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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Community puppet workshops and group show at 118
2 Elliot marks America 250 milestone

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4 TEXT BODY:

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5 As Brattleboro commemorates America’s 250th birthday,
6 118 Elliot presents “I Lift My Light,” a month of events including
7 a gallery show and puppet building along with other artistic
8 activities. The events also include community puppet-building
9 and march at Gallery Walk, July 3, celebrating people’s visions of
10 hope for America, symbolized by the Statue of Liberty.

11 As part of “I Lift My Light,” 118 Elliot is working with
12 other community groups and Bread & Puppet Theater alum Uriel
13 Najera to lead free puppet-making workshops for adults and
14 children at 118 Elliot to build a giant Statue of Liberty puppet and
15 other puppetry performance elements that will be presented as
16 part of the ‘Brattleboro Goes Fourth’ July 4th parade.

17 Through these community workshops, participants will
18 learn about puppet construction and use of puppetry for civic
19 expression.

20 The first workshop is scheduled for Saturday, June 20,
21 from 10 a.m. to noon (and possibly longer). The day will begin
22 with building the large puppet and planning for the parade
23 performance and other puppetry elements, such as wings and
24 lamps, all within the framework of what the Statue of Liberty
25 means for participants.

26 The title of these events is taken from Emma Lazarus’s
27 sonnet “The New Colossus,” inspired by the Statue and exhibited
28 within its pedestal, whose last line reads: “I lift my lamp beside
29 the golden door!”

30 On Friday, July 3, from 2 to 4 p.m., Najera will also lead
31 a Kids Workshop (for 5- to 12-year-olds), in 118 Elliot’s back lot.
32 Participants will get to make wearable wings modeled after
33 different birds that migrate across the world.

34 Later that day, during Brattleboro’s July Gallery Walk
35 event, the public is invited to join Najera and other volunteers to
36 help complete the Statue of Liberty puppet in the lot behind 118
37 Elliot from 5 to 7 p.m.

38 The completed Lady Liberty puppet may also ‘march’ to
39 the Harmony Parking Lot toward the end of Gallery Walk to make
40 her public debut.

41 On Saturday, July 4, The Statue and supporting puppets
42 made the previous evening will participate in the Brattleboro
43 Goes Fourth parade, which will take place at 10 a.m. The parade
44 steps off from the corner of Flat Street, proceeds up Main Street,
45 and concludes at the Common.

46 In addition to the puppet-building workshops, 118 Elliot
47 is also hosting a group art show, opening July 3, which will
48 include artist Liza Cassidy's "The Mending Wall" which invites
49 visitors to sew patches of fabric onto others' pieces with hopeful
50 thoughts about the future of the American experiment.

51 Other "I Lift My Light" activities focused on the
52 significance of the Statue in commemorating the 250th
53 anniversary of the Declaration of Independence will occur at the
54 gallery throughout the month of July.

55 Brattleboro has a special connection with Lady Liberty.
56 Brattleboro-based architect Richard Morris Hunt designed the
57 Statue of Liberty's pedestal on commission from the American
58 Committee for the Statue of Liberty. From 1882 to 1884, Hunt
59 worked with *Frédéric Bartholdi*, the French sculptor and designer
60 who designed the Statue of Liberty.

61 Hunt's family home was at the current site of Pliny Park
62 in downtown Brattleboro, one reason the town logo for America
63 250 events includes the Statue's image.

64 The puppet workshops are the culminating effort of a
65 multi-year collaboration of the Windham World Affairs Council,
66 Brooks Memorial Library, *VIM/The Commons*, with support from
67 the Vermont Humanities Council, as well as 118 Elliot and the
68 Downtown Brattleboro Alliance.

69 All workshops are free with materials provided. To
70 register, participants can write to 118Elliot@gmail.com or call
71 (917) 239-8743.

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