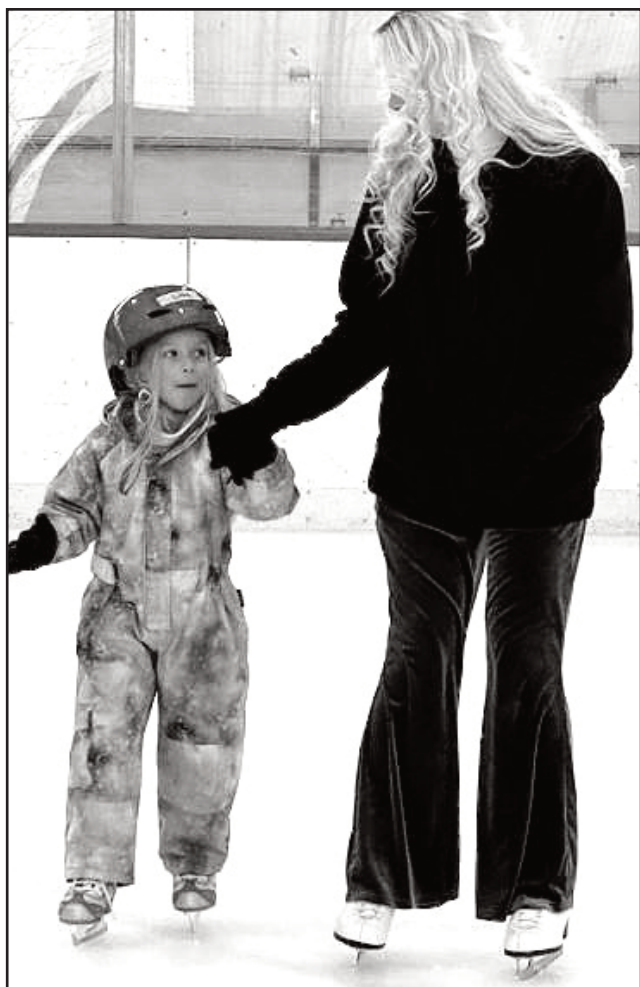




## WINTER SPORTS AT WCS



By Liz Harty, WCS Principal

Winter is here, and with it comes the excitement of winter sports! Every Monday in January and February, students in kindergarten and first grade ice skate at Vermont Academy.

Students in grades 2-6 have the option to ski or snowboard at Okemo Mountain, swim at the Edgar May Rec Center, or stay at WCS for Winter Adventure. This tradition not only provides a great way to stay active but it is also a way to build our school community as we try new things together. We are so lucky to have so many community volunteers to make this program possible.

Along with the excellent growth in learning a new physical skill, it is inspiring to see the progress our students have made in reading comprehension. With a new reading curriculum, educational resources, and professional learning, WCS saw a 13% increase in reading comprehension from the fall to winter.



This growth not only enhances academic success but also strengthens critical thinking and communication—key tools for thriving in today’s world.

Let’s continue to support initiatives that encourage reading and celebrate the power of literacy!



## KURN HATTIN KIDS GET A TASTE OF SUCCESS WITH CAREER AWARENESS PROGRAM VISIT TO EAT MORE CAKE BAKERY

Kurn Hattin Homes continues to cook up exciting experiences for the children through the Career Awareness Program (CAP). This month, Kurn Hattin students and staff ventured to the Eat More Cake Bakery in Downtown Keene, NH for a behind-the-scenes look at the sweet world of baking.

The moment they stepped through the doors of the Main Street bakery, the heavenly aroma of freshly baked sweets and treats greeted them, leaving no doubt they had arrived at a truly delicious destination.

Business owner Amy Christensen welcomed the group to back into the pristine kitchen operation packed with racks of baking supplies, equipment, and seasonal décor being prepped for the hectic holiday rush.

During the tour, she shared her personal story—a story of resilience and reinvention.

Amy, a U.S. Navy veteran and mother of four, told the kids that she once studied criminology and sociology because she wanted to be a lawyer. However, she had a change of heart and set her sights on a completely different career. Today, Amy is a self-taught baker who has had a successful bakery for more than nine years.

In that time, she has grown her business solely through word-of-mouth and a strong social media presence. “I grew my business without the use of paid advertising because I’m always networking and interacting with the public in the shop and on social media.”

For the Kurn Hattin 8th graders, the visit to Eat More Cake was more than a bakery tour; it was a powerful lesson in determination, reinvention, and the courage to pursue a new path.

“There are no mistakes,” Amy said. “Every step along the way helps you grow and helps shape your future.”

The Kurn Hattin Homes Career Awareness Program continues to inspire students by introducing them to diverse career paths, equipping them with valuable life lessons, and showing them the boundless possibilities that await with hard work and perseverance.

Upcoming CAP visits are planned for Subaru of Keene, Fireworks Restaurant, the Colonial Performing Arts Center, the Winchester Water Department, and RE/MAX Town & Country, with other destinations in the planning stages. If your



organization is interested in hosting a CAP visit, please contact Lorie Rogers at 802-721-6917 or [lrogers@kurnhattin.org](mailto:lrogers@kurnhattin.org).

Above, Eat More Cake bakery owner Amy Christiansen and Kurn Hattin 8th graders.

**COMMUNITY FORUM**  
 WITH THE WESTMINSTER TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD  
 TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET  
 THURSDAY, FEB. 6, 2025  
 7PM, WESTMINSTER CENTER SCHOOL, SCHOOL DINING ROOM  
 301 SCHOOL STREET, WESTMINSTER, VERMONT  
 ZOOM OPTION AVAILABLE:  
[HTTPS://WNESU.ORG/JOINMEETING](https://wnesu.org/joinmeeting)

Our Monthly Community Newspaper February 2025 Vol. 21 No. 2

**Westminster Gazette**  
 Town of Westminster  
 PO Box 147  
 Westminster, VT 05158

**DELIVER TO ADDRESSEE OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

Pre-Sorted Standard U.S. Postage  
**Paid**  
 Westminster, VT PERMIT NO. 3

## ANNUAL TOWN & FIRE & SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING – MARCH 1, 2025

VOTING BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT– MARCH 4, 2025

ELECTED OFFICIALS WITH TERMS EXPIRING MARCH 4, 2025

POSITION	LENGTH OF TERM	PRESENTLY HELD BY
TOWN MODERATOR	1 Year	David Major
SCHOOL MODERATOR	1 Year	David Major
FIRE DISTRICT #3 MODERATOR	1 Year	David Major
SELECTBOARD	3 Years	Katrina Hamilton
SELECTBOARD	2 Years	Daniel Crocker
LISTER	3 Years	Racheal Cohen
COMMISSIONER, CAMPBELL FUND	1 Year	Karen Walter
COMMISSIONER, CAMPBELL FUND	1 Year	Nancy Dalzell
COMMISSIONER, CAMPBELL FUND	1 Year	Vacant

TRUSTEE, CAMPBELL FUND	3 Years	Pete Harrison
TRUSTEE OF PUBLIC FUNDS	3 Years	Pete Harrison
UHSD#27 DIRECTOR	3 Years	David Clark
TOWN SCHOOL DIRECTOR	2 Years	Margery Ferry
TOWN SCHOOL DIRECTOR	3 Years	Tine Biolsi
FIRE DISTRICT #3 PRUDENTIAL	3 Years	Daniel Green

Nomination Petitions have been distributed to residents wishing to run for town office(s).

The completed petitions need to be returned to the Town Clerk's office by 5 pm on Monday, January 27, 2025, and contain a minimum of 28 valid signatures (1% of Registered

Voters. Anyone whose name does not appear on the voter checklist should register at the Town Clerk's office.

### FROM THE TOWN MANAGER - LISTERS OR ASSESSOR ON TOWN MEETING ARTICLE?

*By Lou Bordeaux, Town Manager*

An interesting article on the Town Meeting Warning is one that asks the Voters of Westminster the following: "Shall the voters of the Town of Westminster vote to eliminate the elected Board of Listers, in favor of a professional assessing department?" Your Selectboard wants to present some advantages and disadvantages to the potential change.

**Advantages:**

**Specialized Knowledge:** Appointing a professional assessor can lead to more efficient operations in town, especially as property assessments become increasingly complex with the growth of property values and evolving tax laws. An appointed professional assessor is trained in appraisal techniques, property tax law, and assessment standards. This ensures that property assessments are conducted with a high degree of accuracy and professionalism, reducing the risk of errors or inconsistencies in tax valuations.

**Enhanced Fairness & Equity:** A professional assessor applies consistent valuation standards across all properties, minimizing disparities and ensuring fairer tax burdens.

**Reduced Potential for Conflict of Interest:** The transition to a professional assessor can help eliminate the potential for inconsistency. A professional assessor operates independently, reducing these concerns. An appointed assessor brings stability and continuity to the process. With a professional perspective, the assessor ensures that property valuations are consistent and reflect up-to-date market conditions, reducing disparities in how properties are taxed. This consistency fosters public trust and confidence in the property tax system.

**Reduced Litigation:** More accurate and equitable assessments can reduce the number of property tax appeals and legal challenges, saving the town time and money. Property assessment requires a detailed understanding of complex factors such as market trends, property conditions, and zoning laws. Property assessment laws and best practices are frequently evolving at the state and federal levels.

A professional assessor is required to stay informed of these changes and ensure the town's assessments comply with the latest regulations and standards. Non-compliance can result in legal challenges, financial penalties, or the invalidation of property assessments. The use of a qualified assessor can also help prevent the need for frequent corrections or appeals, which can be time-consuming and costly for municipalities.

Appointing a professional ensures that the assessment process aligns with current legal requirements and industry best practices, reducing the risk of legal disputes and enhancing the integrity of the town's tax system.

**Increased Public Trust:** Fair and equitable property assessments contribute to greater public trust and confidence in their transparency. An appointed professional is required to remain impartial and focus solely on fair, market-based assessments. This objectivity helps prevent favoritism, or the perception of bias in property tax decisions.

**Potential Disadvantages:**

**Potential for Higher Administrative Costs:** The transition may require additional administrative costs, such as hiring support staff, implementing new software systems, and providing adequate office space.

**Potential for Reduced Flexibility:** Reliance on a single professional assessor may limit the town's flexibility in responding to unique local challenges or adapting to changing circumstances.

**Accountability Challenges:** An elected Board of Listers can be voted out of office if their performance is perceived to be unsatisfactory, thus providing a clear avenue for public accountability. With an appointed professional assessor, accountability mechanisms are less straightforward. While an assessor may answer to a town manager or selectboard, these individuals may not be as responsive to public opinion or local concerns as elected officials. Additionally, appointed assessors often serve fixed terms or contracts, meaning that if the community is dissatisfied with their performance, it may be difficult to remove or replace them without legal or procedural barriers. This lack of direct recourse can lead to frustration among residents if they believe the assessor is not acting in the town's best interests.

**Loss of Direct Citizen Involvement:** With an elected Board of Listers, community members have the opportunity to vote for the individuals they believe are best suited to assess property values. This system fosters a sense of participation and civic engagement. Elected listers provide a direct link between property owners and the assessment process. An appointed assessor may reduce opportunities for citizen involvement and input.

(Continued on page 3 - Lister or Assessor?)

# COMPASS SCHOOL

LEARNING COMMUNITY DEMOCRACY DIRECTION

A vibrant learning community for grades 7-12 in Westminster, Vermont

Come see what school can be

Generous Scholarships and Financial Aid Available .....

..... [www.compass-school.org](http://www.compass-school.org)

# BRENNAN

## BUILDING EXCAVATION SEPTIC SYSTEMS

# 802 869 2866

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

## K. BEEBE, INC

PUMP SERVICE  
Plumbing and Heating

*Established 1946*

**FULLY INSURED \* ESTIMATES GIVEN**

**CALL 463-3725**

51 SAXTONS RIVER ROAD  
BELLOWS FALLS

## BEST SEPTIC

www.bestsepticvt.net  
bestseptic@gmail.com  
Fax: (802)-463-1523

All Septic Needs,  
Portable Toilets,  
Jetting and Camera Service.

**Jeff & Lisa Ruggiero**  
Owners

(802)-463-9444

BIG OR SMALL WE PUMP IT ALL!

## WESTMINSTER ENERGY GROUP

A Division of

## WESTMINSTER FARMS

Top Soil  
Compost  
Dried Manure

Made in Vermont  
By  
Vermont Farmers  
And  
Vermont Cows

PO Box 24 4187 US Rt 5 Westminster Sta., VT 05159  
Phone/Fax: 802 722 4017 Email: westfarms1@myfairpoint.net

## ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE!

Annual Rates:  
Pages 2-3 - approx. 4"x5" \$300 a year - \$30 for one month  
Pages 4-7 - approx. 4.7"x6.8" \$525 a year - \$80 for one month  
Page 8 - approx. 2.5"x3.25" - \$200 a year

New Sections Introductory Rates:  
A&E Events Section \$50 a month  
New & Seasonal Businesses Section \$200 for 3 months

Underwriting Support is a donation of at least \$300 annually and does not include advertising. Underwriters are listed in the box on page 6 each month.

We also welcome article submissions that would be of interest to the community. We ask for a maximum size limit of 500 words, and reserve the right to edit for content and length. Thank you!

On-line at: [www.westminstervt.org](http://www.westminstervt.org)

**!!TOWN MEETING VOTING INFORMATION - PAGES 2,3 & 5; ARTICLES WARNED PAGE 7!!**

**NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES -**

The Westminster Cares Board of Directors met Jan. 9 at the Westminster Institute with President Lori Larue presiding. The following board members attended in person: Vice President Pat Goodell, Vice President Pete Harrison, Treasurer Frannie Waldron, Secretary Doug Oftedahl. Nancy Dalzell and director Donna Dawson. Those attending via web-ex: Kathy Elliott, Miriam Lanata, Don Dawson and Cindy Moses.

The next Elder Tech Session will be held at the Institute on Saturday, Feb. 22. Call the office to schedule an appointment: (802) 722-3607

Westminster Cares will be serving hot beverages, breakfast items and baked goods at Town Meeting on Saturday, March 1.

If you are a Westminister resident, 60 years or older and would like to have a phone consultation or home visit with our Community Nurse, please call the office to schedule an appointment: (802) 722-3607.

**ANNUAL APPEAL UPDATE:** Thank You Westminster! We have been humbled by the support received from individuals, families and businesses in our community. Your contributions enable us to continue to provide programs and services to older adults in our community.

**Donations received through January 22, 2025**

**In Honor of:**

- In honor of Alma Beals from Jim & Lisa Calchera
- In honor of Donna Dawson from Ellen Jones
- In honor of Donna, the WeCares Board and all the volunteers from Kathleen Pirruccello
- In honor of Judy & Pete Harrison from Lisa DiBernardo
- In honor of the board members and all the volunteers from Robert Rhodes
- In honor of the Murray and Slomon Families
- In honor of our Aunts, Carolyn Muzzey & Charlotte Kurkul, from Gary & Karleen McKenney
- In honor of Bill Smidutz from Jim Kamel; Catherine & Bert Baldarelli
- In honor of Westminister Cares volunteers from Charmion Handy

**Memorials:**

- In memory of all the good people who have passed away from Richard & Linda Todd
- In memory of our parents from Frank & Shirley Aiken

- In memory of Walt Allbee from Priscilla Allbee
- In memory of John & Dorothy Allen from Craig & Mary Allen
- In memory of Hank & Phyllis Anderson from Jill Kimber; Wendy Schoene-mann
- In memory of Phyllis & Henry Anderson, Mel Delonge and Greta Schoene-mann from Jennifer Anderson
- In memory of Ralph and Signa Buck from Nancy Adams
- In memory of Joanne Cordano from Don Cordano
- In memory of Joanna Crocker from Rachael Shaw
- In memory of Robert & Joyce Gay from their children
- In memory of Robert Gay, Jr. from Valerie & Steve Barry
- In memory of Claudia Giese from Matt Conklin; Laurie Nystrom
- In memory of Bob Haas from Pat Haas
- In memory of Jay & Larry Hammond from Marty Hammond
- In memory of Peggy Jager from: Allison & David Deen, Roberta & Franklin Geist, Debbie Bernier-Sontag
- In memory of Walter & Patricia Jennison from Cheryl Jennison
- In memory of Staci Jones-Maly, Joanne Duval, Caro Duval, Ginny Farnsworth from Tonia & Lester White
- In memory of Paulie Kissell from Verna Newcomb
- In memory of Larry Lanata from Reilly Clark; Laurie Nystrom
- In memory of Jeffrey Michaud from Irene Michaud
- In memory of Lori Miller from Priscilla Allbee; Ila Mitchell
- In memory of Libby Mills from Carrie Gelfan, Michael Beh; Toby Young
- In memory of Buster Newcomb from Diana Brown
- In memory of Ernie & Phyllis Norman from Wanda & Scott West
- In memory of Bill O'Connor from: Sheldon & Betsy Beebe, Wendell & Leona Brown, Mel & Laurie Hawley, and Joyce Sullivan
- In memory of Kay & Robie Palmer from George Cheney
- In memory of Dorothy Jacobs Palumbo from Susan Colby
- In memory of Harold & Alice Shattuck from Barbara Greenough
- In memory of Sam and Fran Streeter from Jane & Phil Savoy
- In memory of Ethel Virginia Sullivan from Flo Magdalena & David Bayer
- In memory of Fred Yates from Lorraine Yates

**LISTERS OR ASSESSOR? TOWN MTG ARTICLE CONT.**

(Continued fom page 2)

By appointing a professional assessor, the town may lose a sense of direct involvement in property tax decisions.

The assessor, while skilled and experienced, may not have the same level of understanding of the local context or the nuances of property values in a rural community like many towns in Vermont.

**Resistance to Change:** Finally, there may be significant resistance from residents and local officials to making this change. Vermont towns tend to have strong traditions of local governance, and the Board of Listers has been a fixture in many communities for decades. For residents who value the local control and familiarity of the elected process, the idea of transitioning to a professional assessor may seem unnecessary or even threatening.

While there are clear advantages to appointing a professional assessor, such as enhanced expertise and consistency, the disadvantages are equally important to consider. The loss of local control, increased costs, reduced community involvement, accountability challenges, and resistance to change are all significant factors that could complicate or even hinder the transition.

For many towns in Vermont, these challenges may make the move from an elected Board of Listers to an appointed professional assessor a difficult decision.

The Selectboard has asked for potential costs to also be included in this column. For FY2026, the Listers have furnished a total budget request of \$42,080.

Based on the same line items, a budget for a potential change to an assessing office would require a total budget of \$35,786; a potential savings of \$6,294.

**HAPPY FEBRUARY, WESTMINSTER! BEAT THE DEEP WINTER DOLDRUMS – STOP BY THE LIBRARY!**

We're settling into our new hours (remember: Monday 10–3, Tuesday 3–8, Thursday 1–6, Saturday 10:30–12:30) and we hope you are adjusting to them well.

Nights in the winter are dark, but the lights will be blazing in both the library and the Dascomb Room on those late Tuesday evenings — it's a perfect place to hang out, be it by yourself or with a friend.

Throughout February, we are continuing our new programming for children. Every Monday morning at 10am, children ages 0–5 and their caregivers are invited to Preschool Storytime.

Listen to a few good books read aloud — by our wonderful volunteers, retired art teacher Colleen Grout and former children's librarian Jennifer Holan — and, if there's time and interest, settle into some gentle crafting like coloring.

We will also continue with our Saturday family art program, where we work collaboratively to make decorations for the Butterfield children's room. We're painting a canvas and we're "embroidering" two pegboards with yarn — all of which will be installed on the walls in the children's room (and on the stairway). Both projects have some work done already (thank you to our young artists!) but there's

plenty of blank space for more creativity.

This will happen each Saturday in February, from 10:30am–12:30pm. If that timing doesn't work for your family, just let me know when you are visiting the library, and I can make sure you have access to the art supplies.

For adults, our popular Bring Your Own Book Club will meet again on Tuesday, February 18th, from 5pm to 6pm. Our craft group — bring yourself and a craft project (any craft project will do!) and craft in community — will be meeting twice in February, on Tuesday, February 4th from 6pm–8pm (note the later time!) and on Saturday, February 15th from 10:30am–12:30pm.

Events at the library are constantly being finalized, so pop by and keep an eye on our Facebook page for the most up-to-date info! As always, thank you for your patronage and support of the library! See you soon.

**Vermont's Largest Farm Stand Garden Center & Nursery**  
**Fresh pies and award winning cider donuts made daily!**



**Allen Farms**  
 WESTMINSTER, VT

Visit us: Exit 5 off I-91  
 Route 5 South, Westminister, Vermont  
 802-722-3395 • allenbrothersfarms.com

**Open 7 days a week: Mon-Sat 6 a.m.-8 p.m. • Sun 7 a.m.-8 p.m.**

**Give Your Home a Hug!**

With a low cost **Green Mountain Home Repair** loan.

Maintaining your home matters, and now there's an affordable way to tackle those home improvement projects.



- Health & safety issues
- Structural problems
- Failing mechanical systems
- Energy efficiency upgrades
- Interior & exterior modifications for elderly or disabled

**Let us help!**



**GREEN MOUNTAIN Home Repair**




**Home Matters Here**




**Windham & Windsor Housing Trust**

(802) 254-4604  
 HomeMattersHere.org

**Edward Jones** > edwardjones.com | Member SIPC



**Caring for a loved one? We can help.**



**Jessica Fuller, CFP®**  
 Financial Advisor  
 P O Box 96  
 Walpole, NH 03608  
 603-756-2513

## Nature Notes - Winter Birds at My Feeder

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

For Christmas I was given a refrigerator magnet, “If you have a garden and a library you have everything you need.” Well almost. I would have to add “and birds.” I am an avid gardener, reader, and birder.

This winter I am feeding small songbirds sunflower seeds, corn and a mix of small seeds on a tray on my deck. I have a tiny container of peanut butter tied to the tray.

The usual mix of birds visiting include titmice, nuthatches, chickadees, and juncos which pay no attention to me on the other side of the glass, but the slightest motion will send the occasional female Northern Cardinal or Red-bellied Woodpecker flying.

The first bird that arrives each morning is a Carolina Wren and how I enjoy him. This little bird with the brown back and buff underparts, white line above the eye, curved bill, and raised tail is hard to miss. I was so afraid he wasn't finding enough to eat but he has it solved. He digs into the peanut butter. They eat mainly insects that they find on the ground but these are hard to find in the winter.

After the Carolina Wren leaves, the other birds arrive. The titmice and juncos get along with each other but the juncos squabble among themselves. If I drag



*At left, a Chickadee photographed by Don Clark, and a Carolina wren.*

my feet in getting the food out to the feeder on the maple tree, the chickadees arrive and peer in to let me know. All the activity brightens a gray winter day.

Another change I have made this winter is to feed peanut butter by putting it on the rough bark on the maple tree by the feeders. Peanut butter is like suet and helps keep the birds warm and nourished. I find that Black-capped Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches,



and an occasional woodpecker eat most of it. That's if I can keep the squirrels away!

## WESTMINSTER SAMPLER: IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

By Jessie Haas, Westminster Historical Society

Incredibly, 50 years have galloped past since many of us celebrated the 200 th anniversary of the founding of our country. Events here in Westminster were large-scale and festive, and spread over two or three years, with parades, reenactments, and a dance—I think the governor attended.

That was the year our large courthouse model was made by famous Walpole dollhouse maker Dorothy Metros, who also created one for the Vermont Historical Society. It was a big deal.

The 250 th is being celebrated nationwide, but in a smaller way, and the Historical Society's plans are also smaller. School schedules being what they are these days, we won't be putting on the play that the kids at the Center School did so many times.

Instead, we'll be commemorating the Massacre over three days, with events on Thursday and Friday afternoons and Saturday evening. If you can't attend all of them, we hope at least one will fit into your schedule.

On Thursday March 13th we'll gather at Greg Gay's farm on the corner of Sand Hill Road between 3 and 4 pm. That's where 100 men gathered on March 13, 1775.

They made their plans, took up sticks from Azariah Wright's woodpile, and marched up Courthouse Hill to occupy the Cumberland County Court House. They were unarmed; one man who had wanted to bring a sword was forced by his companions to leave it at home. This was a peaceful protest in line with those in Massachusetts that shut down all the courts there in 1774. Weather permitting, we will reenact their walk up Courthouse Hill.

Literally 20 minutes after the protesters occupied the courthouse the court officials arrived with an armed posse. Despite the chief judge's promise that the occupiers could stay in the building overnight, the posse attacked them near midnight, firing point-blank and wounding several men.

They dragged the hideously wounded William French into a cell with other prisoners and mocked his dying agonies. The next day, 400 justly furious and fully armed men gathered in the street, threatening to kill the court officials holed up inside the building. Colonel Benjamin Bellows of Walpole, at the head of a large body of New Hampshire militia, prevented further violence.

Late in the afternoon two men walked into the courthouse and suggested that the officials surrender.

To celebrate that nonviolent victory, which over-



threw New York government in Cumberland County forever, we'll gather at the Court House marker—on the right side of Route 5 as you head north, at the top of Courthouse Hill. We'll honor Benjamin Bellows and his legacy in our area, and learn more about the aftermath of the Massacre. This gathering will also take place around 4 p.m. If you see the crowd, join the crowd.

Please bear in mind that the top of the hill is a blind spot for drivers, and be very careful. If you need to cross the road, do so a good distance from the crest of the hill.

On March 15, the 250 th anniversary of William French's burial, we will hold a candlelight vigil at the French/Houghton monument in the Old Cemetery. The museum will be open before the vigil, and we'll serve cider and goodies.

Readings, remarks from those who gather, and perhaps some music will honor French, a young man protesting for better behavior by his government, who did not expect to die for standing up for his rights. He was the first fatality of the American Revolution, and

the largely-forgotten Daniel Houghton of Dummerston, buried somewhere nearby in a grave whose location has been lost, was the second. We will honor them both equally.

Again, all parts of the celebration may not fit everyone's schedule, but feel free to slot in wherever you can. Definitely pay attention to our Facebook page, Westminster, VT Historical Society, and our website, WestminsterVthistory.org.

These are outdoor events in March. Plans and times may change due to weather. We'll do our best to stay on top of this, though the person handling the Facebook page admits to being less than adept sometimes. However, if our ancestors could free themselves from tyranny and start a new state, and country, we can probably manage to hold a reverent and community-friendly celebration of their actions with all our modern advantages.

All events are open to the public, and we especially urge alumnae (or should I say veterans?) of the reenactments and school plays to join us. We also hope to see people who are descendants of people who participated. A list of members of Azariah Wright's militia and others who took a prominent role has been posted on our Facebook page. Have a look and see if you spot your ever-so-great grandfather there.

The Massacre took place in Westminster village, but participants came from all over town. Members of Wright's militia lived at the Haas farm on Patch Road, at Crook's Mills, on Windmill Hill, and down near Putney student travel.

We're extremely grateful to the Westminster West church, which held an emergency trustees meeting to switch the day of their cabin fever supper to avoid conflict with the candlelight vigil.

We live in tumultuous times. There's power and consolation in looking back to previous days when we were in conflict, and didn't know what would happen next. The ideals of the protesters are inspiring. The local government in this case was the reverse—drunken, lying, and vicious. But American loyalists also shared some high ideals, including rule of law and loyalty to one's country.

Because of how things turned out, we take the side of the Whig protesters, but if we'd lived then, there's no knowing which side we would have been on.

Watch [www.westminsterVthistory](http://www.westminsterVthistory) and Westminster, VT Historical Society on Facebook for updated details.

*In photo, Massacre Reenactor Art Stacy.*

## NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of the month and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Rescue training is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Next association meeting Tuesday, Feb. 4 at 7 p.m.

The Prudential Committee normally meets once or twice a month. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting.

The Prudential Committee meets on the 3rd Sunday of every month at the Fire House on Grout Ave. at 10 a.m.

Number of calls in December: 47

Number of calls through January 23rd: 38

Number of calls calendar year to date: 38

Number of calls fiscal year, July 1st, to date: 291

**Association Meeting:** The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting January 7th with President Nancy Deitz presiding. There were 26 members present and 7 members excused. Currently there are 48 members of the volunteer fire department.

**Emergency responses:** December turned out to be another busy month with 47 calls for the month. And January is turning out to be another busy month with 38 calls by the 23rd of the month. Here is the breakdown for the 47 calls: 18 rescue/medical calls; 4

motor vehicle accidents; 2 box alarm/false alarm; 7 Mutual Aid, 1 Chester, 1 to Alstead, 2 to Acworth; 3 to Brattleboro; 4 tree on wires/power line down; 1 illegal burn; 2 service calls; 1 transformer issue at the high school; 2 odor/ smoke investigations; 1 brush fire; 2 for CO detectors.

**Off Road:** The fire department is looking for names of anyone who has an off road vehicle that they would be willing to operate in case of an emergency requiring off road or 4 wheelers. Contact any member of the department if this is something you are willing and able to make available.

**Ashes from wood burning stoves or furnaces:** When cleaning out your ashes, put them in a closed metal container outside. If they are going to be dumped be sure to wet them down or cover them with snow if there is any. Never put them on a wooden deck or porch floor even in a metal container. Recently there was a building fire caused by coals from a wood stove being placed in a plastic pail.

**Driveways and Right of Ways:** Please be sure that private roads and driveways leading to your home are plowed wide enough so a large fire truck can pass through easily. Also, be sure brush and any other obstacles are not hindering an emergency vehicle from getting to a scene where they may be needed.

**Icy conditions:** Back roads, especially dirt roads

and driveways tend to be icy this year. Be careful walking and driving on them. Several cases of someone falling have been reported recently.

**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS FOR SALE:** Anyone want to buy a fire extinguisher? We have them for sale and there are 4 sizes available. See the Chief or stop by the fire station for more information if interested.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember or honor a loved one or a friend. All memorial donations go into our scholarship fund to be given out at graduation.

Send donation to: Westminster Fire & Rescue Association PO Box 111 Westminster, 05158

Donations received in January:

Jeff Shumlin and Evelyn Lovett

Bruce Mickle

Woodbridge Fuller

Susan and David Morse

Memorial Donations received in January

Joey Gay in memory of Bob Gay

Lorain Yates in memory of Fred Yates

As always, we would like to thank the members of the community for their continued support of the fire department.

Check us out on our web-site [www.westminster-fireandrescue.org](http://www.westminster-fireandrescue.org).

# Aged in Vermont

## Westminster Cares, Inc.

### THE TOP 10 SCAMS IN VERMONT IN 2024

Vermonters made a total of 3,533 scam reports to the Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) in 2024. Leading the list was the "Computer Tech Support" scam, totaling almost 30% of the top scams reported. This scam tricks people with sudden alerts about alleged computer issues, such as expiring antivirus software or malware infections.

Variations also include fake messages or texts to the consumer's phone or email about packages or unauthorized orders. Noticeably, this marks the fourth consecutive year this scam has ranked as the most reported.

The email extortion scam has returned to the list after a four-year hiatus. These troubling emails threaten to release personally compromising photos and information. A new and disturbing twist on this scam is the emails include screen-captured images of the recipient's home from online map services to further unsettle recipients and pressure them into complying with the scammers' demands.

Other scams on the Top 10 list include: Identity Theft; Law Enforcement Imposter; Medicare Phishing; Relationship Imposter; Email Extortion; Sweepstakes/Lottery; Deceitful Solicitation and Bank-related Phishing.

**SCAMS ON THE TOP 10 LIST INCLUDE:**  
**COMPUTER TECH SUPPORT;**  
**IDENTITY THEFT;**  
**LAW ENFORCEMENT IMPOSTER;**  
**MEDICARE PHISHING;**  
**RELATIONSHIP IMPOSTER;**  
**EMAIL EXTORTION;**  
**SWEEPSTAKES/LOTTERY;**  
**DECEITFUL SOLICITATION**  
**AND BANK-RELATED PHISHING.**

More information about scam prevention strategies and other resources can be found on the CAP Connection blog, at Attorney General Clark's social media sites, and by signing up for VT Scam Alert System scam alerts. To sign up, visit CAP's scam prevention website. Roughly 9,000 Vermonters have signed up to receive alerts.

"Vermonters have long relied on Vermont Alert to notify them of floods, hazardous travel, local boil water notices, and countless other issues that impact their lives," Vermont Emergency Management Director Eric Forand said. "Scam alerts will add a layer of protection of Vermonters' financial security for those who choose to receive them." Attorney General Clark thanked Vermont Emergency Management for their partnership.

In the future, whenever someone signs up for VT-ALERT, they will have the option to choose to receive notifications about scams among the list of options. VT-ALERT's 72,000 existing users can also update their preferences to add scam alerts.

Attorney General Clark reminds Vermonters to report scams and get support if you or a loved one falls victim to a scam by contacting her Consumer Assistance Program. Call 800-649-2424 or email AGO.CAP@vermont.gov.

## REMEMBRANCES

FEBRUARY 2025:

**MARGARET "PEGGY" JAGER, 84**  
**1940 – 12/28/2024**  
**WESTMINSTER WEST, VT**

**THOMAS SALMON, 92**  
**8/19/1932 – 1/14/2025**  
**FORMERLY ROCKINGHAM, VT**

## NOTES FROM THE WESTMINSTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Westminster Conservation Commission was established in 2011 to build awareness and provide guidance and education to the Town and its residents with regard to our appreciation and stewardship of Westminster's environment.

The Commission works to highlight the aesthetics, recreational opportunities and ecological values of the natural world, as well as its vulnerabilities.

The Commission sponsored a number of educational programs and workshops in 2024, including a winter tracking event and an ephemeral wildflower walk. These provided opportunities for folks to learn about and appreciate the diverse flora and fauna of our beautiful wild areas. Thanks to those neighbors who kindly allowed us to walk on their lands.

In April and May, the Commission completed a planting project on a grassy bank below the Town Cemetery in Westminster West. The previous year, a row of trees bordering the cemetery had been removed due to their proximity to power lines. The Commission developed a planting plan; purchased native shrubs; planted them; and watered and monitored them all summer as the young plants got established. Funds for the plants were contributed by the Town via the Selectboard.

The Commission contributed articles about these activities to *The Westminster Gazette*. Currently we are writing a series of feature stories about Westminster's waterways and watersheds.

The Conservation Commission also sponsored Westminster's participation in the statewide Green-up Day activities: promoting the event, distributing bags, and reporting on how much trash was collected.

Members of the Conservation Commission participated in the Westminster Beaver Working Group, which, in partnership with the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center, continued its focus on educational programs concerning the role of beavers in our region's habitat and ways to avoid beaver/human conflicts, such as the installation of "beaver deceivers."

The Commission continues to contribute recommendations for sections of the Westminster Town Plan related to natural resources and environmental issues as the plan is revised.

The Commission is interested in developing improved public access and trails in our Town Forest and has done some preliminary scoping of potential trails. Future projects and programs may address riparian buffer projects in sensitive areas, conducting biodiversity inventories of key locations in the Town, the development of protected corridors to support safe passage of wildlife, and signage to indicate important wildlife road crossings.

The Commission currently has four members and would welcome two or three more, representing all parts of the community and with a range of backgrounds and experience with respect to environmental concerns. Training or experience in ecological science and conservation is especially welcome.

As an all-volunteer Commission we understand that everyone has many commitments and time is precious. Yet, working together, we can accomplish a lot to better understand and appreciate our town's beautiful natural environment and the human-built infrastructure on which we all depend.

We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month, at 7 p.m., alternating between the Westminster Institute and the Westminster West Public Library. Joining by Zoom is also an option. Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the Town website.

For more information, email the Commission at: westminstervtconservation@gmail.com or call Tatiana Schreiber at 802-387-2781. Thank you!

*Tatiana Schreiber, Chair*  
*Rachael Shaw, Secretary*  
*Kestrel Craig*  
*Jim Calchera*

## WESTMINSTER RABIES CLINICS

Westminster rabies clinics will be held at the Town highway garage on Wednesday, Feb. 12, from 4 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, Mar. 8 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. by Paul Kotas, DVM, cost is \$25.

On Mar. 29, Vincent Dibernardo, DVM, will administer rabies vaccinations at the highway garage from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., cost is \$15.

The most recent rabies certificate is required to obtain a 3-year vaccination. Please call the town clerk at 802-722-4091 or email: clerk@westminstervt.org with questions or to verify a past certificate.

The cost to license a dog is \$11 due to a \$2 State of Vermont increase.

## BACK IN THE DAY - LYNN LAWRENCE REMEMBERS GARDENING FOR 13 PEOPLE

*By Lynn Lawrence, as told to his daughter, Sherry, when asked, "How did your parents feed 10 children back in the 40's?"*

"Back in the Day" Meals for 13 People

My mother did all of the cooking on a woodstove and got water from a hand pump

in the kitchen. When I was small, my grandmother Lawrence lived with us for a while and she worked in the kitchen, too. They'd keep a coffee can on the back of the stove all of the time, saving the meat fat for other things, pouring the grease through a tea strainer. They had a big silver bowl that they used for everything.

My grandmother would take that bowl and a sieve out to the barn and sift through the corn meal we had for the animals and you could cook corn meal muffins and johnny cake and anything else with it. It was just as good as any corn meal, but I remember some neighbor kids saying we ate "pig food".

We bought flour by the 50 pound bag, oatmeal in 100 pound bags and sugar and salt in white cloth sacks. The bags came printed with pretty patterns and people would use them for dresses and aprons and other clothes.

My father knew one of the men who bagged the flour and he'd throw in a couple of extra empty sacks for my family to use. Some bags came with instructions on how to remove the ink patterns and have plain white cloth but people didn't do



that, they liked the patterns.

Some food was rationed. We couldn't get real butter, but a vegetable lard would come in a clear plastic bag with a button in it. Squeezing the button would release yellow dye; knead the bag and the margarine would turn yellow.

My father planted blueberry bushes and we had a large garden. We wouldn't waste any vegetable scraps, but fed them to the animals.

We had plenty of milk because we raised goats, and we'd eat goat meat.

We had rabbits, and now I look back and remember that the mother rabbits were always having babies but we never had to build new hutches. My father never butchered the rabbits when we kids were around.

Once we had a friend over for supper. My mother had just gone shopping and she had enough hot dogs so we could all have 1 and a half hot dogs.

My friend came up to us at school the next day and told us that when he got home that night, his mother also had hot dogs and he had another one and a half hot dogs. We could hardly believe having that much to eat.

We would never have imagined, back then, that people would one day have eating contests and eat dozens of hotdogs at a time and no one would think anything of it.

## WHAT IS THE WESTMINSTER EAST PARISH?

The Westminster East Parish was created by the General Assembly in 1787 and granted limited municipal authority in 1890.

This is an unusual municipal entity, possibly the only one of this kind in Vermont. With leadership from George Dascomb, it acquired funding for the Westminster Institute.

At about the same time, Isaac Butterfield left funds for a free public library in Westminster. With these resources, the Westminster East Parish began construction of a Colonial Revival building, dedicated in July 1924.

The building is often referred to as the Westminster Institute, the Butterfield Library, or just the Institute. But by any name, they are all part of the Westminster East Parish, governed and overseen by a volunteer Board of Managers. The managers are responsible for management of the finances, including an endowment, donations, grants, fundraising, and rental income, as well as maintenance of the building and grounds. The Westminster East Parish, including the Institute and library, is not owned or operated by the town although it does receive some funding from the town.

The Town uses it for meetings, voting, etc free of charge. The Institute houses an auditorium, meeting spaces, and a public library. Some original functions have been discontinued, such as shower facilities, used by many local families who did not have full plumbing at the time it was built.

The auditorium was changed to accommodate basketball—we believe in the 1950s—but was restored to its original use as a meeting hall after the Westminster Center School built its new gymnasium. It is also a location for town polling and houses offices of the Westminster Historical Society and Westminster Cares.

Community uses include public meetings and gatherings, exercise and other instructional classes, and theatrical events. Individuals often rent the facility for family reunions, parties, and weddings.

The Institute grounds include a large playing field, playground facilities, a gazebo, and picnic tables. They can also be used by residents and groups for outdoor gatherings and events.

The Westminster Institute was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988, as part of the Westminster Village Historic District.

## WINTER TRACKING CLASS WITH WCC

Join the Westminster Conservation Commission for a winter tracking activity on Sunday, Feb. 23. Program location TBD.

In the past couple years, we have seen tracks of fox, otter, ruffed grouse, fisher, and others. We will hope for excellent conditions and we will determine an intriguing spot for tracking.

Date: Sunday, February 23, 2025

Time: 11 a.m - 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Place: TBD

Registration: Please email westminstervtconservation@gmail.com to register.

Registration limited to 12 participants.

Call Rachael Shaw at 802-869-3184 for details.

## WESTMINSTER WEST PUBLIC LIBRARY - THE FUTURE IS NOW

This month we, at the Westminister West Public Library, are proud to print an interview with our dedicated librarian, Lise Cavanaugh. Lise has served the Westminister West community for ten years and continues to bring new ideas, resources, and grants to the little blue library with a big heart.

### What made you want to become a librarian?

I have always loved libraries. When I was growing up in Denmark, I visited the library and took out a ton of picture books – I think I had 10 bags! The librarian said that I had too many books but let me take them anyway. Then I went home and handprinted my own library cards and checked them out to other kids. Years later, I moved to Vermont after visiting once – it was love at first sight – and I used to visit the library often when Beverly Major was the librarian. She asked me if I was interested in taking over, and I had to learn a lot of things very quickly!

### What makes the WWPL unique?

Since the school closed, the library has become a welcoming place for neighbors to meet up with neighbors and talk about books and other things. The people of Westminister West understand the importance of



community. I see the library as a vibrant community hub.

### What is your vision for the future of WWPL?

One of my goals for the library is to hold on to its past while jumping into the future. For example, we have just concluded a week-long program about historical Westminister and Westminister West. We also joined

the Catamount Network and automated our library several years ago. Now patrons have access to books and other resources from all over Vermont!

### Which programs and opportunities would the library pursue with more funding?

I would love to have more children's programming for different age groups. For example, we could bring back the music program for young kids and their caretakers. More STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) related, school-age programming would be valuable. We are also looking to expand a Dungeons and Dragons program for teenagers. Engaging kids and their families is very important to me.

### Do you have any other hopes and dreams for the library?

We want to make all the residents of Westminister aware that this is your library. We are always open to suggestions for programs that folks are interested in attending. If anyone wants to offer their own programming, such as a film series, cooking class, or whatever, you can make these activities happen at the library. With your ideas, creativity, and participation, the sky is the limit!

# WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

WE'RE ALWAYS UPDATING THE HAPPENINGS ENTRIES. IT IS YOUR GROUP'S RESPONSIBILITY TO LET US KNOW WHEN THINGS CHANGE OR WHEN SOMETHING SHOULD BE ADDED OR REMOVED. THANK YOU!

## FAITH COMMUNITY

### The First Congregational Church of Westminister

Please join us for Church Services or any program we offer. Every Sunday service starts at 10 a.m. and there is a children's message. Fellowship hour follows every service. We are located at 3470 Rt. 5 in Westminister. Rev. Rich O'Donnell serves as pastor.

Feb 2. Service at 10 a.m.

Feb 5 SOUPer Wednesday 12-2. Soup meal in the fellowship hall

Feb 5 Bible study in Fellowship hall 6:30 pm In person and zoom

Feb 9 Service at 10 With Communion New Member Service we will welcome several new members.

Feb 12. SOUPer Wednesday 12-2. Soup meal in the Fellowship hall

Feb 12 Bible Study in Fellowship hall 6:30 p.m. In person and zoom.

Feb 16. Service at 10

Feb 17 Standing Committee 5:30 on Zoom

Feb 19 SOUPer Wednesday 12-2. Soup meal in the Fellowship hall

Feb 19 Bible Study in Fellowship hall 6:30 pm in person and zoom

Feb 23 Service at 10

Feb 26 SOUPer Wednesday 12-2 .

### The Congregational Church of Westminister West

Worships every Sunday at 10 a.m. We are using Facebook Live to stream our weekly services. Just go on Facebook to the church's page. If you are with us in person, we ask you to wear a mask when conditions warrant it. Masks are available at the church. We are an Open and Affirming Church and fully accessible.

On the first Sunday of every month we celebrate Holy Communion. For those watching on Facebook, please provide your own elements. On the second Sunday, the congregation collects a special offering for the food shelf at Our Place in Bellows Falls. Each dollar donated buys \$10 of food for Our Place from the Vermont Food Bank.

Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno keeps office hours either in the office itself or by visiting parishioners on Thursday afternoons and is available by appointment at other times. She keeps Mondays as her Sabbath observation. She can be reached at susiewt@gmail.com com or (802) 579-8356.

### Walpole Unitarian Church

The corner of Union and Main Streets, Walpole, NH. Services begin at 10 a.m. with Rev. Elaine Bomford. www.walpoleunitarian.org. First Sunday of each month is Circle Sunday with visiting presenters.

### United Church of Bellows Falls

Worship service is at 10 a.m. every Sunday at 8 School Street. ALL are welcome to attend.

Following the service, we host a time of refreshments where you can get to know other members of our community. We offer many other services throughout the week, so there's something for everyone.

To learn more, call us at (802) 463-4323 or visit us. Also find us on Facebook. We're always happy to meet new people and welcome them into our church family.

## ACTIVITIES

Butterfield Library hours are Mon. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Tues. 3-8 p.m. and Thur. 1-6 p.m. Sat. 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Westminister West Library Hours Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 1- 6 p.m., Saturday 10 - 2 p.m.

Gentle Yoga with Lisa Nigro Monday's 10:30-11:45 a.m. at the Westminister Institute

This is an all levels class with a focus on building strength, increasing range of motion and flexibility, and improving balance. All poses can be modified to be either more accessible or more challenging.

Radiance Yoga: A slow Yoga fusion class with focus on immune and nervous systems, balance, ways of breathing, deep relaxation for over all health. At Westminister West Congregational Church, 44 Church St. Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m. \$15 per class or \$54 for 4 classes (paid for month). Instructor is Elizabeth Bunker, shimmerez@gmail.com. Call for further info : 603 835-2900, text 978 793-2256.

Living Strong Classes with Ronnie Friedman, Karen Walter Online - Mondays & Thursdays 722-3607

Tai Chi Class Tues. 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

Class Tues. 11 a.m.-noon Class Thursday 6-7 p.m. Westminister Institute

### Souper Wednesdays

Homemade soups at Congregational Church Rt. 5 January through April 12-2 p.m. For deliveries Tina 802-376-7330

### Putney Contradance

Last Sunday of month at 3 p.m. Pierce's Hall, 121 East Putney Falls Road Vaccinations, boosters & K95 masks contradanceputney@gmail.com

### Knitting Together

An Enjoyable Experience! Wednesdays 1- 3 p.m. Village Square Booksellers, Bellows Falls Bring your needles, we have yarn and casual instruction - all products donated locally. Contact: Caroline 802-463-4653

Coffee Mornings - Coffee, Community, Conversation Westminister West Library, Saturdays from 10 to 2. All welcome, please drop in!

Zumba Fitness at Westminister Institute: Latin and world rhythm music, set to easy-to-follow choreog-

raphy. Hybrid Classes: Tuesdays & Thursdays at 4:30 p.m Pre-registration and status review is required; contact: ZIN Certified Instructor: Pauline Blake O'Brien, 802-376-5397, paulineblakeob@outlook.com.

## MEETINGS

Town Clerk - 802-722-4091

Selectboard 2nd and 4th Tuesdays 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Planning Commission 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Conservation Commission meets every 4th Thursday at 7 p.m. alternating between Westminister West Library and the Westminister Institute. Every meeting by Zoom.

Development Review Board 1st Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The Westminister Fire and Rescue meet on the 1st Tuesday every month, at 7 p.m. and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday at the Fire Station. 802-722-3178

911 Committee as needed

Westminister Cares Board 802-722-3607 Second Thursday, 4:30 p.m., Westminister Institute on-line & in person

Westminister Historical Society Board 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m. Town Hall 2nd floor

Westminister Institute Board 2nd Tues. 6:30 p.m., Westminister Institute jimmatteau@gmail.com

Westminister Gazette westminsternews@gmail.com 3rd Monday, 5 p.m., Westminister Institute

Westminister West Library Board 802-387-4682 2nd Wed. 7 p.m. at the WW Library

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association 3rd Thurs. 7 p.m. In-person or Zoom Contact: coordinator@windmillhillpinnacle.org

The Living Earth Action Group most Fridays at 5 p.m. Westminister West Congregational Church Contact: Caitlin Adair pcdair@sover.net

WVFD Prudential Committee meets on the 3rd Sunday of the month, at 10 a.m. at the Westminister Fire Station.

## March Deadline

The deadline for the Mar. 2025 Issue of the Westminister Gazette is Wednesday, Feb. 19 Publication Date Is Wed. Feb. 26 To Contact the Westminister Gazette E-mail: westminsternews@gmail.com

THE GAZETTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:

802 Credit Union  
Stacey & Tim Allen  
Kurn Hattin Homes  
Town of Westminister  
Westminister Cares  
Westminister Fire and Rescue Association  
Burtco Inc.  
The Dascomb Trust  
K Beebe Inc.  
American Wealth Administration Group

## WESTMINSTER GAZETTE

**Editor:** Robert F. Smith

### **Board of Directors:**

Charmion Handy - Chairwoman  
Donna Dawson  
Alma Beals - Treas.  
Joyce Sullivan - Sec.  
Mary Scherbatskoy

Printed by Sentinel Printing, Keene, NH

### **Pictures and Articles**

Provided by the Community  
westminsternews@gmail.com

**WARNING FOR 2025 WESTMINSTER ANNUAL MEETING- FIRE DIST. #3, TOWN & SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The legal voters of the Westminister Fire District Number 3, Westminister Town, and Westminister

**Article 1:** To choose all Town Fire District Number 3, Town Officers, and Town School District Officers by Australian Ballot, Tuesday, March 4, 2025, from eight o'clock in the forenoon (8:00 A.M.) until seven o'clock in the evening (7:00 P.M.)

**Article 2:** To hear the reports of the Town Fire District Number 3 and to take action Thereupon

**Article 3:** To see whether Town Fire District Number 3 shall authorize and instruct its Prudential Committee and Treasurer to borrow money, if necessary, to meet current expenses, on the credit of the district, in anticipation of the collection of taxes and/or the receipt of any State or Federal Funds.

**Article 4:** To see if the voters of the Town Fire District Number 3 will raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Sixty-Four Thousand, Eight Hundred Dollars (\$364,800) to pay the indebtedness and other general expenses of the District for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026

**Article 5:** To see if the voters of the Town Fire District Number 3 will authorize the Prudential Committee to expend up to One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$ 125,000) from the Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a new Utility Vehicle.

**Article 6:** To transact any other business proper to be brought before the Town Fire District Number 3 meeting.

**Article 7:** To hear the reports of the Town Officers and to take action thereupon.

**Article 8:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister authorize and instruct its Selectboard to borrow money, if necessary, on the credit of the town for its current expenses in anticipation of the collection of taxes and/or the receipt of any State or Federal funds.

**Article 9:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister authorize total General Fund expenditures for operating expenses of One Million Three Hundred Ninety-Eight Thousand Eighteen Dollars (\$ 1,398,018) of which One Million Eighty-Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$ 1,087,913) shall be raised by taxes, and Three Hundred Ten Thousand One Hundred Five (\$3 1 0, 105) by other estimated revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.

*School District, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Bellows Falls Union High School Auditorium in Westminister, Vermont on Saturday, March 1, 2025 at ten o'clock in the morning (10:00 AM) to take action on the Articles following Article 1.*

The meeting will be recessed to the Westminister In-

stitute, 3534 US Route 5, Westminister, Vermont to meet at eight o'clock in the forenoon (8:00 A.M.) on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 for the consideration of Article 1, by Australian Ballot. The polls shall remain open until seven o'clock in the evening (7:00 P.M)

**Article 10:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister authorize total Highway Fund expenditures for operating expenses of One Million Seven Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,774,500) of which One Million Six Hundred Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,607,500) shall be raised by taxes, and One Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand Dollars (\$167,000) by other estimated revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.

**Article 11:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister raise and appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$ 17,400) to complete repairs to the Westminister West Cemetery Hearse Shed?

**Article 12:** Shall the voters in the Town of Westminister increase the annual Town appropriation from Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$7,500) to Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to support the cost of operation and maintenance of the Westminister Institute and Butterfield Library?

**Article 13:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to raise, appropriate, and expend the sum of Three Thousand Eighty-Three Dollars (\$3,083.00) to help support the food budget of Putney Food Shelf, which provides services to residents of the Town of Westminister?

**Article 14:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) to support the Bellows Falls Community Bike Project?

**Article 15:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to continue their support for the Westminister Gazette in the annual amount of Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000.00) to partially defray costs associated with production and distribution?

**Article 16:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to eliminate the elected Board of Listers, in favor of a professional assessing department?

**Article 17:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to raise, appropriate and expend the sum of Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000.00) annually, in addition to the sum included in the budget proposed by the Selectboard, to help support the rapidly rising costs of operation, maintenance and programming for the Westminister West Public Library?

**Article 18:** Shall the voters of the Town of West-

minister allow the Selectboard to offer for public sale, the property known as "North Westminister Community House" to be used exclusively as residential housing?

**Article 19:** Shall the voters of the Town of Westminister vote to utilize Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) for the purpose of reducing taxes from a FY24 budget surplus?

**Article 20:** To transact any other proper business to be brought before the Town of Westminister Annual Meeting.

**Article 21:** To hear the report of the Westminister Town School District officers and to take action thereon.

**Article 22:** Shall the voters of the Westminister Town School District authorize and instruct its School Directors and Treasurer to borrow money, if necessary, on the credit of the town school district for its current expenses in anticipation of the collection of taxes and receipt of money due from state aid and other sources.

**Article 23:** Shall the voters of the Westminister Town School District apply the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) from the fiscal year 2024 surplus of Two Hundred Thirty-Six Thousand One Hundred Fifteen Dollars (\$236,1 15) to create a reserve fund to offset expenditures in the fiscal year 2027.

**Article 24:** Shall the voters of the Westminister Town School District apply the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$ 100,000) from the fiscal year 2024 surplus of Two Hundred Thirty-Six Thousand One Hundred Fifteen Dollars (\$236, 1 15) to create a reserve fund to offset expenditures in the fiscal year 2028.

**Article 25:** Shall the voters apply the sum of Thirty-Six Thousand One Hundred Fifteen Dollars (\$36,115) from the Westminister Town School District 2024 surplus to a reserve fund for repairs or improvements to buildings and grounds, including, although not limited to, enhanced security and energy efficiencies, and to authorize the Board to expend such funds.

**Article 26:** Shall the voters of the Westminister Town School District authorize the school board to expend Five Million Three Hundred Eight Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Four Dollars (\$5,308,124.00) which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year. The

Westminister Town School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$1 5,015.49, which is 12.67% higher than per pupil education spending of he current year.

**Article 27:** To transact any other proper business to be brought before the Town School District Annual Meeting.

**NORTH STAR HEALTH CHANGES TO HEALTH CENTER WALK IN SERVICES**

North Star Health announces changes to walk-in care services at Springfield Health Center that will enhance pa-

tient access and strengthen continuity of care for the community. Starting Feb. 3, walk-in hours will shift to Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5

p.m.

In addition, Lauren Lavoie, PA and Shannon Ormsbee, NP will join the walk-in care team starting March 3. Both providers are dedicated to offering health-care access for patients whose primary care providers or care teams are unavailable at the time of their visit.

**How Walk-In Works**

Patients with acute, non-life-threatening needs can visit the walk-in clinic on the first floor of Springfield Health Center, Charlestown Health Center, or Ludlow Health Center. Our Medical Office Coordinators will check patients in and gather the necessary information.

**For patients with a Primary Care Provider (PCP):** Whenever possible, patients will be seen by their PCP or another member of their care team.

For new or unassigned patients: Patients without a primary care provider will be seen by the next available provider. Patients will also be encouraged to establish ongoing care with North Star Health to support their long-term health and wellness.

For more information, visit our website or contact Patient Business Services at 802-886-8950.

**Harlow Farm Winter Market**

**Open Thursdays this year!**

**Open Dec. 12—mid-April**

**9 a.m. -3 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays**

**Shop our fresh organic produce all winter!  
Fresh greens, meat, eggs, root crops, Orchard Hill bread, Smokin' Bowl baked goods, and more.**

**Harlow Farmstand**

**6365 U.S. Rte 5 Westminister VT**

**Purchase a Winter Market card on-line at:**

**harlowfarm.com/order-form/**

**SEASONAL, HANDMADE, RAW MILK CHEESE**  
PRESERVED SUNSHINE, IN A VARIETY OF STYLES

Unique, complex flavors start with healthy cows out on pasture under open skies.  
Raw milk, creamery-made autochthonous starters, natural rennet, & sea salt from Maine.  
Our cheese ages slowly, developing distinct flavors and textures that deliver the taste of this place.

VISIT OUR FARMSTORE

**873 PATCH ROAD**

WWW.PARISHHILLCREAMERY.COM

**Parish Hill Creamery**




**Listen, Join and Support**  
Your Community Radio Station

**WOOL 91.5 FM**  
[www.blacksheepradio.org](http://www.blacksheepradio.org)

Join The Team  
Local Shows and Local DJ's Needed





**Temple Chiropractic**  
*Supporting the health care needs of the community for the past 35 years*  
*Specialist in the treatment of non-surgical back & neck pain*

**Dr. Vernon R. Temple**  
*Chiropractic Physician*  
**Dr. Tarontè Venable**  
*Chiropractic Physician*

102 Saxtons River Road  
Bellows Falls, VT 05101  
802-463-9522

*We accept all Vermont insurance plans including BCBS, CIGNA, MVP and workers injury insurance*

S.B. and Company Auctioneers, Antiques

# SHARON BOCCELLI & COMPANY

Buying entire estates or single items.  
Probate appraisals  
46 Canal St. Bellows Falls Vt 802-460-1190

## Streeter L.L.C.

### Licensed Electrician

PO Box 206, Westminster, VT 05158  
(Building, Remodeling and Repairs)

Cole Streeter Box 103  
(802)722-3178 Westminster, VT 05158

## GREATER FALLS INSURANCE

celebrating 20 years

Home • Auto • Farm • Business • Motorcycle • Recreational Vehicles

7190 US Route 5 • Westminster, Vermont 05158  
802-463-1900 • www.greaterfallsinsurance.com



**Jessica Fuller**  
Financial Advisor

57 Main Street  
P.O. Box 96  
Walpole, NH 03608  
Bus. 603-756-2513 Fax 888-215-1621  
jessica.fuller@edwardjones.com  
www.edwardjones.com/jessica-fuller

**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

**STILL LOCAL**  
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

Switch to Savings Bank of Walpole's **TRULY FREE local checking.**  
To open an account online visit [walpolebank.com](http://walpolebank.com), or call (603) 352-1822.

since 1875



## Maple Leaf Chimney Sweep

(802) 380-9890

Mapleleafchimney@gmail.com  
www.mapleleafchimneysweep.com  
Facebook.com/mapleleafchimneysweep

### Fred's Rock Shop

Frederick McKenny  
1993 Pine Banks Road  
Putney, VT 05346  
802 376 7313

Open Saturdays  
10:00am - 4:00pm

Or for an appointment to browse or any questions please call or email.

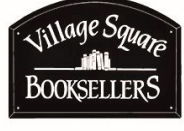
Fredrocksrockshop.com  
fredrocksrockshop@gmail.com

# RUGGIERO

TRASH REMOVAL

802.869.2235

Box 434, Saxtons River Vermont 05154 Joe 802.384.0397  
Jeff 603.209.4441



32 The Square,  
Bellows Falls, Vermont  
Open 7 days a week  
802-463-9404

Books, Toys & Gifts for All Ages  
Independent bookstore with a friendly & knowledgeable staff  
villagesquarebooks.com - Books, Audio & e-Books  
Order Online- PickUp & Pay in Store

\$5 Bella Bucks on \$25 Purchase with this ad

**YOUR BUSINESS CARD AD  
COULD BE HERE.  
INTERESTED?  
CONTACT US FOR DETAILS**

## FEBRUARY BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: BALD HILL BEES



Bald Hill Bees, owned and operated by Chip and Diane O'Brien, is a small apiary perched atop Bald Hill, overlooking the picturesque Connecticut River and the town of Walpole. Our journey began in March 2022, when we adopted two hives from a family member who was relocating and unable to take their bees with them.

Having always dreamed of keeping bees, this felt like the perfect opportunity to start our own apiary.

Beekeeping runs deep in our family, spanning three generations. It all began with my grandfather's hives in Bellows Falls in the early 1900s. His very first hive was established through the practice of "beelining" right here on Bald Hill. Beelining involves tracking honeybees back to their nest to locate a wild colony in a tree.

Today, Bald Hill Bees has grown to eight thriving hives and has honey in six local stores: Allen Brothers, Westminster Station Market, Community Feed Store, The Common Sense Store, Lisai's, and MKT: Grafton. Our honey is available in a variety of sizes, from 8 oz. jars to 64 oz. jars, and we also produce small-batch creamed honey.

In addition to its delicious taste, honey offers several health benefits. It is rich in antioxidants, which may help protect your body from cell damage caused by free radicals. Honey has natural antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, making it a soothing remedy for sore throats and minor wounds. It can also help support digestive health and provide a natural energy boost, thanks to its simple sugars and nutrients.

To learn more about Bald Hill Bees please give Chip or Diane a call at 802-579-6115 or email at dianebrien802@gmail.com.

## FEBRUARY BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: JUDD'S AUTO REPAIRS

### JUDD'S AUTO REPAIRS

6109 US ROUTE 5  
WESTMINSTER, VERMONT 05158  
802-722-4200

David & Elaine Judd, owners  
Steve Godfrey, mechanic

Automotive Repair Vermont State Inspection

Judd's Auto Repairs is a full automotive repair shop, Vermont State Inspection and UHaul Dealer. Located right next to Allen Bros. on Route 5.

Our hours are Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. You can find us on Facebook as well. With over 40 years experience, let us take care of all your automotive needs.

Thank you for your continued support!



### BALD HILL BEES

Raw, Local Honey

Chip & Diane O'Brien  
802-579-6115

566 Bald Hill  
Westminster VT 05158



VISIT OUR FARMSTORE  
BETWEEN WESTMINSTER + PUTNEY:  
281 Patch Farm Road

SHOP ONLINE:  
vermontshepherd.com

### Sheep's milk cheese, gelato, yogurt, maple syrup, honey



Emily Hartz & Jonah Mossberg

Earth Bridge Rd,  
Westminster West

Join our vegetable CSA!

www.milkweedfarmvt.com

**Christopher Hinds**  
LICSW, ACSW

Free telephone consultation

**PSYCHOTHERAPY** 404-989-4320

Adults, Adolescents  
Couples

39 The Square,  
Suite 201  
Bellows Falls, VT  
05101

www.hindstherapy.com On: psychologytoday.com



**Harlow Farmstand**  
Rte. 5 Westminster VT  
802.722.3515

**JACKLYN ATWOOD**  
REAL ESTATE

JACKIE ATWOOD 616 NEWCOMB ROAD WESTMINSTER, VT 05346

VT & NH BROKER OFFICE/FAX 802-722-9296 CELL 802-236-1164

jackieatwoodrealestate@gmail.com

**Karen Vedus LMFT**  
Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy

Westminster, Vermont  
802-332-3007  
karenveduslmft@buildingbetterbonds.com  
www.buildingbetterbonds.com

## R.A.M.P.

Rockingham Arts & Museum Project

Since 1996 believing that art makes a difference!

www.ramp-vt.org  
802-463-3252

Committed to integrating the arts in the long-term sustainability of the community by creating effective partnerships that initiate and support:

- Accessibility • Affordable Housing • Artist Town Meetings
- Public Art Initiatives • Policy Making



**Heidi Bernier**  
CBR, SRES, Realtor®  
Licensed VT & NH  
heidi.bernier@berkeleyveller.com

O: (802) 254-6400 X 135  
C: (802) 380-1585-Best

119 Western Avenue • Brattleboro, VT 05301  
www.berkeleyveller.com

### WESTMINSTER ANIMAL HOSPITAL

PO BOX 90  
WESTMINSTER STATION, VT 05159  
(802)722-4196

Andrea Neiley, DVM Megan Peddigree, VMD

Kristin Anderson, DVM Susan Oswald, DVM

## LAWRENCE & LOBER

### ELECTRIC

www.llelectricservices.com  
info@llelectricservices.com

15 Barker St.  
Bellows Falls, Vt 05101


Tel: 802-460-3479  
800-559-3479  
Fax: 802-460-3480

## Cota & Cota

HEATING OIL  
PROPANE GAS  
PLUMBING

Your Local Heating & Cooling Experts  
Delivering Peace of Mind Since 1941

WWW.COTAOL.COM (802) 463-0000



Pasture Raised Lamb  
Maple Syrup  
Yarn, Woolen Blankets,  
Sheep Pelts  
Herding Demonstrations

**MORSE BROOK FARM**

226 Kurkul Rd Westminster, VT 05346  
802-528-2155 morsebrookfarm.com

### JUDD'S AUTO REPAIRS

6109 US ROUTE 5  
WESTMINSTER, VERMONT 05158  
802-722-4200

David & Elaine Judd, owners  
Steve Godfrey, mechanic

Automotive Repair Vermont State Inspection