
THIRD ACT VT

AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER

“I condemn the spread of...misinformation and the influence of dark money that aims to promote confusion and fear. Vermonters deserve to know the truth about legislation that affects their daily lives, and the last thing they need is interference from bad actors.”
—Vermont House Speaker Jill Krowinsky

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Beware of Misinformation

On July 24, Vermont House Speaker Jill Krowinsky penned a [press release](#) about Vermont’s Affordable Heat Act (S.5) and a misinformation campaign by a Koch Brothers Super-PAC.

“There has been a significant and intentional misinformation campaign circulating across Vermont about the Affordable Heat Act,” Krowinsky wrote. “Much of this information is coming from groups outside of Vermont, like Americans for Prosperity [AFP].” Founded by the Koch brothers, “...this Super-PAC has emerged as a leading defender of the oil and gas industry and a well-funded opponent of climate and environmental initiatives nationwide. In May 2024, AFP announced a ‘major five-part mail and digital campaign’ to target Vermont voters during this election cycle. AFP postcards, for example, include false claims that S.5 ‘mandates heat pump installations in homes,’” reads the press release.

“The Affordable Heat Act is an important step in ensuring that all Vermonters have access to low-cost, reliable heat and relief from the dramatic increases in heating fuel that we see year over year,” Krowinsky wrote. Draft rules for the act are being developed and will be brought before the legislature for a transparent review. Learn more about the Affordable Heat Act and the legislative process [here](#).

Summer of Heat on Wall Street

August 26-30, New York City

Interested in taking part in Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA)? This month is a great time to do so!

The last week of August is the official final week of [Summer of Heat on Wall Street](#), an escalating, multi-month NVDA campaign. The main goal is to end fossil fuels by cutting off their funding, insurance, and new-development permitting. Summer of Heat is organized by a wide ranging coalition of climate groups. There is thoughtful support available if you wish to help with everything from action design and housing to jail and court support.

Third Act is not planning the grand finale, but we are very welcome to join the [Third Act Faith Working Group](#) and [Green Faith](#) on Tuesday morning, Aug. 27, or on Friday, Aug. 30, to swell the crowd of activists making demands on Citibank.



According to the Summer of Heat website, demands include:

Stop Funding Fossil Fuels. Wall Street must stop funding, insuring, and investing in all coal, oil, gas, and petrochemical companies.

Exponentially Increase Financing for Renewable Energy. Wall Street must increase its level of financing for renewable energy so that it is in line with what is required for the world to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit). According to research by [Re-claimFinance](#), a non-governmental research and campaigning organization, this means that Wall Street banks must increase their level of renewable energy financing by at least a factor of six by 2030.

Respect Human Rights and Indigenous Sovereignty as Part of a Just Transition. From Arizona to the Congo, the energy transition risks driving a new wave of human rights abuses and violations of Indigenous sovereignty. Wall Street must ensure that human rights, Indigenous sovereignty, and the rights of workers are respected by every company they finance, including renewable energy and rare earth mining companies.

Repair the Harm. Wall Street must acknowledge its role in fueling climate chaos and environmental racism around the world and pay into a climate reparations fund, such as the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage of the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change. Learn more in this [2023 article in The Guardian](#).

If you're considering taking action in NYC, please contact Laurel Green at laurel1planet@gmail.com. Further details will be provided, including information about housing, transportation, NVDA agreement, and how to learn about details of the Summer of Heat actions.

Senior-to-Senior Youth Voter Registration

It's estimated that fewer than half of 18-year-olds are registered to vote! High school is the time and place to get it done. Third Act VT has an important role to play in welcoming young people into our democracy and instilling a lifelong interest in voting and good citizenship.

Join us in working with [Third Act](#) national and [The Civics Center](#) on this initiative. Learn more and preview the resources available to schools on The Civics Center's website. Third Act VT is also collaborating with the League of Women Voters of Vermont's ([LWVVT](#)) high school voter registration efforts.

As of May 2024, Third Act Vermonters were working on Senior-to-Senior in one-third of our high schools (out of 90 total schools). Our allies in the LWVVT were working in another 10 percent. Many report having fun, feeling satisfied with their work, and feeling pleased to promote this key action for democracy.

“Being part of the team that facilitated the voter registration drive at Middlebury Union High School was a totally ENERGIZING experience...,” wrote Walt Koenig. “Just being a part of the energy that both the students and faculty brought to this project brought me hope that we will be leaving our democracy in good hands for the next two generations! I also had the good fortune to get to do this with two other ‘well seasoned’ Third Actors...[and] I feel I now have new friends in the community.”

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

Contact Suzie McCoy at SuzieMcCoy1@gmail.com for more information and with any questions. She's happy to share a one-page flyer to use when contacting schools. Let's help register seniors in every part of the state!



Third Act Vermonters Judy Wade (left) and Suzie McCoy with student Emma Fahey (center) at a Mount Mansfield Union High School voter registration event in February 2024

Kamala vs. Donald—Light vs. Dark

Never again in our lifetime will we face an election so stark. This election is not about picking the lesser of two evils. It's about choosing hope, not despair. Day, not night.

Yes, things have been looking much brighter in the last three weeks. And we can't afford to let up, become complacent. Remember 2016? Hillary was projected to win handily. Instead, we ended up with Trump.

We need more help with phone banking, writing postcards, and text banking. If you're able to step up and help, please contact Jud Lawrie (judlawrie@mindspring.com). Coaching and training is available.

Less than three months to go. Let's get it done!

Postcards for Democracy

Our post-carding efforts targeted Pennsylvania voters, initially, to remind them to re-register for mail-in ballots. The state’s requirement to re-register had been implemented to suppress voting. Since March, we have also used post-carding to support important campaigns in PA, AZ, MT, OH, NY, and CA. Our current focus is back to Pennsylvania.

We meet on the first Sunday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in various locations (VT, DC, PA, and MA). You do not have to attend an in-person event to participate; you may participate remotely. We would welcome your participation in any way and at any level.

We have sent more than 14,000 post cards so far! We have two more Sunday events planned and a week-long marathon in October. Separate details, Zoom links, and reminders will be sent out ahead of any actions.

Learn more about Third Act Vermont’s post-carding efforts [here](https://thirdactvt.org/postcards-for-democracy/), or copy and paste <https://thirdactvt.org/postcards-for-democracy/>

Any questions? Please contact Shaun Deane at shaun@thirdactvt.org.



15 Minutes for Our Future!

Mondays, 8:30 a.m., up to Election Day

As a complement to and outgrowth of our partnership with teams from battleground states, we have launched a weekly meeting and actions to protect our democracy—and by default, our climate and future. We’re calling this “15 Minutes For Our Future!”

We are holding *brief* (less than 15-minute) weekly Zoom calls to identify two actions that each of us can take that week in support of democracy. These actions are easy, with clear instructions; fun; and fast—they can be completed in 15 minutes or less. And they require minimal effort for maximum impact.

At our first meeting, on August 5, we chose actions to support battleground candidates and to learn about Project 2025. At each upcoming meeting, we:

- will recap wins and accomplishments from the previous week (5 minutes), and
- present two new actions for the current week, including any support materials.

Program details, week-by-week actions and accomplishments, and any other pertinent information are available and current at the Third Act VT [15 Minutes For Our Future web page](#).

Meetings are Mondays at 8:30 a.m. up to Election Day, and there’s a hard stop after 15 minutes, though the moderator may stay on if they wish.

The Zoom link is always the same: <https://thirdact-org.zoom.us/j/86068042744?pwd=BGpTYaTwRyYpjfrwGP3nwsFDhtiWkP.1>

Divestment Action Team Update

The Divestment Action Team (DAT) will meet with Becky Wasserman, director of Economic Empowerment in the Office of the State Treasurer, and State Treasurer Mike Pieciak to discuss a decarbonization proposal. The Vermont Pension Investment Commission (VPIC) presented the proposal as an alternative to Bill S.42 before the House Government Operations and Military Affairs Committee witness testimonies. Bill S.42 is an act relating to divestment of state pension funds of investments in the fossil fuel industry. DAT members Beth Sachs and David McColgin will meet with Representative Kate Nugent about this decarbonization proposal.

DAT members are David McColgin, Beth Sachs, Donna Fialkoff, Dina DuBois, Hank Prenskey, and Mari Miceli

Changes Ahead Within Third Act Vermont

This is a good time for retrospection. We have made strides as we follow our mission to inspire Vermont elders to take action on the climate crisis and democracy through education, advocacy, and camaraderie.

Internal to Third Act VT, we reconstituted the Coordinating Committee in 2022 and the group has functioned well. It established our Vision, Mission, and Values; has held monthly statewide meetings on the third Thursday each month; dealt with database and web page needs; and built connections with Third Act Central, just to name a few accomplishments.

Regarding our outreach efforts,

- we organized and hosted a very successful Banking on Our Future: Day of Action on 3.21.23,
- our Legislative Action Team and Divestment Action Team moved legislation through the Vermont House and Senate and developed working relationships with many legislators and allied organizations,
- we celebrated camaraderie at our Rendezvous in June, and
- some of us have participated in Summer of Heat on Wall Street nonviolent direct actions.

TA VT members are stepping up for action on democracy with postcarding, letter writing, conversational canvassing, Senior to Senior Voter Registration, and Regional Groups for local action. There are now regional groups in half the counties in Vermont, and three more are in development.

The work of the Coordinating Committee to surface new leadership is starting to bear fruit. Two TA VT members, who have been active in various roles, are about to become the new co-facilitators. It will be an honor to mentor them as they find ways for the new role to fit them.

Personally, I will be transitioning from the role of facilitator into a new role as the regional groups coordinator to continue that important work of organizational development. I appreciate each person who has put their time, energy, and thought into the past and current thriving of Third Act Vermont. I can proudly say I am pleased with us as a working group of Third Act.

—Laurel Green, TA VT Facilitator

Revitalization Statewide Meeting

Thursday, August 15, 4:30-6 p.m.

We will have a special guest facilitator for our “all-in call” this month. Anna Goldstein, an advisor on the national Third Act Advisory Council, will facilitate our meeting. Besides being a dynamic, delightful person, Anna is a skilled leader who had been working with our Coordinating Committee to plan the next steps to keep the lights on at Third Act Vermont.

There will be some great news to share, time in breakout rooms to talk about what is important to each of us about Third Act Vermont, and time to work together to fill gaps in the essential work of our all volunteer organization. The entire 90 minutes will be focused on our Revitalization process. We’d love to have all of you join us for this special meeting.

Here is the meeting [link](#).

Or cut and paste this URL into your browser: <https://thirdact-org.zoom.us/j/83923821289?pwd=hdqHdaAF9qUFCd9gUV8IvyEPUWUwgW.1>
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.

Talk, Q&A, and Book Sale with Bill McKibben

Sunday, October 6, 4 p.m. at American Flatbread, 46 Lareau Rd., Waitsfield, VT 05673

This is not a Third Act VT event, but we thought you’d like to know about it.

Bill McKibben is an acclaimed environmental activist who founded the first global grassroots climate campaign, 350.org, and Third Act. He has written more than a dozen books about the environment, including his first, *The End of Nature*, published in 1989. In 2014 he was awarded the Right Livelihood Prize, often referred to as the alternative Nobel. He has won the Gandhi Peace Award, holds honorary degrees from 19 colleges and universities, and currently serves as the Schumann Distinguished Scholar Environmental Studies at Middlebury College in Vermont.



The event is sponsored by: Friends of the Mad River, The MR Path Association, The Valley Reporter, Mad River Climate Action, Champlain College, and American Flatbread

Thank you for being a member of Third Act Vermont!