Jeanne Holmes: 
Growing Good Young People

Virginia Dean

Sitting on her deck overlooking the Connecticut River, Norwich resident and retired teacher Jeanne Holmes recently reflected on her personal and professional achievements over her lifetime.

Holmes is the founder of two area vocational programs – an accomplishment she modestly acknowledges that has had a significant and lasting influence on many students in the Upper Valley.

“I was surprised by a student recently who had been in one of the programs about five years ago,” said Holmes. “He had his three children, knew my name and ran to give me a big hug. After catching my breath, he told me that he had a fabulous career and that I had been so helpful with that. I will never forget that moment.”

Holmes worked as a teacher’s aide at the Oxbow Vocational Center (now River Bend Career & Technical School). It was because of her work in this capacity that Holmes founded her first vocational program, an instrument-building program, which she then expanded to include automotive and computer technology.

“Looking back, I recognize that although I was only one teacher among many, those students and I formed a deep bond,” said Holmes. “I still hear from students regularly, and I enjoy seeing how they have continued to succeed.”

Holmes is the founder of two area vocational programs – an accomplishment she modestly acknowledges that has had a significant and lasting influence on many students in the Upper Valley.

From Norwich to Washington, DC: Working in a US Senate Office

It’s clear from the pages of the Norwich Times that Norwich youth have covered the world through trips, jobs, and adventures of all sorts. This coverage includes Washington, DC, where Norwich is well represented in many government offices. Consider three recent Hanover High School graduates who currently work or recently held an internship in the office of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

Young Politicos

Virginia Dean

Using Music and the Arts to Engage Community

Ruth Sylvester

Meeting Norwich’s Katie Kitchel is a bit like catching hold of a rocketship. She gives the impression of fast movement even when she’s sitting down. But she focuses her attention on what she’s doing or saying – this is not a woman who indulges fog.

She obviously loves children, smiling and admiring new babies that friends bring into a cafe, and she is keenly aware of how long her own children, a sophomore, a 6th grader, and a 3rd grader, can benefit by supervising themselves and when some adult contact would be a good idea.

Katie has found jobs she loves that intersect with her interests and talents: children and performing arts. She teaches in and coordinates the Music Together program at the Upper Valley Music Center in Lebanon, and she has just begun a position with Northern Stage as Director of Outreach.

For Northern Stage, Katie will be working as part of the team with the YES – Youth Ensemble Studio – program, an ambitious and surprisingly ambitious and surprising program that provides training and performance opportunities for middle school students interested in the arts.

Continued on page 14

Continued on page 8
NORWICH WOMEN’S CLUB NEWS

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In the Upper Valley, we encounter farms all the time. In our day-to-day lives we buy their produce or their meat or their milk. We see farmers at farmers’ markets, or glance at their photos at the supermarket. In the summer we pass by – and sometimes stop at – their stands on the way to work or to play. We’re fortunate to be so close to our farms and food here in the Upper Valley – many of us long-timers grew up with grandparents farming in the region, or worked our first job on one of the numerous farms that make up such a vital part of our beautiful landscape.

But for all that, we still don’t know much about them. For instance, how many farms do you think exist in this region? A few hundred? Maybe 1,000? That second number would have been my guess.

So here’s what surprised me: In the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, there were 2,058 farms in the four counties that include most of the Upper Valley – Orange and Windsor in Vermont, and Grafton and Sullivan in New Hampshire. That’s a lot of farms!

“We have an incredible local food system in the Upper Valley,” says Becka Warren, who works with the region’s farmers as part of the team at the nonprofit Vital Communities. “For folks looking to farm, this is a great place to do it because the populace are inclined to support local producers, and there’s a pride closely identified with a working landscape that’s true both for transplants and for people who grew up here. I think people around here really see support for local food producers as a way of life.”

I like knowing that when I choose locally grown, I support local family businesses – farmers I know, right here at home – and that the impact benefits the entire community by increasing the vibrancy of our economy and environment.

Plus, it’s delicious! There’s just nothing like LOCAL – the produce I buy at the grocery store simply can’t compare to the bright flavors of freshly picked berries, tomatoes, melons, corn, peas... As I write, my bowl of local cantaloupe and blueberries dwindles and I’m looking forward to lunch.

Want to add a little more local to your way of life? Now is the season of greatest local bounty in the Upper Valley! Head on over to the Norwich Farmers’ Market, and find local farms, markets, pick-your-own, and even search by specific towns or products using the Vital Communities Food & Farm Online Guide at vitalcommunities.org/guide.

- Allison Rogers Furbish
Growing Good Things

While the world is spinning seemingly out of control, we are growing all things good here at home and that is where real change happens.

Jeanne Holmes was a bit ahead of her time when she saw the value of meeting kids where they live, so to speak, and guiding them in the direction of what makes them tick. She also knew that meant becoming productive and fulfilled citizens. She received the Teacher of the Year award from the State of Vermont which validates her methods and philosophy. Today she grows plants and relationships with her strong work ethic and fabulous wit at Killdeer Farm, alongside Liz and Jake Guest.

Admittedly not trying to make it about his family, per sé, Norwich resident Dan Hinch contacted me to see if I would be interested in running a story about his kids’ experiences as young people in DC politics. He and I both agreed that it’s fascinating to see what the draw is and what members of the next generation hope to accomplish in today’s political climate. [Editor’s Note: The Norwich Times does not run stories with a political bent. This story about politics focuses on career and life choice in the political arena and not about the issues or agendas.] Katrina Menard, who also grew up in Norwich, works in Senator Sanders’ office with Ethan, and provides her perspective as well. It’s refreshing to see that the next generation is still full of hope and sees the value of their Norwich roots.

On a more obvious note, to say that we grow good things is easy to see this time of year. Read about the local farm CSA movement on page 10, and fully appreciate how good we have it to be able to access such healthful and abundant locally-grown food despite our very short growing season.

Thank you all for growing good things, and have a happy Fall!

~ Jen
There is an established adage that states the following: “When one door closes, another opens!” An Upper Valley institution, Revels North will now base its offerings at the Lebanon Opera House. While the long-standing connection to Norwich remains through its many performers, Norwich fans will just drive a bit further to experience the splendor of Revels North performances in the grand venue that is the Lebanon Opera House.

Last spring, the officials who run the Hopkins Center in Hanover, NH announced that they would embark on an extensive five-year plan that will renovate that cultural arts center including Spaulding Auditorium. That would leave the beloved Revels North organization without a home. Fear not, lovers of the arts. The Revels North quickly found a new home at the Lebanon Opera House (LOH) and it appears to be a match made in heaven.

Nils Fredland, Artistic Director for Revels North, reports that while the news would have a huge impact going forward, the LOH stood shining like a beacon of light on a dark night.

“This was a major announcement for us when you consider the Hopkins Center has been home since 1976, but selecting the LOH was a no brainer for us. I would state that what is taking place at the Hopkins Center should not be labeled a renovation, but rather as capital improvements.” Nils explained.

Regardless of what it was labeled, the Revels North had a challenge on their hands, but Kim Rheinlander, President of The Board of Directors, took the announcement in stride while looking toward nearby neighbor, Lebanon.

Revels North has been revered for its Christmas and outdoor summer programs for decades. For those unfamiliar with the Revels and what the organization imparts, the mission statement provides a good foundation: “We are the stewards of tradition. The music, dances and stories passed down through the generations embody a collected wisdom that can illuminate the past and inform the future. These traditions ground us in what it means to be human. Through the transformative power of performance and storytelling, we bring tradition alive for today’s audiences.”

This year’s Christmas performance is scheduled at the LOH on December 21-23, 2019. In addition, the Revels North management is also eyeing Lebanon’s Colburn Park as a possible outdoor venue for next year’s Summer Series.

Regardless of the season, the Revels North transition to Lebanon has been well received and the LOH looks forward to a lasting relationship. LOH Executive Director Joe Clifford echoed the growing enthusiasm for the move.

“We are so pleased to welcome the Revels North to the LOH family – it’s a natural fit! As the Upper Valley’s community arts hub, we recognize that Revels North’s decades-long work as an engine for multigenerational community arts participation dovetails perfectly with our mission. I’m excited to see how Revels’ artistic team adapts the production to our venue.”

Joining the chorus of welcoming voices was that of Rob Taylor, former executive director for the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce. “We are excited to welcome Revels North to Lebanon. To have Christmas Revels on the LOH stage this Winter will be marvelous! The burgeoning arts and culture scene... is one of the most important community assets. We think that Revels will add more fuel to the creative fire that is burning brightly...”
Vermont is home to nine species of bats. Six of these species are year round residents and three migrate south in the winter. Our six year -long residents live in caves and mines during the winter and during summer months can often be found roosting in barns and other buildings. Of the 6 resident species all but one are either state or federally endangered.

Little brown and long-eared bats are the ones we are most likely to see in Norwich during the summer months from mid-April to October. They have been a part of our summer landscape as long as we can remember, swooping over fields and ponds tirelessly hunting the night flying insects that make up their diet. We sometimes wonder what part these nocturnal mammals with their impressive echolocation play in our lives, but because many of us rarely see a bat, we are unaware of the services they provide.

The bat holds an important place in a healthy ecosystem. Like insects, bats play a role in pollinating the fruits and flowers we enjoy. They are a critical player in insect control, hunting down the flying insects like mosquitos that spread disease as well as various moths that turn into the caterpillars that eat our fruits and vegetables. According to the Bat Conservation International Website “a single little brown bat can eat up to 1,000 mosquito-sized insects in 1 hour.”

Beginning in 2006 a disease known as White Nose syndrome was discovered in a cave in upstate New York and spread rapidly east into Vermont. The syndrome gets its name from a white fungus that attacks the bat’s nose, ears and wings during their winter hibernation. The hibernating bats in attempting to fight off the effects of the disease exhaust their fat supplies and they weaken and die. All 6 of Vermont’s hibernating species have been affected and their populations have declined by over 90 percent.

There is some good news. According to Vermont wildlife officials, this situation seems to have stabilized somewhat for certain bat species. The Northern Long Eared bat has lost 98% of its population and does not appear to be recovering. However the Little Brown Bat seems to be holding on, doing better in the Champlain Valley. The Big Brown Bat is actually doing pretty well, maybe because they have 2 pups a year instead of the usual one.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is very interested in monitoring the population of Little Brown bats and is working to determine if we still have a population in Norwich. Alyssa Bennett (Alyssa.bennett@vermont.gov) is collecting information and answering questions about them and is collecting samples of bat guano to analyze for species identification.

There are some things we can do to help our struggling bat populations.
• We can reduce our use of pesticides which poison bats as well as the insects they eat.
• We can plan flowers that attract night pollinators
• We can participate in citizen science programs sponsored by the Vermont Wildlife Department that monitor summer bat activity.
• We can install bat boxes in our yards to make our land more bat friendly.
As much as we appreciate these amazing creatures, we do not want them in our houses. If you are find a bat in your home, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife web page gives instructions on removing it.

NORWICH CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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A staged reading of Lucy Prince Walks to Norwich; at the camera is Norwich filmmaker Nora Jacobson (right)

**Nora Jacobson's New Screenplay**


Lucy Terry Prince was a formerly enslaved Afro-Vermont, who walked from Guilford – in the most Southern tip of Vermont – to Norwich in 1785. Her mission was to seek justice from Vermont’s first governor, Thomas Chittenden, against the abuses that she and her family were suffering at the hands of their white neighbors.

The reading, co-sponsored by the Norwich Historical Society and the Byrne Foundation, attracted 150 audience members from all over the Upper Valley, eager to hear about an unknown part of Norwich's history. There was a talk-back with the audience after the reading, led by historians Mary Louise Kete, from UVM, and Bill Hart, from Middlebury College.

Nora Jacobson is an award-winning independent filmmaker who writes and directs narrative feature films as well as documentaries. She is devoted to telling stories of women, social justice, racial and cultural diversity, and place.

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Loop™, a state-of-the-art circular shopping system designed to reduce waste, announced it is now available to customers in Vermont, Delaware, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island and will officially begin shipping orders in those states. This expansion comes approximately six weeks after the launch of the pilot in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

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Loop enables consumers to responsibly consume a variety of commonly used products in customized, brand-specific durable packaging that is delivered in a specially designed reusable shipping tote. When finished with the product, the packaging is collected, cleaned, refilled and reused – creating a revolutionary circular shopping system.

To learn more about Loop, visit www.loopstore.com.

**Family Day on the Green**

*September 21, 2019*

9:15am  Parade ‘marchers’ and vehicles begin staging in St. Barnabas driveway

10:00am  Parade begins, same route as last year Art in the Park opens

10:45am  Parade returns to green Activity tent opens

11:00am  Food service opens HHS band plays on bandstand

1:00pm  Revels North performs in front of bandstand

2:00pm  Other bands/musicians play on bandstand

4:00pm  Art in the Park begins closing, pack up Activity tent packs up Disposal tent packs up

5:00pm  END of FAMILY DAY on the GREEN

![New Hours!](Norwich Knits)

**New Hours!**

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Katie with family (Owen, Liam, Sebastian & Davy) in Acadia National Park

playing rhythmically with your baby makes them happy and helps their development. The Music Together program provides social contact for parents and children, and, importantly, gives parents ideas of ways to play with their child, and validates interactions that grown-ups may at first find silly as useful and connecting. MT leaders introduce songs and chants from traditions around the world, expanding a parent's toolkit and providing a broader base for a child's future experience. And the group discusses ways to use music at transition times of days, perhaps with a song about bathtime. “As parents we have various skills that we use to help direct our children’s behaviors in positive ways, why not use singing as one of them?” says Katie. “Music is a language. The more it's spoken in a household the more fluent everyone is.

“Play is how kids learn,” adds Katie. She describes a game that helps children develop their ability to maintain a steady rhythm where a circle of kids use their arms as gates that swing open and shut at a certain speed. “Because they’re playing, they’re more apt to stay interested in repeating a motion for an extended period of time. They are having so much fun, they don’t even realize that they’re practicing how to keep a steady beat!” she explains. Other games include musical “Hot or Cold,” where the increasing volume of the group’s tapping shows a seeker they’re approaching the object. Social skills grow with sharing equipment, putting toys away.

And in Her Free Time...

Katie has worked with Perry Allison's We The People theater company, which produces a show to spark discussion and interaction. Founded after the 2016 election, WTP produced 1776, provoking conversations about the nature of democratic government. Katie was a millworker in Working, and played John Hancock in 1776. Coming up this spring in White River's Briggs Opera House is Man of La Mancha, aiming to present Don Quixote's still-timely message of hope. “Whether through the lens of world events or concerns close to home, we all want to believe in a brighter future,” says the producing team. Katie, as Director of Audience Engagement, will be drawing out audience reactions and ideas in intermission and post-show discussions. “Even in conflict, foundations can be laid,” says Katie. She is planning ways to convey audience ideas across performances, with comment boards in the lobby and other means.

Katie will audition for a role in La Mancha. She's loved performing since she was young. Her mother also loved to sing, and “I shared a birthday with my mom (Halloween!),” she recalls. It was the occasion of a trip into New York to hunt up some discount tickets and finish off with a deluxe ice cream at Rumplemayer's, then a palace of children's sweet delights. Katie and her family live in Norwich on Sugartop Road. Her husband, Davy, was born in St. Johnsbury and went to Marion Cross. Katie likes to run (surprise!) with “a group of amazing moms” that's grown to about eight over the years. The women tend to meet at Marion Cross in the morning and love to head off, en masse, into the trails of Norwich, although in winter you will likely see them bundled up on the roads, even in sub-zero weather.

“They all have lives like this,” says Katie, admitting that things sometimes get a little crazed, “and they're very supportive. It’s a sisterhood.” The women trade suggestions and encouragement as they run. Katie’s way to find time in the day? “I drink a lot of coffee and I don’t sleep much. I’m like a shark – I gotta keep moving.■

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Meet the Newest Norwich Police Officer

Dave Nelson

Simon Keeling Adds A New Dimension

It has been long established that Norwich, Vermont is one of the most unique and beautiful small towns in Vermont and all of New England for that matter. Recent developments by the Norwich Police Department have only added to that legacy.

It all began when veteran Police Chief Doug Robinson formally retired on April 13, 2019. Sgt. Jennifer Frank was elevated into the Chief’s vacated position becoming one of only four females in Vermont and New Hampshire to hold that office. Jennifer assumed the position with a solid background in teaching and a 14-year career in law enforcement holding a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science and a Doctorate Degree in Education. Her first task was to find her replacement and she wasted no time.

“I knew all about Sgt. Simon Keeling,” she noted with a smile. “I actively recruited Sgt. Simon. In my view, he was exactly what this town needed. We have a very small department in numbers but very well-staffed with officers equipped with excellent qualifications. Norwich was a very easy sell.”

In Simon’s case, impressive and unique qualifications were an understatement. For beginners, he was born in London, England and that soft British accent still prevails. In addition to the English language, Simon is fluent in German as well. He is one of the few police officers you will see wearing a patch over his shirt pocket with the initials DRE which indicates he is a certified Drug Recognition Expert.

Prior to coming to the United States, Simon served eight years as a police constable with the Metropolitan Police in his native England. He came to this country in 2013 and gained citizenship before he was employed by the nearby Hartford, Vermont Police Department for a four-year stint. That made his transition to Norwich easier.

“Having worked with the Hartford Police I was very familiar with the Norwich force by sharing mutual aid calls,” Simon explained. “Norwich has a very rural setting and is spread out over a long distance, but I was comfortable with that. It has a similar feel to Hartford, but of course a smaller force. I found the Norwich community to be very welcoming and very, very supportive. Vital support is the key.”

Simon can also offer the Norwich Police some very valuable expertise in another key area. He had acquired a Master of Science degree in Collision Investigation at the Teesside University in Middlesbrough, UK. He notes that work involves some very complex, scientific and detailed investigation.

“Collision investigation is a very detailed task. There are many aspects to consider that encompass a number of factors. The main element is that everything involved in a collision has to agree to be true. That has to be proven!”

Simon has been part of the Norwich Police Department since mid-June and that brings the force to four full-time officers and two part-time. Make a point of seeking him out and extending a Norwich welcome. Rest assured it will be an informative experience! ■

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Growing up in Michigan farm country, my parents would always plant a large vegetable garden by our house. I’d help plant, weed, and harvest the vegetables, and every summer I would carry the surplus veggies to a table set up by the roadside and sell them. It was a great way for a ten-year-old to make some money, and learn about the work ethic and entrepreneurship.

The farm stands in our area make my little set-up look miniscule in comparison, and selling produce from the farm stand is only one way farmers market their product. Vegetable growers today – both in the Upper Valley and nationwide – have turned to new marketing methods to increase sales, profitability, and customer satisfaction with their products. The one aspect of marketing vegetables from the farm today making the most impact is the advent of ‘community-supported agriculture,’ known as the CSA.

Most area farmers today offer CSAs as a way for consumers to get their product. In its simplest form, a customer will sign up to receive boxes – or shares – of various vegetables throughout the growing season. The produce they receive depends on their desires and what happens to be maturing at any time. The consumer is assured of a regular supply of produce, and the farmer has advance notice of how much of each crop to plant as well as having a cash flow before the season, since customers pay a deposit or in-full when signing up for the CSA. Sign-ups often occur in winter or early spring. The popularity of CSAs is growing quickly among both consumers and farmers.

Sarah Brousseau is the farm stand manager for Crossroads Farm. The farm itself is in Post Mills and they operate a very busy farm stand in Norwich as well. Brousseau says the popularity of the CSA is steadily increasing. “We have seen our CSA membership grow exponentially each year,” she says.

This trend is not only true at Crossroads. Brousseau says other area farms see a similar trend in popularity. “It seems each season there’s a handful of new farms with CSAs, and they’re all supported and successful,” she finds.

Danielle Allen and her husband own Root 5 Farm up in Fairlee. After spending years farming in the Burlington area, they moved their farming operation to the Upper Valley eight years ago. “CSAs are a big part of our business,” says Allen, adding that around 70 percent of their sales come from CSAs. Though they do not operate a farm stand, Allen says her farm sells some products wholesale and sells at farmers markets, primarily the Norwich Farmers’ Market.

Speaking about the Norwich Market, Allen says, “We love the (Norwich) Market... it’s fun and one of the best.” Allen says Root 5 Farm sets up every Saturday in Norwich, throughout the entire season.

Traditionally, when selling at farm stands and farmers’ markets, the farmer realizes their entire cash flow during the growing and harvesting season. In areas such as northern New England with a limited growing season, this can produce income shortfalls during the long winter. CSAs can help alleviate that situation.

Sarah Brousseau says many of Crossroads’ members sign up for their CSAs during the months of January through April, bringing in funds during the farm’s non-harvesting period. “This allows the farm to purchase supplies and heat greenhouses, to get the season off to a good start (without the need to take out loans),” she says.

Danielle Allen adds that the early commitment from Root 5’s CSA customers is beneficial to her farm because they are then able to plan what and how much of each type of vegetable needs to be grown for the season. Brousseau concurs that CSAs help tremendously in the farms planning efforts for the season. “If we sign up 100 new (CSA) members in one season, we know we’re going to have to increase our productivity to support those 100 members,” Brousseau says.

Not surprisingly, both Crossroads and Root 5 Farm find Norwich residents very supportive of their respective community-supported agriculture programs. Along with their sales at the Norwich Farmers Market, Allen says about 20 percent of their CSA sales are to Norwich residents. That’s a good percentage, considering they sell throughout the entire Upper Valley.

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Brousseau says, “We have a great number of Norwich residents in our CSA program. I also think Norwich is a great market, as folks here are interested and dedicated to shopping local.”

One difference between these two farms is in the method CSA customers receive their allotment of vegetables. Crossroads clients “pre-purchase a credit-based share” and then will show up at either of the farm stands (Norwich or Post Mills) and use that credit to purchase whatever vegetables they choose, whenever they want.

Root 5 Farm delivers the boxed vegetables to various locations throughout the Upper Valley, where the CSA customers then pick up their produce. Norwich customers, for instance, may pick up their vegetables at the Norwich Farmers’ Market, or on different days at locations in Hanover. Other spots Root 5 Farm customers receive their vegetables include locations in Lebanon, Quechee, and Lyme. Of course, customers may also pick up their CSA produce at the farm in Fairlee.

Allen adds that Root 5 customers can receive custom-packed boxes, since clients may pick and choose which vegetables they prefer, depending of course on what is being harvested at any particular time. Along with choosing which vegetables they prefer, customers can choose between a weekly or a bi-weekly share for delivery and pick-up.

Since Crossroads Farm offers sales of their produce at farm stands as well as through their CSA program, I wondered if the CSAs hurt farm stand sales. “Absolutely not,” says Brousseau. Because their credit-based CSA brings the customers regularly to the farm stands, the program actually enhances farm stand sales, she explains. While picking out their CSA produce, the customer may very well find other produce they want, above and beyond what they choose with their CSA share.

It appears that community-supported agriculture shares are not a trend that will disappear. “Evaluations show that CSAs add to (the farm’s) profits, offer a lower price for customers, while still giving a good price to the farm,” Danielle Allen says. That seems to be the true definition of a win-win situation. ■
One of the favorite recreational opportunities residents and visitors to the Upper Valley enjoy in the fall is hiking the many area trails. Hiking allows an intimate relationship with nature and, in some cases, a birds-eye view of the spectacular fall color. Residents and visitors are particularly blessed with many local trails from which to choose.

One of the best sources for information on area trails in our area is the Upper Valley Trails Alliance located in Norwich. UVTA executive director, Russ Hirschler, says hikers should be able to thoroughly enjoy the area’s trails this fall, while keeping in mind that the trails get some of their heaviest use this time of year.

Norwich’s Gile Mountain Trail is undoubtedly the most popular of all Norwich trails, Hirschler says. A few years back, the trail received an upgrade with the installation of a series of stone steps, which resulted in the decline of trail erosion and added to the ease of use for hikers. This wooded trail makes its way to a fire tower, the top of which offers great views of the area.

With limited parking available for this trail and heavy use in the fall, Hirschler adds, “Please be respectful of the landowners when choosing a parking place.”

Another trail Hirschler recommends in Norwich is the Ballard Trail, a four-mile long trail located off Beaver Meadow Road. This trail runs close to Charles Brown Brook, and takes hikers to Norwich’s ‘Grand Canyon.’ Crossing many wet areas and run-off streams, volunteer crews recently installed a new boardwalk, stepping stones, and improved drainage to make this trail more accessible during wetter periods.

Erosion after heavy downpours or a quick spring warm-up followed by a run-off causes trail damage requiring repair. Thanks to the employment of drainage standards when building – or rehabilitating older ones – trails are better able to weather damage from storms or run-off. Most problems occur on older trails where these standards have yet to be employed. Fortunately, Hirschler says there haven’t been any major storms in the recent past to raise havoc with area trails.
For families with younger children looking for a pleasant walk in the woods of Norwich, Hirschler recommends the King Arthur trail next to the King Arthur Store and Bakery. Accessible from the King Arthur parking lot, he says this trail, “is a great place for families.” Ending up at the Dresden athletic fields, this trail allows for non-technical biking as well. What better way to end your breakfast or lunch at King Arthur than by a short, pleasant hike through the adjacent woods?

Another great opportunity for family hikes are the trails around the Montshire Museum. Accessible from the museum grounds, trail maps for these walks are obtained from the museum.

Those looking for maps and descriptions of the area trails can access that information from the UVTA’s website. Descriptions of some area trails are on also on an app called Trail Finder which gives great information on many potential hikes in the area.

Hirschler explains that the UVTA works closely with area trails groups – such as the Norwich Trail Commission – to assess trail conditions, help find funding and volunteer assistance for trail work, and to provide professional guidance in determining work needed. As area trail organizations establish themselves and take on the work of maintaining and expanding trail networks, the work of the UVTA expands.

A recent project the UVTA completed with the Mascoma River Greenway (MRG) is one example. The MRG is a multi-use trail running through Lebanon and West Lebanon and is used by pedestrians and bicyclists. The UVTA built an access trail behind the Alice Peck Day Hospital which allows anyone – including disabled folks using wheelchairs or walkers – to reach the MRG. The 250-foot-long gravel and hardpack access trail has numerous switchbacks, which lessens the grade considerably. Lebanon is considering making the trail asphalt in the future. The dedication for this access trail to the MRG took place in August.

With so many trail opportunities available locally, residents and visitors alike should take advantage of the beautiful autumn colors and view them from one of these well-maintained walkways. Dress warm, be ready for some wet patches, and enjoy autumn from the trailside.
of one of our Vermont congressional members, Senator Bernie Sanders. What inspired these recent graduates to work in the Senate and move from Vermont to Washington DC, and what have their experiences been working as civil servants in DC?

Olivia Hinch with Senator Bernie Sanders while interning for his office last summer.

Three Marion Cross School Graduates

The most senior of the three Hanover High graduates, Ethan Hinch, had the opportunity to intern in Senator Sanders’ office in Burlington during the summer of his junior year at UVM. When Ethan graduated from UVM in 2015, he took a permanent position in the Burlington office, and two years later moved to a position in Senator Sanders’ Washington DC office, where he currently works as a Legislative Aide, helping draft legislation among other duties. All Senate aides have focus areas for which they are responsible; Ethan’s main focus is on Energy and the Environment.

Katrina Menard graduated from UVM in 2016 with a degree in Community and International Development. She also worked in Senator Sanders’ Burlington office before moving to the DC office. Katrina is currently a Legislative Correspondent, helping Vermonters who make inquiries of the DC office for support and information. Her focus areas include Energy and Environment, Agriculture, Food and Nutrition, Housing, Transportation, Community Development, and Science and Technology. She also conducts legislative research, as well as hires, trains, and coordinates the interns in the DC office.

Olivia Hinch, Ethan’s sister, graduated from Hanover High in 2016 and is a senior at Brown University, majoring in International Relations. She worked last summer as an intern in Senator Sanders’ DC office, where she conducted policy research, drafted correspondence, worked the front desk, and gave tours of the Capitol.

It should be noted that there have been many others of this same Norwich generation that worked in Senator Sanders’ office, including Libby Chamberlin (Legislative Correspondent), as well as Myra Parsonnet and Sam Alexander (Interns).

Working for Vermonters

The motivation to become civil servants and work in Senator Sanders’ DC office is similar for all three: A desire to help Vermonters, to have an even bigger impact by working in the DC office, to experience city life, and to learn as much as possible along the way.

Katrina sums up her feelings by remembering her experiences in the Burlington office. “When I started working for Senator Sanders, I spent a year answering phones in the Burlington office, where staff help Vermonters solve problems related to federal services or agencies. Speaking with Vermonters every day about their difficulties really opened my eyes to the many hardships our state faces, hardships I find are often brushed under the rug in favor of the “idyllic” Vermont marketed toward tourists. Although my time in the Burlington office was the most emotionally taxing year of my life, in the DC office I think back to my experiences in Burlington every single day to remind myself why I am working for Senator Sanders, who consistently advocates for improving and expanding social programs in Vermont and across the nation.”

Olivia Hinch with Senator Bernie Sanders while interning for his office last summer.

Olivia is also a supporter of the Senator’s policies. “Senator Sanders has put collective action at the head of his political platform. Policies like single-payer healthcare and the reduction of student debt aim to support every American.”

Olivia wanted to intern in the DC office so as to both serve constituents from her home state, and to better understand the legislative branch of the federal government. “I really enjoyed the sense of working for a cause greater than myself,” she said. “Though often dysfunctional, the US Congress is a machine that runs largely thanks to the work of interns and staff assistants who do the grunt work.”

Olivia also sought to engage on topics relevant to her international relations major, including conducting research on human rights issues in the Middle East.

“Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are not within reach for many Americans, and I believe Senator Sanders’ proposals and ideas can help rectify that injustice,” says Ethan. “I recognize that my own life might look very different if I had not grown up in a community like Norwich, and I want to do everything I can to help every American have the same opportunities.”

Working in the US Senate

Ethan, Katrina, and Olivia all say there are many things to like about working in the Senate. One aspect they all comment on is the huge opportunity to learn on the job. “The aspect I enjoy most about working in the Senate is that every day is an opportunity to learn,” says Katrina. “There are always classes, events, hearings, and briefings on the Hill, and I’m constantly blown away by the people who I am able to meet with and learn from. Some of my personal favorites: attending a housing briefing with “Evicted” author Matthew Desmond, and meeting with my personal hero, Chef Jose Andres, to discuss emergency relief efforts.” Ethan comments, “No two days are the same, and we are constantly learning new things about a variety of subjects. It’s also very interesting to see the nitty-gritty details of federal policymaking and learn more about how to influence that process for the benefit of Vermonters.”

Highlights of Olivia’s summer in the DC office include the opportunity to discuss politics with not only Sanders’ staffers, but with interns outside of Sanders’ office as well. Olivia worked with her supervisor to organize lunches with interns from the offices of Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Kamala Harris, and Senator Pat Toomey. Olivia remained in contact with many of these interns throughout her summer internship. She learned how the internship experience in Senator Sanders’ office differs from that of other senators. “The environment in the office tends to be pretty casual. Interns in Senator Sanders’ office are given freedom to start their own projects, which was surprising given stories other interns told me about their schedules marked to the minute.”

The biggest misconception related to working in Sanders’ Senate office can be summed up by the most common question the three have received about their jobs: “Isn’t it exciting to work on such an active and highly visible campaign?” In reality any Senate staffer, whether in DC or Vermont, must remain separate from the campaign due to strict ethics rules reinforced by hours of ethics training. Campaign-related phone calls to the Senate office are simply rerouted to the campaign phone number.

Benefits associated with working in the Senate range from meeting politicians (Olivia highlights the opportunity to meet civil rights leader Representative John Lewis), to front row seats at a rocket launch delivering supplies to the space station, to petting a baby kangaroo at a zoo fundraiser. An unexpected quirk of working in the Senate is that while business formal is the standard dress code, the office environment is much more casual when the Senate is out of session. “The contrast can be especially noticeable when new-hires come dressed in their new business suits only to find Senate is not in session.”

Katrina Menard (right) with Jane Fonda.

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Life in DC

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Life in DC

All three had to adapt to life in DC. Housing for younger congressional staffers usually means sharing a house or apartment with several other young profes-
sionals. Instead of having a car, they use public transportation (mainly the metro), walk to work when possible, or use a ride-sharing service like Uber. And now Jump, Bird, and Lime are becoming more popular.

All have taken advantage of the benefits that living in DC offers. Katrina says “I really enjoy the food scene in DC and the free events held by the city. For example, the National Gallery of Art (NGA) will occasionally stay open after-hours with live music, food vendors, and special exhibits. They also have free concerts in the NGA Sculpture Garden, and free yoga in the Botanical Gardens.” As might be expected, easy access to a variety of museums has been popular. This past spring, Ethan and Katrina, along with many other staffers, took part in the annual Cherry Blossom 10 mile run, which winds through the blossoming cherry trees and along the Potomac river.

Not all of the adaptations to DC were easy, as culture on “The Hill” can be quite impersonal. “I’ve found that in DC I know three times as many people as I did living in Vermont and going to UVM,” comments Ethan, “but I know each of them about a third as well.” He continues, “Many social interactions boil down to your business card and the name of your boss, and it’s easy to wonder whether the other person is just trying to figure out what they can get from you.” Katrina offers the same observation: “What they say about Hill culture is very much true. People are more likely to ask who you work for than to ask for your name. The only thing you can really do is try not to normalize this behavior.” And part of the modus operandi for any staffer is networking. “At first, the idea of networking really intimidated me,” says Olivia, “but I have now become accustomed to reaching out to others for career advice. That does tend to be the culture in DC, for better or worse. Happy hours and other networking events are very prominent.”

What do the Norwichians miss the most about Norwich? It’s not called the Green Mountain State for nothing - they all miss the Vermont countryside after living in such a dense urban setting. “The trees! A more manageable level of humidity! Dan & Whits soft serve!” reports Olivia. Ethan shared a more community based observation: “The tight-knit community, shared values, and the rural setting. Most of all, I realized Norwich feels like a place that you can call home, which does not happen for a lot of the people who have lived in DC for many years.” “The best thing about growing up in Norwich,” says Katrina, “is that you get to carry that community with you, no matter where you go. The people who I’m closest with in DC are mostly from Norwich and Vermont, and we frequently talk about how the town shaped our values, our goals, and our shared experiences.”

The Real Story

So what is it really like living in DC, working for the federal government? There is a saying in DC that goes something like this: “People inside the beltway think working in government is as portrayed in The West Wing. People outside of the beltway think it’s like House of Cards. And in reality, it’s like Veep.” Asking the three Norwich natives about these possibilities, I could not get them to relate to any of these choices. However, they did share that in their experience everyone working in the Senate office is very committed to helping Vermonters...
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NORWICH HISTORY

Paul Sample: Simply Norwich

Dave Callaway

If you drop by the Norwich town clerk’s office to pick up a dog license or a card for the transfer station or if you are just visiting Norwich, take a moment and check out the large painting that hangs on the northern wall.

The painting, Norwich Holiday commemorates the opening of the Norwich town pool in the summer of 1944. On close inspection, you can almost hear the water spilling over the dam, families chatting at a picnic table, and the screams of the kids as they cannonball into the water and splash their friends. On the left side of the painting, a sailor in his white uniform stands with his arm around his girl, a reminder that in 1944 the United States was at war and that the pool was built in part to offer a peaceful sanctuary to the people of Norwich. The artist, Paul Sample, brought his son, Timothy, to the pool throughout that summer for swimming lessons. It was through these short visits that he captured on canvas the excitement and fun of the new town pool. But this wasn’t the first and it certainly was not the last time that Paul Sample captured the heartbeat of the village of Norwich through his art.

Paul Sample was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1896. His father, a construction engineer, moved his family to different jobs around the country. Paul settled in New England for his college career and, entered Dartmouth College in 1916. He was not a strong student but enjoyed the extracurricular activities the college offered. He joined a fraternity, played football, basketball and became an intercollegiate heavyweight boxing champion. He left Dartmouth in 1918 and served in the Merchant Marine for two years during World War I. With a strong push from his father, he returned to Hanover and joined his brother, who was now also a student at Dartmouth. During his second stint at Dartmouth, his father sent him a saxophone and he learned to read music. Together with his brother, he organized the Barbary Coast Jazz Band, a student band that is still going strong today. As for the academics, he said, “I took an art appreciation course and slept through it every day.”

Paul graduated in 1921, but while visiting his brother, who was battling tuberculosis in Saranac Lake, he contracted the disease and was forced to remain in the same sanitarium until 1925. Two important events happened during his stay. He met and fell in love with Sylvia Howland who was a Vermont native and they married in 1928. And while recovering, Paul, who enjoyed sketching, was introduced to the acclaimed painter, Jonas Lie, who gave him lessons in drawing and painting. When he left the hospital he headed to New York City and began a course in commercial art. Apparently, the lessons from Lie paid off because by the early 1930s he was teaching art at the University of Southern California and his work was being displayed in galleries in New York City and California. During the Depression, his paintings reflected the stress of economic hardships of the day. This style was known as Social Realism. Sample’s talent surfaced rapidly. He received an award from the National Academy of Design in 1932 for his first major painting. Time magazine called him “one of America’s most important living painters,” and he was profiled in Life magazine. His work was displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Currier Gallery and the White House.

Fast forward to 1938. Sample was appointed to be the first artist-in-residence at Dartmouth College, a position he held for 24 years. In 1941, the Samples moved from Hanover to Hopson Road in Norwich, where they purchased land and built a small home, barn and studio. The design of the buildings was influenced by the architect,
Walter Curt Behrendt, who lived in Norwich and taught at Dartmouth and was noted for his modern housing designs that echoed the ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright. The Samples embraced Behrendt’s ideas and built a house with a flat roofline, facing east away from the road and into nature with a wraparound bank of windows on the second floor.

When Sample settled in Norwich, his style of painting shifted from Social Realism to Regionalism, a style that depicted small-town New Englanders and their relationship to the land. One of his most famous works employing this style was Beaver Meadow, an oil painting he created in 1939. The painting shows the hamlet’s church and several of its residents with hills and tidy fields in the background. There is also a horse and buggy coming down the hill and cars parked at the church. According to one critic, “In Beaver Meadow, Sample hints at tensions between tradition and change in rural Vermont, and offers a mixed portrayal of his new home in New England.” Today, if you drive out to Beaver Meadow, it’s not difficult to see where Sample set up his easel on the steep hill above the church.

During his years in Norwich, Sample painted portraits of many of its citizens. One of his first portraits was that of Will Bond. Bond, who owned 300 acres in Norwich, sold the parcel of land to the Samples where they built their home across the road from his house. According to Bond’s grandson, Don Hawthorne, Sample boarded his horses with Bond and the two became very good friends. Will was “like part of the family.” Bond would “regularly join Sample and his wife during cocktail hour (to the chagrin of Bond’s wife).” Fred Metcalf, who played the organ at several churches each Sunday, and even carted his small organ to the opening day celebration for the Norwich Pool, was a good friend to the Samples and agreed to sit for a portrait.

Through the years, the Samples became active members of the Hanover and Norwich communities. At Dartmouth, as the artist-in-residence, Paul was not required to teach, but he offered figure drawing classes to the Dartmouth students and folks from the neighboring towns. Down the road from their home, the Samples donated land for “Sample’s Jump” a small ski jumping area that was a popular spot with young skiers for many years. In 1948, the Village School was bursting at the seams. Grades 6-8 were being taught in Tracy Hall. The 6th graders, all 28 of them, had a classroom on the Tracy Hall stage. Paul Sample, in favor of building a new school, painted a picture of what a new school might look like on the town green for Lauren Sudler, a school board member. For better or worse the painting didn’t sway the voters, because they approved a bond issue to build a four-room addition onto the old school. The painting can be seen today at the Norwich Historical Society.

Perhaps Sample’s most nostalgic look at Norwich comes from his painting, Old Ledyard Bridge. Built in 1854, the covered Ledyard Bridge lasted until 1934 and was sorely missed by citizens on both sides of the river when it was demolished. In the painting, men are walking down to the bridge carrying their briefcases. Across the river, a train is pulling into the railway depot and the road from Lewiston to Norwich snakes across the snow-covered hill. Some critics said Sample often took a good bit of artistic license to give a painting more of a visual impact, as he did with this painting by shifting the
an gle of the covered bridge. But according to Sample, “My chief concern in painting is with my own reality. This extends beyond appearance. It is a visual experience intensified.”

In 1962, the same year he left his position as artist-in-residence at Dartmouth, the Samples moved from their Hopson Road home to a new one-story home on McKenna Road. For the next decade, the Samples traveled and Paul continued to work, but declining health forced him to paint or sketch only in the mornings. He told his wife he did not want to live if he could not paint. He died of a heart attack on February 26, 1974, after painting that morning. He was 77.

Climb to the top of Norwich’s Hillside Cemetery and you can find the Samples’ final resting place. A huge block of granite with smooth, rounded corners sits near the markers for Sylvia and Paul. An emblem and a small American flag note Paul’s service in WW I. There is a smooth seat on one side of the granite that offers a view to the east. Only the bell tower of the Norwich Congregational Church and the Baker Library tower stand above the sea of dark green foliage. On the bottom of the granite block are these words, etched into the stone, “And as the evening twilight fades away, the sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.”

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Paul Sample self portrait 1926 chalk on paper (photo from Smithsonian American Art Museum website)

Paul Sample with dog  photo by Hanson Carroll 1959

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PAUL SAMPLE – continued from page 17

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With a new school year upon us, there are many families who have joined the Norwich community. For some, this next chapter of their lives will be an easy and smooth transition. Perhaps they grew up here and have moved back now that their kids are ready for elementary school, as I did. Maybe, however, they are new not just to town but to the region as a whole. Doctors, landscapers, professors, massage therapists, administrators, realtors, carpenters, bankers...all of them have arrived in Norwich at some point or another and said, “Well, I guess this is home now.”

For those people, here is a rundown of the ABCs in the 05055. If, by chance, the grizzled veterans of Norwich get a brief reminder of some realities of this town, well, all the better.

Anonymity  For people coming from the city, you should kiss this concept goodbye. Everyone is watching all the time. (Not in a creepy way!) Join in; it’s much easier than resisting.

Biking  The annual bike-to-school days are to be celebrated with reverence.

Chief  It is always OK to call a certain woman with a sidearm and two first names by this moniker. Always.

Dan & Whit’s  You’ve figured out that this is the locus for all town activity. Note, however, the myriad pronunciations: Danowitz, dee and dubs, Fraser’s General Store... they all work. Tattoo the store’s hours on your brain… you’ll be in there at 8:57pm before you know it.

Evaporator  While this may not be on your mind now, it surely will be come sugaring season.

Farmers Market  Every child should be able to sample pickles, cheeses, jams and jellies, yogurt, barbecue sauce, chocolate milk, lamb sausage, and bread. Every parent should thank the vendors for assuaging a case of the Hungries.


Huntley  Mink Farm.

Inside  Where you, miraculously, don’t spend time even when the rain is horizontal, the snow waist-deep, the humidity oppressive, the temperatures in the “below zero” zone.

Jones Circle  If it looks like a neighborhood, feels like a neighborhood, sounds like a neighborhood, well, by Jove, it’s a neighborhood... and a winning one at that.

King Arthur Flour  Literally, the bread in your bread and butter. (Local tip: avoid on leaf-peeper weekends.)

Listserv  Enter at your own risk.

McWhit  On Thursday, you’ll get a free coffee in addition to the best breakfast sandwich this side of a New York City food cart.

Norwich Public Library, Women’s Club, Historical Society  Community glue.

Olympian  Your kid is one now. Believe it.

Porch  The place at the Inn to sit and validate that the point made in “A” is, in fact, a fact.

Quiet  Our (we hope) inexhaustible natural resource.

Route Five South  Some see a meadow, some see affordable housing, some see an existential threat...

Selectboard  Brave souls who surrender their 2nd and 4th Wednesdays for service, a belief in the ability to do good, and a conviction that every challenge is an opportunity for a solution. Right?

Trails  Whether of the Parcel 5, Ballard, Cossingham, or Appalachian variety, we’ve got a little bit of everything for you.

Upper Valley  This is where we live. It is doubtful that anyone could give accurate “borders” for this region, so it is a great catch-all when you want to say an area is “smaller than VT/NH, but bigger than my town.”

Why Do You Live In Vermont?  The question everyone in New Hampshire will ask you when they compare tax rates. When you get to the point where you just laugh and say, “You wouldn’t understand,” you’re approaching Vermonterness.

Xenophobia  Not in our vocabulary.

Yale, Harvard, Princeton  Schools pretending to be superior to Dartmouth, despite all evidence to the contrary.

piZza Oven  Its legends are many, its secrets untold, its tastes exquisite. Do you dare to get certified?

Naturally, the only real words that matter in all this nonsense are “Welcome. Make yourself at home. It’s pretty great here.” If you don’t believe me, ask anyone you meet at Deeanddubbleyous. ■
**Bill and Liz Pierce**  
**Willey Hill Road**

How long have you lived in Norwich?  
Bill: Almost 20 years. Liz: I moved here in 2018 after 38 years in the suburbs (Thetford).

What did/do you want to be when you grew/grow up?  
Bill: Major league pitcher. Liz: No idea.

What do you like most about the Fall season in Norwich?  
Bill: Crisp air and the leaves. Liz: Actually, I dread Fall because Summer is over.

If you could erase one day in history, which would it be?  
Bill: Sept. 11, 2001. It’s made us grow fearful and abandon our ideals. Liz: The day Lincoln was assassinated and an opportunity for better angels to shape our nation was lost.

What song most describes your life right now?  

What is your most energizing dream/vision for your future?  

Print or digital?  
Bill: Both.

What do you love most about living in Vermont?  
Bill: My wonderful bike and tennis. Liz: The culture of civility and tolerance.

If you could have one super human power, what would it be?  
Bill: The power to persuade people to listen to each other.

If you had your own talk show, who would be your first three guests?  
Bill: Right at this moment, three Democratic candidates who could clearly articulate the range of options from progressive to centrist: Elizabeth Warren, Pete Buttigieg, and Steve Bullock.

If you could be invisible for one day, where would you be?  
Bill: Listening to what powerful people say to each other on the golf course.

If you could have one super human power, what would it be?  
Bill: The power to persuade people to listen to each other.

What Disney character would you be and why?  
Bill: I’d like to be as good as Beast, but I’m probably Eeyore.

What is your first thought in the morning?  
Bill: What is the weather going to do? Liz: Will it be a sunny day?

What famous or historic person would you take with you on a world tour?  

What advice would you give to the next generation?  
Bill: Don’t overpopulate. Liz: The day you turn 18, register to vote, and then do it.

In general, do you follow, break or create the rules?  
Bill: Depends which rule. Liz: Follow.

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**Ruth Sylvester and Elfie Forbes**  
**Cliff Street**

How long have you lived in Norwich?  

What did/do you want to be when you grew/grow up?  
Ruth: Not as shy. Elfie: Could I be someone from Jane Austen instead?

What do you like most about the Fall season in Norwich?  

If you had your own talk show, who would be your first three guests?  
Ruth: If I had my own talk show, I’d invite people who challenge the polarized mind-set we’re living in today. Elfie: Three Democratic candidates who could clearly articulate the range of options from progressive to centrist: Elizabeth Warren, Pete Buttigieg, and Steve Bullock.

What song most describes your life right now?  

What is your most energizing dream/vision for your future?  

Print or digital?  
Ruth: Print. (Notice our ages.) Elfie: Print.

What do you love most about living in Vermont?  
Ruth: The culture of civility and tolerance. Elfie: The day you turn 18, register to vote, and then do it.

If you could erase one day in history, which would it be?  
Ruth: Sept. 11, 2001. It’s made us grow fearful and abandon our ideals. Elfie: The day Lincoln was assassinated and an opportunity for better angels to shape our nation was lost.

What famous or historic person would you take with you on a world tour?  
Ruth: Nobody famous, just a geologist and a historian. Elfie: Jane Austen.

What advice would you give to the next generation?  
Ruth: Don’t overpopulate. Elfie: The day you turn 18, register to vote, and then do it.

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As we finish working on our woodpiles, put away our Summer toys, and prepare for the dramatic change of seasons, many people also shift from crisp, chilled white wines to hearty reds. Though not universal, it is certainly evident in what we sell more of at different times of the year. Of course, some people prefer one over the other regardless of the temperature outside, but whatever you’ve become used to, this little bit of advice still applies – try something new!

Now I’m not suggesting you give up what you’ve always enjoyed and find something entirely different, but the world of wine is so vast and diverse that exploration is one of my favorite aspects. For example, if you’ve been enjoying Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand, maybe it’s time to try a French example from the Loire Valley. If your tastes lean toward Cabernet Sauvignon, a Spanish Tempranillo might be a fun experiment. As confusing as Italian wines may seem, exploring a particular grape and region like Barbera from Piemonte is a great way to broaden your knowledge and your palate. Bear in mind that, quite often, the “alternative” can be the same price as what you’re used to, and sometimes even less expensive.

There is no better time to try new wines than right now. With holiday entertaining and meals not that far away, doing some research now can be delicious and educational. Imagine the fun of putting some new wines on the Thanksgiving table for your guests to enjoy and ask “What is this delicious wine?” All of a sudden, you are known as the wine connoisseur in the family! As always, we are more than happy to help guide you along the voyage and take some of the mystery out of the process.
**LET’S TALK ABOUT LIGHTS**

Recent Listserve posts have been quite vocal in opposition to the flashing pedestrian lights that will be installed in front of Tracy Hall and by the gazebo. Although the Listserve serves a valuable function as a voice for the community, not all the community reads the Listserve and some, for various reasons, are hesitant to participate. Despite the opposition by some, at least one set of lights will be installed.

The decision to apply for a grant for these lights was originally approved by the Selectboard in the spring of 2017. The decision was based on an increase in traffic and pedestrian traffic, proximity of schools and businesses, and the increase in distracted driving. We received a grant covering 50% of the funding with the remaining monies covered by the town. The estimated total cost was $16,000. At no time from 2017 until earlier this year was there any expressed opposition to the proposal. These lights have now become the focus of debate. The dilemma faced by the board was twofold: the first, safety; the second, financial.

Although we have not seen accidents at the crosswalks, there are many anecdotal reports of near misses. Arguments that the lights are not effective are not valid. Research has demonstrated an increase of 25-81% vehicle compliance with the flashing lights. Do we wait for an accident to happen or try to prevent one?

We ask that people wait to see what, if any, impact the lights have on safety and aesthetics. We do not believe we would be penalized if we decide to remove the lights. Nor do we need to go forward with the second set.

**FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

At the direction of the Selectboard, the Planning Commission is rewriting the Town Plan this year. Plan chapters include Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Municipal Facilities and Services, Transportation, Energy, and Resilience.

Last spring the Commission gathered input and data from community interest groups, Selectboard-appointed committees, and others. A variety of public forums have been held since June, with more scheduled into the fall. A web page has been set up with Town Plan information and details on the meeting schedule at http://norwich.vt.us/town-plan-2019/

In response to questions that have come up in a number of forums, a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been developed on land use, a key chapter in the plan.

**HOW MANY ZONING DISTRICTS DOES NORWICH HAVE TODAY?**

- There are currently five districts in Norwich.
- Village Business
- Village Residential I
- Village Residential II
- Rural Residential
- Commercial Industrial

**HOW IS ROUTE 5 SOUTH ZONED TODAY?**

- Route 5 South on the eastern side is zoned Commercial Industrial (Foggs side)
- Route 5 South on the western side is Rural Residential

**WHAT IS MIXED USE ZONING?**

Mixed Use zoning allows complementary uses such as residential, retail, and office space within a single development or building, where these uses can be functionally integrated and developed at a pedestrian scale. The Village Business District is an example of a Mixed Use district. In contrast, strip mall development is an example of so-called ‘single-use zoning,’ and is typically auto- vs. pedestrian-oriented.

**WHAT PORTION OF NORWICH IS ZONED RURAL RESIDENTIAL?**

97 percent of the land area in Norwich is currently zoned Rural Residential.

**WHAT TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT ARE PERMITTED IN THE RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT?**

One or two-unit dwellings, bed-and-breakfasts, agricultural and forestry uses.

**WHAT TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT ARE PERMITTED IN THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT?**

Commercial-Industrial allows for retail, light industry, multi-unit housing, and various forms of institutional use.

To see a map of the different zones and read more FAQs, visit the Town Plan web page at www.norwich.vt.us/town-plan-2019.
While there, the student rotates through each vocational and technical area throughout the year which gives a good feel, Holmes explained, for an area to pursue in his or her junior and senior years. “Throughout the programs, projects are created for each student to go along with their chosen area,” said Holmes. “For example, in building trades, each student could design, assemble and decorate a box, the completed one running the gamut from simple

and plain to the beautiful ornate.”

While at HACTC, Holmes won the prestigious Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 1990. “I felt like I was blessed, and that I helped students as a result,” said Holmes.

At RBCTC, students can select from similar programs found at HACTC and whose regular high school schedule or program is adjusted as necessary to ensure that there are no barriers to enrolling in a vocational and technical area throughout the year, Holmes explained.

Located on the Upper Plain in Bradford, VT, and adjacent to the Oxbow High School campus, River Bend’s facility includes a state-of-the-art automotive garage, heavy equipment training sites and shop, a complete building trades workshop, and a commercial kitchen with its own restaurant.

Jeanne Holmes helping with Building Trades house, early 1990s

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married the following November, and moved to East Lansing, Michigan in January 1961,” said Holmes. “Following his graduation from Michigan State University in 1963, we stayed in Michigan for five more years.”

But the couple missed the mountains of New England, so returned east and settled in West Newbury, VT. The town was familiar to Holmes whose father, J. Donald Johnston, had purchased an old farmhouse there without electricity and running water for $1,100. “We went up in a Dodge car with everything in our laps and a small trailer behind us,” said Holmes.

Born in Flushing, NY nearly 80 years ago, Holmes went to many high schools as a result of her father’s practice as a Unitarian minister. “We moved a lot when I was growing up,” Holmes said.

Because the world was in the midst of World War II, her father feared that New York would be a likely target for a bombing attack. “My dad decided that a backup plan was needed to move his family out of harm’s way,” said Holmes. “Answering an ad in the New York Times, he boarded a bus to White River Junction, VT, where he met a realtor and ended up buying our place in West Newbury.”

Holmes retired from HACTC in 1997 and moved from Hanover to Norwich where she and Larry deeply enjoy the town and especially the river. “That river means love, joy, comfort, and peace,” said Holmes. “My life has consisted of beautiful places to be, beautiful people to know, and water in front of me that I can always see and enjoy.”

Holmes and Larry have three grown children including Karen, 59; Mark, 57; and Jennifer, 48. They also have six grandchildren including Lola, Lydia, twins Luke & Liam, Mitchell, and Ryan.

Since her retirement, Holmes has worked at Killdeer Farm in Norwich. There, she grows and sells plants and helps customers determine which plants are best suited to them. “I love the farm, the people and the customers,” said Holmes. “And now I know all of the Upper Valley as a result.”

Larry is also retired, having been a Personnel Director at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center for 25 years. “We made a deal when I returned to work during my retirement,” said Holmes. “He runs the household. He buys the groceries and cooks the meals every day.”

In the meantime, Holmes is more than happy to pursue her 24-year-old career at Killdeer. “I’ll continue until I fall into the river,” laughed Holmes. “You might even see me float by.” 

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Long known for giving back to the communities it serves, charitable giving is an important part of Mascoma Bank’s mission. “The bank is known for its commitment to the community,” says Mariah Davis, the giving administrator for Mascoma Bank.

Davis explains that Mascoma has three different entities for managing and administering funds for charitable causes. The Mascoma Bank Foundation provides capital funding to area non-profit organizations looking to expand their operations through long term projects, such as building acquisitions and capital improvements.

To receive funds through the Foundation, organizations need to show the importance of the project for long-term viability, with an impact extending beyond twenty years. It is clear to see that projects involving building and major renovations fall under the auspices of the Mascoma Bank Foundation.

For organizations interested in receiving funds for less ambitious goals, Mascoma has a donation committee and a sponsorship committee which handle requests for funding projects of less than $10,000. The sponsorship committee handles funding requests for particular events, such as the annual Prouty event for cancer research. The donation committee will consider requests to help with ongoing programs, such as a service organization providing regular meals for low-income or unemployed individuals. Bank employees staff both of these committees, and make the decisions of how the money will be spent.

Over a year ago, Mascoma developed a new system for applying for funds from these two committees. While in the past, representatives from the non-profits would go to their local Mascoma branch and apply for assistance in person, Davis says that now the bank has an online application process in place. With requests numbering an average of about 100 each month for financial assistance through donations, Davis says it became necessary to streamline the process, having the applications go to a central location rather than through the various bank branches.

Another factor in moving to an online application process was the bank’s expansion to the Burlington area. “We’re growing as a bank,” says Davis, resulting in more requests for assistance. With the large number of nonprofit organizations in Burlington, the number of applications increased quite a bit.

Davis says the online process helps the organizations in the important area of efficiency. The online process is simple and straightforward, and the application is immediately sent to her office. “I see it within seconds,” Davis says of the applications, and she sends out a confirmation of receipt shortly afterwards. From those organizations that used the online process, Davis reports good results. “I’ve heard really good feedback,” she says.

New systems do take a while for people to get familiar with. For some, “It’s a big change,” Davis says. Despite the fact that the online application process has been up and running over a year, a few people still visit a branch office to apply. Davis expects that all applications be made online going forward.

-- Frank Orlowski
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