

Ryan Chapell: Roots & Stumps in East Montpelier

by Lyn Blackwell



Photo by Michelle Chapell

Chapell sharing his love of compost.

Ryan, an eighth generation Vermonter, is a descendant of John and Mary Ann Templeton, who migrated to town from Peterborough, NH, in 1788. Their son, John Jr., and his wife Lorany settled on the present Templeton Farm in 1810. Ryan is particularly honored to be part of his family's heritage in East Montpelier and hopes the early settlers would be proud of how his family continues to care for the land.

Though Ryan's business is located in town and he grew up here, he currently lives on Peacham Pond with his wife, Michelle. His parents moved back to the farm in 1986, and he went to schools in East Montpelier. From an early age, he worked on the Sibley and Hall (now Fairmont) farms before taking a job at UPS while a junior at U-32 High School. His career at UPS as a long-haul driver lasted 24 years before he decided he needed a change.

When I asked Ryan, "Why stump grinding?" and not farming, he cited his grandfather's remark, "If they had a cow that milked five days a week, I'd be a farmer." Stump grinding seems to fulfill Ryan's love of the outdoors, his penchant for

You've probably heard about Templeton Farm at the corner of Center and Lyle Young Roads, where the Chapell family sells grassfed beef and maple syrup, but do you know about Green Mountain Stump Grinding? Ryan Chapell, who has deep roots in East Montpelier, has been running his business from the farm since 2021.

working with machinery, and, above all, his desire to be a part of his family's stewardship of the land.

As Ryan explains, a stump grinder is a low-impact machine that helps preserve the surrounding land better than a backhoe or excavator that rips out deep roots, often causing soil disruption and subsequent erosion. He uses a remote-control machine that allows him to get closer to the grinding wheel and direct its action to avoid large rocks. He grinds the stump to a depth of one foot, leaving the remaining roots to decompose.

As Ryan developed his business, he realized that he could use the byproducts of grinding productively. He hauls the resulting wood chips from the site to the farm and adds manure from there and neighboring farms to make compost. Returning to the grinding site, he spreads topsoil and compost onto the area, seeds it, and covers it with mulch. He noted that the final price depends on the nature of the site—whether it's close to a house and its foundation or in an open field.

Most of Ryan's customers have heard about his detailed work through word-of-mouth. Some of his more interesting jobs have included sites with spectacular views of Lake Champlain and the steep slopes on Mad River Glen. He's traveled as far as Island Pond, where he ground 300 stumps at Brighton State Park for the Vermont Department of Forest and Parks.

In addition to stump grinding, local folks can also buy Ryan's wood chips, topsoil, and compost, resulting in five products for sale from one beautiful farm. Much like their early ancestors who raised cows, sheep, pigs, and hens, and sold beef, cheese, butter, wool, eggs, apples, and maple sugar, the Chapells have a diversified operation.

Yet it's not easy to start a local business, according to Ryan. He has gone through numerous site reviews with the Vermont Department of Agriculture, state environmental officials,

Photo by Edie Miller



Signs of spring in the yard - the first croci of the season.

As I started to write this piece in the waning days of March, looking out at my dull, brown, snow-littered lawn, I was trying to think ahead (hopefully) to the wonderful spring weather that would be surrounding us when this issue lands in our mail boxes in May. Suddenly, the temps rose into the fifties, and, as if by magic, there were hints of lilies, daffodils, and crocuses poking up through the leaves that I failed to rake last fall. Green shoots in this uninspiring expanse! Finally, a sign that the back of what felt like a very long, cold winter—much like those I remembered from decades ago—had been broken. That was confirmed when a friend who was busy in a local sugar house mentioned that they had put up 200 gallons of syrup the same day.

So once again, the truism that “spring always comes” finally proved itself—just in time for many of us. In ordinary times, we look forward to and need the motivation of new beginnings that spring provides. In these days of geopolitical turmoil, changing climate, and rising prices, the promises of spring feel like a lifeboat. These signs of yearly rebirth remind us to focus on the many things in our lives we can enjoy and over which we have some control: our friends and families, our gardens, and those many aspects of our daily lives that keep us attached to nature and to one another. Happy spring!

—Edie Miller is a longtime Signpost volunteer..

Roots & Stumps, continued from p. 1

Photo by Michelle Chapell



the town zoning administrator, and the selectboard. He notes that he is not using contaminating amendments, food waste, or other additives for his compost. The Chapell land is in the state current use program and conserved with the Vermont Land Trust. Both entities review his operation for compliance.

Go to greenmtnstumpgrinding.com to learn more about Green Mountain Stump Grinding and see a video of Ryan's grinder.

—Lyn Blackwell lives near the Chapells and is a proofer for the Signpost. She is a co-author of *Across the Onion: A History of East Montpelier, Vermont*

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Printed by L. Brown & Sons Printing 476-3164

Slow Art in a Fast World: Inside Penny Bun Press

by Joe Brooks

Today, a flood of AI-generated content can leave you questioning what is real. It becomes more necessary to find comfort in the handmade, the handcrafted, and the fruits of human intelligence and creativity.

In an upstairs studio in the village of North Montpelier, artist Myrrh Brooks uses one of the oldest forms of printmaking—with a history that spans more than a thousand years and several cultures—to handcraft personalized fine art prints.

Woodcut is valued for its bold lines, strong contrasts, and distinctive hand-crafted texture. Woodcut printmaking is a relief-printing technique in which an artist carves an image into the surface of a wooden block. The areas left raised will hold



ink and print, while the carved-away areas remain white.

Myrrh studied at Smith College under the renowned American visual artist and printmaker Barry Moser. Moser is most well-known for his wood engravings and print illustrations for Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures*

in Wonderland. He was a professor at Smith until his retirement in 2025.

To make her unique art, Myrrh draws a design directly onto the wood block or transfers a reversed image onto the surface. Using carving tools—gouges, knives, and chisels—she cuts away the non-printing areas, leaving the image raised in relief. Ink is rolled onto the raised surface with a brayer. Only the uncarved (raised) areas receive ink. Paper is placed over the inked block, and pressure is applied with a printing press to transfer the ink to the paper.

Myrrh started Penny Bun Press in 2020, in Northampton, Massachusetts, as a way to share and market her unique, hand-carved woodcut prints to a wide audience. Since then, Penny Bun Press has grown to include an Etsy shop, handmade cards and art prints, and the creation of custom logo designs for several rural businesses.



Photos provided by Myrrh Brooks

In 2024, Myrrh self-published her first children's book through her own publishing company, Penny Bun Press. Her book, *Apples for Georgia*, which uses the same woodcut printmaking process for each of the illustrations, is a celebration of "nature, slow, snowy adventures, collecting windfalls, and feeding them to a friend in the barn." Inspired by her own children and visits to a family member's farm, it is a delightful, cozy winter story.

In 2025, Myrrh moved with her husband and two children to North Montpelier and re-established her press in her home. She continues to perfect her craft and is currently working on a hardcover edition of *Apples for Georgia* while planning her next book.

—Joe Brooks is a newly-elected selectboard member.
He and his wife Myrrh live in North Montpelier

Adamant Co-op Blackfly Festival: If You Can't Beat 'Em, Join 'Em

by Liz Knapp

Nestled at the convergence of five gravel roads, tucked between Adamant Pond and Sodom Pond, the Adamant Food Co-op perches atop a knoll in a little valley, surrounded by gorgeous landscaping maintained by the Adamant Music School. A merry brook burbles and splashes through downtown Adamant, connecting the two ponds, confined (usually) between walls built of granite that was quarried nearby. Sounds idyllic, right? And it is... except for one month out of the year in mid-spring, when swarms of blackflies emerge from their breeding grounds in the stream, hungry for blood, relentless in their search for food. Attracted to the very air we exhale, these tiny, biting, maddening insects swarm our necks and burrow behind our ears, driving us all inside for some escape.

But where is the fun in that? After a long, cold winter, we just want to be outside. Twenty-four years ago, the Adamant Co-op decided, in true cooperative fashion, that enough was



Photos taken from adamantcoop.org/blackfly-festival

enough: if we can't beat 'em, let's join 'em. And, so, the very first annual Blackfly Festival came to be.

Always held on the first Saturday of June, rain or shine, this free, day-long, family-friendly festival serves as an important fundraiser for the Co-op. Beginning with a naturalist-led nature walk, it continues with bug-themed crafting activities, live music all day, a bake sale, grilled food, and general mayhem. The highlight of the day is a parade in which anyone can join. Create your costume, grab your bug zapper, and be ready to walk with tractors, lawn mowers, maybe a few farm animals, and fabulous floats.

This year, the Blackfly Festival will be held on Saturday, June 6. For more information, visit adamantcoop.org/blackfly-festival.

—Liz Knapp has lived in and around Adamant for 25 years. She is the manager of the Adamant Co-op.



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manager@eastmontpeliervt.org

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Jon Boucher 917-4855

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echapin@leg.state.vt.us

Re-envisioning the Singing Bridge: A Blueprint for North Montpelier

by Tommy Barton

Imagine a North Montpelier where the village center is more than an intersection. Imagine a Saturday morning where you walk along a shaded trail from the Pond to the Waldorf School, stopping at a community-run kiosk for coffee, and nodding to a young family who just moved into a climate-resilient cottage near Orchard Valley. A place where the next generation doesn't just grow up but chooses to stay.

I'm Tommy Barton. I'm 22, I grew up here, and I'm finishing my degree in Design Engineering and Urban Studies at Brown University. For my senior capstone, I've spent the last few months asking a single question:

What if North Montpelier could become a model for how rural communities thrive?

My work is built on what I heard at Town Meeting Day in March. When over 30 residents shared their priorities for East Montpelier's future, three clear issues rose to the top:

- **Affordable Housing:** We need options so families and seniors can continue to live here.
- **Climate Resilience:** The 2023 flooding proved we need better long-term planning.
- **Retaining Young People:** Our community thrives when the next generation chooses to stay.

The good news? Our town has secured over \$200,000 in grants to address these very challenges. My project serves as a bridge, taking those "sticky note" ideas from Town Meeting Day and turning them into an actionable roadmap the selectboard can use to invest that money wisely.

Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), I've been mapping our village to identify exactly where we can build housing that avoids flood zones while staying close to existing infrastructure. I've been planning trails that connect our community assets and identifying sites for public gathering spaces, because a thriving village needs places where neighbors actually run into each other.

But this project goes beyond maps and data. It's about understanding what makes a place worth staying for. North Montpelier has two centuries of leadership history and a scrappy Yankee spirit that proved itself during the 2023 flood response, when neighbors showed up for neighbors without hesitation.

I'll be presenting my final project to the town administrator in early May, with maps showing where we should prioritize investments and how housing, trails, and public spaces can work together to create the village we've already begun to imagine.

But the real work happens after that. We have the resources. We have the will. The question isn't whether we can act—it's how boldly we are willing to imagine what comes next.

What if this small village became a national model for how rural communities not only survive, but lead? What if we stopped planning around limitations and started designing around belonging, resilience, and possibility? And maybe the real question is this: if we already know what matters, what is stopping us from building it now?

*—Tommy Barton lives in North Montpelier and is
a member of the Class of 2026 at Brown University.*

DREAM Grant Update: Don't Heat the Outdoors

by Celina Moore Barton

Most of us don't think much about where our heat goes or where it comes from as long as it works. We turn up the thermostat, the boiler kicks on, and we hope the fuel bill isn't too painful when it arrives. But here is the uncomfortable truth: in most Vermont homes, a significant portion of the heat we pay for—and the money that buys it—simply leaks away. Through the attic. Through the basement. Through walls and windows. Efficiency Vermont estimates that the gaps and cracks in a typical Vermont house add up to roughly a two-foot by two-foot hole in our homes. Are you wondering why your bills are so high? Think of that giant hole draining your heat and your wallets. The good news? East Montpelier has already done some of the leg work to help you fix it.

Meet the DREAM (Decarbonization, Resilience, and Energy Affordability in East Montpelier) Grant. Through a federal Energy Efficiency grant administered by the Vermont Department of Public Service, our town has secured funding to help connect every East Montpelier household with the weatherization resources they qualify for: free audits, rebates, low-interest loans, and, in some cases, full coverage of improvements for income-qualified families.

Early survey results are telling. Nearly every home in town would benefit from better air-sealing and insulation. Most still run on fossil fuels. And energy prices are only getting less predictable as geopolitical shocks, supply disruptions, and new data centers strain the grid. The one thing we can control is how much energy our homes actually need.

A well-weatherized home is warmer in February, cooler in August, and more resilient when the power goes out. The improvements last decades. For neighbors on fixed incomes, elders in old farmhouses, and young families watching every dollar—this is real money back in your pockets, year after year.

What It Involves: No major renovations are required.

The highest-impact work is often the least dramatic: sealing gaps in your attic and basement, adding insulation where heat is escaping, and making sure your heating system isn't working twice as hard as it needs to. Efficiency Vermont will walk you through exactly what your home needs and what help is available to pay for it. Federal tax credits currently cover up to 30 percent of qualifying work for most households.

This is a Community Project. When one home is tightened up, that family saves money. When a whole town does it together, we become collectively harder to shake—less vulnerable to fuel price spikes and less dependent on our energy dollars leaving Vermont. East Montpelier has always looked out for its own. This is just that tradition applied to our buildings.

Take five minutes today to complete the survey:

eastmontpeliervt.org/dream-program-decarbonization-resilience-and-energy-affordability-in-east-montpelier/

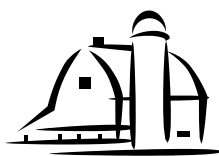
The DREAM survey connects you to the specific resources available for your home and situation. It's free, it's quick, and it's the first step toward potentially saving hundreds—or thousands—of dollars a year.

Or Call Efficiency Vermont:

1-888-921-5990—free, helpful, no sales pitch

Don't wait for next February's fuel bill to make you wish you had taken action on this. The help is here now. Your neighbors are doing this. Take the survey and join the effort!

—Celina Moore Barton is a Signpost volunteer who lives in North Montpelier



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Mallory Brook Bridge Needs Support

by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur

About a decade ago, likely during a winter thaw, the pedestrian bridge over Mallory Brook was carried away by surging waters. The bridge's demise removed a key link in the chain of trail segments that comprise the East Montpelier Trails (EMTI) network. A temporary rerouting of the trail was built, but the brook crossing is challenging during ideal conditions and downright perilous during high water. After years simmering on the back burner, the construction of a much-anticipated new bridge over Mallory Brook will be a focus of EMTI's work this summer.

The original bridge, designed by former State Naturalist Charles Johnson, was built without power tools by the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. The team used a horse to drag trees to the site. The structure lasted a dozen years but slowly weakened and was eventually swept away.

The new bridge will have steel supports and long-lasting hardwood decking and railings. EMTI has enlisted the expertise of local trail builders Timber & Stone to install the 40-foot span. Timber & Stone has recently built several new trails in Montpelier's Hubbard Park. They have also built some high-profile projects around the country, and their work is highly regarded. Steel beams will need to be transported to the site and installed by professionals. With the exception of Timber & Stone's labors, all work will be done by volunteers.

Despite these savings, the cost of this long-overdue project exceeds our annual budget capacity. Thus, we are embarking on a modest capital campaign to raise the \$15,000 needed to complete the bridge.

Our annual budget from the town covers mowing and maintenance on our 18 miles of multiuse trails. Last year we replaced and extended the 550-foot boardwalk on the Sparrow Farm South trail and completed the new 1.5-mile Sparrow Farm North trail. We also completed a re-routing of the Dodge Road to Center Road trail and the dedication of a bench to Austin Cleaves.

Thanks to the generosity of numerous community members, we have raised \$4,980 in the first few weeks of our fundraiser. Every donation helps. A \$20 donation buys a decking plank and \$80 buys a railing.

Work on the new bridge should begin in mid-June, and we hope to have completed our fundraising by that time. Community members are invited to come out and see this project and/or the Sparrow Farm reroute project, also scheduled for this summer.



Donations may be made by check and mailed to:
East Montpelier Trails, Inc.
PO Box 483, Montpelier, VT 05601

or by Venmo: @EastMontpelierTrailsInc

or PayPal: EastMontpelierTrailsIncorporated

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

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MARRIAGES

- Seth Deuso and Jade Powers were married in October.

DEATHS - survivors living in East Montpelier are listed when known

- Evan Benton died in December
- Dixie Blake, wife of Richard Blake, died in January
- Charles Bond, husband of Johnna Bond, died in February
- Melissa Colson died in January
- Earle Ellingwood, husband of Louise Grouleau-Ellingwood, died in March
- Patricia Hersey died in February
- Frederick Jacek died in November
- Norman LaPerle, husband of Claire LaPerle, died in January
- Grace Mekkselsen, mother of Bruce (Laurie), grandmother of Olivia, Jenna and John, died in March
- Bradley Witham, brother of Carroll, uncle of Susan, died in February

LAND TRANSFERS

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

- David Burrus to Seth & Jessica Mitchell, 28.5 acres & dwelling on Horn of the Moon Road
- Susan Clayton to Dylan & Madelyn Walker-Clayton, 10.4 acres on North Street
- Mikaela Engert to Benjamin Franks & Ashley Kiel, 2.94 acres & dwelling on County Road
- Kyle Komline to Kyle Komline & Olivia Jane Davis Burt, 34 acres on Old Trail Road
- John Lambert to Wesley & Brooke Golliot, 10.56 acres & dwelling on US2

- Marlene Mueller to Tracy Fecteau, a mobile home on Sandy Pines Road
- Herri Son to Kyle Komline, 34 acres on Old Trail Road

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

January 21, 2026

- Recommended Harriott Shea to Vermont Health Department as EM Town Health Officer
- Agreed to put forward the FY27 budget as proposed
- Approved Town Meeting and Informational Meeting Warnings as presented
- Appointed Kevin McCollister as Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District Board Rep for EM
- Appointed Nora Duane to Funding Study Request Committee
- Appointed Joe Brooks as SB member until 3-3-25
- Approved additional \$3,350 for the new town garage commissioning agent CX Associates fee

February 9, 2026

- Approved up to \$35,000 toward recreation field shelter, funded from Carlton Smith Fund and Opportunity Fund (Hudson House)
- Agreed to sign letter of support for Generations Vermont's work to establish an intergenerational day services center serving Central

Vermont, to be submitted as part of a USDA community development loan application

- Agreed to renew the map maintenance contract with CAI Technologies which maintains the Town's tax maps continuing their services through 3/31/27, at a cost of \$2,000 plus \$20.00/building added or changed
- Agreed to allow WEC to bury a line in right-of-way along Bliss Road

March 2, 2026

- Participated in the first hearing of draft of updated Town Plan
- Approved curb cut #26-003, Green Rd.
- Approved curb cut #26-005, Taylor Farm Rd.

PLANNING COMMISSION

January 22, 2026 (Special Meeting)

- Followed up on public hearing on new version of Town Plan. Received feedback regarding the half-mile buffer around cell towers and intends to include the issue at the time of the in-depth review of the 2027 Town Plan.
- Discussed potential zoning changes for priority housing areas especially as impacting Goddard College project

February 5, 2026

- Discussed formalizing the structure of the Planning Grants Group. Becca Schrader volunteered to be its facilitator/coordinator.
- Discussed potential zoning changes for priority housing areas

February 19, 2026

- Discussed formalizing structure, purpose, and membership of grants working group

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- Agreed to close the PC survey and analyze and evaluate the data and present it to the PC in April

March 5, 2026

- Formed a working group consisting of Ben McCall, Erica Zimmerman, Becca Schrader, and Celina Barton to work with the TA to polish proposed resolution to form a Grants Committee

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

February 3, 2026

- Discussed a sketch plan proposed by William Smith for a potential 2-lot subdivision at 626 Taylor Farm Road, creating a separate 2–4-acre lot. The DRB suggested requesting a waiver from surveying all of Lot #1, requesting a curb cut from the SB, and having a turnaround created on the driveway to Lot #3.

WCUUSB

February 4, 2026

- Accepted resignation of Lauren Kiessling, WCUUSD School Psychologist, effective March 6, 2026
- Accepted recommendation of administration in support of two residency requests

February 18, 2026

- Heard public comments in reaction to the proposed budget especially regarding concerns about retaining the music programs and about math instruction at Doty
- Discussed concerns about communication, transparency, and sharing of emails
- Accepted FY25 audited financial statements for WCUUSD for the year

ended June 30, 2025 from RHR Smith & Company

- Approved request from Georgia Cody, U-32 classroom teacher, for an extended leave of absence for the 2026–27 academic year
- Following executive session accepted superintendent's recommendation not to accept the residency requests

March 11, 2026

- Elected Diane Nichols-Fleming as Board Chair, Ursula Stanley as Vice Chair, and Daniel Keeney as Clerk
- Appointed Steering Committee (5 members), Policy Committee (5 members), Negotiations Committee (4 members), Education Quality Committee (7 members), Finance Committee (5 members), Transportation Committee (5 members), and Communications Committee (5 members)
- Appointed Andrew Boye as Career Center Representative
- Appointed truancy officers: Berlin: Celia Guggemos; Calais: Jarrod Weiss; Worcester: Gillian Fuqua; Middlesex: Karoline May; East Montpelier: Alicia Lyford; U-32: JB Hilferty
- Designated locations for posting agendas: each school, WCUUSD website, Town Office; posting of minutes: WCUUSD Website; newspaper of record, Times Argus

March 18, 2026 (Special Meeting)

- Met with Twinfield School Board members to begin conversations about the possibility of future partnerships

March 18, 2026

- Following an executive session to discuss a contract issue, authorized

superintendent to sign the contract after clarification from legal counsel

- Authorized transfer of \$573,821 from general fund balance to capital reserve fund for the completion of the 2026 combined construction project
- Awarded contract for the combined construction project to E.F. Wall & Assoc. Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$1,191,540
- Adopted policy E20 "Community Use of School Facilities" as amended
- Adopted "Cell Phone Policy"
- Approved hiring Emily Smith for U-32 World Language teacher
- Accepted resignation of Gillian Fuqua, with acknowledgement for all she has done, especially the past two years
- Approved the hiring of Ann Chapman, long term substitute, U-32 World Languages teacher
- Following an executive session, accepted recommendation of superintendent for residency request



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The Taste of Home

There are lessons a town gives its children long before they have the language to repeat them.

I think of the rows at Legare Farm, where we bent low in early summer, knees damp with morning, fingers learning the quiet art of choosing. Not every berry was ready. Not every berry was worth taking. We learned to recognize the ones that offered themselves—the ones that slipped free without harm, still warm from the sun, carrying in their small red bodies the unmistakable taste of somewhere we belonged, even if we did not yet know it.



Woodcut and Image by Myrrh Brooks

Berry picking was never an errand, it was an event. Laura Brown would arrive in her wide-bodied station wagon, and we would tumble in, buckets and baskets in hand, jostling for the coveted spot behind the seats, where one could flop about freely while the rest packed into the backseat like sardines, all in the easy, unbelted days of childhood. We ate as much as

we gathered. No one scolded us. It was simply understood that tasting was part of the work.

Those strawberries were not merely sweet, they were whole. They grew from soil made rich by care: compost returned, seasons honored, nothing wasted. The ground nourished the plant, the plant nourished us, and we, without knowing it, were being shaped by something larger—a way of living that did not separate taking from giving.

We didn't call it "local" or "seasonal."

We didn't call it "organic."

We didn't call it anything at all.

But our bodies understood.

And in that understanding, something settled deep within us—a kind of inner compass. A knowing not taught, but tasted. So that later, when the world offered its imitations—perfect-looking berries shipped from afar—we could feel, if only faintly, the absence of something essential.

A berry without a place has no story. And a people without the memory of place can be led almost anywhere.

What we were given in those fields was not just fruit, but direction. A quiet instruction that good things come from somewhere, that they arrive in their own time, and that they ask of us patience, restraint, and gratitude. You cannot rush a strawberry. You cannot keep it without losing something. You must meet it where it is, when it is.

There is a kind of freedom in it.

Our town—small in size, immense in spirit—offered these lessons to us kids again and again: in gardens tended, in meals shared, and in the unspoken generosity of neighborliness. It taught us how to return, even after we had wandered far.

In a world of endless distraction, the surest way home may still be the simplest: to taste what is here, to care for what sustains us, and to remember—one strawberry at a time—where we belong.

—Celina Moore Barton is a Signpost volunteer who lives in North Montpelier



Recipe from Arlene Clark, E. Montpelier, VT Presents Personal Recipes, Brick Church Club

Paulie's Recipe

CHEWY MAPLE COOKIES

½ cup shortening	1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 cup brown sugar, packed	2 teaspoons baking powder
1 egg	½ teaspoon salt
½ cup maple syrup	1 cup flaked coconut
½ teaspoon vanilla extract	

DIRECTIONS Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and brown sugar until fluffy. Beat in egg, syrup, and vanilla until well-mixed. Combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Add to the creamed mixture. Stir in the coconut. Drop by tablespoonfuls, 2 inches apart, on greased baking sheets. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes 3 dozen cookies.

Paulie's comments: *These are easy and delicious. I usually add nuts, too.*

A Tribute to Flor Diaz Smith

by Alice Angney

Photo provided by Flor Diaz Smith



HONORING LEADERSHIP & SERVICE The Town of East Montpelier and the Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) have been fortunate to have Flor Diaz Smith as a dedicated public servant. Her commitment to providing high-quality educational opportunities to all students across each of the district's schools is admirable.

Although she has decided to step down as chair of the WCUUSD board after five years, she will continue serving as a member of the board. The switch in responsibilities makes this the appropriate time to acknowledge Flor's enormous contributions to East Montpelier and to the WCUUSD.

Flor began her service as a volunteer on the East Montpelier Elementary School (EMES) Renovations and Addition Oversight Committee, where she offered her architectural skills. That work resulted in a successful bond vote and total renovation of our local school. Her commitment as a board member spans an impressive sixteen years. She was first elected to the EMES Board in 2011 and later to the WCUUSD Board when it was created in 2019. Her dedication and commitment have been phenomenal, as she contributed her expertise and skills to multiple committees, including Policy, Quality, Communications, Strategic Planning, Reconfiguration, and multiple others.

A LEGACY OF INTEGRITY & SERVICE Throughout her tenure as board chair, Flor provided a steady, moral compass for the board, always considering the needs of students, families, teachers, staff, and administration as critical decisions were made. She balanced these needs thoughtfully while remaining mindful of the fiscal responsibilities to the communities she served. A high priority for Flor was transparency and access to information for community members. She regularly wrote and posted informational articles explaining the workings of the board and inviting input. In-person board meetings were rotated among the district's school buildings, and online access was provided as well. When there were tough issues to be considered, Flor was an active participant in the discussions and grounded her decision in the District's Strategic Plan and its articulated core beliefs.

Flor's style is a bonus. She treats everyone with respect, greeting them with a smile and a cheerful comment. Their viewpoints and opinions matter to her, and she considers them carefully. Her leadership has embodied the essence of servant leadership—consistently demonstrating grace, courage, and humility. Our thanks to Flor for her service. We look forward to her contributions in the years to come. Our students' educational opportunities have been, and will continue to be, enriched by her dedication and commitment.

—Alice Angney is a life-time educator and retired school superintendent in VT supervisory unions. Her four children graduated from WCSU schools. She and her husband, Richard, continue to live in and contribute to East Montpelier and Central VT.

OLD MEETING HOUSE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

A free, in-person **Parkinson's Mutual Aid** group is for individuals and caregivers dealing with the challenges of Parkinson's Disease. Meets the second Tuesday of every month from 2-3 pm at the Parish House. For more info: admin@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-229-9593

Community Potluck - Gather round the Parish House table for food and conversation. Bring a labeled dish to share. Tableware/beverages provided. Meets the second Thursday of every month at 6 pm. For more info: catherine.cerulli@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-249-7071.



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CALENDAR

Tues. May 12, 2-3 pm, Parkinson's Mutual Aid Group, Old Meeting House (OMH) Parish House. For more information, contact admin@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-229-9593.

Thurs. May 14, 6 pm, Greater Community Potluck, OMH Parish House. Bring a labeled dish to share, noting gluten-free, dairy-free, or nut-free. For more information, contact admin@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-229-9593.

Mon. May 18, 5 pm (early start), EM & Calais Historical Societies Meeting, walking tour of Adamant Village as part of the Calais Town History Tour, meet by brook at Adamant Coop; if rainy, meet at Adamant Community Center, BYO bag supper/chair. Contact: sandal.cate@gmail.com

Sat. June 6, 10 am - 3 pm, Adamant Coop Blackfly Festival, Adamant Village. Visit adamantcoop.org/blackfly-festival for more information.

Tues. June 9, 2-3 pm, Parkinson's Mutual Aid Group, Old Meeting House (OMH) Parish House. For more information, contact admin@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-229-9593.

Thurs. June 11, 6 pm, Greater Community Potluck, OMH Parish House. Bring a labeled dish to share, noting gluten-free, dairy-free, or nut-free. For more information, contact admin@oldmeetinghouse.org or 802-229-9593.

Mon. June 15, 6 pm, EM & Calais Historical Societies Meeting, Stories of North Calais, Memorial Hall on #10 Pond, pot luck Supper (bring a food item to share and your own place setting). For more information, contact donnaefitch@gmail.com.



Thank you for your support
ALICE & RICHARD ANGNEY

JUNE-JULY SIGNPOST
SUBMISSIONS DUE: MONDAY, JUNE 1

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