

The Mountain Gazette's 2017

HOME & GARDEN

Supplement

From clogs to backups: 3 simple DIY plumbing fixes

(StatePoint) If the idea of doing-it-yourself where plumbing is concerned sounds intimidating, fear not. There are many simple fixes to common plumbing problems that just about anyone can take care of without professional assistance. More importantly, performing these simple maintenance tasks as they are needed can prevent larger problems from occurring.

Not sure where to start? Try these quick plumbing tips from Jeff Devlin, a licensed contractor who's appeared on several TV home improvement shows.

- **Hair clogs:** If you are accustomed to calling the plumber or snaking the drain when your tub is clogged, consider a simpler solution. Hair clog removers, available at your local hardware store or supercenter, are formulated with specific ingredients that work to dissolve hair and clear a drain on contact. For example, Roto-Rooter Hair Clog Remover works up to five times faster than other brands because it has 25% more hair dissolving ingredients.

You can also help slow down the forming of new clogs by ensuring all of your drains have strainers to catch hairs and other debris.

- **Kitchen clogs:** Grease, soap, and food can get trapped in kitchen sinks – it happens in every home sooner or later. The easiest way to clear

these tough clogs is to use a solution designed specifically to cut through grease and food and open up a drain. Use 16 ounces of a solution like Roto-Rooter's Gel Clog Remover and wait about ten minutes before flushing with water.

While a great clog remover can do wonders, you should try to dispose of larger amounts of grease in the garbage. Keep this in mind next time you are deep frying dinner!

- **Septic backups:** If you have a septic system, know that anything poured down any drain in your home will end up in the tank. So it's very important to keep that system healthy. A septic system is not unlike the human digestive system – it contains bacteria and enzymes that help to eliminate waste. However, sometimes the good bacteria and enzymes get destroyed by the things that get dumped into drains.

Just as you can add a probiotic to your personal digestive system to keep things in balance, in a septic system you can maintain balance by adding a septic treatment to your toilet. To avoid costly and messy backups, do this quick task once a month.

"Performing simple routine maintenance can save you time, money and a headache down the line," says Devlin.



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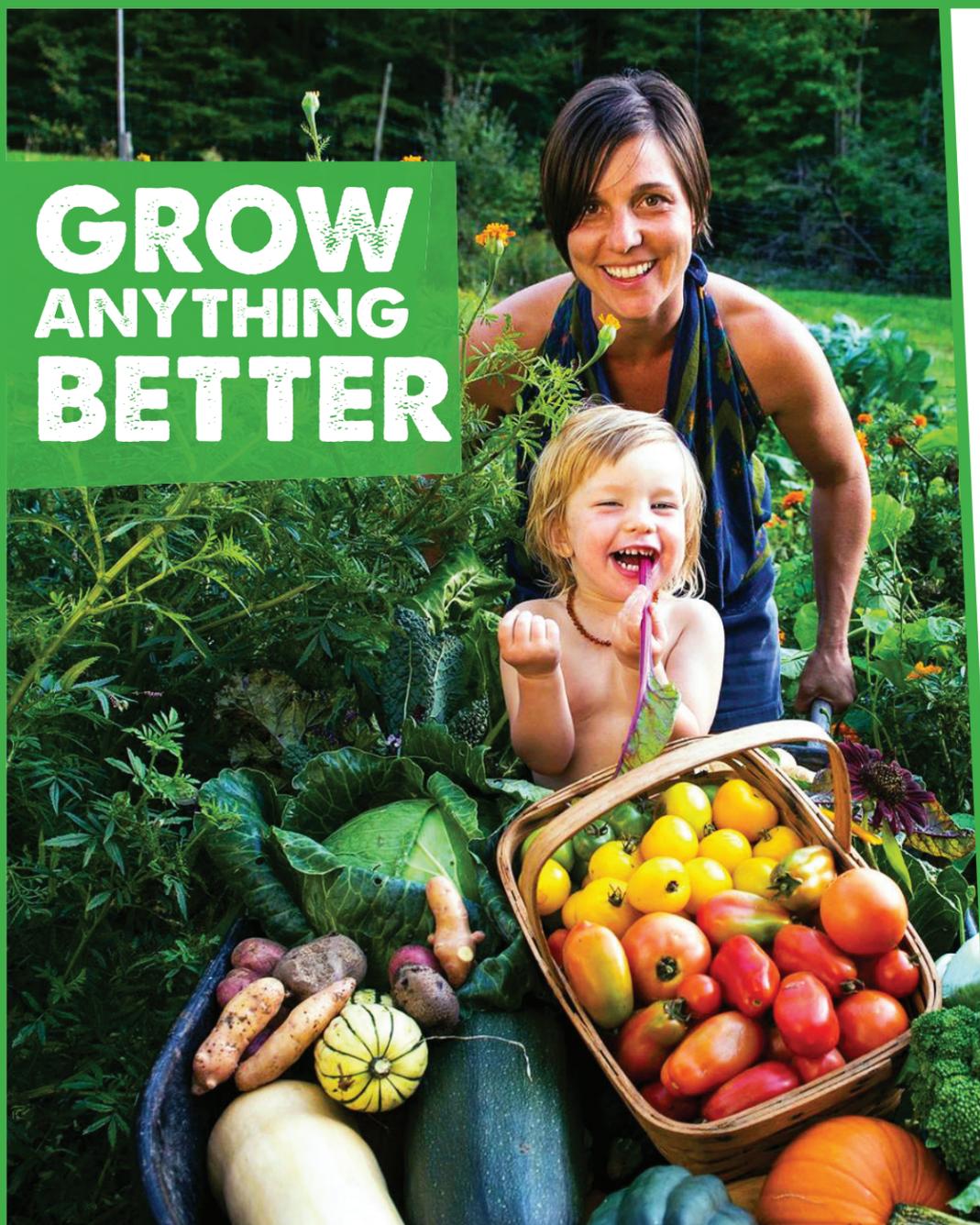


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HOME & GARDEN

Supplement

Imitating old growth captures carbon better

New results from a fifteen-year study on Mount Mansfield and at the University of Vermont's research forest come to a surprising conclusion: imitating old-growth forests enhances carbon storage in managed forestland far better than conventional forestry techniques.

As the planet warms, carbon markets are getting hot too. Forest landowners have been looking for ways to enter these markets, making money from their commercial timberland not just by selling logs – but also by demonstrating that their land is absorbing climate-warming carbon dioxide from the air. The more carbon an acre of trees holds, the more valuable it will be in these new carbon markets. But what forestry techniques do the best job of

maximizing carbon storage in trees and soil – while still allowing landowners to provide habitat for wildlife and harvest timber for profitable sale?

Using “structural complexity enhancement” (SCE) – a suite of forestry techniques designed to imitate the complexity of old forests and natural disturbances (like wind storms) – a team of UVM scientists show that they can maintain high levels of carbon storage on managed timberland. Under this new style of forestry, the scientists report that, a decade after harvesting, carbon storage was just 15% less than what would accumulate over time in forests that were not logged at all. In contrast, the study shows that conventionally managed timberland holds about 45% less carbon than uncut forests.

“This approach can let landowners restore old-growth forest habitats, fight climate change, and make a moderate amount of money – all at the same time,” says UVM forest ecologist Bill Keeton, who co-led the new study, published April 6, online, in the journal *Ecosphere*. “This is a great new tool for foresters and landowners to have in their tool box.”

Fast forest

“We were very surprised that the growth rates of trees in the structural complexity areas exceeded the areas with conventional treatments,” Keeton says. “This overturns previous dogma that more heavily thinned areas would have faster growth that would sequester carbon more rapidly than old trees.” *Keeton's technique provides opportunity for growth at all levels of the forest canopy and releases the crowns of large older trees – by cutting less vigorous trees around them – so they get lots of sunshine and pack on new wood and leaves. In short, the study shows that imitating natural disturbances and the way an old forest grows can allow forests to grow faster than traditional selection forestry.*

And this new approach “keeps a lot of carbon on-site that would otherwise be transferred to the atmosphere if the trees were cut,” says Keeton, “even when accounting for the life cycle of carbon in wood products.”

New old growth

For nearly two decades, Keeton and his students have been studying SCE on northern hardwood and mixed hardwood-conifer

forest plots on the side of Mount Mansfield and at UVM's Jericho Research Forest. This new Ecosphere study – co-led by former UVM graduate student Sarah Ford – is part of a series of his findings that show that imitating key characteristics of old-growth forests in managed timberland can increase biodiversity (including notable increases in mushrooms, herbaceous plants, and amphibians), enhance the ecosystem services that forests provide to people (like clean water), and, ultimately, restore old-growth forests – “a vastly underrepresented forest type in the Northern Forest,” Keeton says, due to the lingering effects of forest clearing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Now this new study adds another crucial benefit to the SCE approach: fighting climate change by soaking carbon dioxide out of the air and storing it for long periods in forests. To make their study of how effective SCE would be for this “carbon forestry,” the UVM scientists established plots in the forest and measured the carbon stored in living and dead trees, as well as in woody debris on the forest floor, in each plot. Then they used a variety of ways of selecting trees for harvest – including conventional approaches, the SCE techniques, and control groups that were not cut at all.

Ten years after experimental harvesting, the scientists went back and measured the carbon stored in each kind of plot. Not only did the SCE approach show dramatically higher levels of carbon than conventional “single-tree” and “group” selection techniques, but in one key pool of stored carbon – coarse woody material lying on the ground – the SCE approach led to more carbon being captured than even the control plots where no cutting or other forestry work was done.

Conservation concerns

In other words, for conservation-minded land owners, like land trusts or forest preserves, Keeton's SCE approach – when aimed at maximizing biodiversity and fighting climate change – could lead to more carbon storage, and faster creation of old-growth types of habitats, than doing nothing at all.

“It's possible to accelerate the recovery of old growth in the Northern Forest,” says Keeton, who co-directs the Forestry Program and leads the Carbon Dynamics Lab in UVM's Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources.

As the climate warms, that goal becomes increasingly urgent – and the definition of old growth itself becomes increasingly complex. With warmer temperatures and many new invasive pests, like emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid, and beech bark disease, “the baseline is shifting,” Keeton says. Restoring old growth to the Northern Forest “does not mean going back to the forests we had four hundred years ago,” he says. Instead, he sees old growth restoration as a form of adaptation for the future. The characteristics of old forests – “like their structural complexity, closed canopies, high levels of biodiversity, mixed-age trees, and microclimates,” Keeton says – can give land resilience against drought, higher temperatures, diseases, storms, and rapid ecosystem changes.

“We'll need more old growth in the future,” Bill Keeton says.



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LIBRARY NEWS

DEBORAH RAWSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY UNDERHILL

Author M. T. Anderson will be at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library on Thursday, April 27, 6:30 PM. Anderson, author of *Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad*, is partnering with the Craftsbury Chamber Players to curate two concerts of music composed by Shostakovich, one of which will be performed in Burlington during May. Leading up to the concert, Anderson will read from his book at separate gatherings in the Northeast Kingdom and the greater Burlington area. Please take this opportunity to hear an author speak about the topics of history and music with a passion and knowledge that is unsurpassed.

For children and families: April Break Vacation Camp activities Wednesday, April 26: Movie and Popcorn Afternoon. Join us for vacation movie time! We will provide popcorn and lemonade just after the movie starts. No registration needed. Call 899-4962 for details.

Thursday, April 27: LEGO Construction. LEGO builders wanted Thursday, April 27, 12:00 – 2:00 PM! You will have the opportunity to attempt a building challenge and/or you can build your own independent creation. You'll have the opportunity to create, construct, and share your works with other LEGO builders. All ages welcome. No registration required.

Friday, April 28, 1:00 PM: Cat-A-Who-Ya? Are you a Cat Person or a Dog Person? No matter who you are, everyone will love this special presentation by special guest JoAnn Nichols from the Humane Society, "Cat-A-Who-Ya?" This description is from the Humane Society: "Children learn about different types of domestic cats. They learn about how cats communicate using their body and voices. Children learn the secret "hand shake" that cats understand and why the secret works. We spend time making toys for their own cats or they donate them to the Humane Society's kitties." Please join us for this special event!

Library hours: Tuesday 12:00 – 8:00 PM, Wednesday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Thursday 12:00 – 8:00 PM, Friday 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Sunday 1:00 – 4:00 PM; closed Monday. For information on any of the library's programs, call 899-4962.

JERICHO TOWN LIBRARY

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & EVENTS AT JTL

Poetry Workshops with Mary Jane Dickerson, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Mondays, April 3, 10, 17, and 24 with additional individual sessions with MJD at times to be scheduled at her house from April 26-29. On Monday, May 1, from 6:30 – 8:00 PM will be the public reading of our work and favorite poems from others in the community at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library. This year's topic is *Weather – Inside and Out*. For complete information and to register, please contact Mary Jane Dickerson, marydickers@comcast.net.

Wildlife Tracking for Kids and Adults: Wednesday, May 3, 10:30 AM. Have you ever been in the woods and wondered, "Who's been here?" Are you curious about what wildlife lives on your land? Join Mike Kessler on a multi-sensory adventure in wildlife tracking. This once monthly workshop is designed for all ages (Pre-K-adult). Animal tracking connects us with nature in a way that engages both our bodies and minds. Learn how to use your senses to locate clues, read signs and tell the stories of the landscape. Shine or rain. Dress for all weather. Workshop begins at the Jericho Town Library and will explore the surrounding grounds and the Green.

Transition Town Jericho (second Monday each month): May 8, 5:30 – 6:30 PM. Transition Town is a worldwide initiative to inspire communities to come together to explore the practicalities of rebuilding local resilience and reducing carbon emissions. There are thousands of towns involved in this effort and several active chapters in Vermont! Come learn about Transition Town movement with trained Transition facilitator Laura Markowitz and discuss the possibilities for Jericho!

YOUTH PROGRAMMING AT JTL

LEGO CLUB: Thursdays, April 20, May 4 and 18, 4:30 – 5:30 PM. Lego, Lego, Legos! Join us for Lego missions, competitions, activities, and more! Grades K-6. Please note: younger children must be accompanied by an adult.

New! Tot Yoga (Third Friday series): Friday April 21, 3:00 – 4:00 PM. Join early childhood educator, certified YogaKids instructor, and mama Meredith Bartolo for this once-monthly parent/toddler yoga. Come stretch, wiggle, move, and groove with Tot Yoga! Two- and three-year-olds are invited to come do some fun yoga poses and relax on a cloud while singing songs, hearing stories, and playing games together. No prior yoga experience necessary! Space is limited pre-registration is required, sharingcircleeducation@gmail.com.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: Wednesdays, 4:30-6:30 PM. This group is led by adult Dungeon Master Dana VanHorn. No experience necessary but a commitment to the group is needed in order to follow the on-going story line.

Little One & Me Circle Time: Wednesday, April 26, 10:00 – 11:00 AM. Join Katie Coons for interactive circle time with movement, free play, songs, craft, and healthy snack.

Baby Yoga (ages 0-1): First Friday Monthly Series: Friday, May 5, 3:00 – 4:00 PM. Join early childhood educator, certified YogaKids instructor, and mama Meredith Bartolo for once-monthly parent/baby yoga. Happy baby, flying baby, and dancing baby are all a part of this baby yoga workshop! We will spend time getting flexible with our babies, stretching them and ourselves. There will be postures for babies that may help with things like colic and gross motor skills, and postures for caregivers will focus on strengthening and stretching overused muscles and general relaxation. No yoga experience or equipment necessary. Space limited pre-registration required, sharingcircleeducation@gmail.com.

ALL LIBRARY PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

NEWS FROM THE JTL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 7:15 PM at Jericho Town Library. Everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information on programs and library services, please visit our website at www.jerichotownlibraryvt.org or give us a call at 899-4686.

VARNUM MEMORIAL LIBRARY JEFFERSONVILLE

Story Hour and Crafts with LN, every Thursday, 10:00 – 11:00 AM. Come hear stories from a gifted and talented storyteller, and she does a craft with kids!

Weekly Crafting Circle, Mondays, 5:00 – 7:00 PM. Come and enjoy fiber and fabric with craft novices, as well as folks who have enjoyed handwork arts for their lifetimes! Have a project you're already working on? Bring it in and share your expertise and enthusiasm.

The Varnum Library, P.O. Box 198, 194 Main St., Jeffersonville, 802-644-2117; thevarnum@gmail.com. Please visit Varnum Library's website, <http://thevarnum.org>.

Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays 12:00 – 7:00 PM, Wednesdays 3:00 – 7:00 PM, Thursdays 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Fridays 2:00 – 5:00 PM, and Saturdays 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Closed Sundays.

WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Early Literacy Storytime for birth to preschool age children is every Thursday, 11:00 AM. No registration needed. Several stories around a theme, and a theme-based craft. All ages and levels of attention are encouraged to come. Don't worry if they fidget – they are still getting a lot out of it!

Library Hours: Wednesday 1:00 – 7:00 PM, Thursday 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Friday 1:00 – 7:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM; website www.westfordpubliclibrary.wordpress.com; email westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com. Like us on Facebook. 878-5639, Bree Drapa, Librarian.

RICHMOND LIBRARY

May Art Show: circular weaving pieces by Richmond Elementary School fourth graders under the direction of art teacher Kim Aueter. We will highlight a sampling of weaving done by the other grades in the foyer display case.

Book Discussions: Tuesday, May 9, at 6:30 PM in the Mezzanine: *The Diver's Clothes Lie Empty* by Vendela Vida. A woman travels to Casablanca, Morocco, on mysterious business. While checking into her hotel, she is robbed of her wallet and passport, all her money and ID. Stripped of her identity, she feels burdened by the crime yet strangely liberated by her sudden freedom to be anyone she wants to be. Thursday, May 18, at 7:00 PM in the Mezzanine: *Death of a Doxy: a Nero Wolfe Mystery* by Rex Stout. When an old acquaintance and fellow P.I. is accused of murdering a kept woman, Nero Wolfe investigates and finds several suspects in a mystery blackmailer, a sexy lounge singer, and a cold-blooded lady-killer.

Matching New Books with New Babies: If you welcomed a new little bundle of joy into your home in 2016 and you were not able to attend this year's baby social on March 26, you can still come to the library and find out what special book has been added to the collection in honor of your little person. We have been dedicating new picture books to Richmond's littlest residents since 1995. Plaques bearing the child's name are found in the front of the book.

The Dorothy Canfield Fisher (DCF) Book Award: The winning book will be announced at the end of April, which is when the 30 titles for the next year are unveiled and take their place on our DCF shelf! The 2017-18 list is rich with books that brilliantly incorporate adventure, imagination, and history such as *Some Kind of Courage* by Dan Gemeinhart, *The Bitter Side of Sweet* by Tara Sullivan, *The Inquisitor's Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog* by Adam Gidwitz, *Projekt 1065: A Novel of World War II* by Alan Gatz, and *A Bandit's Tale: The Muddled Misadventures of a Pickpocket* by Deborah Hopkinson. Fantasy lovers will enjoy *The Evil Wizard Smallbone* by Delia Sherman, *The Seventh Wish* by Kate Messner, *Beautiful Blue World* by Suzanne LaFleur, and *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill. And there's more: books that feature sports (*Soar* by Joan Bauer), animals (*The Poet's Dog* by Patricia MacLaughlin), school situations (*It Ain't So Awful, Falafel* by Firoozeh Dumas), and families (*Wish* by Barbara O'Connor) to name just a few.

Summer Programs: We are putting together a summer schedule that includes our youth reading program, stories, art, music, yoga, nature programs, movies, crafts and more. Schedules will be out in early June, but mark your calendar today with our kick-off program on June 29 at 10:30 AM. Dinoman will educate us and dazzle us with life-size blowup dinosaurs.

Community Art: The months of March and April brought so many bright butterflies to the library. They clung to our walls, shelves and ceiling. Thank you to all who contributed to our colorful community art and special thanks to Kathryn Wysockey Johnson who created the inspired watercolor and silhouette backgrounds as a tribute to the special book, *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson.

Weekly Children's Programs:

- Baby Laptime. This short storytime is for babies ages 0-24 months and their grownups. We will share the magic of stories, songs, rhymes, bounces, and fingerplays designed to introduce these youngest children to color, sounds, fine motor skills, and body movement. Join the fun on Mondays at 10:30 AM.
- Storytime. For children age 2-5. One of the best things you can do for your child is introduce them to the wonderful world of books. We'll share excellent picture books both new and old as well as the classics at this storytime on Wednesdays at 10:00 AM.
- Early Bird Math Storytime. For children ages 2-5. We will explore numbers, shapes, patterns, and sets through books, songs, rhymes, and games. This fun, interactive storytime happens in the community room every Friday at 11:00 AM.

Richmond Area Playgroup meets on Wednesdays from 8:45 – 10:15 AM in the Library Community Room.

The Library is closed on Monday, May 29, Memorial Day.

Other Events:

Stellaria Trio: Burlington's newest classical piano trio returns to the Richmond Free Library with its second program following the group's debut in October 2016. Violinist Letitia Quante, cellist John Dunlop, and pianist Claire Black present the first piano trios of Beethoven and Brahms, and Ernest Bloch's *Three Nocturnes* in one of their favorite VT venues. The concert will take place Sunday, April 30 at 2:30 PM. Free admission. Donations accepted.

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Open Monday and Wednesday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 6:00 PM; Friday, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Saturday, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

FAIRFAX COMMUNITY LIBRARY

All events are free unless noted. Pre-registration encouraged. Call or email libraryprograms@fwsu.org.

Tuesday, May 2, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Family Game Night. Join us for this fun monthly tabletop game event! Bring a favorite game or come and learn a new one. Drop in. All Ages.

Youth Events

Tuesdays, April and May, 9:30 – 10:30 AM: Preschool Story Hour. April 11: Music Special with Caitlin. April 18: Earth Day and Recycling. April 25: Favorite Authors. May 2: Babies. May 9: Mothers. May 23: Bugs. May 30: Bunnies. Join us for themed stories, songs, and activities for ages 0-6. No registration necessary for story hour.

Thursday, April 20, May 3, 17, 3:15 – 4:15 PM: READ to a

DOG. Kids ages 5-10 can read a book of their choice to a fuzzy, friendly dog. Call to reserve a 15-minute slot.

Tuesday, May 2 and Wednesday, May 3, 3:00 – 4:30 PM: Sewing Club I & II. Youth age 10+ will learn a variety of sewing skills with Karin Hernandez. Must register.

Thursday, May 4, 6:00 – 7:00 PM: PJ Story Hour. Kids age 0-6 listen to themed stories, followed by a craft and snack. Thanks to Building Bright Futures for this wonderful program.

Wednesday, May 10, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: LEGO Club. Ages 6+ enjoy themed Lego play after school. Please register.

Monday, May 15, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Crafternoon. Bird Houses. Kids 6+ will paint bird houses. Must register.

Tuesday, May 16, 9:30 – 10:30 AM: Preschool Story Hour: Music Special with Caitlin. Join us for themed stories, songs, and activities for ages 0-6. No registration necessary for story hour.

Monday, May 22, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: Lab Girls. This club empowers young women to explore science through hands-on experiments and activities. Grades 6-12. This month students will meet a marine biologist and do a hands-on project. Must register.

Wednesday, May 31, 3:00 – 4:00 PM: STEM Club. Kids age 6+ will continue a series on "six simple machines." Must pre-register.

Adult Events

Saturdays, April 22, May 20, 9:00 – 11:00 AM: Tech Help. Get help with individual tech questions. You can ask any tech question and/or bring in a device with which you need help. You will be ably assisted by our techie, Josiah. Call to reserve a half hour time slot, or drop in.

Saturday, April 22, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Art Bop. Libraries across Franklin County are hosting an Art Bop. Travel from library to library and see wonderful art displays, sales, and hands-on art activities. Our library will host several artists from right here in Fairfax, plus enjoy live bluegrass music by *The King and Captain!* This family friendly event will also include a kids' art table.

Thursday, April 27, 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Film Screening and Discussion with Black Lives Matter. Watch a portion of a film about Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights movement, followed by a time of discussion and storytelling with Black Lives Matter Vermont.

Thursday May 11, 6:30 – 8:00 PM: Fiction Book Group discusses *The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton. Abandoned on a ship headed to Australia as a young child and raised by the dockmaster and his wife, Nell searches for her real identity when she learns the truth on her 21st birthday.

Saturday, May 13, 10:00 – 11:00 AM: Woof! Dog Communication in the Human World. Deb from GoldStar Dog Training of Fairfax presents this popular, long-running dog communication and safety lecture – a multi-media extravaganza of fun where the audience also gets to test their "dog reading" skills. In an hour, she'll demystify dog communication, reveal some common dog-human misunderstandings, and explore how we can all live safely and happily together. (Shhhh... this is for humans only... dogs must be left at home!) Please register.

Thursday, May 18, 5:30 – 7:30 PM: Book Binding for Beginners. Learn how to create a simple book with Nicole Vance using the Japanese stab binding technique. Materials fee \$10. Must register.

Thursday, May 25, 5:30 - 7:30 PM: Tea and Bristles. We welcome back Julie of Blue Jay Creative Common to lead this fun step-by-step painting class, perfect for beginners. A \$25 fee covers all materials and tea/refreshments. Must register.

The library is open Monday and Wednesday 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM, Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 AM – 8:00 PM, Friday 8:30 AM – 3:15 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

For up-to-date info about programs, visit our website: www.fairfaxvtlibrary.org, where you can also find a link to the interactive Google calendar.

DOROTHY ALLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY WILLISTON

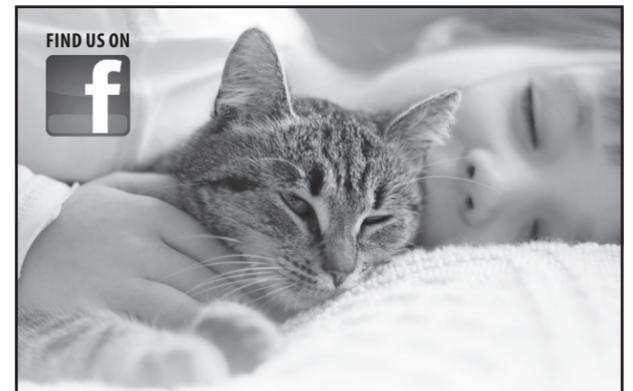
All events free. Children 8 and younger must be accompanied by an adult while at the library.

Preschool Story Time: Tuesdays, 10:30 AM. Includes a simple craft activity. February 21: At the Beach. All ages.

Preschool Music: Mondays, 11:00 AM with Peter Alsen; and Thursdays, 10:30 AM with Marcie Hernandez. Up to age 5 with a caregiver. No pre-registration. Limit one session per week per family.

Thursday Playtime: Thursdays, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Preschoolers and their caregivers are invited for an informal playtime following our Preschool Music program. For children birth to age 5. Presented with Building Bright Futures.

Dorothy Alling Memorial Library, 21 Library Lane, Williston. 802-878-4918, www.williston.lib.vt.us.



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ART / MUSIC / THEATER

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

CHICKENS! Contrary to the proverbial wisdom, go ahead and count them! Established and emerging artists are invited to submit one or two pieces of two-dimensional artwork in any medium (including photography) for *CHICKENS!*, an exhibit scheduled for May through August 2017 at the Jericho Town Hall. The only two requirements: The work must depict one or more chickens (yep, roosters are okay), and it must be able to be hung on a wall. Register by April 15; for information and registration: 878-8887 or blgreen@myfairpoint.net. The exhibit is one of an ongoing series of shows that are part of a collaborative project between the Town of Jericho and a committee of volunteers involved in the arts. The Committee includes Jericho Selectboard member Catherine McMains, artists Dianne Shullenberger and Barbara Greene, and gallery owner Emilie Alexander.

At the Dianne Shullenberger Gallery, 228 Nashville Rd., Jericho, *Delicious Words 2017* will feature writers, a quilter, and desserts Sunday, April 23, 4:00 PM. Quilter Rosalind Daniels will present her exhibit *Fiber Abstractions*. Three writers will speak: Pam Mac Pherson with *Vigil: The Poetry of Presence*; Maya Parry, with *The Forgotten Feminist: Clarina Nichols*; and Rosa Costellano, with *Low Beating Drum: Voices from the Margin*. Dessert chefs John and Liz Snell provide the "delicious" in *Delicious Words*. \$25 minimum donation benefits C.O.T.S.; RSVP 899-4993 or vidianne@hotmail.com. For information, www.diannesshullenberger.com, vidianne@hotmail.com, or 899-4993.

A Duo Exhibit of Vermont Watercolors by Vermont artists Amanda Amend and Susan Bull Riley will be at the Emile A Gruppe Gallery in Jericho through Open Studio Weekend, Saturday-Sunday, May 27-28. An artist reception is planned for Sunday, April 30 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM. Susan's primary muse is Vermont's natural world. The work reflects her "love of botanical watercolor, my bottomless affection for birds, and a need to release, via art, the intensity of my affection for the landscapes of my native state." She has collaborated with a number of institutions that seek to protect the natural world such as The New York Museum, The National Science Foundation, The Vermont Community Foundation, the American Chestnut Foundation, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and many local land trusts, and has several paintings hanging in the VT State House. Amanda calls her paintings contemplations: "contemplations on the textures, colors, forms and sensory experiences of the world around me, and on the thoughts that they inspire." She is a master at "lost and found edges," the exploration of the blending of edges between image and reflection. She says "Watercolor is the perfect medium to explore the morphing of form." Amanda has participated in exhibitions around the state, is a signature member of the VT Watercolor Society, and was featured in the VT Arts Council Spotlight Gallery in 2016. Emile A Gruppe Gallery, 22 Barber Farm Rd., Jericho. For more information, go online to www.emilegruppegallery.com or call 899-3211.

Bryan Memorial Gallery call to artists for *Land and Light and Water and Air*, a juried exhibit of Vermont and New England landscapes. Deadline: Friday, July 14. Submissions due to the jury by Friday, July 14. The exhibit runs from September 8-November 5. Cash prizes awarded. For complete specifications, please go to www.bryangallery.org and click on *Call To Artists*. Bryan Gallery, 180 Main St., Jeffersonville; 802-644-5100 or info@bryangallery.org.

A senior thesis exhibit of work by Johnson State College BFA students will be displayed through Tuesday, April 25 at the Julian Scott Memorial Gallery and Visual Arts Center on the campus of Johnson State College, Johnson. The artists are Brady Hird, Hannah Leroux, Brittany Miracle, Dani LaPerle, Brendan Walsh, Vanessa Sproates-Horl, and Laurel Hubbert Severance. Open Mondays-Fridays, 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM and Saturdays 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Information: 635-1469 or www.jsc.edu/Dibden.

The 36th Student Art Show will open at Helen Day Art Center, 90 Pond St., Stowe on Monday, May 1 with an opening reception, 3:00 – 6:00 PM. The show runs through Saturday, May 27 and features artwork from students at all levels of Stowe schools. Complimentary ice cream will be served at the reception, and guests will be invited to participate in an art activity. Gallery hours Tuesday-

Saturday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM or by appointment. Information: Rachel Moore, director@helenday.com, www.helenday.com, or 802-253-8358.

The Vermont Folklife Center in Middlebury announces *Family Traits: Art, Humor, and Everyday Life*, celebrating familial culture through the artwork of Stanley Lyndes, will be open through Monday, May 15 in the Center's Vision & Voice Gallery. Free and open to the public, Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; the Gallery is ADA accessible. VT Folklife Center, 88 Main St., Middlebury, 802-388-4964.

Burlington City Arts launches its 2017 spring exhibitions with an opening reception Friday, April 21, 5:00 – 8:00 PM at the BCA center, 405 Pine St., Burlington. *Ready. Fire! Aim.* Is a joint exhibition with the Hall Art Foundation in Reading, VT; it runs in Burlington through Sunday, July 9. This group show explores the psychology of impulsive action and strategic thinking. *Ready. Fire! Aim.* brings together artworks addressing issues of violence and decay, gestural abstraction and linear precision, as well as the sensible and the absurd. The presentation will include work by six emerging to nationally recognized Vermont-based artists, while the Hall Art Foundation's presentation (May 6-November 26) will feature a selection of paintings, sculptures, and photographs by internationally recognized, contemporary artists. Also at BCA, UVM grad and former BCA artist-in-residence Justin Hoekstra returns with *Heavy Smile*, a solo exhibition of large scale abstract paintings. BCA exhibitions are free for public viewing Tuesday-Thursday, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and Friday-Saturday, 11:00 AM – 8:00 PM.

PechaKucha Night (PKN) returns to the Fleming Museum of Art on Thursday, May 4, offering a peek into the imaginations of Burlington's creative community. PKN is an evening event where people gather to hear presentations from creative individuals in our communities. Each presentation consists of exactly 20 slides with each slide appearing onscreen for exactly 20 seconds. There are usually 10 presentations during a PKN event, with presentations from artists, photographers, travelers, filmmakers, writers, gardeners, ice sculptors, architects, designers, stone masons, graphic novelists, community activists, dreamers, and many more. Anyone and everyone is invited to present; the only requirement is 20 images and a passion. Contact fleming@uvm.edu for more information. \$6 suggested donation at the door to help keep things running. Learn more about PechaKucha Night at the global website, <http://www.pechakucha.org>. View presentations from a recent PechaKucha Night on RETN's website, <http://www.retn.org/pechakucha-night-burlington-vol-23>.

At River Arts in Morrisville: through May 9, *Women, Beasts and Dreams* is an exhibit of acrylic painting by Carolyn Mecklosky of Waterville. Her recent work portrays a personal and evolving mythology. Through her use of vibrant, uncomplicated color she allows space within the work for a flowing dreamscape of imagery. For more information including cost for this and other programs, <http://www.riverartsvt.org>. River Arts, 74 Pleasant St., Morrisville.

At the Fleming Museum of Art, artist Barbara Bloom enlisted print scholar Susan Tallman to contribute text to two artist's books, on view in the European and American Gallery of the Fleming through Sunday, May 21. In *The Collections of Barbara Bloom*, retrospective is turned on its head with gathered images of Bloom's multimedia installations and objects from her personal collections, with commentary by Tallman. In *Gifts*, Bloom explores the nature of gifts through the format of eight giftwrap papers she designed, which come wrapped in a linen box along with a book in which Tallman provides context for the designs. Regular admission; free to Museum members and to UVM students, staff, and faculty. On Wednesday, April 26, 6:00 PM, Sina Queyras will bring her *Painted Word Poetry Series* to the Fleming. She grew up on the road in western Canada and has since lived in Vancouver, Toronto, NYC, Philadelphia, and Montreal (where she now teaches at Concordia University); she has authored and edited poetry collections and maintains the literary blog *Lemon Hound*. The Fleming Museum of Art, UVM, 61 Colchester Ave., Burlington, <http://www.flemingmuseum.org>. Regular admission; free to Museum members and UVM students, staff, and faculty. *Interested in Mehndi* –

The Traditional Art of Henna Painting? Come to this presentation with Bridgette Butler, henna artist and owner of *Maple Mehndi*. She will introduce participants the history and origins of henna painting in a workshop that includes a hands-on portion. Preregistration required; for information and cost, contact fleming@uvm.edu.

Shelburne Vineyard will hang a new exhibit in the Tasting Room, titled *Freedom Speak* by Shelburne artist Kate Longmaid, through May 31. Her message is both contemporary and culturally, socially, and politically relevant, expounding upon the importance of taking a stand and "speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak or are at risk of being silenced. Open every day, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Shelburne Vineyard, 6308 Shelburne Rd., Shelburne. Information: 985-8222 or www.shelburnevineyard.com.

At the Shelburne Museum: *Backstage Pass: Rock & Roll Photography* through Sunday, May 7 includes studio portraits and candid outtakes of famous rock and roll stars and jazz greats from Miles Davis, Elvis, and the Beatles to David Bowie, Prince, and *The Beastie Boys*. *Upstream with Ogden Pleissner*, May 1-October 31 will feature paintings, prints, and ephemera from the Museum's permanent collection to transport viewers to some of the avid anglers' favorite streams, rivers, and lakes from Maine to Wyoming. This summer running Saturday, June 3-Wednesday, August 23, the museum presents *Wild Spaces, Open Seasons: Hunting and Fishing in American Art*, the first major exhibition to explore the visual culture of hunting and fishing in both painting and sculpture from the early 1800s to WWII. The exhibition will include a wide variety of portraits, landscapes, still lifes, and genre scenes, and will include iconic works by Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, and John Singer Sargent, as well as key pictures by specialist sporting artists such as Charles Deas, Alfred Jacob Miller, Carl Rungius, and Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait. This is the only east coast venue for this exhibition, and will include objects like decoys, antlers, and firearms; more than 70 paintings and sculptures. Shelburne Museum, Shelburne Rd., Shelburne; 802-985-0881 or klevsque@shelburnemuseum.org.

Essex Art League meets the first Thursday of the month, September-June, from 9:00 – 11:00 AM at the Essex Junction Congregational Church on VT Rt. 15. The meeting includes a business and social time followed by a guest artist presentation. For a detailed calendar of meetings, speakers, and online gallery of members' works: <http://www.essexartleague.com/>.

MUSIC

The Westford Music Series presents the singer-songwriter folk-inspired musician, Zack Tyler, at the UCW white church on Sunday, April 23 from 4:00 – 5:00 PM. Zack recently moved to Vermont and is a fresh new talent on the folk music circuit. Prior to his arrival in Vermont he spent years performing along the South Shore and on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Zack's unique vocals set him apart from his peers as a solo acoustic performer with comparisons to Ray Lamontagne, Eddie Vedder and Phillip Phillips. Zack released his first album, *Two Separate Ways*, in 2015. The Westford Music Series supports the performers with free will donations and has been serving the community of Westford and surrounding areas for the past nine years. Information: 879-4028. Free will donation. Refreshments.

VT Italian Cultural Association (VICA) presents *An Evening of Italian Opera* featuring Meghan McCormack, soprano (VICA Scholarship recipient, 2015), Lillian Broderick (VICA Scholarship recipient, 2017), soprano, Erik Kroncke, bass, and Mary Jane Austin, piano at 7:30 PM on Sunday, April 23 at Waterbury Congregational Church, Waterbury. Admission is by donation.

Johnson State College students will perform free concerts, open to the public, in April: on Wednesday, April 26, the JSC Jazz Ensemble and the JSC Funk/Fusion Ensemble will perform at 7:00 PM; on Friday, April 28, the JSC Concert Band will perform at 7:00 PM. Both concerts are at the Dibden Center for the Arts, JSC campus, Johnson. For more information, 635-1476 or www.jsc.edu/dibden.

Cathedral Arts, Burlington presents *Trio Music of the Ages* at 12:00 PM on Tuesday, April 25 featuring Laura Markowitz, violin, John Dunlop, cello, and Rebecca Kauffman, harp. From Bach to Bartok, the program has baroque, classical, impressionist, and modern styles. Free! On Friday, April 28 at

7:30 PM, concert pianist Kevin Ayesh will perform *Piano Masterpieces* from the classic, romantic, and impressionist eras, as well as *Rhapsody in Blue* by *George Gershwin*; general admission \$20, seniors \$15, students/limited means \$5. Saturday, April 29 Cathedral Arts and Greenfield Piano Associates present a Piano Masterclass with Kevin Ayesh from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – free admission, and open to the public. Tuesday, May 2 at 12:00 PM (bring a bag lunch; coffee/tea provided), *First I'll Try Love* with Melissa DSickerson, soprano, and Samuel Whitesell, piano, present a free concert with Andre Previn's song cycle *Honey and Rue*, *Ruckert-Lieder* by Gustav Mahler, and piano pieces by Zez Confrey and Claude Debussy. For all events: wheelchair accessible; free handicapped parking with plates or tags at the Cathedral; paid parking at the Cathedral or two hours free in the city lot at Macy's. For information: 802-864-0471.

Each year, the winner of Burlington Chamber Orchestra's open competition for music students is invited to perform a concerto with the chamber orchestra in the final concert of the season, this year on Saturday, May 13. The 2017 winner of the Young Artist Solo Competition is Sebastiaan West, who will be performing the first movement of Bach's *D minor Keyboard Concerto*. Sebastiaan was born in the Netherlands and moved to Vermont in 2010. He is a student of master teacher Paul Orgel, who teaches at UVM, and he plays in the Flynn Youth Jazz Combo and the jazz combo *Blue Slate*. A sophomore at Mount Mansfield Union High School in Jericho, Sebastiaan also plays marimba and bells in the school's marching band and orchestra. More information about the Burlington Chamber Orchestra: www.bcovt.org.

THEATER/FILM

The Johnson State College production of the Oscar- and Tony-award-winning musical *Cabaret* will be staged Thursday-Sunday, April 20-23 at the Dibden Center for the Arts on campus. Performances, with live music by JSC students, will be at 7:00 PM Thursday-Saturday and 2:00 PM Sunday. Tickets, \$10 for the public, may be bought at the box office the day of the show or reserved beforehand by calling 635-1476. Set in Berlin in 1931, *Cabaret* focuses on nightclub life during Hitler's rise to power. The 1972 film version won eight Oscars. The cast of the JSC production includes several students from Vermont including senior Samuel Lewis of Jericho, who plays Herr Schultz.

Shelburne Players will present two one-act farces – *Black Comedy* by Peter Shaffer, and *The Real Inspector Hound* by Tom Stoppard at Shelburne Town Center, 5420 Shelburne Rd., Shelburne. In *Black Comedy*, action supposedly in the dark is illuminated; when the lights are to be on, the stage is dark. Lovesick and desperate, a sculptor has embellished his apartment with furniture and objects d'arte "borrowed" from the absent antique collector next door in a bid to impress his fiancée's pompous father and a wealthy art dealer. In *The Real Inspector Hound*, two feuding theatre critics – one a fusty philanderer and the other a pompous and vindictive second stringer – are swept up into the whodunit they are viewing. Performances are Thursday-Saturday, April 20, 21, and 22 at 7:30 PM. Open seating tickets are \$15. Tickets in advance available at Shelburne Market or reserved at www.shelburneplayers.com, or call 343-2602.

Dorset Theatre Festival opens its 40th anniversary season with the world premiere of Theresa Rebeck's *Downstairs*, starring brother and sister Tim Daly and Tyne Daly, who will be appearing together for the first time on the stage. The show will run for 16 performances between June 22-July 8, at the Dorset Playhouse, 104 Cheney Road, Dorset. *Downstairs* is a thought-provoking family drama written with Tim and Tyne in mind. The play follows the story of Eileen (Tyne Daly), whose brother Teddy (Tim Daly) has decided to move home and live in her basement. Eileen's husband is less than thrilled about this. And Teddy is more than a little off his game. As the brother and sister struggle to understand their present and their past, questions of betrayal, disappointment, and madness rise and fall. Who is saving whom? Subscriptions for the 2017 Summer Season now on sale; single tickets go on sale April 1. For information call the box office, 802-867-2223 ext. 2 Monday-Thursday, 12:00 – 4:00 PM; to purchase subscriptions and tickets online, www.dorsettheatrefestival.org.

Green Mountain Bicycle Club day touring rides

All riders must wear helmets and obey the rules of the road. Please do not ride two abreast if there is traffic in either direction. For mornings with questionable weather, please call the ride leader to make sure the ride is still taking place. Ride leaders are obligated to go to the starting point and provide maps but may choose not to ride if the weather is miserable. Riders below the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent. E indicates an easy ride,

M is for moderate, and S is for strenuous. Rides begin promptly 15 minutes after the meeting time.

Saturday, May 6: Introductory ride for new riders. We will go 12-20 miles (E) at a leisurely pace for folks new to road cycling. Our goal is to teach new cyclists the rules of the road and how to ride in a group. Meet at 10:00 AM, Veterans Memorial Park, S. Burlington. Wheeler lot. Leader Chris Johnson, 373-9015/cjohnson42@gmail.com; co-leader Mark Dupuis, 864-5567/markdupuis14902@yahoo.com.

Sunday, May 7: Covered Bridges of Chittenden County. 23 (E), 30 (E/M), and 36 (M) mile options

of hills through Shelburne and Charlotte the longer ride going through Ferrisburgh. Possible food stops include the Old Brick Store in Charlotte (no bathrooms) or a convenience store in Ferrisburgh for the long ride. Visit up to four of the five covered bridges in Chittenden County: the Shelburne Covered Bridge and the Holmes, Sequin, and Quinlin bridges in Charlotte. Meet at 9:45 AM, Wheeler Lot, S. Burlington. Leader Dorothy Pumo, 829-8729/dpumo5@gmail.com; co-leader Kevin Batson, 825-5816/kevbat@gmail.com.

Sunday, May 14: Vergennes Voyager. 26-mile rolling (E) or 39-mile flat to rolling (E/M) rural ride running along Otter Creek to Middlebury for a bakery stop. The longer ride rolls out by Kingsland Bay State Park before heading south to Middlebury. There are no big hills on this ride. Meet at 9:45 AM, Vergennes Union High School, Monkton Rd., east parking lot. Leader John Bertelsen, 864-0101/jo.bertel@gmail.com; co-leader/social ride leader Karla Ferrelli, 864-0101/karla.ferrelli@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 20: Introductory Ride for new riders. We will go 12-20 miles (E) at a leisurely pace for folks new to road cycling. Our goal is to teach new cyclists the rules of the road and how to ride in a group. Meet at 10:00 AM, Veterans

Memorial Park, S. Burlington, Wheeler lot. Leader Amy Otten, 878-4070/amyotten@netscape.com; co-leader John Bertelsen, 864-0101/jo.bertel@gmail.com.

Sunday, May 21: Kingsland Bay. The 35 mile (EM) ride rolls from Shelburne through Charlotte to Kingsland Bay Park and returns. The 46 mile (M) ride heads towards Vergennes and climbs to Monkton Ridge, returning through Hinesburg, and a 65 (M/S) option heads into Huntington. Meet at 9:45 AM, Shelburne Village Shopping Center. Leader Amy Otten, 878-4070/amyotten@netscape.com; co-leader Ralph Kilmoyer, 878-4070/ralphkilmoyer@comcast.net.

Saturday, May 27: St. Albans Explorer. Light, rolling hills views by the lake. 35-mile (E/M) route goes to Kill Kare Park and returns, the 50-mile (M) route goes on to Swanton and back. Both rides can break for food at St. Albans Bay. Meet at 9:45 AM, Georgia Park and Ride. For those coming from the Burlington area, we suggest carpooling at the Colchester Park and Ride at Exit 17 off I-89 or perhaps meeting at UVM or Veterans Memorial Park in S. Burlington. Leader Matt Kuivinen, 881-9045/mattkuiv@earthlink.net; co-leader Kerry Crosby, 578-3249/crosbykn@comcast.net.

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Wednesday, April 19 – American Legion, Colchester, check-in 10:30 AM, lunch 11:00 AM. Cup of corn and chicken cheddar chowder soup, half turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato.

Thursday, April 20 – Holiday Inn, 1068 Williston Rd., S. Burlington, check-in 10:30 AM, lunch 11:00 AM. Turkey stew, mashed potatoes, biscuits, salad, assorted desserts.

Tuesday, April 25 – Ray’s Seafood, Essex Jct., check-in 10:30 AM, lunch 11:00 AM. Fish, potato, coleslaw, squash, roll, and creamer.

Wednesday, April 26 – JP’s Diner & Deli, River Rd., Essex Junction, check-in 10:30 AM, lunch 11:00 AM. Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, dessert.

Thursday, April 27 – Pizza Putt, S. Burlington, check-in 10:30 AM, lunch 11:00 AM. Salad, chicken parmesan over

spaghetti, ice cream cake.

Restaurant ticket program – Age Well’s restaurant tickets are available on the first of each month, and must be used during the month they are purchased. Tickets are nonreturnable and not exchangeable. For tickets, connect with Pat Long, Community Meal Coordinator, 802-662-5200. Tickets must be presented before ordering. Restaurants have the right to offer limited menus.

Athens Diner, Milton, Monday-Saturday, 6:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Sundays 6:00 AM – 3:00 PM.

Dam Diner, Milton, Breakfast served all day, Sunday-Thursday, 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM, Friday-Saturday, 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM.

Dutch Mill, Shelburne, Monday-Sunday, 7:30 AM – 2:00 PM.

Holiday Inn, S. Burlington, Early Bird Dinner, Monday-Sunday, 5:00 – 7:00 PM. Four entrees available: grilled chicken, quesadilla, soup and sandwich, chicken primavera with broccoli.

Mimmo’s, Essex Junction, Mondays, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

Pizza Putt, S. Burlington, lunch or dinner served seven days a week. Spaghetti with marinara sauce or baked ziti with tomato sauce and cheese. Includes salad, garlic bread or roll, and drink.

St. Michael’s College, Colchester, Monday-Friday dinner, 5:00 – 6:00 PM, Saturday-Sunday brunch 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM, dinner 5:00 – 6:00 PM. Closed for the ticket program 12/15/2016 – 01/15/2017 5:00 PM.

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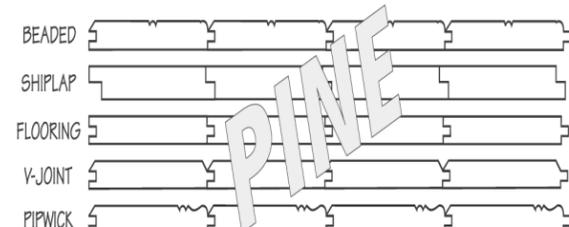
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Building a village: pre-K in Jericho

By Michele Campbell



Michele Campbell began teaching at Saxon Hill School in Jericho in 1979. She has taught in all of its programs for children ages three through six and, as a Saxon Hill parent, she served as the preschool's treasurer and registrar. She retired from teaching in 2013 and has been the director of educational programs since 2000. She has a Bachelor of Science from Trinity College and has studied the early childhood programs in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Saxon Hill is a National Association for the Education of Young Children- (NAEYC) accredited parent cooperative preschool and licensed kindergarten serving children ages three through six. We opened our doors in 1964 and, over the years, we have noticed that it's no longer just parents who are parenting children, but also families. Families are actively involved here, serving on school committees and the school board, and taking turns as the classroom helper.

"Parent helper day is a big day in our house," said Katie Hamm, parent of two Saxon Hill children. "My kids love sharing who they enjoy playing with, the things they like to do here, what they like to play with."

Families also spearhead our fundraisers. We generate a significant portion of our operating revenue through fundraising, which helps us offer competitive tuition rates, tuition assistance, and scholarships. That, combined with implementation of Act 166 – which provides ten hours a week of free pre-K to all three-, four- and five-year olds in Vermont – has really helped families in this community. I know it's the only way for some of our families to access quality early childhood care. And that access makes a huge difference. We are helping these children develop the social and emotional skills needed to be ready to learn in kindergarten. That's no small task!

Saxon Hill has a Reggio Emilia-inspired, emergent-curriculum philosophy in which the materials and opportunities provided to the children are inspired by the children's own interests. At Saxon Hill, the environment is one of the "teachers" in the room. We think carefully about what the children are interested in and then create an environment in the room to engage those interests. Children, families, and staff collaborate and research to find answers to our curiosities. Discovery is engaging, energizing, and ongoing.

For example, with the first melt of snow, children were really showing an interest in things that move in puddles, at the bottom of our sliding hill, and in the river. Our staff members worked to change the classroom and to introduce play with water. And then the kids took over. We watched as children created the scenario of a boat rescuing a girl who had fallen into shark-infested waters. They used a sled as a boat and pushed and pulled the sled to shore. Then a hospital was made and three kids became the patients, others were doctors and nurses, and the rescue workers kept going out with the boat to get more patients. The kids asked us to look up what was needed for rescues, so we got a book out to look that up. The family helper that day happened to be a chiropractor so he was explaining possible injuries.

This active, hands-on learning process happens here every day. And it wouldn't be possible without the creation of a safe environment that encourages collaborative, open-ended discovery and learning. This is why we're so fortunate to be in the space we're in today.

When Saxon Hill lost its longtime home in Jericho's Red Mill Park area in 2015, we scrambled to relocate. We wanted to stay in the Jericho area because our roots were here and because there weren't a lot of early education programs around. The process was challenging and many families were panicked, so when the Chittenden East Supervisory Union came to us and said they might have a solution to our problem, we couldn't believe our luck. School age populations have decreased and the merger of our school district in 2015 left some buildings with empty classrooms. CESU offered to rent out two of their classrooms to Saxon Hill.

"Our school district was really pleased and eager to help Saxon Hill when they were looking to find a new location because it's been really clear to us that high-quality early education is so important for children," said David Wells, principal for Underhill I.D. School. "Data from our kindergarten readiness survey clearly shows that kids from high-quality pre-kindergarten programs are more ready for school. And it's not just about learning their letters and numbers. It's about gaining social skills and learning to interact, share, and play with a wide variety of children."

CESU was welcoming and made it clear to us that this was our own space. So we took down white boards, painted, moved our playground, and made this our new home. In our first two years here, it's become clear to us that this is more than just a home. We're also building a village:

- We do our own cleaning and our own garbage collecting, but the 4th graders take care of our compost.
- When a federal Pre-K Expansion Grant program moved into another empty room here, they weren't able to use the school's playground because it wasn't age-appropriate. So we offered to share ours!
- The 6th grade teacher wanted to give her students an experience that would encourage empathy and community-mindedness and so we established a buddy program with our four year olds.
- The 3rd graders come in once a week to read to our three year olds.
- We have access to the library and the gymnasium and we borrow snowshoes and snowboards.
- Our room is next to the speech and language pathologist and special educator, who can come take a quick look/listen if we have a question about how best to accommodate our work with a child.
- I've been invited to serve on the school district committee that's looking for a new early education coordinator.

This partnership has been beneficial for all of us, and especially for the children and their families. "Little kids look up to big kids and they're sort of mystified by them. Sometimes they just stand there in awe," said Allison Coeyman, a Saxon Hill teacher. "To be able to connect with an older kid, to make your own friend who isn't your own age, that's important. Kids are often divided by age and that can be isolating. But when you get to know someone from a different age group, then they're not so mysterious and you feel like you're more a part of the community. It makes the world more understandable."

This kind of collaboration is exactly what our state needs. We need to make sure we don't see ourselves as competitors. We are educators who can work together to give Vermont's children the quality early learning experiences they deserve. I've been doing this for a really long time and change is slow, but it's happening and the world will be a better place for it.

Editor's note: Reprinted with permission Let's Grow Kids



Sailors 2: Mary and Abbie set off on an ocean journey.



Show and Tell: Nora shares her underwater jar she made on her Family Help Day.



Water Table: Teddy, Ira, Asa, Franco and Jameson explore sea life at the water table.

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