



A GREAT WAY TO TAP INTO KNOWLEDGE AND  
KNOW-HOW LURKING IN YOUR VERMONT COMMUNITY

Our “consumer guarantee”:

*Mind candy for the curious. More fun than paying bills or shoveling snow. Healthier than contemplating the Zombie Apocalypse.*

**If you've spent any time in Vermont, it can't have escaped your notice that many of our communities are awash in people with extraordinary talents and expertise, valuable old-fashioned know-how and a love of studying, doing and creating all manner of interesting things. We love tapping into a little of what they know and bringing it to you.**

The Internet brought us stupendous tools for learning, sharing and expressing ideas. It also, ironically, brought on a kind of social disconnect, with more people living in isolated trenches of online vs. real human connectivity. As an antidote to this kind of disconnection, TOWN BRAINTAP offers the intimacy and vibrancy of the live learning experience.

- \* Events are cheap or free. Pay as you wish.
- \* You get to meet your neighbors.
- \* You can learn something with others who share your curiosities.
- \* You can do something besides whatever your same-old-same-old is.
- \* You can feel good about where your money goes. You'll be helping programs that enrich the lives of young people in your communities and kindle a love of reading in children at a formative age.

### **Who's Behind TOWNBRAINTAP**

**Ricka McNaughton**, Co-Creator, Producer, Web Content/Design

Contact: [rickamcn@charter.net](mailto:rickamcn@charter.net)

**Jeanne Haskell**, Co-creator, provider of imagination, logistical support and other ongoing acts of generosity. Thanks will always go to **Emily Johansen** who has moved out of state to a new life but whose initial concept, sense of the possible and executive mindset were fundamental to getting Town Braintap off the ground. We miss you Emily.

## **Press**

"It's fitting that one of the most innovative speaker's series around has the most unusual slogan you'll ever hear... "

--Rick Kisonak , *Seven Days Columnist, Film Critic / 3-11-15*

"Pithy evening classes with some of the most interesting and creative characters around..."

--Gayle Hanson, *Correspondent, Times-Argus*  
9-26-14

## **We are Ridiculously Grateful to our Presenters**

*Our presenters receive no pay for educating and entertaining you. We cannot overstate our thanks for their donated time and expertise in support of the aims of TOWN BRAINTAP. Some presenters are experienced public speakers and/or educators by training. Some aren't, but they have knowledge about subjects they know and love, and are willing to share it with us.*

## **THANK YOU TO SOME OF OUR EXTRAORDINARY PAST PRESENTERS:**

### **Inserted Page content from TOWN BRAINTAP.NET WEBSITE**

We created this page to recognize, with buckets of gratitude, our past presenters who so generously donated their valuable time and extraordinary knowledge. This will also give you an idea of the types of subject matter we've had thus far, if you're thinking of doing a presentation. And we've provided links, where possible, to learn more about these remarkable people in our community.

### **LEDA SCHUBERT gave us:**

#### **"Creating the Children's Picture Book: An Introduction"**

Leda Schubert is the winner of the Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding non-fiction from the National Council of teachers of English. She was a core faculty member at the Vermont College of Fine Arts, MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults. Her published books include *Here Comes Darrell* (illustrated by Mary Azarian) and *Ballet of the Elephants*. Leda presented an advice-packed agenda, covering the art of creating the children's picture book, explaining how text and imagery combine in 32 pages to produce a unique whole, and dissecting some of her favorite books by other successful authors. A bonanza of solid, authoritative information for budding authors.

Leda's website: <http://www.ledaschubert.com/>

### **ANAIS MITCHELL gave us:**

#### **"Song Lyrics and the Imagery Behind Them"**

Internationally acclaimed recording artist Anais Mitchell has been called "first and foremost a storyteller." One reviewer called her work "a perfect example of how art, and the power of a song, can transform the merely anecdotal into something almost mythic." Her Album *Child Ballads* took Best traditional Song at the BBC Folk Awards. *Young Man in America* made many "best lists," including those of NPR and the Wall Street Journal. She gave us her thoughts on

how songwriting pairs poetry with melody, and melds inspiration with structural theory. Like having a backstage pass to schmooze with the artist, only way better. Anais is a literary as well as a musical force to be reckoned with. And, yep, she brought her guitar.

(Note: Anais subsequently won a Tony Award (music, book, lyrics, best Broadway Musical) for her play *Hadestown*.)

Anais's website: <http://anaismitchell.com/>

**JEANNE HASKELL gave us:**

**"An Introduction to Enneagram Theory"**

Jeanne Haskell is Certified Enneagram Instructor, consultant and life coach (and also a co-creator of Town Braintap.) She revealed how Enneagram Theory and its personality charting tools can offer fresh approaches for solving problems that are blocking growth and creativity, at any age. You might, for example, recharge a sluggish creative drive or overcome a difficult relationship. She explained how over time, as you continue Enneagram work, you may discover who you really are and what else you might want to be or do.

Jeanne's website: <http://jeannehaskell.com/>

**TREVOR TAIT gave us:**

**"Empower Yourself at Home: Handling Common Power Tools"**

Trevor Tait teaches kids about design and construction and runs the Design Technology Department at Twinfield Union High School in Marshfield, Vermont. Someone needs to do a documentary one day about Trevor's canoe-building program for Twinfield students. Beginning in January for the past several years, they start with a pile of cut logs, they learn to build beautifully finished modern canoes and paddles from scratch, and then they embark on a week-long class trip/canoeing adventure that spring. In his Town Braintap workshop, Trevor covered the anatomy, handling skills and tips for using common home power tools: a boatload of info for DIY-ers.

**LARK UPSON gave us:**

**"The Relevance of Color Theory to Your Everyday Life"**

Lark Upson is a renowned artist, designer and interior creator whose work has been featured in *Yankee Magazine*, *Vermont Life* and was on the cover of *House Beautiful*. She operated her own hand-built furniture company for a number of years, acquiring high end clients such as the Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont. She designed and built her own home as well as much of the furniture in it. She most recently took up portrait painting, to great local acclaim. Lark spoke about how our eyes see color values, what's pleasing and why, and how color choices influence your sense of well-being in the home, at work, in the garden, even in what we wear.

**JOHN STARK BELLAMY gave us:**

**"True Tales of Murder and Crime in 19th and 20th Century Vermont"**

Crime author John Stark Bellamy has extensively researched and written about notorious homicides, stories of disappearance, mishap, manslaughter and criminal justice procedures of the day. His most recent book is *Vintage Vermont Villainies*. Of this volume author Howard Frank Mosher wrote, "Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler would have loved it." John has appeared in documentaries on A&E's The History Channel and The Discovery Channel. He presented his subject matter in a wry and witty style, and told entertaining stories about the fact gathering process and local, latter day public reaction to his historical accounts.

**TOM BLACHLY gave us:**

**"Take Two Sonnets and Call me In the Morning"**

Tom reflected on his bone deep love of Shakespeare's work, touching on how it banished his blues and cured his boredom. Through the analysis of sonnets, Tom spoke of the Bard's enduring impact on the art, language and the powers of human reason. Tom Blachly has written roughly 40 plays, which include a cycle of nineteen 5-act works about American history inspired by Shakespeare's English history cycle. He has directed plays for over 30 years at Unadilla Theater in East Calais, VT. He also co-founded a group called Shakespeare in the Hills where he produced a series of plays and ran a summer camp for young thespians.

**FRED WILBER gave us:**

**"Ageless Musical Concepts in the age of Ones and Zeros"**

Fred performed a few of his compositions on keyboard pairing them for effect with pre-recorded digital tracks, breaking down the creation process. The audience used their voices and "found" musical objects in the room to make and record an original musical soundscape. As founder, owner and operator of Buch Spieler in Montpelier, VT, Fred has spent 40+ years in the retail music business, an accompaniment to his life-long love of creating and playing music. He's taught music video making to inner-city youth and played in New York City clubs and studios. He also holds a degree in philosophy, a perspective that forms a backbeat to his musical endeavors.

**ELLEN BLACHLY gave us:**

**"The Upholsterer's Craft - A Glimpse into the Art of Restoring Old and Antique Furniture"**

"Ellie" is an upholsterer specializing in historically accurate 18th century techniques and natural materials. The upholstery trade is still-taught with the old-time apprentice master system because it is simply not practical to learn it any other way. Ellie welcomed us into her professional workshop, spoke about her love of this craft, her experiences learning it and some of what it entails. A great look-listen-touch experience. She works out of her Marshfield Shop, Eaton Hill Upholstery. Following her apprenticeship she earned a Master's Degree in Furniture Restoration from Buckinghamshire New University in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, UK. Her projects have included work for the Palace of Holyrood in Edinburgh, Scotland and she serves as the official upholsterer for the Vermont Statehouse. She's also available for local reupholstery projects and consults.  
Ellen's website: [www.eatonhillupholstery.com](http://www.eatonhillupholstery.com)

**JUDY CYPRIAN gave us:**

**"Positive Tactics for Settling Disagreements (and Soothing Hotheads)"**

Judy is a certified mediator focusing on communication and conflict management, in private practice for 12 years. She covered tips for settling disagreements wherever the need may arise: work, at home, in public or social settings. She spoke about turning conflict into opportunities for improved relationships, and covered positive ways to communicate with people and motivate them to problem solve with you, so you can reach mutually beneficial outcomes. She has an M.Ed in Counseling from the University of Vermont and is a graduate of Woodbury College's Mediation/Conflict Management program. She provides consultation and facilitation for non-profit boards and organizations, leads community dialog groups and mediates issues of divorce and special education.

**ROSEMARY GLADSTAR gave us:**

**"Herbs for Winter Health: Recipes for Wellness"**

An internationally renowned herbalist, author and plant conservationist, Rosemary covered a wide array of herbal recipes and strategies for keeping emotional and physical balance through the heightened stressors of a Vermont winter. She brought written recipes for some of her most popular herbal tinctures and recipes to share, blended to help with coughs, colds, flus and seasonal depression. We tasted some of them and heard about their biological components, actions and quality control issues. Rosemary founded Sage Mountain herbal retreat center and Botanical Sanctuary on her 500-acre preserve in Central Vermont. She is the founding president of United Plant Savers and Director of the International herb Symposium and the New England Women's Herbal Conference. She has also written eleven books, been featured in documentary film, and authored a home study course.

Rosemary's website: [www.sagemountain.com](http://www.sagemountain.com)

**SUSAN ABBOTT gave us:**

**"Pens, Paper, Paint and Passport: The Art of the Travel Journal"**

An exhibit painter, Susan's work is also held in swank private collections ranging from Fortune 500 companies to Oprah Winfrey. She studied with many name luminaries and created her first travel sketchbook in Paris twenty years ago. Since then, she has never taken a trip without one and the tools to record her impressions in it. A sketchbook, she explained, is a way to deepen your appreciation of your journeys through artistic observation and expression, whether you're a pro or a even just a beginning sketcher. She covered some fascinating history of sketchbooks and explained how they powerfully evoke your memories of place -- of light, form, color, textures, smells, encounters with locals. She shared sketchbook she completed in France, Italy, England, Spain and India. Susan also conducts popular workshops abroad.

Susan's website: [www.susanabbott.com](http://www.susanabbott.com)

**LINCOLN EARLE-CENTERS gave us:**

**"Do Plants Think? A Fascinating Look at Nature's Elegant Problem Solvers"**

Plants behave and communicate in some astonishingly smart ways, and beliefs about plant intelligence stem from a fertile mix of sources. They include the observations of naturalists and gardeners, the ideas of spiritualists and primitive cultures, purveyors of pseudo-science and legitimate scientists who have discovered that, yes, plants have neurotransmitters. Lincoln, a certified arborist, is the owner-operator of Sylvan Tree Care based in Marshfield, VT, specializing in thoughtful, environmentally low-impact methods of tree care. He's often called to spend time in towering or inaccessible trees without the aid of buckets or cranes. This work has a spiritual side for him, and it affords him an especially good space in which to contemplate the mechanisms and strivings of both the natural and human-made world.

**CAROL WEYLAND gave us:**

**"Creature Comforts: Nutrition, Wellness and First Aid for Your Pet"**

Veterinarian Carol Weyland emphasizes that no one form of medicine or diet is good for every animal. In her many years of practice, Carol has found out what works and doesn't work for a good many animals, and thus centered her practice around holistic care, natural diets, acupuncture, and herbal medicine. She'll cover nutrition issues, including the benefits of raw and home-made diets you can provide and adapt for your pet. She'll also cover home

treatments, emergency and minor first aid you can do yourself, and when you should get your pet to a vet pronto. And of course, there will be time for questions. And your pet stories.

**STEPHEN MORRIS gave us:**

**“The Roots of Beer: A Talk and Tasting Experience”**

Author, Publisher, and Beer Lover Stephen Morris set out in 1978 to find out why the state of beer in the United States was so dismal. He learned why, but he also encountered startling evidence that beer was on the brink of a revolution, a revolution now in full-swing with Vermont at its epicenter. Stephen’s talk, which will pause for several tastings of representative brews, will examine why beer is such an important piece of our culture and delve into how beer is made. He’ll relate parts of his own colorful story, "The Great Beer Trek," which refers both to his own inquisitive travels and the resulting book of that name which some global industry observers credit as an igniter of the microbrew explosion.

**JEANNE HASKELL gave us:**

**“An Introduction to Enneagram Theory”**

Imagine if you could release a long-stifled or undernourished creative drive... What could you start to achieve? What if you finally gained some key insights into a difficult business or personal relationship and became better at overcoming it.... How might your life be different? Some people find that Enneagram theory offers them fresh approaches to problems that are blocking their personal growth and productivity. It uses personality investigation and charting that develops tools for self-understanding, and has both practical and spiritual applications. Over time, these tools could help you gain valuable insights into who you really are, and what’s coming between you and what you want to become...at any age. Jeanne Haskell is a certified Enneagram instructor, consultant and life coach.

TOWN BRAINTAP is not a fundraising organization. Its primary purpose is to provide stimulating and unusual local talks and events in our rural area, and to bring neighbors together for a little quality face time. We do usually ask for a suggested donation of \$5.00-10.00 at the door (whatever you can comfortably pay.) At the end of each season we pay the proceeds (usually 90% of gross) forward to an organization of our choice that helps enrich the minds and lives of young people in our community. TOWN BRAINTAP is a private, non-profit volunteer-operated entity, not connected to, funded by or governed by any other organizations.

