



The Littleton Weekly Record

THURSDAY, OCT. 26, 2023

LOCAL NEWS

Effort To Reconcile Bible, LGBTQ Acceptance

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Cyan Magenta Yellow Black



Continued Criticism. Residents Blast Board, Gendreau Over LGBTQ+ Stance. **Page 2**

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Residents Blast Gendreau, Board Over Ongoing LGBTQ+ Stance

BY ROBERT BLECHL
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — A Select Board member's religious-based opposition to a diversity mural in town, followed by her recent opposition to a planned gay-themed musical production at the Opera House, has thrust Littleton into the spotlight across New England.

Residents, though, as they did during a board meeting in September, continue to push back and level criticisms at Carrie Gendreau, as well as at other board members, whom they say are marginalizing the LGBTQ+ community, placing a changing town in a negative light, and costing the town in legal fees.

On Oct. 23, during the second consecutive board meeting at the opera house — a venue chosen to accommodate what has been a North Country citizen turnout in the hundreds — residents decried Gendreau's comments in an Oct. 23 Boston Globe interview in which, similar to a Caledonian-Record interview in September, she called homosexuality an "abomination," said more artwork from the Pride community is creeping into Littleton, and called Theatre UP's upcoming production of *La Cage aux Folles* "disgusting."

The latest comments have made Theatre UP pause on its plan to make a multi-million investment in Littleton and have jeopardized a possible long-term lease with the town for the group's use of the town-owned opera house.

DISCORD AFFECTS TOWN MANAGER

Among the two dozen people who spoke Monday was Littleton Town Manager Jim Gleason, who didn't plan to speak, but said the discord in town has led one resident to make a personal attack on him and his late son, who was gay.

Gleason, whose job is to carry out the board's policies, said he's taken shots from both sides.

"I'm here to talk about what happened to me Friday on a very personal level that's made me wonder how can I stay here and work," he said. "One of our residents stopped at the town offices and asked me why I wasn't stopping the play. I advised to her that there are laws, freedom of speech and expression. Her protest could be don't buy a ticket. If you still don't like the show, stand out in front of it with a sign and tell people that come there. As she left, she turned to me and said I hope your son — my late son who passed away seven years ago — is happy in hell with the devil where he belongs."

His words drew an audible reaction among many of the 200 people in the opera house and brought some to the verge of tears.

"What's going on in this town does hurt," Gleason said, with emotion. "It does cause pain. I don't care what side you're on, be careful. I had to come into work today and wonder how will I go forward, how will I focus on my job, which is supposed to be potholes, sidewalks, police, and fire, when I've got people in this community telling me my son is in hell because he was gay. He didn't choose to be anything. He was born gay and I loved him. And if you're here in this room today, ma'am, thank you very much for your values because they're not

"As she left, she turned to me and said I hope your son — my late son who passed away seven years ago — is happy in hell with the devil where he belongs."

— Town Manager Jim Gleason
mine."

ANGER, PLEAS FOR UNITY

None of those who spoke supported Gendreau's position, except for possibly one.

The first speaker was Sally Sherrard, who said Gendreau's comments in the *Globe* hurt everyone.

"Carrie Gendreau should not be a selectman if she's going to bring her religious beliefs to this community," said Sherrard. "It's completely unacceptable ... It is appalling that you are attacking the LGBTQ+ community ... They are residents of Littleton and pay taxes."

In August, Gendreau suggested that the town look into a policy regarding art on public property, a move some are concerned could result in censorship.

As a taxpayer, Sherrard said she should not have to pay legal fees because the board is not practicing the separation of church and state.

Katie Masters, a 3-year Littleton resident who grew up in the North Country and had ancestors who settled Pittsburgh, said they were also appalled by what she read in the *Globe*.

"I am part of the LGBTQA+ community and I'm not an abomination," said Masters, who added that they would not push their beliefs on others. "Neither are any of my friends, colleagues, and co-workers who also identify the same way I do."

Speaking on behalf of her father, World War II veteran George McAvoy, who fought in the 1944 Battle of the Bulge and died last year at the age of 101, was Suzanne McAvoy Hopsgood.

At one time, George asked her if there were any gay men in the military, said Hopsgood, who responded that there certainly were, but they didn't speak out because they would have been killed.

"His response was, 'You're telling me we would have killed a soldier fighting for his country who would have given his life defending me?'" said Hopsgood. "I said yes dad. His response was, 'That's not what I was fighting for.'"

She related a second story in which, at age 90, her father returned home from a senior golf tournament he had won and said the woman who was his partner was the greatest golfer and the reason for their victory.

Hopsgood told her father she didn't know there were women in the senior golf tournament.

"He said, 'I played with her last year when she was a man,'" said Hopsgood. "I said what did you think about that, dad? He said, 'She plays a hell of a game of golf and she helps me put my bag in the

trunk when we're done.' That was my dad, a World War II veteran who fought for our freedom."

Hopsgood said there are those who share their own interpretations of the Bible and Jesus "mostly to validate their own prejudices."

"I have to wonder if the next step the Board of Selectmen will be considering is what books to ban from our library," she said. "I hope those sitting in judgment of others have a flawless personal history."

Resident Lars Nielson said, "When one quotes Jesus as a means to discrimination, I'd like to remind everybody of what his first commandment was, which was to 'love one another as I have loved you.' And later, he said 'whatever you do to the least of my children, you do to me.'"

Resident and business owner Stacey Doll said she is angry that the board is not listening to the community.

"Your job as Select Board — and it's absurd I have to explain this to you — is to represent the people of this community, and I mean all of the people," said Doll. "Instead, you choose to use taxpayer money to seek legal counsel on an issue against the people of this community ... I'm here to tell you that you do not have my permission to use my tax money for discrimination, hate, or censorship."

Resident Dennis Wagner said he's agnostic about the "homosexual community," but said images of same-sex kissing on television constitute "child abuse."

The comments drew jeers from the audience, with one person yelling, "You don't know what you're talking about."

Littleton resident Kerri Harrington, co-chair of North Country Pride and who was raised by two sets of lesbian aunts, disputed the child abuse claim and said as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer she has worked in multiple cases involving real child abuse.

As an ally of the LGBTQ+ community, Harrington said the current situation in Littleton is difficult, but an upside is that it's bringing many people together.

"It feels good to be supported," said Harrington, who added that expanding the Select Board from three to five members, as proposed through a circulating petition, would bring more people and opinions to the Littleton Select Board.

Hannah Whitcomb, a 17-year-old senior at Littleton High School, said the mood of her school has changed in the last few weeks and the actions of some Select Board members have made some embarrassed to be members of the Littleton community and that she feels more welcome by the LGBTQ+ community than she does by the board.

"I am appalled by all of you, and Carrie, I'd love it if you'd pay attention," said Whitcomb.

Lynne Grigelevich, executive director of Theatre UP, said the outpouring of support for the theater organization, artists, the upcoming show, and "the values we share as a loving community" has been incredible.

Ben Salamon, of Bethlehem, and Nancy Strand, a member of the Bethlehem Select Board, suggested that Littleton adopt an inclusivity resolution like

"Your job as Select Board — and it's absurd I have to explain this to you — is to represent the people of this community, and I mean all of the people."

— Stacey Doll

the towns of Bethlehem and Franconia have done. Strand proposed the resolution for Bethlehem and said the catalyst was the feeling that the LGBTQ+ community was being attacked in the North Country.

Jill Kimball, of Monroe, co-chair of North Country Pride, said the Pride group was formed three years ago to bring inclusivity to residents and businesses and make all feel welcome so they would not have to move elsewhere to feel comfortable.

"It was not our idea to be divisive in any way," said Kimball. "A lot of us are moms who have gay children. We're not the devil. We're not aberrations. I do find absolute offense to that. It's very hard to me as a mom to hear that, it's very hard as a human being to hear that, and to also think that the folks who are elected to represent us are not doing their part. It's been very rough for us for the last couple of weeks for those of us who identify as LGBTQ to feel as though we have to justify our mere existence in the town that we love."

At the same time, the support has been strong, Kimball said to the board.

"I thank you because North Country Pride has received a lot of great donations, a lot of support, and a lot of activity that we didn't know we were going to get," she said. "I cannot thank the community enough for standing beside us, allies and supporters, and showing that this town, this North Country that I love and you love, belongs to all of us, all of us."

Select Board member Linda MacNeil read a statement saying that she opposes censoring art.

"Over the last several weeks there has been an atmosphere created in Littleton that does not reflect the loving community that I grew up knowing," said MacNeil. "I am a third-generation Littleton resident and appreciate the diversity of the town. The question of art has become completely contentious and often disrespectful of the individuals involved. The arts are important, not only to the economic health of any community, but extremely valuable to us as individuals. Whether we agree with the content or not, art is part of the fabric of history and should not be censored."

Her words drew a standing ovation.

To date, Selectman Roger Emerson has not publicly commented either at Monday's board meeting or the September meeting about the criticisms the board has faced in regard to the LGBTQ+ issue.

Gendreau did not speak after public input on Monday or after the input in September.



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\$1.99 Lb



1 Dozen Organic Organic Valley Large Brown Eggs

\$3.99



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\$2.99



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\$8.99 Lb



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\$10.99 Lb



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\$6.99



14 oz Haagen Dazs Ice Cream

2/\$7 WITH COUPON



Cooper Sharp American Cheese

\$3.99 Lb



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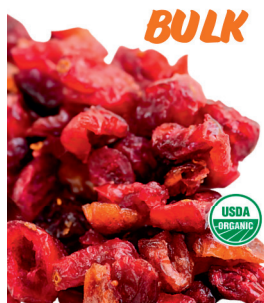
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News Briefs

Lakeway Project Looks At Access Road As Route Alternative

LITTLETON — An access road that would skirt around some homes in a residential area is being considered once more as an alternative route to the proposed new Lakeway Elementary School.

While the original bus route is set to go from Route 302 to Remich Street to the school that would be accessed at the top of Crane Street, members of the Lakeway Building Committee are now looking at a road a few hundred yards above Remich Street and across the town line in Bethlehem.

The announcement came during the school board's meeting on Oct. 16, four days after a community update meeting on Oct. 12 that drew nearly 100 residents, some of them voicing concerns about traffic impacts along the

route that was then presented.

"The access road — we're going to re-investigate that option," Henri Wante, member of the Lakeway committee, told school board members last week. "It was a request made after the meeting to look into this a little further."

Wante approached Horizons Engineering about the cost and said the committee won't move forward until the school board has a proposal about what bringing the road up to standards would entail.

"The challenges with the Moran Road access to Paper Road is, naturally, the wetlands because it will encompass the marshy area behind some of the homes, and also the abutters that are on the Paper Road," he said.

The other part is the access from Route 302/Bethlehem Road because the road entrance begins in the town of Bethlehem, said Wante.

"That's not something that we can't get past, but now we're dealing with another town with the potential utilization of that road,"

said Wante, who told board members that he will keep them updated.

Meanwhile, the committee is also looking at assessing the current market value of the existing Lakeway Elementary School along Union Street.

For that effort, school board member Erica Antonucci, who works for Union Bank and has banking experience, has volunteered to help determine the value of the current property, which, if sold, could offset the cost of a new school.

For the traffic study for the proposed new school site, Wante said the committee has a meeting scheduled for Thursday with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, which noted a few traffic challenges that the Littleton School District will need to look at, said Wante.

The final cost savings for the project was due on Oct. 18 and will be reviewed with Bonnette, Page and Stone, the construction manager, which will then be able to move forward with the final gross maximum price, he said.

Parents: Outsider Needed To Address 'Systemic Problems' In Profile Athletics Department

BETHLEHEM — The Profile School Board on Oct. 19 was asked to address sexism and racism in its athletic program.

Ajilla Pospesil and Janel Lawton, parents of Profile School graduates, described what they said was a troubling pattern of harassment under former athletic director Jack Bartlett, prior to his abrupt resignation this month.

After Bartlett was replaced by internal hires, Pospesil and Lawton called on the school board to advertise the position, saying that only an outsider could clean up what they called "systemic" problems.

"I believe NOT opening up the AD position widely is a stance that maintains the status quo — a closed and dysfunctional system," Pospesil said.

Making their case to the school board, Pospesil and Lawton described their children's experiences as Profile student-athletes.

Pospesil said her daughter, Lily, who is Chinese-American, was subjected to racial and sexual harassment on the basketball team bus last winter.

Lawton said her daughter, Liz, was sexually harassed while on the soccer team bus her senior year.

Neither parent mentioned Bartlett by name, but said the incidents pointed to bigger problems within the athletic program, which they feel have not been adequately addressed.

"It's happening over and over again," Lawton said. "And that's a concern."

Lawton and Pospesil said they were free to speak because their children had graduated.

However, they said current students (and their families) were hesitant to report harass-

ment because they feared repercussions.

"It's much easier to come here and talk about this now that my daughter's not here," Pospesil said.

Lawton added that, back when her daughter made a harassment complaint, "she was reprimanded by the soccer coach for being a whistle-blower."

Pospesil spoke with the approval of her daughter.

They agreed the school board should know about Lily's traumatic experience as a way to bring about change, and potentially improve the lives of current and future Profile School athletes.

"She's moved on, she's in college now," Pospesil said. "But neither she, nor me, nor any of the people that care about her want that to just go waste. We figure since she went through that, change should happen. And there should be a strong, clear response that changes the system that allowed that to happen."

Bartlett was placed on leave for unspecified reasons prior to Sept. 23 and stepped down as girls' soccer coach and athletic director on Oct. 6.

He was replaced as soccer coach by his daughter, Ellie, and as athletic director by two people, Profile School principal Kerri Bushway and building & facilities director Mitchell Roy.

Pospesil said it was a mistake to replace Bartlett with internal hires, and only an outsider can do what is necessary to reform the athletic department.

"This is a missed opportunity [...] to seek a candidate who is able to bring much needed outside energy," Pospesil said.

She urged the school board to find someone willing to implement trainings, enforce policies, and stand strong against harassment.

"This takes professionalism, experience and a clear vision. I believe that candidate is out there, and encourage Profile administration and School Board to find them," Pospesil said.

School Board Chair Kim Koprowski thanked Pospesil and Lawton for their comments and promised the school board would look into the matter.

"It is something that is serious that needs to be taken care of," Koprowski said. "I'm very happy that you all came here tonight and shared that."

"This is nice because we get to hear directly from community members and what their concerns are. And some of us may have heard rumors, or may have not heard things and really didn't know. So now we're all on the same page."

To accommodate Pospesil and Lawton's re-

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ON THE COVER: About 200 turned out to a Littleton Select Board meeting at the opera house on Oct. 23 to protest some board members' stances on the LGBTQ+ community. (Photo by Robert Blechl)

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"God Says Love One Another. So Why Should We Discriminate?"

Church Committee Seeks To Reconcile Bible, LGBTQ+ Acceptance

BY PAUL HAYES
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — Last September, the First Congregational Church hired its first gay pastor: Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz.

Not long after, a parishioner approached church leaders to ask how Ilgenfritz's sexuality was compatible with the church.

"A man came to the church council and said 'I grew up with the experience that homosexuality is wrong,'" Ilgenfritz said.

That inspired the church council to form a task force, the 'Love Your Neighbor Diversity Committee,' to look at issues of sexuality, gender, and scripture.

The committee met from October of last year through May, then broke for the summer, after which a series of incidents brought LGBTQ+ acceptance to the forefront.

During those incidents, opponents of LGBTQ+ expression invoked religion. Notably, Littleton Select Board member Carrie Gendreau criticized downtown Pride-themed murals as offensive to her faith.

At the First Congregational Church, the diversity committee's leadership — Tina Peabody, June Davis, Linda Warden and Suzanne Schott — were upset by what they heard.

"What makes me really angry — reading everything that's going on now — is some people say 'Homosexuality is against my religion. It's against all religions,'" Peabody said. "That's not true."

First Congregational Church is part of the United Church of Christ, whose national leadership has openly encouraged LGBTQ+ members since 1985.

The UCC also allows individual churches to adopt the "Open and Affirming" designation, which signifies that a church welcomes LGBTQ+ people in its membership and ministry.

As part of its work, the diversity committee hopes to win its congregation's approval to make the First Congregational Church "Open and Affirming."

Said Davis, the newest member of the committee's leadership, "God said love one another. So why should we discriminate?"

"PERSONAL TO ME"

The diversity committee is more than a dry, academic Bible study.

Its members are passionate about the work. They have strong motivation to reconcile the Bible with their lives, and apply ancient scripture to modern society.

"It's personal to me because my brother is gay. Celebrating over 25 years with his partner," Peabody said.

Peabody is 74, her brother is 76. They were raised at a time when homosexuality was not widely accepted.

"My father was very unaccepting of it, my mother 'tolerated' it," she said.

She and her brother did not discuss the topic until their parents died.

"It's only in the last 5 or 10 years ... that we've been able to have conversations," Peabody said.

For Davis, the diversity committee's importance was underscored by a chance encounter.

"I ran into a young gal [in a waiting room] and I said, 'Can I help you with something?' She goes, 'I'm trans, and I'm here because of domestic abuse.'"

Davis was struck by the fact the woman declared her transgender status first, as if she thought Davis would reject her.

"I said, 'Honey, no one has the right to be abused,' and my heart just went out to her. Because God loves everyone," Davis said. "I told her, 'That is not love. You are dealing with control.' Whether you're gay or trans or heterosexual, no one has the right to abuse another person."

"There's a long history of humans being unkind and unloving. If you're a church, you've got to change that. How could you be a church of faith and not help someone you see struggling?"

— Linda Warden

Another committee leader, Warden, recalled viewing the issue through the eyes of her daughter, who had a gay friend "whose parents didn't accept him at all" and who lived in San Francisco during the early HIV epidemic.

During that time, Warden said, her daughter suffered a serious laceration in a bike crash and "no one would help her" over fears of HIV, which mirrored the way members of the gay community were treated.

"There's a long history of humans being unkind and unloving. If you're a church, you've got to change that," Warden said. "How could you be a church of faith and not help someone you see struggling?"

"...YOU HAVE TO GIVE GRACE"

Members of the diversity committee were dumbstruck by the ongoing controversy in Littleton, which stems from an Aug. 28

meeting when board member Carrie Gendreau raised objections to LGBTQ+ murals on a private building at 60 Main St.

Among her comments, Gendreau said, "What went up is not good. It was not good. I won't get into it. I don't want that to be in our town. I don't want it to be here."

Her comments were met with backlash, with 300 attending a Sept. 11 Select Board meeting in protest.

Members of the First Congregational Church were among those who showed up.

They were particularly surprised because Gendreau had delivered a moving guest sermon at their church FCC last summer.

Specifically, she had talked about how her faith had cured her cancer.

"She was talking about her healing," Warden said. "And what she had to do: Reconcile with someone that she had not forgiven, for a trespass that they committed."

Warden was struck by the contrast between Gendreau's sermon and her stance on the murals.

"Maybe she hasn't truly understood the gift God gave her, because in order to get grace, you have to give grace. That is a condition of grace," Warden said.

"MUCH DEEPER CALL"

Rev. Ilgenfritz has seen anger and animosity fracture communities before.

Recent events in Littleton have reminded him of another experience from 35 years ago.

"I was the director of an AIDS organization in Chicago in the late 1980s. We carried out that work in a context of incredible fear and anxiety," Ilgenfritz said. "And, boy, we're just not at our best

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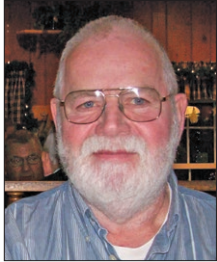
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Obituaries

Bernard "Bernie" Donald Bradshaw

Bernard "Bernie" Donald Bradshaw passed away at the age of 75, peacefully at his home on Thursday, October 19, 2023, with family by his side, in Monroe, N.H., after years of living with Parkinson's Disease. Bernie was born in St. Johnsbury, Vt., on July 30, 1948, to Merlin and Margaret "Dot" Bradshaw.

He lived in Monroe his entire life. Bernie is survived by his wife Linda (Murray) Bradshaw, sons: Brian (and Katina Comstock) of Essex, Vt., and Justin (and wife Hilary) of Monroe, N.H.; grandchildren: Hollyn, Hudson, Andrew, Harmony, Brandon and Olivia; brother, Chris Bradshaw (and wife Winnie) of Tarpon Springs, Fla., and sister, Nancy Murray (and husband Douglas) of East Ryegate, Vt., and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his par-



ents, and siblings: Natalie Allen (and husband Dick), Mary Ingalls (and husband Bill), and Patricia Smith (and husband Jim).

After graduating from McIndoes Academy in 1967 Bernie went to work for John Mitchell and Kilfasset Farms picking up and delivering milk. He worked for the Town of Monroe as Road Agent. He then worked for J. J. Nissen Baking Company and went on to spend the next 30 years working for Koffee Kup Bakery from where he retired in 2011. He served on the Board of Selectmen for 21 years and was an active member of the Monroe Fire Department and Monroe Men's Club. He spent his retirement years enjoying time with his family, especially his grandchildren.

Bernie married Linda Sue Murray of Ryegate, Vt., on October 10, 1970, and they spent 53 years together, living on property that was a part of the Merlin Bradshaw family farm.

Bernie enjoyed his family pets, raising a variety of animals on his mini-farm, taking his sons and their 4-H livestock to all of the area fairs, attending auctions, and buying and selling items. He enjoyed socializing at Webster's Store in McIndoe Falls, breakfasts at The Cof-

fee Pot in Littleton, being a big presence in the Monroe Community, attending activities and sporting events of his children and grandchildren, watching his grandchildren, and driving them to their activities (he was best known as G'Pa), tending his blueberry bushes, and spending time on his tractor, especially mowing his lawn.

Bernie was not a man of many words, but he enjoyed sitting back and taking it all in. He had a big smile and enjoyed a good joke with hearty laughter.

There will be a graveside service in the North Monroe Cemetery in the spring of 2024.

He will be greatly missed by his wife of 53 years, family, extended family, and friends.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Health Well Foundation, allocated to Parkinson's Disease at www.healthwellfoundation.org. To offer the family an online condolence, please visit www.rickerfh.com

Ricker Funeral Home & Cremation Care of Woodsville is assisting with arrangements.

Carol A. MacIver

July 23, 1948 - Oct. 14, 2023

Carol A. MacIver, of Littleton, N.H., passed away on Oct. 14, 2023 at the age of 75.

Carol was a lifelong resident of Littleton. She was the oldest of six children born to James and Mary (Ward) Knight of Littleton.

Carol was an avid gardener, often spending hours tending to her passion. She also enjoyed traveling with her girlfriends, including her annual trip to Wells, Maine with the 12 lovely ladies. She was always quick to prepare a meal for family or friends, making sure they had enough to take some home to heat up later as a quick snack.

Carol was a staple in town, often supporting the local establishments, especially Theater UP (formally known as the UPstage Players) and the Garden Club.

Surviving family members include her two sons, Duncan MacIver and Angus (Julie) MacIver; four grandchildren, James, Chloe, Shannon, and Kris; and her five siblings, Irene, Janet (Marty), Nancy (Dave), Sally (Ken), and John (Holly). Carol is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Per Carol's wishes, there will be no service at this time. In the spring, when her garden is in bloom, we will have one last spring fling to celebrate her life.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Carol's honor to the Littleton Public Library or the VFW Post 816 Honor Guard. Messages of condolences may be sent to the family at: 310 Slate Ledge Road, Littleton, NH 03561.

To view Carol's online tribute, or send condolences to the family, please visit: <https://obits.phaneuf.net/carol-maciver>.



Tami L. Moore

Tami L. Moore, age 60, of St. Johnsbury, Vt. passed away on Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2023, at her sister's home.

Tami was born in St. Johnsbury on June 28, 1963, to the late Robert W. and late Ruth (Drew) Moore.

She attended the Living Arts Center and graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy Living Arts Program. For the last 24 years, Tami has lived with her sister Sherry and Jack in St. Johnsbury.

When Tami was young, she loved her time at Silver Towers Camp in Ripton, Vt. where she spent two weeks every summer. Tami participated in the Special Olympics and was very proud of her accomplishments and the medals she won. Tami loved music and could be heard happily singing along to her favorite songs. She also enjoyed camping, visiting Old Orchard Beach, and traveling with her partner and fiancé Gary Place.

Downs Syndrome may have been her handicap, but anyone who knew Tami would say that it was her gift. Her warmth, innocence, and wit, along with her contagious smile endeared her to everyone she met along life's path. Tami always had fond memories of her time working at Burke Mtn. and White Market Plaza Store.

Survivors include her two sisters: Susan Mackay (Maitland) of Lyndonville, Vt., Sherry Stahler (Jack Savasta) of St. Johnsbury; and her brother: Jeffrey Moore (Michael Robey) of Westmore, her fiancé, and life partner Gary Place of East Haven, Vt.; her nieces: Tineka Holk (Boyd) of Londonderry, N.H., Lee Penniman of St. Johnsbury; Lori Fortier (Mark) of Lyndonville, and Pam Kinder (Jim) of North Haverhill, N.H. along with many great nieces, nephews, and special Sister in law Jan Oliver.

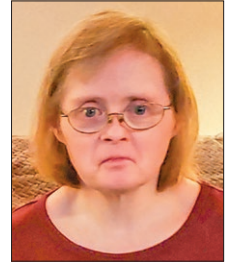
Tami was predeceased by her Parents, her brother Michael Moore, sister-in-law Debbie Moore, and nephew Ty Penniman.

Visiting hours will be held on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, during the hours of 4-7 p.m. at Sayles Funeral Home, 525 Summer St., St. Johnsbury, Vt. A graveside service will be held for the family at the Lyndon Center Cemetery on Friday Oct. 27.

The family would like to express a heartfelt thank you to Hazel Clark and Linda Samson for the care, support, and compassion given to Tami over the years.

Memorial donations can be made to Caledonia County Special Olympics, c/o Ellen Hinman PO Box 345 East Burke, VT 05832 or Caledonia County Home Health and Hospice, 161 Sherman Drive St. Johnsbury, VT 05819.

Condolences can be shared online at saylesfh.com.



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quest to advertise the position, Profile School may have to restructure the athletic director position.

Currently, the Profile School athletic director is a co-curricular role with a paid stipend and no benefits.

It is included under the Profile Education Association's Collective Bargaining Agreement, which covers teaching staff.

Although Bartlett was not a member of the teaching staff, most co-curricular roles (e.g. student council advisor) are filled by educators.

There is talk of removing the athletic director from the PEA's collective bargaining agreement and making it a full- or part-time administrative position with a salary and benefits.

Those conversations are ongoing.

Groveton's Haskins To Be Enshrined In 2023 NHIAA Hall Of Fame

Tim Haskins will be enshrined.

The North Country native and legendary Groveton coach is among seven individuals to be inducted into the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association Hall of Fame Class of 2023. The 23rd annual induction ceremony will be held on Sunday, Nov. 12.

Joining Haskins are: Peter S. Cofran, Contributor; Bin Hood, Official; Bruce Parsons, Contributor; Carrol Morris Rivard, Official; Mim Ryan, Coach; Tom Sawyer, Coach.

Haskins, a graduate of Woodsville High School in 1979, was a three-sport athlete for the Engineers running cross country in the fall, playing basketball in the winter and baseball in the spring. During his years at Woodsville, Haskins was fortunate enough to play two seasons of baseball and one season of basketball for fellow NHIAA Hall of Famer John Bagonzi. Haskins' first experience with NHIAA championships was as the starting first baseman on the 1977 Class M Championship baseball team.

Upon his graduation from Woodsville, Haskins attended Boston College earning a degree in English. Shortly thereafter, he returned to the North Country to begin his teaching and coaching career, first at his alma mater, then at Groveton Middle High School.

Haskins began his coaching career as the boys and girls cross country coach as well as the junior varsity baseball and basketball coach at Woodsville. In 1986, Haskins took on an English teaching position at Groveton and began to build his legendary coaching resume.

During his 24 years as head coach of the Groveton softball team, his teams amassed 315 wins, a state championship in 1989 and appeared in five additional title games. As an assistant girls basketball coach for 20 years, he and legendary coach Gary Jenness led the Groveton girls to 11 state titles.

Since assuming the role as head coach in 2007, a position he currently holds, Haskins'

teams have won 283 games and five state titles. Haskins was the head coach of the girls varsity soccer program when the school fielded their first team in 1995. In 11 seasons roaming the sidelines, his teams tallied 111 wins and one state title. Over his 39-plus years in education, Tim has coached 27 junior varsity seasons and 59 varsity seasons for a total of 86 seasons to date.

Haskins' basketball championship in 2008 gave him the state championship "trifecta" having won state titles in three different sports: softball, soccer, and basketball. In addition to his seven championships and seven runners-up, he has been honored by his peers having been named "Coach of the Year" in three different sports.

Haskins has also been the Class S Representative to the New Hampshire Softball Coaches Association for many years as well as serving as the Division IV Representative for girls basketball and Executive Board member of the New Hampshire Basketball Coaches Organization for several years.

By Tim's own admission, he is proud to have played a part in helping hundreds of student-athletes achieve their goals "in a blue-collar, northern New Hampshire mill town with a dwindling population, that lost its mill 15 years ago, but never lost its enthusiasm for high school sports teams."

He feels that activities on the high school athletic fields and courts should mirror "life lessons." Success in sports and life is built upon hard work, dedication, individual effort and team effort. He has always instilled into the countless players he has been fortunate to coach over the years that "sometimes our efforts will bring us great success, but we have to learn that we don't always win, even with our best efforts and intentions."

His belief that student-athletes must learn to win and lose with grace and dignity, personal goals are secondary to team goals and, above all else, intelligence, desire and composure are just as valuable as athletic ability have been hallmarks of his teams.

The indication ceremony will be held at the Grappone Conference Center Courtyard by Marriott in Concord beginning with a reception at 11:30 a.m. Cost of the event is \$60. Tickets can be purchased by contacting the NHIAA at 603-228-8671 or via email to: nchaput@nhiaa.org.

Tickets sales will close on October 25, 2023 and will not be sold at the door.

WMRSD To Sell Off 200 Air Purifiers

WHITEFIELD — The White Mountains Regional School District will be selling off approximately 200 air purifiers.

The school board on Oct. 12 agreed to liquidate the Whirlpool Whispure units, which were purchased with federal COVID aid to assist with the return to in-person school.

WMRSD unplugged the air purifiers on July 1 to save approximately \$32,000 annually as part of \$750,000 in spending reductions under the default budget.

That accounts for \$20,000 in electric costs to operate the units in every classroom and office for the 186-day school year, and \$12,000 to replace the filters twice annually.

The decision was made possible because (1) The collective bargaining agreement, effective July 1, no longer required the units to be used, and (2) The World Health Organization officially declared the COVID pandemic over on May 5, 2023.

Lisa Miller, the COVID coordinator for WMRSD, was consulted on the decision.

On her recommendation, the school district will retain 40 Blue Air purifiers to be used as needed.

The Blue Air purifiers were retained because they are quieter and more energy-efficient than the Whispures.

Rob Scott, assistant superintendent of school operations, said the Blue Air purifiers will be deployed on request.

For instance, to accommodate students and staff with medical needs or to address bouts of illness (COVID, flu, strep, etc.) in a classroom.

"If school nurses or building administration notice pockets of illness with notable absences, an air purifier can be placed in a classroom until illnesses improve," Scott said.

North Country State Rep. Tackles Gerrymandering

Although the next redrawing of New Hamp-

shire House, Senate, and Executive Council district maps is the better part of a decade away, a local lawmaker is working on legislation to make the process more neutral and fair and without an advantage to any one party.

State Rep. Jared Sullivan, D-Bethlehem, said reducing gerrymandering — when the majority party at the time of a redistricting can manipulate the boundaries of a district to its own favor — would do its part to restore some of the faith that has been lost in today's political world.

Sullivan submitted a bill for the 2024 session, but state Rep. Connie Lane, D-Merrimack, submitted her gerrymandering bill first, which kicked out Sullivan's bill.

But Sullivan is hoping to work with Lane for the possibility of incorporating some of his ideas — which include establishing a new and independent redistricting commission in New Hampshire and an algorithm to draw up maps — into her bill, as well as keep them for possible legislation in future years.

A number of states have enacted laws to curb gerrymandering.

"Of the people who really studied it, the gold standards are California, Michigan, and Colorado," said Sullivan. "I mostly modeled my bill after Colorado's law and then tweaked it a little."

While Colorado pays its commission members a \$200-a-day stipend, Sullivan proposes paying New Hampshire members 25 percent

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of whatever the governor is earning at any given time.

“We’re talking between \$35,000 and \$40,000 a year for a part-time job,” he said.

Under the Colorado law, anyone can apply for the commission job, but Sullivan exempted from his bill anyone who has held a state office or run for a state office.

“That’s key, because people like me probably shouldn’t have a hand in deciding what the districts look like, and people who ran also shouldn’t have a hand in it,” he said. “You want to take that incentive away.”

The commission would be made up of 13 people, four from the largest two parties, the Republicans and Democrats, and five from independents and other parties.

The members would be selected by a judicial board.

“In Colorado and Michigan, they have thousands of people who apply for these jobs,” said Sullivan. “That way, you have a good pool of people. It’s easier to weed out the people who wouldn’t be good and there should be enough incentive for people to do a good job because you’re going to get paid \$30,000 for it.”

Based on laws in the other states, he also proposes an algorithmic test.

A public or private in-state university, such as the University of New Hampshire, Dartmouth College, Plymouth State University, or Keene State College, would bid on writing an algorithm to create about 5,000 potential maps.

“It would have to be within one standard deviation of the mean, of the one that the commission comes up with, in order for it to be eligible,” said Sullivan. “If it’s within one standard deviation of the mean, there’s room for a little bit of gerrymandering, but it’s still going to be pretty fair and reasonable.”

He hopes that some of his ideas make it into the 2024 gerrymandering legislation.

“This is the most important thing to me,” said Sullivan. “I think many people in this country are losing faith in the process and these sorts of reforms are vital if we want to build faith in the process and give hope that people aren’t just partisan and are being rewarded for not working with the other side, not solving problems, and just being combative all the time. That’s the kind of world we’re in now.”

While other reforms are being eyed by New Hampshire lawmakers through other legislation, Sullivan said it’s important to begin a gerrymandering bill now so people become comfortable with it and, if it doesn’t pass next year, there will still be a few election cycles for a bill to be made law before the next restricting.

In New Hampshire, where the most recent district maps took effect for the 2022 elections, redistricting occurs every 10 years.

The next redistricting will occur in 2031. The 2032 elections will be the first use of the new maps that come out of it.

Free Energy Efficiency Workshops Coming Up

A film about coal is coming up on Saturday and a NHSaves Button Up workshop will be hosted Sept. 20 by the Bethlehem Sustainability Working Group and the Bethlehem Energy Commission.

The Sustainability Working Group, in conjunction with The Colonial Theatre, is presenting the documentary film “King Coal” at 7 p.m. Sept. 9.

Oscar-nominated filmmaker Elaine McMillion Sheldon reshapes the boundaries of documentary film-making in a spectacularly beautiful and deeply moving immersion into Central Appalachia, where coal is not just a resource, but a way of life, imagining the ways a community can re-envision itself.

The working group will host a reception with food and beverages for all attendees beginning at 7 p.m., and a discussion and question-and-answer session prior to the film.

To buy tickets, visit the Colonial’s website at bethlehemcolonial.org/events/king-coal.

If you’re worried about energy costs this coming winter, join us for a free home energy savings and workshop series from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20 at the Bethlehem Library to learn ways you and your family can save by taking advantage of energy audits and rebates. Refreshments will be provided.

To sign up, visit <https://forms.gle/EpzcCmdGdVd5toaw8>.

The workshop is sponsored by NHSaves and coordinated statewide by the Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI).

NHSaves is a collaboration of New Hampshire’s electric and natural gas utilities (Eversource, Liberty Utilities, NH Electric Cooperative and Unital).

The utilities are working together to provide New Hampshire customers with information, incentives, and support designed to save energy, reduce costs, and protect the NH environment.

PAREI is working with local groups around the state to bring these workshops to the public on behalf of New Hampshire’s utilities.

The NHSaves Button Up Workshop is a presentation about how to improve the energy efficiency of your home and is conducted by a certified energy auditor and covers basic building science principles as well as examples of whole house weatherization measures that will button up your home for the heating and cooling seasons.

It also covers details about the energy efficiency programs offered by NH utilities (for existing homes and new construction) that provide energy audits, weatherization measures such as air sealing and insulating and rebates on new technologies and products such as electric and gas appliances and high efficiency electric heating/cooling equipment.

The Bethlehem Sustainability Committee is hosting this workshop because it offers valuable and practical information about how to save energy and reduce costs while making our homes more comfortable.

Many residents are not aware of how much money and energy can be saved by improving the efficiency of their homes.

Energy audits and weatherization can make a big difference. The information about rebates and incentives can help residents make improvements with minimal out-of-pocket expenses. With the high cost of energy, efficiency is now more important than ever. Residents interested in finding ways to conserve energy and save money on their heating and cooling bills will find the information very useful.

For more information on the workshop, visit nhsaves.com or call or email Rachele Lyons at 412-2694 and rlyons@plymouth.edu or Robbin Adams at 536-5030 and robbin@plymouthenergy.org

Bethlehem Takes Steps To Join N.H. Community Power Coalition

With an eye toward securing less expensive electricity for residents and businesses and more renewable energy sources for those who want it, the Bethlehem Select Board on Monday took the first steps to have the town join the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPC).

The CPC is a statewide 501(c)(4) public nonprofit that is governed by its member communities and allows residents to obtain third-party power at less expensive rates than New Hampshire’s default provider, Eversource Energy, and offers expanded choices for renewable energy and other innovations.

“They say they are consistently reducing electric supply rates by 10 to 20 percent over Eversource’s supply rates and are putting the money back into individuals’ pockets,” said Mary Lou Krambeer, who gave the presentation on behalf of the Bethlehem Energy Commission (BEC). “It benefits all residents.”

The Select Board voted 4-0 to adopt the CPC New Hampshire Joint Powers Agreement and designate the BEC as Bethlehem’s community power committee.

The decision, though, is non-binding and the ultimate authority will go to voters through an article that could be on the March town meeting warrant.

There is no cost to join the coalition and the program is voluntary for residential and business customers.

In January, the BEC asked the Select Board to consider joining the CPC, which was born from RSA 53-E and made law in 2019, that allows communities to aggregate their electricity needs.

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If voters give the green light, Bethlehem Community Power would be created.

“The reason for doing this is that New Hampshire cities, towns, and counties can become the default provider for the residents and businesses and provide related services,” said Krambeer. “We’d be a member of the Community Power Coalition and we hand them the administrative piece.

“The primary goal is to serve residents and New Hampshire towns with lower-priced electricity,” she said. “There’s no shareholders, no profit motive. The program aggregates demand to establish more negotiating power for the purchase of electricity on behalf of towns throughout New Hampshire. The idea behind community power is to provide all residents of a town with lower-priced bulk buying of electricity automatically versus having to sign into it. You can always opt out. This would be the default instead of Eversource. Community Power Coalition would be the default third-party supplier.”

She noted that the mission of the BEC is to support environmentally and economically sustainable energy practices, and the CPC falls into the later category.

Currently, only about 30 percent of New Hampshire buys its power from third-party sources, as many people don’t have the time to keep track of every option or need in their household because they’re busy, said Krambeer.

Krambeer uses a third-party supplier, Direct Energy Services, which she said had a rate of 9.5 cents per kilowatt hour versus the 22 cents Eversource had earlier in the year.

In the past year, she’s saved between \$300 and \$400.

The CPC got underway in earnest in 2021 as more towns joined.

“If we were to join, this would be the third wave and the beauty of having waited is it’s been tested in two waves already,” said Krambeer. “There’s now a member board. We would send members to a meeting.”

The CPC provides the expertise and technical assistance at no cost.

Along with economic benefits, environmental benefits allow residents to have the option to use all solar energy or a percentage of solar or other forms of green energy, at at slightly higher cost, said Krambeer.

Since the Bethlehem Select Board last discussed the CPC 10 months ago, a number of towns above the Notch and in Coos County have joined the coalition, said Veronica Morris, chair of the board.

In addition to the town vote that would be the ultimate decider, the process of joining involves two public hearings.

If approved, Bethlehem, per RSA 53-E, would have to submit its final aggregation plan to the New Hampshire Public Utilities, which sets electricity rates twice a year.

While those Bethlehem residents who are receiving power from a third-party would not be automatically switched and would have to opt in to CPC when their contract expires, any resident receiving Eversource power would automatically be enrolled with the CPC.

“It’s worth noting that the current published rate of community power at their basic service rate all the way to their 50-percent renewable rate is currently less than the Eversource default rate,” said Morris.

CPC offers four tiers and its basic tier is substantially less expensive, she said.

“I think it’s a great opportunity for those who may not have the savviness to get in there and start working on getting deals,” said Selectman Mike Bruno.

“We’re talking about the potential, as everyone’s looking at how they’re going to pay for the rising cost of groceries ... to save people like 2.5 cents per kilowatt hour on their electricity just right out of the gate,” said Morris, who also currently has a third-party provider. “That’s amazing. It may seem like a noth-

ing-burger, but in my house my electricity would have doubled if I hadn’t gotten onto a third-party supplier. And Eversource is not interested in making our rates cheaper because they have shareholders.”

North of the Notch, the communities of Berlin, Randolph, and Sugar Hill are in the planning stages of joining the CPC.

The coalition currently has a total of 34 member communities, which equates to 23 percent of the state’s population.

Quilts Of Valor Honors 10 Local Veterans

WHITEFIELD — Ten local veterans were honored with a Quilt of Valor during the 17th recognition ceremony by the Sew Far North Quilts of Valor group on Oct. 22 at the Ingerson-Smith American Legion Post 41 in Whitefield.

“A Quilt of Valor is an expression of gratitude meant to comfort and thank you for your service while serving our nation,” said Jane Graham, leader of the Sew Far North Quilts of Valor group 79722. “We understand your commitment and acknowledgment that freedom is not free. We can never know the extent of your sacrifice while keeping us safe. On behalf of the American people, the Quilt of Valor says that your service to our country is honored. The quilt is a reminder that those of us who quilt them are remembering all who made the sacrifice of service, and it is our way of offering comfort and thanking them.”

Honored on Sunday were Jeremy Brann, of Groveton; Gary Cassidy, of Littleton; Ronald Desilets, of Lancaster; Lee Dunn, of Groveton; Arthur Greaves, of Dalton; The Rev. Brian Grover, of Colebrook; Jason Laughton, of Clarksville; Herbert Smith, of North Stratford; Ron Turcott, of Groveton; and Pauline Whitcomb, of Bloomfield.

Brann is an Army veteran who was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army in 2011.

In 2015, he was deployed as a first lieutenant and battle captain in support of Operation Spartan Shield in the Middle East, where he was assigned as a firing platoon leader with the 3/197th Field Artillery Regiment and received an Army commendation for his performance in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

In 2019, Brann successfully completed his captain’s course.

He has received numerous awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation and Achievement Medals, National Defense Service Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and Army Service Medal.

Brann, who has a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice, lives in Groveton with his wife, Christine, and their two children.

“Thank you for your continued service to our country,” said Sew Far North Quilts of Valor member Jean LaPrade.

Cassady served as a specialist in the Army from 1965 to 1969 and was a signal analyst in Turkey for one year, followed by several years in Texas. He was awarded the National Defense Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and two sharpshooter badges.

“Thank you for your service, Gary,” said LaPrade.

Desilets, known as “Dez,” entered the Army in 1981 and was trained as a track and wheel mechanic and recovery specialist.



He served for six months as an assistant recruiter in his hometown, was then stationed in Germany as a recovery specialist, and lastly stationed at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, where he served as company clerk, assistant, supply clerk and driver, as well as an assistant chaplain.

Desilets left active duty as an expert M16 marksman and joined the National Guard in 1985.

“He enjoyed the brotherhood and camaraderie of the military and met a lot of good people throughout his service,” said LaPrade.

Dunn joined the Army in 1988 and was trained to track helicopter flights, pilot hours, and ammunition.

“She faced many challenges within her time in the service as a woman entering a male-dominated field,” said Sew Far North Quilts of Valor member Joanne Hennessey. “Lee earned awards of a sharpshooter and an expert in grenades. She left the service in 1992 as a private third class. Thank you for your service, Lee.”

Greaves, who earned the rank of a master sergeant, served in both the Navy, for six years, and Air Force, for 14 years, and was deployed to the Mediterranean, North Africa, China, Korea, Vietnam, and stationed at several posts stateside.

His awards include the National Defense Service Medal, Navy Good Conduct Medal, and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

“Thank you, Arthur, for your service to our country,” said Hennessey.

Grover served as a first lieutenant in the Army from 1989 to 1994 and was stationed in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait. He earned the Southwest Asia Campaign Ribbon and the Bronze Star.

“Thank you, Rev. Grover, for your service to the United States of America,” said Hennessey.

Laughton served in the Army Reserve and Guard from 1978 to 2014. He worked as a supply clerk in Beecher Falls and in field artillery in Lancaster. Among his awards were the Combat Overseas Medal for service in Iraq and the Good Conduct Award for service in Afghanistan.

Smith joined the Army in 1968. While wanting to go to Vietnam, he was trained to go to Korea and was present when a U.S. reconnaissance plane was shot down.

In 1982, Smith, also known as “Smitty,” enlisted in the National Guard, serving until 2008 and rising to the rank of a staff

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 Director: Tim Burton, Cast: Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, Michael Keaton, PG

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 Cast: Rachel Sennott, Ayo Edebiri, Ruby Cruz, comedy/Lgbtq, R

Tickets & Info: BethlehemColonial.org

Church

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when we feel threatened, anxious and afraid.”

However, the First Congregational Church has taken a different approach through the formation of the diversity committee.

“It was prompted by a beautiful conversation,” Ilgenfritz said.

The man who initially came to the council with the question of homosexuality and faith, Ilgenfritz said, “was looking for an opportunity to learn more, and to grow in his faith and engagement with scripture. And, boy, what a wonderful opportunity.”

The man has remained with the First Congregational Church and maintained a strong relationship with both the church and Ilgenfritz himself, the pastor said. “And that, for me, is such an incredible strength and gift of this community.”

The diversity committee follows the United Church of Christ’s traditions of independent thought, critical analysis, and progressive values.

Through its thoughtful and collaborative work, the committee has attempted to put the Bible in the context of modern times, in a way that aligns with church values.

“We can use scripture – and it has been used – to justify everything from the role of women to slavery, to the exclusion of different people. It’s been used in all of these different ways, and you can find that in scripture if that’s what you go looking for,” Ilgenfritz said. “But I think there’s a much deeper call of what the Bible is about.”

During the past year, members of the diversity committee heard from LGBTQ+ people, participated in the North Country Pride Ride, and attended the North Country Chorus presentation of

“Considering Matthew Shepard.”

The performance explored the life, death and legacy of Shepard, a gay student at the University of Wyoming who 35 years ago, was kidnapped, severely beaten, tied to a fence and left to die.

For committee members, it reinforced the need for the church, and the community, to welcome everyone.

“That was so moving,” Warden said. “How could you not react to that kind of hatred?”

After a pause, she added, “God did not put us here for that.”

“PREPARED TO HAVE THAT DISCUSSION”

The First Congregational Church has a tradition of outreach. It hosts a childcare center (Shining Lights Preschool), a Little Free Food Pantry, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, community meals and events, and more.

The diversity committee, Schott said, “is just one more example [of our outreach], and maybe we’re raising the bar with this.”

In its first year, the diversity committee has tried to determine what the Bible actually says about love, acceptance, and homosexuality.

One thing they found: Over time, many Biblical guidelines and forms or prejudice have been discarded in the name of progress.

Said Peabody, “The world is evolving and I think there are a lot of people that don’t like that. People don’t like change.”

That could include some of the estimated 60 members of the First Congregational Church.

A few years ago, a couple of churchgoers reportedly affirmed LGBTQ+ rights from the pulpit, which caused others to leave the church.

Those on the diversity committee admit that could happen again, as their work proceeds.

“We may have people leave if we persist in becoming an Open and Affirming church,” Peabody said. “But I hope not.”

Reconvened this month, the diversity committee will resume its efforts through a combination of Bible study, robust and respectful dialogue, and fact-finding missions. They anticipate approximately 15 church members will participate.

They may open the discussion to the greater Littleton community to address questions raised by events this summer: controversy over a Drag Story Hour in Lancaster, LGBTQ+ signs and statements in various communities, and Pride-themed murals in Littleton.

Following 12 months of work, committee members believe they are ready to discuss sensitive LGBTQ+/Bible topics with people who might disagree, in a constructive and productive way.

“Most of the people I talk with are supportive. But, at some point, I’m going to reach that person that’s not. And I’ll have to have that discussion,” Peabody said. “I’m more prepared to have that discussion now than I ever was.”

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Continued from Page 9

sergeant.

“Herbert would like you to know that is a cancer survivor, officially five years cancer-free,” said Sew Far North Quilts of Valor member Jeanne Burdette. “He is often asked about his military service, and to quote Smitty, ‘It’s just like civilian life. It’s what you make of it. If you are hard on yourself, then it will be hard on you. If you do what you’re told and work with your superiors, then it will work for you.’ Thank you, Smitty, for your service.”

Turcott, who rose to the rank of a staff sergeant, served in the Army from 1960 to 2000. He was stationed in Germany, where he served as a tank driver, as well as in Korea and the Panama Canal.

He also served as a door gunner and sat behind a machine gun in Vietnam. His awards include the Vietnam Service Medal.

Whitcomb, who was born and raised in Bloomfield, joined the Navy as part of a lifelong dream to become a nurse.

She was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where she worked under the direction of the registered nurses at the naval hospital and served in all areas, including pediatrics.

Whitcomb also served during the Vietnam War from 1964 to 1966 and was honorably discharged as a petty officer third class.

“She gained experience in many different areas,” said Sew Far North Quilts of Valor member Linda Greenwood. “Her experience in pediatrics turned out to be invaluable, when, as a civilian, she successfully delivered a baby who couldn’t wait to get to the hospital.”

After her discharge, Whitcomb built a house beside her parents’ home, one that she still lives in today, and is the commander of the Disabled American Veterans group in Derby, serving local veterans.

In addition to quilts, Cassidy, Greaves, Smith, Turcott, and Whitcomb were honored with Vietnam War commemorative lapel pins as authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act.

To date, the Sew Far North Quilts of Valor has 17 members. Since its founding in 2021, the group has awarded 63 quilts to local veterans.

More than 350,000 quilts have been awarded nationally since the founding in 2003 of the Quilts of Valor Foundation.

The local group’s business sponsor is the Littleton-based Sew Far North Quilting Studio, owned by Andrea Graham.

“Our mission is to honor local service members, individuals, and veterans touched by war with healing Quilts of Valor,” said Sew Far North Quilts of Valor member Karen Locke.

Locke encouraged all community members to reach out to a local veteran who has been touched by war and nominate him or her for a quilt.

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