
THIRD ACT VT

APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything;
but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

—Edward Everett Hale,
20th-century American author and
Unitarian clergyman

Hello Third Actors,

Laurel Green, a member of Third Act VT’s Coordinating Committee, submitted the above quotation for this newsletter. It’s a stirring statement of purpose and one that inspired her to create her own verse in “Why I Decided To Do Nonviolent Civil Disobedience (NVDA),” on page 2.

What inspires you to work in service of the planet? Who encouraged you to become engaged with Third Act VT, 350.org, or a similar organization? How would you like to make a difference in this third act of your life? Let us know at our next statewide meeting this Thursday, and read on for a multitude of ways to protect our precious Earth. The total solar eclipse last week was a joyous gift to us all. Let’s reciprocate with mind, body, and soul.

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Summer of Heat on Wall Street

Third Act is collaborating with many other groups on a campaign of intense organizing. **This summer in New York City, we're planning a major, sustained direct action campaign on the financiers of climate chaos.** Our plan is to hold multiple, escalated, disruptive nonviolent direct actions against the financiers of climate chaos *every week, all summer long*. There are specific dates especially for elders (that's us!) to hit the streets in protest. **Learn more at the next Third Act VT Statewide Meeting, Thursday, April 18, 4:30- 6 p.m.**

And join the next Summer of Heat Onboarding Call by registering [here](#). The calls are run by a coalition of groups that are organizing the campaign with the help of Third Act. Consider this style of presentation a cross-cultural experience.

Third Act VT hopes to take 20 affinity groups or “crews” to the Summer of Heat. If you would be willing to **organize a crew of 6-10 people** to take action in New York City, please contact me. I can share lots more information and provide support.

Thanks,
Laurel Green, laurelplanet@gmail.com

Why I Decided To Do Nonviolent Civil Disobedience (NVDA)

As a woman elder I want to tell you why I am willing to take part in the Summer of Heat on Wall Street and am willing to put myself at risk for arrest.

Until the past few years, I took full advantage of living in the U.S. during the fossil fuel feast. I drove across the U.S. half a dozen times and drove from Mexico to Alaska. I flew across the U.S. many times and also flew to Europe and to China. I lived my whole life in a consumption-based lifestyle. However, I see now that everything I buy is laced with fossil fuel. Now, I know how this lifestyle hurts the whole ecosystem that I depend on, so I can act differently.

I am a good candidate for NVDA. I no longer have dependent children. I no longer have aging parents. I'm not worried about my resume or an arrest record. I can afford to be away from home for a week this summer.

There have been a few little worries in my mind. Details that I can figure out—how to travel, where to stay, how this adventure might affect my aging body. I see these as small details compared to taking a stand for the health of my planet. The big thing for me has been to decide to participate in NVDA.

So, I recently decided to give up comfort for one week to face off with the banks, insurance companies, and the other funders of the fossil fuel industry. I am calling on my integrity and courage to do this. I can share my experience of this novel adventure with my children and grandchildren.

(Continued on page 3)

(Why I decided to do Nonviolent Civil Disobedience (NVDA), cont'd from page 2)

Here is my version of Edward Everett Hale's quotation:

I am only one. If you join me, we are two,
If we both bring a crew, we are a dozen.
If Third Act Vermont brings 20 crews, we are a hundred.
If all the Third Act working groups in and surrounding New York City
bring 20 crews, we are a 1,000!

Together, I think, we can change
the hearts and minds of people
by showing up on Wall Street.

I need to be there.
I want you to be there, too.
Please join me.
– Laurel Green

New Resources for Senior to Senior Voter Registration

Third Act Vermonters are currently working in one-third of Vermont high schools to help register seniors to vote. Our members in Addison, Franklin, and Washington counties are working with every high school in their counties! Many report having fun, feeling satisfied with their work, and feeling pleased to promote this key action for democracy. Our allies in the League of Women Voters are working in another 10 percent of the schools.

Here are a few new helpful items from the recent Third Act VT Senior to Senior Voter Registration training.

- Third Act Central has developed these [resources](#) to recruit high school students.
- [The Civics Center](#) writes, “Almost every single American graduating from high school this Spring (4 million in total) is old enough to register to vote, regardless of what state they live in. That’s why we like to say: Graduation Season is Voter Registration Season!” The center has launched the [Cap, Gown & Ballot](#) toolkit.
- Ideas for running a drive before graduation: Senior Week activities, cap and gown pickup day, prom, senior breakfast, senior night, yearbook signing.

This work is so important. Young voters care about the climate and vote accordingly.

For more information or questions on how to approach Vermont high schools, contact Third Act VT member Suzie McCoy at suziemccoy1@gmail.com or 802-343-4076.

Webinar on Taking Back Our Power from Utility Companies

Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m. EDT

Utility companies are complicit in the climate crisis by making us reliant on fossil fuels to heat and cool our homes, and they are actively trying to stop a just transition. 350.org is coming down hard on utility companies this year and needs your help. They are hosting a webinar to share how we can take back our power from utility companies: **350 U.S. Utilities Kick-Off**.

They'll share firsthand accounts of the financial and health impacts utilities have on our lives—and our partners from around the country will help identify the main culprits behind endangering our planet's future and exacerbating the climate crisis. Will you join us? Register [here](#).

Nationally, Third Act has a campaign called Democratize Energy, which is focused on Public Utility Commissions and is in line with the work 350.org is doing. If you are interested in organizing this work here in Third Act Vermont, please let Laurel know at laurel1planet@gmail.com.

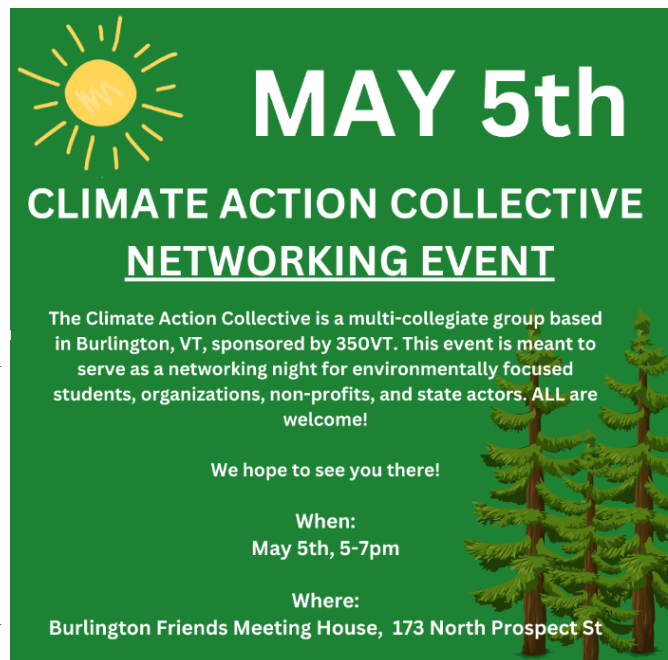
Climate Action Collective Networking Event

Sunday, May 5, 5-7 p.m., Burlington Friends Meeting House, 173 No. Prospect St.

The Climate Action Collective is a multicollegiate group of more than 40 students in the Burlington, VT, area, sponsored by 350VT. This event is a networking night to form connections between students, professionals, and community members working toward a just and sustainable future.

The Climate Action Collective has already rallied college students to go to the 2023 March to End Fossil Fuels, flipped a key vote in the McNeil Generation Station biomass decision, sponsored an environmental focused debate for the 2024 Burlington City Council, and registered students to vote in the Burlington March elections.

RSVP for the event at cac@350vt.org. If you'd like to support the collective, please consider helping with the event or donating items. They seek string lights, outdoor tents (easy setup style), and raffle/silent auction items. They encourage business owners and artists to share their wares.



Divestment Action Team Update: Providing Testimony

The Fossil Fuel Divestment Bill, S.42, is an act relating to divestment of state pension funds of investments in the fossil fuel industry. The Third Act VT Divestment Action Team believes S.42 dovetails with the Climate Superfund Act, S.259, aka Make Big Oil Pay, which is strongly supported by the Vermont Senate, where it recently passed 26-3.

Third Act VT member David McColgin testified in support of S.42 at a House Government Operations and Military Affairs Committee hearing on April 11. The other witnesses were Vermont State Treasurer Mike Pieciak and former Vermont State Treasurer Beth Pearce, as well as state pension holders Patrick Flood and Francie Marbury. Third Act Vermonters who also attended were Judy Raven, Donna Fialkoff, Dina DuBois, Hank Prensky, Laura Zakaras, Beebe Potter, Paula Schramm, Ken Whitehead, and Mari Miceli.



Members of Third Act VT at the April 11 House Government Operations and Military Affairs Committee hearing

In addition to David's testimony, The Divestment Action Team submitted sign-on letters in support of S.42 from Vermont environmental groups and pension members of the Vermont State Employees' Retirement System.

Here is a video [recording](#) of the hearing from the legislature's website.

Climate Action Rally

Monday, May 6, 5:30 p.m., in front of Burlington City Hall

Spring is here. Eager to get out in the streets? Here's a good opportunity. The grassroots organization [Stop VT Biomass](#) will hold a climate action rally on Monday, May 6, at 5:30 p.m. in front of Burlington City Hall. A critical Mass Bike Ride will leave Battery Park at 5 p.m. The Burlington City Council will hold its weekly meeting later that evening.

This event aims to support new Burlington Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanak, who has made it clear she agrees with Stop VT Biomass' positions. The group advocates for shutting down the McNeil Generating Station and canceling the steam pipe, cutting airport emissions by 50% by 2030, replacing the city's Net Zero Energy Roadmap with a real climate plan, developing a dignified walk/bike plan, free and accessible public transit, banning new combustion infrastructure in buildings, and strengthening Burlington's thermal energy ordinance.

Stop VT Biomass has supported past Third Act VT efforts. Wear your Third Act apparel so Stop VT Biomass knows you're there!

Join the New Third Act VT Democracy Team

Dear Vermont Third Actors,

Given that the stakes of the 2024 elections are inordinately high, and having been involved in 30-plus political campaigns over the last 40-plus years, I am creating a Third Act VT democracy team.

Third Act VT already has a Legislative Action Team (LAT), a Divestment Action Team (DAT), and a Climate Action Team (CAT). We will call the new democracy team the Voters Action Team (VAT), and I seek members. My hope is that we can form several sub-teams to tackle specific projects and actions.

Below is Third Act Central's general plan for what needs to happen nationally in the next seven months. This involves not just the presidential race but also races for governors, U.S. senators and representatives, state legislatures, secretaries of state, and state attorneys general, especially in swing states. Note: many of these actions will be happening nationwide, but only some will involve Vermonters.

If you have experience in any of the following areas or an interest in doing whatever you can to help in what may be the most important election of our lives, please contact me, Third Act VT member Jud Lawrie, at Jud@Lawrie.com.

Democracy Action Opportunities for 2024

- Voter Registration
 - Senior to Senior
 - ◊ The Civics Center—Goal: 500 schools recruited
 - ◊ Rock the Vote—Community college voter registration
- GOTV (Get Out the Vote)
 - Activate America:
 - ◊ Postcards to Voters—Goal: 50,000 postcards by November
 - ◊ Phonebanks
 - Environmental Voter Project, Field Team 6, others: canvassing, local campaigns
- Election Protection
 - E.g., making sure voters have adequate access to their voting places
- Priorities:
 - Hotspots: CA, NY, Swing States, adopt “flippable” districts
 - Trainings: phonebank, canvass, poll observer, vote count monitor
- Beyond Elections...
 - Everyday Democracy skill building
 - Alternatives to “winner-take-all” systems

Contact me to learn more at Jud@Lawrie.com. I hope you'll join me!

Sincerely,
Jud Lawrie

Third Act VT Coordinating Committee Update

The Third Act VT Coordinating Committee has shrunk. We once had eight members but are now down to five, including one new member serving as a note taker and another new member serving as a Camaraderie-Art-Music-Fun Coordinator. It is apparent that this size will limit what we can take on.

There are Third Act VT committees doing great work, including Divestment, Legislative, Senior to Senior, and Regional Groups, as well as a multistate post-carding effort. Some of this work will end with the conclusion of the legislative session and election cycle, but there will be future legislative and election cycles.

Third Act Central is planning some very ambitious efforts for which we ought to be gearing up. These are multi-week and multi-month actions, including the 2024 Elections and Summer of Heat on Wall Street. There will also be phase two of the Costco campaign. Because Third Act VT is located within relative proximity to New York City, compared to working groups in the middle and western part of the country, Third Act Central would like us to play a significant role. Plans include nonviolent direct action, which requires a lot of training, planning, and support. Third Act will not be the only group participating, which also requires coordination.

Our small Coordinating Committee intends to do what it can in terms of attending Third Act Central and multi-group meetings to prepare for these events. Please understand that our ability to do this kind of work without more help is limited.

If you would like to play a central role as part of the Coordinating Committee, please contact Laurel at laurelplanet@gmail.com, Jud at jud@lawrie.com, or John at johnwoodlandr90@gmail.com.

Next Statewide Meeting

Please join us for our next statewide meeting on **Thursday, April 18, from 4:30 to 6 p.m.** During the first half hour, we'll talk about the basics of Third Act Vermont and answer your questions. During the main meeting, from 5 to 6 p.m., we'll discuss the new big campaigns that are being rolled out from Third Act Central: the Democracy Action Team or Voting Action Team, and the Summer of Heat on Wall Street. We hope you will join us.

Here is the meeting [link](#).

Meeting ID: 839 2382 1289.

Passcode: 089568.

Third Act Vermont Handout

This is the latest [TA VT handout](#) in PDF form. Feel free to print it and share it with friends, distribute it at community events, post it on grocery store bulletin boards, etc.

Print it on 8.5 by 11-inch paper on both sides. You may have good luck with a local print shop that can print the sheets double-sided, then cut them into four quarters. We recommend using light card stock, not plain paper. You may want to print 10 sheets and cut them into quarters, which gives you 40 handouts and should be relatively inexpensive. If you have any questions, please contact Jud at jud@laurie.com.

Thank you for being a member of Third Act Vermont!