
THIRD ACT VT

MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

“The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them.
If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough.”

—Ellen Johnson Sirleaf,
a Liberian politician and economist who was president of Liberia for 12 years
and was the first woman to be elected head of state of an African country

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Dreaming Big

My biggest dream is to resolve the climate crisis.

In February, I was one of more than 500 Third Actors who pledged to travel to Washington DC to hold three days of protests against development of more liquified natural gas terminals on the southern coast of the U.S. That was enough pressure for President Biden to put a pause on the permitting process. I consider our protests successful nonviolent direct action (NVDA).

In Third Act VT’s April newsletter I mentioned my goal of bringing 100 of our members with me to the nonviolent direct actions in New York City this summer. The campaign is called the Summer of Heat on Wall Street.

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Dreaming Big *(continued from page 1)*

Later this week I will go to an NVDA training with another TA VT member. We will be with leaders from other Third Act working groups in the Northeast who are preparing to confront CitiBank and other financiers of continued fossil fuel infrastructure development.

As of today there are half a dozen people from TA VT who said they are willing to join me in protests on Wall Street. We just need another 93 to reach my 100-member goal.

Even though bringing 100 TA VTers may feel impossible, it's what I've decided to try to do. I have a powerful vision of elders: getting up out of our rocking chairs, taking a stand for the sake of the planet and all the life it holds, including our grandchildren's future.

I am also fighting for a livable planet for myself, this year, here in Vermont. I am afraid for my garden, the forests I love, the quality of the air I breathe, and the water I drink as we face quickly rising global temperatures. I am afraid for our society that has not acted at a pace and scale sufficient to halt that rise in temperature.

I also feel afraid that my words and actions won't be large and strong enough to convince you to join me.

My dream scares me. Do I have enough time and energy to do everything I can think of to make my dream a reality? My dream scares me because I feel like I won't be able to control or predict what will happen. My dream scares me because I'm not sure whether you share my dream.

However, I know that I am not alone. Over the last few years I have heard Bill McKibben repeatedly say, "Climate change is the single biggest thing that humans have ever done on this planet. The one thing that needs to be bigger is our movement to stop it." I am putting my efforts with his to make our movement large enough to turn things around. Please join us.

—Laurel Green, Third Act VT Coordinating Committee member



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 our Third Act VT Statewide Meeting, May 16, 4:30-6 p.m.

And join the next Summer of Heat Onboarding Call (May 15 and May 29 at 7:30-8:30 p.m.) by registering [here](#). The calls are run by a coalition of groups organizing the campaign with the help of Third Act. Consider this style of presentation a cross-cultural experience.

TA 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, please contact Laurel Green at laurelplanet@gmail.com. She can share lots more information with you and provide support. Thanks!

Windham County Regional Group Meeting Report

A dozen people met in Putney on May 1 to learn how they can take action on climate and democracy with Third Act Vermont. We talked about the basics of our organization and the current campaigns. People got into small groups to consider how they might like to be involved.

In addition to the information session, we sang together, shared a potluck meal, and got to know each other a bit. Eight new people joined Third Act VT, and we all had a good time!



Postcards for Democracy Update

On Sunday, May 5, we had our third monthly postcarding event to support candidates and issues in key battleground states. There were in-person meetings in Chittenden and Windham counties, as well as at three sites in Massachusetts, one in Washington D.C., and one in Pennsylvania.

Cards went out in support of Ruben Gallego's U.S. senate candidacy in Arizona, and for current U.S. Senator Jon Tester of Montana. As we get closer to Election Day, the race targets will change as polls are updated and battleground state dynamics shift. So far, we have mailed just shy of 7,000 cards, and we hope to break the 20,000 mark by October.

Please join us! You do not have to join an existing in-person group and can participate from the comfort of your own home or at a neighborhood site you might feel inclined to organize. Full details are available [here](#). Any questions? Please contact Shaun Deane at shaun@thirdactvt.org

Senior to Senior Voter Registration Update

Our numbers keep growing! Of the 91 public and private high schools in the state, Third Act VT members are helping young voters register to vote in 37 schools, and League of Women Voters is doing the same in 10 schools—for a combined total of 47. That's more than half of Vermont high schools!

With a one-hour, online training, any one of us can learn how to get the Senior to Senior project into schools in Vermont or in swing states. May is the perfect time to take action. Here is the link on the [Third Act Central](#) website to get involved. This work is so important. Young voters care about climate and vote accordingly. Questions? Contact Suzie McCoy at suziemccoy1@gmail.com or 802-343-4076.

Help Wanted: WordPress Volunteer

We seek a volunteer familiar with WordPress for one-time project. Ideally, it would take place in the next four weeks.

Are you interested in lending a hand to Third Act Vermont on a short-term basis? If so, please contact Laurel at laurelplanet@gmail.com.



Lost: Third Act Vermont Banner

On February 20, members of our Divestment Action Team spent the day at the Statehouse talking with legislators about the bill. At the end of the day, our handmade banner was lost in the shuffle. It is 6 feet long and 2.5 feet wide and has a white background with large orange letters. It's really cute. If you have seen it, please let Laurel know, at laurelplanet@gmail.com. We need it for the Summer of Heat on Wall Street!

Divestment Action Team Update

The Divestment Action Team (DAT) was ultimately unsuccessful in its efforts to get S.42, the fossil fuel divestment bill, voted out of the VT House Government Operations and Military Affairs Committee. DAT members, along with Vermont Treasurer Mike Pieciak, testified before the committee in support of the bill on April 11. But the committee also heard testimony in opposition to divestment from former Treasurer Beth Pearce on that day, as well as from the Vermont Pension Commission and labor groups on April 16. Unfortunately, much of their testimony either overlooked or misunderstood how the bill had been amended to address the Pension Commission's concerns. In the committee's discussion of the bill, and it became clear that a majority did not support it. The bill was therefore not voted out of committee for consideration by the full House, and it has "died" in committee for this legislative biennium.

The DAT is currently considering whether to reintroduce a new divestment bill next year, at the start of the new legislative biennium, or instead introduce a "decarbonization" bill, which was an approach the Pension Commission proposed as an alternative to divestment.

On the plus side, the DAT is proud of having moved a divestment bill closer to passage than at any time in the last decade. The team's advocacy for the bill has also been a great introduction for Third Act Vermont to the legislature and a great education for the team in how the state legislative process works. Through this work the team has built credibility with members of the legislature that will be very helpful for our future efforts.

Third Act VT Rendezvous

Saturday, June 8, 11 a.m.

Allis State Park Pavilion in Randolph

Save the date! More details coming soon, but you can expect *fun* and *inspiration* and *camaraderie*. Please plan to join us, and bring a friend who is not yet a part of Third Act VT.

Questions? Contact Steve Crofter at 802-275-4646 or steve.crofter@gmail.com.



Next Statewide Meeting

Please join us for our next statewide meeting on **Thursday, May 16, 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 explain the new big campaigns being rolled out from Third Act Central: the Voting Action Team and the Summer of Heat on Wall Street. We will also share plans for our summer in-person gathering. 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 judlawrie@mindspring.com.

Thank you for being a member of Third Act Vermont!