

The Winooski Newsletter

A newsletter created in partnership by the City of Winooski and the Winooski School District.

DECEMBER 2023



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS
We are the future.

Kate Grodin a Fulbright Recipient



Congrats to WMHS Co-Principal Kate Grodin who has been honored with a prestigious Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program award! The Fulbright program, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, has recognized Principal Kate's dedication and passion for global education. As a Fulbright recipient, she travelled from November 4th-15th to share her expertise and build meaningful connections across communities both in the United States and abroad. Congratulating Principal Kate on this incredible achievement!



Back to Back State Championships!

By Miriam Greenfield, Director of Communications

The Winooski Boys High School soccer team did it again! They repeated as **state champions** with a nail-biting 1-0 victory in the final!

Anchored by an unbreakable defense, a sensational goalie, and lightning-fast offense, this victory was truly a team effort. Senior Abdoul Lailati secured Winooski's place in history with the game's lone goal, and from there, the defense took care of the rest.

We couldn't be prouder of these young athletes and their dedication, hard work, and resilience. It's not just a victory for the team but for the entire community.



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Superintendent Report

By Wilmer Chavarria, Superintendent

It has been an eventful start of the cold season in Winooski. From performances, to festivals, to championships, the pace has been exciting yet steady. There is much to report on this month from our schools and I hope you enjoy the information posted here as well as on our website and social media. There are exciting things happening that you will not want to miss. For example, on Saturday November 18, our PTO organized the exciting 2023 Craft and Vendor Fair in benefit of initiatives for our schools. Thanks to all who came to support it.

An important update this month is that budget season has officially begun. The Board of Trustees embarked on a process to put a budget together for next year that is acceptable to you as a Winooski voter. There are many opportunities for involvement, including our Board-led community input event on **Saturday, December 9** at noon in our Performing Arts Center. We strongly encourage your participation.

A first public introduction of the context surrounding our new budget proposals took place during our last regularly scheduled Board meeting. Three important points were made during this presentation:

1. Major decreases in offsetting revenue mixed with significant increases in operating costs may bring us to a need for several million dollars to maintain current levels of operation.
2. Significant changes to the pupil weighting formula provide considerably more capacity to Winooski than most districts in Vermont.
3. Our potential deficit can be matched by the new capacity, but expectations for more must be approached carefully due to future uncertainties.

These points may be hard at first to understand, especially without all the information in front of you, but we will be making several more presentations and the Board will be providing many other opportunities during the next two months where more in-depth explanations will be possible and where you will be able to ask questions. Again, **please consider joining us for some of these, especially our community session on December 9.**

Have a wonderful rest of the fall and a cozy beginning of the winter.

December Update From The School Board

By Steven Berbeco, Board of School Trustees

Hello, neighbors!

As the weather changes and there is more of a winter chill in the air, the school board is entering a new season, too. This time of year we begin the important effort of building a school budget for next fiscal year. Our regular monthly meetings aren't enough to tackle the work ahead, so we begin meeting weekly to give us the time to thoughtfully plan the district's next steps.

The budget process is exciting because it's an opportunity for the school board, and our community more broadly, to do a deep dive into what it will take for our students to be college and career ready. These meetings are collaborative among board members, the superintendent and his staff, and community members like you.

An important part of our budget conversations is the role of the "budget buddy." That's a member of our community who joins the meetings to learn with us, discuss and debate the issues, and bring an additional and important point of view. Our five board members bring diverse perspectives and welcome even more to enrich our conversations.

Also, being a budget buddy is a great way to learn more about the school board and our district. I was a budget buddy before joining the board and it was helpful in getting to know my future colleagues as well as understanding better the strengths and challenges of the district. No prior financial knowledge required!

If you are interested, and I hope that you are, please get in touch with me or any of the other board members. We can also answer any questions you may have, for instance about the time commitment and what else is part of this important way to support our community.

Our meetings are held on Wednesdays, usually at 6pm in the library (or on Zoom), but please check our website at wsdvt.org for the most updated details. Contact me at 858-376-7269 or sberbeco@wsdvt.org if you'd like more information. For a complete list of school board members you could reach out to, see the last page of this newsletter.

Using Assessments to Monitor Progress at Winooski Schools

Michael Eppolito, Director of Curriculum and Learning

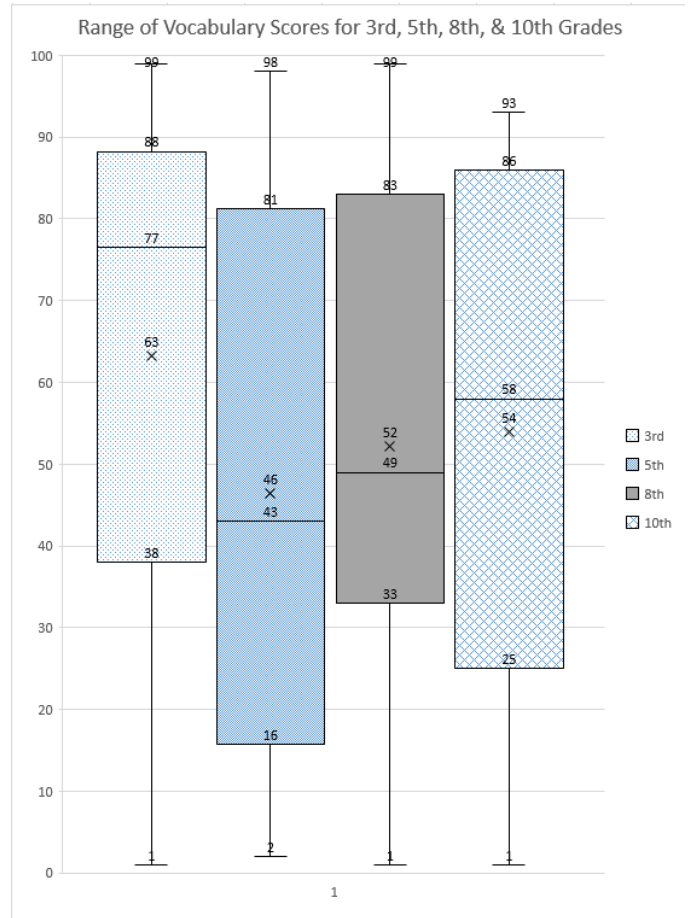
Earlier this year, I shared all the curriculum investments we made here at your community school. This month, I'd like to share one way we monitor the impact of our investments. Three times yearly, we use an assessment called "Star" to look at student performance in reading and math. Star is a short 34-question computer adaptive assessment that takes about 20 minutes to complete. If you have a child in the school, you may have received a family report describing how your child performed on this assessment. This report is a snapshot of your child's reading and math skills and is one way to tell how well we are doing with teaching your child the skills they need.

We also use this data to look at school-wide trends to see if our curriculum decisions are having an impact. The graph below is one way I look at those trends. This box and whisker graph shows the range of vocabulary scores our students received on our September assessment.

The score at the top of the whisker tells the highest score a student earned, and the number at the bottom gives the lowest. The line in the middle tells you the middle or median score. That means 50% of our have scores above the median and 50% have scores below. The small "x" tells you the average score. We aim to have all students score 80 or above by the end of the year.

We should be careful not to read too much into the results from this one 34-question assessment, and we do look at other measures to assess our success. We can, however, see some promising improvements in our 3rd-grade class. We see on this one measure that nearly 50% can read and figure out unfamiliar third-grade level vocabulary. Research tells us that a child's vocabulary is a key indicator of reading comprehension and critical for success with complex text.

This graph tells me that while we have plenty of work to do we are seeing the impact of our curriculum on our students' learning. If you have questions about student learning here at Winooski, please feel free to reach out.



Wellness Recognition

By Miriam Greenfield, Director of Communications

Congratulations to Patrice Lumumba and the Winooski School District (WSD) for receiving a 2023 Worksite Wellness Gold Award from the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and the state Department of Health. The award recognizes Winooski School District's standard of excellence for worksite wellness initiatives. Lumumba is the Wellness Coordinator at WSD and said, "Our district continues to model wellness with our staff and students in many ways and because of that we received the award." Wellness Initiatives include The Necessities Store, Food and Housing Security, and Mindfulness and Movement.





Winooski Anti-Racism Steering Committee Members Grow Leadership Skills

By Christie Beveridge, Program and Communications Director, UP for Learning

On Monday, November 6th, youth and adults from the Winooski community gathered for the fourth meeting of the 2023-2024 Antiracism Steering Committee (ARSC). This team is tasked with implementing the six demands of the Winooski Students for Antiracism (WSA): to form a truth and reconciliation committee, hire and retain more faculty of color, establish a multilingual mentoring program, implement an ethnic studies curriculum, conduct an equity audit of the school, and host a yearly workshop for students where they can learn about their civil rights.

At the start of this month's meeting, the team enjoyed a pizza dinner together. We are so grateful to school board member Isaiah Donaldson, who picks up dinner for the ARSC before every

meeting! It is wonderful to be able to gather to share a meal in community. We are also grateful for Superintendent Wilmer Chavarria and other members of school administration who make the time to attend the ARSC meetings amidst their busy schedules.

After dinner, each member of the team took a leadership style assessment, known as Compass Points. This assessment helps people identify their leadership style, whether they are North (action-oriented), East (big-picture vision oriented), South (empathy-oriented), or West (detail-oriented). After each member finished their assessment, they gathered with others who share their leadership style, and discussed their strengths and limitations, as well as what those who identify as the three other leadership

styles need to know about them to work well together. Throughout the year, the full youth/adult team will take part in these kinds of activities to learn about and develop their leadership skills.

The committee then broke into the six Action Teams, and brainstormed questions for a survey that they plan to distribute to Winooski Middle and High School students in December, checking in on the progress of the 2020 WSA demands, as well as developing an understanding of current needs and opportunities. At the November 27th meeting, the committee edited and added to this initial list of questions, in order to make a plan for how best to distribute it among the Middle and High School students.



Ski Cubs

By Courtney Dickerson

Want to learn how to cross-country ski this winter? The Catamount Trail Association is hosting Ski Cubs! Ski Cubs is a free learn-to-ski program open to students with no prior skiing experience that might not otherwise have the opportunity to learn. For Winooski residents, we provide a bus from the O'Brien Community Center and JFK Elementary to trails at Catamount Outdoor Family Center. This six-week program takes beginner students through a skills progression curriculum by knowledgeable, friendly and supportive volunteer instructors, all costs are covered for participants. If you have any questions, please our office at 802-864-5794 or email outreach@catamounttrail.org. For more information and to sign up please visit <http://bit.ly/3QnhFRw>

WHS Peace Jam Club Hosts Clothing Giveaway

By Maeve Poleman

The Winooski Peace Jam will be hosting a winter clothing giveaway and toy giveaway on Saturday, December 2, at 11am at the O'Brien Center. All will be welcome to come pick out what they need at no charge.

We are collecting donations for the next few weeks, and they can be brought right to the school store, with Mr. Patrice, or to advisory teachers.

We are hoping to collect gently used jackets, snowpants, hats, gloves, and boots, as well as toys for Elementary School age children.

Thanks for supporting our community!

Knights of Columbus Provides Winter Coats to Winooski Students

By Jeffrey Brosseau

Knights of Columbus Saint Stephen's Council

#2284 Worthy Grand Knight Jeffrey Brosseau presented to Winooski School

District's Wellness Coordinator Patrice Lumumba eight large boxes of brand-new winter coats for Winooski students on Friday November 3rd. Go Spartans Go!!!

They also donated several boxes of new coats to St. Francis School for their students.



Veggie VanGo

Winooski School District will continue to host Veggie VanGo (VVG) this year. These resources are completely free to the community and all are welcome to come. Community members are welcome from 10:00 a.m. to 10:20 am.

VVG comes twice a month, the first and the third Friday of each month. Other dates: Dec 1, Dec 15th, Jan 5th, Jan 19th, Feb 2nd, Feb 16th,

Mar 1st, Mar 15th, April 5th and April 19th, May 3rd, and May 17th.

In addition to Veggie VanGo, there are lots of other food access resources available to families and community members in Winooski and the surrounding areas. These resources consist of food pantries and shelves, free prepared meals, and so much more. For more information including a full list and map of locations, visit <https://bit.ly/SummerFoodResources> or scan the QR code.



Winooski PTO

By Molly Robin-Abbott

The Winooski PTO is a dedicated group of parents working together to support the WSD learning community. We have several more activities planned this school year, including school dances, staff appreciation events, and a community dinner. Join us and share your enthusiasm and ideas for supporting our students, teachers and staff. **Our next meeting is on Tuesday, December 19th at 6pm. at the school.** We can't wait to meet you! Visit <https://www.wsdvt.org/parents-families/pto/>, check out our Facebook page (Winooski PTO), or email us at PTO@wsdvt.org for more information.



JFK Update

By Sara Raabe, Principal, JFK Elementary

Language Matters

As a school, we take our commitment to all our students and the community seriously. Part of that commitment means full inclusion of all our students and each part of their identity. We work together with our students and families to create welcoming environments in the building so all students can show up as their authentic selves. When hurtful language is used, it undermines that important work damages students' self-esteem, and has a profound impact on the class and school community. Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile language that relate to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability are all considered unacceptable language and may constitute harassment, even if the student thought what they were saying was funny or just a joke. When these types of words are used, they affect not only the individual they were directed at, they also affect the other people in the space, the class, the school, and the community.

We need support from our families and community to ensure that students understand what language constitutes harassment language. Discussions around slurs and emotionally charged words can be challenging, and students must hear the correct information from trusted adults. If the adults in their lives do not address these issues with them,

students will take the lead from what they see and hear on social media or other sources, which does not always have a positive impact on your student's development. Below are some resources for you to look at so you feel prepared to have these discussions with your student(s). Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

- **Talking to Kids About Race and Racism** (kidshealth.org)
- **Let's Talk! Discussing Race, Racism, and Other Difficult Topics with Students** (learningforjustice.org)
- **Talking to your child about slurs: When words hurt** (answers.childrenshospital.org)
- **Talking to kids about discrimination** (apa.org)
- **How to talk to kids about racism: An age-by-age guide** (todayparent.com)

Hands-On Learning Experiences

The students at JFK Elementary are engaged in robust and meaningful learning every day. Students also have the opportunity to leave the school campus and expand their learning with some hands-on experiences.

Our 5th graders participated in Starbase again this year. Starbase allows

students to engage in 25 hours of STEM instruction:

PHYSICS

- Newton's Laws of Motion – Model Rocketry, hands-on experiments
- Fluid Mechanics and Investigations – Bernoulli's Principle

CHEMISTRY

- Building Blocks of Matter – Molecular Models, States of Matter, Chromatography
- Physical & Chemical Changes
- Fluid Investigations

TECHNOLOGY

- Innovations – Nanotechnology, Robotics
- Navigation and Mapping – Topography, Satellite Imagery, Holograms, Vermont Mapping

ENGINEERING

- Engineering and Design Process – Eggbert
- 3-D Computer-Aided Design (CAD)

ENERGY

- Energy Fundamentals- Energy Explorations

MATH OPERATIONS & APPLICATIONS

- Numbers and Number Relationships – Fingerprint Analysis
- Measurement – Metric Mission
- Geometry – Fly on the Ceiling, a coordinate grid activity
- Data Analysis – Pop Goes the Fizz



The Magic of Tools

By Nancy Johnson, Grade 1 Teacher

Fall in first grade is all about tools! Our first literacy unit of the year focuses on tools and how they make work easier. We start off learning about many different categories of tools: cooking, cleaning, building, etc. Then we move onto looking at the tools we have within ourselves: initiative, collaboration, perseverance, and responsibility. We have read books, completed challenges, and written about tools. Our final step will be to create our own magnificent thing for our classroom!



Flexible Pathways and Work-based Learning Update: Career Cafe has Launched!

By Jessica Handrik, Flexible Pathways & Work-based Learning Coordinator

As the Flexible Pathways and Work-based Learning Coordinator, I am one of the educators at the high school making sure that students are engaged in exploring career pathways. How can a student prepare for a career that they haven't had the opportunity to explore?

We close this experience gap by attending field trips such as to the Women Can Do! conference in October and Manufacturing Day at Global Foundries. One of our students was

interviewed by WCAX about the importance of cyber security at the November 3rd Women In Cyber summit at Champlain College.

Cybersecurity was a new field to the students attending, a new career option that we had never explored before this opportunity. We close the opportunity gap through such off-site engagements and by inviting the community right into our beautiful new building. One of the ways we do this is through the Career Cafe.

Career Cafe is a mini in-school career cafe held every Tuesday and Thursday during Advisory in our main lobby, where students can practice their career fair skills and learn about employment, volunteer, community engagement and academic opportunities. We launched last week with a visit from CTE/Essex, and will be welcoming Burlington Technical Center, Champlain Cable, Beta, UVM School of Environmental Science, Husky, Efficiency VT, UVM Extension 4-H, the City of Winooski (Parks & Rec, Human

Resources, City Clerk) between now and May. We are adding new participants continuously.

We would love to welcome more Winooski businesses. We were thrilled to welcome Melissa Corbin, Executive Director of Downtown Winooski, to visit the school and attend our Community Meeting recently and we are looking forward to lots of engagement with our local businesses and organizations, including through Career Cafe. Please reach out to me to either continue or start a conversation about how we can build pathways of engagement between your organization and Winooski high school.

I look forward to working together to close opportunity and experience gaps and to make sure that the creative, smart, engaged, ambitious students in our community know about the opportunities right here in their city.



During this part of the unit, students work in small groups to plan, revise, and build something that will be useful in the classroom. Students will then write about the magnificent thing they created and present it to an audience. Erin Hurley worked with ECHO to provide a wonderful field trip experience with many hands-on activities! At ECHO, we built devices to prevent an egg from breaking



when dropped, we used pulleys to pull ourselves up, we explored many materials such as wax, wind, heat, and building tools. The traveling exhibit of *How People Make Things* complemented our unit perfectly! This exhibit will be at the Flynn through January 7. Thank you to ECHO for providing this free field trip to our first grade!





Health Office News

By Emily Gallina, RN, BSN

As we head into cooler weather and we start to add warm layers of clothing, we thought we would give some helpful tips on preventing lice and treating it. Head lice are spread most commonly by direct head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact. However, much less frequently they are spread by sharing clothing or belongings. Head lice survive less than 1–2 days if they fall off of a person and cannot feed; nits cannot hatch and usually die within a week if they are not kept at the same temperature as that found close to the scalp.

The following are steps that can be taken to help prevent and control the spread of head lice:

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities at home, school, and elsewhere (sports activities, playground, slumber parties, camp).
- Do not share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Do not share combs, brushes, or towels.
- Do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infested person.
- Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that an infested person wore or used during the two days before treatment using the hot water and the high heat settings. Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay.

As a reminder, students will not be sent home or kept home from school for lice. It is recommended and encouraged that a student be treated with lice shampoo which can be ordered by the child's provider.

Dental News

By Tracy Towers RDH,BS

Vermont Dental Care is now Winooski Dental

If you were a patient at Vermont Dental Care, you will need to fill out NEW paperwork to establish yourself at Winooski Dental. You probably received these forms in the mail; if you need help filling them out, please come to school on Thursday Nov 16th, and we can assist.

Dental Services Now Available at School

We are now offering preventive dental services (cleaning, fluoride and sealants) at school!

Your child can participate in this program regardless of who their dentist is. All information from school will be communicated to their usual dentist. Dental services on site does NOT take the place of a yearly check up with a dentist.




Dental Transportation Program Available

Now that Vermont Dental Care has merged with Community Health Center, we will be starting up a transportation program to get students to dental appointments at the Winooski Community Health Center.

Forms need to be filled out for ALL three of these programs. Please contact me at ttowers@wsdvt.org with any questions.

Winooski Elementary School Breakfast
December 2023

Menus are subject to change

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				
4 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	5 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	6 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	7 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	1 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety
11 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	12 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	13 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	14 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	15 Chocolate Chip Muffin Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety
18 Blueberry Bread Slice Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	19 Cinnamon Granola Breakfast Round Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	20 Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	21 Iced Breakfast Bun Asst. WG Cereal w/Animal Crackers Assorted Fresh, Dried or Canned Fruit Milk Variety	22 No School
25 No School	26 No School	27 No School	28 No School	29 No School

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Breakfast in the Classroom series

Meals Are Free To All Students

Adult Breakfast \$2.90
Adult Lunch \$4.75
Milk \$0.50

Please Click Links Below for Nutrition Information on Daily Options:
Fresh, Dried, or Canned Fruit, Skim White Milk, 1% White Milk, & Fat Free Chocolate Milk Offered With All Meals.


Milk Condiments

Fresh, Dried Or Canned Fruit

Pay for meals on-line. Click on Link Below:





LINQ Connect ONLINE POSTAL

Please advise us if special meal accommodations are required for allergens or other special dietary needs.
Click Image Below for employment opportunities



Winooski Elementary School K-8 Lunch
December 2023

Menus are subject to change

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				
4 Chicken Patty Sandwich w/Lettuce & Tomato Roasted Sweet Potato Wedges Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	5 Steak & Cheese Fajita w/ Onions & Peppers Garden Salsa Southwest Rice Pilaf Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	6 Chicken & Cheese Calzone Marinara Sauce Seasoned Green Beans Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	7 Homemade Baked Ziti Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	1 Fluffy Pancakes Real Maple Syrup Sweet & White Homefries Twin Turkey Sausage Patty's Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
11 Meatball Sub (Beef & Chicken Meatballs) Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	Taste Test Event - Winter Squash 12 General Tso Chicken Rice Pilaf Steamed Broccoli Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	13 Cheesy Breadsticks Marinara Sauce Caesar Salad Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	14 Homemade Shepherd's Pie Homemade Dinner Roll Hand Cut French Fries Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	15 French Toast Sticks Real Maple Syrup Twin Turkey Sausage Patty's Mini Hash Browns Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety
18 Oven Baked Chicken Nuggets Homemade Dinner Roll Roasted Potato Wedges Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	Birthday Celebration 19 Taco Bar w/ The Works & Ground Turkey Mexicali Corn Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	20 Sweet & Sour Chicken Roasted Broccoli Rice Pilaf Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	21 Hearty Chicken & Biscuits Garlic Roasted Butternut Squash Fresh Fruit & Veggie Bar Milk Variety	22 No School
25 No School	26 No School	27 No School	28 No School	29 No School

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Meals Are Free To All Students

Adult Breakfast \$2.90
Adult Lunch \$4.75
Milk \$0.50

Please Click Links Below for Nutrition Information on Daily Options:
Fruit & Yogurt Parfait w/Granola, Deli Turkey & Cheese Sandwich, Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich w/Cheese Stick
Fresh, Dried, or Canned Fruit, Skim White Milk, 1% White Milk, & Fat Free Chocolate Milk Offered With All Deli Options K-8

Express Options

Grab & Chef Salad or Yogurt Parfait w/Oat


Milk Condiments

Fresh, Dried Or Canned Fruit

Please advise us if special meal accommodations are required for allergens or other special dietary needs.
Pay for meals on-line. Click Image Below

LINQ Connect ONLINE POSTAL

Harvest of the Month:
Winter Squash



Click on the image above for more info on the Harvest of the Month!



Letter from the Mayor

By Mayor Kristine Lott

Hello Neighbors, December kicks off our Fiscal Year 2025 budget process - community members are encouraged to participate! Every year, the City Council discusses with the staff and public how your tax dollars are spent. We've got a schedule of meetings planned to cover the different areas of government services, citywide projects, staffing, and costs to the community. To view the budget and meeting info, please visit winooski.vt.gov/fy25. Meetings are held on Mondays at 6pm with virtual and in-person attendance options. Here's what we've got lined up:



- **Monday, December 4:** Overall Budget Presentation & General Government (elections, billing, cash collection, parking, and more)
- **Monday, December 11:** Community Services (community programs, events, parks, the library, the pool, the senior center, community gardens, and more)
- **Tuesday, January 2:** Public Works (plowing, paving, sidewalks, water/sewer, facilities, and equipment)
- **Monday, January 8:** Public Safety (Police Department, Fire Department, code enforcement, and rental inspections)
- **Tuesday, January 16:** Overall Budget Discussion & Capital Improvement Projects (last chance to provide your thoughts on the City budget - is the City spending your taxes the way you want?)
- **Monday, January 22:** Final Budget Vote/Approval (City Council will approve the City budget for the Town Meeting Day election ballot you vote on in March)

We'll also host a joint budget presentation with the school and there will be other opportunities to engage.

In October, the City Council directed staff to bring us a draft budget that retains all current services and makes a modest tax increase to catch up on our municipal infrastructure. In service of affordability, the City of Winooski has historically presented a city budget with a tax rate increase less than inflation. This means we haven't been able to keep up with expenses for things like street and sidewalk repair. We also held water and sewer rates flat by subsidizing the operating costs with reserve funds, which resulted in a depletion that prevented us from moving forward with capital improvement projects (city-owned property, facilities, vehicles, etc.), leaving things like our 100-year-old pipes and other important things behind schedule. Our last budget addressed this by raising utility rates and avoided additional tax increases by allocating the available TIF funds (Tax Increment Financing from redeveloping our downtown) towards some amazing investments like the new community pool, fire trucks, and community services programs.

In good news, last year the State Legislature made much-needed updates to the State's education funding formula to bring more equity into our education funding system, recognizing that educating multilingual learners requires more money. For years, the State funding formula has not provided enough money to support appropriate resources and we as a community have been covering that gap. Our school district has built the programming needed to support learners, and voters have supported those tax increases. With the new more equitable funding formula kicking in next year, our district will benefit by receiving more funding per pupil. This will ensure the school has money to support our multilingual students, and could also moderate the combined School District-City tax impact so we can catch up on community needs outside the school that will also support our youth, families, and all residents.

I encourage you all to get involved in the budget process and to attend as many

meetings as you can leading up to the Town Meeting Day election. As always, we'll have ballot, budget, and election information readily available for you to make informed decisions about how your tax dollars are spent.



From Your Local Representative

By Representative Daisy Berbeco

As we enter the shorter days of the year, many of us strive for routines that keep us healthy and mentally well. Our mental health and psychosocial problems increased following the Covid pandemic. Access to appropriate and timely care did not. Mental health care providers, it turns out, are people, too, and many of them understandably left their jobs for more money and better working conditions.

Three years after the start of the pandemic, 90% of Americans believe we are facing a mental health crisis (Kaiser Family Foundation Survey, 2023). When our mental health challenges rise, the health and wellbeing of all Vermonters of every age is at greater risk. Our mental wellbeing influences markers of physical health such as blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and heart disease, and can significantly impact the costs of healthcare for everyone.

Unaddressed mental health challenges even impact our economic health. Sick people can't work, staff turnover rates rise, and local businesses suffer. When we are too sick to work, we focus on survival and become less supportive of the things that help address both our own and our community's economic and social problems. It's easy to lose sight of where there is kindness and good in the world.

Maybe Vermont needs to move beyond just the individual treatment approach that has placed us in a costly, crisis-response mode when symptoms are

unbearable. We can get ahead of the curve by focusing now on local, community-led efforts that build resilience and enhance the values of connection, support, and service. We must begin to address the issue before it's an issue.

I recently saw Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy speak at Dartmouth Medical School on the future of mental health. He said something that guides me, and probably many others, as we go forward in healing ourselves from hardships many of us are facing today. He suggested we are facing a moral crisis.

"[Many people say] 'It feels like it's become more important to be right than to be compassionate, it's become somehow more important to be powerful than to be kind. To look good than to actually be good.' And that sense has fueled this notion, belief almost, that people have taken on, that we are fundamentally just mean-spirited. That we are just looking out for ourselves and this is the way the world is and so we have to be that way if we want to survive in this kind of world. But I actually don't believe that is fundamentally who we are. I don't think that we are primarily mean-spirited and unkind. I think that we are actually more grounded in the core values of kindness and generosity of service and friendship, I think that's what we want. I think that's the life we want our kids to lead."

We have to give more support to expanding community-led resilience so that every neighbor is included and has an active voice in supporting their neighbors to be strong, connected, and well. Community is prevention, that is why we have to support local communities coming together for more mental wellness and resilience in our future. When you pass someone on the street in Winooski this winter, remember they are also weathering the same season. Some of the most critical supports for wellbeing of our community aren't things that can be bought or delivered through state and federal programming—but are simple human expressions of kindness. That is up to each of us to decide whether or not we want to make the investment in our community.

As your State Representative I will be

introducing legislation to address climate change and mental wellbeing, healthcare costs, Vermont joining the social worker compact, and continuing to address the housing crisis.

Please reach out if you would like to connect regarding any of these issues or others: dberbeco@leg.state.vt.us



Community Vision

This section of the Winooski Newsletter is designed to keep our residents and visitors informed of the progress being made in the City's Strategic Vision areas – or “community vision”. To learn more and view progress updates, visit winooskivt.gov/vision.

Economic Vitality:

In November, the Finance and Municipal Infrastructure Commissions held a joint meeting to continue their discussion on the City's capital improvement projects (big picture investments, city properties, assets, etc.) as they relate to budgeting for Fiscal Year 2025. Both commissions provided input which was received by the Finance and Public Works Directors and City Council liaisons and was helpful in the framing of how this part of the budget is put together.

Municipal Infrastructure:

The Winooski Main Street Revitalization Project, which went out to bid this summer, received three competitive bids from qualified contractors with the lowest bid exceeding the engineer's estimate by 26%. The City of Winooski is actively working on cost-saving measures to reduce the overall budget and seeking additional funding. Specific details regarding the City's budget optimization efforts, contractor selection, and construction schedule will be shared with the public in the coming

months as information becomes available. A public information meeting will be held prior to the start of construction which is anticipated to begin in Spring 2024. All inquiries can be directed to the Public Involvement Team at 802 595 4399 or mainstreet@winooskivt.gov. To stay up to date on the project, sign up to receive project update emails or visit the project website at winooskivt.gov/mainstreet.

Housing:

The Housing Initiative Director and Housing Commission have been working on ways to improve the Housing Trust Fund program offerings and reach within the community. An Interest Rate Buydown program has been drafted, and improvements are also being made to the Down Payment Assistance and Home Improvement Programs to promote utilization, and administrative feasibility. An application is being drafted to apply for a Municipal Planning Grant which may allow the City to conduct an equitable housing needs assessment focusing on affordable housing stock and future planning, senior housing, accessible housing, and recommendations to achieve housing goals for these communities. Learn more about the City's housing initiatives at winooskivt.gov/housing.

Safe, Healthy, Connected People:

On October 2nd, the City's Community Service Director provided the City Council with a goal update on this area. Items included recruitment and retention of paid on-call part-time staff for the Fire and Code Enforcement departments, a Strategic Vision Plan for fire/EMS delivery models (including dispatching), plans for possible future renovation of existing fire station to accommodate 24/7 staffing, continuing to make progress on the Parks and Open Space Plan, and determining a future plan for the Winooski Senior Center on the St. Stephens property (123 Barlow St).



Reminders from the City Clerk's Office

Return of Regular Hours

The City Clerk's Office is open again for regular hours, Mon.–Fri., 8am–4pm. We'll be closed on Friday, December 22 (1/2 day) and on Monday, December 25.

Please visit our website at winooskivt.gov/clerk, call or email for any information needed: 802 655 6410 / clerk@winooskivt.gov



Free COVID-19 Test Kits

As a reminder, the winter months are here and spending more time indoors means more opportunities to get sick. Protect yourselves and your neighbors by keeping up to date with COVID-19 guidance by visiting: healthvermont.gov/covid19 and be sure to pick up a free COVID-19 test kit with extended FDA approved expiration dates at these City locations:

- Winooski City Hall (27 West Allen Street)
- Winooski Senior Center (123 Barlow Street)
- Winooski Memorial Library (32 Malletts Bay Ave)



Annual Winter Parking Ban Reminder

There is no overnight street parking from 2:30 – 6am in Downtown Winooski from December 1 – March 31. For everywhere else in Winooski, overnight winter parking bans are made during winter storms and for snow removal where street parking is not allowed from 11pm to 7am.

To sign up for our winter parking ban alerts, text Winooski to 888 777 or register at nixle.com.

- Winter parking bans may last more than one evening.
- The alerts will say when the ban starts, if it keeps going, and when it is done.
- The City of Winooski reserves the right to tow vehicles at the owner's expense.
- Landline phone users can get updates by calling 802 655 3908.
- Signs will flash at exit 15 on East Allen Street, on the Winooski side of the Winooski/Burlington Bridge, on Malletts Bay Ave, and on Main Street.
- Parking is available from 6 PM to 7 AM in the Winooski Parking Garage on Cascade Way.
- Users can pay in the garage or by using the ParkMobile app.

Visit our parking page at winooskivt.gov/parking



Community Services Updates

Recreation and Parks

Sign up for our programs at winooskivt.gov/recprograms



YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Skateboarding at Talent Skatepark

- Ages 8-13 / Mondays / October 23 - December 18 / 3 - 5pm @ Talent Skatepark

Shred it up with your friends at Talent! This program is open to all levels of skateboarders - from first-time skaters learning the basics to experienced pros practicing tricks. All gear is provided.

Youth Climbing

- Ages 5-8 / Tuesdays / November 7 - December 19 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock
- Ages 5-8 / Tuesdays / January 2 - February 20 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock
- Ages 9-13 / Wednesdays / November 8 - December 20 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock
- Ages 9-13 / Wednesdays / January 4 - February 22 / 3 - 5pm @ MetroRock

Youth will work with coaches to learn the basics of climbing techniques, get comfortable with safe belaying, and build their confidence. All gear is provided.

Youth Basketball League

- Grades K-2 Co-Ed Clinic / Saturdays / January 6 - February 17 / Time TBD @ Winooski School District Gym
- Grades 3-6 Boys or Girls Teams / Weeks of January 2 - February 17 / Time TBD @ Winooski School District Gym

WINOOSKI MUNICIPAL UPDATES

Join local volunteer coaches and Winooski Rec & Parks staff in this youth basketball league this winter! Students in grades K-2 will participate in a weekly Saturday clinic. Students in grades 3-6 will practice one time per week (M-Fr depending on volunteer availability) and attend Saturday games against neighboring town recreation teams.

Youth Drop-In Indoor Soccer

- U8-U12 Girls and Boys / Sundays / January 7 - February 25 / Time TBD @ Winooski School District Gym

Are you looking to continue working on your soccer skills through the colder months? Join Winooski Rec staff and volunteer coaches in collaboration with Vermont Patriots for this indoor soccer program! This will be a drop-in, pick-up program and registration is not necessary.

Very Merry Theatre

- Grades 5-9 / Mondays / January 8 - February 19 / 3 - 4:30pm @ Winooski School District Performing Arts Center

Interested in exploring your talents and learning more about theatre arts and stage performance? Join Winooski Rec & Parks in collaboration with Very Merry Theatre for this fun musical version of Peter Pan! Fly off to Neverland and play a pirate, lost child or mermaid! Great roles for everyone.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Yoga Vinyasa Flow

- Ages 18+ / Mondays / October 2 - December 18 / 5:40 - 7pm @ O'Brien Community Center Studio
- Ages 18+ / Wednesdays / October 4 - December 20 / 8:30 - 9:30am @ O'Brien Community Center Studio

Join yoga practitioner Sarah Sears of Yoga Vermont for an amazing Vinyasa Flow program! Open to everyone and all levels, this program is designed to help you adapt to postures and create your own practice routine.

Yoga Mysore

- Ages 18+ / Thursdays / October 5 - December 14 / 6 - 8am @ O'Brien Community Center Studio

Join Sarah Sears for Mysore Yoga. The studio is open to do your yoga practice and Sarah will be there to provide assists if you'd like them or guide you in learning your practice. All levels are welcome.

Yoga Mysore Intensives

- Ages 18+ / Monday - Thursday / December 4 - 7 / 6 - 8:30am @ O'Brien Community Center Studio
- Ages 18+ / Monday - Thursday / December 4 - 7 / 6 - 8:30am @ O'Brien Community Center Studio

One-week intensive Mysore Yoga practice with Sarah Sears. Studio will be open at 6am. You can start your practice anytime between 6 - 7am.

Ukulele Holiday Song Tune-Up

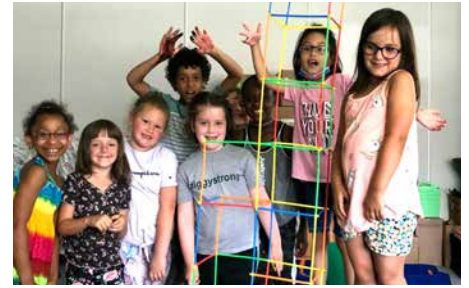
- Ages 18+ / Tuesdays / November 28 - December 19 / 5:30 - 6:30pm @ O'Brien Community Center

We've partnered with Ukulele Clare to provide this amazing music program for adults! What's your favorite holiday song? If your answer is "All of them!" then this lighthearted, 3-week class plus a final jam session day is for you. We'll sing and laugh and explore some of the ukulele techniques and chords that will help get these songs well in hand in time for holiday gatherings. To get the most out of this class, I suggest that you can get to most of these chords with relative ease: A, Am, C, D, D7, Dm, E7, Em, F, G, G7. Ukes available at class for rent (\$20 for all 3 weeks) or purchase.

Winter Lights Drive Through at Shelburne Museum

- Ages 18+ / Wednesday / December 6 / 6 - 7:30pm @ Winooski Senior Center.

Winter Lights is a yearly holiday tradition where Shelburne Museum's campus glows in a spectacular display of lights and music! Join us to drive through the magical, luminescent installations of the steamboat Ticonderoga, Lighthouse, Beach Woods, and Bostwick Garden. Transportation in a 15 passenger city vehicle will be provided. Meet at Winooski Senior Center (123 Barlow St) at 6pm.



Thrive After School

winooski.vt.gov/thrive

 @thrivewinooski

Our state-licensed, 3 STAR childcare/enrichment program fall season (beginning September 2023) is open for registration! Sessions run from 3 - 5:30pm, Monday - Friday.

We partner with the Winooski School District to provide a community where children in grades K-5 explore, learn, and grow during their after-school hours. During Thrive, students engage with creative arts, STEM and Makerspace activities, literacy skills, cooperative and socio-emotional learning, outdoor play, and more.

Thrive costs \$19 per day enrollment or \$90 for full week. We accept state childcare subsidy as well as offer scholarships to families in need.

To learn more and sign up, please visit winooski.vt.gov/thrive.



Winooski Memorial Library

winooski.vt.gov/library

  @winooskilibrary

Updated Library Hours

Be on the lookout for a slight change in our hours of operation on Thursdays and Fridays.

Monday: Closed

Tuesday/Wednesday: 10am-6pm

Thursday/Friday: 10am-5pm

Saturday: 10am-2pm

Sunday: Closed

1:1 Tech Assistance

The Library is once again partnering with USCRI and volunteers from St. Michael's College MOVE program to provide 1:1 technology assistance to community members! Stop by to learn more about your laptop or computer, develop new skills, find out how to download ebooks and audiobooks to your device, and more.

- Saturday, December 2 from 11:30am - 1:30pm
- Adults 18+; free, no registration required.

Audiobooks, eBooks, & More!

Did you know that all Winooski Memorial Library cardholders have access to FREE online resources including audiobooks, ebooks, film streaming, language learning, educational and professional development courses, and more? Visit our website at winooskivt.gov/library or stop by the library with questions about access and/or additional information.

Dad Guild Playgroup

Join the Dad Guild for an afternoon of play, and connect with other parents, guardians, and caregivers - all are welcome regardless of gender identity. This event is free and open to all.

- Saturday, December 16th from 12:30-2:00pm
- Children 0-5; parents, guardians, and caregivers.

About Dad Guild: Founded in 2019, Dad Guild is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to create a supportive network for new fathers in the greater Burlington, VT region. They offer opportunities for dads to connect with one another, share their experiences, model positive father engagement, and advocate for parental equality.

English Conversation Group

We're excited to announce our partnership with USCRI Vermont to offer their English Conversation Group program! Join a weekly conversation group to practice English skills. Each week will have a different theme and new vocabulary to practice. Do you have a topic you would like to talk

about? Join the conversation!

- Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-12pm
- Free to join, open to adults 18+

Friends of the Winooski Library

The Friends of the Winooski Memorial Library is recruiting new members interested in supporting the values and mission of the Library. The Friends are a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization that aims to promote use of the library's resources, work to encourage contributions and lead fundraising efforts, and serve as an advocate of all things library in the community.

As a Friend, you might participate on the Friend's Board, attend quarterly meetings, help to create public support and awareness for the Library and its programs, raise money for capital campaigns or direct gifts for items not in the Library's own budget, sponsor and support Library programs and events, volunteer to work in the Library or on specific tasks, and/or something else of your choosing.

Membership is free and open to anyone in the Winooski community.

Please reach with interest or questions to Nate Eddy, Library Director, at neddy@winooskivt.gov / 802-655-6424.

Hot Cocoa Storytime

Cozy up at the Library on the first Friday of each month this winter for a wintry-themed storytime. We'll enjoy a hot cup of cocoa and two picture books before settling into a simple craft. Recommended for youth ages 4 and up.

- 1st Friday of the month: December 1st
- 3:30 - 4:30pm
- Youth 9 and under must be with an adult caregiver.

Library of Things

Stop by for snowshoes, museum passes, headlamps, birding backpacks, a telescope, walking poles, snow shovels, and other items to enjoy in the outdoors!

Library Playgroup and Family Support

Join the Winooski Memorial Library for a fun playgroup for parents,

caregivers, and young children ages 0-5. Meet at the Library for activities such as reading stories, movement exercises, and sing-alongs. Adults will also have the opportunity to talk about child development or just chat. Come connect with your child and meet other families within your community.

- Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30am

For more information, please reach out to Kirsten Wilson at kwilson@winooskivt.gov; 802-655-6424.

Pokémon Club

Join us on Wednesdays at the Library for all things Pokemon! Franchise fans will get together to discuss their favorite cards, games, and TV episodes. Along with card trading, we'll have simple art projects and other activities for club members to enjoy while socializing at this weekly activity group.

- Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30pm
- Drop-in, no registration required
- Youth 8+

Pride Book Club

Join the Winooski Library once a month for a LGBTQ+ book club for adult readers (18+). This book club is a queer-centered space dedicated to reading books across a variety of genres written by LGBTQ+ authors.

For more information and to sign up for email updates, please email Kirsten Wilson, kwilson@winooskivt.gov or call 802 655 6424.

STEAM Ahead Saturdays

Find us on Saturdays from 10 - 11am for our STEAM Activity hour. Each week will feature a new project for young learners that will engage the mind and introduce participants to science, technology, engineering, art and math-based concepts!

This program is intended for youth ages 5 and up, however parents are encouraged to partake. Youth should attend in clothing appropriate for art projects.

Weekly Storytime

Join us on Thursdays at 10:30am for our weekly storytime! We'll be reading our favorite books, singing songs, doing

a little dancing, and sharing in fun. No registration required.

Winooski Reads Book Group

The Winooski Library is excited to offer a chance to participate in our Winooski Reads Book Club for adult readers (18+)! Join your friends and neighbors for a lively discussion of each month's selected title and share your thoughts, insights, and reactions to the book. Free to take part, email or call Nate Eddy, Library Director, at neddy@winooskivt.gov / 802-655-6424.

Youth Jewelry Club

Join us every Thursday after school as we learn to make jewelry at the Library! Each week we'll try out a different pattern or style of friendship, paracord, or bead bracelets together.

- Thursdays from 3:30 - 4:30pm
- Drop-in; no registration required
- Recommended for youth ages 8+

Questions? Please contact Kirsten Wilson, Library Youth Services Coordinator, at kwilson@winooskivt.gov or 802 655 6424.



Winooski Senior Center

winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter

 [@winooskiseniorcenter](https://www.facebook.com/winooskiseniorcenter)

The Winooski Senior Center is open for regular programming on Tuesdays, Wednesdays from 9am–12pm & Thursdays from 9am–2pm. Join us for events and programs! Stay connected with us: call: 802-655-6425, voicemail 24/7. Email us at: seniorcenter@winooskivt.gov

NOTE: We will be closed for the week of December 25th and will re-open on January 3rd!

TUESDAYS

Grab-N-Go Meals for Seniors - pick up 10am–12pm

In partnership with Age Well, we offer Older Vermonters (60+) a nutritious take out meal every Tuesday. We want to support you being well at home and provide you with an opportunity to stay connected to your community while enjoying a healthy and deliciously prepared meal. Reservations must be made by 12pm the Thursday before the scheduled Tuesday meal. Find our monthly menus at winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter.

Call us at 802 655 6425 to register for this program. \$5 suggested donation to Age Well.

Note: No Meal on December 26 and January 2.

WEDNESDAYS

Breakfast Café & Coffee Chat serving 9 – 11am

Breakfast and Conversation are served! Everyone is welcome to drop in and join us as we gather and converse with community members. Our eat-in Breakfast Café features hot breakfast sandwiches, fruit, treats & beverages. Priced by donation. Note: No Café December 26 and January 2

THURSDAYS

Sit Down Community Meals - served at 12pm

In partnership with Age Well, we are now offering healthy sit-down community meals for older Vermonters (60+). Reservations must be made by 12pm the Monday before the scheduled meal. Call us at 802-655-6425 to register for this program. \$5 suggested donation to Age Well. Find monthly menus at winooskivt.gov/seniorcenter. After lunch, stay and play games or just relax with friends and neighbors!

Note: No Meal on December 28

Special Events

December 14 - Sit Down Holiday Meal at Noon

We will be serving stuffed chicken breast w/ apple & cranberry stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, carrots, roll, and a pumpkin bar. Reservations must be

made by December 7 at 12pm. Seating is limited. \$5 suggested donation to Age Well. Registration is required. Call 802 655 6425 to RSVP.

December 21 - Holiday Party at Noon

We will be serving hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, with our famous dessert bar. There will be a Yankee Gift Swap, with entertainment and a sing-a-long by Jazzou Jones. Reservations must be made by December 14 at 12pm. \$5 suggested donation. Call 802 655 6425 to RSVP.

Special Programs

Bone Builders - Mondays and Wednesdays at 2-3pm

RSVP Bone Builders is an exercise program designed to prevent (and even reverse) the negative effects of osteoporosis. The program is based on research conducted and published by Tufts University which shows that strength training just twice a week dramatically reduces the risk of fractures due to the disease. Bone Builders classes fill a vital need for regular physical exercise as well as increased social interaction, both well-known components of healthy aging. FREE. Note: No class on December 25 or January 1.

Singing Class for People with Dementia

Age Well is sponsoring a FREE singing class for people with dementia and their caregivers. Music can help sustain cognition and quality of life for people with dementia. It can be an opportunity for people with dementia to connect and share an experience with their caregivers. Classes will be on Fridays through December 8 from 10:30-11:30am. No music experience is required. For more info or to register, contact Emily Mars Raymond at eraymond@agewellvt.org.

Meals on Wheels

If you know of an older Vermonter who has special nutrition requirements or is having difficulty with meal preparation, please call Age Well at 802-863-0360 to find out the eligibility requirements. No one is denied meals due to an inability to donate. Volunteer drivers are always needed.



December Update

By Melissa Corbin, Executive Director, Downtown Winooski

Halloween in Winooski ~ Best Attendance Ever!



It was a long road leading up to lighting 1,000 jack-o-lanterns in Rotary Park on October 28th, but we pulled together as a community once again and created an epic display of creativity. We estimate that nearly 5,000 people visited the park that weekend and 600 families completed our scavenger hunt for carvings. Volunteer participation was greatly increased this year and thankfully nobody saw the clock past 8pm with a sharp tool in hand. Our final night of carving at the Senior Center, we maxed capacity with a spooky

DJ dance party. We involved our local schools on two formal days of carving on Tuesday and Friday but saw many more young people in the evenings with their families as well. Saturday morning setup was cold and wet, but the positive attitude of the UVM Women's Swim Team lifted all the volunteers up and kept us going until the last trailer was unloaded and the final pumpkin was placed. Massive gratitude to all of you who helped to make this spectacle of lights possible.

Year-end Recap

Well, it is December and I think I finally figured out what this job entails, and wow is it diverse! Forgive the shameless plug for year-end giving and 2024 event sponsorship, but you deserve to know all the cool things Downtown Winooski does for your community. We have events, advocacy, business development and support as well as a statewide voice for all designated downtown districts. I was recently appointed to the Vermont Downtown Coalition and in collaboration with the Preservation Trust of Vermont, we advocate for Downtown & Village Redevelopment Incentives and the Vermont Downtown Program. I sit on the Planning Advisory Committee for the Burlington-Winooski Bridge Project and the Winooski Alliance for Active Transportation. I represent a voice for Winooski on the Regional Affairs Committee working to address public safety issues in the Greater Burlington Area at the legislature. Now that



you have my resume details, let's look at the awesome events we have in our community.

The Winooski Farmers Market generated nearly \$200k in sales for 34 local vendors between May and October. The market saw an average of 650 people every Sunday and a local musician was paid every week to perform for market goers. Come see us at the O'Brien Community Center on alternating Sundays (adjustments made for holidays) between 10am-2pm for our new Winter Winooski Farmers Market.

Winooski Wednesdays are free concerts in Rotary Park held June through September. The performers are all paid and when made possible by a sponsor, we provide free food to attendees. We see an average of 1,000 people in the park on Wednesday evenings and have some awesome ideas for enhancements in 2024 to draw even more of a crowd.

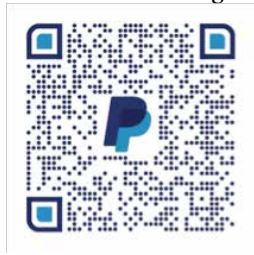
Juneteenth, Pride, Holiday Pop-Up and Blingo are created and executed by our small org of 1.5 employees and a very active volunteer Board of Directors. We also play a support role to the City in bringing 1,000 jack-o-lanterns to life each October. Finally, unless something goes sideways between this copy submission and print day, we should be launching a

crowdfunding campaign soon to enhance Rotary Park with a permanent stage system to more formally support the performing arts in our community.

Now that the shameless plug is done, the ask is for your financial support in the form of community donations, business membership dues or event sponsorship. The organization has a very small donor base that we need to grow for our work in all areas to elevate and flourish. Details on event sponsorship levels and benefits are listed on our website by program. You can use the QR code here or

hit the donate button in the top right of downtownwinooski.org to show your support. We are a 501 (C)3 organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

If you made it this far, thank you for taking the time to read all this copy. You must really care about the work we do and I bet you would love to support it with a donation. Cheers!



Winooski Food Shelf Schedule for December

By Linda Howe, Winooski Food Shelf Coordinator

Saturday, December 2nd	9:30am to 11:00am	Veggies, deli, bakery, meat and eggs
Wednesday, December 6th	1:00pm to 3:00pm	Pantry staples, veggies, meat and eggs
Wednesday, December 13th	1:00pm to 3:00pm	Pantry staples, veggies, meat and eggs
Saturday, December 16th	9:30am to 11:00am	Veggies, deli, bakery, meat and eggs

The Food Shelf is adjusting the days of operation to work around Christmas and New Years celebrations. Please read over the schedule carefully! Please pack your patience and some reusable bags. We no longer have diapers available due to loss of funding.

Food Shelf Policy: We request that all new food shelf clients bring a piece of mail such as a utility bill or lease with their current address. We do not accept “junk mail” or driver license. Winooski residents may come three times a month. They can come one Wednesday and both Saturdays. Starbucks in Colchester provides pastry and sandwiches while Hannaford Market on Dorset Street helps provide Saturdays’ food selections.

Where to find us: The Food Shelf is located in the United Methodist Church at 24 West Allen Street. We do not provide rides so please bring a wheeled cart or suitcase and some bags to

lug your food home. The church phone number is 802-655-7371.

Cash donations needed: The Food Shelf is growing rapidly. More and more of the food must be purchased since donations of food items cannot meet demand. Checks can be mailed to: The Winooski Food Shelf, P.O. Box 53, Winooski, VT 05404. You may also donate at winooskifoodshelf.org.

New drop off location: The Winooski Senior Center will accept non perishable food and toiletries during regular programming on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00am to noon and Thursdays from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

Food Shelf Volunteers Needed: If you have some free time and would like to do some pickups and deliveries, pack food boxes, set up for food shelves or serve our clients, please reach out to us at our e-mail address: winooskifoodshelf@gmail.com. We especially need help serving clients on Wednesdays.

Wishing you a safe and joyous holiday season.

Celebrate Sober!

RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT HOWARDCENTER.ORG | 802-488-6000

Celebrating Sober

By Paul Detzer, Development and Communications Engagement Manager

As we approach this season of celebration, Howard Center remains committed to offering support and resources for those who wish to celebrate sober. If you or a loved one need support, Howard Center’s main number is 802-488-6000, or our First Call for Chittenden County crisis line 802-488-7777 is available 24/7/365.

Help is here.

Tips for Celebrating Sober

- **Prepare for Potential Challenges:** Acknowledge and plan for situations that could test your resolve, including celebratory events that traditionally involve alcohol.
- **Embrace Sober Free Socializing:** Engage in pastimes or gatherings that promote a substance-free lifestyle, such as outdoor activities, crafts, or cultural events.
- **Prioritize Wellness:** Balance rest with activity, ensure nutritional needs are met, and incorporate mindfulness or meditation to maintain focus on well-being.

- **Establish Boundaries:** Be clear with friends and family about your decision to remain sober and enlist their support.
 - **Craft an Exit Strategy:** Have a reliable transportation method and a trusted contact on standby should you decide to leave an event early.
 - **Find Strength in Community:** Connect with support groups or networks that celebrate sobriety, which can offer companionship and understanding during the holidays.
 - **Celebrate Milestones:** Acknowledge the progress you or your loved ones have made in sobriety — no matter how small. Each celebration is a testament to strength and commitment.
 - **Supportive Dialogue:** Maintain open communication with a confidant who can provide encouragement and perspective during challenging times.
- Visit our website at <https://howardcenter.org/celebrate-sober/> for a list of resources; including videos and articles about substance use; and a listing of local, state, and national resources.

Sister Pat's Retiring!

By Erin Armstrong, LICSW, Network Director, Community Health Improvement

It is with mixed emotions that I share some HUGE news- Sister Pat is retiring December 8th!

Sr. Pat has worked for The University of Vermont Health Network for 29 years. She will leave a legacy of hard work, community connections, education on important issues and too many friendships to count. Sr. Pat could often be found in the community, supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and mental illness. She worked directly with many, and helped many in other ways by working closely with social workers and others to ensure people were getting what they needed. She was a staple of the Winooski community. She helped start and was a key player in many groups and initiatives over the years such Faith in Action, the Winooski Network, the Winooski Peace Initiative, many school and community programs, and serving on the Board of the Winooski Food Shelf.



Her involvement in educating others on Human Trafficking, Humor and Health, gratitude and more, has far reaching impact. Her work has made a difference in the lives of many.

During her time here she received many awards for that work, including a 2019 Outstanding Social Justice Award.

This is all just a small snapshot of the legacy she will leave behind, and will continue in some ways.

Please join me in recognizing and celebrating her many accomplishments.

There will be a formal celebration to mark her move into retirement. While we will miss her and her work, we know she will have some well-deserved time for herself!

Winooski's Wonderful History of Community

By Ric Cengeri, Communications Specialist

Winooski has a fascinating history. It was 5,000 years ago, when Native Americans first camped in the area. Then the Abenaki tribe lived in Winoskitegw – the land of the Wild Onion – around 3,000 years ago.

Winooski has had sawmills and woolen mills, dreams of a dome and then wonderful restaurants ringing a real traffic circle. What has remained consistent is the town's incredible sense of community.

A way to continue this bond is through homesharing, the practice of having two or more people share a home for a mutual benefit. The homeshare host provides a private bedroom and shared common space in exchange for rent, services or both.

Homeshare hosts can benefit from receiving rent and/or a share of utilities, or getting help with snow shoveling, gardening, meal prep, chores, tech questions and more. For guests, homesharing provides

incredibly cost-effective housing, using existing housing stock.

If you have a room in your home that would be a great place for someone to live, consider offering it through HomeShare Vermont. Although the average monthly rent is \$378 through the program, hosts in Chittenden County can charge up to a maximum rent of \$650.

A typical homeshare match lasts around 13 months. We conduct background and reference checks and interviews. Then, you decide which of our pre-screened candidates you'd like to meet and who you'd like to live with.

If you're interested in learning more about how we create compatible matches and how homesharing might benefit you, we'd be happy to visit with you or you can call us at (802) 863-5625. You can also visit HomeShareVermont.org, where you can read our past newsletters and learn about some of the matches we've created.



Winooski Partnership for Prevention

By Kate Nugent, Executive Director

Our next community dinner will be in the new year on January 29! Connect with your neighbors, take the night off from cooking, and find new and existing community resources. Please mark your calendars and look for the sign-up in our newsletter, available on our website at www.Winooskiprevention.org.

Upcoming events:

- **January 29**Somali cuisine
- **February 19**Northern Spanish cuisine
- **March 25**Harmony's Kitchen

Families are important

Recently, researchers comprehensively reviewed programs intended to prevent substance use by youth and young adults under age 21 and found that family-based interventions were proven very effective. These programs resulted in reduced initiation and use of various substances, including those most used, nicotine, THC (cannabis), alcohol, and prescription drugs. Programs also resulted in reduced sexual risk behaviors among youth and led to improvements in mental health symptoms and school-related outcomes.

These types of programs provide opportunities for parents and caregivers

to enhance their children's substance use preventive skills and practices. They may assist with adult-child communication, rule setting, and monitoring. Programs can be participated in in individual or small group sessions, web-based, or via printed instruction manuals and workbooks, or a combination. Health professionals or trained providers can provide the programs in the home, school, or community.

To learn more, go to the CDC's Community Guide page about these results by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or visiting our website for a link.



Above the Influence + WPP at WSD

- Basketball at Elm Street with Mukhtar Abdullahi, the WPP's new Substance Use Prevention Educator. Mukhtar had

- a lot of fun recently with youth playing outside and being active!
- Youth Leadership Conferences: ATI is scheduled to attend the statewide youth conference on tobacco use prevention in early November. Everyone is looking forward to an action-packed day of learning and inspiration.
- The Winooski Partnership for Prevention currently has two open board of trustees positions for youth. Ideally, students will be in their third year of high school and be passionate about healthy community change. This is a great resume-building and opportunity to work directly with local leaders and support your neighbors. To learn more, email info@winooskiprevention.org.



SAVE THE DATES

23-24 Winter Farmers Market!

By Melissa Corbin, Executive Director, Downtown Winooski

We're super excited to introduce the Winooski Winter Farmers Market!

Find as in the gym at the O'Brien Community Center (32 Malletts Bay Avenue) every other Sunday (with adjustments for holidays) from 10am-2pm. We'll see you on:

- November 12 | November 26
- December 10 | December 17
- January 7 | January 21
- February 4 | February 18
- March 3 | March 17
- April 7 | April 14

Interested in being a part of the market? Email or phone with questions: 802-310-6942 or melissa@downtownwinooski.org.



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS
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WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT
www.wsdvt.org

Superintendent of Schools
 Wilmer Chavarria, wchavarria@wsdvt.org
 802-383-6000

John F. Kennedy Elementary School
 Principal: Sara Raabe
 802-655-0411
sraabe@wsdvt.org

Winooski Middle and High School
 Co-Principals: Kate Grodin and Jean Berthiaume
 802-655-3530
kgrodin@wsdvt.org
jberthiaume@wsdvt.org

Board of School Trustees
 Robert Millar, *President*, 802-383-6000, rmillar@wsdvt.org
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 Kamal Dahal, *Vice President*, 802-310-2821, kdahal@wsdvt.org
 Isaiah Donaldson, *Secretary*, 802-383-6000, idonaldson@wsdvt.org
 Nicole Mace, 802-383-6000, nimace@wsdvt.org

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CITY OF WINOOSKI
www.winooskivt.gov, 802-655-6410

Mayor
 Kristine Lott, 802-766-1988, klott@winooskivt.gov

City Manager
 Elaine Wang, 802-655-6410, ewang@winooskivt.gov

City Councilors
 Aurora Hurd, 802-734-7082, ahurd@winooskivt.gov
 Charles Judge, 802-655-6410, cjudge@winooskivt.gov
 Bryn Oakleaf, 802-448-2966, boakleaf@winooskivt.gov
 Thomas Renner, *Deputy Mayor*, 802-922-3265, trenner@winooskivt.gov

City Clerk
 Jenny Willingham, 802-655-6410, jwillingham@winooskivt.gov

Winooski Police
 Emergency: Call 9-1-1
 Non-emergency: 802-655-0221

Winooski Fire Department
 Emergency: Call 9-1-1
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