



SUMMER 2025

WHISTLER: Alison Latham 387-5711 aliemae1@outlook.com

WELCOME PASTOR KURT

We are excited to announce the appointment of our Interim Co-Pastor Kurt Shaffert. Pastor Kurt is a native Vermonter and has served the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ as an interim minister in various towns throughout Vermont and New Hampshire.



A colleague of Pastor Kurt said of him that his is a mosaic ministry, bringing together all the pieces into a greater whole, and that he is always talking about his people...like Moses. In Pastor Kurt's own words, "I love seeing people coming alive and collaborating and sharing gifts on the journey -- worship, study, education, care, reparative justice, discernment, environmental stewardship, outreach. As a cartooning chaplain, I love co-creating. As a double bassist, I love low notes in the mix. As a Vermonter, I love collaborating in boiling things down to pure and simple sweetness."

Pastor Kurt's ministry with Westminster West, which began in June, will focus on shared leadership: "Searching together for clues for transformation, like manna in the desert, that sustain us in following the Way of Love. As teacher AND pastor, I hope to be a lead learner."

REFLECTIONS A HOPI ELDER SPEAKS

June 8, 2000

Hopi Nation, Oraibi, Arizona

"You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour, now you must tell the people that this is the Hour. And there are things to be considered . . .

Where are you living?
What are you doing?
What are your relationships?
Are you in right relation?
Where is your water?

Know your garden.
It is time to speak your Truth.
Create your community.
Be good to each other.

And do not look outside yourself for the leader."

Then he clasped his hands together, smiled, and said,
"This could be a good time!"

"There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are torn apart and will suffer greatly.

Know the river has its destination. The elders say we must let go of the shore and push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above water.

And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate. At this time in history, you are to take nothing personally, Least of all ourselves. For the moment we do, our spiritual growth and journey comes to a halt.

The time for the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves! Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we've been waiting for."



**"You must be the change
you wish to see in the world."**

Mahatma Gandhi

THE WHISTLE BLOWER

Vigil for Sanity and Compassion- Every Thurs., noon to 12:30 on the Green in Putney. Bring your own signs.

Elena Dodd needs our help. Can anyone identify the children from a theater workshop she gave in 1987? She has the names of the kids in the photo but not in order, so she is not sure who is who. She would love to have them all identified. Her email is: windmill64@gmail.com.

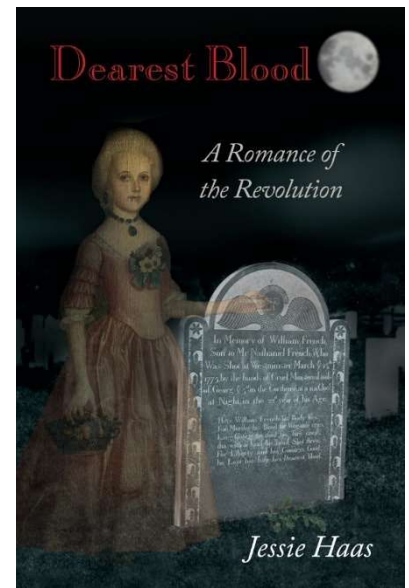


Katra Faust passed away peacefully March 30th, 2025. Our sympathy to her husband, Marvin Resnikoff and her 4 children. Katra lived with her whole heart. She found space for joy and laughter even in difficult times, and her spontaneity kept life full of surprise and delight. She was never one to decline a party — or a dance floor — and her sense of adventure made her brave in ways both big and small. She saw the good in people, forgave freely, and held space for others to be exactly who they were. Her courage, curiosity, and refusal to play it safe shaped a life that was bold, open, and unapologetically her own.



From **Rick Cowan**: Some happy news; Libby McCawley and I welcomed our first grandchild on May 22nd. Daughter **Emma Cowan** and her husband **Caleb Cochrane** are the proud parents of **Wesley Edmund Cochrane** who was born in Concord, MA weighing 9lbs 10oz.

Jessie Haas will be introducing and reading from **DEAREST BLOOD**, HER new historical novel for adults, July 1, 5 o'clock, at the Butterfield Library, and July 15, 7 o'clock, at the Westminster West Library. **DEAREST BLOOD** tells the story of the Westminster Massacre through the eyes of the future Fanny Allen, who was fifteen, a Tory, and living just up the street from the courthouse in 1775 when the Massacre took place. Eight years later she returned to Westminster to recover her property, only to find that she shared a lawyer with the Tory-hating Ethan Allen. Fanny was an educated and opinionated woman who left no writings; the only words we have from her were spoken in Westminster, and are woven into this novel. Books will be available for purchase at both events.



Congratulations to **Jasmine Cavanaugh** and **Alexis Larsen** who recently received Associate Degrees from the Community College of Vermont.

From **Jeanne Bennett**: **Margaret (Weeze) Bennett Robinson** and **Joe Robinson** welcomed their daughter, **Piper Jean Robinson** on May 4th 2025. They reside in Gorham, Maine.

From **Ira Wilner**: I keep busy working full-time at my wonderful broadcast engineering job and am doing occasional videos and editing on the side. I'm planning on continuing my tech support for community theater and other non-profits. In fact, I'll be photographing Westminster Cares Garden Tour coming up shortly. I visit my daughter Leah and her family down in MA when I can.



Peter Adair's current wood stack art at the Sanctuary Garden. Photo by Caitlin Adair

WESTMINSTER WEST CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday worship begins at 10am
We are an Open and Affirming Church
and fully accessible.
Come as you are, masks are optional

We are using Facebook Live to stream our weekly services, but you do NOT have to have a Facebook account to join us virtually. Just go on Facebook to the church's page, Congregational Church of Westminster West.

July 6: the Rev. Kurt Shaffert
July 13: Sue Venman
July 20: the Rev. Kurt Shaffert

The following ALTERNATIVE SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES are part of our discernment work; please see article below for more information.

July 27: Karen Blanchard, Prayer Walk
Aug 3: the Rev. Kurt Shaffert, Holy Communion and Breakfast Church (pot luck)
Aug 10: Ray Huessy, Bible study
Aug 17: Charlotte Gifford, TBA

WHAT IS ALTERNATIVE SUNDAY WORSHIP?

The Deacons of the church are planning alternate and innovative forms of fellowship as a pause in our usual worship service routine for the last week of July and the first three weeks of August. These Sunday gatherings will include a service based on a meditation / prayer walk, a Sunday Holy Communion and breakfast together, a service based on Bible study and one more option, TBA. This is the third round of our experiment, and by definition not permanent. We'll evaluate these experiences, and continue to strive to listen to our Still-Speaking God as we go forward. As ever, all will be welcome!



On this special day, the Fourth of July, remember to:
"Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration".

CHURCH CONTACTS

Rev. Kurt F. Shaffert, M.Div, ACPE

Half-Time Clergy Co-Pastor,

* In a pastoral emergency, *please call* his cell: (802) 518-0180. Church Phone is (802) 387-1175.

* In a non-emergency, email (pastorkurtvt@gmail.com) is a better way to reach him promptly; you can expect a reply about church business during his church work days: Tuesdays, Thursdays & Sundays. (Along with other clergy colleagues, Kurt observes Mondays as Sabbath.)

Pastoral "Office Hours" for Summer 2025 are:

Tuesdays 8am-12n, Thursdays 8am-8pm & Sundays 8am-2pm. Call first to make an appointment. Kurt looks forward to time together in prayer, conversation and community outreach. (He especially enjoys sharing coffee at the Putney Co-Op... iced tea at Cafe Loco... and maple creemees at Hidden Valley.)

BUILDING USE: Tom Griffith 387-5694

tgriffith@hilltopmontessori.org

DEACONS: Charlotte Gifford 387-4145

gifford@languagehead.com

TRUSTEES: Guy Payne 869-2600

gpaynevt@gmail.com

WEB SITE: www.westminsterwest.org

LET'S WELCOME OUR NEW NEIGHBORS TO WESTMINSTER WEST

From Andrea Capron

As many of you know, we have had a number of new neighbors and families move into our area in the past year. Being that they are new to the area, they probably are unaware that we even have a Community Newsletter, The West Parish Whistler, or a community fair and parade, or that there's a section in the parade set aside just for them to march under the banner Welcome to New Neighbors.

Therefore, if you know of a new neighbor and/or family, let them know about the fair and parade! And, if you can, ask them if they would like to receive The Whistler so they can stay informed about events in our community, and give them a chance to get to know their new neighbors. Email Alison Latham at The Whistler, aliemae1@outlook.com, with their names and email addresses so they can get on the list and THANK YOU!

**NO ONE IS GOING TO STAND UP AT
YOUR FUNERAL AND SAY:
"SHE HAD A REALLY EXPENSIVE
COUCH AND GREAT SHOES."
DON'T MAKE LIFE ABOUT STUFF.**

6TH ANNUAL JULY 4TH CONCERT WITH THE SEYMOUR SISTERS

Enjoy a local, outdoor concert and help support the Westminster West Church at the same time!



The band includes local musicians Beth Spicer on banjo, mandolin and guitar, Laura Bryant-Williams on vocals & guitar, Kate Wolff on Dobro and Betsy Williams on Upright Bass. The Seymour Sisters have been playing together for over 10 years after a jam session on Lake Seymour in the Northeast Kingdom and now enjoy a strong following in their community. The Seymour Sisters perform Americana music and are known for their vocal harmonies and rousing as well as sentimental songs. If you like Nanci Griffith, Rani Arbo, Gillian Welch or Red Molly you'll like The Seymour Sisters!

JON BLISS, WILL BE BACK AGAIN THIS YEAR!
with his beautiful and melodic guitar picking.

So, bring a lawn chair, a picnic supper, a beverage of your choice, and enjoy some outdoor music-on-the-lawn at the home of Betsy and Laura Bryant Williams, 1197 Westminister West Rd, Westminister West, VT. (just 5 miles from the center of Putney).

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$10 - \$25

All proceeds to benefit the Westminister West Church

**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS
WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE FOR SALE**

Questions?

Contact Betsy at: laladust@gmail.com

Rain location:

Congregational Church of Westminister West
,44 Church St, Westminister West, VT

ANOTHER WONDERFUL YEAR

At Westminster's Public Elementary School

By Liz Harty, Principal, and Cheryl Charles, Board Chair

The hallways at Westminster Center School (WCS) are always a busy place. And Studio Y, held each year at the Westminster West school building and grounds, inspires every student from kindergarten through sixth grade with qualities of character through story-based experiential learning. We continue to foster the love of learning along with the importance of community.

Recently, WCS 4th, 5th and 6th graders had the wonderful opportunity to hear from some gifted and inspiring BFUHS students. Members of the student panel shared about their skills, activities, memorable high school moments, and post-secondary goals. Thanks to the following students who volunteered their time: Cam Perry, Coby Levesque, Jake Tostrup, Meadow Meyer, Dylan Stewart, Will Hallock, Maya Rentas, Izzy Stoodley, and Laura Kamel. The high school students were candid about their challenges, humble in describing their accomplishments and good-humored in the advice they shared. The younger students were respectful and completely engaged throughout this visit from their older counterparts. Our future Terriers are grateful!

As the school year comes to a close, we reflect on a year filled with learning, laughter, and growth. Our students have made tremendous progress - academically, socially, and emotionally - and we're so proud of all they've accomplished. From classroom projects to concerts and field trips, each experience helped build a strong school community. We are grateful for the support of our families, staff, and the wider community. Have a safe and joyful summer - we look forward to welcoming everyone back in the fall!



Westminster Fire Department Cools off Students
at the End of the School Year

SUGGESTED DONATION FOR THE WHISTLER

Basic \$25 Neighborly \$50 Angelic \$100

Send donations to CCWW Whistler, 44 Church St, WW, 05346

WESTMINSTER CARES GARDEN TOUR

JULY 5TH AND 6TH

Gordon and Mary Hayward's Westminster West gardens will once again highlight the Westminster Garden Tour, which celebrates its 22nd anniversary this year. Over the years the event has become the major fundraiser for Westminster Cares.



Gazebo in Haywards Garden

The tour will be held July 5 and 6, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Tickets are \$20 for one, or \$35 for two; they are good for both days of the tour. Children under age 16 get free admission to the Garden Tour.

In addition to the Haywards' gardens, Cyndy Fine's "Kismet", The Laughlin's Family Farm and the Westminster Center School's garden will be on the tour. One special program is planned: On Saturday, (1:30pm), Julie Moir Messervy will give a talk, "Landscaping Ideas That Work". Entry to this talk is included with your ticket.

Discounted tickets are now available online at www.westminstercares.org. They can also be purchased throughout the tour at the Haywards' garden or at the Westminster Institute. Below photo of Cindy Fines Garden (Kismet.)



The Haywards' garden, begun in 1984, is based on the footprint and the remnants of the Ranney farm, including the milking parlor and a stone wall that ran to the silo. Their garden shed was originally a tobacco barn moved up from Connecticut River Valley.

Mary, originally from the Cotswold region in England, and Gordon, from northwest Connecticut, were teachers who purchased the Ranney Farm, built in the late 1700s, in 1983. Both raised on farms, they treasure the long history of the property. "The house has been part of the life of the community for 200 years, so it's also a celebration of the history," Gordon says.

Sincere appreciation goes out to our corporate sponsors for their tremendous support and community involvement: Chroma Technology Corp.; Mascoma Bank; Allen Bros. Farms; Savings Bank of Walpole; Silver Forest; 802 Credit Union; Brattleboro Bowl; Cota & Cota and C & S Wholesale Grocers (for printing all promotional materials). Throughout the tour, Raffle tickets can be purchased for 17 fabulous prizes. Lunch and refreshments will be available for purchase in the garden café under tents at the Haywards'. Morning Star Perennials & Trees will again have an array of unique and Vermont-hardy plants for sale at the Hayward garden. For more information visit our website: westminstercares.org; call the office: 802.722.3607 or email: westminstercaresvt@gmail.com.

YOUR INPUT INVITED FOR STEWARDSHIP OF OUR TOWN FOREST

Wait, Westminster has a Town Forest? Representative Michele Bos-Lun commented, "I've lived here over 20 years and did not know that we even had a Town Forest." This is a common refrain when friends and neighbors are first told about the Forest. The Town Forest is over 240 acres of rugged, mixed forest land containing some of the few examples of black gum trees in the state and has been owned by the town for over 30 years.

The Westminster Conservation Commission will lead a public forum on July 31, 2025 from 7:00-9:00 PM at the Butterfield Institute. Come learn more about this fantastic underutilized resource in our backyards and provide input on the future of the forest. Do we want to manage the forest with a look towards future timber and firewood harvest? Do we want to steward the land for wildlife habitat? Do we want to design and install trails through the property? Tell us about your experiences on the Town Forest and what your suggestions would be for the future! Light refreshments will be served. For information, contact westminstervtconservation@gmail.com

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty back together again."
An English Nursery Rhyme



DEDICATION CELEBRATION AT LILY POND HIGHLANDS

On a rainy Saturday morning, about 20 Pinnacle supporters, board members, and Windham County residents gathered on May 31, 2025, to celebrate the official dedication of a parking lot and the Edwin J. Massey Trail at Lily Pond Highlands. The trail is a former logging road in the ecologically diverse preserve that spans 615 acres in Athens, Brookline, and Townshend, Vermont, and leads to Lily Pond.

The trail is now open to the public for hiking, snowshoeing, and other nonmotorized uses. The Pinnacle has also obtained an Act 250 permit to build a loop trail back to the parking lot.

Massey, a Westminster West resident who died in 2016, had owned the parcel, and his widow, Adele Massey, and other friends attended the dedication. A Plaque embedded in a rock tells of his life and ends with this dedication:

"The wilderness you are entering was his sanctuary and haven, a place of healing and adventure. May this land bless you the same way it did Jim. Peace be with you."



Mossy rock with Jim's plaque - Photo: John Gregg

The Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association acquired Lily Pond Highlands in 2021 from two of Massey's nephews and protects it in perpetuity through a conservation easement co-held with the Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

Hikers can access the trail at the parking area at 466 Brookline Rd in Athens. There's an informational kiosk at the trailhead with maps and more information. The parking lot also serves the nearby Townline Trail that leads to the Pinnacle summit on the Windmill Hill ridgeline.

3RD ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

Photos can be taken any time in 2025 on Pinnacle lands, but limited to 5 per entrant. More details and how to submit photos will be forthcoming, check our website for updates. Contest ends at the end of the year.

TRANSITIONS ON THE PINNACLE BOARD A TRIBUTE TO SILOS AND CAMILLA ROBERTS

The Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association celebrated retiring Board members Laura Swoyer, and Camilla and Silos Roberts in June. The Roberts have served on the WHPA Board for more than 20 years and were instrumental in the growth of the organization, both serving as chairs during their years of volunteer work. With his expertise as a forester, Silos guided the land management plan and practices as 1400 acres were added to the WHPA's stewardship. Camilla's passion for community engagement in conservation helped build the WHPA capacity and fundraising, always with an eye towards the future. The WHPA is strong and thriving, in no small part to their leadership. Starting July 1, we welcome Lachlan Francis of Westminster West to the Board!

TIME TO CLEAN UP YOUR BOOKSHELF



Bring your books to the library! Free up space for this year's Westminster West Library book sale on September 6th! You end up with new reading material AND you help your local library by donating those books you know you are never going to read again. It's a WIN-WIN situation. Please make sure your books are clean and in readable shape. We do not take text books, encyclopedias, magazines, other reference books, or VHS tapes. Bring your books to the library and leave them in a box by the back door, the library is open Tues, Wed, Fri 1-6 and Sat 10-2. Have a wonderful summer and please visit the library. Thank you, Lise Cavanaugh (Librarian)

THE FAIR IS COMING!

Plans are being made for the 35th annual Westminster West Community Fair, which will be on Saturday September 6th. While it's too early for you to bake some brownies, it is not too early to think of what goody you have in your garage or attic that you can donate to the Silent Auction or Golden Elephant. And it is definitely NOT too late to join the fair committee or volunteer to help. To join in the fun of planning, email laladust@gmail.com

The Silent Auction will be both online and at the church. Online gives folks who can't be at the fair a chance to bid on the donated auction items. Most of the business donations will be online, but on Fair day there will be a lot of other auction items upstairs in the church for bidding.

Golden Elephant Tag Sale will be back again. If you want to be a volunteer to help call Laura at 802 387-2765 or email her at laladust@gmail.com. (Volunteers get to have first dibs on items in the sale by virtue of seeing them first.)

This year's Parade theme is **"HOME GROWN: CELEBRATING LOCAL FARMERS"** and the Grand Marshals are longtime local farmers Howard and Elizabeth Prussack. For the truck nerds, they will be driving their old yellow truck, a 1969 Chevy C20, 3/4 ton with 8ft bed. Other local farmers are invited to join in the parade, bring yourself and your favorite tractor. Our whacky parade is again at 10:30am and offers an opportunity to meet new neighbors, our local politicians, young bike riders, drummers, accordion players and perennial favorites "Ladies against Women." And don't forget our Peace Dove.

There'll be the usual selection of entertainment and activities from races in the morning to the talent show in the afternoon. In between there is the fabulous chicken BBQ, the ever popular and exclusive "Whack a Corn Cob" and don't forget to view the work of local artists upstairs or the zany vegetable creations in the foyer of the church (let those zucchinis grow!) The Nature Museum of Grafton will have a table and materials for making Fairy Houses.



Bike riders ready to ride in the parade September 2023
Photo by Ira Wilner

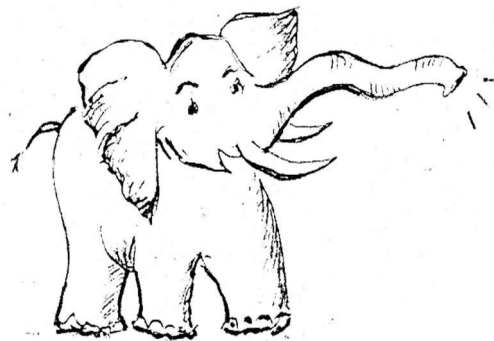


Drummers on hay wagon in Parade. Photo by Ira Wilner

This event is a wonderful opportunity to gather together as friends and neighbors, to honor the farmers who put food on our table, and have fun and share talents with each other. It also provides a significant financial contribution to the Church's annual budget for keeping our village church and community gathering center in good repair and available for community use.

ONLINE AUCTION GUIDELINES

During July and August, folks need to let Cheryl Charles (cherylcharles01@gmail.com) know of possible donations to the silent auction. Please send a photo and description of the item, estimated value, and if there is a minimum bid. Our deadline is August 25th. Ray Huessy, our website guru, will post them on the auction page at the church website (westminsterwest.org). The bidding kick-off will be announced via an email, but before Labor Day weekend. Sunday Sep 7th is the last day of bidding. Last bid updates will be posted on the auction website at 1, 2, 3, and 4pm. Bidding closes at 5pm. In the next week, we arrange transport of auction items to the winners.



DON'T FORGET THE GOLDEN RULE OF DONATING:
Only donate what you would want to add to your household clutter.

GOLDEN ELEPHANT GUIDELINES

If you have something for the Sale or Church Silent Auction, you can bring it by the week before the fair (5 to 8pm on Tue, Wed and Thur.) or make an appointment for drop off with, Tom Griffith 387-5694 or Laura Williams 387-2765. Please remember, no electronics, furniture, broken toys or broken anything, books or clothes and do follow the Golden Rule for the sale: donate only what you yourself might want to buy that doesn't create more clutter.

Congregational Church of Westminster West
44 Church Street
Putney, VT 05346-9098



You have to admire their tenacity,
but keep them in your prayers

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SUMMER 2025 CALENDAR

WEEKLY EVENTS:

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of WEST WEST

Church Service – Sunday 10am

TAI CHI

Intermediate Class Tues 11-noon at the Westminster Inst with Leslie Lassetter. Call West Cares if interested in a beginner's class Thur evenings @ (802) 722-3607

ACCESSIBLE YOGA

Mon 10 to 11:15 at the Westminster Inst with Lisa Nigro

STRONG LIVING is happening by ZOOM

Karen Walter and Ronnie Friedman lead online weight classes 9:30 - 10:30am on Mondays and Thursdays. There is room for more folks and a donation to Westminster Cares is appreciated. To get on Karen and Ronnies's list email them Karensww7@gmail.com
veronicafriedman24@gmail.com

WESTMINSTER WEST LIBRARY

Tuesday, Wed and Fri 1-6pm, Sat 10am to 2pm

Coffee Morning Sat 10am -2pm

LiseHCavanaugh@aol.com

WestminsterWestLibrary@gmail.com

BUTTERFIELD LIBRARY

Mon 10am-3pm, Tues 3-8pm and Thurs 1-6pm,

Saturday 10:30am-12:30pm

The Institute & the Library share a website and a Facebook page.

website: <https://butterfieldlibraryvt.wordpress.com/>

RECYCLING

Recycling Center on Rte 5 - Wed & Sat - 9am - 1pm

LIVING EARTH ACTION GROUP (LEAG)

Most Fridays from 5 – 6:30 at the Cong Church of West West. Info: Caitlin Adair pcadair@sover.net

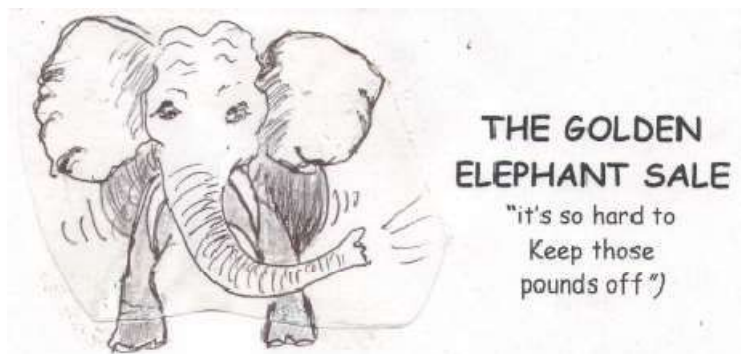
WESTMINSTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

The Historical Society is participating in the Vermont Sampler Driving Tour this summer. Samplers worked by Vermont schoolgirls will be displayed at 20 venues; each venue has six or more samplers to show. Each girl whose work is displayed has a Revolutionary soldier in her family. Westminster has seven samplers on exhibit. One was worked in Roxbury, Massachusetts, by Anna Ruggles, who would eventually move to Westminster and become William Czar Bradley's mother-in-law. That sampler is displayed next to one by her granddaughter. The samplers are at the Museum, upstairs in the town hall. Museum and Bradley Law Office hours are Saturdays 2-4, July 5 through August 30, or by appointment. For more about the sampler tour and a map go to [Vermont Schoolgirl Sampler Driving Tour | Vermont's 250th](#)

Check our Facebook page for any updates. Our main exhibit focuses on the Westminster Massacre, with the 250th anniversary coming up next year.



Mary Gorham was 12 years old in 1828 when she did this sampler, she lived in Westminster West.



PHOTOS from 2023 Community Fair
By Ira Wilner



THE LADIES



BEAVER GROUP AND ELECTED OFFICIALS



ELECTED OFFICIALS



FUN RUN RACER WITH AN ENCOURAGING MOM



CARLENE RAPER HAVING FUN IN THE PARADE
(WE WILL MISS YOU THIS YEAR)

PHOTOS from 2019 Community Fair
By Ira Wilner



LIBRARY BOOK SALE



TWO FRIENDS DISCUSSING WORLD AFFAIRS



SCARY ZUCCHINNI EATING ANOTHER ZUCCHINNI



FUN RACE START



VEGETABLE CONTEST ENTRIES



ALL ROADS LEAD TO WESTMINSTER WEST



2019 GRAND MARSHALS - TOWN ROAD CREW

INSTRUCIONS FOR READING THE WHISTLER

- 1) Open on computer and view all colored photos
- 2) Print (photos in black and white aren't as nice)
- 3) Find comfortable chair and read
- 4) Oh wait, what about all those links
- 5) It might take several sit downs to read