelier. That foundational conflict, and earlier events such as the French and Indian War and the NH-NY fight over Vermont territory, illustrate how our world has never been conflict-free. All the more reason to enjoy these halcyon

days of swimming, cookouts, gardens, trails, and bike rides. Who knew that we could take our bikes on the bus to St. Johnsbury or the train to Brattleboro and beyond? Doug Kievit-Kylar shows us the way. Speaking of bikes, our own Rachel Senechal reports on her days-long ride to Unity, Maine.

Here at the *Signpost*, we take great pleasure in discovering new people, places, and stories. In that regard, keep in mind that the September-October issue is "reader-produced," so look for the details later in this issue. Thank you for supporting and reading this newsletter and for sharing your own stories in the weeks to come. Happy Summer!

—Ann Stanton is Managing Editor of the *Signpost*.

Remembering Terry



Terry at Town Meeting 2026

Terry Allen tragically passed away on April 10 of Prion Disease. That so many of her friends and neighbors made it possible for her to die in her beloved home on Guyette Road is an indication of how valued she was by those lucky enough to know her.

Terry was a *Signpost* volunteer for many years, contributing her design skills and her photography. What many didn't know was that Terry had also been

a talented ceramicist, as well as a reporter and editor, with bylines or images appearing in the *Guardian*, the *Boston Globe*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times*, the *Nation*, *Salon*, *New Scientist*, *In These Times*, and many other publications. Traveling throughout the world, Terry documented both the human drama of injustice and the day-to-day story of lives lived.

From her obituary, written by Bryan Pfeiffer: "Terry leaves behind a legacy of investigative journalism, art, activism, friendships and photography, much of which will remain at her Substack, called Opposable, and her Flickr site. From a life of art, journalism, activism and community, Terry revealed for us a world beautiful, flawed, hardened and easily broken."

To see Terry's work: terryjallen.substack.com/, terryjallen.org/ or [flickr.com/photos/terryjallen/albums/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/terryjallen/albums/)

—Hilari Farrington was a friend, neighbor, and *Signpost* coworker to Terry.

Help Us Write the Next *Signpost* Issue

The September-October issue of the *Signpost* traditionally features a theme – a topic on which we ask our readers to weigh in. In the past we've heard about your favorite trails, the origins of your street names, and many other topics. These short stories are told in +/-250 words. Photos are welcome, too. This year we ask that you tell us all - **How did you wind up in East Montpelier and where did you come from?** Please respond to this prompt in any way that suits your experience; and, of course, tell us if you feel you made a good decision and why.

The deadline for submissions is Monday, July 29th. Please send your stories to emillervt@comcast.net. We're looking forward to learning more about one another.

EAST
MONTPELIER

The *Signpost*

PO Box 184
East Montpelier VT 05651

emSignpost.com
Signpost Archive

Signpost Volunteers

Celina Moore Barton
Columnist

Liz Benjamin
Proofreader

Alex Brown
Production, Mailing, Photography

Patty Connor
Layout & Design

Hilari Farrington
Features Co-editor

Sian Foulkes
Layout & Design

Margaret Grant
Proofreader

Rachael Grossman
Business Manager

Rosie Laquerre
Town Records and Webmaster

Edie Miller
Copy Coordinator
signpostteam@comcast.net

Carolyn Pastore
Copy Editor

Barbara Ploof
Records Editor

Mary Redmond
Copy Editor

Rachel Senechal
Features Co-editor

Ann Stanton
Managing Editor
profstanton@aol.com

Printed by L. Brown & Sons Printing
476-3164

From East Montpelier to Beyond— Without Turning the Key

story and photos by Doug Kievit-Kylar

Imagine leaving East Montpelier for the day with no car, no parking worries, and no gas stops—yet still ending up exploring art museums, mountain bike trails, or a lively downtown hundreds of miles away. It might sound like something that only works in Europe, but it can begin right here at home.

Years ago, I spent nearly a month traveling across Europe with my son using nothing but public transit. Trains and buses carried us smoothly between cities large and small, dropping us in the middle of walkable downtowns. We even found ourselves riding unusual conveyances—funicular railways and cable cars—simply because they were part of the local network. For weeks, we never once stepped into a car.

Back home in the United States, public transit often feels like an afterthought, especially in a rural state like Vermont. Yet many Vermonters may be surprised to learn that it is entirely possible to build day trips—and even longer adventures—around buses and trains from East Montpelier. The bus journey can begin at the Park-N-Ride lot across from Washington Electric Coop, where the US Route 2 Commuter operated by Green Mountain Transit stops. GMT, created by the Vermont General Assembly in 1973 after a private bus company shut down, now serves Montpelier and surrounding communities with LINK Express routes. Fares are extremely affordable at \$2.00, and only \$1.00 for those aged six to seventeen, people aged sixty and over, and those with disabilities.



Aboard that bus, you can ride to St. Johnsbury, after stops at the Goddard campus, Marshfield village, and Joe's Pond. Arriving in St. Johnsbury, a day trip might include visits to the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium or the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum to see

its remarkable collection of 19th century art.

Bring your bicycle along—buses have front-mounted bike racks—and the trip expands even further. From St. Johnsbury, you can ride sections of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, loop through the Northeast Kingdom, or venture into New Hampshire. Friends and neighbors, Paul Erlbaum and



Rachael Grossman, have used the bus to start a multi-day bike trip that took them into the White Mountains.

But the bus isn't the only way to travel car-free.

From Montpelier's station on Junction Road, the Amtrak Vermonter train runs daily between St. Albans and Washington, D.C., with stops in cities like New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Along the way, it also stops in Brattleboro, a southern Vermont town known for its vibrant arts scene, independent shops, and lively downtown along the Connecticut River.

Cyclists can bring their bikes on the train as well, though space is limited and requires a reservation. From Brattleboro, riders might cross into New Hampshire, roll south into Massachusetts, or follow the Connecticut River Valley north through Vermont before catching the Route 2 Commuter home.

The distances you can travel without a car might surprise you. What begins with a short bus ride from East Montpelier could end with a bike tour across New England—or a train trip to one of the great cities of the East Coast.

Public transit in Vermont may not be as extensive as in Europe, but it can still open doors to adventure. Sometimes, all it takes is leaving the car keys at home and stepping onto a bus or train. You might discover that the journey itself becomes part of the trip.

For more information and schedules: ridegmt.com/wp-content/uploads/March-2026_Berlin.pdf or amtrak.com/home

—Doug Kievit-Kylar lives blissfully with his life-partner, Renee, not on Bliss Road but on Brazier.

Cycling to Maine

by Rachel Senechal

I was wet. Really wet. After weeks of drought in the summer of 2025, I started my bicycle trip to Maine on September 6—the first day of rain in a very long time. My friend Pam Flanders was driving her car—my sag (support and gear) wagon—and meeting me every 10 miles or so, knitting a sweater while waiting for me along the way. We started from her home on Joe's Pond and headed to Unity, Maine, where my daughter Hannah and her husband Jim live.

The rain started after the first five miles and stayed with me until the end of the day. I cycled on the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to St. Johnsbury, then on Route 2 to Route 18 into Littleton. Even though I was drenched from the rain, I smiled as I cycled the hills. I hadn't trained much on hills, and I was a bit concerned about my first day on them. It turned out, the hills were no problem.

We spent the first night at a motel in Twin Mountain whose owners are from Vermont. We ate supper at the Copper Pot Bistro and were surprised to learn that the sandwiches were made with bread from Red Hen Bakery.

The next day, I started cycling at the Presidential Rail Trail in Whitefield, NH, which took me to Gorham, NH. The views of the mountains, ponds, and open marshes were spectacular. As I cycled closer to Gorham in a heavily forested section, I found large mounds of organic material along the trail. I stopped cycling, trying to determine what it was. I finally realized it was the largest bear scat that I have ever seen. I took off very quickly. No time for a photo; I didn't want to encounter the bears that left this scat!

In Gorham, I couldn't find the trestle that goes over Route 2 to the other side of the Androscoggin River, so Pam drove me to North Road in Shelburne, NH, where I cycled on a back road to Bethel, Maine, our stopping point for the night.

On the third day, we stopped at the Bethel Visitors Center to look at a map for side roads that would take us to Farmington. We headed to the Whistle Stop Rail Trail

in Jay that went to Farmington. I cycled through beautiful farmland and along the river, discovering areas I had never visited before. Most of the roads were cycle-friendly. I hopped on the Whistle Stop Rail Trail but quickly realized the surface was unbearable; clearly, the rail trail had suffered from flooding. I took to the streets and made my way to Wilton. My

sag wagon drove me to Farmington because Route 2 going into Farmington has no shoulder. We found our charming Airbnb, an old carriage house. Cooking our own breakfast in the well-appointed kitchen was a delight.



Rachel enjoys the view in Bethel, ME.

Photo by Pam Flanders.



Pam & Rachel begin at the Flanders' home.

Photo by Nick Flanders.



A spectacular long-range view from the Presidential Rail Trail.

Photo by Rachel Senechal.

Maine is really hilly. I knew this last day of cycling would be challenging. My husband, Wayne Hamilton, and I cycled this trip several years ago. Although we had driven to Unity several times, I hadn't noticed how hilly the route was until I was on my bike. Memories of Wayne were with me most of the day. Our destination was the Unity Public Library, which has two Airbnb rooms above the library. Staying in a library overnight was wonderful! And, of course, it was wonderful meeting up with Hannah and Jim. Next time, though, I will train on more hills.

—Rachel Senechal is co-features editor of the Signpost.

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

Town Treasurer

Michele Pallas
treasurer@eastmontpeliervt.org

Town Administrator

Jennifer Devine
manager@eastmontpeliervt.org

Fire Permits

Ty Rolland 793-8532

First Constable

Jon Boucher 917-4855

Animal Control Officer

Jon Boucher 917-4855

Listers

Deborah Fillion
Ross Hazel
Jez Harrington
223-3313 x206
listers@eastmontpeliervt.org

Health Officer

Harriott Shea
THO@eastmontpeliervt.org

Service Officer

Rachael Grossman 223-3177

Selectboard

Seth Gardner, Chair
sethbgardner@hotmail.com
Carl Etnier Scott Hess
Tom Brazier Joe Brooks

Planning Commission

Ben McCall, co2negative@yahoo.com

Development Review Board

Kim Watson, Chair
kwatson45@aol.com

WCUUSD Board

David Lowther, dlowther@u32.org
Flor Diaz Smith, fdiazsmith@u32.org
Zach Sullivan, zsullivan@u32.org

State Representative

Ela Chapin, 552-0242
echapin@leg.state.vt.us

Paul Cate Receives Tree Warden Recognition Award



Photo provided by Paul Cate

During the spring conference of the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program, held at VSU Randolph, Paul Cate, East Montpelier's recently retired Tree Warden, received the Larry Hamilton Award in recognition of his service. The award is in honor of Dr. Larry Hamilton, a world-renowned forest and mountain ecologist from Charlotte.

Paul served East Montpelier for more than 40 years, assisting in many capacities to help landowners and the Town tend to trees that needed attention, care, or removal. He

coordinated closely with town officials and many townspeople to meet their needs and address concerns relating to all kinds of trees. He was happy to be of service in this way, building on his education and experience in the forests of Vermont. He continues to serve on the Resilient Roads Committee.

On behalf of the Town of East Montpelier, the *Signpost* staff says to Paul "Well done and thank you!"

Comings and Goings

The old adage about change being the only constant is certainly true; and while we don't always look forward to altered situations, they always provide new opportunities. Lyn Blackwell has been molding the *Signpost* you read in many ways for many years as our very attentive and skillful proofreader. An official definition of that job tells us that a proofreader "...checks written text for spelling, grammar, and typographical errors prior to publication." It is one of those critical unseen jobs that affects the final product in untold ways. But that's just the beginning. In addition, Lyn has always been there to untangle mangled prose, recommend improvements, and to be sure that *Signpost* articles are not only readable, but also interesting and informative. Lyn, with her husband Ed, is moving out of East Montpelier. We thank her, and we will miss her.

The other part of this equation is the welcoming of new ideas and new talents. Stepping up to help fill the gap left by Lyn's absence are Margaret Grant and Liz Benjamin. Margaret is a professional writer who has lived in EM for several years and looks forward to engaging in town activities. Liz moved to town in recent years to be closer to her brother who farms in Plainfield. She is a composer of music, a square dancer, and, like Margaret, is eager to engage in the *Signpost's* mission to encourage "communityism." Welcome Margaret and Liz.



**TWIN
VALLEY
SENIOR
CENTER**

Canasta This classic card game combines skill, strategy, memory, and teamwork. Beginners and experienced players welcome. Join us: 2nd and 4th Monday, 10:15 am– noon.

Hot Dog - It's Friday! Grilled hot dog and drink: \$2; Fridays, noon-1 pm.

Volunteers Needed to deliver Meals on Wheels to seniors in our community. A small amount of time makes a big difference in someone's day by providing both a nutritious meal and a friendly check-in. For info: 802-223-3322

Vermont 250: Local Revolutionary Soldiers' Stories

by Tim Jerman

The current Montpelier and East Montpelier Historical Societies, (we were one community until 1848), have identified 49 local soldiers who fought in the American Revolution. Most of them had enlisted in other states and moved to Vermont between 1780 and 1820 during the land rush following the war. This is part one of a three-part article focusing on the human drama of two local soldiers who survived their service—brothers Joseph and Ziba Woodworth.

On April 4, 1763, twin boys were born in Bozrah, Connecticut, to a family already blessed with 17 children. One brother, Joseph, joined the Continental Army in 1777 at age 14. Although service in Connecticut was compulsory, recruits were supposed to be 16. However, many younger boys were accepted as drummers, fifers, and chore-doers. Joseph served in General Poor's regiment, under General Benedict Arnold, in the two battles of Saratoga. During those battles, eighteen days apart, the British were decisively defeated, forcing their surrender and retreat. The Battles of Saratoga are now considered a turning point in the war, persuading the French to ally with the Continental Army. Although Joseph's specific role is unknown, we do know that Connecticut soldiers took a heavy toll and were commended for bravery.

Joseph married, had five children, and moved with his wife Elizabeth to what is now East Montpelier in 1794. He bought land from Jacob Davis and Allen Carpenter on the northwest end of the Lyle Young Road, near today's Ananda Gardens. Joseph clearly was a community leader: a selectman for ten years, a town lister, and a three-term state legislator. (One of those one-year terms in 1803 was in Westminster, as Montpelier did not become the state capital until 1808. Travel for the three-week session in October would not have been easy.) Joseph worked hard on the farm, died in 1817 at age 54, and left a modest estate for his family.

Twin brother Ziba took a very different route to Vermont.



Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga



Fort Griswold Massacre

With his older brother Asahel, he joined Colonel William Ledyard's militia for the defense of Fort Griswold in 1781 at the age of seventeen. Guarding the Thames River in Groton, Connecticut, Fort Griswold was not far from his home. Furthermore, militia commander Ledyard had married his aunt—a family connection as well as a geographic one.

On September 6, the fort was attacked by British troops and loyalists led by Benedict Arnold, a man called "that revengeful and conscience-chafed devil incarnate," by Montpelier historian D.T. Thompson. This was the same hero of Saratoga under whom young Joseph had proudly served. But times had changed dramatically. Arnold had defected to the British in 1780. The British high command, anticipating the decisive Battle of Yorktown, were desperate to score a major victory in the northeast to draw Washington's troops away from Virginia, thereby allowing Cornwallis' army to escape.

In the next issue of the *Signpost*, I will recount the Fort Griswold massacre and recount Ziba's journey to East Montpelier.

—Tim Jerman lives in East Montpelier and is a member of Montpelier and East Montpelier Historical Societies. In 2025 he helped coordinate the 200th anniversary celebration of General Lafayette's 1825 Vermont visit.

Maple Syrup • Vermont Products • Country Store
Corporate Gifts • Woodshed Theatre • Folk Art

 **MORSE FARM**
MAPLE SUGARWORKS

Thanks a lot for your continued support!

1168 COUNTY ROAD, MONTPELIER, VT 05602
1-800-242-2740 • morsefarm.com

The Adamant Co-op

General Store, Post Office and Community Hub
since 1935

1313 Haggett Road
802-223-5760
adamantcoop.org



2026 #1 Dog

Photo by Sandal Cate



very useful and important. Also, you're the third generation of your family—from your grandparents to your parents, and now you—that has lived here and contributed to the fabric of town life. What does that feel like for you? And do you see it as a long-term place to live?

Hazen: This is home

for me. People here have done a lot for my family and me. It's beautiful here, and I don't want to be anywhere else. I enjoy seeing other places but this is the place I want to be. I want to do as much as I can for the people that have helped me. That's an important part of the community we have here.

Paul: Thank you for sharing your thoughts on becoming our town tree warden. I'm sure that townsfolk will enjoy interacting with you, Hazen. Carry on!

—Paul and Sandal Cate are long-time active members of the EM community.

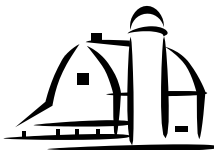
Photo by Jennifer Nance



Ladies and gentlemen, please raise the roof—and maybe hide your snacks—for this year's #1 dog, Bella! This 8-year-old black Lab from North Montpelier shares her home with her trusty canine sidekick Sassy, two proud parents, and two lucky kids. Originally from East Montpelier village, Bella was re-homed with the Nance family, and she's been stealing hearts ever since. A trained hunting

dog with serious retrieving skills, Bella is equally talented at entertaining children, enjoying car rides, and enthusiastically taste-testing absolutely anything edible. Please join me in giving a round of applause to Bella and her family for this paws-ively well-deserved honor!

Bella celebrates the occasion with a photo op, gift certificate from Agway, official #1 dog certificate, bragging rights and, of course, the #1 dog tag!



MCKNIGHT FARM

Farm store open daily
VOF certified organic milk, beef, and pork
Farm raised eggs

440 Snow Hill Road • East Montpelier • mcknightfarmvt.com
Kim (802)249-7753 or Seth (802)272-3478



Vermont Handicrafts & Gifts
Vermont Cheeses
Mail-order maple products We ship anywhere!

Maple Creemees All Year Long

One mile north of East Montpelier Village on Route 14
802.223.5757 www.braggfarm.com

E.E. PACKARD ENTERPRISES

Celebrating 35 years of serving Vermonters

Residential/Commercial
Land Clearing/Grading
Building & Site Prep/Water & Septic
Ponds & Driveways
Hauling

Call us today at 802.229.5741



Residential & Commercial
OIL DELIVERY

On & Off road diesel pumps
available at
290 Packard Rd, E. Montpelier

802.262.FUEL (3835)

Packardfuels.com
epackard@packardfuels.com

BIRTHS

- Irene Manning was born to Lauren & Raymond Manning in May
- Thiago Rodriguez-Mustafic was born to Lejna Mustafic & Bismark Rodriguez-Valdez in March

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

- Terry Allen died in April
- James Clemons, husband of Joni Perkins, died in May
- Blair Nance, husband of Holly and father of Bryant, died in May
- Nancy Streeter, mother of Jane Thurlow, died in April

LAND TRANSFERS

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

- Angela & Celine Biron, 10.5 acres and commercial buildings on US2 to Fairmont Mercantile, LLC and Fairmont Holdings, LLC
- Pamela, Angela & Celine Biron to Harper Properties, an easement off Quaker Rd.
- Thomas & Ann Brazier to Hilde Sibley, 0.77 acres of open land on Bliss Rd.
- Carol Delaney to Brooklynne Sundseth & Jessica Reid, 12.37 acres & dwelling on Sanders Cir.
- Estate of Edna Corliss to Vicki LaRose, 1.0 acre & mobile home on County Rd.
- Estate of Norma Clark Fleury to Edward Fleury, 2.0 acres & dwelling on Horn of the Moon Rd.
- Gregory Farnum to Kimberly Farnum, 3.82 acres & dwelling on Brazier Rd.
- Adam Galler & Allie McCann to Michele & Nathan Morrison, 3.79 acres on Coburn Rd.
- Harper Properties to Angela & Celine Biron, an easement off Quaker Rd.
- Kitchen Sync Holdings, LLC to Whispering Roots, LLC, 1.80 acres of open land on Wheeler Rd.
- Linda McCall to Michael & Melissa Pafundi, 1.67 acres & dwelling on Pine Ridge Rd.
- Darien McElwain to Leigh-Ann Garfield, 0.21 acre & dwelling on Factory St.

- Craig & Sheila Palmer to Richardson Aronson & Todd Darling, 5.59 acres & dwelling on VT14 S.
- Paul Parsons to Elizabeth Unger, 7.07 acres & dwelling on County Rd.
- Gregory Raymond to Gregory & Jean Raymond, 3.0 acres & dwelling on Towne Hill Rd.
- Town & Country Homes to Brianna Lane, a mobile home on Gould Hill Rd.

The following are highlights from the 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 options for remote attendance.

SELECTBOARD

March 23, 2026

- Selected Board officers: chair, Seth Gardner; vice chair, Scott Hess
- Adopted the 2026 SB rules of transaction
- Appointed new and continuing appointees as presented
- Referred barking dog issue to the ACO/Constable
- Approved EMFD purchase of two ZOLL X series cardiac monitors using ambulance revenue instead of capital reserve
- Authorized EMFD to spend up to \$160,000 to purchase self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment over next two fiscal years
- Accepted resolution, with amendments, establishing the East Montpelier Grants Committee
- Authorized the TA to complete survey to become an EV charger site host
- Authorized TC to approve the applications for Liquor/Tobacco permits for Mekkelsen wedding, JR Biron, and Fairmont Mercantile as presented

April 6, 2026

- Authorized TA to sign Project Commitment Form to continue sidewalk project with no changes from previous SB approval, with the \$11k match
- Authorized TA to submit the highway grant application

- Approved 2027 Town Highway Annual Financial Plan and Certificate of Compliance
- Agreed that listers are authorized to use the electric truck under same conditions as the road crew, provided that the TA verify that the listers are considered town employees by the insurance company
- Hired the low bidder EcoClean vendor of Middlesex for \$200 for first clean and \$100/week thereafter

May 4, 2026

- Authorized TA to accept the proposals from SE Group for the North Montpelier Downtown Village Master Plan and the North Montpelier Orchard Valley Waldorf School Master Plan
- Adopted the Town Plan as submitted
- Authorized TC to issue the liquor licenses for Fox Market as presented

May 11, 2026

- Following an executive session authorized TA to offer the Municipal Coordinator position to the candidate discussed at a rate of \$26.50 per hour, plus the standard benefits package, contingent upon the successful completion of a background check

May 18, 2026

- Signed the Sheriff's contract capped at \$18,000.
- Accepted the bid proposal from Timberworks LLC for the 25 x 35 foot recreation shelter
- Accepted the grant policy for East Montpelier as presented
- Authorized TA to apply for a grant for a bike/pedestrian scoping study
- Authorized TA to invite the Vermont Council on Rural Development for a community visit
- Authorized TA to sign off on the rbTech quote presented for the Town Garage network
- Authorized TA to sign Security Alarm Services Contract with Royal Monitoring Services of New England, Inc.
- Granted the Listers a 28-day extension for the lodging of the Grand List

May 26, 2026

- Joint meeting with Calais Selectboard. Entered into executive session. Decided to meet jointly again on June 1.

PLANNING COMMISSION

March 19, 2026

- Discussed goals for coming year.

April 2, 2026

- Adopted Rules of Procedure as presented
- Elected officers: chair, Ben McCall; vice chair, Becca Schrader; secretary, Glenn Weyant

May 7, 2026

- Recommended to SB that we do a VCRD community visit, send them an email with information, and send Becca to SB meeting to discuss
- Celina Barton announced her intention to step down from PC

May 21, 2026

- Reviewed CVRP's future land use map and housing targets for East Montpelier. Alex presented the new mapping system showing different land use categories including rural conservation, rural general, and village areas, explaining how these classifications would impact development opportunities and housing targets. Debated best approach for engaging the public about new mapping system.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

April 7, 2026

- Discussed application 26-006 by William Smith for a 2-lot minor subdivision at 626 Taylor Farm Road, Parcel ID 08-068.000, Tax Map # 10-00-10.100. Approved the application of the subdivision as described and waived the requirement of a survey of the remaining Lot #1.

WCUUSB

April 8, 2026

- Participated in Q&A about pre-K programming for 26-27 school year
- Approved hiring Ruairi Hutchison – U-32, Special Education Teacher, 1.00 FTE, and Hayden Roberge – U-32, PE/Health Teacher, 1.00 FTE
- Accepted resignations with great appreciation: Randy Brown, U-32

Science, resigning 0.20 FTE of their position (6/30/26), Sharon Spector, Rumney School Counselor, resigning 0.20 FTE of their position (6/30/26), Amy Molina, U-32 Assistant Principal resigning effective 6/30/2026, Scott Benerofe, U-32 MS Science, resigning effective 6/30/2026, Amy Young, Doty School Librarian, resigning effective 6/30/2026, Makenna Lund, EMES/Rumney Music, resigning effective 6/30/2026

- Approved following changes in FTE: Randy Brown, U-32 Science will be 0.80 FTE in 26-27 school year, Sharon Spector, Rumney School Counselor will be 0.60 FTE in 26-27 school year, Heather Clark-Warner, EMES will be 1.00 FTE in 26-27 school year, Katie Walczak, BES will be 1.00 FTE in 26-27 school year
- Approved the following job descriptions: Project Director (Youth Community Educator Work-Based Learning Afterschool), Site Director (Youth Community Educator Work-Based Learning Afterschool), Workshop Facilitator, Student Leader Designer, Youth Community Educator Trainee, Youth Community Educator Intern

April 15, 2026

- Board evaluation discussion focused on new members training, number and timing of Board retreats, and the merits of standing firm or not on previous decisions
- Approved 2026-27 school calendar
- Approved new hire Jaycee Coyle, EMES, SLP, 0.50FTE. Approved hiring long term substitute (25-26 school year) Eric Kapner, U-32, Classroom Math Teacher. Approved extended leave of absence for Kimberly Knapp, BES
- Following executive session accepted administration's recommendation for both residency requests

May 6, 2026

- Passed a resolution thanking our district teachers and staff for their service
- Approved these hires: Elijah Hawkes, U-32 Interim Principal; Ilana Williams, 1.00 FTE, U-32 MS Science Teacher; Sarah Berry, 1.00 FTE, EMES/Calais Music Teacher;

Jenna Hallstrom 1.00 FTE SLP – WCUUSD

- Accepted these resignations: Sarah Ainsworth, Rise Coordinator, U-32; Sarah Cousins, SLP, WCUUSD; Cairsten Keese, School Counselor, U-32; Liza Semler, Work-Based Learning Coord.; William Poderzay, Special Education Teacher, WCUUSD
- Following an executive session approved the recommendation from the administration regarding the student residency exemption request
- Heard public comments regarding placement of students of various ages in school buildings in a town other than the one in which they live

May 20, 2026

- Listened to public comments about the reconfiguration proposal and the process for reaching this proposal
- Approved the following hires: Jarrod Weiss, U-32 Asst. Principal; Karoline May, Principal Doty/Rumney; Bonnie Gadapee, U-32 Community & Work-Based Learning Coordinator
- Discussed Board concerns related to details of the reconfiguration proposal

Adamant Music School 2026 Season

International artists and emerging pianists come together this summer at the Adamant Music School. The 2026 season features new leadership under Juilliard faculty member Vivian Chang, a roster of artist-teachers from institutions including Curtis, Juilliard, Oberlin, and Eastman, and many concerts in Adamant, Montpelier, and surrounding communities. The program also introduces Piano Camp, a new offering for adult pianists of all levels.

For summer concert schedule and information go to adamant.org.

Papagena Days

by Celina Barton

Summer in East Montpelier arrives quietly. One morning the hills seem greener than they were the day before. The air carries the scent of cut grass and lilacs. Screen doors swing open. On Center Road, light luxuriously stretches across the meadows. The fields on Route 14 ripple with waist-high grasses. Peonies pop. Swallows return to the barns. Along the Winooski and around Wrightsville, the evenings fill with laughter drifting across the water. The whole town exhales after the long winter and breathes.

In summer, the landscape feels less like scenery and more like a companion. Barns, streams, stone walls, and wooded ridgelines lean closer. Life spills outdoors. Supper stretches onto porches. Children roam until dusk. Neighbors linger at the mailbox. The long northern twilight signals that daylight itself is reluctant to leave.

This season always reminds me of Mozart's Magic Flute. Not the grand opera house version alone, but the Vermont version of my growing-up years: pop-up productions; church fellowship halls transformed into an enchanted forest; the school gymnasiums where children first encountered Mozart; community theaters stitched together by volunteers; old opera houses scattered across central Vermont; barns where music echoed off wooden beams older than most of us. And, of course, the unforgettable experience of Opera in the Field, where the landscape itself became part of the performance and the evening sky stepped in as scenery.

In my Vermont, opera has never belonged only to velvet curtains and chandeliers. It belongs to fields; to church suppers; to folding chairs carried from pickup trucks; to car Karaoke with Sarastro and Queen of the Night; to neighbors showing up.

That may be why Mozart's Papagena—she who symbolizes country earthiness and the wonders of nature—feels so familiar here. In summer evenings, for a brief moment, as fireflies begin appearing above the fields, and the evening light settles over the hills, everything feels illuminated from within.

Like the stage lights have just come up.

Perhaps that is why the story of The Magic Flute continues to appear generation after generation in places like ours. Beneath all its fantasy and spectacle, it tells a simple truth: after all the trials, all the searching, all the darkness, what we are really seeking is connection.

To each other.

To the land.

To wonder itself.

During Papagena Days, East Montpelier makes that truth feel visible everywhere you look.

—Celina Moore Barton grew up in East Montpelier, flew from the nest for several decades, and has returned to play an active role in our community including writing this column for the Signpost.

Paulie's Recipe BOILED COOKIES

This cookie recipe will save you from turning on the oven on hot summer days.

Melt a stick of butter in a saucepan. Stir in the following ingredients:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup milk

Bring to a boil and boil for two minutes. Be ready to immediately add

- 1/3 - 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 1/2 cups quick oats

Mix very well. On parchment paper or wax paper, drop spoonfuls of the batter. Let cool completely. Makes 3 dozen cookies.

—Recipe from Dodie Vinton,
East Montpelier Elementary School Cookbook

Alco Energy Products
OIL & PROPANE DELIVERY, SALES & SERVICE

Locally Owned & Operated
Now Supplying Premium Heating Oil

Route 14, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651
Ph: 802-223-0126 • Cell: 802-793-4013
homeenergy@pshift.com

Oil & Propane Delivery • Air Conditioning • Installation • Service



FAIRMONT
MARKET
EST. 2020 | FAMILY RAISED | FAMILY ENJOYED

We offer locally raised beef, pork and lamb and Cabot products.
Orders can be placed any day for pick-up.
Call or email for open hours.

Check out our inventory or place an order at:
www.fairmontfarminc.com/shop-our-market
bonnie@fairmontfarminc.com
802-272-8426

Birding by Ear on East Montpelier Trails

by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur

East Montpelier has about 2,600 human residents and untold numbers of wildlife residents. Step outside on any May morning, and the wealth of bird life in our town immediately becomes apparent, as a symphony of song greets the ear. Some of the best places to see and hear this chorus are on the East Montpelier Trails network. In May, I set out to get a sense of what species are out there on the trail.

I'm an exceptionally mediocre birder and not much of a technophile, but the popular phone app, Merlin, has transformed my birding pursuits. If you're not familiar with Merlin, the free app was created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and launched in 2014. The original Merlin was only a visual identification guide; in 2021, a sound identification capability was added, which was a game changer. Merlin learns from at least 100 clean recordings for every species to achieve its remarkable accuracy. After the sound identification feature was added, Merlin became the most downloaded reference app—with more than 10 million worldwide users.

For my sampling of which birds are flying around our neighborhoods, I set out on short walks across our town's trail network in mid-May, at 8 am, in similar weather conditions. My first walk was on the Templeton-Fairmont Trail off Dodge Road, a deep, mature forest right in the center of town. In ten minutes, Merlin identified 20 species, including a wide variety of warblers. I saw only a few birds, but thanks to the app, I was able to locate and catch glimpses of such beauties as the Indigo Bunting and the Common Yellowthroat.

My next walk was on the west side of town on the Sparrow Farm Trail, which includes open fields and a wetland. Merlin identified 17 species including Red-winged Blackbird and Alder Flycatcher, which are found in this type of habitat.

My final walk was on the woody Karen Clark Trail on the south side of town near U-32, where Merlin identified 17 species. I was pleased to finally hear my two favorite bird songs on this stretch, the Hermit Thrush (Vermont's state

bird) and the White-throated Sparrow.

The most common bird on all three walks was the Ovenbird, with its noisy sewing machine refrain. Only five species were identified in all three locations: Ovenbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, Red-eyed Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, and American Crow. In all, Merlin identified 34 different species.

I sent the list of birds to my friend and bird wizard Bryan Pfeiffer to see if there were any anomalies among the identified species. The only one he thought was unlikely was the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher on Sparrow Farm.

Our East Montpelier Trails system is not only great for getting exercise but is also a rich opportunity for seeing, and hearing, a wide variety of birds.



Photo by Gary Ann Lewis

Here is the complete list of bird species –

Dodge Road Trail:

American Crow
American Goldfinch
Black-capped Chickadee
Black-throated Green Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Blue Jay
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Easter Wood-Pewee
Indigo Bunting
Nashville Warbler
Northern Yellow Warbler
Ovenbird
Pine Warbler
Red-eyed Vireo
Scarlet tanager
Winter Wren
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Sparrow Farm South:

Alder Flycatcher
American Crow
American Goldfinch
American Robin
Black-throated Green Warbler
Blue Jay
Black-capped Chickadee

Common Yellowthroat

Hairy Woodpecker
Ovenbird
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Red-eyed Vireo
Red-winged Blackbird
Scarlet Tanager
Song Sparrow
Veery
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

Karen Clark Trail:

Alder Flycatcher
American Crow
Black-and-white Warbler
Blue-headed Vireo
Black-Throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Hermit Thrush
Northern House Wren
Northern Parula
Ovenbird
Red-breasted nuthatch
Red-eyed Vireo
Tufted Titmouse
White-throated Sparrow
Wood Thrush



Leslie Drown Real Estate, LLC

Leslie Drown®

Broker/Owner

LeslieDrownRealtor@gmail.com

802-279-2782

—Jeb Wallace-Brodeur is a member of the EMTI board of directors.



EAST MONTPELIER Signpost

PO Box 184, East Montpelier VT 05651
Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 61
Montpelier, VT

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

CALENDAR

Mon. July 20, 6 pm, EM & Calais Historical Societies annual ice cream social and croquet match. Reed/Doyle home, 1795 Rte. 214, N. Montpelier. Bring a chair and bug repellent. All players welcome! Watch FPF for rainy day relocation. Free and open to the public. Contact: *sandal.cate@gmail.com*

Mon. July 20, 7:30-9:30 pm, Spencer Myer, piano concert, Adamant Community Club

Sun. Aug 2, 7:30-9:30 pm, Rebecca Penneys, piano concert, Adamant Community Club

Mon. Aug 17, 6 pm, EM & Calais Historical Societies Meeting, Potluck, Old Brick Church, EM Village. "Meet the Walter Coates Driftwind Press," a local poetry publisher circa 1925-1935. Bring a dish to share and own place settings. Free and open to the public. Contact: *sandal.cate@gmail.com*

Tues. Aug 18, 11 am-2 pm, Thrive & Connect Resource Fair, Twin Valley Sr. Ctr. Meet representatives from local organizations and services that support health, wellness, independence, and quality of life. FREE lunch provided. For more info call 802-223-3322.

IMPORTANT DATES

Fri. July 3, Town offices closed, Independence Day

Sat. July 25, 10 am, Ribbon Cutting at New Town Garage, 325 Templeton Road. Light refreshments will be served.

Tues. Aug 11, 7 am-7 pm, Primary election at EMES. Ballots MUST be requested for early voting.

Mon. Sept 7, Town offices closed, Labor Day

Wed. Sept 8 + Thurs. Sept 9, Town Clerk's & Treasurer's offices closed, training

Thank you for your support

**NANCY COUCH
ELAINE MANGHI
KATE RADER AND KEN HERTZ
FRED STRONG**

**SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER SIGNPOST
SUBMISSIONS DUE: JULY 29, 2026**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

1st Tues. 6:30 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
1st & 3rd Wed. 6:15 pm
3rd Mon. 6 pm

Town Office Building
EMFD Community Room
Four Corners Schoolhouse
Town Office Building
Elementary School
Town Office Building
Rotating Locations (check website)
Old Brick Church/E. Calais