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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Retreat Farm hosts 'Resilience' series in June

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3 TEXT BODY:

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4 Retreat Farm presents "Resilience," a series of four
5 conversations and presentations with local luminaries on
6 Thursday nights during the month of June. Each week will feature
7 a different expert — a gardener, a filmmaker, a poet, and a
8 musician — to show their work and share stories of their craft in
9 the North Barn.

10 On June 4, there will be an "ecological resilience" talk
11 and pop-up plant sale with gardener and nursery owner Helen

12 O'Donnell, who owns and manages the Bunker Farm in
13 Dummerston along with her husband, sister, and brother-in-law.

14 O'Donnell manages Bunker Farm Plants, a specialty
15 plant nursery, as part of the farm operation, offering unusual
16 annuals and perennials, natives and non-natives, primarily grown
17 from seed. In her gardening business, she designs, installs, and
18 maintains gardens for private clients, works as a consultant,
19 writes, and lectures.

20 She believes that design, maintenance, and growing are
21 symbiotic practices and that a garden is an ever-changing,
22 interspecies collaboration. O'Donnell says she loves plants —
23 especially the unkempt wild ones — and is a painter and
24 printmaker who spends time each winter making art. Food at the
25 event will be by Anon's Thai Cuisine.

26 "Family resilience" is the theme June 11, with a
27 screening of *Sugarhouse*, followed by a discussion with
28 filmmaker Jesse Kreitzer.

29 Kreitzer is a Vermont-based filmmaker whose fiction and
30 nonfiction work explores rural life, folk cultures, and traditions.
31 His films have received Oscar-qualifying and New England
32 Emmy awards, and have screened at galleries, museums, and
33 festivals worldwide, including the National Gallery of Art,
34 Museum of the Moving Image, Raindance, Rooftop, Big Sky,
35 Camden, and Oldenburg.

36 Kreitzer holds a master of fine arts in cinema and
37 comparative literature from the University of Iowa and a
38 bachelor's in visual & media arts from Emerson College. He is the
39 founder of Lanterna, a film and video production company
40 specializing in short-form documentaries, narrative films, and
41 commissions. Food at the event will be by Anon's Thai Cuisine.

42 Poet Emma Paris will do a "wild resilience poetry
43 reading" June 18. Paris was the 2025 Vermont Youth Poet
44 Laureate, and is an undergrad at Bennington College where she
45 studies poetry and environmental science.

46 She has an American Voices nomination from Scholastic
47 Art & Writing Awards, is a 2025 Adroit Commended Writer, and
48 has been nominated for the 2025 Pushcart Prize. She has
49 interned at both Green Writers Press and the *Bennington Review*,
50 working as an editor and reader. Food at the event will be by
51 RVQ Smokehouse and Taste of Wantastegok.

52 The series concludes June 25 with a “cultural resilience”
53 musical performance and talk by Brendan Taaffe of The Bucolics
54 Project.

55 Taaffe is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, and visual
56 artist who lives outside of Brattleboro. His most recent work, The
57 Bucolics Project, is a long-time collaboration with Kentucky poet
58 Maurice Manning. The project is a collection of songs based on
59 the poems in Manning’s 2007 collection, *Bucolics*, a
60 conversation between a field hand and a divine being known
61 only as Boss. Each song references an archival field recording
62 from the Appalachian Sound Archives at Berea College, where
63 Taaffe was awarded a research fellowship in 2017.

64 The bulk of Taaffe’s choral compositions can be heard on
65 four albums with The Bright Wings Chorus, recorded between
66 2011 and 2018. As a song leader, Taaffe has taught with Village
67 Harmony for the past 20 years and has worked extensively with
68 community choirs in the U.K. He holds a masters degree in
69 performance from the Irish World Music Centre at the University
70 of Limerick, Ireland, and has spent extensive time studying music
71 in Zimbabwe (mbira and song traditions) and southern France
72 (song traditions).

73 An active crankie artist, Taaffe has been directing The
74 Vermont Crankie Festival in Brattleboro for the past 10 years. He
75 also works in schools as an artist-in-residence teaching children
76 how to contra dance. Food will be by RVQ Smokehouse.

77 Doors open at 5 p.m., with the featured event beginning
78 at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per event, or \$25 for all four events,
79 with no one turned away for lack of funds. More information can

80 be found at retreatfarm.ticketspice.com/resilience-series. Support
81 for this series comes from Vermont Humanities.

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BIO/COATTAIL:

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83 #####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

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84 #####BEGIN LINKS####

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