

## Making MSAC Mobile! The Do Good Van is Ready for Passengers

Tremendous thanks go to the National Life Charitable Foundation, which generously awarded the Montpelier Community Services Department (MCSD) with a grant of \$75,000 in the spring of 2022, enabling MCSD to now be the proud owner of a “Do Good Van”!

As most of you know, MSAC operated a popular day-trip program for over a decade until 2020, when its previously leased, GMT-owned, wheelchair-accessible, 12-passenger van became inoperable. That van, due to its federal funding, also wasn't ever available for use by non-senior groups. The new Do Good Van will allow the three MCSD divisions of MSAC, Parks and Recreation to transport groups of all ages – including those requiring wheelchair accessibility and those “doing good” in service – on excursions that enhance their connection with each other, their learning and their access to Montpelier's FEAST Farm.

This mobilization will allow MCSD to play a role in combatting food insecurity and connecting younger and older local people to the land, fresh food, exciting adventures, and each other. The 14-passenger, wheel-chair accessible van will support MCSD's important work

reducing social isolation for aging adults by helping them to stay connected with others, actively engaged in community and able to access volunteerism, exploration, lifelong learning and recreational opportunities. Innovative strategies will also allow MCSD to build program revenue while supporting local economies through social and recreational outings.

When the MCSD team approached Beth Rusnock of the National Life Charitable Foundation prior to requesting this grant, she told us: “Ask for what you need.” We had been listening to our community members expressing the need for a new van, and so that's what we asked for... and that's what we received! So, folks, look forward to going mobile with us again in 2023!



## Seeking Your Input: Neurodiversity, Social Connection & Technology Program

We know that many people feel more isolated in the winter months. At a time when in-person social gathering is challenging (whether related to COVID, weather, disability, or a wide range of other factors), virtual social connection is one strategy to reduce isolation. For many people, however, virtual social connection (whether attending community events, classes, or other social connection programs) is new and less comfortable.

We therefore seek your input in developing a program to support people, which will make them feel more comfortable using Zoom to have more social connection this winter. In a partnership between All Brains Belong VT, Central Vermont Council on Aging, Montpelier High School, the Central VT Refuge Action Network and Montpelier Senior Activity Center, we are

creating a program to help support MSAC members to expand their access to virtual social connection opportunities. Using an approach called Community Participatory Research, we are seeking to co-create this program with people whom this program will serve. There are multiple ways to get involved and give input:

- Attend an in-person focus group at MSAC on Thursday, January 5th at 1pm
- Attend an in-person 1:1 interview
- Participate in a 1:1 interview by phone
- Complete this: [Technology/Zoom Support Survey](#)

We will launch the Social Connection & Technology program later this winter. For more info, contact Sara Wilkins at All Brains Belong:

[community@allbrainsbelong.org](mailto:community@allbrainsbelong.org)

# Director's Dispatch

Dear Readers,

What a whirlwind 2022 was...how is it possible that we have entered 2023?! As you'll see in the following pages, we're working hard to tighten up our operations to continuously serve you better and more efficiently. We're listening intently so we can co-create with you what you want to see happen. We're building strategies for financial solvency for years to come. We're hosting many more programs and diverse offerings...

And, though we're trying hard, we're not always doing it perfectly. So, in this month's dispatch, I want to acknowledge the ways and places we've struggled to keep up, just so you know what it's like for us behind the scenes, in the interest of kindness and transparency.

Some class prices changed this winter to accommodate the beginning of a shift towards more equitable pay for instructors, which will help us move in the direction of a more streamlined registration process. We apologize for not communicating clearly about this before making the changes. We will be working towards an inclusive solution over the course of 2023 to ensure our courses are available to all who wish to access them.

Due to staff shortages (COVID hit our ranks in December), and database upgrades, we were behind the 8-ball on the registration process, so a huge thank you to all of you for your patience with us.

We received free meals through Everyone Eats so we could try to jump back into congregate meals, and we know the presentation

and quality of the meals was not what you hoped for. We're sorry about that and are working hard to launch an exciting new congregate program in February with meals on plates prepared by an exciting array of local chefs. Due to staff shortages, an incredible amount of activity and loads of behind-the-scenes meetings, I remain perpetually behind on phone calls and emails. Want to find me? Drop by the office! If I'm available, I'll be more than happy to talk with you!

Okay, now, on to the future: We're thrilled the City of Montpelier recognized the value we provide to the community by approving a whopping 18% increase to our FY24 budget! And, thanks to ALL of you who have donated your time & money to our operations!!!

Sarah Lipton  
MSAC Director



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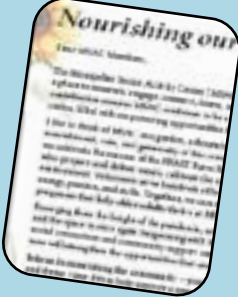
View Sarah's video discussing the proposed FY24 budget for MSAC:  
[bit.ly/MSACBudgetVideoFY24](https://bit.ly/MSACBudgetVideoFY24)




**Start the Year Off Right**  
Support our Mission: Help Older Adults Age Well

Your gifts of time, skills and finances assure that the Montpelier Senior Activity Center can continue to be the most dynamic community center for older adults in Central Vermont. From hosting dozens of engaging classes and events to serving necessary meals and hosting more in-person activities, we're listening to your needs.

**We're looking for donations to MSAC, FEAST, and volunteers to help out. Join us and give!**



**Click/Scan Here to Give:**  
<https://bit.ly/MSACDonate>

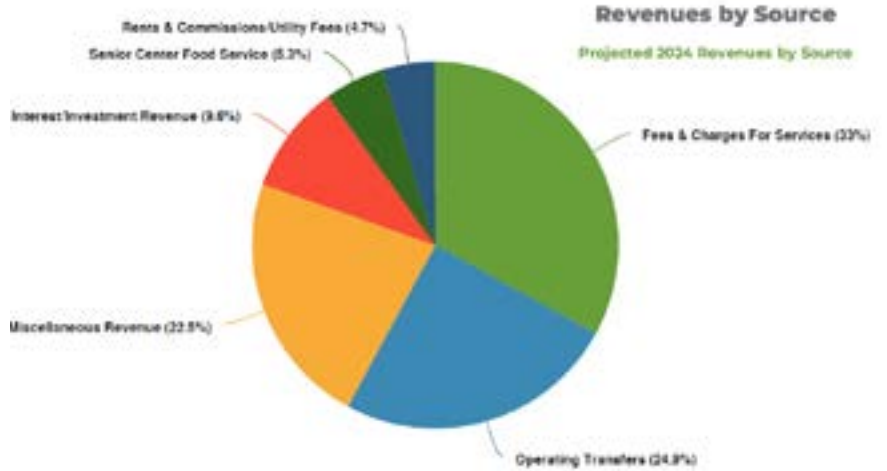


# Town Square: The Year Ahead

MSAC is extremely grateful to the City of Montpelier for adjusting our general fund transfer not by 7.7%, but by a whopping 18%. This adjustment allows MSAC to be nearly 25% funded by the City for the first time, ensuring that our core staff positions are funded by the City. **Thank you, Montpelier,** for understanding the value we provide to all citizens of Montpelier, and thank you for trusting us to achieve our central mission of enhancing the quality of life for older adults in the Montpelier area through opportunities that develop physical, mental, cultural, social, and economic well-being.

To sustain the other 75% of our activities in FY24, we will work to receive at least \$80,000 in grants. We have increased our ask to our six supporting towns by the required 7.7% for services rendered to residents of each town. We will strive to host more rentals in our facility to bring in sustaining revenue. We will also engage in a drive to bring in more memberships with a clear articulation of benefits. We will continue to pursue generous donations from members at our annual appeal, as well as identifying major donors in our community. At the same time, we will address an equitable payment structure for our classes and programs so that folks who can give at a higher level are encouraged to do so, thereby supporting folks with fewer means to attend classes at a rate that works for them. We will work to grow our programming so that the revenue that comes in ensures our bottom line is solvent. In addition, we will enrich our offerings by bringing back trips for older adults in our new "Do Good Van."

To ensure the successful continued implementation of the FEAST program, and to achieve financial stability for FEAST, we are grateful to have Robbie Plunkett as our Kitchen Assistant to support Kitchen Manager/ Chef Shalonda James. Our key partner for FEAST – the Central VT Council on Aging (CVCOA) – has assured us that we have their support for every aspect of growing and sustaining this vital program. As a team, we



are also focused on legislative advocacy to help spotlight the inherent need for and worth of food security programs to support our aging adults.

We are facing a critical moment of growth for FEAST because of the sharp increase in need for meals. Once we crack the nut on funding, we'll be able to settle the program into a sustainable rhythm that does not take a toll on the larger system of MSAC. To do this, FEAST needs a cash infusion to get us over our current hurdle.

Our community partnerships allow us to have increased visibility and expanded scope in our programs. The impact we offer to our older adult community is tremendous, and there is potential to continue to grow and offer more. In the future, for instance, it would be incredibly beneficial to the larger community if MSAC could steward an inter-agency Adult Day Center with partners like Home Health and Hospice. Through developments at the Country Club Road Site (former Elks Lodge), we could support stay-at-home caregivers and their family members with needs.

As the Center grows and changes, we need to design effective systems that meet our needs. This means not only adapting technology where we can, but also establishing protocols and procedures so that staff can feel secure and empowered.

We are working now on a strategic plan, which will give us direction and clarity in the year ahead, and, we hope, responds to the ever-shifting needs of our aging community.

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**• In Your Own Words •**

(Quote of the Month)

“Abundant offerings. Truly an excellent, useful resource for the community in every way.”

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Reach out to share your thoughts:  
[slipton@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:slipton@montpelier-vt.org)





# Focus on FEAST



## by Eli Mutino, Program Manager

The role of FEAST Program Manager is dynamic and exciting. I joined the team at the end of October and feel welcomed, needed and appreciated. Chef Shalonda and I rely upon more than 30 Meals on Wheels volunteer delivery drivers, 12 substitute drivers, 6 kitchen volunteers, 2 curbside volunteers, and 2 congregate meal volunteers. These volunteers show up every day we are open, no matter the weather, and ensure 250 Meals on Wheels, 70 curbside meals and small group of congregate meals are served every week of the year.

Our food costs are primarily funded by the Central Vermont Council on Aging, and staff and other costs are covered by the City of Montpelier, grants, and individual donations. We've seen growth like never before since the pandemic created new need. We meet that need by offering higher quality food to our Meals on Wheels recipients than ever before. We also serve curbside meals for those who rely on meals to-go.

When I arrived, I heard many people advocate for a return to congregate meals like before the pandemic began—the days of 100 people gathering to socialize and dine together twice a week. We want to serve that need again and are proceeding at a pace that our team can handle. We're taking a pause in the beginning of January to line

up chefs from the community and local sponsors to pay for their time and talent. Stay tuned for more in-person opportunities to eat together at the Senior Activity Center.

As December comes to an end, I am filled with gratitude, hope and determination. Our team spirit is youthful, as we range in age from teens to those in their 80s. Each day is balanced with a sense of humor, thoughtful relationships, and hard work. The year 2023 will undoubtedly be filled with good food and relationship building for all who we serve. Thank you to all who donate your time toward resiliency, nutritious food, community service and positivity. Please join our diverse community by contributing your time, talent or funds this year.

**Call to Reserve a Meal!** Curbside Pickup Meals offered Tuesdays and Fridays between 12-12:30pm. Meals on Wheels are available to Montpelier and Berlin residents over 60 who need it. Please call ahead to reserve your meal: [262-6288](tel:262-6288).

*Now offering Meatless Mondays for our Meals on Wheels recipients!*



## FEAST MENU



<b>Tuesday, January 3rd:</b> Chicken Parm, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Eggplant Parm	<b>Friday, January 20th:</b> Meatloaf, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Lentil Loaf
<b>Friday, January 6th:</b> Meatballs with Tomato Ragu, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Vegetarian Meatballs	<b>Tuesday, January 24th:</b> Orange Chicken, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Veggie Stir Fry
<b>Tuesday, January 10th:</b> Chicken and Rice Casserole, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk, Dessert <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Mushroom & Tempeh Risotto	<b>Friday, January 27th:</b> Roasted Turkey Dinner, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Vegan Dumplings
<b>Friday, January 13th:</b> Swedish Meatballs, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Vegetarian Meatballs	<b>Tuesday, January 31st:</b> Chicken Kiev, Seasonal Veg, Roll, Fresh Fruit, 1% Milk <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Veggie Pierogies
<b>Tuesday, January 17th:</b> Sweet & Sour Chicken, Seasonal Veg, Cornbread, 1% Milk, Dessert <i>Vegetarian Option:</i> Sweet & Sour Tofu	For questions about curbside pickup, please contact FEAST: <a href="tel:262-6288">262-6288</a>   <a href="mailto:feast@montpelier-vt.org">feast@montpelier-vt.org</a> . Or message us on Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/montpeliersenioractivitycenter">@montpeliersenioractivitycenter</a>



# Focus on FEAST

## “Why I deliver Meals on Wheels”

by Noah Sexton

My name is Noah Sexton, and I am a volunteer driver delivering meals for Meals On Wheels in Montpelier. I am often asked why I love doing this, and the answer for me is simply because it changed my life!

I moved to Montpelier in 2014 after 40 years living in a suburb of New York City. I found a way to give back to others through the Montpelier Senior Activity Center delivering meals. It allowed me to meet so

many amazing people who became dear friends. They showed me the joy of being of service to others and truly being a part of a community.

I could write pages of how this experience afforded me joy and sadness, but the bottom line for me is the more I gave, the more I received. I would ask that you consider this service for yourself. It will change your life.

My answer for why I love this volunteer service is that it has helped me become the person my dogs always thought I was!

**Do you want to deliver for our MOW routes?**

**Contact FEAST Manager Eli at: [262-6288](tel:262-6288)**

**or [feast@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:feast@montpelier-vt.org)**

## Arts Corner

### Hand Building in Clay Class

by Janice Walrafen

I was asked to offer a clay class at MSAC because the previous teacher of many years, Nicole, took a position teaching art in the public schools. I walked into a class made of a mixture of previous students of Nicole's, new students with a love of clay, and students new to clay. It is quite a juggling act. Everyone comes with ideas about what they want to create and gets right to work. I offer lessons and ideas when needed, but most people quickly become very excited about their inspirations and need only my advice and suggestions on how to make it. It is enjoyable to teach people who are so inspired and excited about their creations.



I love teaching art and helping people feel inspired and see the world of possibilities open to them through the creative process. I grew up with a mother who was a potter and found my way to clay as a sculptural medium in art school. There are so many layers to working with clay. It is a real science as well as an art medium. I make my own glazes, which involve a lot of chemistry. There are many things to know to become successful at having a piece last through the

making, drying, firing and glazing processes. I share this information with my students when they ask. I love clay because it is elemental: earth, water, fire, air and space. We work with these natural forces to create lasting and functional pieces of beauty.

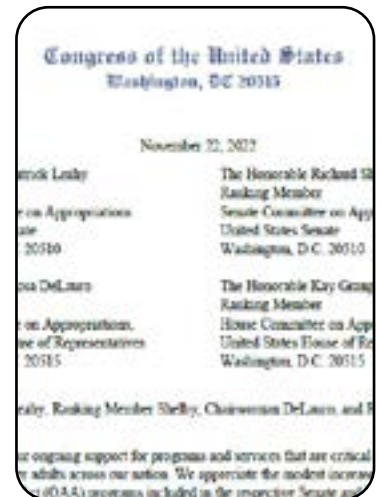
## Advocacy Update

Sarah Lipton was asked to contribute a quote to a letter that Senator Sanders co-wrote, requesting increased senior nutrition funding:

***“Squeezed by 70% increased need, the Meals on Wheels program in the capital city of Vermont is facing a financial deficit of 78% because of the static level of OAA funding.***

***We’ve had to start a waitlist, putting folks who deserve vital nutrition in limbo. Simply put, we receive \$3.80 for each meal we serve but our cost is actually \$17 per meal, which we are struggling to finance.”***

Make sure to reach out to your local, state, and federal legislators so they know how important funding is for our programs!



Read the full letter on our website: [montpelier-vt.org/msac](http://montpelier-vt.org/msac)

# MSAC & Community Services Events

## Updates to Rug Hooking Courses

Pam Finnegan's Beginner Rug Hooking course on Wednesdays from 3-5 pm will not start until **January 18th**. This course will run for 4 weeks ending on February 8th.

Also, Pam's regular Rug Hooking course will be on Wednesdays from **9:30-11:30am** starting on January 4th. Please contact our office with questions: [223-2518](tel:223-2518).

## NEW: Winter Poetry Drop-in Group Wednesdays | starts January 4 | 10 - 11:30am | meets every 2 weeks | MSAC Resource Room

The on-going poetry group will meet without a teacher. We will bring in poems we have written and offer supportive critique. A poem and writing suggestion will be sent out before each meeting.

If you write poetry, you are welcome to join us. We will be meeting on Wednesday mornings, every other week, 10-11:30. Contact Kristin Glaser: [kristinglaser@comcast.net](mailto:kristinglaser@comcast.net) or [802-249-9093](tel:802-249-9093).

## Tech Cafe Focus Group w/ All Brains Belong January 5 | 1pm | MSAC Community Room

MSAC is delighted to be partnering with Dr. Mel Houser of All Brains Belong who is creating a training program for Montpelier High School students who will offer tech training for older adults.

We plan to launch these tech cafes in the new year, but before we do - we want to hear from you! If you are interested in tech support or have a specific technological thing you want training on, please join us for the Focus Group so we can learn what you'd like to see happen!

## Have You Subscribed to our Social Media Pages?

On Facebook, we're at: [@MontpelierSeniorActivity-Center](https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierSeniorActivityCenter)

On Instagram, we're at: [@MSACVT](https://www.instagram.com/MSACVT)

And on YouTube, we're at:

[@MontpelierSeniorActivityCenter](https://www.youtube.com/MontpelierSeniorActivityCenter)



**Follow us and subscribe today!**

## Ice Skating Party at the State House Lawn! January 14 | 2-5pm | State House Lawn, Montpelier

Winter is here! Now is the time to lace up your skates and join us at the State House Lawn this January. Celebrate the beginning of winter at the State House Lawn Skating Rink on Saturday, January 14! Enjoy food, hot cocoa, music, and skating. The Recreation Department is supplying skates to borrow on-site, and all are welcome to join!

This event is also supported by the Montpelier Roxbury Public Schools Partners in Education (MRPS PIE) and the Vermont Youth Service Bureau. The Montpelier outdoor skating rink is operated by the city of Montpelier and provides people with free open skating any day of the week. Enjoy a day of shopping, ice skating under the Golden Dome, and a hot meal at a local restaurant!

For more information, visit Montpelier Alive's website: <https://montpelieralive.com/calendar>.



## CVRAN: Getting Involved January 17 | 5 - 6:30pm | MSAC Community Room

The Montpelier Senior Activity Center and the Central Vermont Refugee Action Network are holding a joint event to rouse more engagement. CVRAN provides housing, financial, medical, legal, and educational support, as well as friendship, to asylum seekers and refugees living in our communities.

We invite you to come hear our panel of volunteers and asylum seekers talk about what we do, who we serve, and how you could get involved. Refreshments will be served. The award-winning Ghazi Goodies will serve delightful treats.

In case of inclement weather, the event will be held the following Tuesday, January 24. Cancellation information would be posted on the CVRAN website: [cvran.org](http://cvran.org).





# MSAC & Community Services Events

## NEW Drop-In: Reader's Choice

Tuesdays | 12:45-1:45pm | Activity Room

Enjoy an hour relaxing in this drop-in program, sharing short pieces of fiction or non-fiction that you have chosen. Or, if you prefer, listen to pieces that others bring.

## NEW Drop-In: Life Long Qi Gong

Fridays | 11:45am-12:15pm | Activity Room

Invest 30 minutes for a longer life! All are invited to participate in this free, hybrid program of gentle movements from the Chinese Qi Gong "Long Life" tradition of Master Ru.

## NEW Drop-In: The Rhythm Method

Fridays | 2:30-3:30pm | Activity Room

Simply come with two wooden spoons, drumsticks, or rhythm sticks and prepare to "drum" to pop songs. If you happen to have a yoga ball, feel free to bring it.

## Watch MSAC's FY24 Budget Overview

Are you interested in learning about the FY24 MSAC-budget in a quick and simple presentation? Director Sarah Lipton sat down with City Communications Coordinator Evelyn Prim to record a comprehensive update on MSAC's current status and future budgetary matters. Watch it now on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu7qLN99JF8>.



## Thank You For The Holiday Gifts!

Our MSAC staff want to thank you all for dropping off gifts for our annual drive to deliver to older adults in our community. We gave away dozens of stuffed animals, calendars, books, and other knick knacks, which our Meals on Wheels recipients appreciated very much.

We would like to thank the incoming Chief of Police, Eric Nordenson, Meals on Wheels drivers, and a local Girl Scout troop for coming to deliver the boxes. We would also like to thank the residents of Westview Meadows who helped us wrap all of the gift boxes.

## Middlesex Residents! We Need Your Voices

Are you a resident of the town of Middlesex? We need your help. Due to increased inflationary and operational costs as well as our commitment to offering high quality services and programming, the Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC) is respectfully requesting an increase in the annual appropriation request to voters from our six supporting towns for Fiscal Year 2024 equal to the November 2022 Consumer Price Index of 7.7% rounded to the nearest \$100.

If you can, stop by the the Senior Activity Center and write your name on our petition outside of our main office. We need many signatures to show the need for a community center for older adults throughout Central Vermont. **ONLY REGISTERED MIDDLESEX VOTERS MAY SIGN THIS PETITION.** Thank you!



## Ice on Fire

February 5 | 2pm-Dusk | 203 Country Club Road, Montpelier (Former Elks Lodge property)

Join us for Ice on Fire, Central Vermont's premier winter festival! Come one, come all to this whimsical festival, which celebrates the warmth of our Montpelier community even in the frigid depths of winter. It is a fun afternoon of dance, theater, music, storytelling, and poetry performed by local artists and community members.

There will also be winter games, kids' activities, and more. Don't miss it. Save the date! We'll be back for 2023 on Sunday, February 5th starting at 2pm and finishing around dusk with our bonfire.

More details about Ice on Fire will be coming soon. Stay tuned to the Montpelier Parks' social media pages and Front Porch Forum for the latest updates on this and all Montpelier Parks' events coming in 2023. <https://www.facebook.com/MontpelierParks/>

# Winter Class Schedule

## Legend

*	MSAC members only
▪	Open to the public
⊗	Open to City employees of all ages
☺	In-Person
📺	Online / Zoom
↔	Hybrid

See Registration Form On Website For More Details On All Classes!

[Click here to download the class descriptions](#)



## Mondays **\*All classes are held at MSAC unless otherwise specified.**

Drawing Nature (Janice Walrafen) ▪ ☺	18+	10 Mondays 1-3pm <b>Starts 1/9</b>
Hand Building with Clay (Janice Walrafen) ▪ ☺	18+	10 Mondays 3:30-5:30pm <b>Starts 1/9</b>
Film Appreciation: The Ould Sod (Rick Winston) at Savoy Theater * ☺	50+	8 Mondays 10am-12:30pm <b>Starts 1/9</b>
Creative Writing Monday (Maggie Thompson) * ☺	50+	10 Mondays 10am-12pm <b>Starts 1/9</b>
Heathy Happy Brains: Games & Puzzles (Noa Zhivago) ▪ ☺	18+	4 Mondays 1-2:30pm <b>Starts 1/9</b>
Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program [AFEP] (Ellen Urman) ▪ 📺	50+	12 Mondays & Thursdays 10:30-11:45am <b>Starts 1/23</b>
Bone Builders (Laura Morse) * 📺	50+	12 Mondays & Fridays 3:15-4:30pm <b>Starts 1/6</b>
Next Level Beginner Pilates (Shannon Hepburn) ▪ 📺	15+	12 Mondays 10:30-11:30am <b>Starts 1/9</b>

## Tuesdays

Painting at all Levels (Linda Hogan) ▪ ☺	18+	10 Tuesdays 10am-12pm <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Digital Literacy (Technology for Tomorrow) ▪ ☺	60+	5 Tuesdays 1-3pm <b>Starts 2/14</b>
A Pro-Active, Insightful Approach to Estate Planning (Claudia Pringles, Esq.) ▪ ☺	50+	4 Tuesdays 6-7:30pm <b>Starts 1/3</b> <b>*Skips 1/17 &amp; 1/24</b>
Bone Builders (Tina Muncy) * 📺	50+	12 Tuesdays & Fridays 5-6pm <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Bone Builders (Nancy Schulz) ▪ ↔	50+	12 Tuesdays & Fridays 10:15-11:30am <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Bone Builders (Joan Barrett & Jean Phillips) * 📺	50+	12 Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30-9:30am <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Diabetes Prevention (Ginny Clark of CVMC) ▪ ☺	18+	Tuesdays [Extended Prog.] 5:30-6:30pm <b>Starts 1/10</b>
Strength Through Resistance Band Exercises (Becky Roy-Widschwenter) ▪ 📺	18+	12 Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-3pm <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Gentle Yoga (Patty Crawford) ▪ 📺	18+	12 Tuesdays & Fridays 10-11:15am <b>Starts 1/3</b>

## Wednesdays

Rug Hooking (Pam Finnegan) ▪ ☺	50+	10 Wednesdays 9:30-11:30am <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Beginner Rug Hooking (Pam Finnegan) ▪ ☺	30+	4 Wednesdays 3-5pm <b>Starts 1/18</b>
Creative Writing Wednesday (Maggie Thompson) * 📺	50+	10 Wednesdays 1-3pm <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Pilates Express (Shannon Hepburn) ▪ 📺	15+	12 Wednesdays 10:15-11am <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Tai Chi for Fall Prevention (Ellie Hayes) ▪ ↔	12+	12 Wednesdays 10:30-11:15am <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Longevity Tree Qi Gong (Ellie Hayes) ▪ ↔	12+	12 Wednesdays 12-1pm <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Line Dancing [Beginner Friendly] (Sid McLam) ▪ ☺	18+	12 Wednesdays 5-6:30pm <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Bailemos Salsa y Ritmos en Espanol (Claudia Lopez) ▪ ☺	25+	10 Wednesdays 9-10am (Activity Rm) & 10 Saturdays 11am-12pm (Community Rm) <b>Starts 1/4</b>



# Winter Class Schedule

Gentle Flow Yoga (Sarah Parker Givens) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Wednesdays 9-10am <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Moderate Flow Yoga (Sarah Parker Givens) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Wednesdays 5-6:15pm <b>Starts 1/4</b>
Yoga for Focus & Fitness (Monica DiGiovanni) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Wednesdays 8:45-10am <b>Starts 1/4</b>

## Thursdays

Drawing Basics (Janice Walrafen) ▪ 🎨	18+	10 Thursdays 1-3pm <b>Starts 1/5</b>
Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program (Ellen Urman) ▪ 🧘	50+	12 Mondays & Thursdays 10:30-11:45am <b>Starts 1/23</b>
Bone Builders (Joan Barrett & Jean Phillips) * 🧘	50+	12 Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30-9:30am <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Moving for Parkinson's & Other Neuro-Movement Challenges (Mary Chris DeBelina) ▪ 🌀	15+	10 Thursdays 10-11:15am <b>Starts 1/5</b>
Strength Through Resistance Band Exercises (Becky Roy-Widschwenter) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-3pm <b>Starts 1/3</b>
ARRIVE Chair Yoga (Becky Roy-Widschwenter) ▪ 🧘	18+	6 Thursdays 11:30am-12:30pm <b>Starts 1/5</b>
Moving into Stillness (Sarah Parker Givens) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Thursdays 2-3:15pm <b>Starts 1/5</b>
Moderate Yoga for Balance (Patty Crawford) * 🧘	50+	12 Thursdays 10-11:15am <b>Starts 1/5</b>

## Fridays

Bone Builders (Laura Morse) * 🧘	50+	12 Mondays & Fridays 3:15-4:30pm <b>Starts 1/6</b>
Bone Builders (Tina Muncy) * 🧘	50+	12 Tuesdays & Fridays 5-6pm <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Bone Builders (Nancy Schulz) ▪ 🌀	50+	12 Tuesdays & Fridays 10:15-11:30am <b>Starts 1/3</b>
Somatic Movement: Calm & Carry On (Amy Lepage) ▪ 🧘	18+	4 Fridays 12-1pm <b>Starts 2/3</b>
Somatic Movement: Neck & Jaw Release (Amy Lepage) ▪ 🧘	18+	4 Fridays 12-1pm <b>Starts 3/10</b>
Yoga for Osteoporosis & Osteopenia (Ragan Sheridan) ▪ 🧘	18+	12 Fridays 4-5pm <b>Starts 1/6</b>

## Drop In Groups

<b>Monday Walks</b> .....	Mondays   9:30 am   on-going   meetup locations vary week to week
<b>Coffee &amp; Conversations on Mondays</b> .....	Mondays   9:30-10:30 am   on-going   MSAC Community Room
<b>Artists Group In-Person at MSAC</b> .....	Mondays 10am-12 pm   MSAC Art Room
<b>Beginner-Friendly English Country Dance</b> .....	4 Mondays (Starts 2/27) 7-9 pm   MSAC Community Room
<b>Readers' Choice</b> .....	Tuesdays   12:45 - 1:45 pm   MSAC Activity Room
<b>Italian Group</b> .....	Tuesdays   1:15 - 2:30 pm   MSAC Resource Room
<b>Scrabble</b> .....	Tuesdays & Fridays 1-3pm   MSAC Art Room
<b>Trash Tramps Outdoors</b> .....	Tuesdays   2:00 pm   meets at 1:50 pm inside MSAC
<b>Winter Poetry Group</b> .....	every other Wednesday   10-11:30 pm   MSAC Resource Room
<b>Crafters Group In-Person at MSAC</b> .....	Wednesdays   12-2:30 pm   MSAC Art Room
<b>Bridge</b> .....	Thursdays   12:30-3:15 pm
<b>Community Jam with Experienced Musicians</b> .....	Biweekly 1st & 3rd Thursdays   6:15-8pm   MSAC Community Room
<b>Ukulele Players</b> .....	Biweekly 2nd & 4th Thursdays   3:30-5pm   MSAC Community Room
<b>Life Long Qi Gong</b> .....	Fridays   11:45 am - 12:15 pm   MSAC Activity Room
<b>The Rhythm Method</b> .....	Fridays   2:30 - 3:30 pm   MSAC Activity Room
<b>Mah Jongg</b> .....	Fridays 1:00-3:30 pm

*\$5 Suggested Donation - new donation box in the lobby; your donations help ensure we can keep our space beautiful!*

# Community Announcements

Upcoming Community Events from Kellogg-Hubbard Library



First Wednesdays programs go virtual for the winter. Register through Vermont Humanities at: [bit.ly/VTHumanitiesWednesdays](https://bit.ly/VTHumanitiesWednesdays)

## Alzheimer's Canyon

January 9 | 6:30pm | Kellogg-Hubbard Library

What do you do when your reality slips away? If you're Sky Yardley and Jane Dwinell, you accept each new challenge, reshape your life, and write. Welcome to Alzheimer's Canyon: there is one way in, and no way out. Follow Sky and Jane as they navigate this journey they did not ask to take, a journey that balances pain, loss, and confusion with gratitude, wonder, and transformation. This is a free, in-person program at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

## Climate Change & Social Justice

January 11 | 7pm | Zoom

Moderated by Senator Kesha Ram Hinsdale with panelists Judy Dow and Kashka Orlo, this discussion will focus on social justice aspects of climate change. This is part of the League of Women Voters Climate Change Speaker Series. To register for this Zoom event, visit <https://www.kellogghubbard.org/adult-programs>.

## Book Discussion Group: A Year to Live

January 19 | 6:30pm | Zoom

All are welcome as we discuss *A Year to Live: How to Live This Year as If It Were Your Last* by Stephen Levine. Copies of this non-fiction book are available at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in the Book Group section of the Reading Room. To register for the Zoom discussion visit <https://www.kellogghubbard.org/adult-programs>.

## How Do I Know When It's Time? Mobility, Dementia, and Quality-of-Life Assessment for Elderly Pets

January 21 | 10:30am - 12pm | Kellogg-Hubbard Library

Having trouble getting around and being confused are

the most common problems affecting comfort and happiness for aging dogs and cats. But pet caregivers don't always know how to understand what's happening, or what we can do about it. This talk will help!

We'll also learn to work with the JOURNEYS quality of life scale, a helpful tool to approach the difficult question that's on everyone's mind at this life stage—but it's so hard to go there. You are not alone; we'll go there together, and the tears will be leavened with humor and love.

A veterinarian in the Montpelier area since 2002, Dr. Erika Bruner currently focuses on improving quality of life for elderly animals and their caregivers. She is a certified veterinary acupuncturist and makes housecalls for end-of-life consultations and euthanasia throughout central Vermont. This is a free, in-person program at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

## Poetry Society of Vermont 75th Anniversary Celebration & Reading

January 23 | 6:30pm | Kellogg-Hubbard Library

The Poetry Society of Vermont celebrates its 75th anniversary with readings from its members. Public warmly invited! This is an in-person event at the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.



## Infusing Yoga & Writing into Your Practice of Self-Care Workshop

January 25 | 6-8pm | Zoom

Create a deeper connection with yourself through practices of yoga and written expression. This workshop will explore the impact yoga and writing can have on your well-being. We will infuse elements of mindful movement and meditation with writing exercises to deepen our connection with ourselves as we delve into these powerful practices of self-care. Open to all levels. Please have a journal or notebook and a yoga mat or towel. Led by Kristen Miranda, registered yoga teacher and wellness coach. Register for this Zoom workshop at <https://www.kellogghubbard.org/adult-programs>.

# Community Announcements

## Upcoming Community Events

([See more on our website](#))

### Need A Book Group?

Is a resolution to read a few (or a few more) books on your New Year's List? The Kellogg Hubbard Library has an adult reading program, and the library will loan you the books.

Book discussion schedule at KHL:

- December 15, 2022 | *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig
- January 19, 2023 | *A Year to Live* by Stephen Levine
- February 16, 2023 | *The Engineer's Wife* by Tracey Enerson Wood
- March 16, 2023 | *The Most Costly Journey* (Vermont Humanities)
- May 18, 2023 | *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

This list, and the links to register for Zoom sessions are always available on the KHL website Adult Programs page: <https://www.kellogghubbard.org/adult-programs>. You can sign up by contacting Michelle Singer at: [msinger@kellogghubbard.org](mailto:msinger@kellogghubbard.org).

OR:

Maybe you and a few people you know would like to discuss a book together. Do you need ideas about books to read? Aren't sure how to organize a discussion? MSAC can help! Give Barbara Dall a call ([802-229-4870](tel:802-229-4870)) and start the discussion. Read a great book today!

### Memorable Times Online, "Hidden Talents"

January 4 | 10:30-11:30am | Zoom

Hidden Talents: Can these famous people sing and dance?

We will be joined by our Memorable Times friends from Scotland to make guesses about what some stars can do, then view clips and deliver our verdicts!

Contact Barb Asen at [basen@cvcoa.org](mailto:basen@cvcoa.org) or [802-476-2681](tel:802-476-2681) for more information and the Zoom link.

### Technology for Tomorrow Session: How to Use the Google Maps App Effectively

January 10 | 2:30-4pm | Zoom

In this presentation, you will learn to use the Google Maps App to: get directions, plan journeys, share locations, and download area maps for offline use. For the

Zoom link and other Technology4Tomorrow events, visit <http://cvcoa.org/technology-for-tomorrow-sessions>.

### Memorable Times Cafe, "Snowbirds"

January 18 | 1:30-3pm | Vermont History Center

Snowbirds! Let's talk about the feathered friends that stay around for the winter, and share where we have gone or would wish to go for a break from the cold.

Memorable Times Café is a relaxed social time for people living with mild to moderate memory loss and their care partners. Sponsored by Central Vermont Council on Aging in partnership with ABLE Libraries of the state of Vermont.

Contact Barb Asen at [basen@cvcoa.org](mailto:basen@cvcoa.org) or [802-476-2681](tel:802-476-2681) for more information.

### Medicare and You Workshop on Zoom

January 24 | 1:30-3:30pm | Zoom

Medicare & You Workshops are offered regularly to help individuals who are new to the Medicare system. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CVCOA is offering Medicare & You sessions remotely using Zoom.

If you want to participate, pre-register by calling [802-479-0531](tel:802-479-0531) or by sending an email with your name, address, phone number, and the date of the workshop you would like to register for, to: [medicareworkshops@cvcoa.org](mailto:medicareworkshops@cvcoa.org). We will then email you information on how to join in the workshop session on Zoom.



### CVHS Holiday Raffle

Ends January 6 at 5pm | Raffle Drawing on January 16

The Central Vermont Humane Society is hosting its annual holiday raffle, and tickets are on sale now! Go to: <https://centralvermonthumane.org/holiday-affle/> to get your tickets and learn more about the drawing. Tickets are \$3 each, or come in quantity prices: \$20 for 8 tickets / \$30 for 15 tickets / \$40 for 22 tickets / \$50 for 30 tickets.

All prizes were donated by local artists and businesses. 100% of proceeds from ticket purchases go to provide care for the animals at CVHS!



# Looking Forward To 2023

## Become a Sustaining Member



Consider donating on a monthly basis to help ensure the thriving success of MSAC's programs. Just \$10/month helps build sustainability. Reach a little and give \$33/month with 3 other friends and the four of you will ensure food access to one Meals on Wheels client. It costs \$133 to feed one individual for a month. Or, give \$20/month and help ensure another member can access a scholarship for a class they want to take. Your generosity is a difference maker. It counts.

Donate online by visiting this link: <https://bit.ly/MSACDonate>



## Get Engaged!



Hankering to do more, be more active with community, help influence the decisions at MSAC, work to support the activities of the community, or just have some fun? Think about helping out in the FEAST kitchen, driving for Meals on Wheels, joining the Advisory Council, stepping onto a committee, or just jump into one of our many Drop-in groups!

If you have ideas of things you'd like to do, just reach out to us and let us know what you want, and we'll help you plug in!



## Be Part of the Solution



MSAC feels deeply honored to be part of the food security puzzle in Central VT by providing the vital FEAST Senior Meals Program. You can help by reaching out to your local legislators, and your federal ones, to make sure they understand how vital nutrition programs are for older adults. Share your story, or help your neighbors share their stories. By coming together as a community, we can co-create the solution to ease not only the pain of isolation but also the threat of hunger. Start here with this survey that Hunger Free Vermont is collecting:

<https://www.hungerfreevt.org/farm-bill-2023>



## Look out for these Facilities Upgrades



A number of key facility upgrades are being planned. We're replacing old u-bulbs in our foyer with LED lights, to ensure better lighting and higher electric efficiency. We're waiting for a quote to replace all of our aging and dying air conditioner units with energy efficient heat pumps. We're looking for an energy efficient dishwasher to replace our old clunky, energy-consuming one in the FEAST kitchen. We have a quote to build a small interior office for our FEAST Chef and a quote to install a new hybrid set up in one of our classrooms. For many of these initiatives, we are seeking funding through grants.

# Community Connection

Stories from our Community Partners

## Connecting with New Americans by Diane Fitch, Central VT Refugee Action Network



Established in 2015, Central Vermont Refugee Action Network (CVRAN) is a grassroots, non-profit organization based in Montpelier and dedicated to making our communities welcoming, safe places for migrant workers, asylum seekers, and refugees from countries around the world.

Thus far, CVRAN has sponsored a total of 20 asylum seekers from Central and South America, Africa, and Russia, often securing their release from detention and bringing them to Central Vermont. It takes asylum seekers from 1-3 years to build new lives here and become self-sustaining.

A network of caring and committed volunteers raises funds for their food and living expenses. We settle them with local host families when they first arrive and then pay their rent until they are granted work permits and can support themselves. Our volunteers facilitate their enrollment in schools and adult English language classes. We provide transportation to appointments, schools, and stores. We find asylum seekers legal representation and medical care. We also give them driving lessons and help them purchase cars.

Since the fall of 2021, we've worked with USCRI (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants) to welcome five large Afghan refugee families to our area. A total of 20 Afghan children are now attending Montpelier public schools and rapidly learning English. CVRAN is directly sponsoring one of these families, and assisting the others in various ways.

CVRAN invites you to join us in the vital work of outreach and support for our new neighbors by becoming a volunteer. Presently our greatest need is for people to host asylum seekers when they first arrive and help to find them rental apartments. We are also looking for artists and their sponsors to participate in our 2023 third annual March Arts Marathon, which is a major fundraiser. You can visit our website [cvrn.org](http://cvrn.org) to learn more about CVRAN, the March Arts Marathon, and our volunteer opportunities.



## Prioritize Social Connection, For Yourself and For Others by Luke Rackers

Social connection is vital to our well-being. Making meaningful connections

with others is integral for thriving as humans, equally important as nutritious food and clean water, access to the outdoors, and safe housing. It's time we recognize social isolation and loneliness as health risks.

The statistics are alarming: health risks of prolonged isolation are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and, over half of older adults experience isolation

throughout the year. Social isolation and loneliness have been tied to increased risk of cognitive decline, depression, obesity, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, and more. It is becoming increasingly clear that a lack of social connectedness can affect both physical and mental health.

The social connection picture can be quite complicated for older adults. As we age, we lose connections through death, migration of family and friends, family conflict or severing of family ties, and lack of opportunities. 28% of older adults live alone, which increases risk of social isolation and loneliness. People with lower incomes, underrepresented racial groups, and LGBTQ+ people are also disproportionately affected.

Here's the good news! Enhancing social connection is often within our control as humans. We can seek out opportunities for social connection, benefitting our own health and well-being and those around us!

*Continued on Page 14...*

# Community Connection

## Prioritize Social Connection, For Yourself and For Others

Think about those times when a friendly hello or smile from a neighbor or stranger made your day in the grocery store, or when an unexpected compliment or casual conversation with a co-worker gave you a new perspective. We all experienced a catastrophic loss of these interactions during the height of the pandemic, leading to many people feeling cut off from the world.

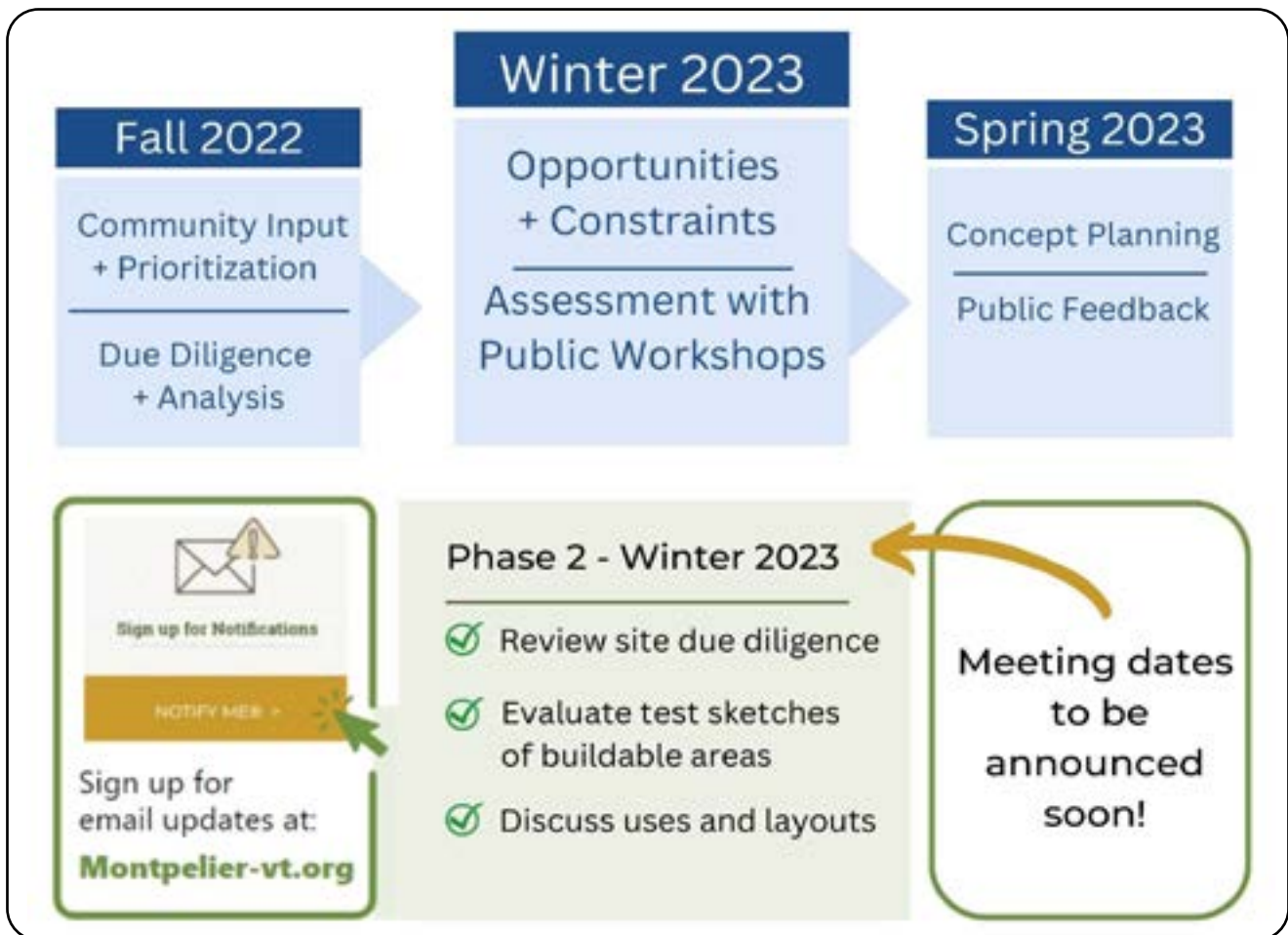
Small interactions have subtle but significant impacts on our happiness, and for some, these interactions are vital for social and emotional well-being. Research is showing that these encounters have a profound impact on our well-being, especially as we age. Intentionally engaging in these casual encounters and conversations is a great way to share stories, spark curiosity, encourage lifelong learning, and create joyful moments.

Learn more about all the Central VT Council on Aging has to offer: <https://www.cvcoa.org>



## Country Club Road Site 203 Country Club Rd., Montpelier Master Planning Process

Read more about the Country Club Road Site at: [www.montpelier-vt.org](http://www.montpelier-vt.org).





# Bulletin Board

## Sponsorships and Announcements

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Thank You



For Your \$3,000  
Contribution to  
MSAC and FEAST!

### A Few Good Members...

Have you been wanting to help our community seniors but not sure how? This may be your opportunity! The Montpelier Senior Activity Center is looking for a few good people to round out our awesome Advisory Council. The MSAC Advisory Council (AC) meets every other month with the MSAC Director to learn about new resources and opportunities and offer advice on how to address challenges that arise. Members also help determine programming and events, offer suggestions for the operation of the FEAST and Meals on Wheels programs and advise on budgets and fundraising.

There will be at least two vacancies as of June, and elections are in May.

Join MSAC's



Advisory Council!

### Small Home Repairs

MSAC is delighted to announce a new volunteer small home repair service offered by our generous community member Jerry Farland. Jerry is a retired carpenter, so if you have something broken, he can help! Just supply your own materials. Donations to MSAC Special Projects helps others in need of materials.

Email him at: [gerfarland@hotmail.com](mailto:gerfarland@hotmail.com)



### Get Engaged in 2023!

Start your year off right - come on out and play! Make sure to check out a long list of Drop-In groups on page 9. Hankingering for music? Poetry? Drumming? Dancing? Community service? Games? Coffee & Conversation? Book discussions? Meals? Drag Bingo? We've got it all!

*Suggested Donations are \$5-10.*



### Thank You, Donors!

Tremendous thanks to all of you who have been reaching out with your generous donations at this season of giving! Your gifts ensure that we are able to provide the best possible services to our community. Thank you.

In case you missed it, there's still a chance to get in on the giving: Donate to MSAC and FEAST. Visit our donation page here: <https://bit.ly/MSACDonate>. Or donate in person at MSAC.

*Thank you*

Montpelier Senior Activity Center  
58 Barre Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

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**Dear Newsletter Subscriber:**

Save MSAC \$1 per month (and save paper!) by switching to our e-letter. You'll get the newsletter in full color and earlier than the USPS edition. Email [msac@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:msac@montpelier-vt.org).

**Important Dates:**

- **New Year's Day Closure:** 1/2
- **Winter Classes Start:** 1/3
- **Tech Focus Group:** 1/5
- **Climate Change Series at KHL:** 1/11
- **Ice Skating Party at State House:** 1/14
- **MLK Jr. Day:** 1/16
- **CVRAN Getting Involved:** 1/17
- **Ice on Fire:** 2/5

**Sustaining MSAC's Future**

Please consider MSAC when making your estate plans and keep us vibrant for years to come. To learn more, contact Sarah Lipton at [262-6283](tel:262-6283) or [slipton@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:slipton@montpelier-vt.org)

**Montpelier Senior Activity Center** Office hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 3pm

[223-2518](tel:262-2518) (phone) • [262-6285](tel:262-6285) (fax) • [montpelier-vt.org/msac](http://montpelier-vt.org/msac) (website) • [msac@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:msac@montpelier-vt.org) (email)

FEAST Senior Meals Program Reservations • [262-6288](tel:262-6288) • [feast@montpelier-vt.org](mailto:feast@montpelier-vt.org)

*MSAC is a division of the Community Services (CS) Department. MSAC's mission is to enhance the quality of life for older adults in the Montpelier area through opportunities that develop physical, mental, cultural, social, and economic well-being in a welcoming, flexible environment.*

- Sarah Lipton, MSAC Director
- Norma Maurice, CS Office Manager
- Matt Wilson, CS Communications & Development Coordinator
- Tom Leahey, CS Administrative Assistant
- Eli Mutino, FEAST Program Manager
- Shalonda James: FEAST Kitchen Manager / Chef
- Robbie Plunkett: FEAST Kitchen Assistant



**Important Notice**

MSAC will be closed on January 2nd and January 16th for the holidays. Please plan ahead for conducting business at our offices or picking up curbside meals. Thank you!

**MSAC Advisory Council:** Dianne Maccario (Chair), Suzi Swanson (Vice Chair), Renea Bordeau, Kris Clark, Barbara Dall, Mariah Lane, Laura Morse, Kathy Nickels, and Rick Winston.