

the bridge

Professional Grassroots Journalism at its Best

Let's Build The Bridge Together

The Bridge is our community newspaper, and for 25 years it has stayed the course, remaining free, independent, and local. Providing in-depth reporting on diverse, vital topics that are close to our hearts but that fly under the radar of media focused on state and national issues, The Bridge lives the truth that the words “community” and “communication” grow from the same root.

The Bridge is among the dwindling number of newspapers throughout the country—published daily, weekly, or less frequently—working hard to keep high-quality independent journalism alive. By providing two issues a month free of charge, The Bridge works to ensure that local news is a resource freely available to everyone. It promotes equity of information and an informed, engaged citizenry.

Local newspapers like The Bridge build community and protect democracy, values that are core to my beliefs and my life. So I am more than happy to donate as a way of supporting those values.

August Burns, artist and former nonprofit director

Your Support Makes The Bridge Possible

Although The Bridge is free to readers, it takes money to produce it. Ongoing expenses for staff, printing, postage, distribution, and professional services add up quickly. Office space is donated, volunteers contribute time and energy, and the operation is strictly no-frills. While advertising revenue covers most expenses, it doesn't stretch far enough to make ends meet.

Your support is critical. The cash contributions, in-kind donations, grants, and volunteer hours you provide make The Bridge possible. This is your newspaper, and we couldn't do it without you! We are deeply appreciative of the engaged community members and businesses who provide funding and work with us to sustain and invigorate The Bridge.

No city, no community, no democracy is complete without a vibrant and independent local newspaper. As too many of us scatter across a littered landscape of social media, glowing screens, and bad ideas, maybe a little newspaper, The Bridge, can bring us all a little closer together.

Bryan Pfeiffer, writer, biologist, and former journalist

Who We Are

The Bridge's Board of Directors. Following the 2018 retirement of long-time editor and publisher Nat Frothingham, The Bridge became a Vermont non-profit managed by a board of directors. In the past year, the board has enhanced both the quality and financial stability of the paper and will be tackling additional improvements in coming months. The Bridge board members are Phil Dodd, Irene Racz, Josh Fitzhugh, Jake Brown, Larry Floersch, Greg Gerdel, Donny Osman, Nancy Reid, Jen Roberts, and Mason Singer.

Friends of The Bridge. The Bridge is a state of Vermont nonprofit, but does not hold federal tax-exempt status. Following the lead of other community newspapers in Vermont, in 2018 The Bridge board created a separate nonprofit entity, Friends of The Bridge, which is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization with its own board of directors. To close the gap between advertising revenue and operating costs, the Friends solicit donations, host fundraising events, and submit grant applications. Board members are Barbara Floersch, David Dauria, Nat Winthrop, Kathleen Casserly, Irene Racz, and Tim Simard.

Staff. **Mike Dunphy**, editor and publisher, is the paper's only full-time staffer. Managing editor **Tom Brown**, sales director **Rick McMahan**, designer **Sarah Davin**, and bookkeeper **Kathy Thurston** fill out the staff.

Making Progress and Getting Stronger!

Upgrading the Website. The Bridge is now completing the critical task of upgrading its website and recovering lost archives. A \$4,000 grant from The National Life Group Foundation provided half the needed funds, and a supporter has provided a \$2,000 challenge donation to generate the additional \$4,000 needed to finish the work.

Writing and Proofing. Several board members with journalism backgrounds contribute many hours of volunteer time to write stories, copy-edit, and assist with proofreading.

Municipal Pages. Once each month, The Bridge publishes a page authored by the city of Montpelier and another authored by the Montpelier/Roxbury school system. Providing detailed information needed by residents, these pages are funded by the city and school district. They represent their official views and do not impinge on The Bridge's independent coverage of local issues.

Increasing Subscriptions. The Bridge is working to increase paid subscriptions, particularly for those who live out of state for part of the year and want to keep up with local news.

You don't know how important a free press is until you don't have it. We at the State House can see the decline in print news, with the result that it's become more difficult for the public to know what's going on. The Bridge fills that information gap for Montpelier residents and other local readers.

Ann Cummings, state senator from Washington County and former mayor of Montpelier

Finances. Revenue for 2019 is projected to be \$233,496, with 87.8 percent coming from ad sales, 10.3 percent from donations, and the remaining 1.9 percent from subscriptions and fees. Expenses for 2019 are projected at \$231,365, with 65.2 percent for creating the paper (wages, health insurance, taxes, commissions, and other editorial and illustration services); 20.3 percent for printing and delivery; 5.2 percent for legal and accounting services; and the remainder for overhead costs.

Help Build The Bridge to the Future

The Bridge is among the Vermont community newspapers that are so essential to preserving the sense of place and connectedness fundamental to the character of our state. The Friends of The Bridge invites you to join us in sustaining this valuable community resource well into the future.

The 2019–2020 fundraising campaign goal is \$50,000. This funding will support much-needed upgrades to systems and technology and will close the gap between advertising revenues and operating costs.

The Bridge is one of the unique voices and resources that makes Montpelier a capital all Vermonters can be proud of. It connects and enriches our community. It's our hometown newspaper.

**Give Generously • Contribute Boldly
Invest Significantly • Do What You Can
Send Your Contribution Today to**

**Friends of The Bridge
P.O. Box 1641
Montpelier, VT 05601**

The Friends of The Bridge is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation may be tax deductible.