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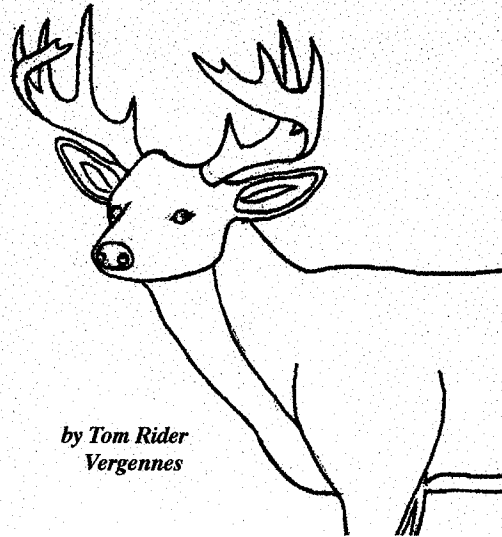
I'm Florita Williams, originally from the Phillipines. My life in the Phillipines was hard. I worked in the sugar cane fields from the ages of 10 to 12. After that I worked as a housekeeper between the ages of 12 and 16. Then I worked in a factory from the time I was 16 to 29 years old.

The conditions in the factory included working long hours, eating poor food, drinking coffee to stay awake until morning, on into the next day. I was always rushed and pushed by my boss and paid a very small amount of money for my work - about \$40 per week. Normal working hours were from 8 am to 10 pm. When there was a rush, especially just before shipping, we would be made to work 24 hours straight. We would then sleep for 2 or 4 hours and be woken up again to work more until the shipment was done. I managed working there for 13 years.

In 1992, I was married to a co-worker in the factory. He later died of lung cancer. We had a son together. I was widowed for six years, and it was hard being a single mother. I was forced to work far from my son Ian so I could support him. I went back to work in the factory as a high-speed sewer, and later became head of the department of linking machines.

I began thinking about my life and how I could change it. I met a person while riding the ferryboat. The woman gave me a form and said to fill it out and send it to the address above. I filled out the form and sent it. While I was waiting for the response to the form I sent, I started reading books in English, reading the dictionary, watching movies in English, and writing the words that I didn't know, and understanding them by looking in the dictionary. I was having trouble learning English because I had no teacher. The first time I communicated with someone I was nervous because I didn't have enough knowledge of English. I was concerned that maybe he wouldn't understand me. I thank God for him. His name is Horace.

(This story continues on page 3.)



by Tom Rider
Vergennes

In my opinion, it's not cruel or brutal to deer hunt. Deer hunting is fun and helps manage wildlife. If people didn't deer hunt, there would be deer getting hit by cars all over the United States, every highway, every town, and they would starve because of over population.

Deer hunting is about having fun and getting out in the woods and seeing wildlife. You don't always have to get a deer to have fun. Hunting helps bring people together. It's a way for someone to get away from the city and work. It helps cleanse your mind and body. The exercise helps too.

Some people need to hunt for food. If it was banned, they would go hungry. My whole family hunts and we love it. People in Vermont have hunted forever, and it has caused no major problems. If it's banned, then it will put a lot of people out of business. It helps in every aspect of life.

If hunting gets banned, it will affect the entire ecosystem. Deer could carry diseases like blackfoot if they become overpopulated. They would give other animals like cows these diseases. Every farm would go out of business from deer. Deer get in the crops and lay in the grass and corn. When it's cut, they get caught in the chopper.

Don't ban deer hunting. We have everyone's best interests in mind.

Jared Litch
Middlebury

WHO WE ARE
pages 6 and 7

Learning Cut-Work Embroidery

Eight years ago I visited a very small sewing shop at the place where I lived in rural Jamaica. I saw an old lady sitting in a corner of the shop sewing a white tablecloth. It was cut-work embroidery. It seemed to be one of the most beautiful art I had ever seen.

I arranged for her to teach it to me at a fee and I would pay after I started learning.

I became almost obsessed with the passion of learning. I thought I was extremely privileged to learn this art.

The first thing she taught me was to design and transfer patterns to the material that I would be sewing, which is a work of art in itself.

When she thought I had mastered that technique, she taught me shift hook, which is a process to sew with steady hands taking the presser foot off the machine using only the machine needle and an embroidery hoop.

She then taught me cording, which is sewing over a piece of cord so closely that one is not able to see the cord.

After I mastered all those steps she taught me how to cut small holes in the material and to do web-like sewing over the holes.

I would wake up in the middle of the night and practice. I would practice all weekend long, and every spare moment I had I would practice.

After about two months had passed, I went to pay the fee that we had agreed on. She said, "No charge. You have done so well that I would like you to help me sew some of my embroidery work."

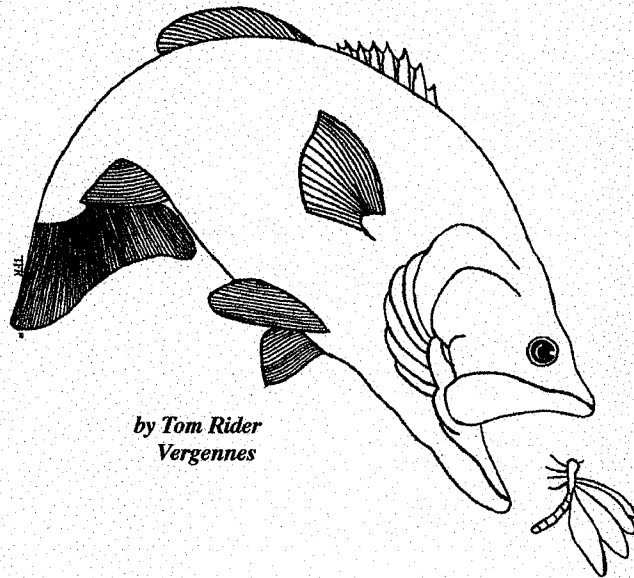
I felt very privileged when she requested that of me because I thought of her as a perfectionist.

After about one year I established an embroidery school in my community because I knew that this was a dying art in Jamaica. People were eager to learn and my school was a success.

I promised my daughter when she was sixteen years old that when she was ready to get married I would embroider her wedding dress. She is now twenty-four years old and she reminded me recently that I had promised her this special dress.

I felt very blessed to have learned cut-work embroidery. Although it was challenging, it was an extremely rewarding experience.

**Myriene Pottinger
Cornwall**



by Tom Rider
Vergennes

A place that is special to me is my grandmother's house. When I'm with my grandma we watch movies, make things, and we also cook.

When I'm with my grandma watching movies, we watch all kinds - anywhere from cartoons to action to comedy. We always watch the cartoons most of the time. We watch Tom and Jerry, Smurfs and Looney Tunes. Those are our favorites. For Action movies we like any Rockie movie, Lethal Weapons, and pretty much anything that gives suspense. For the comedy movies, there are so many it would be hard to name them all. Just to name a couple: Health Inspector, The Big Bounce and Fat Albert. That's what kind of movie I like to watch with my grandmother.

When I'm with my grandmother, we also make a lot of different things. Mostly we make blankets, but we also make tree decorations, pot holders and much more. When my grandma and I make things, that's our way of relaxing and our way of bonding.

When I'm at my grandmother's house, we cook lots of different kinds of things. She first taught me how to cook when I was seven years old. The first thing she taught me how to cook was homemade pancakes. Then it went to cakes, brownies and a bunch of other things. She taught me how to make ice cream. My grandmother is one of the best cooks in my life.

My favorite place to be is my grandmother's. Cooking, watching movies and making things are some of the many reasons her house is my special place. I want to continue going there and for my kids to go there to get the knowledge my grandmother has.

**Amanda Corey
Middlebury**

(Continued from the front page.)

Horace petitioned for me to come to the United States, starting the process on June 29, 1999. He miraculously had me on U.S. soil by August 27, 1999. He is a very strong-hearted person, taking the risk of getting me out of there, and he managed it. It took him only two months instead of the usual 8 to 9 months. The reason it was quick was because of the conditions I was working in at the factory.

Horace and I went back to the Phillipines to get my son. Horace is such a good father to him. He treats Ian like his own biological child. We have been married for almost 9 years, and we have a daughter named Maricel. We live together as happy as can be.

Now my life is different than before. I live in a nice home, and wake up in the morning without feeling pressure. I'm very happy because I can be with my kids. When the kids come home from school, we're there for them. I can do the work that I like to do, or not do anything at all! I'm my own boss, not like before when everything worried me. I can sew whenever I want as I now have my own small business - Flori's Sewing Service. Now I'm pursuing and earning my high school diploma and hoping to graduate soon. I'm hoping to expand my own business.

I am very strong-hearted and determined. Without these qualities, I would not be where I am now. I'm very hard-working and enjoy my simple life. I keep the experiences of my life with my parents as a treasure. It is meaningful and valuable being poor. I would rather live and begin with a hard life, rather than having everything come easily. Being poor, I learned a lot about how to value small things. That is why I care about the poor people I see anywhere, especially those with no houses of their own.

I'm very honest about how I feel and what I think. I manage my time well. I never waste time. I don't spend lots of time wishing I was doing something else. I am in complete control of my time.

I learn better in a one-to-one situation. I do better alone than in a class or group. My other learning styles are verbal, aural, and social. I learn well when talking and listening. My experience with Mary has been a good fit, working one-on-one with her as my teacher. I'm also the kind of person who learns best by seeing and doing.

At this point of my life, I have a chance to address my education. I have learned a lot, reading and understanding words more. I'm now able to add, subtract, multiply, divide, do decimals and percents. It was a good feeling to understand all of this, because I had never learned it before. I only learned by going back to school in this kind of program.

I want to focus on one thing first and that is achieving my high school diploma. After that I will move on to the next steps and challenges ahead. I would like to learn more about bookkeeping so I can help my husband take care of his business, doing taxes every year. I would like to learn about health, so I can be a caregiver. I like human resources, something I can use to help people. I also want to help my husband expand his business in Canada, and to be able to communicate with people properly. I want to volunteer to be a helper in my children's school.

There are lots of dreams to think about, but achieving my diploma first will help me with any of them.

Florita Williams
Starksboro

I went to work on Mr. Hudson's chicken farm when I was 10 years old. My father had worked for the Elmore Feed store in Fair Haven. He knew Mr. Hudson from delivering grain to his farm. I ended up living on that farm. My dad said, "See how you like it." And I thought, "Maybe I will like it."

I had been hanging out with the wrong crowd. There were six of us and the oldest one had a car. I was the youngest at ten. One of my favorite memories of that time was Cabbage Night. This was Cabbage Night back in the 1950's in Fair Haven, Vermont.

There was a slate quarry, completely abandoned. The guy, Bruce, who had the car, was 21 and worked with his father as a well driller. He had access to his father's dynamite and helped himself to a case of it. We went with him and watched while he put it way down in the quarry hole. Bruce attached a half-hour fuse to the dynamite. I looked on from the top of the quarry while he lit it.

We all got out of there in a hurry, laughing our heads off. We decided to go wait for the big boom down at the Roadhouse Cafe. We heard the blast about 20 minutes after getting to the coffee shop. Someone said, "There it goes."

The sheriff came in and asked us, "Did any of you hear that explosion?" With straight faces, we said, "We don't know anything about it."

This was the best Cabbage Night I've ever had.

Gerald Brown
Middlebury

Assignment: What do you want your child to know about Martin Luther King?

Dear Hilary,

There once was a man, a great man and his name was Martin Luther King. He was a minister with a dream. A dream that all men and women would be equal, regardless of the color of their skin. He lived and died many years before you were born. A time when the world was a much different place to live. He was a man of peace. He wanted great things for this world.

Sunday, you asked me if I knew about a time when not all children were allowed to go to school because of the color of their skin. You told me how wrong you thought that was. I want you to know how proud I am of you for knowing in your heart that was wrong.

That was the time when Martin Luther King lived. That was part of his dream, for all children to be allowed to go to school regardless of the color of their skin. Mr. King was African-American and his children were not allowed to attend public schools. He wanted the world to see how wrong this was.

Back then (1960's and before) people (and some still today) are uneducated to difference and I think a little afraid. If all people were the same color and size, it would be a very dull world. Picture a world where all the flowers had to be red, or a rainbow made up of one color. A rainbow without color is no rainbow. No matter what you hear, always remember we are all the same on the inside. God loves all. Martin Luther King was killed because he had a dream that a lot of people didn't understand at that time...

Michalla Bowen
Morrisville

*Writing on this page was inspired by the art in
The Four Seasons of Mary Azarian, a Voices Book
Discussion Project sponsored by the Vermont
Humanities Council. Writers are members of an
English as a Second Language Class at VT Adult
Learning in Middlebury.*

The weather is getting cold
I like to see the chimney of my house
giving out smoke.

Autumn sun and golden leaves.
Such a beautiful season.

Irene Lin

There is a middle-aged man in the yard.
He is doing all the work alone. He cuts
some wood. He takes some wood into
the house. He is tired, but he needs to
be prepared for winter time. The trees
are empty. They lost their leaves.

Maya Abdul Sater

In autumn, after work, I returned to my
house and I couldn't find my wife. She
went to visit her mother. I found a note
on the table. She wrote me some letters
and said if you want to eat, come to my
mother's house. Don't touch anything
because I tidied up the kitchen. I saw
the sauce pans, baskets with apples,
spices, and some herbs hanging up next
to the window and one bottle of wine.
Finally, I turned back and said, "Ooh, it
looks like a movie set."

Carlos Blanco

Many years ago when no electric machines
existed, everything was made by hand.
Dinner time is close and vegetable soup is
ideal for everybody. I remembered
Grandma's book of recipes. She drew all
the ingredients in the book. The vegetable
soup recipe was expressive. It had beets,
carrots, celery, onion, garlic, cabbage,
potatoes, and seasoning. The best drawing
in Grandma's book was a very old
molcajete and pepper grinder.

Alicia Rodriguez

My mother said the autumn is here.
It is time to harvest all the veg-
etables and fruits. We need to pre-
pare for one long and cold winter.
We need to conserve the squash,
cucumbers, tomatoes, hot peppers,
peaches, and apples. When the
weather is colder, we can cook and
bake apple pie.

Alicia Rodriguez

It wasn't a sunny day. The sky was
grey and the wind blew the remain-
ing leaves into the house. The
ground was spongy and slippery
with a soaking rain. The tree was
moving and whispering, "I'm na-
ked and cold," The autumn arrived.
Around the house everything was
bald. A man was wearing a heavy
coat and hat, ready to light up a
woodstove. I pictured a simmering
woodstove with a teapot full of
aromatic cinnamon tea. The music
of the woodstove sounds led me
into sleep.

Fikreta Hadzic

The Fall of 1966

It was a long time ago. In 1966, I visited Dubrovnik and Split,
well-known cities for the Summer Festival Performances. It was a
sunny day. The wind was blowing hard and the yellow leaves were
everywhere. The sea was so blue and the green islands were like
emeralds. I spent two days visiting Mestrovic's Gallery and
Diocletian Wine Cellars, well-known in the world.

I enjoyed every minute of it. After that, I went to visit the
Sarajevo capitol of Bosnia and its cultural, political and economic
center. Everything about Sarajevo dates back to the Turkish times. I
had a great time. It was the best fall season I ever had. I'm hoping
I'll visit the same places next year, 2008.

4 Fikreta Hadzic

Do you like autumn? It
seems to me it is the best
time of year to can your
favorite vegetables! If you
prefer to eat fresh garden
veggies, enjoy them now.
The fresh veggies look
better in a basket than on a
platter. Unfortunately, the
season for them in Vermont
is ending. My garden
doesn't look great now, so
very soon I have to clean it.
I think I'll miss my cukes
and tomatoes in the winter a
lot.

Tanya Andreeva

The apple tree is so
beautiful with a mix of
colors. The red apples
faced down to the
ground and green leaves
are flying in the air.
The movement of the
wind and feelings are
sending out desire. I
have them all. Harvest
is here. I felt in the air a
smell of spicy cinnamon
apple pie just baked.
My imagination was
real.

Fikreta Hadzic

My name is Carolyn L. Hart. I was born in Moretown, a small town in Vermont. I am the middle daughter of five girls born in a family of eleven children.

There were six boys and five girls. We lived in several small towns when I was growing up. From Moretown, we moved to Jonesville, then to Bolton, where I started school at Bolton Standard School. I was the only girl in a class with seven boys. I didn't pass my first year. When I passed the fourth grade, I went on to the Memorial School on the other end of town. In the eighth grade my family left Bolton and moved to Waterbury. I was babysitting with a young girl named Carol. I stayed with her family for a while, then went back to live with my own family and started school in Waterbury. I was in the eighth grade at a new school with thirty or more children in one homeroom. We had to go from one classroom to another for classes.

The summer before I started the eighth grade, my father John Fleury started building the house we would live in that winter. I was fourteen years old then. I helped my father lug cement blocks to build the basement walls. Then we built the floor above the cellar. Then we started the walls, and so on. I enjoyed the time I spent with my father during that summer. We spent a lot of time outdoors, and still today I enjoy working outdoors. I learned to build a house and still use those skills today doing other things. When I returned home, I started school. When I passed the eighth grade, I quit school.

When I was seventeen I got married. At age 18, I had my son. I had two children by the time I got my divorce. The children and I moved in with my parents. In order to support my children, I got a job working at the Vermont State Hospital in their sewing room. I ran a commercial sewing machine. I married a few years later. I had two more children. The marriage lasted fourteen years, then another divorce.

A year and a half later, I married for the third time in Greensboro Bend, Vermont. We lived in Hardwick on the west end of the village. We moved to Johnson on Railroad Street. My husband Harvey worked for J. A. McDonald in Belvidere Center. When he got laid off, he took a job in New Hampshire. I made the meals and took care of the camper where we lived.

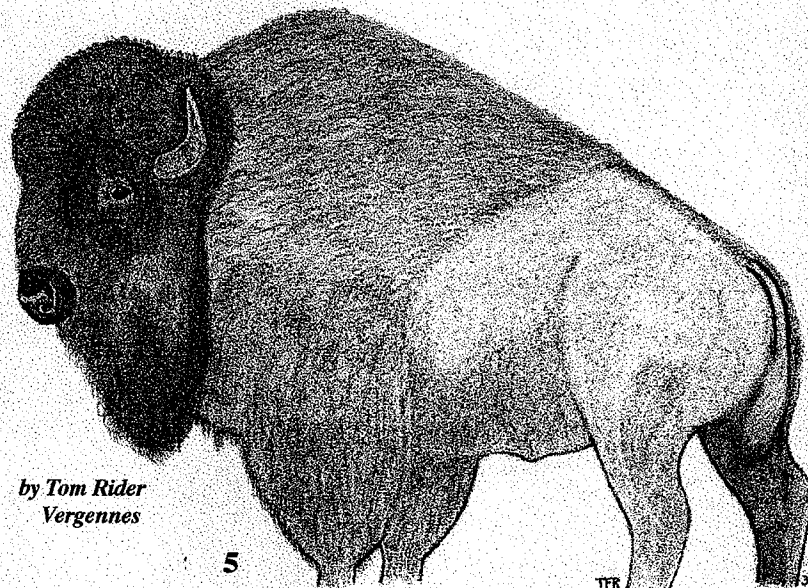
Then we found an apartment and moved in. I told Harvey I had to find a job, because I didn't have enough to do. I found a job in Newmarket, New Hampshire working in a shoe factory gluing leather together. I worked for them around a year. Then I went to work for another shoe factory in the same town, Timberland Shoes, sewing the leather together for their work shoes. Then I moved on to another job working for Tobinitron Electronics stripping ends of wire, putting connectors on the ends of flat and round cables, some up to twenty feet long or longer. I made sure the connectors were put on the right pins, so when you touch a pin on one end, the other end would work.

Then the company moved to another town. Harvey also got another job. We had one vehicle so I had to find a job in another area. I found a job in Manchester, New Hampshire working at Granite State Plastic. I ran an injector mold machine and a mold press where you put inserts into the mold, then place them in the press with a plastic pill. The pill would melt and run down into the mold. You had to take the mold apart and take out the new parts. The molds were 400 degrees. I worked there for three years. We bought a home in Chichester, New Hampshire. Then I went to work at Globe Manufacturing making firefighter suits. I ran a commercial sewing machine, bartack and overedge. I worked there around one year and a half. We then moved back to Vermont.

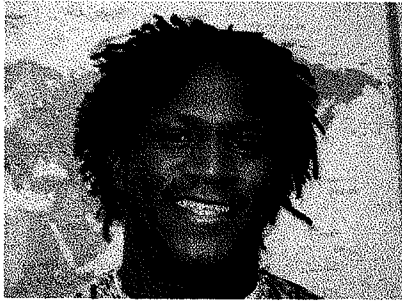
I'm the wife of Harvey M. Hart, Sr. I have four children: Robert W. Laird, Jr., Jessie R. (Laird) Wiggins, Frances I. (Culver) Plankey and Maurice E. Culver II. I have two grandsons, eight granddaughters and four great-grandchildren. We live in Hancock, Vermont, just over the mountain from Middlebury. I like to work with my hands, and also like doing work outdoors. I'm building a woodshed with a small workshop on one end. I go to church in Hancock, and I sing in the choir. I belong to the Moss Glen Grange # 454; I am the lecturer there. I belong to the Moose Club in Barre, Vermont. I have a lifetime membership in Vermont Direct Descendants of the Mayflower. I have six lines back to the Mayflower.

I belong to the Student Advisory Board through Learning Works in Middlebury. With this group I've been to Washington, D. C. for the VALUE conference and to Connecticut last year. I have been helping with our Spring Fling Fleamarket that is in April this year. We are hoping to make even more money than last year to help the students. I've gone back to Learning Works to get my high school diploma. I should have gotten it years ago. If I can get it, so can my children.

**Carolyn Hart
Hancock**



*by Tom Rider
Vergennes*



My name is Hassiniou Bangoura and I am from Guinea, West Africa. I moved to Vermont in October, 2007 to live with my wife in New Haven. When I first moved here, I didn't speak very much English. I could say, "Hello" and "How are you?", but that was all.

My mother-in-law saw an advertisement in the *Addison Independent* for English classes at Learning Works in Middlebury. My wife called the office and made me an appointment to be interviewed and assessed in November 2007.

I immediately started beginner classes with Mary on Tuesday nights. I love going to English class and Mary is a good teacher. She teaches me useful things like writing and how to understand money. She is really patient with me and gives me a lot of help and support.

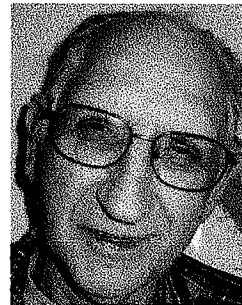
I was really sad during the holidays because we didn't have class for two weeks. It was good to get back to English class in January. Learning Works has helped me speak, write and understand English. This has helped me so much. It makes it easier to live in Vermont because I can talk to all kinds of people.

I want to continue with the program and maybe earn a GED. I can't wait to speak, read and write English fluently. I LOVE ENGLISH!!



WHO WE ARE

My name is Gerry Brown and I live in Middlebury. I come to Learning Works to improve my reading. In the past year, I've read ten books. I come into the center five days a week and have four different teachers. They've taught me the sounds of the vowels, the consonants, and new words. I feel that I'm learning really well here. The teachers are great. They drill me every time I come in. I can pick up a newspaper and read some of the stories. I work at Elderly Services doing housekeeping.



Welcome! My name is Rosaleen H. Treadway, and I am a resident of Middlebury, Vermont. I have lived here since 1996. Before, I lived in California all my past life. I am a single parent of two wonderful, special and intelligent children. My oldest is 12 and her name is Jyauna. My youngest is 10 and his name is Isiah. They both attend the same public school.

My experiences with Learning Works have been very positive and helpful. Learning Works' programs have been extremely supportive to me and my family. One of them was Making It Work hosted by Joanie L. This class taught me how to locate and use the resources. In addition, I learned how to use and create a financial budget and what to do and not to do in an interview.

I am attending Open Center to improve my mathematic skills with Ronnie C. on Thursday mornings. I have learned a lot about myself and math. We both have learned so much from each other. It has been an absolute pleasure to me.

Recently, I have completed Introduction to Computers and Microsoft Word with June F. I took these classes because I wanted to fill in the missing pieces of my computer skills, as well as learn more computer skills to be prepared in computer-related careers.

Next, I am attending Advanced Studies with Don P. In this class I needed extra, extra help in my language skills. It took a lot of time for me to understand the English language. I would like to include I am taking Microsoft Excel classes.

Thirdly, I am co-secretary of the Student Advisory Board with Robin K. Also I attend Learning Works student support group on Tuesday evenings.

Every day I look forward to come to Learning Works. The whole staff is absolutely great. I would like to give thanks to Learning Works staff (you know who you are).

I came to Learning Works in Middlebury about four months ago because I never graduated from high school. I want to get my diploma so I can get a good job and to show my kids that I did it. I like it here. Everyone is outgoing, pleasant and kind. I get the help I need working through problems with math and reading. This is a very flexible program.

Lisa Lafreniere
Middlebury



I'm Florita D. Williams, originally from the Philippines. Before I came here, I did not have enough education to be proud of myself. Now I'm in the U.S. going back to school. I'm so happy to be at the Learning Works Center. It is very nice and comfortable for me to learn here. All my assessors are very nice to work with. I'm very proud of what I have learned from them. I am hoping to graduate and get my high school diploma soon.



I arrived in Cornwall, Vermont the fall of 2006. Coming from Jamaica, it was a pleasant surprise to see the leaves of the trees changing to such magnificent colors. I pretended that I was in fairy land for a week or two. Of course I had to get back to reality sooner or later. I found the people who live here just as unique as the place itself. They were kind, friendly and helpful.

Coming from Jamaica, I could see a whole new world opening up for me. I was pleasantly surprised and happy that there was a place, Learning Works, where this could be made possible. I jumped at the opportunity to do my GED and graduated in 2007. I have also started a course at the Community College of Vermont on "How to Study in College."

I plan to pursue a career in the medical field. I feel confident to know that age is no barrier. The possibilities are endless and the sky is the limit. I feel abundantly blessed.

Myrlene Pottinger
Cornwall

I came to Learning Works because I wanted to learn how to login and fill out my timesheet at Middlebury College. I work there in the dining area. It went so well that I decided to keep on going and get to be a better reader. The teachers here have a lot of patience and I'm learning.



Mark Manning
Shoreham

Africa - Born Free

We read a story and watched a movie called "Born Free." It was about wild lion cubs found in Kenya by George Adamson, a game warden. George took the lion cubs home to his wife Joy to raise. Joy was an artist and a conservationist. There were three female lion cubs, Elsa, Big One and Lustica.

The cubs grew larger and became feisty, playful and good friends. They became too big, and George took them to the airport in Nairobi, Kenya to be sent to a zoo. Joy was sad because she wanted to raise Elsa. George surprised Joy by not sending Elsa to the zoo.

They took Elsa home to Elsamere on Lake Naivasha. Elsa got into big trouble when she chased a herd of elephants. The elephants destroyed a village and the villagers' gardens. George and Joy were told to send Elsa to a zoo before someone was hurt. Joy begged to keep her and promised to train her to live in the wild. It took over a year to teach her how to hunt, live independently, find food, and to get along with other wild lions.

One day Elsa left and they didn't see her for almost a year. Then she showed up at Elsamere with three of her own lion cubs. She came to show them off. Joy had a hard time not petting them, but she knew they had to be left wild.

George and Joy continued to live in Kenya and help return other animals to the wild.

Robin, Crystal, John, Lois, Kim, Maureen, Helen
Springfield Learning Center

What Do YOU Think?

The *Green Mountain Eagle* welcomes opinions such as that by Jared Litch on page 1 of this issue. Please write and tell us what you think about:

deerhunting minimum wage your boss

your landlord the school your kids go to

the school you went to your job

your neighbor algebra Social Security

welfare farming in Vermont

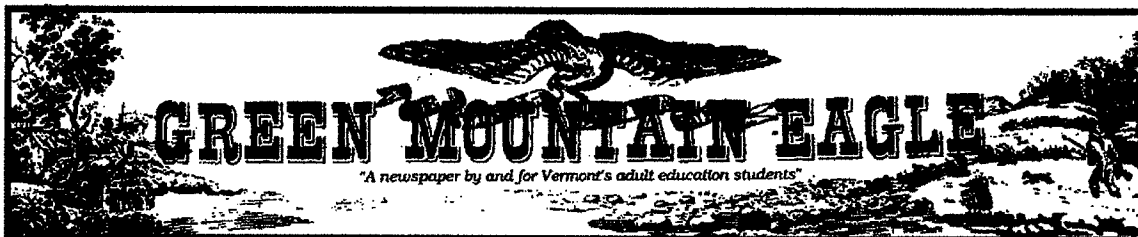
the town you live in cell phones

VT court system coyote hunting

how we elect a president e-mail

how Vermont is changing

or anything else on your mind



KEEP YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS COMING!

Address all comments, questions and contributions to:

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Phone: (802) 388-4392

E-MAIL ADDRESS: gmeagle@vtadultlearning.org

Please be sure to include your name, phone number and/or address or a way to reach you in case we have questions about your contribution.

We need your art and photos!

The more there are, the better the *Eagle* is. Send us your drawings done in black ink on white, unlined paper. Send us photos!