

Letters to the editor

Something to cheer about

To the editor,

It's now May 19, 2021, and this Dampen has left us with little to cheer about. Lives have been lost. Businesses have closed. Jobs have gone away.

There's still a hole in the middle of Newport. Sporting and other social events seem a distant memory. Even the mask mandate being mostly lifted leaves us with a despair of when do I, when don't I, should I, shouldn't I, etc.

With all that's been bad, it's hard to look to bright stars, places to find our joy again. It's been especially hard for me, as anyone who knows my story will attest. But finding something to cheer about is hard. Finding that bright star is something that I desperately need, and I'm pretty sure I'm not alone.

Months ago I was approached by the president of MCM. After he explained about MCM, and acknowledging that he thought about me for my nonprofit history I listed on my Senate run website, he asked if I'd like to be on the board. I let him know that his endeavor was one of my campaign initiatives, but that after losing my 21-year-old daughter to COVID, my energy level was pretty low. But I'd be willing to come on board as a consultant. He was happy with that.

Now that I've been with them a few months I'll have to admit that my energy level for MCM has gone up. Maybe not enough to be on the board, but to be on board.

You see, MCM is the acronym for Memphremagog Community Maritime, the nonprofit company that has offered up that new, bright star that's been so elusive. The *Northern Star* cruises are back!

The first cruise is set for May 28 and thus will start a series of dinner cruises, theme

cruises, scenic cruises, and educational cruises. It will be a floating classroom for many of our local students. For the rest of us, cruise rates are NEK low, as are the rates for renting the boat for private parties, weddings, graduations, family reunions, or anything else you might be able to consider.

May 28 has now become a special day for me. I pushed for the *Northern Star* to get back out on the lake, and I was thrilled when I heard of the efforts to fund this treasure of Newport. It's one more step forward to seeing Newport come out of the darkness that has hung over the city for far too long. This is a huge undertaking by, not the government, but a group of Vermonters who envisioned how important the *Northern Star* is to our area.

The board has done a fantastic job. The new captain is a treasure himself, with a great personality. His first mate is equally pleasing. I encourage anyone who loves our lake to come on down and take a cruise. For under \$30 you can go out for a two-hour cruise, and not end up on a deserted island.

One small step at a time. That's how we will get Newport rebounding. There have been some visual improvements to the town, but this is the first major business/tourism improvement I've seen in the nine years since I was able to move back to Vermont. I'll be supporting the boat. I'll be on the boat cruises. I sure hope a large part of the community will step up and make sure the *Northern Star* cruises stay afloat. We can't afford not to.

Visit <https://northernstarcruises.com/>. Take a look. This is a beautiful boat, on a beautiful lake, in the greatest state in the country!

Ron Horton
Jay

Small but important steps

To the editor,

Amidst the flurry of concluding business last week, the Vermont Senate passed three resolutions that are small but important steps toward acknowledging and addressing racism in the state.

The first, JRH.6, a joint resolution of the House and Senate, declares that racism is a public health emergency.

The second, SR.10, designates May 2021 as Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Vermont. The resolution also condemns anti-Asian and anti-Pacific Islander hate in the United States.

SR.11 was the third resolution, passed by the Senate with a unanimous vote. The measure

honors the memory of George Floyd, the black man murdered by a Minneapolis police officer a year ago this week. SR.11 designates May 25, 2021, as a day of remembrance and action.

The three legislative enactments are important. The General Assembly — our elected representatives — stepped up. Of most importance, they call upon us, the citizens of Vermont, to act. Racism exists here. All of us must work to recognize how blatant and insidious this is, and take action to end it. We have the power and responsibility to ensure the ideals of Vermont and the country become reality for all.

Ross Connelly
Hardwick

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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

The answer is on page fourteen.

Plant sale at Old Stone House Museum

Garden starters will be available May 29 and May 30 from the Old Stone House Museum and Historic Village in Brownington. The plant sale will help to support the museum's 2021 season.

All purchases will go to benefit the museum's educational programs, public events and adult programs, including the museum's free 2021 speaker series and free Kids' Friday program. Please stop by the Alexander Twilight House (109 Old Stone House Road) in Brownington from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on either Saturday or Sunday.

The museum will have plant starters for sale at \$1. They will include jumpin' pansies, pansies and snow drops. Plants for sale at \$3 include a wide variety of garden vegetables, flowers and herbs such as spiderwort, gooseneck loosestrife, yellow loosestrife, catnip, heliopsis, rudbeckia, bee balm, a variety of tomato starts, green cabbage starts, red cabbage starts, kohlrabi starts, brussel sprout starts, broccoli starts, hot and sweet pepper starts. Finally, the museum will have hostas, day lilies, and lemon lilies at \$5.

All plants are high quality, fresh young plants. Those who have taken part before know that the museum offers only the best plants from the gardens of staff members. — from the Old Stone House.

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