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Notes from editor (not for publication):

Nicely organized.

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

‘The more of us that are active, the better the outcome’

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

Local organizers get ready for Oct. 18 ‘No Kings 2.0’
events in Brattleboro, and across Vermont and the nation

####END SUBHED####

TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

AROUND THE COUNTRY and throughout Vermont, citizens
will take to the streets Saturday, Oct. 18, to protest actions of the
Trump administration and to share concerns regarding
ramifications thereof.

In our region alone, one can join rallies and marches in
Bellows Falls, Bennington, Chester, Manchester, and Wilmington,

11 as well as Brattleboro, the previous site of several such
12 demonstrations.

13 According to a press release from Brattleboro Area
14 Action, Brattleboro's event, "Be the Change: No Kings 2.0" will
15 urge participants to "stand beside all our neighbors as we
16 continue to care for each other and cooperate in support of
17 healthy self-governance."

18 The event "is a call to action for every neighbor, every
19 voice, to join in rejecting authoritarianism, to focus on our shared
20 priorities and to build a stronger community."

21 The protest is intended not only as a rebuke of tyranny
22 and injustice, but an embrace of "a democracy that thrives on
23 shared humanity, values, and interests; on freedom and justice for
24 all instead of dictatorship."

25 Sponsored by National Indivisible, Indivisible
26 Brattleboro, and Brattleboro Area Action, Saturday's event begins
27 at 1 p.m. and is expected to wrap up at 2:30 p.m.

28 An opening rally will be held at the Brattleboro
29 Common, 14 Park Place, with two brief speeches by State
30 Treasurer Mike Pieciak and Django Grace, a 2024 graduate of
31 Brattleboro Union High School, now a sophomore at Columbia
32 University studying political science and environmental policy.

33 A march will then commence down sidewalks on both
34 sides of Main Street from Brooks Memorial Library toward the
35 Brattleboro Food Co-op with songs, chants, and more "uplifting"
36 music by The Peoples Resistance Marching Band, The Good
37 Trouble Street Choir, and other area musicians.

38 *The Commons* spoke recently with two of Saturday's
39 organizers: Christine Scypinski, a retired landscape architect, and
40 Heather Ashcraft, a dietician.

41 * * *

42 **Annie Landenberger:** Tell me briefly about your role in
43 Saturday's event.

44 **Christine Scypinski:** I'm part of the action resistance
45 collective, as is Heather. We're one of five action groups with
46 Brattleboro Indivisible.

47 Our action group concentrates on events, actions,
48 potlucks, all kinds of community events [including the overpass
49 protests, the Good Trouble protest in March, the Mother's Day
50 event, the June No Kings march]. We've been part of all that, and
51 we collaborate with other groups like Brattleboro Area Action.

52 Heather's the emcee for the event. I'm a safety marshal.
53 Jill Green and I are trying to organize all the safety marshals so
54 it'll be a very safe event. We need a lot for this one because it's a
55 double-sidewalk march. So twice as many marshals are needed
56 to cover the sidewalks.

57 **A.L.:** Is there any concern about this being perhaps a
58 more volatile landscape than previous marches?

59 **C.S.:** Not really. Yeah, I don't think in Brattleboro.
60 Well, on the overpasses, we get people that definitely do
61 thumbs down on I-91, trucks on the overpass that blow black
62 smoke at us — that's happened at every rally.

63 But we've had very few counterprotesters. The police are
64 very aware of what's going on and are also monitoring ahead of
65 the event as much as they can through social media and the like.

66 Americans for Prosperity and some active Republican
67 groups in Brattleboro have organized, so there could be more
68 people [as counterprotestors], but I don't think it's going to be
69 volatile, even if they are there.

70 **A.L.:** The release says you're going to distribute
71 information on actions, meaning ... ?

72 **Heather Ashcraft:** We're still making it. The last cards we
73 distributed were advertising an event on one side and actions
74 similar to what's on the 5calls.org website on the other. We send
75 people to that [site] because it has a slew of topics that people
76 can pick from to contact their legislators about.

77 **A.L.:** I ask because I'm one who doesn't want to just be
78 moaning about what's going on. I want to know what I can do.

79 **H.A.:** I think a lot of us are there: What can we actually
80 do? That's our concern. We're holding a rally, but the rally is just
81 a point for us to connect and to set up options and awareness of
82 things that people can do in between rallies.

83 Because that's where the real action happens. As fun as
84 rallies are, we all have a job.

85 **C.S.:** And that's why we have Django Grace, because he
86 wrote that wonderful commentary in *The Commons*
87 [["Connecting dots,"](#) Viewpoint, Aug. 12] saying that we have a lot
88 of work to do here in Brattleboro — locally.

89 **A.L.:** What about traffic Saturday?

90 **C.S.:** Well, the police are going to help us with traffic
91 coordination: They're expecting leaf peepers for fall foliage, the
92 [Brattleboro] Literary Festival, and all of us.

93 We had 3,000 last time, and this one hopefully will be
94 even bigger. It'll be a lot of people in town, so they're already
95 stacking up for that.

96 **A.L.:** Ah, yes, the Literary Festival.

97 **C.S.:** Members of our group have met with members of
98 the planning group for the Festival to tell them what we're
99 thinking, to get their feedback, and to make sure we're not
100 disrupting their people as they flow into the different venues.

101 **H.A.:** We're going to chalk the entrances so that
102 protesters don't block them.

103 **C.S.:** Our marshals will be aware of the entrances and
104 can help people cross the street if they need to.

105 **A.L.:** Parking will be interesting.

106 **C.S.:** It's always interesting. I mean, people found parking
107 last time and there are [parking maps](#) online that are quite good.

108 **A.L.:** Let me give you a chance to each say what's in your
109 head and heart in anticipation of this — and just [in response to]
110 waking up to the news every morning.

111 **H.A.:** I think everyone is overwhelmed. There's more
112 news than anyone can digest. And it's not something any one
113 person can tackle alone.

114 We're trying to bring people together and to create a
115 stronger, more resilient community where you know that even if
116 you're not the one tackling a particular issue, another group has
117 your back so you can really devote yourself to the things that you
118 feel most passionate about.

119 I think we'll have the most impact that way and that
120 people will maybe be able to close their focus a little bit because
121 we are so overwhelmed. You cannot carry all that's going on.

122 So how do we make it easier? How do we make it more
123 effective?

124 And how do we stop what's happening so that we can
125 move our culture and our community to a place where we feel
126 safe and secure and resourced to tackle the things we need to
127 tackle in order to build the tomorrow we all want to live in?

128 **C.S.:** You're ready to emcee Saturday!

129 **A.L.:** How about you, Christine?

130 **C.S.:** The news every day is very alarming and
131 disheartening. But I really just reiterate what Heather said.
132 There're many people doing so many things already in
133 Brattleboro to try to stop what's happening. Indivisible Brattleboro
134 has many different groups. There are probably 25 others.

135 You can volunteer to help feed your neighbors. You can
136 just have people over for dinner to get to know them, to make
137 connections. You can join mutual aid groups already out there.

138 So I just remind people of all the small things they can
139 do that are actually easy — it doesn't have to be hard. You don't
140 all have to call your legislators if that's not your deal. You don't all
141 have to hold a sign at a rally or on an overpass if that's not your
142 deal. A lot of the people in Indivisible Brattleboro don't go out
143 and do those types of things. They prefer to write their legislators
144 or just to meet their neighbors and organize a potluck.

145 The One Million Rising is another thing that's trying to
146 get people to have small coffee conversations, basically, with
147 their neighbors and their friends that aren't yet active — those
148 who don't know what to do but who want to do something.

149 So it's all an effort to bring people up so that everybody
150 feels like they're doing something. The more of us who are active,
151 the better the outcome.

152 **A.L.:** You give some hope. Thank you.

153 * * *

154 ORGANIZERS encourage participants to bring bells, to "let
155 freedom ring." They add that "a core principle behind all
156 Indivisible and Brattleboro Area Action events is a commitment to
157 nonviolent action. We expect all participants to seek to de-
158 escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree
159 with our values and to act lawfully at these events."

160 For more information on the action, visit 4thbranch.us
161 and/or mobilize.us/nokings/event/84386.

162 * * *

163 *Editor's note: Columns that include interviews in this*
164 *format are edited for clarity, readability, and space. Words not*
165 *spoken by interview subjects appear in brackets, as do brief*
166 *editorial clarifications.*

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

167 **ANNIE LANDENBERGER** is an arts writer and columnist
168 for *The Commons*. She also is one half of the musical duo Bard
169 Owl, with partner T. Breeze Verdant.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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