



New new year

Celebrate Lunar New Year with a variety of activities and food from East Asia. See Arts + Leisure.



Mixed results

Both Tiger hockey teams posted a win, but also came up short in recent play. See Sports, Page 1B.



Healthcare

A local member of the Green Mountain Care Board reflects on Vt. hospitals. See Page 2A.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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On the ballot Three to vie for two Midd seats

Selectboard opening draws interest

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury voters on March 5 will decide a three-person race for two seats on their selectboard, a contest that'll involve an incumbent, a former selectman, and the community's former longtime town planner.

It'll be the only contested election on Middlebury's 2024 Town Meeting Day ballot, as other candidates are running unopposed for slots on the Addison Central

School District (see story on Page 15A) and Ilsley Public Library boards, and for town moderator and town clerk.

The three candidates for selectboard are, in alphabetical order, Fred Dunnington, Travis Forbes and Farhad Khan.

Each of the three men has plenty of knowledge about Middlebury's inner workings.

Dunnington, a University of (See Middlebury, Page 11A)

Ferrisburgh has race; city sees status quo

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — Barring stunning write-in results, the status quo will rule on the Vergennes City Council after Town Meeting Day, but the Ferrisburgh selectboard will have a new member after March 5 voting.

In Addison, three incumbents face challengers for their selectboard seats (See story on page 1A).

Meanwhile in Pantton, only incumbent selectboard member Teresa Boucher is on the ballot. (See Ferrisburgh, Page 17A)

Nine running for 3 seats in Addison

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON — Three incumbents on the Addison selectboard face challengers for their selectboard seats in Town Meeting Day voting.

One race on the March 5 ballot will offer five names to choose from.

Of the three multi-term selectboard incumbents running, Chairman Roger Waterman drew

four opponents for a two-year term: retiree Elizabeth Armstrong, pig farmer and wood mill owner Ethan Gevry, Agency of Transportation worker Geoffrey Grant, and Michael Hollis, reportedly a former Apple employee.

Former board Chair Jeffrey Kauffman has one opponent for (See Addison, Page 17A)

Bristol, Lincoln have newcomers on ballot

Look to fill school, selectboard seats

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — On Town Meeting Day, voters in Bristol and Lincoln will weigh in on contested races for open seats on their respective town's selectboard.

5-town area school boards will also welcome new faces this spring. In Lincoln, two residents are running unopposed for two seats being vacated by incumbent

school board directors.

The Mount Abraham Unified School District board will also see some turnover, as three longtime board members have decided to take a pass on reelection this March. A New Haven resident is running unopposed for her town's open spot on the board, though two open seats in Bristol two open seats have yet to draw any candidates.

(See Newcomers, Page 17A)



BABY CARL, VOICED by Doyle Dean, right, talks with Sister Gail Worcelo of the Green Mountain Monastery about her community's efforts to care for the planet and its inhabitants. Worcelo is one of several Vermonters interviewed in the new Baby Carl's Happy Apocalypse podcast, a production of the New Perennials Project at Middlebury College.

Photo courtesy of Bill Vitek



Piece by piece

MIDDLEBURY SELECTMAN ANDY Hooper, right, takes his civic duty seriously by chairing the team "The Missing Piece" at Ilsley Library's Great Puzzle Challenge this past Saturday morning. His teammates are daughter Bea Hooper, an MUHS junior, and stepson Cullen Myers, a freshman at the high school. See more photos on Pages 4A and 12A.

Independent photo/Steve James

ACSD sets budget ask at \$50.6M

Reflects 6.5% bump, but big tax hikes loom

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The Addison Central School District board has agreed to present voters with a fiscal year 2025 preK-12 budget of \$50.6 million, representing a 6.5% increase in total spending.

Given the implications of a new state funding law and common level of appraisal (CLA) adjustments, this level of spending could drive homestead education property tax rate increases of 13% to 27% in the ACSD's seven member towns.

The ACSD delivers preK-12 public education to around (See ACSD budget, Page 11A)

Farmers and researchers mull climate change in Vt.

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — 2023 produced more than its fair share of weather-related challenges for Vermont farmers. Following summer floods and a damaging spring frost, growers around the state saw their crops devastated, feed stores depleted, and faced a variety of other obstacles posed by this year's extreme weather.

This past Thursday, two panel discussions hosted by the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition (CVFC) focused in part on the effects of this past year's severe weather and how to help (See Farmers, Page 16A)

State's attorney cited for drunken driving

By MIKE DONOGHUE

Vermont News First

BRIDPORT — Addison County's top prosecutor was arrested for suspicion of driving while under the influence on Thursday, Jan. 25, after she showed up at the scene of a suspicious death in Bridport.

State police at the scene this past Thursday evening asked

State's Attorney Eva Vekos if she wanted to take a walk through the crime scene on Swinton Road where a 44-year-old man was found dead the previous day. State Police Crime Scene Search Team members were wrapping up their site work, and police normally ask the local prosecutor if they want to observe the scene in case there are decisions to be made,

including criminal charges.

Vekos, 54, of Middlebury arrived about 8:50 p.m. Thursday, and troopers detected the odor of intoxicants and saw indicators of impairment such as slurred speech, Patrol Sgt. Eden Neary reported.

Vekos refused to undergo standardized field sobriety tests at the scene and troopers placed

her under arrest for DUI – refusal, Neary said.

Troopers took Vekos to the state police barracks in New Haven, where she was processed and later released to a friend, police said. Police said they issued Vekos a citation ordering her to appear for arraignment in Vermont Superior Court, criminal (See Vekos, Page 17A)

New comedy podcast tackles serious subjects

Interviewees talk farming, address global warming

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — Bill Vitek and Doyle Dean know that talking about the climate crisis, social injustice and other pressing issues facing the world today can be challenging.

That's why the pair has teamed up on a new podcast that uses comedy as a vehicle to start those conversations and make them more approachable.

"It's a little break from the tone, from the endless statistics and the endless blaming of another group that's not you that's causing all of the problems," Vitek explained. "We spend so much time being on a side, being angry and blaming others. I feel that there's another way to do it, or to be relieved from it for a little bit."

The show is called "Baby Carl's Happy Apocalypse" and is a production of the New Perennials project at (See Podcast, Page 18A)



By the way

In wake of the catastrophic severe weather and flooding in 2023 that caused widespread damage along Vermont waterways, several business and (See By the way, Page 16A)

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Lincoln School Board adopts budget

By MARIN HOWELL

LINCOLN — Lincoln School Board members last week unanimously agreed to present voters with a spending plan for fiscal year 2025 that calls for \$4,927,940 in total spending, an increase of \$282,810, or 6.09%, over the current year.

However, it's not yet clear how exactly the proposed budget will impact taxpayers in Lincoln.

That's because the town is currently undergoing a town-wide reappraisal, which district officials expect will result in a recalculation of Lincoln's Common Level of Appraisal, currently 67.51%.

Due to anticipated changes in the town's CLA, district officials have drafted a few different tax rate scenarios for residents who pay education taxes based on the value of their home. The scenarios show a range of changes in the homestead school tax rate from an 8-cent increase to a 13 cent decrease.

BUDGET DETAILS

Lincoln School Board Chair Jeanne Albert said major drivers of the \$4.9 million spending plan adopted on Jan. 22 include salary increases and a rise in health insurance premiums.

"The primary factor driving the increase are wages and benefits, which make up over 60% of our non-tuition expenses, and in particular, a 16.9% increase in health insurance costs. This includes budgeting for an additional classroom teacher, based on current enrollment and continuing trends. Secondly, the budget also includes proactive planning for maintaining facilities and other contingencies," she told the *Independent*.

With an anticipated \$503,482 coming into the district from local revenue, education spending for FY'25 is expected to total \$4,424,457.

Budget figures shared on Monday include an estimated long-term weighted average daily membership of 301.39. That

represents a reduction of 2.42 students from the current year. Long-term weighted average daily membership is a revised way of measuring a district's equalized pupils outlined under Act 127, the state's new education funding law.

The new funding formula is intended to correct inequities in how the state funds the cost of educating students with different needs by changing the equalized pupil calculation to a measurement of long-term weighted average daily membership and applying new weights to students based on grade level, poverty and English Language Learner status.

Factoring in the anticipated increase in total expenditures and a reduction in long-term weighted average daily membership, spending per-pupil is expected to rise by \$931.69, or 6.78%, to \$14,680.17 in FY'25.

That single-digit increase in per-pupil spending should qualify the district for a 5% homestead tax rate cap offered under Act 127. Districts with cost per-pupil increases that exceed 10% will be required to appear before a tax review board to determine their eligibility for the cap.

TAX RATE IMPACTS

With the 5% cap factored in, the district tax rate is expected to rise by seven cents, from \$1.44 to \$1.51 per \$100 of assessed property value.

However, Lincoln's CLA will determine the overall tax implications for residents who pay education taxes based on the value of their home.

The common level of appraisal is an adjustment that the state makes when assessing education property taxes to make the level of taxation equal among all Vermont towns. If a town's grant list (list of the value of all its properties) is less than 100% that indicates that fair market value for the properties is higher than the grand list values, so then the tax rate is increased.

Like other towns in the county and throughout the state, Lincoln has seen a drop in its CLA this year, from 87.72 to 67.51. However, the district is anticipating an adjustment in the town's common level of appraisal following the completion of the reappraisal this spring.

That adjustment could bring the town's CLA closer to 100, though district officials don't yet know exactly what the recalculation will look like.

Thus, district officials have drafted a few different scenarios for how varying CLAs would affect the homestead school tax rate:

- With a CLA of 87.72, residents would see an 8-cent increase, or an additional \$82.08 per \$100,000 of assessed property value.

- With a CLA of 95, taxpayers would see a 5-cent decrease, or a reduction of \$50.01 per \$100,000.

- With a CLA of 100, residents would see a 13-cent decrease, or a reduction of \$129.59 per \$100,000.

Albert noted district officials have not drafted an estimate for how the current CLA of 67.51 would impact school taxes because knowing that the reappraisal will change the current CLA, calculating at 67.51 "wouldn't be accurate or useful," she said.

District officials are also waiting to see how the reappraisal might impact Lincoln residents who pay education taxes based on their income.

"While we've made preliminary estimates for the percentage of income used as part of income sensitivity tax credits, the town-wide reappraisal makes estimating actual education tax impacts more challenging this year, whether someone pays based on property alone or on a combination of income and property," Albert explained. "At LSD's upcoming budget informational meeting (on Feb. 12) and at our annual meeting (March 4), we will share any updates about tax impacts that become available."



Great with words

MUHS 9TH-GRADER Maggie Morter recently won round 1 of the Rotary speech contest. Morter will go on to compete in round 2 in Vergennes later this year. With her are Rotarian John Barstow, left; Morter, MUHS teacher Tara Martin; contestant Cora Bliven; and Rotarian Jason Schnoor.

Photo courtesy of John Barstow

Holmes

(Continued from Page 2A)

yet towns, employers and households cannot afford double-digit increases in health insurance premiums. The GMCB is in the midst of a comprehensive process to find ways to both improve the financial sustainability of our hospital system and address our access and affordability crises. We have data experts analyzing hospital capacity, efficiency, cost, price, volume, quality and financial performance. We also have healthcare experts gathering insights and lived experiences from patients and providers across the state. Our consultants held over 100 meetings with more than 1,800 participants this past fall and will be returning for more community meetings in the spring. My hope is that this data-driven, community-inclusive process helps us identify strategies to increase efficiencies, lower cost, and improve quality and access in the system. There are some exciting initiatives happening around the state and this process may allow us to share best practices and scale up successful initiatives that improve the health of our communities.

AI – Since joining the GMCB in 2014, do you believe the state's hospitals have made good progress in providing healthcare services more effectively and cost-efficiently?

Holmes – Hospitals have certainly made efforts to provide more cost-effective care and improve health outcomes in their communities. Every year, during the hospital budget process, we hear about genuine cost savings efforts from hospital CEOs and CFOs. We also learn about innovative programs designed to improve community health. The COVID-19 pandemic slowed down some wellness initiatives, but I am optimistic that we will continue to see a shift of resources towards more primary prevention.

AI – In a Jan. 25 op ed, UVM Health Network CEO Sunny Eappen spoke of a new strategy to "improve patient access and move toward a value-based, population health management system, while also operating more efficiently and creating new sources of revenue." Among other things, he's proposing that hospitals prioritize access to surgical services at several hospitals.

Can you see the GMCB supporting hospital budgets that feature bigger requests for surgical equipment, supplies and staffing, in order to enhance hospitals' revenue streams?

Holmes – During the GMCB's hospital budget and certificate-of-need review processes, a hospital may request approval to expand services or purchase expensive capital equipment. The burden

of proof is on the hospital: when approving such expenditures, I look for evidence that the investment meets an unmet community health need, at a reasonable cost, and does not compromise the financial sustainability of the hospital or the affordability of healthcare.

AI – In retrospect, do you think Porter Medical Center made the right decision in affiliating with the UVM Health Network back in 2017?

Holmes – Over the past two decades, we have seen an increase in hospital affiliations, both in the state and at a national level. Hospital consolidation has the potential to reduce costs, increase access to services, and improve care coordination, but it also tends to drive up prices and impact affordability. To my knowledge, there has not been an empirical study of the net impact of recent affiliations in Vermont.

Looking ahead, we need a better path forward for Vermonters. I would encourage all interested Vermonters to attend the GMCB's community meetings in the spring and engage in this important, unprecedented process. You can find more information about the hospital sustainability efforts online at the GMCB website (tinyurl.com/mtnvf5ar), along with links to where the public can sign up to be notified about the spring meeting schedule.

ANWSD

(Continued from Page 2A)

the 10% eligibility threshold. With the capital funding including, the district's per-pupil spending hike was about 9%, edging closer to, but still below, the threshold.

But Stroup said board members were concerned the Legislature would to re-examine district budgets if they too closely approached to the threshold. Essentially, he said the ANWSD board did not want to risk losing the cap and adding to the district tax burden.

"(We) don't want to push it ... in a way that could cause our constituents to lose completely the benefit from 5% tax cap," Stroup said. "This is a good budget for school programs. (It) just delays some infrastructure projects until we figure another way to pay for them."

BUDGET DETAILS

ANWSD officials said the budget proposal preserves all educational and extracurricular programs and most of the behavioral and academic intervention positions that had been paid for by temporary pandemic-era federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds.

Officials added it would take \$1.5 million of cuts to save 1 cent on the district tax rate.

According to Superintendent Sheila Soule, the budget would keep the equivalent of 7.8 full-time positions out of the 10.35 current ESSER-funded ANWSD jobs.

The ESSER positions and the capital improvements were part of the small percentage of the budget over which board members said they had control, without cutting programs.

Outside of the ESSER positions, the budget also includes one new PreK position and one new behavioral specialist, according to administrators.

Officials said because VUHS is a smaller school than most in Vermont it already also offers fewer academic options than many, but Stroup said VUHS programs would probably be targeted if the board had to cut spending.

Budget cost drivers include higher wages for teachers and support staff due to new contracts that brought salaries in line with neighboring districts, a roughly 16% increase in health insurance benefits, a hike in Hannaford Career Center tuition, and higher busing costs.

According to a presentation by Soule, the budget prioritizes continuing to close the achievement gap between low- and higher-


income students, which shows signs of narrowing; supporting student services, multi-tiered systems of support and behavioral programs; enhancing PreK early learning; and supporting the transition of the 6th grade to VUHS.

The ANWSD annual meeting and budget public information hearing is Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. at VUHS.

Board members also made decisions on how to handle a projected surplus from FY23, opting not to apply any to tax relief given the 5% cap. They said using the entire surplus would save only a little more than a penny in the district rate, and thus devoted it instead to funds that can be used for capital or emergency purposes. They voted to:

- Move \$558,483 of the surplus into the district's Education Stabilization Fund. That is a 4% contribution that is within previously voter-approved limits. The Education Stabilization Fund is essentially an emergency fund that can be used at the board's discretion.

- Seek voter approval in March to put the remaining \$1,172,108 into the district's Capital Improvement Fund to address district building needs. On Jan. 17 the fund contained about \$3million.



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Guest editorial

Income inequality solutions

By FRED BASER

Income inequality is often used to illustrate what is wrong with our country. Our capitalistic economy is often thrown up as the major cause of the income gap between the rich and not so rich. I think that is a bunch of bunk. There is plenty of evidence to suggest capitalism works as an economic system. Socialism, the alternative suggested by Bernie Sanders and other Bernieites, has not proven to be a successful alternative.

The headline solution put forward to leveling the income field is increased taxation on wealthy Americans. Tax policy is complicated. There are consequences to every major policy change or additional tax. Vermont's and America's current income tax system is progressive. The wealthy do pay most of all income tax collected. Yes, we hear the stories on how little a few wealthy Americans pay, but these examples are the exception to the rule.

What about Denmark, oft cited as an economic example we should emulate. Denmark has a flat tax on incomes slightly above our nation's household median income, according to the Talent.com Income Tax Calculator and the Tax Foundation. A Danish household making \$100,000 in U.S. dollars has the same marginal income tax rate, 48.6%, as a Danish household making \$500,000. Plus, Denmark has a significant Value Added Tax, which we call a sales tax. Sales taxes are viewed as regressive by many American policy makers. Denmark's lifestyle successes come from a very vibrant capitalistic economic system and the Danes willingness to be heavily taxed in trade for social programs that benefit all Danes regardless of income. In a quote from denmark.dk, Denmark's official website, "The Danish welfare system is built to facilitate the capitalistic market economy in which the Danish society is an integrated part." Keep the economy growing and income rising, and you grow the dollars for social programs that benefit everyone.

So, if capitalism isn't the culprit in creating income inequality, and raising taxes on the rich isn't in and of itself a solution, what can we do?

Here are some steps we could take in this country to elevate the opportunities for those that are struggling economically. Some of these ideas do require additional dollars to make them work. Some ideas emulate programs that exist overseas, like in Denmark for example. However, many of the following ideas do not require large sums of capital. They are likely to require political leadership, compromise and a vision of the future. Here we go:

1. Invest in resources that focus on early childhood development and put special emphasis on working with the children of the disadvantaged. Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman has written extensively on the importance early childhood experiences and their effect on a child's future.

2. Pass immigration reform (both political parties want to) that clears the way for thousands of people who want to make the U.S. their home. Help our immigrants learn English.

3. Provide greater support for mental health programs, especially for youth.

4. Make paid family leave a priority, especially a provision for 12 weeks of leave for new mothers.

5. Support child and dependent care tax credits.

6. Continue to support and bolster the earned income tax credit.

7. Revise rules surrounding the building of affordable housing to provide the greatest financial incentives to mixed income developments. In other words, blend family economic circumstances in the living environment. Today, federal and state programs are the most generous when housing projects are substantially lower income oriented.

8. Capitalize on the community spirit and family strengths found in smaller, often rural, communities. For example, zoning in smaller communities should reflect common sense and be minimalistic. Property taxes in Vermont could be reduced by putting a greater emphasis on income taxes.

9. Support people running for office who emphasize education, especially early childhood development, and place the family and programs to support families as priority goals. Creativity, innovation and invention thrive in societies that are accepting, open, and reasonably regulated. Vote for candidates who believe America can be, and in many ways is, such a place, and work to keep it that way.

10. Embrace AI (artificial intelligence) and its potential to create new types of well-paying jobs for all people.

Here's another thought on this subject that is difficult to assess. It has to do with religious faith. I've read over the years that people who practice their faith and go to church, temple or the mosque, etc. tend to live happier lives. In faith communities there is support among friends, songs and music, special holiday celebrations, welcoming of new people to the faith community, outreach to the disadvantaged or a family in grief, a belief and hope in a happy end. In recent decades practicing religion has markedly decreased. Church attendance, in my hometown of Bristol, would confirm this statement. Reversing this trend would be a positive in many ways, including how content people are regardless of income.

Income inequality headlines and criticizing the rich help no one. Focusing on how we can give hope to people who have lost it will make for positive change. Let me repeat that. Give hope to all Americans. If you believe there is opportunity for you ahead, your actions are far different than if you believe there is no future. My immigrant grandparents and great-grandparents had hope, despite their lower incomes, and they passed it on to their kids.

As this piece is published, the American economy is growing. Wages are rising, not because we've changed our economic model, but because our economic system is flexible and changes itself ... usually for the better. Too many people of all political persuasions have glasses that are half empty. We need forward-looking leaders with a plan, and who deliver it with conviction.

Note: Fred Baser, a long-time Bristol resident, is a retired financial adviser and former state representative.



Which one?

THE POSSIBILITIES SEEM limitless as a hand hovers over the hundreds of puzzle pieces spread about before a participant in Saturday's Great Puzzle Challenge at Ilsley Public Library. Around a dozen teams took part. See more photos on Page 12A.

Independent photo/Steve James

Answering spirits during new moon

On the eleventh day after the new moon, spirits call me. I am giving Grandmother Erdenchimeg an energy healing. Her back is sore after the evening reindeer milking. That's when the call comes. My heart pounds and I know. It is still dusk, although past eleven o'clock at night. Mongolian shaman teachers have taught me to listen for the call from the spirits each month at this time. In response, I must play the mouth harp or drum. Always at this phase of the moon.

No problem when I'm home in Vermont with no one around. It should be easy in the taiga, the place where I was taught. But now, where can I do it? I don't feel like making a big deal about it. It is still my small practice, not for a public ceremony, not in front of the powerful shaman family who lives here.

Shadows are enclosing us. Erdenchimeg returns to her urts, Siberian tipi, to sleep. Only Chimedee my translator is up with me. As my assistant, she knows what I need to do since she has always been with me during my teachings.

The others of our team are sleeping in the urts where we will sleep.

"Could you take me to the beautiful place you found in the woods?" I ask Chimedee. She often takes a break during the day and when she returns tells me she has been to a "beautiful place."

"Now? It's so dark in the woods."

"Yes. We need juniper incense and my mouth harp."

She never says no. We had gathered juniper today. She grabs a branch. My mouth harp is wrapped in a khadag, prayer flag, inserted into a wooden spirit horse

carved by Orchibat, one of the Dukha reindeer herders. I follow Chimedee over uneven ground through the larch trees. We come to a boulder.

Chimedee says, "This is where I sit."

I say, "Perfect. We'll stop here."

She tries to light juniper to prepare the space. As she strikes the match and holds it under a branch, the needles are too fresh to ignite, but a faint juniper smell escapes

with the match smoke. I unwrap my mouth harp with cold fingers and begin to play. When the sound seems to come from somewhere else, I have connected with the land and the beyond. Gotten into the flow of energy for whatever needs to happen. Although no spoken messages come, I am glad that I have opened myself here.

This ancient land is called gazar where each plant, tree, and especially this boulder we are leaning against, has a spirit. Every spirit with a name. Where spirits from beyond are the ancient people, ancestors of those like Erdenchimeg who want to keep this way of life prosperous — the people and animals healthy.

Chimedee strikes one last match and holds it under the branch. I wrap the mouth harp in the khadag and wooden horse. Chimedee carries the juniper.

Through the branches, the moon seems to thank us as we walk back to the urts to sleep.

Sas Carey is an energy healer who practices in Mongolia and Middlebury. Her books "Marrying Mongolia" and "Reindeer Herders in My Heart" and six documentaries are available through Nomadicare. ORG and Amazon.

Ways of Seeing

By Sas Carey



Letters to the Editor

Traffic scheme makes no sense

Recently I needed to shop at the Dollar Market store on Court Street in Middlebury. I was headed north and pulled over into the lane where I could enter the store, but traffic was so heavy I could not hold cars back, so I went to the light, turned left, up the road to turn around and back to the light to turn right into the store's parking lot.

All the time I am thinking, "Why oh why is that second opening to the store blocked off?"

When inquiring I discovered that the "powers that be" of the town decided it was dangerous. I was puzzled because it is much more dangerous to try to pull out into traffic than to have an exit or entrance where the light can help motorists safely.

I would like to see the selectpersons please open that area before we have a serious accident. We are grateful for that store and want to safely be able to enter and exit.

Shirley Pominville
Middlebury

Workers thanked for tree removal

Kudos to the "Men At Work" of Middlebury when a very large pine tree came down in the windy night of the recent storm. It landed across Munson Road, bringing with it the electric wire and into my driveway, preventing traffic access to Route 116. Very shortly, at about 9 a.m., a team of workers arrived and got to work releasing the wire to be attached to the pole. The men efficiently cleared Munson Road for traffic to resume by 11:15 a.m.

The next day a John Deere loader arrived, and work began to remove a massive amount of tree trunks, limbs and debris, each man stepping into his particular job.

I had a front row seat from my living room watching this very smooth execution of a monumental job. The entire project took approximately six hours, and without wasting a moment of time they were off to the next eagerly awaiting dilemma.

My thanks and appreciation to the men here and all the men who keep Middlebury beautiful.

Jean Panicucci
Middlebury

A tale of two healthcare views

The apt placement of the guest editorial by the UVMHN CEO, Sunny Eappen; "Living Together" by Danielle Wallace; and "Ways of Seeing" by Cheryl Mitchell on the editorial pages of the Jan. 25 issue, could not have been better timed. The thinly veiled corporate approach to healthcare by Eappen betrays the prime motivators and objectives of UVMHN: revenue and margin. As a former employee at director-level at the mothership, UVM Medical Center, I have reason to draw this conclusion.

Eappen's empty corporate-speak is an excellent portrayal of the top-down mandate of "Margin Is King." Trust me, UVMHN does not care about housing for those in desperate, urgent need; it seeks housing to attract employees. Eappen's "urgency" is only about increasing revenue. As Fletcher Allen became UVM Medical Center, then UVMHN, absorbing smaller local hospitals throughout northern Vermont and New York while simultaneously creating revenue generators such as One Care and UVM Advantage, administrative costs have soared to 31%. (I strongly recommend reading Bill Schubart's Opinion piece in VT Digger, December 10, 2023. Mr. Schubart asks, "So if the mission focuses on the institution rather than the population it serves, how do we measure its success?" I do recommend reading his reference, a piece in the *New York Times*

(See LaDue letter, Page 4A)

New mental health strategy needed

Third in a series.
Officer Christopher Mason has been with Middlebury Police Department since 2009.

There is a burgeoning housing crisis in Vermont, as evidenced in our state's shockingly high rate of unhoused, and even more shocking increase in that rate — an estimated 218% between 2007 and 2023 according to HUD. The causes are complex, with contributing factors extending through every facet of the social fabric.

Most of my professional encounters are with the people at the very fringe of this diverse group — typically those struggling with a combination of acute poverty, addiction and mental health issues. An effective response for these folks would have to address all three major factors, each of which is dishearteningly monumental.

Focusing purely upon mental health, I am convinced our community is grappling with a public health catastrophe.

When engaging with people experiencing a mental health crisis, I often reach out to mental health services for support but seldom receive it. I am generally able to de-escalate situations, despite being confronted by severe psychosis, paranoia and aggression, but these calls pose a significant hazard, most especially to the person in crisis.

The protocol is for police to transport people who are unsafe to the local hospital where mental health professionals can evaluate them to determine if continued custody is warranted. These individuals are often forced to stay in a room in the ER for hours or days awaiting that assessment, and then awaiting a residential placement after that assessment has been made, all the while receiving almost no mental health treatment, sometimes physically or chemically restrained, and frequently in the grip of overwhelming confusion and terror. The situation deteriorates if they decide to leave. Hospital staff are not permitted to physically restrain people, so

police sometimes have to locate a psychotic, suicidal or homicidal individual wandering in the community. This process does a profound disservice to the person experiencing the mental health crisis. It also puts the community at risk, endangers hospital staff (there have been numerous assaults upon personnel at Porter), and negatively impacts patients at the hospital, sometimes severely.

Often a formal evaluation doesn't even occur, and the person is deemed safe to return home after a very brief conversation with a counselor. I've known this to happen when the person was interrupted making

(See Living Together, Page 5A)

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Letters to the Editor

Rep. Stefanik is failing her New York constituents

U.S. Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York is unfit for any office. Stefanik says the Supreme Court should vote 9 to 0 that the treasonous ex-president be allowed on the Colorado ballot because "that is the American people's decision to make in November." However, when Biden clearly won the last election, Stefanik voted against certifying the election and did not listen to the people's voices. So, she surely doesn't care about the American people's decisions, unless, of course, their decisions match her decisions. She is a hypocrite to the utmost extent: She wouldn't allow the rights

of all voters in 2020, but when it comes to far-right extremist voters, she'll allow their rights. According to this deluded individual, "American people" only count as American people if they are voting for candidates she supports. Also, Stefanik lacks education, not bothering to gather the whole truth before making judgments but promulgating conspiracy theories and the right-wing lies. Stefanik supports the greatest existing danger facing the American way — Donald's sinister autocracy and his pathological lies! The sick, sad people she is among will do and say anything in their desperate

attempt to toss out democracy and legitimate votes. The only thing on which the Supreme Court should rule 9 to 0 is for Donald to be imprisoned for inciting insurrection, election fraud, and every other disgusting crime he has committed, and for you, Elise, to be right beside him in the next cell. I don't know who is voting for and following these damaging extremists, or believing their hypocrisy and lies. If it is you, wake up and smell the coffee, quickly, please!

Judy Kowalczyk Ripton

Becoming a mentor is helpful and empowering

January is National Mentor Month, and I am writing to express and share the joy and fulfillment of being a mentor in the MAUSD mentor program with the hope that others in the community will consider joining or supporting this important program. MAUSD helps to foster and build relationships between district students and community members through mentor/mentee matches in the elementary schools, and the Mt. Abe middle and high school. Mentoring is a community strengthening endeavor that enriches the lives of all involved. MAUSD programs in Bristol, Monkton, Starksboro, New Haven help connect interested adult volunteers with kids who benefit from these one-on-one

connections. As a community mentor for the last four years, the benefits of connecting with a local student and creating a lifetime of memories has been immeasurable. I met my mentee when she was in third grade, and now as a sixth grader we have found a variety of activities and interests we enjoy sharing with one another and have been able to forge a relationship that is built on trust, kindness, respect and appreciation for the time we get to spend together. There are currently 82 matches in the MAUSD's four towns who meet with their mentees to enjoy conversation and lunch at school or to work on shared art projects, play outdoors, do farm chores, craft and recreate together. Many of us have cultivated shared interests like painting, mechanics,

skiing, climbing, hiking, and making music. There are so many community events that I might not otherwise attend but having a young friend to share in our rich local culture has been a gift for me. I always come away with a feeling of gratitude for the opportunity to spend time with a young person who is forming her hopes and dreams and ideas for the future. And thankful for her willingness to share all of these with me. Research has shown that students with mentors have increased high school graduation rates, lower high school dropout rates, healthier relationships and lifestyle choices, better attitude about school, higher college enrollment rates and higher

(See Callahan letter, Page 8A)

Living Together

(Continued from Page 4A)

a suicide attempt, cut down in the process of trying to hang themselves. These incidents are especially surreal when mental health services call police to respond to a mental health crisis. It's my duty to protect people, and I will do that to the very best of my ability, but often the intent is for law enforcement to address behavioral issues rooted in mental health problems through the criminal justice system. Several times, I've been ardently urged by mental health staff to arrest people in crisis, to incarcerate them as a solution to ongoing disruption — a request that is appalling, but also based upon a lack of understanding of the justice system. Even if a person were to be charged criminally with damaging property or causing a disturbance, the response would be to give them a citation to appear in court in several weeks, not to immediately incarcerate them.

Sometimes the situations are truly absurd. I've had counselors inform me they cannot perform a psychiatric evaluation because the person in crisis does not pose an imminent threat to themselves or others — then, moments later, I'm told counseling cannot be provided because it would be excessively dangerous for the counselor. This lack of response has resulted in incalculable harm and even death. It is not acceptable. Of course, I know the Counselling Service of Addison County (CSAC) is profoundly under-resourced. Mental health infrastructure has been dismantled in the state and every agency is experiencing a staffing shortage. Many of the counselors I work with at CSAC are dedicated, competent and deeply compassionate individuals. They too are victims of these intolerable circumstances, asked to do the impossible and condemned for their lack of success. One of the consequences of

this problem is that our homeless shelter is being used as a residential mental health facility, though it's not structurally designed for this, and staff are not trained to provide treatment. I know they frequently struggle in vain to gain assistance for people in crisis, and are repeatedly told individuals in the grip of devastating mental illness do not meet the criteria for intervention. This not only means people are failing to receive services that are desperately needed, but well-meaning staff are being subjected to debilitating, traumatic and sometimes dangerous situations. As part of our response to the housing crisis, these issues must be addressed. We owe it to these most marginalized members of our community, we owe it to our service providers, and we owe it to ourselves. Whether our primary motivation is compassion or self-interest, the mandate is equally imperative.

LaDue letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

Opinion section of Nov. 30, 2023, "Why Are Nonprofit Hospitals Focused More On Dollars Than Patients?") In beautiful contrast, Danielle Wallace's call for community compassion and caring for those suffering who have found themselves houseless and/or addicted is laser-focused on what we all need more of. Addison

County, we can do this. Cheryl Mitchell accurately acknowledges the broad, long-term issue of our housing crisis, the danger of silver-bullet solutions, and the sound approach of silver-seed plantings of solutions. One silver seed Ms. Mitchell presents that has the real potential to grow into flourishing long-term growth is universal primary

care. Vermont, we can do this. I strongly endorse her call to "Contact your representatives to advocate for H.59 and universal primary care." I would add a call to oppose S.211; The Green Mountain Care Board needs to strengthen, not weaken its ability to control hospital costs.

Bill LaDue Ferrisburgh

Schools penalized in budget battle

Like most of my colleagues, I strongly support the spirit of Act 127. Providing equitable educational opportunities to the students of Vermont is essential. That being said, while the implementation of Act 127 has been challenging, I feel it has highlighted a larger issue facing Vermont, which is that our current system for education is unaffordable and unsustainable. I fear if we don't make significant changes on a larger scale, one of two things will happen: Either tax rates will continue to rise, or the programming and support for our students will decrease.

We were one of the many districts looking to increase our budget while staying under the 10% increase per pupil spending to avoid submitting our budget for review. From a level service budget, we could either cut approximately \$1 million or add more than \$3 million and both cases



Community Forum

This week's writer is Patrick Reen, Superintendent, Mount Abraham Unified School District. This is his testimony submitted to the Vermont House Ways and Means, Senate Finance, Senate Education, and House Education Committees on the Implications of ACT 127.

still have a 5% increase in our homestead tax rate. With three failed bond attempts in recent years, the opportunity to add money to make important building repairs, like replacing a roof or electrical main, or installing a sprinkler system or a new elevator, or replacing drafty windows, was a welcome opportunity. As I understand it, we were one district of many that was looking to take advantage of the opportunity. The joint letter from Chairs Kornheiser and Cummings made it seem districts like ours were acting irresponsibly. From my perspective, we were pursuing a path that would enable us to make important facilities improvements. A path that was made available to us by Act 127. A path we were pursuing that was well within the bounds of Act 127. Nevertheless, as it became clear that many districts were looking to do the same thing

and that the collective impact on the state education funding system could be devastating, we decided we would not add the \$3 million we had originally intended to. Part of the reason we were looking to take advantage of this opportunity in the first place is because we have struggled to fund important facilities projects. Thankfully, we have been able to establish and grow a construction services line in our budget and we now have a capital reserve fund we are able to add money to from time to time. But these dollars are insignificant relative to the scope of work our schools need. Part of the reason we have not been able to make these facilities improvements earlier is due to lack of state funding support for these projects. Local communities have been out on their own to figure out how to get this work done and some communities have been successful, while others have not. Local communities have also been on their own to figure out how to make educating students more affordable and sustainable. Several years ago, myself and my two other Addison County superintendent colleagues approached the then-secretary of education asking for support to explore the possibility of merging our three small school

(See Reen, Page 8A)

Act 127 fuels school funding woes

I am here to provide testimony on behalf of the Addison Northwest School District regarding the implications of ACT 127 on the FY25 budgeting process. I want to emphasize the unprecedented challenges we face even as a district that remains relatively neutral in the changes to pupil weighting.

Our level service budget for FY25 represents a 14.5% increase in expenditures. This includes the continuation of 8 out of 10 ESSER-funded positions due to continued needs. Our budget incorporates \$750,000 in capital spending for middle school expansion, as well as an HVAC and roofing project whose costs unexpectedly doubled. Excluding the cap, the budget carries tax implications of \$0.23 before CLAs are applied (with CLAs reflecting an average increase of \$0.39 across our five-town community). Even if we exclude the capital spending, we still confront an 11% increase, resulting in a \$0.17 rise in the union tax rate without the cap.

While our circumstances may seem less dramatic than many others, I must highlight the proactive steps we've taken to address these anticipated fiscal challenges. In 2020, three years after our ACT 46 merger, we closed the Addison Central School to control costs. This was a divisive and painful process for our community. A year after that school closure, we initiated a merger study with the Mount Abraham Unified School District (MAUSD), again to preserve programming



Community Forum

This week's writer is Sheila Soule, Superintendent, Addison Northwest School District. This is her testimony submitted to the Vermont House Ways and Means, Senate Finance, Senate Education, and House Education Committees on the Implications of ACT 127.

and control costs. In the Fall of 2022, the merger proposal ended in a failed vote, and also resulted in the Lincoln School withdrawing from MAUSD, creating yet another district in Addison County. Each subsequent budget cycle feels like a fresh round of zero-sum bargaining and blame. Despite all our continued efforts, on a per-pupil basis, we remain among the highest-spending districts in the state. Further, our program of studies analysis reveals the bare minimum of High School course offerings with far less diversity as compared to other high schools. Additionally, our central office is smaller than average, with most of us wearing many hats to cover all the bases. At the school level, we employ fewer than five interventionists and have

no additional positions such as behavioral support specialists and professional development coaches — positions many other districts have. With no clear options to maintain even our basic level of programs and services, we are left with the difficult choice of continually increasing costs or cutting programs. What is local control? We have no control over this situation. The Legislature must understand that we have no other options. Our proposed budget aims to maintain programs, provide fair but modest wages comparatively, address social and emotional needs, and accommodate uncontrollable costs such as health insurance, transportation, paid leave, PreK, and universal free meals. As the Legislature considers the effects on districts that gained or lost tax capacity, please do not lose sight of those of us in the middle with nowhere to go. We have specific short-term questions that urgently need to be answered: Is there a definite 5% cap, and if not used this year, will it be available later? Is the yield estimate stable, or should we expect big changes? We preliminarily passed a budget with the expectation that our union tax rate will be capped

(See Soule, Page 8A)



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ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

Ramona E. Swenor, 90, formerly of Addison

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. — Ramona E. Swenor, 90, of Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (formally of Addison, Vt.) passed away peacefully on Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024, at The Home of the Good Shephard, in Malta, N.Y.

Ramona was born on April 14, 1933, in Burlington, Vt., the daughter of the late Arthur Danyow and Bertha Palmer Danyow.

She was married to Donald F. Swenor on Nov. 22, 1967. He predeceased her on Jan. 10, 2023.

A 1950 Vergennes, Vt., High School Graduate, she worked at Simmonds Precision for over 25 years, then drove school bus for Addison Elementary School for approx. 20 years and then worked for Middlebury College in the cafeteria on campus and at the Snow Bowl.

Ramona's favorite hobbies were bowling in women's and mixed



RAMONA E. SWENOR

leagues. She traveled to women's state and national tournaments. She loved waterskiing, boating and gardening. Mom's greatest enjoyment was being with family. As she often said "You can never

have enough family."

Ramona is survived by her son, Thomas (Kendra) Swenor; grandson, Phillip Swenor; stepson, Frederick (Malou) Monago; sister, Joyce Charbonneau and several nieces, nephews and friends.

She was predeceased by her brother, Arthur (Pat) Danyow and brother-in-law Norbert Charbonneau.

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Home of the Good Shepherd in Malta for the loving care they gave to our mother.

Per her request there will be no service. Her obituary will be listed on Compassionatefuneralcare.com to leave condolences to family.

There will be a burial sometime this spring in Addison, Vt., at the Grandview Cemetery. Details will be posted in the *Addison Independent* newspaper. ♦

Holly Katherine Tuck, 68, of Monkton

MONKTON — Holly Katherine Tuck, 68, died on Jan. 27, peacefully, after spending a short period of time on hospice care, with her husband, Bob by her side.

Holly was born Sept. 29, 1955, to parents, George and Ruth Tuck in Swanton, Vt. She graduated from Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School in 1973. She then attended and graduated from Trinity College in 1980 with a B.A. in Human Services. She received her master's in counseling from St. Michael's College in 1983. Holly became the director of development at The Lund Home 1983-1985. In 1988 she opened her private practice, where she was a mental health and substance abuse counselor, until the time of her death. In addition to her practice, she taught college courses at CCV, Johnson State, and Trinity College for 28 years.

Holly loved all animals, but her favorites were Morgan horses and Collie dogs. Holly had a Collie at her side from the time she could remember until the day she left us. Holly's beloved dog, Jessie B, even traveled cross-country with Holly many times. It didn't matter to Holly if it was a rough or smooth coat Collie, she loved them just the same! She fell in love with Morgan horses when she met



HOLLY KATHERINE TUCK

her heart horse, Stoneyton. Stoney was a very special horse who needed Holly, just as much as she needed him. After Stoney died, she got Maxfield, who was a BIG, red 2-year-old. If you got the chance to meet Max, you knew he was the perfect horse for Holly. His personality matched hers perfectly.

Holly was a phenomenal friend and loved to take care of the people she cared about. She welcomed people into her life with arms wide open. She never had her own kids, but she was happy to love and mentor many young people in her life. Holly will be greatly missed by

all who got to know her throughout her lifetime. Her legacy will be carried on by Tiffany Rochon at the barn Holly started in 1997, Stone Hollow Farm.

Holly was predeceased by her parents, George and Ruth Tuck. She leaves her husband of 27 years, Bob Turcot; her very special barn kid, Tiffany Rochon and her husband, Joshua and their children Rhett and Evelyn Rochon of New Haven; Kelsey Armell and Scott Heath of Starksboro; her collie, "Teds our dog;" her beloved cat, Felix; brother, Terrance (Joyce) Tuck of Isle La Motte; sister, Amber (Greg) Lasnier of St. Johnsbury; her Tuck/Hudak family, Jane, Alex, Cyrus, and Ben; all her special family in Monkton, at Windswept Farm, and Northland Job Corps; Andrea St. Pierre, and Jeffrey Giel, her friend of more than 50 years; and her Stone Hollow Farm.

Per Holly's wishes, there will not be a memorial service or calling hours. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Homeward Bound Animal Shelter in Middlebury, Vt. This was one of Holly's favorite local places to support.

Online condolences can be made at ObituaryinformationforHollyK.Tuck@sandersonfuneralservice.com ♦

Marion Louise Provoncha, 95, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Marion Louise Provoncha, 95, passed away Monday, Jan. 22, 2024, at Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center in Middlebury.

She was born Sept. 20, 1928, in Bristol, the daughter of Newton and Lorraine (Wheelock) Hurlbert.

Her hobbies were cooking, baking, reading, and needle point.

Marion is survived by two daughters, Shirley Provoncha and Judy Goodrich; a son, Mark Provoncha and his partner Luis Carvajal; a grandson, Matthew

Goodrich; several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband, Francis Provoncha, and her brothers and sisters.

A graveside service will be held in the spring. In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to Alzheimer Association of Vermont, 300 Cornerstone Drive 130, Williston, VT 05495 or Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, 30 Porter Drive, Middlebury, VT 05753.

To send online condolences to her family please visit brownmccclayfuneralhomes.com. ♦



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Donald Patrick Laughlin, 61, formerly of Vergennes

MILTON — Donald "Donnie" Patrick Laughlin, a longtime area resident passed away unexpectedly at his home on Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024.

Donnie was one of nine children born to Joan (Granger) Limoge and the late Lyle Laughlin. Donnie was 61 years old, born on Nov. 5, 1962.

He was educated in Vergennes and was a longtime member of Vergennes Post 14, American Legion. He was a construction foreman for 32 years for Don Weston Construction Company.

Donnie is survived by his mother, Joan; his daughter, Jessica Laughlin, and her fiancé, Evan Fleming, and their two children, Riley and Colton; as well as his

brothers, Danny Laughlin and Daren Laughlin and his wife, Sandra; his sister, Ila Hunt; several nieces, nephews, cousins; and close friends Jason Cousino and his fiancée, Haley.

In addition to his father, Lyle, Donnie was predeceased by his brothers David, Dwayne, Derick, and Douglas; and his sister, Debbie Marcott.

A celebration of life will be held on Feb. 25, at 1 p.m., at the American Legion Post 14 in Vergennes, Vt.

Honored to be serving the family of Donnie Laughlin is Rett Heald of the Heald Funeral Home, where messages of condolence are welcome at www.healdfuneralhome.com. ♦



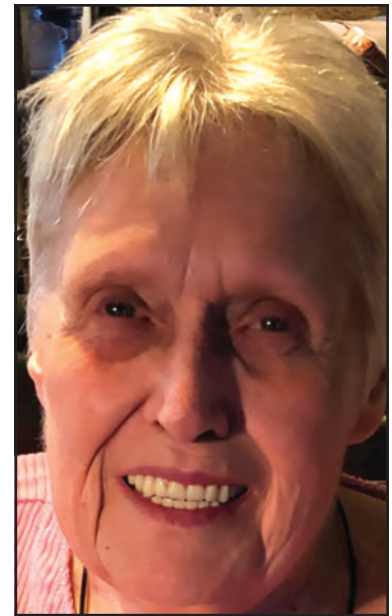
DONALD "DONNIE" PATRICK LAUGHLIN

Carol Dorothy Hadley, 80, of Burlington

BURLINGTON — Carol Dorothy Hadley passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Jan. 9, 2024, in Burlington, Vt., at the age of 80.

Carol was born in Lawrence, Mass., on Oct. 4, 1943, daughter of Anita (Blanchette) and Robert Levasseur. She grew up in Lawrence, where she attended school, worked in mills as a shoemaker and textile operative, married Willard Warren Hadley in 1966, raised three children alongside her loving husband and was later employed for nearly 20 years at the Internal Revenue Service.

In 1997 she moved to Methuen, Mass., where her part-time job at AMC Theatres fostered her passion to become a cinema enthusiast. She was outgoing and easily made friends at every stop along the way of life. She especially cherished any time spent with her grandchildren, particularly when cards, board games, crocheting,



CAROL DOROTHY HADLEY

and puzzles were involved. Carol was loved by everyone who knew her and will be greatly missed.

Carol is survived by her three children, Warren (Dawn)

Hadley of Duxbury, Mass., Dawn (Matt) Coleman of Starksboro, Vt., and Rhonda (John) Zodda of Londonderry, N.H.; eight grandchildren, Vanessa (Miles) MacArthur, Samantha (Joseph) Hill, Jessica (Dylan) Devoid Martell, Drew Hadley, Madison Hadley, Makenna Hadley, Drake Hadley and Jennifer Zodda; and six great-grandchildren. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Willard Warren Hadley, and two brothers, Robert Levasseur and Ronald Levasseur.

All are welcome to pay tribute to Carol at the Brown-McClay Funeral Home, 4 South Street, Bristol, Vt., on Feb. 3, 2024, from 2-4 p.m., followed by a prayer and remembrance Service at 4 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, please make a small donation to the McClure Miller Respite House at The University of Vermont Health Network at www.uvmhomehealth.org/donate/make-an-online-donation/. ♦

Nancy (Sperry) Kemp, 84, of Cornwall

CORNWALL — Nancy (Sperry) Kemp, 84, of Cornwall, Vt., passed away, Jan. 18, 2024, following a brief illness.

Nancy was born on July 12, 1939, in Middlebury, Vt., to the late, Winford and A. Joyce (Bull) Sperry. She took pride in being a Cornwall farm girl — making her residence on a parcel of land that was in the family for many generations — and also in being known as The Cookie Lady, supplying homemade cookies and donuts in the food booth at Tiger football games for almost 20 years.

She was a graduate of Middlebury High School, class of 1957, a member of the Cornwall Congregational Church, VFW Aux. and the American Legion Aux. She is predeceased by her



NANCY (SPERRY) KEMP

husband, Paul Kemp and her son, Larry.

She leaves behind her daughter,

Judith Sperry Gibbs, 82, of Hubbardton

HUBBARDTON, Vt. — The family of Judith Sperry Gibbs is saddened to announce her passing on Jan. 23, 2024.

She was born Aug. 14, 1941, in Norway, Maine, to Carl and Tyne Sandstrom and spent her childhood there. She was the salutatorian of her graduating class. She graduated from the Central Maine General Hospital School of Nursing in Lewiston, Maine, in 1962.

She was a real estate broker, and for many years worked at Bill Beck Real Estate in Middlebury, Vt. She also practiced as an R.N. at Shorewell Medical Center in Shoreham.

Judy was a Lioness in the Middlebury Lions Club and volunteered for HomeShare (helping match people without homes to people needing

housemates). She also volunteered at the Neat Repeats thrift store in Middlebury.

Judy is remembered for her passionate support and caring for her family and loved ones. If anyone was in need of a friend, Judy could always be counted on. She was always ready for a game of cribbage, if her opponent did not mind losing.

Judy is survived by her husband, Bob Gibbs; and children, Nathan Greer of York, Maine, Benjamin Greer of Boulder, Colo., and Paula Sperry of Rutland, Vt. She is also survived by stepchildren, Rhonda Nichols of New Ipswich, N.H., and Beazetta Sperry of Greenville, N.H. She is also survived by grandchildren, Seth and Owen Greer of Colorado and Stephen Schoff, Danielle Schoff, Doug

Terry (Kemp) Ringey and husband Marc, and grandchildren Marci (Ringey) Lambert and husband Bradle, and Kirk and wife Lauren (Barber-Smith) Ringey all of Cornwall. She was also "Gigi" to great-grandchildren Marley, Koen and Boone. She also leaves behind a special friend Davis Bodette Sr. of East Middlebury.

Nancy loved her yearly visits to Maine and the ocean. Please think of her the next time you are at the ocean.

A graveside service will be held in the spring. Donations in Nancy's name may be made to Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehab Center Activities Fund. Services are in the care of Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Home 117 South Main St. Middlebury, VT. 05753. ♦

Nichols, and Jamie Nowak, all of New Hampshire. Other family members include sister, Carla Sandstrom and husband Daniel Crook of Lebanon, N.H.; sister-in-law, Verna Navin of Rutland, Vt.; stepchildren Raymond Gibbs of Poultney, Vt., and Katje Hewes of Hubbardton; and step-grandchildren Gavin Schillinger of New York, and Lorna and Edward Hewes of Hubbardton, Vt.

Those who loved her will miss her deeply, but feel blessed to have had her in our lives.

Donations in Judy's memory can be made to the March of Dimes or the Lions Club.

Arrangements under the direction of Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Home, Middlebury, Vermont.

Online condolences at www.sandersonfuneralservice.com. ♦

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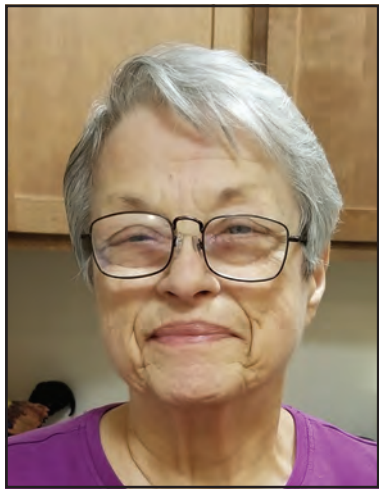
ADDISON COUNTY
School Briefs

Amanda Burnham, of Cornwall received a Master of Arts degree in Educational Psychology at the end of the fall semester at the University of Northern Colorado.

Brooke Bertrand, a resident of Whiting, was honored for academic achievement by being named to the dean's list at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pa., for the fall 2023 semester.

Linda Lee Moulton, 82, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Linda Lee Moulton, 82, resident of Middlebury, Vt., passed away Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024, at home surrounded by family. She was born June 21, 1941, to Harmon and Caroline Stanley. Linda was a graduate of Burlington High School and then attended cosmetology school in Maine. She returned to Vermont and met her husband, Searle "Al" Moulton at his mechanic shop, Al's Downtown Flying A, in Burlington, Vt. They spent their life together in Bridport, Vt., where they raised three children.



LINDA LEE MOULTON

Linda loved to cook for family and friends. She enjoyed preparing healthy meals for the children at Bridport Central School and Mary Johnson Children's Center for many years. She will be forever remembered for her famous macaroni and cheese. She also had a passion for studying nutrition and sharing her knowledge with others. Linda was a faithful member of

the Middlebury congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. She was dedicated to her study of the Bible and sharing its beautiful promises for a better future. She was a devoted mother and cared deeply for her family.

She is survived by her daughters, Laura Charron (Jody)

and Tricia Gordon (Chris), and her son, Searle "Chip" Moulton II, in addition to her favorite people, who called her Gramma: Ashley Swain (Martin), Tajah Marsden and Levi Gordon. She is also survived by her younger sisters Haleen Lafreniere (Conn.), and Pamela Garcia (Vt.), as well as many nieces, nephews and dear friends. She was predeceased by her husband (2001) and a younger sister, Louise Maynard (Ky. 2010).

In lieu of flowers, charitable donations can be made to the worldwide Bible education and relief work of Jehovah's Witnesses at <http://www.donate.jw.org>, or locally to the Middlebury Kingdom Hall, PO Box 12, New Haven, Vt., 05742, or to Addison County Home Health and Hospice, 254 Ethan Allen Hwy, New Haven, Vt., 05472. The family greatly appreciates the care and kindness shown to Linda as she battled a variety of challenging health issues. No services will be held. ◊



Sabina Barbara Evarts, 86, formerly of Ferrisburgh

SHELBURNE — Sabina Barbara Evarts, 86, made her life full by surrounding herself with people, art, conversation, and lots of laughter. She passed on Jan. 22, 2024.



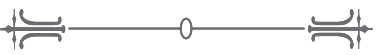
SABINA BARBARA EVARTS

Her legacy will live on in her husband, Lloyd; children, David (Lisa C.) Evarts, Patricia Evarts and John (Lisa V.) Evarts; her sisters; nine grandchildren; fifteen great-grandchildren; and all who called her a friend and teacher.

In lieu of flowers, make weird art, plant flowers, eat ice cream, and live joyfully.

A memorial celebration will be held on Feb. 3, from 1-4 p.m., at the Ferrisburgh Grange Hall.

A full obituary can be viewed at everloved.com/life-of/sabina-evarts/ ◊



Caren June Farnsworth, 87, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Caren June Farnsworth, 87, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024, at Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center in Middlebury.



CAREN JUNE FARNSWORTH

She was born Feb. 25, 1936, in Shoreham, Vt., the daughter of Fayette and Maxine (White) Hutchins.

She was a member of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Middlebury.

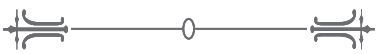
Caren is survived by her three children, Deborah Farnsworth and her husband Eslye, Randall Farnsworth, and Cindy Cloutier and her husband Roger; a brother, Carl, and wife Janet Hutchins; half brother and sister; grandchildren Melissa, Eslye, Rosemary, April, Heather Cloutier and her fiancé Jordan; great-grandchildren Ethan, Jacob, Brennan, Deston, Alysa, and Haley; several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband, Lucien Farnsworth, and two children, Loriann and Lynn.

Funeral services will be held in the spring. In lieu of flowers

contributions may be made to Helen Porter Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, 30 Porter Drive, Middlebury, VT 05753.

To send online condolences to her family please visit www.brownmccayfuneralhomes.com ◊



Bernard D. Kimball, 76, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Bernard D. Kimball, 76, passed away in Bennington Hospital on Jan. 10, 2023.

He leaves his children, Kevin, Bernie, Jason and Anthony "Tony" Kimball; and Victor, Chris and Nicole Vincelle. He also leaves his brothers, Wesley, Olin and Albert Kimball and three sisters, Sylvia, Darlene and Joyce. He also leaves three sisters-in-law.

He was predeceased by his parents, Onon and Ruth Kimball,

his daughter Amber and twin infant daughters.

He has many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and also many nieces and nephews.

Over the years he had many friends and caregivers. He will be missed by many.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later date, to be published. ◊

Time for blinds to come down

VERMONT — Waterfowl hunters who have not removed their hunting blinds from the waters of the state earlier must do so before Feb. 15 on Lake Champlain or May 15 on inland waters, according to a reminder from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

State law requires removal of the blinds before these deadlines to protect natural areas and to prevent boating accidents after the ice melts.

"Removal of the blinds and any posts that may be below the surface of the ice is important because of the danger they present when boaters are on the water in the spring," said State Game Warden Colonel Justin Stedman.

Stedman says wardens annually record names and addresses of blind owners and will follow up with inspections.

ADDISON COUNTY School Briefs

SUNY Morrisville recently announced that **Hannah Taylor** and **Samuel Warren**, both of Bridport were named to the dean's list for the fall 2023 semester. To be named to the list, a student must achieve a 3.0 to 3.99 grade-point average for the semester and complete 12 credit hours.

Liam Seaton, son of Michael Seaton and Elizabeth McCracken of Weybridge, has been named to the dean's list at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. Seaton is a Psychology and Spanish major.

Obituary Guidelines

The Independent will publish paid obituaries and free notices of passing. Paid obituaries cost 25 cents per word and will be published, as submitted, on the date of the family's choosing. For those who do not wish to purchase an obituary, the Independent offers a free notice of passing up to 100 words, subject to editing by our news department. Photos (optional) with either paid obituaries or free notices cost \$10 per photo. Obituaries may be emailed to obits@addisonindependent.com.

Submissions must be received by 11 a.m. on Wednesday for publication in the Thursday paper. Email obits@addisonindependent.com or call 802-388-4944 for more information.

City, town still talking fire deal

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The mediation process that began on Jan. 19 between Vergennes and Ferrisburgh officials to seek an agreement on a new fire contract between the two communities is ongoing, but as of midweek had yet to produce a resolution to the long-running disagreement.

Per the mediation protocol, officials on both sides are bound not to comment except in the most general fashion.

"Mediation is continuing, and both municipalities are participating in good faith," said Vergennes Mayor Chris Bearor on Tuesday.

Ferrisburgh Selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale later on Tuesday agreed that was a fair assessment of the situation. He also noted that at the board's Jan. 23 meeting the Ferrisburgh board budgeted \$104,676 for city fire protection — the voter-approved amount in the current budget — as a placeholder in its proposed budget for the coming year. That's more than the board wanted to pay in the current year.

The board that day also paid Vergennes for half that \$104,676. Until then the selectboard had not paid the city for fire protection while the two municipalities disputed the finances.

"Based on the quarterly schedule we typically had, we paid Vergennes up current," Hinsdale said.

Was it a show of good faith? "That was absolutely what it was. That was us saying we'd like to reach an agreement," he said.

The exact question is what the town should pay the city for its fire department to serve as the first responder for a significant part of Ferrisburgh. That includes all of the town west of Otter Creek, which can only be accessed from the rest of the town by going through the city, and the part of Ferrisburgh south of the intersection of Tupper's Crossing, which is closer to the city fire station than the town's fire station.

What officials have said publicly is that after a daylong session on Jan. 19 at which mediator Adam Powers served as a go-between for the separated parties, the

Ferrisburgh selectboard met in an executive session on Jan. 23 and, according to Hinsdale, came up with an offer that the board asked Powers to forward to city officials.

The Ferrisburgh selectboard insists the amount billed to its town is too high based on the fact that the city department responds to fewer calls in Ferrisburgh than Vergennes; that the billing formula used doesn't take into account much of Ferrisburgh's property value is in empty land; that the town should have more say in the city department budget given its support level; and that Ferrisburgh is also funding its own department, unlike Pantown and Waltham.

Hinsdale said he hopes mediation can produce a resolution for the sake of the fire departments themselves, and hopes their member firefighters understand the talks are about funding mechanisms, not departments' performances.

"The fire departments have had a long-running positive relationship," he said. "And I would say the Ferrisburgh selectboard and the Vergennes City Council recognize that and value it."



Take off

A TUFTED TITMOUSE takes wing after eating peanuts on a Middlebury resident's porch railing.

Photo by Dottie Nelson

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\$23,995



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Callahan letter

(Continued from Page 5A)

educational aspirations, enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, improved behavior, both at home and at school, stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers, improved interpersonal skills and a decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use.

Many kids, adults and families are reaching out for this kind of connection. At a time where we all feel more divided and isolated than ever, mentoring has provided me with a link to my community that I miss from the time when our own kids were at our local school. I'm not sure that there is a more important asset to us all than the promise of our youngest community members. It is hard to imagine a better way we can show our support and make a difference in our communities than to be a mentor. I am thankful to MAUSD- the administrators, the teachers, the families and the volunteers who support this work in our schools and our communities. And I hope anyone looking to make a real difference in the lives of our



KIM CALLAHAN ACCOMPANIES her MAUSD mentee at Bristol holiday festivities.
Photo courtesy of MAUSD Mentor program

kids will consider becoming a mentor.

**Kim Callahan
New Haven**

Reen

(Continued from Page 5A)

districts into a single Addison County district. The response we received was that after Act 46, there was no appetite to engage in this kind of work. Since then, our school district has explored closing/repurposing schools and merging with another school district. Local leaders, myself included, were left to bear the brunt of this work. Despite our efforts and years of community engagement, we have not closed or repurposed any of our schools and we did not merge with another district. In fact, the number of school districts in Addison County has

grown from three to four, while the number of students has decreased.

Act 127 is getting a lot of attention right now, and deservedly so. We need to continue to look for ways to increase equity for our students. But shifting the same, rapidly increasing education fund dollars from one district to another does not address the fact that we can't afford to keep doing business as usual.

In my experience, local communities can agree that change is needed and maybe even agree on what the change should be, just as long as the change happens somewhere other than their

backyard. I believe we need strong leadership at the state level if we are to see the kind of change that will ensure we can give our students the very best we can at a price tag our community can support. A price tag that doesn't keep Vermont so unaffordable that we can't attract and retain young families, which only perpetuates our demographic struggles. Once the wrinkles have been ironed out of Act 127, I encourage you to turn your sights on finding ways to reduce the cost of education in Vermont without taking away the programming and support our students need and deserve.

Soule

(Continued from Page 5A)

at 5%, which we may rescind on Monday if necessary. If changes are imminent, we urgently request information.

The ambiguity surrounding intentions and the lack of clarity in the law are unacceptable. Our message to the Legislature is to make the law clear, allowing school boards to inform their constituents about the impacts of what they are voting on.

In the long term, we implore the

administration and the Legislature to collaborate with school leaders to outline a vision for public education that serves all Vermont students. If we believe every Vermont student deserves access to a next-generation, top-tier public education, what are we doing to bring that vision forward collectively? If our primary focus is on achieving positive outcomes for all learners, let's first establish the vision and subsequently decide how to address our

aging facilities. Given that all Vermonters collectively bear the costs of education and facilities, it's imperative that we collaborate to determine the optimal way to invest in our shared future. The current problem cannot be solved with an interdependent funding system and local decision-making.

Thank you for your attention to these critical matters. We appreciate your efforts to create a clear and supportive legislative framework for Vermont's education system.

Letters to the Editor

Deadly fungal infection poses serious threat to dogs

All dog owners need to read this submission.

Blastomycosis, a rare, deadly fungal infection in dogs has been found in Addison and Chittenden counties. Our dog has it and his life is in the balance.

Blastomycosis was found primarily in the Midwest and South, but BEVS (Burlington Emergency & Veterinary Specialists) reports an uptick in cases in our area. Blastomycosis typically occurs

when the dog inhales the airborne fungus of Blastomyces dermatitidis after the contaminated soil has been disturbed (i.e. digging in the dirt). It thrives in wet conditions such as riverbanks, lakes, and swamps but also forests and farms. Typically, it occurs in large breed, sporting dogs, male, 2-4 in years of age. Because it hasn't been seen here, local vets might not be looking for it. The common symptoms are similar to other infections: fever,

loss of appetite, vomiting and joint pain — but what sets it apart are skin lesions filled with pus, eye inflammation, and difficulty breathing.

If our dog lives, his left eye will have to be removed due to the infection. Ask your vet to rule it out if a constellation of these symptoms occur and share this information with others.

**Doug Engel
Weybridge**

New legislation is a blatant anti-hunting proposal

I am deeply disturbed by recent efforts by our local Senators, Christopher Bray, Bristol, and Ruth Hardy, Middlebury, to write legislation to remove the responsibility of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board in cooperation with our Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's sole mission to manage healthy wildlife and fish populations throughout Vermont.

Bill S.258, written by Bray and Hardy, is an anti-hunting, anti-fishing and anti-trapping effort. These two Addison County Senators wrote S.258 as an attempt to dismantle the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board and place critical wildlife and fisheries management decisions in the hands of those not connected to outdoor pursuits, i.e. "non-consumptive users." This bill will essentially allow anti-hunting, anti-fishing, and anti-trapping activists to rewrite hunting and fishing laws and seasons and make critical choices in the management of Vermont wildlife and fish populations. Let me make this clear. Anti-hunting, anti-trapping, and anti-Fishing activists could be making the rules.

Let me give you more background on S.258. The bitter truth unknown to most Vermonters is that Bray and Hardy's bill was

not brought about by local dismay of hunting, fishing, and trapping, but in cooperation with a radical closet animal rights group called Protect Our Wildlife, POW.

For many years, POW has been struggling for traction to change the statewide rules on coyote hunting and an all-out ban on trapping in Vermont. POW activists have attended Fish & Wildlife Board meetings for years in an attempt to change hunting and trapping laws. For the most part, their efforts have been deflected by sound judgment by the board and the professional biologists of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

POW is a closet radical anti-hunting and anti-trapping animal rights group with ideals consistent with the global animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, PETA. Check out either of their websites. Any reasonable person can see their mission. They do not represent the current and historical views of Addison County residents and Vermonters. These groups use emotions and fear tactics to drive their mission to deny hunting, fishing and trapping to all.

Nationwide, Vermont has one of the highest per-capita participation rates in hunting, fishing and trapping. This fact is undeniable.

Even if you yourself don't hunt, fish, or trap, more than likely you have relatives, friends and colleagues who do. Responsible hunting, fishing, and trapping are healthy outdoor activities that thousands of Vermonters enjoy and also bring multi-millions in revenues to Vermont's economy.

Now appears S.258, a bill introduced by our current Senators Bray and Hardy. The language of this bill is a complete reflection of POW and their anti-hunting and anti-trapping sentiment. This is not coincidence. These are facts.

Are Bray and Hardy in tight with POW? I say beyond a reasonable doubt. Brenda Galdenzi, the ringleader of POW, couldn't have written this bill any better. Why, Senators Bray and Hardy are you writing anti-hunting, anti-trapping, and anti-fishing bills contrary to the current and historic beliefs of Vermonters?

My recent efforts to elicit a response from Bray or Hardy have not worked. If Bray or Hardy will not comment publicly on their reasoning for writing S.258, it speaks measures of their character or ability to write laws that benefit the citizens of Vermont.

**Fred Schroeder
Bristol**

**Letters to the Editor can be found on
Pages 4A, 5A and 8A.**

There aren't enough words to describe what you've meant and given to all of us, but here's a start:

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- Window air conditioners: \$100 rebate for select ENERGY STAR models
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- Wood and pellet stoves: \$400 discount at select retailers



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Sad farewell

THE BRIDGE SCHOOL'S iconic silo has been deemed structurally unsound and will need to be taken down. The silo was built in the 1950's and the mural was painted by Chris Murray, local artist and parent of a former Bridge student, and alum Olivia Lane in 2018. "This mural brought so much joy to the community and visitors to the area. We will miss seeing the beautiful message that we are all different and we are all the same, every day," said Head of School Jen Grilly.

Nop's Metalworks will be taking the silo down the week of February 19-23, and the school will be auctioning off some of the painted bricks to raise funds to build a gazebo — designed by current student Maxwell Newton — in its place using the current cap.

Photo courtesy of Jenn Grilly

The complicated lives of conifer seeds

By JENNA O'DEL

My yard is full of eastern white pine trees, and every three years or so, it is full of pine cones. This is one of those years. Pine cones have fallen all over the yard, the sidewalk, the driveway. The neighborhood wildlife seem pleased by this bounty. A resident gray squirrel has made a fallen log in my yard its snack site. Pine cone fragments are neatly arranged in a circle around the squirrel's perch.

Synchronized conifer masting cycles — or the yearly variation in the number of cones produced — vary by species. For eastern white pines, cone "mast years" — when the trees produce a large number of cones — occur every few years. Mast years benefit the trees through a phenomenon ecologists call predator swamping. When multiple trees produce masses of seeds all at once, there are more seeds than predators can eat, and some of these seeds therefore have a chance at germinating. Non-mast years give trees time to recover their energetic reserves, and also to starve out seed predators. By the time the next mast year arrives, the predator population

having diminished with less available food — will be relatively sparse.

A white pine tree produces both male and female cones. The cones we find on the ground are female. Male cones look like miniature versions of the female cones and release yellow pollen during spring.

You've likely noticed this pollen coating your driveway — and, perhaps, causing sneezing fits. Conifers are wind-pollinated, so the powder-like pollen grains reach female cones on the breeze. Pollen grains that land inside the developing female cone fertilize an embryo there, and that embryo becomes a seed.

After seeds have developed, pine cones open in dry weather, and seeds are dispersed by wind. If you hold a freshly dropped female cone with the pointy bit facing up, you'll see the seeds sitting close to the stem, just above the pine cone scales — those individual woody pieces that give the cone its shape. A white pine seed looks a bit like a maple seed lodged inside the cone, with a papery tail extending the length of the scale. This tail acts like a kite. During rainy weather, the moisture-sensitive scales of a pine cone close to keep the seeds dry and protect them from rot.

Pine seeds contain plentiful nutrients and protein, which are necessary for a new pine tree to get its start — and also a prize for animals seeking calories. Small mammals collect seeds during autumn and cache them for winter snacking. Some seed predators, such as red squirrels, cache the whole cones. Many bird

species are frequent pine seed eaters. Red-breasted nuthatches cache pine seeds underneath tree bark, while red- and white-winged crossbills have specialized beaks that allow them to pick seeds from the cones. Gregarious pine siskins are also frequent conifer seed eaters and during winter may appear in large flocks in areas with abundant pine cones.

These seed collectors can help propagate the next generation of pines. Squirrels and nuthatches forget some of their caches, giving these seeds a chance to grow into trees. Seeds cached by squirrels are already buried in the soil, offering them a head start toward growth.

Eastern white pine is one of the most common pines in the Northeast. White pines grow fast and well on old agricultural land, giving this species the nickname of "old field pine" or "pasture pine." However, there are several other conifer species in the region that have their own masting cycles.

If you live in northern New England or New York, you may have white or red spruce, which drop their cones less than a year after the cone starts to develop. Jack pines may take more than a decade to drop cones. Pitch pines, found across much of the East Coast, can take 10 years to drop cones, but these won't open until the heat-sensitive cones have experienced fire.

Rather than gathering and disposing of the pine cones that have dropped in your field or yard, consider leaving them for wildlife. If you must clear the yard, perhaps leave some cones in a pile for the resident squirrels, mice, and birds. Keep an eye on the pile — the pine cones may soon be stripped of their seeds.

Jenna O'del is a biologist and science writer based in Rhode Island. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: www.nhcf.org.



Vasiliou named partner at local firm

MIDDLEBURY — Langrock Sperry & Wool, LLP has announced that William A. Vasiliou has been named a partner at the firm, effective Jan. 1. Vasiliou will be based in the firm's Middlebury office.

Vasiliou is a trial attorney with a focus on state and federal criminal defense and civil litigation and with a concentration on plaintiff's work, including trucking and auto collisions, premises liability, and victims of sexual assault as well as other crimes. Vasiliou has criminal and civil appellate experience in several of Ohio's intermediate courts of appeal, and in the Vermont Supreme Court. He is licensed to appear in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

"William has built a deserved reputation as a skilled trial litigator on behalf of injured persons and as a zealous advocate for his criminal defense clients. His energy and enthusiasm are infectious, and we are lucky to have him as a partner in the firm," remarked partner Devin McLaughlin.

Vasiliou joined Langrock Sperry & Wool in August of 2019. Prior to joining the firm, William owned and operated his own firm and was also a partner in one of northeast Ohio's preeminent criminal defense firms. Vasiliou has served as lead or co-counsel in multiple criminal and civil jury trials, an equal number of criminal and civil appeals, and numerous other bench trials as



WILLIAM A. VASILIOU

well as pretrial motion hearings. Vasiliou graduated from the Trial Lawyer's College in July of 2019, and he also has his master's in business administration.

Summer journalism workshop designed for teens

BOSTON — The New England High School Journalism Collaborative will hold its all-expense-paid summer workshop for students interested in journalism for the 37th year from June 22 - June 29.

The program is intended for students who are from traditionally underserved populations. Some preference is given to current juniors and seniors in high school.

Students will work out of a newsroom at Simmons University in Boston and learn to report, write, edit for a newspaper, and produce multimedia projects for a website. They will be assigned stories, do interviews, and will be exposed to working on a deadline to create their own newspaper.

The New England Newspaper and Press Association will be assisting with the application process. Application guidelines are as follows:

- Only students who attend

high school in the New England states (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT) are eligible.

- Only students currently in high school may apply, including graduating seniors. The program is not accepting students who have already taken part in the program.

- Students must be recommended by a teacher.
- A letter of recommendation from the sponsoring teacher must accompany the application.

- A transcript from the school with the student's most recent grades must accompany the application.

- An essay of no more than 500 words must accompany the application. The applicant can write about why they should be selected to participate in this program or how writing has helped the applicant explore and understand a problem in their life.
- Students will need to upload

a headshot.

- *Please note:* You will receive an email confirming the receipt of your application with a link to a Dropbox folder to upload the required documents (letter of recommendation, transcript, personal essay, and headshot).

If you have problems using the form or uploading documents, you should email students@nenpa.com.

The deadline for applications is Friday, April 12, 2024.

Students will be notified of their status by the end of April.

Don't miss the chance to take part in this unique program, established by the late Carole C. Remick more than 37 years ago.

If there are additional questions or if the applicant needs special accommodations to submit information, please email Leah Lamson, NEHSJC managing director, at lamsonleah@gmail.com.

VT Women's Fund grants available

VERMONT — Funding is now available from the Vermont Women's Fund at the Vermont Community Foundation, and they are earmarked for nonprofits that support economic security and provide career opportunities and programs that drive change for Vermont women and girls.

The competitive grant program will award grants of up to \$15,000 for proposals that:

- Make pathways to economic well-being more visible, accessible and affordable for all women and girls.

- Invest in the economic security and career prospects of women, especially those earning less than a living wage.

- Advance strategies that address systemic barriers to economic well-being and thriving in Vermont; and/or,

- Enhance the capacity of the organization to achieve its mission and stated values.

In 2023, the Vermont Women's Fund distributed \$412,135 to 36 Vermont organizations. Those grantees reflect the fund's mission to advance gender equity and justice. To view the list of 2023 grant recipients, visit vermontwomensfund.org/news/vwf-announces-2023-grants.

The Vermont Women's Fund, a component fund of the Vermont Community Foundation, was established in 1994 as an enduring resource for our state's women and girls. The fund remains the largest philanthropic resource dedicated exclusively to this mission. A council of people from around Vermont advises the fund and participates in its grantmaking, fundraising and leadership work.

Nonprofits may apply online at any time. Applications will be accepted through March 19 at 5 p.m. Visit vermontwomensfund.org/grants to learn more about the Vermont Women's Fund, its mission, and grantmaking.

GROW grant used to attract workers to county

MIDDLEBURY — The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing has awarded grant funds to 12 partner organizations through the Grants for Relocation Outreach Work (GROW) Program. The grants support regional organizations conducting new resident relocation, recruitment, and retention activities in Vermont. In Addison County, grant funds will be used by a partnership between the Addison County Economic Development Corporation and the Addison County Chamber of Commerce, with ACCoC taking the lead, providing primary staff, and undertaking most activities, and ACEDC acting as grant administrator, fiscal agent, and involving employers in the project.

There are two GROW grant tracks: the Regional Relocation Network Track and the Outreach Track. The ACCoC/ACEDC partnership grant involves both tracks. The Regional Relocation Network Track funds will complement and support the state's relocation lead generation and distribution system on ThinkVermont.com.

The Addison County partnership will connect with out-of-state residents interested in moving to Addison County. Outreach Track funds will be used to organize events and activities that promote Addison County to prospective residents and/or help new residents feel welcome in their new community.

The Regional Relocation Network Track in Addison County will build on the successful partnerships, collateral, DEI impacts, and momentum established through the "48 Hours in Addison County" campaign undertaken in 2021-2022 with a Tourism & Economic Recovery grant. Activities will include:

- A concierge service to connect and nurture relocation

leads from state and local sources, providing information about why Addison County is the best place to live, work and play.

- Creation of a lead tracking system.

- Development of a relocation resource subsite on AddisonCounty.com.

- Development of social media channels for the GROW Program in Addison County.

- Building partnerships with realtors, employers, school districts, recreation providers, and others to provide information for prospective new residents.

The Outreach Track will focus on bringing people together to include the recently relocated and those considering relocation with the local community. Community engagement activities will include connecting new and potential residents with resources for finding employment, housing, education, childcare, etc. In addition, events and activities including receptions, dinners, mixers, job fairs, and other family- and business-friendly opportunities will be scheduled. Outreach will also encourage new residents to participate in established regional events such as ACCoC and ACEDC mixers, the Middlebury Car Show, Vergennes Day, and the Bristol Harvest Festival.

ACCoC and ACEDC have strong relationships within the community that will facilitate robust participation from varying sectors, including tourism, business, workforce development, real estate, and education. Partnerships with community organizations including the Better Middlebury Partnership, the Vergennes Partnership, and Bristol CORE, as well as a strong relationship with the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, will also be used to ensure community buy-in and project success.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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ACSD sees unopposed seats

By JOHN FLOWERS

ADDISON COUNTY — Four people are running unopposed for four seats on the Addison Central School District board, which governs the preK-12 public school system serving students in Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge.

The lack of competition this year stands in sharp contrast to last year, when 11 candidates emerged for four seats on the 13-member panel.

This year, incumbent Mary Heather Noble and Laura Harthan are uncontested for two seats representing Middlebury on the board, while incumbents Ellen Whelan-Wuest and Barb Wilson each have clear paths to three-year terms representing Cornwall and Shoreham, respectively.

All ACSD candidates are elected at large, meaning voters in all seven towns can weigh in on March 5.

Here, in alphabetical order, are short bios of the candidates:

Harthan was among four candidates who vied for two open Middlebury seats on the board last year. She finished out of the running but has a clear path this year for a seat that's being vacated by incumbent Lindsey Hescocock, the current vice chair.

Harthan and her family moved to Vermont in 2016, to be closer to family and for work.

She's employed in the dairy sector, providing technical support for feed formulation software and does dairy nutrition work on the side.

Her husband, George Sherman, teaches music at Middlebury Union Middle School, and previously taught that subject at Mary Hogan School, Bridport Central School

and Shoreham Elementary School.

The couple has two children, including a son enrolled at Mary Hogan School.

Last year, Harthan and the other ACSD board candidates at the time shared their views on various education issues. Her responses can be found at tinyurl.com/2p9r8vwd.

Noble is seeking a second consecutive three-year term. She currently serves on the board's Communications & Engagement Committee and played a major role in coordinating the district's search last year for an interim superintendent, as well as this year's search for a permanent superintendent — which culminated in the hiring of Wendy Baker.

Noble works for the *New England Review* literary magazine at Middlebury College and at the Stone Mill Public Market in Middlebury.

Among her top school board concerns: The long-term financial stability of the ACSD, which, like many other public school districts in Vermont, had a challenging time assembling a fiscal year 2025 budget (see story on Page 1A).

Noble offered this emailed comment along with confirmation of her reelection plans:

"I am compelled to maintain consistency on the board to support Dr. Baker's transition to superintendent and I also feel this is a critical time for the board to consider the long-term viability of its current configuration — not just from a financial/facilities perspective, but from an equity perspective as well."

Whelan-Wuest, a Middlebury College graduate, is program director for the Council of State Governments Justice Center, a

national nonprofit that works with states to reform criminal justice systems. She was the board's choice to temporarily succeed incumbent Peter Conlon when he stepped down a year ago to helm the Vermont House Education Committee. Whelan-Wuest last March won the election for the remaining year on Conlon's term and is now set to begin a new three-year term in March.

She serves on the board's Facilities Committee, which among other things has been sizing up potential deferred maintenance projects for the district's nine school buildings.

Whelan-Wuest and her spouse, Conor Stinson, have two young children, one of whom is enrolled at Cornwall's Bingham Memorial School. The family has lived in Cornwall since 2017.

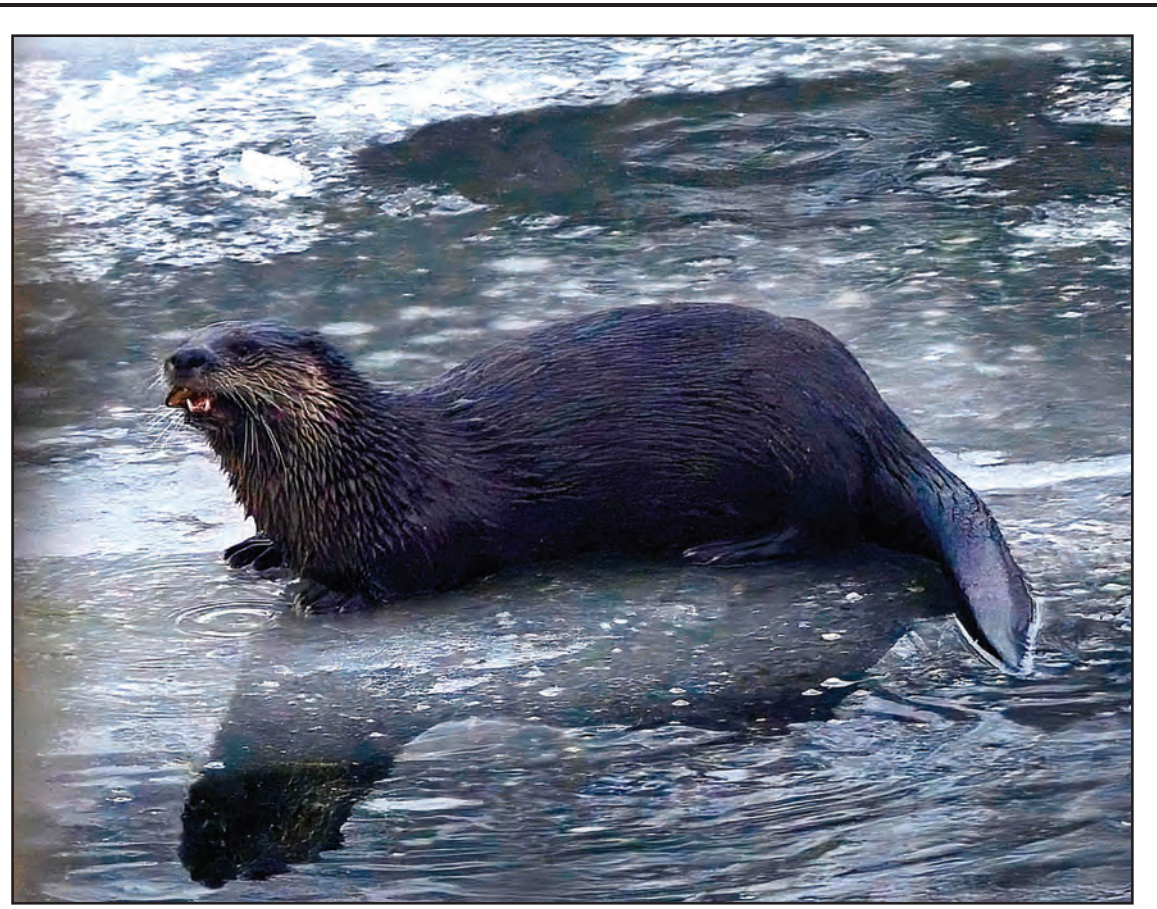
Her responses to last year's candidate questionnaire can also be found at tinyurl.com/2p9r8vwd.

Wilson was elected to the ACSD Board in 2021 and has chaired the panel for the past year. She holds a B.S. in Secondary Education and Mathematics from Michigan State University and spent 38 years working in the telecommunications software field in New Jersey, designing, implementing and deploying engineering-support software.

Prior to joining the board, Wilson was active volunteer at Shoreham Elementary. She and her husband, George Gross, own and operate a small fruit business in Shoreham. Wilson is a member of the boards of directors for the Middlebury Farmers Market and for Rights and Democracy.

Wilson serves on the ACSD's Facilities and MCTV committees.

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



Frozen food

A RIVER OTTER recently enjoyed a bullhead-on-ice breakfast in a Lincoln beaver pond.

Photo by Dale Cockrell

ACSD budget

(Continued from Page 1A)

1,620 students attending schools in Bridport, Cornwall, Ripton, Middlebury, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge, as well as those enrolled at Middlebury Union middle and high schools.

Containing costs has been a challenge for the ACSD — and indeed most public schools in the state — in part due to an ongoing trend of declining enrollment and reacclimating kids to in-person classes following months of remote and hybrid learning due to the COVID pandemic.

But as rough as fiscal planning has been during the past four years, the FY'25 budget has been giving school directors fits. It's being affected by what some officials are calling a "perfect storm" of expiring federal aid, inflation, rising fixed costs, Vermont's Act 127 school funding law, and spiraling real estate values.

ACSD officials said they've done their best to craft a budget according to state rules and aid variables that could still change even after area voters decide the FY25 spending plan on March 5. Board members believe they'll have their work cut out for them to make sure district taxpayers go to the polls informed about what they'll be voting on.

"We should be able to defend

this budget to the state very well; it's a matter of how the public envisions all these changes, and it's almost impossible to describe," James "Chip" Malcolm said at a Jan. 25 special meeting at which the budget was OK'd for warning. He is one of seven Middlebury representatives to the 13-member ACSD board.

The budget's \$50.6 million bottom line is only part of the story. It's a package that reflects net local education spending of roughly \$40 million (an 8.2% hike); and an education cost per weighted pupil of \$16,099 — a 9.9% increase.

Pressures on the FY'25 budget include a 16.4% (\$765,874) increase in employee health care premiums; a 4.5% hike in student transportation costs; a potential 16% increase in the Patricia Hannaford Career Center tuition rate; a new contract for ACSD teachers that's still under negotiation; a commitment by the board to ask taxpayers to fund approximately six full-time equivalent positions — including a special worker and three literacy interventionists — that had been created with federal pandemic-relief money that's about to sunset; and a new Child Care Contribution tax could add \$100,000-\$120,000 to the bottom line.

ACT 127 IMPACT

Then there's Act 127, the so-called "pupil-weighting law" that seeks to change the education funding mechanics in Vermont by assigning different "weighting standards" for students. In short, students who fit into those more expensive categories are weighted more, and the more weight a district has, the more money it can spend without raising local tax rates. In an effort to help soften the Act 127 impact, the law caps the education tax rate increase at 5% in school districts, providing they keep their per-pupil education spending increase below 10%. If education spending per pupil increases by 10% or more, a state panel will review and determine if the budget contains excess spending. If so, the 5% tax rate increase limit won't apply to that town.

The ACSD has elected to keep its FY25 per-pupil spending increase at 9.9%, allowing it to qualify for the 5% cap on its FY25 education tax rate. This would tentatively produce a districtwide homestead education tax rate of \$1.47 per \$100 in property value for the ACSD.

But that's before the CLA is applied in each of the seven towns. CLAs — a town-by-town analyses of real estate sales by (See CLAs, Page 15A)

Middlebury

(Continued from Page 1A)

Vermont graduate (1977), spent some time during the 1970s working as a heavy equipment operator for the City of Burlington Parks Department during construction of Leddy Park.

Having completed his studies in land use and natural resource planning, Dunnington in 1981 took a job as Middlebury's town planner and zoning administrator. He retired as town planner in 2013, after 32 years of service that included overseeing several town plan and zoning updates, as well as providing administrative support and counsel to selectboards, planning commissions, zoning/development review boards and five Middlebury town managers.

Dunnington took an active role in an ever-evolving town, including in the community's relationship with Middlebury College — both in terms of municipal infrastructure planning and the town's review of college master plans, as well as the town-gown financial relationships during a period of significant expansion for the institution.

He worked to build support for the Cross Street Bridge and new municipal building, and was involved in creating Middlebury's Land Trust Fund, and the establishment of the Middlebury Land Trust and Middlebury Community Television.

Dunnington, around a year ago, began helping organize Middlebury's voluminous town archives. He said that volunteer work has renewed his interest in becoming more involved with the community he calls home.

"I think the town faces some significant challenges," he said, citing tight budget constraints, the Ilsley Library project, a major

looming update of the town's wastewater treatment plant, and a possible makeover of the Middlebury DPW offices as examples.

When late January rolled around and one of the selectboard seats had no takers (at the time), Dunnington thought, "Maybe I should step up... I think some of the experiences I've had might be useful. I'm interested in what's next for the town."

Forbes, a principal of Case Street Redi-Mix, was first elected to the selectboard in 2011.

He ran successfully for re-election in 2013, resigning in July of 2014, citing personal reasons. Forbes

was particularly active on the selectboard's Public Works Committee, now known as the Infrastructure Committee.

Efforts to reach Forbes at his personal and business phone numbers were unsuccessful as the *Independent* went to press on Wednesday.

Khan, a seven-year incumbent, is the longtime owner of the One Dollar Market on Court Street Extension. He's served on the board during some challenging times — including through the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and during construction of the downtown rail tunnel.

Khan is particularly proud of his service on the Middlebury's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, and the Ilsley 100 Project Team that's planning a major renovation/expansion project for the town's public library.

"I am also very keen on finding a solution to the housing crisis that we are facing, which in turn has affected small businesses in recruiting/retaining much-needed help," he told the *Independent* during a recent interview.

"We have to do our part in trying to see what can be done to address this."

Khan voiced gratitude for the



DUNNINGTON



KHAN



FORBES

confidence local voters have placed in him since he first ran for the board in 2017.

"I would like to thank everyone who has supported me for the last seven years," he said. "I've had the privilege to work with some of the best colleagues on the selectboard."

Other Middlebury candidates who'll be running unopposed on March 5 include:

- Incumbent Meg Baker, incumbent Natasha Sen and Barbara Doyle-Wilch for the Ilsley Library Board of Trustees.
- Incumbent Susan Shashok for town moderator.
- Incumbent Karin Mott for town clerk.

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Tri-Valley bus barn proves elusive

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — It was in 2012 that U.S. Sen Patrick Leahy helped Tri-Valley Transit (then known as Addison County Transit Resources) celebrate the opening of its new Addison County Community Transportation Center at 297 Creek Rd. in Middlebury.

The 5,400-square-foot administrative building included a double-bay maintenance wing and a single-bay bus wash, but no place to store — and thus extend the life of — Tri-Valley's growing fleet, which currently stands at 22 vehicles.

More than 11 years later, Tri-Valley officials are still storing buses outside, but are taking another swing at securing the federal funding needed to build its much-sought-after bus barn, a structure that will be attached to the east side of the organization's headquarters, on a gravel parking lot.

"We had always designed it as a two-phase project; we just didn't know when the second phase would happen," said Tri-Valley Executive Director Jim Moulton. "The original federal grant we got wasn't enough to do both parts of the project. There was an amount of money we had available, so we fit what we could build under that (amount). We've been trying to pull together new funding for a couple of years now."

Moulton remembers the

organization's humble beginnings in the Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects Community Services Center at 282 Boardman St. ACTR employees in those days were squeezed into a small office, while the fledgling fleet remained outdoors in a shared parking lot.

The Community Transportation Center has allowed Tri-Valley to wash and maintain its own buses but leaving them outside has its shortcomings. The vehicles are tougher to start during cold weather and thus consume more fuel warming up for a day of service. Time spent clearing snow from buses could be used on other tasks, officials noted.

A proposed 6,300-square-foot bus barn is currently estimated at around \$4.8 million. Tri-Valley last year applied for a federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Unfortunately, Tri-Valley didn't make the cut.

"It's a very competitive grant," Moulton said. "After we applied last year, we did a debriefing and were told there were around 1,100 grant applications and only around 165 projects actually got selected."

Undaunted, Tri-Valley is again seeking a RAISE grant this year, with unanimous backing from

the Middlebury selectboard. The application is due at the end of February, with notification in June.

"I like our chances better this year than last year," Moulton said. "We learned a lot through the grant process last year and will be putting in a stronger application. But it's highly competitive. Will we make the top 10%? I don't know. That's a hard thing to measure. We're dealing with folks in D.C. who are doing the evaluations, and we have no idea what the competition looks like."

The bus barn would essentially mirror the steel-skin structure of Tri-Valley's administrative building. It'll have high-value insulation and the roof will maximize rainwater and snow melt collection for bus washing, according to Moulton. The new facility will also be topped with a solar array, generating enough electricity to power the new structure.

Other bus barn benefits, according to Moulton, will include:

- Improved reliability of bus service during inclement weather.
- Savings of \$2,000 per vehicle per year in bus repair.
- Extended life expectancy of 15.21 months for each bus, thereby saving money on vehicle replacements.
- Reduced noise and pollution associated with bus idling.



TRI-VALLEY TRANSIT buses spend winters parked outside in the elements next to the public transportation company's Middlebury headquarters. After a dozen years at the location, the public transportation company is again seeking federal funds for a bus barn that would allow it to house its vehicle fleet indoors, thus saving on fuel, wear and tear and maintenance.

Independent photo/Steve James

• Fewer chances of buses being vandalized or having parts stolen.

• The ability for Tri-Valley to expand its pellet boiler capacity and take its propane back-up system offline, thus eliminating fossil-fuel heat for the facility and making the organization's operations net neutral.

Moulton added the bus barn will be key to Tri-Valley's future transition to electric vehicles, or EVs. The organization is slated to receive its first two EV buses in February. Each will have eight seats and space for one wheelchair

rider. Larger EV buses have yet to receive certification for public transportation companies, Moulton noted.

"Our expansion into vehicle electrification is contingent upon availability of vehicles at the size we need them... and their reliability," he said.

Moulton looks forward to seeing how the two new EV buses perform, and he'll monitor future advances in the amount of miles EVs can travel on a single charge.

"You have to think differently about how to manage your fleet,"

he said of the EV transition. "We can think conceptually, but drilling down to the details requires a lot more information that we really don't have yet. (Tri-Valley) is almost at the pilot stage for an EV transition."

Making the switch too early might backfire, he warned.

"Public transit has to be reliable," Moulton said. "The rider has to be able to count on the bus being there."

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



Great Puzzle Challenge

MIDDLEBURY'S ILSLEY LIBRARY was abuzz with activity this past Saturday with a dozen teams taking part in a puzzle competition on National Puzzle Day (who knew there was one?). Working against the other teams and the clock are, clockwise from top right, Sarah Yamaguchi of Middlebury and her father, Brian, who was visiting from Chicago; Cornwall first-grade teacher Wendy Taylor; Middlebury's Phyllis Bowdish; Maddie Burke of Cornwall; and Ellie Clevestine, along with her teammates Vicky Laven and Corinne Kehoe completed the Cats puzzle in one hour and 20 minutes to win the contest.

Independent photos/Steve James



Check your trees for signs of Asian Longhorn Beetle

By GINGER NICKERSON
Extension Forest Pest
Education Coordinator
University of Vermont

When working in their sugarbush this winter, maple producers are encouraged to be on the lookout for signs of the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB). This wood-boring insect, native to southeast Asia, will kill many hardwood trees. However, its preferred host is the beloved maple.

This highly destructive pest has not yet been confirmed in Vermont. However, there is an active infestation in Worcester



THE ADULT ASIAN longhorned beetle is .75 to 1.5 inches long with a shiny black body with white spots and antennae one to two times its body length.



THE ASIAN LONGHORNED beetles chew round, dime-sized holes in maple and other hardwood trees to lay their eggs.

Photos: Joe Boggs, Ohio State University/bugwood.org

The beetle threatens all species of maples, not just sugar maples.

The beetle threatens all species of maples, not just sugar maples. It is typically spread through nursery stock, infested wood

products or by moving infested firewood.

While the summer and early fall are the best times to spot the adult beetles, winter is an excellent time to examine trees for signs of ALB damage. Take photos of any signs and report suspicious trees to <http://vtinvasives.org>.

Signs include multiple round, shallow indentations with rough edges in the bark. These are dime-sized spots that the beetles chew to lay their eggs. The spots may ooze sap in the summer and fall when they are fresh.

Perfectly round, pencil- to dime-sized holes are another indication. These are left when the adults emerge in the summer. The exit hole will be straight and at least one inch deep.

Stick a pencil in the hole to determine if it is deeper than a tap hole. There may be bits of sawdust-like material around these holes, in branch crooks or at the base of the tree.

Adult beetles are .75 to 1.5 inches long with antennae that are one to two times their body length. These beetles are shiny black with white spots and antennae with bluish-black and

white stripes. They resemble our native whitespotted sawyer beetle. However, the latter has a white spot between its wing covers.

In addition to attacking all maple species, ALB also will harm healthy ash, poplar, birch, willow and elm. When ALB is found, all hardwood trees within a certain radius must be removed and destroyed by chipping or

burning to stop the pest from spreading. The infested area is quarantined to prevent people from moving wood.

The infestation in Massachusetts had probably been in the area for about ten years before it was found. Over 36,265 trees in a 110-square-mile area in Worcester County have been removed to try to get rid of the beetle. In contrast, Chicago

eradicated an ALB infestation and destroyed only 1,500 trees because the infestation was discovered early.

Checking hardwoods, especially maples, for signs of ALB is key to early detection. So, woodland owners, hikers and anyone who spends time in the woods should also be on the lookout for signs of this invasive pest.

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Outright VT signs agreement to purchase Orwell Camp Sunrise

ORWELL — Outright Vermont has signed an agreement to buy Camp Sunrise, a 146-acre parcel of lakefront property in Addison and Rutland counties, from the Boy Scouts of America (GMC).

Should the sale close successfully and Outright acquire Camp Sunrise, the property will continue to serve as a vital resource for Vermont's youth and their families. This acquisition would sustain a hundred-year legacy of the camp being a safe and nurturing

environment, fostering the growth and development of young people.

Camp Sunrise is on property abutting Sunrise Lake in Orwell and Benson.

Outright Vermont is a Burlington nonprofit that aims to build a society where LGBT+ youth have hope, equity and power.

"Working with Outright Vermont aligns with the GMC's goal to conserve the natural landscape of the property and ensures Camp Sunrise will endure as a safe place

where youth from Vermont and beyond can gain a powerful sense of belonging needed to grow into responsible community members," said Mark Saxon, Scout executive and CEO of GMC, in a press release.

In response to the needs of LGBTQ+ youth, Outright has long desired to expand its marquee program, Camp Outright, an overnight summer camp, and Vermont's only camp tailored for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,

questioning and allied youth. Although Outright expanded its camp programs in 2021 to double the number of campers from an annual average of 60 to 120, over a hundred youth are declined each year, all without widespread advertising. Also, there's a significant need for outdoor programming for families with children younger than 13 years old.

Outright and GMC have worked with the Vermont Land Trust in recent months to determine the

feasibility of acquiring this major property, working through the acquisition process with cautious optimism while addressing the details.

"Expansion of Camp Outright is an absolute necessity to support LGBT+ and allied youth. The ability to purchase land in Vermont that borders two lakes and already has key camp structures in place is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. We've planned for this moment and are poised to

move forward," said Dana Kaplan, executive director of Outright.

As a statewide organization, Outright has partnerships in the area, and is excited by the prospect of deepening its connection to the region. Outright understands and values that the land and lakes are not only a source of great identity and pride, but an essential part of the infrastructure for the local community's health.

"We want local community members to know we are not seeking any changes to the public access they have historically enjoyed at Sunset Lake. We welcome their continued recreational use for weekend outings, annual traditions, and adventures as they have in years past," Kaplan said.

In a press release, officials from both GMC and Outright said they are dedicated to involving and collaborating with local community members and their organizational supporters as the possible sale moves forward. Financial terms of the deal were not announced.



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ADDISON COUNTY

School News

Madison E. Cram, daughter of Matt Cram and Jamie Cram of Middlebury, was named to the dean's list at Hope College in Holland, Mich., for the fall 2023 semester. A freshman, Madison is majoring in Nursing.

David Peters of Salisbury has been named to the fall 2023 dean's list at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. Fulltime students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a grade point average of 3.4 or higher are placed on the list that semester.

Brian Thornton of Brandon has qualified for the fall 2023 dean's list at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J.

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CLAs

(Continued from Page 11A)
 the Vermont Department of Taxes — compare towns' property tax assessments to fair market value. Ratios created with that study are then used to adjust school tax rates upwards or downwards to equalize tax collection among all Vermont municipalities.

The state wants municipalities to conduct town wide reappraisals every five years to ensure their CLAs are as close as possible to 100% of fair market value. But the current CLAs in the seven ACSD towns range from 68.33% in Salisbury to 77.07% in Weybridge.

Having low CLAs is expected to drive local FY'25 education property tax rates sharply higher in all seven ACSD towns. According to information provided by district Business Manager Matt Corrente, Bridport's CLA is at 70.67%, which would drive the need for a \$2.08 local education property tax rate based on the current FY'25 budget — a 30-cent (or 17%) increase; Cornwall, with a CLA of 70.6%, would also need a \$2.08 education property tax rate — a 44-cent (27%) increase.

The tentative increases calculated for the other ACSD towns include a 23-cent (14%) bump for Middlebury, for a total of \$1.91; a 24-cent (13%) increase for Ripton, for a total of \$2.01; a 30-cent (16%) increase for Salisbury, for a total of \$2.15; a 23-cent (14%) increase for Shoreham, for a total of \$1.93; and a 25-cent (15%) increase for Weybridge, for a total of \$1.91.

Roughly two-thirds of Vermonters pay an education property tax based on their income, with a small adjustment for property values. The remaining third of the population pay their taxes based on property value. And the sticker shock is going to be severe, barring an 11th-hour financial assist from the state.

Several ACSD members listened to Act 127 testimony that statewide school officials delivered on Jan. 25 to the House Ways & Means,

House Education, Senate Finance, and Senate Education committees.

"It was heart wrenching listening to some of the superintendents who (said), 'We really needed this (program) put it in the budget, but we would have had to cut \$5 million or \$7 million out of our budget to do it, so we took it out,'" ACSD board member Suzanne Buck of Bridport said of the testimony.

She noted other school officials at the legislative hearing reminded lawmakers the state hasn't funded any public school repairs since 2007.

Board member Steve Orzech of Middlebury — who, along with Malcolm, serves on the panel's finance committee — voted against warning the proposed ACSD budget because he believes it should have been further reduced.

FURTHER SPENDING CUT?

He also voiced concern the board hadn't tried to make big, enduring cuts in school spending — such as consolidating some of the ACSD's seven elementary schools. Current K-5 student enrollments are 55 in Bridport, 84 in Cornwall, 357 in Middlebury, 38 in Ripton, 50 in Salisbury, 79 in Shoreham and 41 in Weybridge.

The board has looked at the concept of merging some of its grade schools but has yet to dip its toe into what would be very controversial water. Ripton recently withdrew from the ACSD to have elementary school autonomy, but the town rejoined the district after determining it couldn't run an independent K-12 district.

"I can't believe we've waited a year now and not even look at consolidation, and that we're fighting as hard as we can *not* to talk about it," Orzech said.

Board Chair Barb Wilson of Shoreham said she expects school consolidation could land on the panel's agenda once its new superintendent, Wendy Baker, begins her job this summer.

"This year was going to be a holding pattern, because we have an interim superintendent (Tim Williams) and it's really hard to make those kinds of decisions prior to the new superintendent coming," she said.

Middlebury board member Mary Heather Noble agreed with the notion of waiting until Baker starts her job and then promptly exploring consolidation. She said the board can no longer afford to "value our town schools above

everything else. I'm just not sure that's a sustainable solution, especially with these financial pressures."

Noble said she sees the current FY25 budget proposal "as an investment in our new leadership, as a demonstration to our community that we're trying our very best to be fiscally responsible and stay under the threshold that Act 127 presents."

Board member Joanna Doria of Ripton said she also supports the FY25 spending plan and urged her colleagues to think carefully about long-term savings.

"I would just like to caution people who think that closing schools is a silver bullet," she said. "It's not a simple question."

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



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FARMING AND CLIMATE change were key themes in two panel discussions hosted by the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition this past Thursday. Panelists included researchers, farmers and UVM Extension staff, and they discussed how severe weather has affected growers over the past year and how the state can prepare for similar events in the future.

Photo courtesy of Sarah Audet

Farmers

(Continued from Page 1A)
farmers prepare for similar events in the future.

The panels were hosted by the coalition at its annual meeting and featured local farmers, UVM Extension staff and state officials. Throughout the evening, panelists heard feedback from community members in attendance and discussed the adoption of climate-resilient practices and plans to support farmers during future extreme weather.

Impacts of severe weather on soil health and feed quality. Panelists on Thursday acknowledged the challenges that extreme weather events have created for Vermont farmers over the past year. In particular, panel participants discussed how excessive rainfall this summer affected soil and feed quality.

Brian Kemp, president of the CVFC board of directors and owner of Mountain Meadows Farm in Sudbury, noted that flooding this summer caused feed-related issues for farmers throughout the state.

“As farmers we all saw the same thing. Our feed values are a lot less than what they would be in a ‘normal year,’” he said. “Personally, we’re selling a tremendous amount of feed, and we’re lucky we have it up north. Half a dozen farmers have called, organic or non-organic also, looking for feed. It’s impacted everybody statewide.”

Kemp added that the excessive rainfall has had a negative impact on soil health, despite growers’ efforts to keep fields healthy.

“Even on fields on our farm that we didn’t travel on a lot ... the compaction was unbelievable,” he said. “Alfalfa on our farm is pretty much nonexistent. We had beautiful crops on two- and three-year seedings that disappeared

through the summer. So, I think this is going to impact us for years to come until the land can kind of recoup.”

Heather Darby, UVM Extension professor and agronomy specialist, explained that reduced feed quality has pushed many farmers to spend more on grain for their herds.

“Even with that added grain that’s being purchased, what we’re being told is that milk production is still down 7%,” Darby said. “They’re trying to keep the rations

at a high quality by purchasing grain, which is super expensive with all of that not great quality feed in the bunk, but still losing milk production with more expense.”

Implementing climate-resilient practices: Abigail Augarten, agronomy specialist at the UVM Extension’s Middlebury office, noted on Thursday that according to scientists, extreme weather events like those seen this summer are expected to increase in frequency and severity, thus creating more hurdles for farmers.

With that in mind, Augarten asked researchers and UVM staff about their ongoing research on climate-resilient practices.

Joshua Faulkner, coordinator for the Farming and Climate Change Program in the UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture, said his team is exploring how to quantify how different soil health practices improve water movement through soil. He added other ongoing efforts include studying drainage,

which he said is an especially important tool for farmers during wetter seasons.

“A lot of the work that we’re doing is focused on trying to understand the environmental tradeoffs associated with drainage and try to limit those and try to address those where we do see water quality issues,” Faulkner said.

Faulkner is leading a 10-year study that’s part of a nationwide research network known as the Conservation Effects Assessment Project. The research network aims to quantify the environmental effects of different conservation practices and programs. Faulkner’s team is specifically focused on how various agricultural conservation practices affect water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin.

State officials participating in the panel were also asked about the implementation of climate-resilient farming practices, particularly what can be done at the policy level to make agriculture more resilient to extreme weather.

Travis Thomason is Vermont’s state conservationist with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). He said NRCS has in recent years received funding through the Inflation Reduction Act to help farmers implement and continue conservation practices.

“One of the things that we’re trying to focus on right now is helping producers expand what they’re normally doing, such as cover crops, improving soil health,

all of those things on their farm to help their soils and operations be more resistant to the flooding and climate impacts we see,” he said.

Julie Moore, secretary of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), underscored the role soil health plays in climate resilience.

“(The ANR) spent much time talking about how devastating the floods were, but how much worse they would have been without a landscape that is 75% forested and a significant amount of the remainder of that landscape is in agricultural use,” she said. “We know that the healthy soils that sit under our working lands are this essential sponge to help soak away flood waters, so anything we can do to help support that work around healthy soils we know will pay enormous dividends to the farms themselves, but also to the communities downstream.”

Supporting farmers during future extreme weather events: State officials on Thursday were also asked how the state can support farmers in most need following future extreme weather.

Thomason said NCRS officials heard feedback from producers after rolling out a disaster assistance program this past fall that encouraged the agency to prioritize working with farmers most affected by this summer’s flooding.

“We’re working with a couple of models so that when we have some of the flooding issues or disasters again, we likely will try to map out damage and then work with those producers and send out payments; trying to work with those producers that have the most impact, and then if we have enough funding, move on down the list,” he said.

Vermont Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts said this past year revealed many of the weaknesses and successes in the state’s ability to help farmers after disasters. He noted one of the identified weaknesses is a lack of programming that can quickly distribute needed resources and keep businesses open during such circumstances.

“The state did stand up a \$20 million program through the (the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development) and we were part of that. We were able to get approximately \$3.6 million deployed to farmers, around 133 farmers applied for those,” he said. “But when there’s an emergency, whether it’s a fire or a flood, we don’t have something in place that can get people that immediate need out on the landscape. That’s one thing I think we’ve got to think about.”

Tebbetts added state officials are also evaluating how to improve available insurance programs.

“We learned a lot about our insurance programs, that we need to take a look at insurance programs that are more friendly to our way of life here. Some of them were designed for bigger operations to grow crops in the Midwest,” he explained. “(A task force) has looked at some of these issues and some things that we can do in the short term and long term to make it better the next time it comes along.”

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)
government leaders are stepping up for farms fighting to remain solvent. It’s a new fundraising campaign called “Dig Deep Vermont.” It’s designed to help more than 350 Vermont family farms that are facing potentially permanent seasonal and perennial crop damage, inadequate winter feed supplies for animals, financial ruin from lost harvests necessary to pay loans, and irreparable damage to equipment and facilities. Dig Deep Vermont is being touted by Gov. Phil Scott, Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, the Vermont Association of Broadcasters, Ski Vermont, the Association of Vermont Credit Unions and what organizers are calling “a dedicated alliance of local and out-of-state private enterprises.” The campaign goal is to raise \$20 million, with the actual need estimated at \$45 million. If you’re able to help out, go to digdeepvt.com.

The Jan. 25 edition of the *Independent* included a story about efforts to improve local services for Addison County residents with memory loss ailments. Among those quoted was Middlebury resident Pamela Smith, who was recently diagnosed with Younger Onset Alzheimer’s. The story referenced a short film, “What It Feels Like to Have Alzheimer’s,” that stars Smith. Here’s a link to the film: tinyurl.com/bdf7fwun.

All Addison County law enforcement agencies will be working to make sure motorists stay safe and sober on the roads during Super Bowl weekend, Feb. 9-11. The Vergennes Police Department, along with other agencies, will be conducting sobriety checkpoints and extra patrols across Addison County throughout that weekend. The checkpoints and patrols are meant to deter people from driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Drivers are reminded to wear seat belts and not to drive impaired. Please be safe.

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced 12 grants totaling \$217,000 for Vermont arts and cultural organizations and artists, including a \$15,000 award to support publication and promotion of the *New England Review*, Middlebury College’s literary magazine. The Vermont awards are part of more than \$32 million in recommended NEA grants to organizations in all 50 states and U.S. jurisdictions. Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. To learn more visit arts.gov.

Congratulations to Middlebury Union High School seniors Baxter Harrington and Maura Connelly, who are among 15 graduating high school seniors from throughout the state to be named Vermont Presidential Scholars for their commitment to their communities, academic excellence and leadership. The 15 students — nominated by their school counselors — were honored at the Vermont

Statehouse on Jan. 22. Both Baxter and Maura are now invited to apply for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s New England office has named longtime Middlebury wastewater treatment plant Superintendent Bob Wells the “Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator of the Year.” The award was established to “recognize and honor the employees of publicly owned wastewater treatment plants for their commitment to improving water quality with outstanding plant operations and maintenance. Wastewater operators and staff work diligently to protect public health and the environment, often with limited resources,” according to an EPA press release confirming Wells’s citation. Congratulations, Bob!

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets has organized a series of 2024 listening sessions at which those involved with agriculture — including producers, processors, distributors and service providers — can weigh in on topics such as severe weather impacts, grant and programming feedback and business/industry needs. The agency has scheduled eight listening sessions this year, including one on Feb. 13, from 5-7 p.m., at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society at 2 Duane Court in Middlebury. Each event will have onsite parking and light snacks provided. For partner information, locations and virtual registration, please visit tinyurl.com/yey6t464. The Addison County Relocalization Network will lead the session. For any questions, contact agency Agriculture Development Specialist Sarah McIlvennie at sarah.mcillvennie@vermont.gov.

Vermont’s Nongame Wildlife Fund (NWF) helps nurture some of the state’s most at-risk wildlife, including bumblebees, butterflies, mussels, birds and mammals. And a checkoff option on the Vermont state income tax form makes donating to the fund easy and impactful. Because public donations leverage matching federal grants, every dollar Vermonters donate to NWF on their taxes is nearly tripled, according to Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Wildlife Diversity program Manager Rosalind Renfrew. For more than 35 years, the NWF “tax checkoff” has been helping species that were once on the brink of extinction in Vermont, like the common loon, osprey and peregrine falcon. Most recently, the bald eagle was removed from Vermont’s list of endangered species in 2022, and the NWF supported their reintroduction at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area here in Addison County.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont fell 1.2 cents per gallon during the past week to \$3.16, according to GasBuddy. Prices in Vermont are 12.8 cents lower than a month ago and 36.9 cents lower than a year ago. The cheapest station in Vermont sold gas at \$2.92; the most expensive at \$3.39. Meanwhile, the national average price of gasoline rose 4.5 cents to \$3.07.

ADDISON COUNTY

School News

Calder Rakowski of Vergennes has been awarded the Rensselaer Medal and scholarship from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. The medal and scholarship are awarded to promising high school juniors who have distinguished themselves in mathematics and science. The merit scholarship, with a value of \$40,000 per year, is guaranteed for four years for each medalist who is accepted and enrolls.

Mount Abraham Union High School graduates and Bristol residents Chance Denecker and Koby LaRose have been named to the dean’s list at the University

Melody Berenbaum of Middlebury and Ila Collette of North Ferrisburgh have been named to the dean’s list at The University of Rhode Island for the fall 2023 semester. To be included on the list, full-time students must have completed 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable during a semester and achieved at least a 3.30 quality point average.

of New England for the fall 2023 semester. Dean’s list students have attained a grade point average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

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Vekos

(Continued from Page 1A)
 division, in Middlebury on Feb. 12. Vekos also refused to cooperate with being fingerprinted and photographed for her mugshot while at the state police barracks, Neary said.

It was not immediately clear who will be prosecuting Vekos in the DUI case, though she did appear in court this week prosecuting other cases.

State Police Detective Lt. Chris Barber said it is standard procedure when there is a potential conflict of interest in a case that another state's attorney from a nearby county is asked to handle the prosecution.

State police from the New Haven barracks had been called to the home of Stephen Nuciolo Sr., 44, of Bridport shortly before 9 a.m. Wednesday, after troopers received report that he had died overnight inside the residence (see story, Page 14B).

Nuciolo's body was eventually transported to the Chief Medical Examiner's Office in Burlington and a preliminary report the next day showed the death appeared suspicious, police said. State police returned to the scene on Thursday for more investigation and were wrapping up when Vekos arrived at the trailer.

In a news release state police said preliminary investigative work indicated the suspicious death was an isolated event, but did not explain that theory.

Police also said they believed there is no known threat to the community, but did not explain that belief.

When asked by the *Independent* on Friday morning about the DUI charge, Vekos declined to comment.

Vekos is being represented by St. Johnsbury attorney David Sleigh. During a phone interview on Wednesday with the *Independent*, Sleigh took particular issue with the alleged DUI-refusal offense.

"It is a crime to refuse a reasonable request for an evidentiary breath



ADDISON COUNTY STATE'S Attorney Eva Vekos, shown at a courthouse press conference in November, is scheduled to answer a charge of driving under the influence – test refusal in court this month.

Independent file photo/Marin Howell

"If you don't have a prior DWI conviction, the Vermont Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that the (drivers) have a choice whether to submit a sample for testing, or not... There's nothing criminal about refusing to take a test."

— attorney David Sleigh

alcohol test — if you have a prior DWI conviction," he said. "If you don't have a prior DWI conviction, the Vermont Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that the operators have a choice whether to submit a sample for testing, or not. "There's nothing criminal about refusing to take a test. There are potential sanctions, such as license suspension, if a judge finds the officer's request for the test was reasonable. And in order to support that, they have to show they had some articulable suspicion — supported by facts — that Eva had violated the drunk driving statute."

Vekos, a Democrat, was elected in November 2022 and took over the following month when the interim state's attorney

stepped down early to take another job in Rutland. Since being sworn in, her office has seen several serious cases, including at least three reported homicides in four months last year.

Hussein Mohamed, 14, of Burlington has been charged as an adult with second degree murder, manslaughter and aggravated assault in the death of Madden Gouveia, 14, of Shelburne following a shooting in Bristol on Oct. 30. Mohamed, who has denied the charges, is being prosecuted under a law approved during a special session of the Vermont Legislature in 1981 designed to hold young teens accountable for 12 of the most serious crimes.

In a second case, Michelle Kilbreth, 48, was fatally shot after she got into an argument with another woman outside her home on McKnight Lane in Waltham on Sept. 15, 2023, police said. A neighborhood boy picked up the handgun and fired multiple shots killing Kilbreth, officials said. No charges have been filed in adult court against the juvenile, who is believed to be around 12 years

old. It is unknown if juvenile proceedings were implemented in Family Court, which is confidential.

In the third homicide, Zaquikon T. Roy, 35, who has lived in Rutland and St. Albans, has been charged in federal court in connection with a double shooting of two brothers on Route 7 in Leicester in June 2023 after a drug deal went bad when Roy shorted his buyers, officials said.

One man, Scott Lanpher, 35, of Leicester died and his brother, Larry Lanpher Jr., 31, of Leicester was seriously wounded. Roy, who was originally from Brooklyn, was initially charged in state court with second-degree murder, manslaughter, attempted second degree murder, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and possession of a firearm after being convicted of a violent crime, court records show. The state dropped those in favor of the federal prosecution after he was caught in Lewiston, Maine, in August 2023.

Independent reporter John Flowers contributed to this report

Teen Makery returns for after-school hours

MIDDLEBURY — The Teen Makery at the Hannaford Career Center returns Thursdays after-school from 3:15 – 5:00pm.

All high school aged students can participate in the sewing or games labs. Students who are 16 or older can participate in the woodworking lab. Each lab is managed by a trained mentor who is an expert in using all the available tools. Students can work on individual projects or team up with other students on a group project. Additionally, special workshops will be offered beginning with table making on March 7. This workshop uses CNC Router/Welding/Woodworking technologies. Food and snacks will be provided, and transportation can be arranged if needed.

In the sewing lab, students can create with fabrics and fibers using our sewing machines, cutting tables, and notions. This lab also offers machine use training or review. Tools include seven sewing machines, three cutting tables, an iron, assorted dress forms, basic sewing

supplies, and scrap fabrics.

The woodworking lab provides personal safety equipment plus specific training on machinery and tools. Tools include: Delta 8" jointer, 24" Powermatic planer, 10" table saw, band saw, large work tables, and assorted small power and hand tools.

The games lab will be playing Magic: The Gathering. This game is a fantasy-themed trading card game that requires critical thinking and strategy. Makery Magic: The Gathering program students will be provided with pre-constructed decks and gaming supplies. All levels of players, from first-timers wanting to learn to experienced players are welcome. The game is taught and facilitated by a professional Magic player.

Anyone interested in attending the Teen Makery or who would like to learn more, can contact Nancy Yannett at nyannett@csacvt.org, call the Career Center at 802-382-1012, or just show up at the Career Center at 3:15 on Thursday afternoons when school is in session.

Newcomers

(Continued from Page 1A)

Those running in the March 5 races are:

Longtime Bristol Selectman Joel Bouvier, for another three-year term. Bristol selectboard incumbent Darla Senecal has decided not to run again. Jessica Teets and Chanin Hill are vying for her two-year seat.

Voters in Bristol will see four school board positions on their ballots, two for open three-year seats previously held by longtime board members Krista Siringo and Kevin Hanson.

Bristol school board representative Mike Dash is running for the remaining two years of a seat he was appointed to fill in April.

MAUSD Board Vice Chair Erin Jipner is running unopposed for a three-year term. No one has stepped forward to run for the one year remaining on a two-year seat formerly held by Jipner, or Bristol's other open three-year seat.

Bristol residents can still fill both of those seats through write-in campaigns. Otherwise, the MAUSD board, in consultation with the town's selectboard, will appoint Bristol residents to temporarily fill the open spots after Town Meeting Day.

Voters in Lincoln will elect three new members to the town's selectboard this March. Incumbents Bay Jackson and Bill Finger have decided not to seek reelection.

Joe Martell, Ken Stockman and Bern Terry have thrown their hats into the ring for the three-year seat being vacated by Finger. Amanda Allen is running unopposed to fill Jackson's two-year seat.

Meanwhile, Victor Atkins II and Brett Bassett are running for the remaining year of a three-year seat vacated by former Selectman Alan Schmidt in August.

Lincoln residents will also decide three Lincoln School Board

races. Incumbents Abby Reynolds and Lea Calderone-Guthe will not seek new terms on the school board.

Deirdre Kelly is running unopposed for Reynolds' seat for a three-year term. Peg Sutlive is the lone candidate running for Calderone-Guthe's two-year seat.

Lincoln School Board Chair Jeanne Albert is also running for the remaining year of a three-year term she was appointed to fill in December.

Lincoln residents will have a chance to hear from those running for spots on the school and selectboard later this month. The town will host a "Meet the Candidates" event at the Lincoln Library on Feb. 29, at 7 p.m.

IN OTHER FIVE TOWNS

In Starksboro, selectboard incumbents Koran Cousino (two-year-term) and John Painter (one-year-term) are running unopposed to keep their seats on the board. No one has filed to run for the three-year seat vacated by Carin McCarthy in August.

MAUSD board member Steve Rooney is also running unopposed for another three-year term.

New Haven's Town Meeting Day ballot will feature uncontested races for spots on the selectboard and the MAUSD board.

Selectboard incumbents John R. Roleau (two-year term) and Bruce Many (three-year term) are running unopposed to keep their seats. Ashley Bessette is running unopposed for a three-year seat on the MAUSD board. That seat is currently held by Sarah LaPerle, who won't seek another term on the board.

A list of candidates for Monkton's Town Meeting Day races was not available as the *Independent* went to press on Wednesday, and this story will be updated online once that information is available.

Ferrisburgh

(Continued from Page 1A)

In Waltham, incumbent board member Andrew Martin has said he will step down in March, coincident with the end of his term. But at least one more resident has expressed interest in being nominated again from the floor of town meeting. Waltham remains one of the few towns that still chooses town officers by voice vote, and the emergence of other interested parties can never be ruled out.

In Ferrisburgh longtime Selectman Red Muir, who among other things has led the board's buildings committee, chose not to run again after several terms. Two candidates filed for his seat: Stephen Fleming, a longtime

former member and president of the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad, and Susan Oliveira, a guidance counselor at Vergennes Union High School. Before the election, the *Independent* will reach out to both candidates about their reasons for running and goals if elected.

Things are quieter in Vergennes, where Deputy Mayor Dickie Austin and Councilors Jill Murray-Killon, Mark Koenig and John Montgomery are all seeking election without opposition on the ballot.

Austin and Murray-Killon are both elected incumbents seeking re-election for two more years. Koenig and Montgomery were both appointed to vacancies during 2023 and will seek election, not

re-election. Koenig has served previously on the council; he will be seeking to fill out the final year of a two-year term. Montgomery was appointed to a finish out a term that expires in March and is looking for a full two years.

In Waltham, Martin, a multi-term board member, said he would be stepping down, according to Town Clerk Linda Devino. However, she added, attorney Anthony Duprey has expressed interest in being nominated to fill the vacancy on the three-member board. Duprey has experience in municipal governance — he once served on the Vergennes City Council, resigning when he moved from Vergennes to Waltham.

Meanwhile, there is no

competition for openings on the Addison Northwest School District board.

Kristina MacKulin and Erica Andrus are running unopposed for three-year terms in Ferrisburgh, as is Koenig for three years in Vergennes.

Panton and Waltham's school directors' terms do not expire in March, while in Addison there will be a school board opening: Longtime ANWSD board member Laurie Childers told town officials she made the difficult decision not to file paperwork this time around. No one else filed. The town's other school director is Amy Kittredge, whose term does not expire this year.

Addison

(Continued from Page 1A)

three more years: Eliza Spencer, a consultant for a firm that handles federal contracts who is also helping upgrade the town's website.

Finally, incumbent Peter Briggs is on the ballot for one year; officials said there was an oversight, and he should have been on the 2023 ballot

for two years. Challenging Briggs for the 12-month term will be the self-employed Levi Barrett, who could walk to meetings from his nearby home.

The *Independent* plans to seek and publish comments from all the Addison candidates prior to the election.

Wildlife art competition takes flight

VERMONT — The Vermont Wildlife Education Fund and the Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro, Vermont have announced the Third Annual Student Wildlife Art Competition. Known as the "Give Wildlife a Voice" art competition. The competition is open to all Vermont students from grades seven through twelve.

This year's theme is "Winged Wonders" presented in memory of Lee C. Churchill. Winged wildlife need not be the focus, but something with wings must be included. The competition seeks to help young Vermonters become more aware of the beauty of the wildlife. There

are cash prizes for the top eighteen entrants, beginning with a \$750.00 award for first place.

The entry deadline is March 15, 2024. Top honorees will be exhibited at the Highland Center for the Arts from Saturday, April 27, to Saturday, May 4. The top ten honorees will then be exhibited at the Vermont State House. Vermont Congresswoman Becca Balint has invited the top honorees to be exhibited in the United States House of Representatives.

For more information go to <https://www.vtwildlifeeducationfund.org/> or write to vtwildlifeeducationfund@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Addison County Solid Waste Management District is seeking volunteer repair fixers for our next Repair Fair on **Saturday, April 20th!**




Examples of fixer skills:

- Appliance Repair • Woodworking • Bike repair
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To volunteer or partner with us, please email emily@acswwd.org or sign up at www.AddisonCountyRecycles.org/repair-fair



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Shoreham Memory Tree 2023 Honorees

Irene Treadway	Jay C Adams III
Donald Treadway	Joan Watt
Norman Treadway	Bill Watt
Adrian Fournier	Ray & Polly Hunt
Evelyn Fournier	Clarence & Marion Rathbun
Arthur Fournier	Jerry Brisson
Helen Donovan	Gene Brisson
William (Bill) Donovan	Eleanor Brisson
Ralph Menard	Bill Dupré
Catherine Menard	Belle Dupré
Skip Brush	Tom Dupré
Grandma Moore	Bob Douglas Sr
Lizzie Belden	Betty Douglas
Sherry Kerr	Margaret Bishop
Bob & Betty Douglas	Mary Ann Turpin
Maizie Hescocock	Ernest Turpin
Ken VanHazinga	Jane Ryan
Gloria Rathbun	The Brisson Family
Pearl Bullard	The Rowe Family
Haley	Helen & Auguste Lamoureux
Margaret Bishop	Rhonda Lamoureux
John Walker	Dot & Ed Tyl
Maudie Bishop	Colby
Lawrence Bishop	Thor
James Walker	Henry Paquette
Katherine Walker	Laura Paquette
Roger Bishop	Wayne Paquette
Maynard "Mac" McLaughlin	Kory Laframboise
Elizabeth Causton	Margaret Stark
Eric Causton	Allen Ladd

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Podcast

(Continued from Page 1A)
Middlebury College. It features Baby Carl, a curious toddler, voiced by Dean, with lots of questions about the world.

During each episode, Baby Carl and Vitek talk with Vermonters about their concerns for the planet and how they're responding to those issues in their everyday lives. Each episode is also filled with singing, jokes and the frequent quips of Baby Carl.

According to Vitek and Dean, the show is an intentional blend of silliness and serious topics, meant to invite listeners to laugh as they contemplate their role in the world and in caring for it.

"One of the takeaways (of the project) was a pretty well known fact that if you can get people to laugh, then you can get them to feel," Dean said. "There are moments of levity in the podcast but also very serious moments, and I think that if you concentrate on only one you tend to lose people."

Baby Carl's Happy Apocalypse podcast is a collaboration several years in the making. Creators Vitek and Dean first met while working in New York's Saint Lawrence County, where Vitek spent over three decades teaching philosophy at Clarkson University and where Dean currently works as production manager of North Country Public Radio.

The pair has previously worked together on "The Baby Carl Show" on YouTube, in which Dean would interview experts in topics like politics and electronic music and perform light-hearted songs with Vitek.

More recently, the duo began to consider expanding on that initial collaboration.

"We wondered if we could do a podcast where we'd go out and interview people to talk about the scary things in the world, but also what they're doing," Vitek recalled.

HAPPY APOCALYPSES

The pair wanted the project to focus on the word "apocalypse" in particular, which is at times used in discussions of the more troubling aspects of today's world.

Vitek noted that while the term



BILL VITEK

can be used to describe the end of the world, the word's original meaning is to reveal or uncover something.

"We came about this idea that the word 'apocalypse' is being bandied about quite a bit to talk about these bad times, and that we would use its original meaning, which is just a revelation, and flip it," he said. "We'd have this somewhat innocent baby, who loves to ask big questions and who hangs out with a philosopher, to explore that."

In each episode, Baby Carl talks with Vermonters about the happy apocalypses, or revelations, that led

to their current work in farming, education and other fields.

He travels to the Willowell Foundation in Monkton to talk with educators about connecting with students and nature through outdoor education programs; to Shelburne's Bread and Butter Farm to learn about regenerative farming; and to the Green Mountain Monastery in Greensboro to explore how the community of Catholic sisters cares for the earth and its inhabitants.

While each interview is filled with laughter and the jovial banter of Baby Carl and his guests, conversations also venture into the many challenging issues the world is facing. Interviewees express sorrow over the changing climate, the country's loneliness epidemic and other pressing matters.

Though, they also share how they're working to address those concerns each day and make the world around them a better place to live.

"We think the interviews really speak to extraordinary people, but they're also just people in our neighborhood, in Vermont, in our region, who have taken a risk in their lives," Vitek said. "That's what a revelation sometimes does. It says 'OK, you want to do



DOYLE DEAN, LEFT, and Meghan Rigali of the Willowell Foundation smile with Baby Carl, the fictional star of a new podcast that explores how Vermonters are tackling pressing issues like climate change and social injustice in their everyday lives.

Photo courtesy of Bill Vitek

this, it's going to be scary; people are going to laugh at you or not reward you financially, but you do it anyway," and they're doing it. They're doing it in education, in regenerative farming, they're doing it as Catholic sisters in Northern Vermont and throughout the world."

A NEW STORY

The podcast is one of several publications and productions of the New Perennials Project, which Vitek leads at Middlebury College. The initiative explores the idea of using perennial plants as a model for how to live, such as by exploring and sharing the role and influence of perennial agriculture and education.

To achieve its mission, the New Perennials Project team teaches a course at Middlebury College, distributes informational material through its publishing platform and works with community partners.

Vitek explained the new podcast fits into the project's efforts to collaborate with individuals working to nourish and support their communities.

"We think it's part of the work of the New Perennials Project to tell a new story and to do it in a way that's inviting and not judgmental," he said.

A key characteristic of the podcast is approaching serious and important conversations through the innocent, curious eyes of Baby Carl.

Vitek noted that having a toddler-age character guide these discussions was an intentional choice meant to introduce a different way of talking about pressing issues. He and Dean are hopeful the podcast's comedic and child-like approach will help make such conversations more inviting.

"Comedy has been used throughout history to push back against what's wrong in a particular society; to make fun of it and to say, 'do better,'" Vitek said. "We're taking this comedy seriously, and we're not just having a good time. We're trying to use it to get to some serious things."

However, the pair acknowledges that not everyone will agree with the concept, as talking to Baby Carl about serious topics might be strange or upsetting for some.

"The Baby Carl podcast is a concept piece, we'll admit that," Vitek said. "There's a fine line in comedy, and people might not think it's funny and get angry, so there's always that danger."

The pair is grateful that those they've interviewed thus far have been fully on board with the idea, which has led to fruitful conversations.

"People speak differently to Baby Carl than they do to anyone else interviewing them," Dean noted. "(With other people), there's an ego involved, or a self-awareness that goes away once they're talking to the Baby Carl

character. They reduce everything to its basic meaning."

The pair has released five episodes of the Baby Carl's Happy Apocalypse podcast beginning this past June and is hoping to talk with more Vermonters for a second season of the show.

In the meantime, they're looking forward to sharing the podcast with listeners. Those interested in listening to Baby Carl's Happy Apocalypse podcast can find episodes at babyCarl.buzzsprout.com.

Dean and Vitek are hopeful those who tune in will be prompted to consider their own happy apocalypses and how they can inspire change in their everyday lives.

"I just want people to feel something, to enjoy it and to get inspired to see what they can do to change their lives in small ways because we're all on this planet together," Dean said. "I think environmental issues have often been put in a column with everything else; 'I like skiing,' or 'Oh, I like painting,' or 'Well, I like the environment.' But there's no skiing or painting or anything else with a planet that's ruined. The environmental issue and concern have been kind of shoehorned into a hobby or an interest or a vocation when it really needs to be at the top of everything else because, without a planet, what are you going to do?"



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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Hockey
 1/24 MUHS vs Harwood..... 10-0
 1/27 St. Albans vs MUHS..... 10-0
 1/31 MUHS at CVU.....Late

Boys' Hockey
 1/24 MUHS vs Burr & Burton..... 3-2
 1/27 St. Albans vs MUHS..... 7-1
 1/29 MUHS vs Burr & Burton..... 3-3

Boys' Basketball
 1/25 MUHS vs Mt. Abe..... 48-30
 1/26 OV at Windsor Postponed to 2/8
 1/26 Missisquoi vs VUHS..... 50-34
 1/27 MUHS vs Mt. Anthony..... 62-55
 1/29 Colchester vs VUHS..... 75-44
 1/30 OV vs Proctor..... 49-35
 1/31 Mt Abe at VUHS..... Late
 1/31 MUHS at Enosburg..... Late

Girls' Basketball
 1/24 Mt Abe vs MUHS..... 50-30
 1/26 Hartford vs OV..... 77-22
 1/27 Enosburg vs MUHS..... 39-28
 1/27 Mt Abe vs Milton..... 48-29
 1/27 Colchester vs VUHS..... 59-28
 1/29 MSJ vs OV..... 33-22
 1/30 VUHS vs Milton..... 48-45 (OT)
 1/30 Colchester vs MUHS..... 59-23
 1/30 Mt Abe fs Missisquoi..... 42-35

COLLEGE SPORTS

Women's Basketball
 1/26 Bates vs Midd..... 65-54
 1/27 Midd vs Tufts..... 90-82 (3 OT)
 1/30 Midd vs MIT..... 65-51

Men's Basketball
 1/26 Midd vs Bates..... 61-40
 1/27 Tufts vs Midd..... 82-60
 1/29 Keene St. vs Midd..... 84-66

Men's Hockey
 1/26 Midd vs Conn..... 2-1 (OT)
 1/27 Tufts vs Midd..... 2-1

Women's Hockey
 1/26 Midd vs Conn..... 3-1
 1/27 Midd vs Conn..... 4-2

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Hockey
 2/3 MUHS at Rice..... 6:40 PM
 2/7 St. J. at MUHS..... 7 PM
 2/9 S. Burlington at MUHS..... 5 PM
 2/14 MUHS at Colchester..... 4:30 PM

Boys' Hockey
 2/3 MUHS at Hartford..... 2 PM
 2/7 MUHS at Rice..... 7:40 PM
 2/9 S. Burlington at MUHS..... 7 PM

Boys' Basketball
 2/2 Bellows Falls at OV..... 7 PM
 2/3 VUHS at Milton..... 11:30 AM
 2/3 Enosburg at Mt Abe..... 12:30 PM
 2/3 MUHS at Missisquoi..... 1:30 PM
 2/6 Milton at Mt Abe..... 7 PM
 2/6 MUHS at VUHS..... 7 PM
 2/6 Windsor at OV..... 7 PM
 2/8 Enosburg at VUHS..... 7 PM
 2/8 Mt Abe at Missisquoi..... 7 PM
 2/8 OV at Windsor..... 7 PM
 2/9 Milton at MUHS..... 7 PM
 2/10 MSJ at OV..... 7 PM

Girls' Basketball
 2/1 Springfield at OV..... 7 PM
 2/2 MUHS at Milton..... 7 PM
 2/2 Mt Abe at Rutland..... 7 PM
 2/2 VUHS at Missisquoi..... 7:30 PM
 2/5 OV at W. Rutland..... 7 PM
 2/7 MUHS at VUHS..... 7 PM
 2/7 Enosburg at Mt Abe..... 7 PM
 2/9 VUHS at Mt Abe..... 7 PM
 2/9 MUHS at Missisquoi..... 7 PM
 2/10 Hartford at OV..... 7 PM

Wrestling
 2/3..... Mt. Mansfield Tourney

Gymnastics
 2/6 MUHS at Essex..... 7 PM

COLLEGE SPORTS

Men's Basketball
 2/2 Wesleyan at Midd..... 7 PM
 2/3 Trinity at Midd..... 3 PM
 2/9 Conn at Midd..... 7 PM

Women's Basketball
 2/2 Midd at Wesleyan..... 7 PM
 2/3 Midd at Trinity..... 3 PM
 2/9 Midd at Conn..... 7 PM

Men's Hockey
 2/2 Wesleyan at Midd..... 7 PM
 2/3 Trinity at Midd..... 4 PM

Women's Hockey
 2/2 Midd at Wesleyan..... 7 PM
 2/3 Midd at Wesleyan..... 3 PM

Schedules, especially at the high school level, change often due to weather, transportation and officiating availability. Please consult school websites to confirm dates and times.



TIGER CAMDEM WHITLOCK goes airborne on the way to the hoop during his team's Jan. 25 home game vs. Mount Abe. Eagles Ian Funke, right, and Chase Atkins defend. Independent photo/Steve James

Tiger boys' hoop pulls away from Mount Abe with second-half surge

By ANDY KIRKALDY
 MIDDLEBURY — Two trends continued, one of them happier than the other, when the Middlebury Union High School boys' basketball team shut down visiting Mount Abraham in the second half of Thursday's game on the way to a 48-30 victory.

The positive trend: It was the Tigers' third win in five outings after an 0-7 start to their season, and they've played strong defense in all five. On that Thursday what

MUHS Coach Chris Altemose called a matchup zone defense limited the Eagles to 11 second-half points.

"We're on a five-game stretch here where I feel like things are starting to come together for us," he said.

Altemose attributed the Tigers' improvement to a recent break in the schedule caused by a postponed game. Altemose said extra practice time allowed the team to regroup, assess what

was and wasn't working, adjust their 10-deep player rotation, and install the new defense, which heading into a Saturday game had held five straight foes to less than 35% shooting from the floor.

"(We had) almost a week to evaluate and regroup and refocus, and we changed a few things. One of them was buying into the matchup zone defense," he said.

On the flip side, the Eagles dropped their fourth straight (See Hoops, Page 2B)



MUHS SENIOR FORWARD Toby Draper bolts up the ice between two Burr & Burton skaters during Monday's Tiger home game, a 3-3 tie with the Bulldogs. Independent photo/Steve James

Boys' hockey ties Bulldogs

By ANDY KIRKALDY
 MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School boys' hockey team on Monday battled Division I Burr & Burton Academy to a 3-3 tie in a back-and-forth contest.

The D-II Tigers, who chose to play mostly D-I teams this winter, stood at 5-6-1 heading

into a Wednesday road game vs. Champlain Valley. Burr & Burton dropped to 6-5-1. MUHS will visit D-II's second-place team, Hartford, on Saturday, and D-I's first-place team, Rice, this coming Wednesday.

Coach Jordan Stearns' Tigers have gone 1-5-1 after a 4-1 start, but after Monday's tie he offered

perspective on those results. "We're playing a pretty tough schedule. They're all D-I teams, and (the Tigers) are competing," Stearns said.

Still, he acknowledged while the Tigers are getting better, there remains room for improvement, listing details such as positioning (See Tigers, Page 3B)



ELLIE WILKINSON-SACHS carries the puck up the ice against St. Albans during the Tiger girls' hockey team's Saturday home game. Independent photo/Steve James

Girls' hockey wins one, loses one, stays over .500

By ANDY KIRKALDY
 MIDDLEBURY — After splitting a pair of one-sided games last week, the Middlebury Union High School girls' hockey team's record stood at 8-6 heading into a Wednesday road game vs. Division I Champlain Valley. That game was played after the deadline for this edition of the *Independent*.

Regardless of the outcome vs. the Redhawks, the Tigers should remain solidly in fourth place in Division II with good prospects for a home playoff game. A game at D-II Rice is up on Saturday before the Tigers host another tough D-I foe on Wednesday, the Kingdom Blades.

Back on Jan. 24, the Tigers thumped Harwood, D-II's last-place team, 10-0, racking up six

first-period goals.

Six Tigers scored in the opening 15 minutes: Quinn Doria, assisted by Julia Morrissey; Lily Finn, from Isla Weaber; Ireland Hanley, from Ila Crowley; Sawyer Witscher, assisted by Julia Morrissey and Lia Calzini; Sedona Carrara, unassisted; and Kenyon Connors, set up by Doria.

In the second period, Morrissey scored with an assist from Hanley; Doria, set up by Finn; and Hanley, fed by Crowley, made it 9-0. Calzini capped the scoring in the third period with an assist from Morrissey.

Tiger goalie Heaven Ross earned the shutout with nine saves, and Harwood netminder Abigail Geighty blocked 32 shots.

(See Hockey, Page 4B)



VERGENNES UNION HIGH School's Jing Williams enters a curve ahead of Northfield's Talia Jacobs in Saturday's 600 meter race at the state championships at UVM. Williams finished ninth. Photo by Phil Gramling

VUHS track third in D-II; Fearon, Hurley run to gold

By ANDY KIRKALDY
 BURLINGTON — The Vergennes Union High School boys ran to victory in two events and took second in two more to finish third as a team in Division II at Saturday's indoor track and field state championship meet at the University of Vermont.

Meanwhile, Middlebury junior runner Jazmyne Hurley bolted to victory in two D-II girls' events, the 55- and 200-meter races, and Mount Abraham senior long jumper Joseph Darling set a school indoor record while taking second in the boys' long jump.

Winning events for the Commodores was junior Grey Fearon at 1,000 meters and the

four-by-800-meter relay team of Fearon, Riley Gagnon, Calvin Gramling and Calder Rakowski.

Rakowski was edged in the 600 and settled for second, and Rakowski, Fearon, Chance Koenig, and Ryder Messenger won silver in the 4X400 relay.

Hartford cruised in the boys' D-II team competition, as did Rice in the girls' team point standings.

The top three boys' team scores out of 20 and the local teams' results were: 1. Hartford, 126; 2. Thetford, 83; 3. Vergennes, 44; 11. Mount Abraham, 8.

The top three girls' teams' scores out of 19 and the local teams' results were: 1. Rice, 99.5; 2. Burr Fearon at 1,000 meters and the (See Track, Page 3B)

Eruption created awe

Vermonters may have woken up on June 6, 1912, thinking it was a normal day. They may have milked their cows, cut blocks of marble at a quarry, or gone to work at the Champlain Mill in Winooski, opened that year by the American Woolen Company. If I had been alive then, I'd like to think I would have started or ended the day fishing for an hour in some local river.



MATTHEW DICKERSON

But it was not a normal day. In a remote part of Alaska in the Ukak River Valley of what is now Katmai National Park on the eastern side of the Bristol Bay drainage, a volcano began to erupt. The eruption continued for 60 hours until June 8. By the time it ended, it had become the largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century and one of the five largest in recorded human history.

The eruption caused pyroclastic flows to sweep over the valley at speeds exceeding 100 mph. Earthquakes shook the region, causing the peak of Mount Katmai to collapse into a caldera more than 2,000 feet deep. Eventually, an ash cloud encircled the earth causing — according to the National Park Service — “one of the most significant cooling events” of the century, especially in the northern hemisphere. Below-average temperatures persisted for half a year. (According to online weather records I found, 1912 saw Vermont record its second-coldest June day of the 20th century.) Acid rain is said to have disintegrated clothes hanging on lines as far away as Vancouver. In its immediate vicinity, the eruption filled a 40-square-mile area — roughly the size of Middlebury or Bristol — with barren ash up to 700 feet deep.

Although the remote volcano had not been previously identified or named in published geological records, it was later named Novarupta. The valley it filled with ash became known as The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. Although the valley can only be reached by a long voyage on foot or by bush plane — and even by Alaska standards a visit there offers plenty of risks and danger — it is one of the more famous locations in Katmai National Park for those seeking a beautiful, unique, outdoor wilderness experience.

After nine years of visits to the Bristol Bay drainage working on my book, with several trips to various locations within Katmai National Park, I finally had a chance to visit this valley this past September with my wife Deborah and two former Middlebury area friends Kelly and Rachel. I didn't have the fortune (or misfortune) of a camping trip there. I saw the area only via a flyover in a small bush plane, as part of my first visit to the famous Brooks Camp. But it was still one of the most beautiful and stark scenes implanted in my memory in 2023.

My first impression was of how far the ash extends and how lifeless it is. The result of a volcanic eruption of that magnitude is far more devastating than what I could imagine from any wildfire or flood. More than a century later,

the valley is still barren. I expected more evidence of plants beginning to colonize the area, as you would see in the wake of a retreating glacier (even though a glacier also leaves a valley looking barren and lifeless, scraped free of fertile soil and buried in silt). But nothing visible grows on the top of hundreds of feet of acidic volcanic ash. The scene looked extraterrestrial, like something I might expect from a vehicle exploring mars or some sci fi movie.

My second impression was one of awe and wonder at the canyons, hundreds of feet deep, carved over time by a handful of rivers flowing through ash hundreds of feet deep. My wife tells me I overuse the word “stunning” to describe wilderness landscapes. But it was... stunning. And the rivers are still carving and carrying away that ash. After circling the edge of the valley, we flew across the tops of two of those gorges and then out the lower end where a river empties out of the canyon into a series of large lakes. From the sky, you can see a cloud of ash stretching for what looked like miles out into the water, making it opaque.

My final impression was of the tremendous abundance, beauty and diversity of the surrounding landscape. With the exception of the outflowing ash-filled rivers, just a mile or two beyond the ash in any direction I saw rich, green forests full of wildlife, and clear blue rivers and streams. Only a dozen or so miles away from the valley is the famous Brooks Falls where wildlife viewers come from all over the world to see one of the densest congregations of brown bears that can be found anywhere: bears willing to be in close proximity to one another (albeit with very complex social dynamics and hierarchy) because it is also a place with tremendously abundant food supply from July through September in the form of spawning salmon — mostly sockeye. (For those who can make it that far, combining a trip to Brooks Falls and Brooks Camp with a trip to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes is a great option.)

Our pilot and guide on our excursion was Glen Alsworth Jr., owner of the Farm Lodge in the village of Port Alsworth, where Lake Clark National Park and Preserve is headquartered. When there isn't a strong headwind (like we experienced on our trip) the lodge is about a one-hour flight on a Beaver float plane from Brooks Camp and the edge of the Ten Thousand Smokes area. Glen is also the grandson of the famous Alaskan aviator and bush pilot “Babe” Alsworth, after whom his village is named. He has lived his entire life in a remote Alaskan village and all summer takes flights all over both Lake Clark National Park and Katmai National Park. Listening to his stories about the regions was one of the delights of the visit.

Those wanting to learn more about the valley can read about it here: nps.gov/katm/learn/nature/valley-of-ten-thousand-smokes.htm.



TIGER POST PLAYER Cooke Riney goes up strong for a bucket against the defense of Eagle Ian Funke during the teams' game in Middlebury on Jan. 25.

Independent photo/Steve James



MOUNT ABE GUARD Hayden Lutz cuts to the basket for a shot during his team's game at MUHS on Jan. 25. Tigers Carter Paquette and Kyle Stearns, center, defend.

Independent photo/Steve James

Hoops

(Continued from Page 1B)

game and saw their record slide to 4-10. Coach Martin Clark said he doesn't have to look far for the biggest issue. The defense and hard work have been there, he said, but in those four losses the Eagles have scored more than 40 points just once, 43 in a 13-point setback at Milton.

“The effort is there, but we're just not making shots. It's tough when the ball is not going in the hoop for you,” he said.

Clark added the Eagles struggled to get good looks against the Tigers' two different zones.

“We lack patience a little bit, and want to do our own thing on the court once in a while. We just need more ball movement,” he said. “It was a great job by Middlebury. They played hard, too.”

Certainly, both teams showed plenty of effort in Thursday's first quarter, but neither will especially enjoy watching the video of eight minutes that saw the teams combine for 11 turnovers — seven by the Eagles, and just 13 points, eight by the Tigers.

The best that could be said of the period was the Tigers' 1-3-1 zone and press was effective, as was Mount Abe's man defense. Four Tigers scored, while Hayden Lutz hit a three and Ian Funke drove for two and blocked a shot for Mount Abe — he finished with

five blocks.

The offenses gained more traction in the second period. The Tigers opened with a 13-4 run over the first 3:50 to lead by 21-9. Sophomore post player Cooke Riney keyed it with a transition putback, a move in the paint, and a three-pointer. Also, Kyle Stearns rebounded his own missed shot, Colton Odell drove for a hoop, and point guard Tassilo Luksch scored on the break.

The Eagles responded with their best offensive stretch, a 12-2 run to cut the Tiger lead to 23-19 at halftime. Funke scored six points in the surge and blocked two shots at the other end, Charlie Germon hit four free throws, and Lutz scored on the break on a feed from Noah Ladeau.

The third quarter, however, was not kind to Mount Abe, which scored just one basket, a Ladeau floater in the lane two minutes in; hit only one of five free throws; and committed five turnovers.

Altemose said the Tigers tweaked their zone after the

Eagles surged late in the first half. “We adjusted our rotation to match up with their overloads, and the guys handled that really well,” he said.

The Tigers didn't exactly explode offensively in the period, but their 12 points put them up, 35-22, after three. Odell and Camden Whitlock each contributed two buckets in the paint during the quarter to lead the way for MUHS.

Early in the fourth, Funke's three-point play and then a Cooper Cook putback twice pulled Mount Abe to within 11; Cook's hoop made it 38-27 with 5:25 to go.

But all the Eagles managed during the rest of the period was a Germon three-pointer, as the Tigers steadily increased their lead. Stearns hit inside, and when Riney celebrated his second three-pointer at 4:30, the lead was 44-27, and MUHS was on its way.

Funke led the Eagles with 13 points, followed by Germon with seven and Lutz with six.

Clark was asked what it would take to get things pointed in the

right direction.

“We have to get some confidence. We need to feed off each other,” Clark said. “The hard work is there. We just need to play a little more as a team. Defensively we do a pretty decent job, but offensively we've got to do better.”

Riney led the Tigers with 16 points, Stearns scored 10, and Odell and Whitlock contributed six apiece. Several other Tigers scored a bucket or two. Altemose said he was pleased with his team's effort against a rival he said “came out and played hard.”

“We talked about that before the game. Records and level are out the window when you play against Otter Valley and Mount Abe. You know they're going to be scrappy, and they're going to be here to play,” he said. “So I was real happy with our response in the second half. We tweaked a few things in the second half and really dialed in on a couple things, and the guys responded really well.”

Altemose added another factor in his inexperienced team's improved play.

“Everyone is kind of figuring out their roles, which when you rebuild, takes some time to make that happen,” he said. “I'm happy with the progress. I'm happy with them finding their roles for the good of the team.”

“Everyone is kind of figuring out their roles, which when you rebuild, takes some time to make that happen.”

— Coach Martin Clark

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TIGER GUS HODDE, right, flips in the game-tying third period goal during a scramble in Monday's 3-3 tie in the Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tigers

(Continued from Page 1B)

in the offensive zone and shooting lower on opponents' goalies, a tactic more likely to produce rebounds. He also discussed defensive structure, while noting defenders are injured, Jake Kadar, Eliot Heminway (who played) and Reed Grant, with Kadar probably out for rest of the season.

"The big thing for us defensively is us keeping the puck out of the middle, and the other thing is the gap with how our D and our forwards pressure. A lot of time what happens is our forwards reach, and that happened a lot tonight, and then their forwards just skate through, and our D are so far back they just skate in on our goalie," Stearns said.

The coaches are also asking the Tigers to make simpler and quicker decisions with the puck in their own end and in the neutral zone.

"Sometimes we over-complicate things," he said. "Recognize things and execute."

In Monday's first period the Tigers did many of those things and could have emerged with more than the 1-0 lead they earned. The goal came at 9:15 from defenseman Iver Anderson at the left point, set up by a Gus Hodde feed from the left corner. Anderson sidestepped a defender, moved between the top of the circles, and whipped a forehand into net's right side.

Earlier, Anderson's screened shot hit a post; defender Ian Sinclair and forwards Landon Kean, Gavin McNulty and Joe Sullivan had good bids; and the Tigers killed off a penalty, with Kean, Hodde, Anderson and Toby Draper doing good work.

Then came the second period, where things did not go so well. The Tigers skated on the power play for nine out of the 15 minutes after the Bulldogs took three penalties, one a five-minute major. But MUHS allowed three goals, including two breakaway scores, and the period ended with BBA up, 3-2.

"If we had played that second period like we had played the first and third, it would be a much different story," Stearns said.

On a two-minute power play

assessed the first minute, McNulty had the best chance, but Bulldog goalie Michael Hornby stopped his shot from the right circle.

The five-minute major came in the fifth minute. The best the Tigers could muster were shots from the point. Just after the penalty expired Bulldog Max Brownlee picked off a pass in the defensive zone, beat the Tigers down the ice, and stuffed a backhand past MUHS goalie TJ Baron to tie the game.

The Tigers regained the lead at 10:54, when Hodde and Kean worked a slick give-and-go at the blue line that allowed Hodde to skate through the left circle and

"If we had played that second period like we had played the first and third, it would be a much different story."

— Coach Jordan Stearns

in on Hornby. Hodde put the puck high into the net from close range.

At 12:57 the Tigers went on another power play. But Jack McCoy picked off a pass and sprung Bodie Smith on another breakaway, and the game was tied at 2-2. And two seconds after the power play expired and one second before the period ended, McCoy picked off a loose puck at the Tiger blue line and slapped it home off the left pipe to give the Bulldogs a 3-2 lead.

The Tigers responded by tightened up in the back and outshooting BBA in the third period, 6-5, scoring when Hodde converted during a scramble out front that saw Hornby out of position and bodies falling. Eyon Tembreull fed the puck from the left boards into the scrum. Kean's first bid was denied, and Hodde, off the right post, flicked the loose puck home. BBA had one chance in the final minute, but Baron denied Sam Labovitz from the right circle, and it was onto OT at

3-3.

There, the Tigers outshot BBA again, 6-3. But Hornby, who made 29 saves, and Baron, who made 26, held their forts, and the teams settled for the tie.

Stearns was not unhappy with the result, and said the challenging competition has made the Tigers a better team.

"It's great to see how fast the game is at the D-I level and how we play. The development is just going through the roof for all these guys," he said.

EARLIER GAMES

The Tigers defeated BBA on the road on Jan. 24, 3-2. The Tigers took the lead with two goals early in the second period. McNulty scored the first 37 seconds into the period after picking up a turnover just outside of the BBA zone.

The second goal came with the Tigers skating shorthanded 3:49 into the period: Kellan Bartlett converted a breakaway after being sprung by McNulty. BBA answered with two goals in the final five minutes of the period, and the teams entered the third period tied.

Anderson scored the game-winner for the Tigers five minutes into the third period, just after a power play ended. Draper and Hodde assisted. Baron made 21 saves, including two critical stops in the final 1:30, one on a Bulldog breakaway.

Things did not go as smoothly against visiting St. Albans (5-6-1) on Saturday: The Bobwhites topped the Tigers, 7-1. Tembreull scored the Tiger goal, assisted by Anderson. Two MUHS goalies combined for 21 saves. Baylor Lamos, Ethan Laplume and Oliver Horton led the Bobwhites with two goals apiece, and two St. Albans goalies combined for 14 saves.

Track

(Continued from Page 1B)

And Burton, 60; 3. Peoples and Fair Haven, 36; 8. Middlebury, 20; 12. Mount Abraham, 10; 15. Vergennes, 6.

The complete results for the local boys' competitors were:

- 600 meters: 2. Rakowski, VUHS, 1:28.61.

- 1,000: 1. Fearon, VUHS, 2:39.74; 4. Gramling, VUHS, 3:06.85.

- 1,500: 9. Fearon, VUHS, 4:45.02.

- 4X200: 5. VUHS, 1:53.31 (Koenig, Ryan Johnson, Brody McGuire, Messinger).

- 4X400: 2. VUHS, 3:21.91 (Rakowski, Koenig, Fearon, Messinger).

- 4X800: 1. VUHS, 8:59.92 (Fearon, Gagnon, Gramling, Rakowski).

- Shotput: 8. Darling, Mt. Abe, 10.47 meters.

- Long jump: 2. Darling, Mt. Abe, 6.1 meters.

The complete results for the local girls competitors were:

- 55: 1. Hurley, MUHS, 7.53; 9. Ruby Connell, Mt. Abe, 7.95.

- 300 meters: 1. Hurley, MUHS, 42.27; 8. Connell, Mt. Abe, 47.01.

- 600: 1. Jing Williams, VUHS, 1:56.58.

- 1,000: 11. Madeleine Stroup, VUHS, 3:52.49.

- 4X400: 6. VUHS, 3:21.91 (Isabelle Van Voorst, Mary Cosgrove, Torrey Hanna, Faith McCallister).

- 4X400: 7. VUHS, 8:59.92 (Williams, Stroup, Hanna, Van Voorst).



VERGENNES JUNIOR GREY Fearon leads the pack in the Division II 1,000-meter run in Saturday's state track and field championships. Fearon won the race in 2:39.74.

Photo by Phil Gramling



THE COMMODORE QUARTET of Grey Fearon, left Riley Gagnon, Cal Gramling and Calder Rakowski celebrate their victory in the 4X800-meter relay in the Vermont Division II Track & Field Championships in Burlington this past Saturday.

Photo by Sharon O'Daniel

Nordic skiers fare well in pair of recent meets

HUNTINGTON/STOWE — The Middlebury Union High School Nordic ski teams had strong performances at recent races in Stowe and Huntington, highlighted by individual first-place finishes by Mary Harrington and Beth McIntosh, and second-place efforts by Baxter Harrington, Mary Harrington and Ava Schneider.

At the Trapp Family Lodge Nordic Center in Stowe on Tuesday, the Tiger boys were second out of eight teams, while the girls' were third out of four scoring teams in classic races.

For the boys, Baxter Harrington led the way in second, followed by Matias Citarella, 6th; Matthew Berg, 11th; Aaron Carr-Perlow, 12th; Baker Nelson, 22nd; and Nate Cook Yoder, 37th.

McIntosh and Mary Harrington finished 1-2 for the girls' team, followed by Lila Cook Yoder, 26th;

and Sarah Benz, 45th.

Local independent skiers June Yates-Rusch from Mount Abraham and Ellie Eckels from Vergennes Union finished ninth and 45th, respectively.

Separately, in skate races at the Sleepy Hollow center in Huntington on Jan. 25, the Tiger boys were third out of seven teams, and the Tiger girls took third out of four teams.

Mary Harrington and Ava Schneider were first and second in the girls' race, more than a minute ahead of their nearest competitors. They were followed by Cook Yoder in 18th and Benz in 36th. Eckels was 33rd.

Baxter Harrington led the boys' team with an 8th-place finish. He was followed by Berg (14th), Nelson (17th), Carr-Perlow (22nd), Nate Cook Yoder (27th) and Kaden Hammond (47th).



Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 1:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Saturday, February 3:
3:00 - 4:30 PM Public Skating

Tuesday, February 6:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, February 8:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Sunday, February 11:
2:30 - 4:00 PM Public Skating

Tuesday, February 13:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, February 15:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

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TIGER JULIA MORRISSEY battles for the puck on Saturday with a St. Albans defender at Middlebury's Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James



TIGER SAWYER WITSCHER defends a St. Albans skater at the blue line on Saturday during the MUHS girls' hockey team's home game.

Independent photo/Steve James

Boys' hoop: Tigers, OV prevail

MUHS wins on road, OV at home; VUHS drops pair

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**

ADDISON COUNTY — In recent local boys' basketball play, Middlebury and Otter Valley each picked up victories, while Vergennes dropped a pair of road games.

The Tigers hosted Mount Abraham on Jan. 25; see separate story on Page 1B. The Eagles were also set to visit the Commodores on Wednesday after the deadline for this issue.

TIGERS

On Saturday, the Tigers shrugged off an early 14-4 deficit and defeated host Mount Anthony, 62-55. The Tigers came back and trailed by one point at the half, and then outscored the Patriots by 19-11 in the third period to take charge.

There were many contributors for the Tigers, who won their third straight game and improved to

4-9, including **Kyle Stearns** (15 points), **Tassilo Luksch** (10 points, 14 rebounds), **Heath Odell** (10 points), **Cooke Riney** (10 points, 12 rebounds), **Keenan Chicoine** (seven points), and **George Devlin** (seven points, eight rebounds).

The Tigers were scheduled to visit Enosburg on Wednesday after the deadline for this issue.

COMMODORES

On Jan. 26, host Missisquoi defeated the cold-shooting Commodores, 50-34. VUHS hit just 25% of its shots from the floor and committed 22 turnovers, according to Coach Eric LeBeau, who called it a tough loss.

On Monday, host D-I Colchester sank the Commodores, 75-44. Zach Davis led four Lakers in double figures with 21 points.

Ryan Wright scored 11 points,

and **Dev Brisson** added eight for VUHS, which dropped to 8-5 headed into Wednesday's home showdown with Mount Abe.

OTTERS

On Tuesday, the Otters improved to 9-3 with a 49-35 victory over local rival Proctor. The Division IV Phantoms took an early 11-6 lead, but OV led by 18-17 at the half and pulled away afterward against their 9-5 foes.

Connor Denis led the Otters with 17 points, **Drew Pelkey** scored 11, and **Logan Letourneau** added seven.

Matt Nop led the Phantoms with 12 points, and **Chase Razanouski**, who also plays for the OV football team, finished with eight points and 15 rebounds.

The Otters' Jan. 26 game vs. Windsor was postponed to Feb. 8.

Hockey

(Continued from Page 1B)

The going was tougher for the Tigers when D-I St. Albans skated into the Memorial Sports Center on Saturday night, as the Comets prevailed by the same 10-0 final tally.

Comet Bri Jarvis score twice to open the game's scoring in the first period, both assisted by Kali

Cushing. Jarvis also set up Rae Alexander later in the period, and it was 3-0 after 15 minutes.

The Comets broke it open in the second with five goals, one more apiece from Jarvis and Alexander, and one each from Gabbie Fraties, Kate Storms, Addie Parent and Jillian Mathieu. Cushing and Jarvis chipped in assists. Kate Storms and

Jarvis finished the scoring in the third period.

Ruby Hubbell (26 saves) and Kayla Charbonneau (five) combined for 31 stops in the Tiger goal, while Comet goalie Erin Jackson stopped 12 shots to earn the shutout.

College teams net triumphs

Women's hockey, hoop near top of NESCAC tables

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**

MIDDLEBURY — In recent Middlebury College sports action, the women's hockey and basketball teams each won twice and remained near the top of the NESCAC standings, while men's hockey and basketball each picked up one victory.

Women's Hockey

The Panther women's hockey team improved to 10-3-3 with a pair of home wins over NESCAC rival Connecticut this past weekend. The team's 7-1-2 league mark is good for second place in the league behind Amherst (8-2-2), which has two games in hand over Middlebury.

On Friday, the Panthers defeated the Connecticut Camels, 3-1. Middlebury took a 1-0 lead 1:34 into play, when Jordan Hower tipped in a Liv Fernandez shot.

The Camels tied the game 4:21 into the middle period on a power play: Kylie McCarthy redirected a Casey Chesner shot from the point.

The Panthers regained the lead at 18:50 of the second, when Kylie Quinlan wristed a shot into the upper left corner on a two-on-one rush.

The Panthers increased their lead on the power play 5:42 into the third period. Katie Flynn tapped home a Cece Ziegler shot from the point. Panther goalie Sophia Will made 23 saves, and the Camels' Devon Galizio made 20.

On Saturday, Middlebury scored three power-play goals in a 4-2 victory over Connecticut (6-8-5).

Chesner gave the Camels the lead midway through the first period on a power play, one-timing in a loose puck after a shot was blocked.

The Panthers knotted the contest on a power play with 5:34 gone in the middle frame. Kylie Quinlan swept home the rebound of a Cat Appleyard shot. Middlebury took the lead three minutes later on another power play: Britt Nawrocki redirected a Callia Ferraris shot from the top of the left circle. The Panthers made it 3-1 five minutes later, when Molly MacQueen netted a Nawrocki rebound.

The Camels cut the deficit to one around two minutes later, when Sydney Frank poked a rebound past Panther goalie Sophia Merageas. Panther Raia Schluter clinched the 4-2 win with an empty net tally with 34 seconds left in the game. Merageas made 23 saves, and Galizio made 33.

The Panthers travel to third-place Wesleyan this weekend for a two-game series.

Women's Basketball

The Middlebury women's hoop team won twice in three outings and stands at 14-7. The team's 5-2 league record is good enough for third place in NESCAC behind Bates and Bowdoin, both undefeated in league play.

On Friday, visiting Bates improved to 17-2, 5-0 NESCAC, with a 65-54 victory over the Panthers.

The Bobcats took a 36-21 halftime lead and then turned back two Middlebury rallies, the second one closing the gap to 51-47 with 6:39 left in the game. Bates went on a decisive 10-3 run after that final Panther surge. Sarah Hughes led four Bobcats in double figures with 19 points.

Alexa Mustafaj (21 points, four steals), Calie Messina (12 points) and Augusta Dixon (10 points, 10 rebounds, four blocks) led the Panthers.

On Saturday, the Panthers defeated visiting Tufts (11-7, 3-3 NESCAC) in triple overtime, 90-82. The teams were tied at the half, and the second half featured seven lead changes. The Jumbos took the lead, 67-65, on a Maggie Russell layup with 1:30 left in regulation, but a Dixon layup at 0:22 on a feed from Brooke Collins sent the game into OT.

A three-pointer by Jumbo Samantha Sousa late in the first OT sent the game into the second extra session at 73-73. A Bethany Lucey free throw at 0:13 tied the second OT at 78-78, and then a Dixon block at the buzzer sent the game into the third OT. There, Dixon scored four straight points before Mustafaj added eight straight as the Panthers outscored the Jumbos, 12-4, to earn the victory.

Dixon recorded career highs of 35 points and five blocks, adding 12 rebounds. Mustafaj scored 31, Messina chipped in nine points and seven rebounds, Lucey contributed nine boards and five assists, and Collins added five assists.

In a Tuesday non-league game, the Panthers defeated host MIT, 65-41, as Mustafaj poured in a career-high 43 points. The Engineers dropped to 13-6. The Panthers led, 29-24, at halftime and put the game away with a 16-4 run late in the third period.

Mustafaj now has 498 points this season, fifth all-time in program history. Her 43 points tied for the NESCAC high this season. Dixon added a career-high 22 boards and 12 points for her seventh-straight double-double.

Men's Basketball

The Panther men's hoops team dropped two out of three games, all on the road, splitting two weekend NESCAC games before dropping a non-league game on Tuesday to fall to 10-11, 4-3 NESCAC.

This past Friday, the Panthers held host Bates to 29.6% shooting from the floor in a 61-40 victory. Middlebury led by 33-18 at the half and coasted to the win vs. the 3-16 Bobcats afterward.

Panthers Evan Flaks (13 points), Tristan Joseph (11) and Nolan Moore (10) reached double figures.

David Brennan added seven points and 10 rebounds, and Noah Osher scored seven and pulled down seven boards.

On Saturday, host Tufts improved to 16-4, 3-3 NESCAC, with an 82-60 victory over the Panthers. The Jumbos led by 10 at the break and put the game away early in the second half.

Osher's 19 points led the Panthers, Kuba Cwalini scored 21, Flaks added nine, and Brennan chipped in six points and eight boards. James Morakis paced Tufts with 24 points.

On Tuesday, host Keene St., the seventh-ranked team in NCAA D-III, defeated the Panthers, 84-66, to improve to 17-2. Middlebury hung with the Owls until their hosts snapped a 27-27 first-half tie with a 17-2 run; they led at the break by 20 and were not challenged afterward.

Jeff Hunter led four Owls in double figures with 20 points. Osher and Joseph scored 12 apiece for Middlebury.

MEN'S HOCKEY

The Middlebury men's hockey team is 5-9-4, 3-6-3 in NESCAC play, after splitting two league road games this past weekend.

This past Friday, the Panthers rallied from 1-0 down through the third period to force overtime at Connecticut, and Bobby May's unassisted game-winner in the extra session gave them the win, 2-1. Goalie Jake Horoho made 35 saves for Middlebury, and Nolan Moore scored the game-tying goal. Connecticut took the lead late in the second period. Rocco Testa-Basi skated to the blue line and rifled a shot that bounced through traffic and into the goal. Moore knotted the game with just over 10 minutes remaining in regulation. His shot from the left dot landed inside the right pipe.

The golden goal came at 1:45 of overtime. May stole the puck in the neutral zone, skated in on goal, and flipped a shot over Camel goalie's Dynan's left shoulder from close range. Dynan finished with 17 saves for the Camels, who dropped to 6-8-2.

On Saturday, host Tufts scored twice in the third period to defeat Middlebury, 2-1, despite Horoho's 35 saves. The Jumbos improved to 10-6-2, 7-4-1 NESCAC.

Middlebury took the lead 4:46 into the middle period, when Jin Lee took a pass from Ryan Pineault between the circles and ripped a shot home. The Jumbos tied the score 4:13 into the final frame, when Harrison Bazionos scored on a rebound.

Tufts took the lead 40 seconds later, when Clark Bolin took a pass from behind the Panther net and tapped it home. Tufts goalie Peyton Durand made 24 saves, including on a Chris Garbe second-period breakaway.

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The five most important questions heading into Super Bowl LVIII

By JEFFRI CHADIIHA
NFL.com Columnist

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — There is no need to search far for compelling storylines now that the matchup for Super Bowl LVIII is set. The 49ers and Chiefs met on this same stage four years ago, back when Kansas City quarterback Patrick Mahomes was just starting his legacy and head coach Andy Reid was seeking his first championship. Kansas City wound up winning that year's title with a stirring fourth-quarter comeback. There is a very good chance this game comes down to a similar suspense-filled ending.

The Chiefs reached this Super Bowl by reminding us how much experience matters in their latest quest for a Lombardi Trophy. While the Baltimore Ravens melted down in the AFC Championship Game, Kansas City kept its cool, played great defense and made all the necessary plays to deliver that 17-10 win. The 49ers went a different route in beating Detroit in the NFC Championship Game. San Francisco fell behind by 17 points in the first half before rallying behind quarterback Brock Purdy in the final two quarters for the 34-31 victory.

What is going to unfold in Las Vegas on Feb. 11? Kansas City is chasing its second straight Super Bowl win and third in five seasons, accomplishments that would cement that franchise as the newest dynasty. San Francisco knows a few things about dynasties as well. The problem is the 49ers haven't won a Super Bowl since 1994, even though they've had two previous cracks at it in the last 11 years.

So let's prepare for a terrific matchup. Here are the five most important questions when it comes to determining who ultimately wins this contest...

1) Do the Chiefs need a huge game from Patrick Mahomes to win? As strange as it sounds, the answer to that is a resounding "NO." Mahomes needs to play well, but anybody who's watched him in this postseason can see he's gone to another level with his quarterbacking abilities. He's averaged 239.3 passing yards in Kansas City's three playoff wins while tossing four touchdown passes. He only had 241 passing yards on 30 completions against the Ravens' vaunted defense, which reveals plenty about how the Chiefs have been approaching their offensive strategy in the postseason. This team has stopped trying to dominate opponents with schemes and accepted that the best path to moving the football and scoring points is simplicity.

2) Are there any more questions about Brock Purdy? There used to be a lot of questions about whether the 49ers' second-year quarterback was built to handle comeback situations. Now it's fair to ask if he's ever going to start losing in those moments again. One week after leading San Francisco on the game-winning drive in a win over Green Bay, Purdy rallied his team from a 17-point deficit to help the 49ers reach the Super Bowl. He accomplished that with his arm (20-of-31, 267 yards, one touchdown and one

interception) and his legs (48 yards on five carries) — and just as importantly, with his poise.

3) Can the 49ers solve Kansas City's defense? For all the talk about the Ravens' defense, the Chiefs' defense wound up being the unit that dominated the AFC Championship game. It amassed four sacks, three turnovers and thoroughly frustrated Baltimore quarterback Lamar Jackson, a player on the verge of winning his second league Most Valuable Player award.

It did it by using the same formula that has worked all season. The defensive line is relentless, led by a monstrous interior presence in All-Pro defensive tackle Chris Jones. The linebackers are versatile and athletic, and the secondary is adept at locking down receivers, largely because of the cornerback duo of L'Jarius Sneed and Trent McDuffie. When you combine such personnel with an aggressive, veteran defensive coordinator like Steve Spagnuolo, you create a lot of problems for opposing offenses.

4) Can San Francisco coach Kyle Shanahan outwit K.C. coach Andy Reid? Reid has been stellar in the postseason, both with his preparation and play-calling. The Chiefs won in Buffalo in the Divisional Round by scoring 27 points in 23 minutes. They did just enough to get the lead against Baltimore in the first half before playing like a team that wasn't going to beat itself in the final two quarters. The most impressive play call of the game was easily Reid's decision to attempt a pass to Marquez Valdes-Scantling on third-and-9 that resulted in a game-clinching, 32-yard completion.

Shanahan has been impressive in his own right this postseason. His teams have been known for clobbering opponents when they get early leads and wilting when they trail big in the second half. But in these playoffs, the 49ers have shown tremendous character and poise in handling adversity. Shanahan also has plenty of demons to slay. He was the offensive coordinator in Atlanta when the Falcons blew a 28-3 lead and lost to New England in Super Bowl LI. The 49ers also

had a 10-point, fourth-quarter lead in Super Bowl LIV when the Chiefs stormed back to win that contest, 31-20.

5) Will Travis Kelce remind us once again that he still has plenty left in his tank? We already can expect to hear Kelce answering more questions in Las Vegas about his relationship with Taylor Swift than actual football topics. The crazy thing is that his football journey has become far more interesting during the past month. It seemed that age was finally catching up with the 34-year-old Kelce in the second half of the regular season. He had one touchdown reception in his final nine games and only 88 receiving yards combined in his final three contests. After recharging his batteries, Kelce now has 23 receptions for 262 yards and three touchdowns this postseason, and he just became the all-time receptions leader in postseason history on Sunday.

Girls' hoop: Eagles, VUHS win

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — In local high school girls' basketball action between Jan. 24 and 30, Mount Abraham picked up three victories, one over Middlebury; the Tigers dropped three games; Vergennes split a pair of outings, winning one in dramatic fashion; and Otter Valley came up short twice.

EAGLES TOPTIGERS

On Jan. 24, visiting Mount Abe eased past the Tigers, 50-30. McKenzie Griner led the Eagles with 16 points, and Abba Parker (11 points) and Hazel Guilmette (10 points) also reached double figures.

Lexi Whitney scored eight points for MUHS, and Tenny LaRoche finished with seven.

EAGLES

On Saturday, the Eagles brushed aside visiting Milton, 48-29. The trio of Griner (17 points, nine rebounds), Parker (13 points, four steals), and Guilmette (10 points) once again led the attack.

Marlie Bushey led Milton with 16 points.

On Tuesday, the Eagles made it

three straight wins and improved their record to 9-4 with a 42-35 decision over visiting Missisquoi. Leading the charge were Griner, with 12 points and 11 rebounds, and Piper Guilmette, who filled up the stat sheet with 12 points, six rebounds and four assists. Alexandra Bourdeau paced the 7-7-T-Birds with 16 points.

TIGERS

On Saturday, host Enosburg defeated the Tigers, 39-28. Cam Benoit (12 points) led the Hornets.

On Tuesday host Colchester bested the Tigers, 51-23. Nicole Norton scored 19 to pace the Lakers.

Isabel Quinn led MUHS with six points as the Tigers dropped to 3-10.

COMMODORES

On Saturday, host Division I Colchester topped the Commodores, 59-28. Norton's 18 points led the Lakers. Kaelin Sullivan and Amelia Giroux each scored six points for VUHS.

On Tuesday, the Commodores topped visiting Milton in overtime, 48-45. The Yellowjackets erased a seven-point VUHS lead late in

the fourth to tie the game at 43-43 at the end of regulation, but Ava Francis, Ashton Stearns and Giroux combined for all five of the Commodores' points in overtime as they pulled out the victory. Francis (18 points), Giroux (12) and Stearns (11) all scored in double figures as VUHS improved to 7-5. Bushey scored 16 for Milton, and Grace Williams added 15.

OTTERS

On Friday, Jan. 26, the Otters lost at Division II contender Hartford, 77-22. Charlotte Jasmin paced the 8-2 Hurricanes with 24 points. Brenna Bovey (six points) and Marissa Dick (five) led the Otters.

On Monday, visiting Mount St. Joseph limited the Otters to four first-half points and then held them off in the second half to prevail, 33-22. Isabella Anderson scored five of her game-high 12 points for the 6-6 Mounties after OV cut their lead to five in the fourth quarter.

Sierra Corman hit two three-pointers to lead the Otters (1-11) with six points. Matelin LaPorte added five, and Bovey chipped in four.

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Winners will be chosen based on guess accuracy. Prizes include a Vermont Sun membership + 1 month's dues, a Greg's Market & Deli prize package (\$25 gift card, 3 lbs. ribs, 3 lbs. wings, & 1lb. coleslaw), \$25 gift card to Middlebury Discount Beverage, \$30 merchandise gift certificate to Hare and the Dog, \$30 merchandise gift certificate to Otter Creek Bakery, and \$25 Agway gift card. Winners will be contacted once the contest is over to discuss available prizes. Entries will be accepted through Saturday, February 10th. Winners will be announced in the February 15th edition of the Addy Indy.

2024 SUPER SUNDAY FOOTBALL CONTEST

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS vs SAN FRANCISCO 49ers

Who will win: Chiefs or 49ers? _____

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Please circle your top prize choices.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Addison Historical Society will meet Sunday, Feb. 11

ADDISON — The February Addison Town Historical Society meeting at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 11, will feature a special guest speaker, local historian Bernard Noble. Noble's presentation will explain and show the intricate process by which the historic and potentially fragile brick New Haven Junction station was moved and saved. Its new home is 1.6 miles overland on North Street, New Haven. A short business meeting will follow.

Bernie Noble grew up in numerous Addison County towns, spending most of his early years in Salisbury. He attended junior high and high school in Middlebury. After graduating from UVM, he

taught at Middlebury Union Middle School for thirty years, retiring in 2000. An avid history buff, Noble has done archaeological work on Mount Independence, been a re-enactor in a Revolutionary War group (Whitcomb's Rangers) and has written three books so far on Civil War soldiers buried in the Addison County towns of Goshen, Leicester, Orwell and New Haven. Currently he is working on Civil War veterans from Bristol.

The meeting will take place at the Addison Fire Station, 44 VT Rt. 17 West. Blizzard date is the following Sunday, same time and place. For more information or questions, reach out to Geoff Nelson at 802-349-3305.



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Community Playgroups

Middlebury 9:30 - 11 am Saturdays at the Addison County Parent/Child Center 126 Monroe St.	Vergennes 9:30 - 11 am Thursdays at the Congregational Church 30 S. Water St.
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Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT



feb 1 THURSDAY

Introduction to Butoh in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 1, 3 p.m., Dance Theater, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. The dancers of Middlebury College class DANC1017 will present "Introduction to Butoh" — led by professor Messi Chavez. All are welcome to this free showing of the students' final project for the winter term. The dancers will explore new movements and possibilities.

Hannaford Career Center open house in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 1, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Main Campus 51 Charles Ave. and North Campus 372 Mainell Road. Learn about technical/trades education in construction, design, agriculture, theater, engineering, human services, medicine, natural resource management, automotive technologies and more. Info online at hannafordcareercenter.org.

feb 2 FRIDAY

Hill Country Holiday in Lincoln. Friday, Feb. 2, 5 p.m. Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. The first night of Lincoln's yearly winter celebration start with a taco dinner by Erika on the first floor of Burnham Hall followed by a contra dance at 6:30 p.m. upstairs.

One-night Dungeons and Dragons campaign in Middlebury. Friday, Feb. 2, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Calling all sellwords and spellslingers, rogues and fighters. Join Kathryn and Drew for a one-night DnD campaign. All levels of experience welcome. Dice and characters provided. Learn the ins and outs of DnD and help fight a zombie army. For teens in grades 9-12. Space is limited. Registration required. Please email kathryn.laliberte@ilsleypubliclibrary.org to register.

Dinner and a classic movie in Ferrisburgh. Friday, Feb. 2, 6 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. The Friends of the Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall are hosting dinner and movie screening. The film will have everyone saying, "Here's looking at you, kid!" Dinner, \$12/person includes salad and spaghetti. Film is free. More info and registration at unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

feb 3 SATURDAY

Used book sale in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. After a month off, we are stocked and ready to go. Members of the Friends organization may begin shopping at 9:45 a.m.

Twist 'O Wool Guild meeting in Monkton. Saturday, Feb. 3, 10 a.m., Monkton Town Hall, 92 Monkton Ridge. Members will be bringing in all different kinds of spinning wheels and fiber for people to try out. No experience needed, all are welcome.

Hill Country Holiday in Lincoln. Saturday, Feb. 3, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., locations around town. Day two of Lincoln annual celebration starts with the Lincoln Cooperative Preschool Parade from the general store to the library, followed by lunch and skating at the library at noon. Burnham Hall will host a spaghetti dinner at 5 p.m., followed by the Lincoln Variety Show at 7 p.m.

Youth Ministry Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, Feb. 3, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m., Bingo starts at 6 p.m. This is a family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. This event is sponsored by St. Ambrose and St. Peter's Youth Ministry to benefit the on-going program costs.

feb 4 SUNDAY

Hill Country Holiday in Lincoln. Sunday Feb. 4, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Lincoln Sports hill, near the fire station. The final day of Hill Country Holiday begins with sledding, then jump jack lessons at noon and a jump jack race at 1 p.m. Those intending to race will need to fill out a waiver.

feb 6 TUESDAY

"Whispers from the Valley of the Yak" book discussion in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Lincoln resident Jackie Tuxill will read from and discuss her new memoir, which chronicles her quest to understand her difficult childhood and who she is beyond "wife," "mother" and "daughter." Born in 1942 to medical missionary parents in China, Tuxill has traveled extensively, spending time in India, Tibet, Alaska and Europe's navigable inland waterways.

Exhibit talk and tour in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m., Davis Family Library, Middlebury College. Join Middlebury alumnae Bee Ottinger and Karla Baehr for a discussion of representation, feminism, and their experience embracing their sexuality after attending Middlebury in the 1960s. The talk will be followed by a tour of the new exhibition in the library, "The Lesbian House (1972-1973): Photographs by Bee Ottinger, class of 1970." Ottinger's photographs depict life at the Los Angeles Lesbian House, a halfway house affiliated with the Gay Community Service Center established in 1972 to provide a home for lesbians who had been rejected from their families.

Green Mountain Club: Bread Loaf Section Annual Meeting in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Court. Brief social time followed by the meeting at 6:45. At about 7:30, GMC Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney will offer an inside look at the projects and accomplishments the club and volunteers have accomplished during challenges and impacts of changes in climate and trail use patterns. Light refreshments. Free and open to the public. More info online at www.gmcbreadloaf.org.

feb 7 WEDNESDAY

Hearts and Leaves paint night in Middlebury. Wednesday, Feb. 7, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St.



Don't be alarmed

SMOOTH GREENSNAKES LIKE this one can be startling, but they are our friends. Find out more when herpetologist Jim Andrews talks about the snakes of Vermont at Otter Creek Audubon's Cabin Fever lecture at Ilsley Public Library on Thursday, Feb. 8, at 7 p.m.
 Photo by Rosy Metcalf

Join fellow paint adventurers for a Valentine themed paint night. Leave your critical self judgment at home and let your inner artist out. All supplies are provided. Space is limited, please register at ilsleypubliclibrary.org.

Addison County 4-H Foundation annual meeting. Wednesday, Feb. 7, 7 p.m., UVM Extension office, Pond Lane. A rescheduling of the postponed Annual Meeting of the Addison County 4-H Foundation. Attendance via virtual platform will be available. For more information or to receive the Zoom link for the meeting, contact 4-H Educator Martha Seifert at 802-656-7547 or email to martha.seifert@uvm.edu.

feb 8 THURSDAY

Cabin Fever Lecture Series: The Snakes of Vermont in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 8, 7-8 p.m., Community Room, Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Herpetologist Jim Andrews will teach us about the species of snakes that live in Vermont and why they are your friends. Sponsored by Otter Creek Audubon.

feb 9 FRIDAY

Spaghetti dinner in Weybridge. Friday, Feb. 9, 5-7 p.m., Weybridge Elementary School, Quaker Village Rd. A fundraiser for the Weybridge Fire Department. Everyone in the community, including Weybridge and beyond, is welcome to attend. Menu includes marinara sauce, alfredo sauce, meatballs, garlic bread, salad, homemade desserts from our auxiliary members, coffee, fruit punch and Monument Farms milk. Tickets \$14 adults/\$5 children.

Knights in Italy spaghetti dinner in Bristol. Friday, Feb. 9, 5-7 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish Hall, 11 School St. Menu includes spaghetti with sauce, garlic bread, salad and dessert, eat in or take out. All proceeds will go toward furthering the Knights' mission of aiding the community in a variety of ways including a donation of winter coats to 5-town schools. Tickets \$12 adults/\$6 children 12 and under/\$30 family. No pre-order necessary.

feb 10 SATURDAY

Wildlife walk in Middlebury. Saturday, February 10, 8-10 a.m., Otter View Park, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust invite community members to help survey birds and other wildlife. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. Please take common sense COVID-19 precautions. Stay home if you are feeling ill, and wear a mask if you are unvaccinated. More info at 802-388-6019.

Winter crafters market in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 10, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Spread the word. The Middlebury Farmers Market Association invites vendors and customers to its upcoming Winter Crafters. Contact Dennielle and Michael Brinkman at mellowbrookunlimited@gmail.com for more info.

Artist retrospective in New Haven. Saturday Feb. 10, 3:30-5:30 p.m., Tourterelle, Route 7. Come celebrate the colorful art of Alice Murdoch. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served.

feb 11 SUNDAY

Breakfast Buffet in Vergennes. Sunday, Feb. 11, 8-10 a.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Omelets to order, scrambled eggs, French toast, bacon, sausage, fruit, plain and blueberry pancakes, maple syrup, sausage gravy on biscuits, corn bread, home fries, mini muffins, juice, milk and coffee. Adults \$12/children 8-12 \$7/immediate family \$32 (maximum). Offered by Vergennes Knights of Columbus to support their community service programs.

Lunar New Year celebration and expert talk in Middlebury. Sunday, Feb. 11, 12:30-6:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. This free event by Addison County BIPOC+ showcases dance, art and crafts from different Asian traditions, and culminates with a 5:30 p.m. conversation with E. Tammy Kim, contributing writer for *The New Yorker* and founding co-host of the podcast "Time to Say Goodbye." She will talk about transnational Asianness and shifting perspectives on Asian America. Other activities include a tae kwon do demonstration, family-friendly story time and dragon-themed crafts and activities; Chinese fan dance and pungmul drumming; and Chinese calligraphy/painting demonstration with Yinglei Zhang. Free admission, food available for purchase.

Addison Town Historical Society meeting in Addison. Sunday, Feb. 11, 2 p.m., Addison Fire Station, 44 Route 17 West. Special guest speaker local historian Bernard Noble will explain and show the intricate process by which the historic and potentially fragile brick New Haven Junction train station was moved and saved. Questions? Please reach out to Geoff Nelson, 802-349-3305.

feb 13 TUESDAY

New Haven River Anglers meeting in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 13, 6 p.m., Marquee Theatre, 65 Main St. Guest speaker Ben Wilcox will talk about "Lessons learned from competition fishing."

feb 14 WEDNESDAY

Peacemaker Quilt Project open house in Middlebury. Wednesday, Feb. 14, Gather, Merchants Row. Come see quilts pieced together by local Vermonters and individuals around the U.S. and the globe. The quilts will be donated to families and children facing transitions and crises.

feb 15 THURSDAY

Virtual Archeology Conference in Ferrisburgh. Thursday, Feb. 15, 1-4 p.m., Zoom. Researchers and archeologists with the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum come together to share the latest developments in their research. Open to all. Topics will address the LCMM's research in Arnold's Bay, conservation of the underwater objects, and discussion about Benedict Arnold's 1776 flagship, the *Congress*. More info and registration at www.lamm.org.

Emily St. John Mandel reading and Q&A in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 15, 7-8:30 p.m., in the college's Wright Theater. Mandel is author of six novels, most recently "Sea of Tranquility," which has been translated into 25 languages and was selected by President Barack Obama as one of his favorite books of 2022. Her 2014 novel "Station Eleven" won the 2015 Arthur C. Clarke Award and aired as a limited series on HBO Max. Organizers called this an exciting opportunity to listen and ask questions to an author who has a pulse on the anxiety of the country in such a beautiful way. Free and open to the public.

Tourneol in Monkton. Thursday, Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m., Russell Memorial Library. Come hear the sounds of a 1930s Parisian café, gypsy jazz tunes, torch songs in the spirit of Edith Piaf, jazz standards and some Latin beats. Free. Part of the 5-Town Musical Library tour.

feb 17 SATURDAY

Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, Feb. 17, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m., Bingo starts at 6 p.m. A family-friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by St. Peter's Cemetery Committee to benefit the ongoing efforts for cemetery improvements.

"United for Ukraine" in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Middlebury College students, alumni, faculty, staff and guest artists will come together to present a benefit showcase of Ukrainian resilience through art. This year's event will feature the New York Crimean Tatar Ensemble, and a parade of performances by the Middlebury College Choir, the student band Chapel Hill, Middlebury College's Ukrainian students, and other special guests. Free and open to the public. Resources about suggested charities will be provided.

feb 20 TUESDAY

"Gardening with Ornamental Grasses" in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 20, 1 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Middlebury Garden Club welcomes Silvia Jope, a landscape designer from Chittenden County, who will discuss how she incorporates ornamental grasses into her landscape designs. Free and open to the public.

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Work on the Brandon Town Hall is complete

By STEVEN JUPITER
Brandon Reporter

BRANDON — Built in 1861, the Brandon Town Hall has had its ups and downs — the town once even considered tearing it down. But after a major renovation years ago, it's become a center point for Brandon's cultural life. Shows, movies, events — even disc golf — all take place in its main hall. And as a result, the floor (already a replacement for the 1861 original) had taken quite a beating and was worn too thin to be refinished yet again.

Friends of Town Hall (FOTH), under longtime president Dennis Marden, worked hard for years to raise the funds to replace the battered wood. Finally, the group's labor has borne fruit: a beautiful new floor has been installed and is ready for public use.

"We started in early December and finished in mid-January," said Marden, as he proudly showed off the gleaming new boards last week. "There are still a few things left to do, but we're going to be open for Brandon Idol this weekend."

— Dennis Marden

"We started in early December and finished in mid-January. There are still a few things left to do, but we're going to be open for Brandon Idol this weekend."

placed there as a low-tech way to help muffle sound back in the day. Marden collected some of the old materials — square nails and wood — and will make mementos with them to be sold to raise funds for the building. The project cost \$54,000, of which FOTH contributed \$18,000 and the town contributed \$18,000. The remaining \$18,000 came from a Cultural Facilities Grant sponsored by the Vermont Arts Council.

Brandon Deputy Town Manager and Rec Department Director Bill Moore praised FOTH.

"We were happy to partner with them to get this done," he said.

Marden has been an indefatigable advocate for the building, having been president of the FOTH for the last 16 years. He's helped turn it into the locus of local culture it currently is. But at age 80, he's ready to pass the baton. And now that the floor has been finished and

the town has earmarked funds for repair of the slate roof, it's a perfect time to end his tenure on a high note.

The Town Hall will now be operated completely by the town, said Marden. Until now, the Rec Department managed the building in the winter and the FOTH in the warmer months. But FOTH will wind down its operations when Marden leaves and turn the building



DENNIS MARDEN, PRESIDENT of the Friends of the Town Hall, shows off the Brandon Town Hall's new floor. Installed over the last month, the floor caps Marden's tenure at the head of Friends organization, which, with help from the Brandon Rec Department, has seen Town Hall become central to Brandon's cultural life, hosting concerts, films, auctions, town meeting and many other events.

Brandon Reporter photo/Steven Jupiter

over to the town's stewardship.

The town is eager to keep the floor looking great: the upholstered chairs that are used during shows have been cleaned and their legs capped with protective felt to keep from scuffing the new wood.

A new concession stand will also be built by local contractor Tim Shields to replace the makeshift counter that had occupied a corner of the main hall.

Though Marden says nothing of interest was discovered during this renovation, a collection of antique and vintage objects discovered during the building's earlier reno can be seen in the display case in the basement lobby, just outside the Brandon Library's current location.



WHEN THE FLOORBOARDS were pulled up, workers found the space between joists was filled with sand — a decidedly low-tech method to muffle sound when the floor of the 160-year-old building was installed. The sand was shoveled out (filling an entire dump truck), and a new subfloor was installed.

Photo by Dennis Marden

Youngsters can take part in Vt. Duck Stamp Art Contest

VERMONT — The annual state-wide Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program is underway in Vermont. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invites students from pre-K to 12th grade to create designs featuring ducks, swans, or geese in their natural habitats.

Designs are judged in four age categories, with awards for

first, second, and third places and honorable mentions.

The Vermont Best of Show entry will compete with contest winners from other states in a national competition in Washington D.C. The first-place national winning design is used to create the Federal Junior Duck Stamp. Proceeds from the sale of Junior Duck Stamps

support conservation education by providing awards and scholarships for students, teachers, and schools.

Modeled after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's annual Federal Duck Stamp competition, the Junior Duck Stamp contest is part of an educational curriculum that teaches students about waterfowl, the importance of wetlands, and habitat

conservation. Proceeds from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps protect wetlands through land acquisition by the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Entries must be received by March 15 at 5396 VT Route 105, Brunswick VT 05905. The judging of the artwork will occur on March 28 at the Vermont Institute of Natural

Science in Quechee, Vermont.

Contest rules and entry forms are currently available for download at tinyurl.com/jr-duck-stamp-vt. For more information on the contest call the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge at (802) 962-5240, ext. 112. Businesses who would like to sponsor this program should contact U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Middlebury Union High School

Max Carpenter

Middlebury Union High School introduces Max Carpenter as our next Student of the Week. Max's parents are Dave Carpenter of Orwell and Claire Carpenter of Middlebury, and they have a younger brother, Nick who is a sophomore at MUHS. Max has a dog named Panda, who they describe as "little bit of everything, but full of love."

Max has a wide range of interests and talents and is well known for their gifts in theater, circus artistry, and on the soccer field. Max plays soccer with Addison United and after starting as a right wing, the coach suggested a move to center back, something that Max says "has been a good fit right from the start!" Max loves that position and playing alongside a valued group of teammates, both with the club and as a member of the MUHS team. Additionally, Max is a figure skater, participating regularly with a program at Middlebury College, and heads to Pico every-other weekend in the winter months to snowboard.

Academically, Max reports that enrolling in the ART program at the Hannaford Career Center has been "beyond my expectations!" Max considers the environment and experience to be welcoming and challenging and appreciates the wide range of opportunities offered. They especially enjoy working on special effects and make up. They are currently in the second year at ART, learning more about lighting and set design. Max encourages other students to seriously consider ART.

Max has spent the past eight summers with Circus Smirkus in Greensboro, Vt. Max has participated in a wide range of circus-related activities including trapeze and hopes to return this summer in the role of a counselor. They have held a part-time job at the local Subway and have also done some modeling for Buy Again Alley here in Middlebury.

Max is preparing for the Class of 2024's senior play, "Legally Blonde," and will be part of the ensemble when the show opens in mid-March. They are also looking forward to playing Ultimate in the spring. Max is excited about graduation in June and has already heard from one college with positive news. Max's plans include studying somewhere fairly close to home and pursuing a major in the field of archeology with a minor in either theater or sociology. We wish Max only the best in the future!



Max Carpenter
MUHS

Vergennes Union High School

Oakley Francis

Oakley Francis of North Ferrisburgh is Vergennes Union High School's Student of the Week.

A high-honor student, Oakley says he has enjoyed the flexibility he has had at VUHS — that it has allowed him to fine-tune his interests and explore subjects he is passionate about or wants to learn more about. His favorite class has been Modern Expression and Literature, taught by Mr. Wyckoff, which has drastically helped with his ability to speak confidently in front of new people or large crowds. As captain of both the soccer and basketball teams, Oakley has found this skill particularly helpful when encouraging his teammates. He is also taking a World Drumming class and looks forward to a performance at the end of the semester.

Oakley puts in time helping with elementary school basketball clinics, and he will soon be coaching 12U soccer for Addison United.

In his spare time, he enjoys working construction or going to the field or courts to work out and play either basketball or soccer. Oakley says he also enjoys writing wherever he is doing it. It helps calm him and allows him to focus on the task at hand.

Oakley says the most important lesson he has learned from high school is to give his all no matter what he's doing. During his sophomore year the VUHS basketball team lost in the semi-finals. "Losing this game hurt me but did not have that much of an effect, until I looked at the seniors," he says. "Blank faces. Confusion as to what was next in life for them, as all of their years of playing had come to an end." This made Oakley realize that even if something does not affect you directly it can heavily influence others negatively, so seize the moments while the opportunity still exists.

Oakley's post-high school plans are still in flux. He will either go into the workforce or playing soccer in college. Whichever path he chooses, VUHS wishes him well.



Oakley Francis
VUHS

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If you are interested in advertising in Student of the Week contact advertising@addisonindependent.com

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Residential & Commercial
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Reliable & Thorough

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DO YOU CLEAN HOUSES? YOUR AD SHOULD BE HERE!



COMPUTERS

PC MEDIC of Vermont

The PC Medic of Vermont now offers both on-site and remote computer services for your PC.

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For an appointment, call The PC Medic of Vermont at 802-734-6815
www.pcmedicvt.com

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Vantage Point Homes



Salisbury, VT
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New Construction
Additions
Renovations
Project Design

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DUCT CLEANING

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Specializing in Duct Cleaning
And Duct Work for Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
We use 5,000+ cfm HEPA Vacuum Cleaning Systems

We can design, fabricate, seal, insulate, clean, anything to do with your ducted systems.

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FIREWOOD

Are you looking for green or seasoned firewood?
Well we've got it all right here in Addison, VT!

We cut, split, and deliver hardwood firewood in 12-24 inch lengths.
And we now offer kiln dried firewood!

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Gevry Firewood LLC
gevyfirewoodvt@gmail.com
or 802-349-0699

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Chris Mulliss
FLOOR & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

Stripping - Waxing - Buffing
Carpet Cleaning & Emergency Water Removal

802-759-2706
phone or fax
or
802-349-6050
cell phone

email: cmulliss@gmavt.net
1900 Jersey St., S. Addison, VT 05491

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INDEPENDENT
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Thursday & service Business DIRECTORY

masonry
painting
plumbing
renewable energy
roofing

rubbish & recycling
septic & water
siding
snow removal
surveying

taxes
tree service
window treatments

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FINE DRY STONE MASONRY



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CERTIFIED BY THE DRY STONE WALLERS
ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN
802-233-4670
jmasefield@gmavt.net

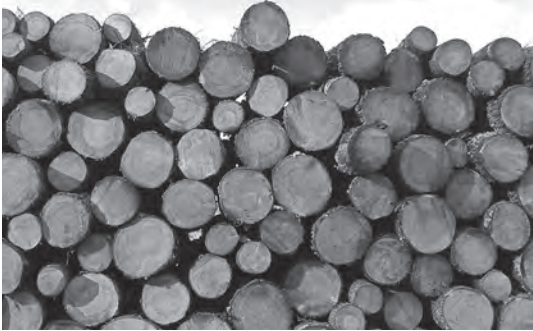
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A friendly, professional,
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making the hot water or electricity that
you use today -

SOLAR IS MORE AFFORDABLE THEN EVER!

We've been here for you for 51 years -
Let us help you with your solar projects today.



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as seen at Addison County Field Days!

- Standing seam
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Environmental Consultants

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Environmental Consultants - Licensed Designers
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Residential and Commercial
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Providing a comprehensive list
of every possible need with 24/7 response.

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for a free consultation

SELL OR SERVICE GENERATORS?

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Serving Addison County Since 1991
Timothy L. Short, L.S.
Property Line Surveys • Topographical Surveys
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21 Years Experience
ALTA Surveys • Full Boundary Surveys and Plat
Commercial and Residential Subdivisions
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(802) 782-9273 • Philo Surveying LLC • Charlotte, VT
Philosurveying.com • References available

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Ronald L. LaRose, L.S. • Kevin R. LaRose, L.S.

Land Surveying/Septic Design
"We will take you through the
permitting process!"

25 West St. • PO Box 388
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Telephone: 802-453-3818
larosesurveys@gmail.com

TREE SERVICE

Serving Vermont for over 42 years!

BROWN'S TREE & CRANE SERVICE **FREE ESTIMATES FOR TREE SERVICES**

WE HAVE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT
FOR THE RIGHT JOB - TO GIVE YOU
REASONABLE RATES

Dangerous Trees Cut & Removed
Stumps Removed
Trusses Set
Trees Trimmed
Land Clearing

Reasonable Rates • Year-round Service • Fully Insured
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Your local source for window treatments
from the nation's most popular brands.
Free in-home consultations!

Vermont Window Treatments LLC
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vermontwindowtreatments.com

**DO YOU SNOW
PLOW? YOUR AD
SHOULD BE HERE!**

JACK OF ALL TRADES?

CALL 802-388-4944 OR EMAIL ADVERTISING@
ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS.



Advertise your business on these pages for under \$10 per week.

Call 802-388-4944 or email advertising@addisonindependent.com for details.

CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

AL-ANON OFFERS HELP and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit vermontalananonlateen.org for links and list of other meetings in the region. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aaavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

Public Meetings

THE TURNING POINT CENTER of Addison County is open for in-person services, Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm, 54A Creek Road, Middlebury. We are available by phone 24/7 at 802-388-4249.



More Help Wanted ads can be found on Page 11B.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Bridge School
AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL BASED IN MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT

SEEKING A SUMMER CAMP DIRECTOR

The Bridge School, an independent school in Middlebury, is seeking a responsible summer camp director who can develop and manage a robust 2024 Bridge School summer program. This hire will lead operations for the entire summer; hire, train and supervise summer counselors; develop, implement and adhere to staff and program policies following Vermont Childcare Program Regulations; manage a high-quality educational program for campers and serve as an ambassador of the Bridge School's mission.

Please email Jen@bridgeschoolvermont.org with your cover letter and resumé to apply!

ALSO SEEKING SUMMER CAMP COUNSELORS

Bridge School Summer Camp is seeking creative, responsible, and dynamic individuals. As part of an educator team, you will create and implement a high-quality summer camp experience for local elementary school children.

Please email Jen@bridgeschoolvermont.org with your cover letter and resumé to apply!

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL COACHING POSITIONS

Middlebury Union High School is seeking coaches for the following:

- Varsity Girls' Lacrosse
- JV Girls' Lacrosse
- JV Baseball

Applicants must possess a strong knowledge of coaching principles with previous coaching experience preferred. Must possess strong organizational skills and the ability to communicate and relate to student athletes.

Interested parties should send a letter of interest, resume, and three current letters of reference to:

Sean Farrell/Athletic Director
Middlebury Union Middle School
73 Charles Avenue
Middlebury, VT 05753

Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled. E.O.E.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Addison County Parent/Child Center

Join the Parent/Child Center Team

CHILDCARE WORKER/PARENT EDUCATOR

Childcare Staff Position: We are seeking a childcare worker who will work with children and parents in our therapeutic program. This is a full-time position with generous benefits. We are a therapeutic childcare program that supports children birth through 5 and their families.

Strong candidates must have knowledge of **child development, family systems**, excellent communication skills, and want to work with young families. Flexibility and collaboration are a must. Experience with children and families wanted: a minimum of a Bachelor's degree preferred.

Please send a resume and cover letter, along with 3 references to **Donna Bailey at dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org**

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

WowToyz

Part-Time Warehouse

WowToyz in Vergennes is seeking part-time help in our warehouse, picking and packing orders, labeling and offering general warehouse support. Ideal candidates are organized, dependable and able to work 20-30 hours/week, Mon-Fri.

Retirees are welcome and encouraged to apply!

We offer flexible work schedules and competitive wages.

Proof of COVID-19 vaccinations required for all employees.

To apply email contact information and work history to: resumes@wowtoyz.com

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Energy Navigator Program Manager

Help your neighbors implement climate and energy solutions!

The nonprofit **Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County (CEAC)** needs you as **Program Manager** for its new **Residential Energy Navigator Program**. The Program Manager will play a vital role in providing an independent, trusted, and local resource connecting Addison County people to the opportunities available to bring electric heat pumps and other weatherization and energy efficiency improvements into their homes to create a low carbon future.

Immediate opening. Please submit applications by email to energynavigator.ceac@gmail.com

Applications should include a cover letter, resume, three references, and several work samples. More details are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/2uwank6n>

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

SALISBURY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Seeking part-time (up to 20 hours/week) person with library qualifications or experience to run all aspects of small but mighty village library. Salary based on qualifications and experience.

Application deadline February 29. Contact Kate Williams at 802-247-3492.

KEEWAYDIN FOUNDATION

SUMMER CAMP NURSE POSITION

Interested in working at a beautiful summer camp on Lake Dunmore in the Green Mountains of Vermont? Do you enjoy working with kids in a vibrant and warm summer camp community? Consider working as a nurse at Keewaydin Dunmore for Boys or Songadeewin of Keewaydin for Girls! Our summer season runs from June 13-August 18. This is a great opportunity for experienced nurses or for those just starting a nursing career—especially for those considering a career in pediatric nursing! Three nurses run each Health Center and work with a consulting physician at a local medical practice.

Salary for RN is \$11,750 (tuition free for first child, 75% discount for second child). Room and board is included.

For more information, please contact Daria Carden at daria@keewaydin.org. Visit our website at www.keewaydin.org.

MAPLEFIELDS

Looking for work in your hometown?

We offer medical, dental, paid vacation, personal time, sick time and 401K for full time positions.

ALL ADDISON COUNTY LOCATIONS CURRENTLY HIRING!

For openings and to apply, visit Maplefields.com

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

WE ARE HIRING!

FULL TIME POSITIONS

BOURDEAU BROS. OF MIDDLEBURY

APPLY NOW!

CDL Drivers with Ag Background Warehouse & Outdoor Workers Experienced Agriculture Equipment Operators

Requirements:

- Clean driving record
- Willing to learn and handle multiple tasks
- Positive Attitude
- Willing to work long hours in the spring
- Agricultural background

Benefits include: Medical, 401k, & Vacation days

TO APPLY: 88 Seymour St., Middlebury Contact Skip Cray at 802-388-7000 or scray@bbinc.us

FREE AARP TAX ASSISTANCE

Beginning February 2024, AARP-trained/IRS-certified volunteers will provide free tax preparation to low- and middle-income residents of Addison County. Tax preparation will take place in Middlebury, Bristol, and Vergennes. Scheduling will begin in February.

Please call RSVP of Addison County at 802-388-7044 to schedule an appointment.

AARP

AmeriCorps Seniors

Addison Independent **CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM**

ADDISON INDEPENDENT
58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-4944
addisonindependent.com • email: classifieds@addisonindependent.com

Cash in on our 4-for-3 rates! Pay for 3 issues, get 4th issue free! An ad placed for consecutive issues runs the 4th time for free!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Or, submit your classified ad on our website: addisonindependent.com

RATES

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

- 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
- \$2 internet listing for up to 4 issues • minimum 2 insertions

• Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted

<input type="checkbox"/> Notices	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted	<input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers
<input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks	<input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles
<input type="checkbox"/> Personals	<input type="checkbox"/> For Sale	<input type="checkbox"/> Cars
<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings**	<input type="checkbox"/> Trucks
<input type="checkbox"/> Free**	<input type="checkbox"/> For Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> SUVs
<input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found**	<input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles
<input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat	<input type="checkbox"/> Boats
<input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate	<input type="checkbox"/> Wanted
<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted
<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption		<input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals

** no charge for these ads Spotlight with large ✓ \$2

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

Number of words: _____
Cost: _____
of runs: _____
Spotlight Charge: _____
Internet Listing: **\$2.00**
TOTAL: _____

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Public Meetings

Public Meetings

Public Meetings

Services

For Rent

For Rent

Att. Farmers



Full time resale associate

Duties include assisting customers donating items, sorting, evaluating and preparing items for sale, and assisting customers in the store. Successful candidate will have excellent interpersonal skills, be task oriented, and a team player. Must be able to lift up to 25 pounds and stand for periods of time. Attention to detail is a must. We offer a positive work environment, generous paid time off, platinum medical plan, dental and life insurance, competitive salary plus matched retirement savings.

Come join us!

Resumes to receptionist@hope-vt.org, or mail or bring it to us at 282 Boardman Street, Middlebury. Equal Opportunity Employer.

VERGENNES FREE THINKERS Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and

inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting vergennes-freethinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

VERMONT SUPPORT LINE Are you struggling with a challenging situation? Do you have feelings of sadness, loneliness, isolation, anger, or depression? You don't have to face it alone. Talk with a caring person who understands what you're going through today by calling or texting the free and confidential Pathways Vermont Support Line available 24/7 at (833) VT - TALKS.

Free

DIGITAL ACCESS View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at addisonindependent.com. Don't miss out on events, garage sales, or opportunities- check out our free digital listings. Looking to read more? Become a subscriber!

Help Wanted

PART TIME PERSONAL CARE assistant wanted for 75 year old man, in Addison. To work for 3 hours/day, every other weekend, Saturday and Sunday. There is also a possibility of working one weekday every week for 3 hours. Help with light housekeeping, cooking, and chores. \$25/hour. Contact Ellen at: eresnik@rcn.com.

REGISTERED NURSE

Looking for a Flexible Monday through Friday schedule? Mountain Lake Services has multiple RN Positions available in Essex County. Responsibilities include: assessing individual medical needs; coordinating medical services; providing staff training on health-related issues; and ensuring compliance with medication policies. RN license to practice in NY required. Experience with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities preferred. Exceptional benefits package. Annual salary range \$69,000-\$82,000. MLS qualifies as a public service loan forgiveness employer. Send resume and cover letter to: Human Resources, Mountain Lake Services, 10 St. Patrick's Place, Port Henry, NY 12974. EOE or visit www.mountainlakeservices.org/ www.facebook.com/mltlakeservices/

For Rent

12' X 25' STORAGE SPACES in Brandon. Call 802-349-4212.

ALL REAL ESTATE

advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

For Rent

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

DRY, WINTER/SUMMER STORAGE SPACE in Addison. Available storage space in my barn for summer/winter storage. The barn is structurally sound and weather-tight with electricity. No heat or running water. The barn is also available for lease. The entrance door measurements are 8' wide by 7' high. For more info: 802-363-3403 or rochon_m@yahoo.com.



LARGE 2 BEDROOM, Summer 2024. Historic 1860's farmhouse located 15 minutes from Middlebury. Furnished and available for the summer months. Completely renovated with new windows, floors, and appliances. \$2500/month plus utilities. Non-smoking, cats considered. 802-897-5447.

VERGENNES VALLEY VIEW APARTMENTS is currently taking wait list applications. Occupants must be 62+ years of age. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply - Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.summitpmg.com.

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

Want to Rent

QUIET, NON-SMOKING, non-pet-owning, retired couple seeks 2BR house or apartment starting May 1st. First preference Bristol village, 2nd preference Vergennes. References available. Call 419-347-3337 (no texts).

Wood Heat

DRY OR GREEN firewood for sale. Delivery available. 802-758-2007.

Att. Farmers

WHITNEY'S CUSTOM FARM WORK Pond agitating, liquid manure hauling, drag line aerating. Call for price. 462-2755, John Whitney.

HORSE BLANKET WASH and repair. Accepting non-leather (for now) horsewear of all kinds for cleaning and repairing at my Weybridge location. Call or text Sue Miller at 802-377-5945 or email svdwmiller@icloud.com with "horse" in the subject line for more information.

Wanted

METAL STORAGE CONTAINER box or tractor trailer box with or without wheels, no water leaks. Looks or condition no concern. 802-373-6678.

OLD & USED GUNS WANTED



Rifles, Hand guns, Shot guns
Top prices paid.
P: 802-775-2859
C: 802-236-7213

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

VARSITY FOOTBALL COACH

Fair Haven Union Middle High School is looking for an individual with experience in coaching Varsity Football. This individual must be able to work with "student" athletes, work well and share responsibilities with assistant coaches, follow school and handbook policies and procedures, be a mentor on and off the field, and help build our football program.

For more information, please contact Kim Alexander, Athletic Director at kalexander@svuvt.org or (802)265-4966. Apply at: <https://slatevalley.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>

Position will remain open until filled. EOE

Services

CONSTRUCTION: ADDITIONS, RENOVATIONS new construction, drywall, carpentry, painting, flooring, roofing, pressure washing, driveway sealing. All aspects of construction, also property maintenance. Steven Fifield 802-989-0009.

MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING SERVICES. Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

Help Wanted

More Help Wanted ads can be found on Page 10B.



Production Team Members

Vermont Soap is looking for attentive, reliable and responsible people to work in our production department.

This position requires basic computer skills, attention to detail, the ability to sit or stand for long periods of time and the ability to lift up to 50lbs. Must be a team player and also able to work independently.

This is a full time position (Mon-Fri 7-3:30) with paid vacation time, paid holidays, 401k with employer match, and more!

Please send cover letter and resume to nichole@vermontsoap.com.

Addison County Parent/Child Center

Join the Parent/Child Center Team EARLY INTERVENTIONIST

We are seeking an **Early Interventionist** to work with young families as an outreach worker on our highly skilled, creative and energetic team.

You will work in coordination with parents in the home, community, and in our program in Middlebury in order to ensure that children are growing healthy and strong.

Candidates must have a solid understanding of child development, early intervention Part C, family systems, communication skills and flexibility. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in a related field is required.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org

Addison County Parent/Child Center

VAN DRIVER JOB OPENING Addison County Parent/Child Center

We are seeking a **van driver** who will transport children, youth, and parents to our center from around Addison County.

Strong candidates must have a clean driving record and experience with children and families.

Great working environment and benefits. This is a 20-hour position with hours split between mornings and afternoons.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** at d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org

SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024-2025 VACANCY SPANISH TEACHER

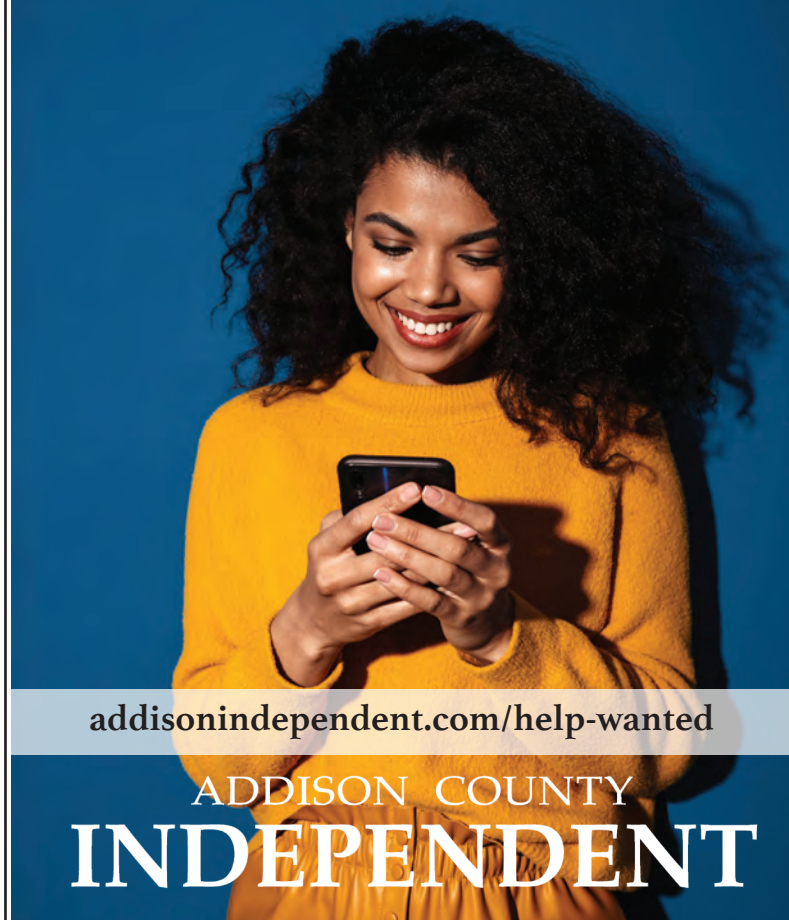
Fair Haven Union Middle and High School is seeking qualified candidates for a 7-12 Spanish teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. The position is designed to help all students learn subject matter and skills that will contribute to meeting the Slate Valley mission. A Vermont teaching license with an endorsement in 7-12 Modern and Classical Languages - Spanish (06B) is preferred.

For more information, please contact Ben Worthing, Co-Principal at bworthing@svuvt.org (802)265-4966.

Apply at: <https://slatevalley.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>

Position will remain open until filled. EOE

In print or online, find your dream job with help from the Addy Indy.



addisonindependent.com/help-wanted
ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT



MARKET REPORT

ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT
Sales for 1/25/24 & 1/29/24

BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
L. Britton	1915	1.18	\$2259.70
Blue Spruce	1785	1.18	\$2106.30
Gosliga Farm	1995	1.13	\$2254.35
M+L Quesnel	1860	1.12	\$2083.20
Deer Valley	1545	1.08	\$1668.60
M. Dolloff	1530	1.07	\$1637.10
Correia Family	1525	1.05	\$1601.25
Wilson Farm	1635	1.04	\$1700.40

CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$
Barnes Bros.	92	6.80	\$625.60
Vorstelvelde Farm	99	6.00	\$594.00
Nea-Tocht Farm	98	6.00	\$588.00
Clifford Farm	112	5.50	\$616.00
Sunderland Farm	99	5.50	\$544.50

Total Beef - 193 Total Calves - 195
We value our faithful customers.
Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.
call 1-802-388-2661

NOTIFICATION OF PERIOD OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 8907 and the Administrative Rules on Agency Designation, the Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) hereby notify the public of the **Application for Redesignation** of Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC).

A 14-day period of public comment is provided for DMH and DAIL to gather information about Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC) as part of the process to decide whether or not the State of Vermont will renew the agency's designation to deliver developmental and mental-health services to adults, children, adolescents and families in Addison County. Comments from consumers, parents, family members and other concerned citizens about your experiences with services provided by CSAC are welcomed. Public comments will be accepted for the two-week period from Thursday, January 25, 2024, until the close of business on Wednesday, February 07, 2024. In particular, DMH and DAIL are interested in knowing:

1. What are the strengths and challenges of the agency?
2. Does the agency work well with other agencies in the community?
3. Do people get the mental health and developmental services that they need?
4. Do people get mental health and developmental services when they need them?
5. Do you have any recommendations for improvements?

Please send written comments or contact us by phone no later than Wednesday, February 07, 2024.

For Mental Health Child, Adolescent and Family Services Community Rehabilitation and Treatment, Adult Outpatient, and Emergency Services

Mail: Department of Mental Health
166 Horseshoe Drive
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-2010
Attn: Puja Senning
Phone: 802-585-4540
Fax: 802-241-0100
E-mail: Puja.Senning@vermont.gov

For Developmental Services:

Mail: Developmental Disabilities Services Division
Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living
280 State Drive, HCS2 South
Waterbury, VT 05671-2030
Attn: Ellen Booth
Phone: 802-241-0281
Fax: 802-241-0410
E-mail: Ellen.Booth@vermont.gov



Water Treatment & Distribution System Operator

The **Vergennes Panton Water District** is seeking an individual for the full-time position of Water System Operator.

Job Description: This position requires the ability to operate the water treatment facility, read water meters, and maintain and repair the transmission and distribution system. Must be willing to work on a rotating on-call basis. Must have or be able to obtain a 4C State of Vermont Operator's Certificate.

To Apply: Please email resume and cover letter to Jon Deming at vpwd.main1@gmail.com

WARNING

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING

Member Towns are Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

The legal voters of the Addison Central School District are hereby notified of the Public Information Hearing on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the Middlebury Union High School to discuss Australian Ballot Articles warned for vote on Tuesday March 5, 2024.

Virtual connection details may be found on the ACSD Website:
www.acsdvt.org

Linda J. Barrett, Clerk
 Addison Central School District

Barbara Wilson, Chair
 Addison Central School District

The Addison Central School District Annual Report and FY25 Budget Book will be available in the following manner:

<https://www.acsdvt.org/district-link/annual-report-and-budget/annual-report-and-budget> or call 802-382-1274 to request a copy.

PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

VPharm Coverage.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P003

AGENCY: Agency of Human Services

CONCISE SUMMARY: This proposed rulemaking amends VPharm rule 5450 titled "Coverage" which establishes coverage for the VPharm program. This VPharm Coverage rule was last amended effective February 25, 2012. This amendment aligns with federal and state guidance and law, improves clarity, and makes technical corrections. Certain content, such as 5450.1 Rebate or Price Discount, has been removed as it was redundant with language that exists in state statute. Substantive revisions include: expanding drug coverage available under VPharm 2 and VPharm 3 to be equivalent to the drug coverage available under VPharm 1 and the Medicaid program, as authorized through Vermont's Global Commitment to Health 1115 Demonstration waiver effective July 1, 2022. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:** Ashley Berliner, Department of Vermont Health Access, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-1000 Tel: 802-578-9305 Fax: 802-241-0450 E-Mail: ahs.medicaidpolicy@vermont.gov URL: <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/rules-policies/health-care-rules>.

FOR COPIES: Danielle Fuoco, Department of Vermont Health Access, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-1000 Tel: 802-585-4265 Fax: 802-241-0450 E-Mail: danielle.fuoco@vermont.gov.

Rules Governing the Importation of Domestic Animals, Including Livestock and Poultry.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P004

AGENCY: Agriculture, Food & Markets

CONCISE SUMMARY: This is an update to the existing importation rules for livestock and poultry. The rule outlines the documentation and disease testing requirements to import cattle/bison, equine, swine, sheep, goats, poultry, ratties, psittacine birds, camelids, and cervids from the US 50 States and Canada. Disease epidemiology and testing have changed, this update addresses the significant diseases of concerns and the tests required to reasonably demonstrate free status. This update aligns the rule with USDA disease programs, modern technology, and the disease traceability standards set by Vermont statutes. Examples of the changes: current USDA brucellosis program standards are eliminating the Class A-C language for describing state status and has increased the age recommendation for swine testing from four months to six months of age.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Kaitlynn Levine, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, 116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620, Tel: 802-636-7144 Email: AGR.FSCPRule@vermont.gov URL: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/rule-governing-importation-livestock-and-poultry-rule-98074>.

FOR COPIES: Kristin Haas, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, 116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620, Tel: 802-522-7326 Email: AGR.FSCPRule@vermont.gov.

Private Nonmedical Institution Rules Simplification.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P005

AGENCY: Agency of Human Services

CONCISE SUMMARY: These rules strike all existing Division of Rate Setting rules and replace them in the Agency of Human Services' Health Care Administrative Rules. Some material, particularly language regarding which costs are allowable and how the Division applies various bonuses or penalties, is moved into a new manual. The remaining material primarily sets out the administrative process for applying for, receiving, and appealing per diem rates set by the Division.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: James LaRock, Department of Vermont Health Access, NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-241-0251 Fax: 802-241-0260 Email: james.larock@vermont.gov URL: <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/rules-policies/health-care-rules/health-care-administrative-rules-hcar>.

FOR COPIES: Jaime Mooney, Department of Vermont Health Access NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-798-2144 Fax: 802-241-0260 Email: jaimemooney@vermont.gov.

Nursing Home Reimbursement Rule Simplification.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P006

AGENCY: Agency of Human Services

CONCISE SUMMARY: These rules strike all existing Division of Rate Setting rules and replace them in the Agency of Human Services' Health Care Administrative Rules. Some material, particularly language regarding which costs are allowable and how the Division applies various bonuses or penalties, is moved into a new manual. The remaining material primarily sets out the administrative process for applying for, receiving, and appealing per diem rates set by the Division.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: James LaRock, Department of Vermont Health Access, NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-241-0251 Fax: 802-241-0260 Email: james.larock@vermont.gov URL: <https://humanservices.vermont.gov/rules-policies/health-care-rules/health-care-administrative-rules-hcar>.

FOR COPIES: Jaime Mooney, Department of Vermont Health Access NOB 1 South, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-798-2144 Fax: 802-241-0260 Email: jaimemooney@vermont.gov.

General Assistance Temporary Housing Assistance.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P007

AGENCY: Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families

CONCISE SUMMARY: The proposed rule contains four amendments to the General Assistance program rules: (1) language was added to rule 2650 authorizing DCF to withhold payments to hotels/motels in violation of lodging licensing rules; (2) the rule expands categorical eligibility for 28 days of housing under rule 2652.3 to include families with children who are 19 years old or younger; (3) the rule updates the basic needs standard chart in rule 2652.4 to align with the current Reach Up basic needs dollar amounts; and (4) the methodology for calculating the 30% income contribution in rule 2652.4 was changed from using the least expensive daily motel rate to either the current daily rate at the motel in which the temporary housing applicant is staying or if the applicant is not currently housed in a motel, the average daily rate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Heidi Moreau, Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families 280 State Drive, NOB 1 North, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-595-9639 Email: heidi.moreau@vermont.gov URL: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/laws-rules/current>.

FOR COPIES: Amanda Beliveau, Agency of Human Services, Department for Children and Families 280 State Drive, HC 1 South, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-241-0641 Email: amanda.beliveau@vermont.gov.

Tierney to speak at GMC annual meeting

MIDDLEBURY — The Bread Loaf Section of the Green Mountain Club (GMC) will hold its 49th annual meeting on the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 6, at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct., in Middlebury. Doors open to the public at 6:30 p.m., with a brief social time, followed by the Annual Meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Following the business meeting, the evening's guest speaker will be GMC's Keegan Tierney. In his role as Director of Field Programs, Tierney works closely with all GMC staff, volunteers, and sections to ensure sustainable management of the Long Trail system, including the Appalachian Trail from Maine Junction to the New Hampshire border and the Kingdom Heritage Trails. Tierney will present an inside look at the projects that the club and volunteers have completed during recent and unprecedented challenges and describe the club's

response to the impacts of changes in climate and trail use patterns.

Working on the trails is a dynamic process as the GMC adapts to changes in use and the climate and the resulting impacts to the trail and the hiking season. The club's programs have the hiker in mind; both to maintain the trails and shelters and to support the hiking community by investing in resources for all to enjoy Vermont's hiking trails. The Green Mountain Club's mission is to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people by protecting and maintaining the Long Trail System and fostering, through education, the stewardship of Vermont's hiking trails and mountains.

Light refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to the public. Learn more about the GMC's Bread Loaf Section at gmcbreadloaf.org/about.



KEEGAN TIERNEY, DIRECTOR of Field Programs at the Green Mountain Club, will talk about the challenges of sustainably managing GMC's trail systems in light of changes in climate and use at the GMC's annual meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 6.

Photo courtesy of Green Mountain Club

Ferrisburgh

Have a news tip?

Email Sally Kerschner at smwkersch@comcast.net

NEWS

FERRISBURGH — March will soon be here and that means Town Meeting! This is a critical aspect of our town governance dating back to colonial times, so all are encouraged to attend both the school budget informational meeting and the Town Meeting — and also don't forget to vote!

The ANWSD Annual Meeting, including information about the school budget, will be held on Monday, Feb. 26, from 6-8 p.m. at the Vergennes Union High School Library. Ferrisburgh Town Meeting is on Saturday, March 2, at 10 a.m., at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center on Route 7. In-person voting is on Tuesday, March 5, also at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall. The polls will be open from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Absentee ballots can be requested from the Town Clerk

up to Feb. 12. For more information on all these events, call the Town Clerk's office at 802.877.3429.

The Bixby Library Book Club will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 6-7 p.m. to review and unravel the charm of "Under the Whispering Door," a humorous, haunting, and compassionate novel by T.J. Klun, the bestselling author of "The House on the Cerulean Sea." For more information, email to martha.sanborn@bixbylibrary.org.

Bixby Library and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Vergennes are holding their Sixth Annual LEGO contest and exhibit. Entries must be original creations using primarily LEGO, Duplo, or other LEGO-compatible pieces. Each entry is limited to a maximum of 18x18 inches and must be accompanied by a short description. Registration

deadline is Feb. 13, drop off of the completed creation is Feb. 22, and viewing for all to enjoy is Feb. 24. This is a fun and innovative activity for budding engineers and for all of us who appreciate creativity. For more information or assistance with obtaining materials, email to mary.neffinger@bixbylibrary.org.

The Ferrisburgh PTO will sponsor the Artist in Residence Program at Ferrisburgh Central School on Feb. 5-9. The PTO is grateful for the generous support of a graduating FCS family that enables artist Troy Wunderle to return to FCS for a very special hands-on experience for the students. Wunderle is a Vermont native with extensive national experience in circus performance. He is the director of Wunderle's Big Top Adventures. FCS students will receive individual encouragement while learning authentic circus skills. We note that all parents are welcome to support the PTO and their great work for our students. Their next meeting is Monday, March 11, at 6 p.m. For more information, call FCS at 802.877.3463 or visit the Ferrisburgh PTO Facebook page.

Ferrisburgh Grange "King Pede" card parties are scheduled for Saturday Feb. 3 and Saturday, Feb. 17. These are fun get-togethers that are held at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center. The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with a sandwich supper and then on to the games. King Pede involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking.

The Friends of the Ferrisburgh Union Meeting Hall are hosting dinner and a movie on Friday, Feb. 2 at 6 p.m. The dinner and movie screening will be held at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall on Route 7. This is a fun night of mid-winter visiting with our friends. The film will have us all saying "here's looking at you, kid!" Admission is free to the film. Please preregister for the dinner which is \$12 per person and includes salad and spaghetti. For more information about this event and also to get details about the film, email to unionmeetinghall@gmail.com.

The Friends of Ferrisburgh

Union Meeting Hall Programming Committee is meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 7-8 p.m. All are welcome to help plan the FUMH 2024 events. You do not need to be a resident of Ferrisburgh to participate. More information and the virtual link to the meeting can be found at www.unionmeetinghall.org.

Rokeby is continuing with its series of winter book discussions. These events will be held monthly, January through March, at no charge and will use a virtual format. Registration in advance is required and the participants will receive the virtual link at that time. Attendance at all three discussions is not required to register. The February session will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 27, at 6:30 p.m., to discuss is "Mr. and Mrs. Prince: How an extraordinary eighteenth-century family moved out of slavery and into legend" by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. This story reveals the detailed history of a pre-Civil War African American family in New England. In this narrative, the book also addresses the challenges faced by African Americans in the North versus slaves in the South. For more information, visit www.rokeby.org.

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum invites us to join the third annual virtual Archeology Conference. Each year, researchers and archeologists with the LCMM come together to share the latest developments in their research. This summit is open to all — whether professional researcher or curious amateur. Topics will address the LCMM's research in Arnold's Bay, conservation of the underwater objects, and discussion about Benedict Arnold's 1776 flagship, the Congress. The summit is on Thursday, Feb. 15, from 1-4 p.m. Visit www.lamm.org for registration information.

Note: We are always interested in including a variety of Ferrisburgh-related event announcement in this column, so if you have events that would be of interest, contact Sally Kerschner at smwkersch@comcast.net. You are also able to access these columns and other information about Ferrisburgh news and events by viewing the Ferrisburgh Town Website at www.ferrisburghvt.org.

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 11B, 12B, 13B and 14B.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 23-PR-07679 IN RE ESTATE OF: LENORE FRANCIS DANYOW NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the late Creditors of Lenore Francis Danyow, late of Vergennes, Vermont.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: January 11, 2024
 Executor/Administrator:
 Gabriel Danyow
 21 October Hill Road
 Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
 302-353-7109
theglacierconcern@yahoo.com

Publication: Addison Independent
 Publication Date: 2/1/24
 Address of Probate Court:
 7 Mahady Court
 Middlebury, VT 05753

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 23-PR-07376 IN RE ESTATE OF: BURTON SHANGRAW, JR. NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Burton Shangraw, Jr., late of Starksboro.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: January 27, 2024
 Executor/Administrator:
 Penny E. Gadwah
 c/o Gamache Law Offices, P.C.
 73 East Allen Street
 Winooski, VT 05404
 (802) 655-4252
gamache.law@myfairpoint.net

Publication: Addison Independent
 Publication Date: 2/1/24
 Address of Probate Court:
 7 Mahady Court
 Middlebury, VT 05753

WARNING ADDISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL MEETING – MARCH 5, 2024

Member Districts are Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge

The legal voters of the Addison Central School District are hereby warned to meet at the following polling places on March 5, 2024 to vote by Australian Ballot on the following article(s) of business:

Town	Location	Polling Hours
Bridport	Bridport Community/Masonic Hall	7:00 AM-7:00 PM
Cornwall	Cornwall Town Hall	7:00 AM-7:00 PM
Middlebury	Middlebury Recreation Center/Gym, 154 Creek Road	7:00 AM-7:00 PM
Ripton	Ripton Community House	8:00 AM-7:00 PM
Salisbury	Salisbury Town Office	8:00 AM-7:00 PM
Shoreham	Shoreham Town Office	7:00 AM-7:00 PM
Weybridge	Weybridge Town Clerk's Office	7:00 AM-7:00 PM

ARTICLE 1: Shall the voters of the Addison Central School District vote to authorize the ACSD school board to expend \$50,604,080, which represents a 6.5% increase in Total Spending and is the amount the ACSD school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?

ARTICLE 2: Shall the voters of the Addison Central School District vote to authorize the ACSD school board to appropriate \$2,033,842 of the FY 2023 Unassigned Fund Balance to the ACSD Capital Reserve Fund?

ARTICLE 3: To elect four (4) school directors from the nominees to serve on the Addison Central School District Board for the following terms:

- One (1) who is a resident of Cornwall for a three-year term.
- Two (2) who are residents of Middlebury for a three-year term.
- One (1) who is a resident of Shoreham for a three-year term.

Ballots shall be commingled and counted at Middlebury Union High School by representatives of the Boards of Civil Authority of the member town school districts under the supervision of the District Clerk of Addison Central School District.

Linda J. Barrett, Clerk
 Barbara Wilson, Chair
 Addison Central School District

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 24-PR-00296 IN RE: THE ESTATE OF ARTHUR R. FARNSWORTH NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Arthur R. Farnsworth, late of New Haven, VT.

I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.

Dated: January 24, 2024
 Executor/Administrator:
 Amy Farnsworth
 1274 Case St.
 Middlebury, VT 05753
rmscenter@yahoo.com

Publication: Addison Independent
 Publication Date: 2/1/24
 Address of Probate Court:
 7 Mahady Court
 Middlebury, VT 05753



MEGAN MENTZER OF Vergennes, center, took top honors in the local American Legion High School Constitutional speech contest on Sunday, Jan. 21 With her are Karlene DeVine, VT Department Oratorical Chair, left; and judges TJ Vincent; Mike Davis; and Diane Shortsleeve. Photo courtesy of Karlene DeVine

Mentzer earns top honors at speech contest

VERGENNES — Megan Mentzer, a junior at Vergennes Union High School, completed the first step of competing in the American Legion's High School Constitutional speech contest, Sun. Jan. 21, at Vergennes Post 14. The judges, Diane Shortsleeve, retired police officer and ICE officer, TJ Vincent, Post 14 member Mike Davis, Sons of the Legion Commander were impressed with Mentzer's composure and

organization of the prepared oration. As a sophomore, Mentzer entered the contest for 2023 and progressed to the Vermont Department finals. This is her second year competing in this crown jewel of high school speech contests.

The prepared oration is an original 8- to 10-minute speech on some phase of the Constitution of the U.S. The speech is accomplished using no

microphone, notes or podium and must address a citizen's duties and obligations to our government. The contest requires students to follow the prepared oration with an assigned topic speech of 3-5 minutes long. There are four possible amendments and one is drawn five minutes before the student is to speak. The assigned topics have been available since May 2023. This, too, must address the duties and obligations of a

citizen to our government.

Mentzer will be unopposed at the district contest, Sunday, Feb. 25, at Vergennes Post 14. This contest is open to the public and will begin at 9:30 a.m. There will be three contestants at the Vermont department finals on Saturday, March 16, in Barre.

The winner from the Vermont department finals will go to the national finals and vie for the top scholarship of \$25,000.

Man cited for interfering with emergency services

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police cited Byron T. Murray, 39, of Middlebury for interfering with access to emergency services in the Weybridge Street area on Jan. 27. Police were called around 6:30 a.m. on that Saturday.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Investigated a report of a woman being harassed on Court Street on Jan. 22.
- Helped a local resident with a fraud complaint on Jan. 22.
- Served no-trespass orders on Jan. 22 on two people in connection with theft complaints made by a Court Street store.
- On Jan. 22, patrolled an area of Bakery Lane where houseless individuals had been camping in recent months.
- Enforced the town's overnight winter parking ban in the downtown area on Jan. 23, 27, 28 and 29.
- Provided a drug recognition evaluation of a driver who had been stopped by Vermont State Police Jan. 23.
- Received a report about a person allegedly seen peering into the windows of vehicles parked at the Hannaford supermarket parking lot on Jan. 23.
- Responded to a report of a woman allegedly seen smoking crack in a vehicle parked in the South Village Green lot off Court Street Extension on Jan. 23. Police said they seized items from the vehicle and that the case remains under investigation.
- Responded to a noise complaint in the South Pleasant Street area on Jan. 23.
- Helped an elderly person get into their Exchange Street home during icy conditions on Jan. 24.
- Responded to a report of a driver slumped over the steering wheel of their car while parked off Exchange Street on Jan. 24. Police said the driver was fine and not impaired.
- Served a temporary restraining order on a person in the Brookside Drive area on Jan. 24.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS on an emergency call to a Chipman Heights residence on Jan. 24.
- Checked on the welfare of a man believed to have been sitting unconscious in his vehicle at Wright Park on Jan. 24.
- Checked on the welfare of a

Middlebury Police Log

man on Seymour Street on Jan. 24.

- Received a complaint on Jan. 24, about a Middlebury Union High School student allegedly being assaulted by a classmate.
- Responded to a reported assault at the Charter House Emergency Shelter on Jan. 24.
- Cited Henry S. Romp, 32, of Middlebury for driving with a criminally suspended license on Court Street on Jan. 25.
- Investigated a report of someone driving erratically in the McIntyre Lane parking lot on Jan. 25.
- Checked on a report of someone sleeping in the shared entry of a North Pleasant Street apartment building on Jan. 25. Police did not find anyone.
- Received a report about a man allegedly "smashing things" in a parking lot in the Jayne Court neighborhood on Jan. 26.
- Provided traffic control during a minor road repair on Seymour Street Extension on Jan. 26.
- Patrolled the Bakery Lane area on Jan. 26.
- Responded to a report that a vehicle had been vandalized while parked on Mill Street on Jan. 26.
- Gave a courtesy ride home to an elderly patient stranded at Porter Medical Center on Jan. 27.
- Investigated a report of a man walking down the middle of Route

7 South at around 8:30 p.m. on Jan. 27.

- Investigated a report of a man breaking into a vehicle parked in the Hannaford supermarket parking lot on Jan. 27.
- Responded to a report of someone screaming in the Jayne Court neighborhood on Jan. 27. Police said it was a youth who had been yelling while playing video games.
- Investigated a credit card fraud complaint at Aubuchon Hardware on Jan. 27.
- Assisted G. Stone Motors on Jan. 27 in recovering a vehicle that had allegedly been purchased with the use of a fraudulent check.
- Assisted Middlebury

Regional EMS, Bristol Rescue and Middlebury Fire Department officials at a medical call on Washington Street on Jan. 27 at 2 a.m.

- Assisted a woman who had been experiencing a mental health crisis in the Court Square area on Jan. 28.
- Assisted emergency responders in the Merchants Row area in dealing with a person experiencing a mental health crisis on Jan. 28.
- Received a report about and unwanted person refusing to leave the lobby of a Court Street Extension business on Jan. 28.
- Returned some found property to Middlebury College campus on Jan. 28.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT CIVIL DIVISION ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO: 151-7-19 Ancv

U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST

PLAINTIFF

KEN DANIELI A/K/A KENNETH G. DANIELI AND OCCUPANTS RESIDING AT 1017 RIDGE ROAD, CORNWALL, VT 05753

DEFENDANT(S)

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Ken Danieli, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Webster Bank, N.A., dated August 23, 2007, and recorded in Book 65, at Page 600, of the Town of Cornwall Land Records, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by Assignment of Mortgage recorded in Book 87, Page 621, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at February 23, 2024 at 4:00 PM at 1017 Ridge Road, Cornwall, VT 05753 all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To Wit:

Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed to Kenneth G. Danieli by Warranty Deed of Deane Wolff Van de Velde dated August 23, 2007 and recorded August 28, 2007 in Book 65, at Page 597 of the Town of Cornwall Land Records and further described therein.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

The public sale may be adjourned one or more times for a total time not exceeding 30 days, without further court order, and without publication or service of a new notice of sale, by announcement of the new sale date to those present at each adjournment or by posting notice of the adjournment in a conspicuous place at the location of the sale. Terms of Sale: \$10,000.00 to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time of sale, with the balance due at closing. The sale is subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

The Mortgagor is entitled to redeem the premises at any time prior to the sale by paying the full amount due under the mortgage, including the costs and expenses of the sale.

Other terms to be announced at sale.

U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner trustee for RCF 2 Acquisition Trust

/s/ Caryn L. Connolly

Caryn L. Connolly, Esq.
BROCK & SCOTT, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
VT_Noticesofhearing@brockandscott.com

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 11B, 12B, 13B & 14B.

Email your Public Notices
to legals@addisonindependent.com
and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper

PUBLIC NOTICE POLICY WARNING

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District Board will conduct a public hearing at their meeting on February 12, 2024 at 6:30 P.M. and take action on the following policies:

C-6 Participation of Home Study Students

D-4 Title I Comparability

D-5 Animal Dissection

D-6 Class Size

F-1 Travel Reimbursement

F-23 Capitalization of Assets

Copies of the policy are available on the district website at slatevalleyunified.org

Brooke Olsen-Farrell
Superintendent of Schools

PUBLIC NOTICE TOWN OF ADDISON

The Addison Planning Commission meeting will be held on **Monday, February 19, 2024** at the Town Clerk's Office at 6:30 PM.

1. To approve the meeting minutes for January 15, 2024.
2. To transact any business found necessary before the board:
3. To allow time for public comment interaction at the end of the meeting.
4. Continue to work on updating & reviewing the Zoning Regulations & public hearing.
5. Continue with the Municipal Grant for updating the Town Plan. Plans are for Katie Raycroft-Meyer from A.C.R.P.C. to attend our meeting for update on Municipal Grant & Town Plan.
6. We have a rough draft to work from to review the Zoning Regulations & Revisions with plans to approve these if no more corrections are necessary. **Plans are to set a possible date for the public hearing in March or April.** We have planned a work meeting for Monday, February 05, 2024 at 6:30PM at the T.C.O.
7. Adjournment — stating time.

*Deliberative Session if needed — after the meeting.

We are planning to have a work meeting after the regular monthly meeting on Monday, February 19, 2024 at Addison Town Clerk's Office at 6:30PM.

Amber Riley, Vice-Chair
Starr Phillips, Secretary
Addison Planning Commission

WARNING ANNUAL MEETING SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

(Towns of Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven,

Hubbardton, Orwell, West Haven)

FEBRUARY 26, 2024

The legal voters of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD) consisting of the towns of Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Orwell and West Haven are hereby warned and notified to meet at Fair Haven Union Middle High School Band Room on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:30 PM to conduct the following business:

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ozq-kxsp-jst>

Or dial: (US) +1 240-428-8613 PIN: 861 320 258#

Anyone who attends virtually will be seen as a "passive participant" meaning they can ask questions and comment but cannot vote from the floor.

Article 1: To elect the following officers to serve for a term of one (1) year:

- A. Moderator
- B. Clerk
- C. Treasurer

Article 2: To hear and act upon the reports of School District Officers.

Article 3: To approve annual salaries for the School Directors and other elected officers of the School District.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the School District authorize the Board of School Directors to borrow money by issuance of bonds or notes in excess of anticipated revenues for the next fiscal year.

Article 5: To have the Board of Directors of the School District present the proposed school budget for the ensuing year.

Article 6: To transact any other business that may come before the meeting.

MARCH 5, 2024

The meeting shall then be recessed to Tuesday, March 5, 2024 for the purpose of voting on the following articles at the usual polling places in the member districts by Australian ballot, said ballots being brought to Bomoseen Fellowship Bible Church following the closing of the polls in the member districts where they will be commingled and counted by the Board of Civil Authority of the constituent districts.

The Town polls will be opened as follows:

Town of Benson	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Benson Community Hall
Town of Castleton	8:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Castleton Fire Station
Town of Fair Haven	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	American Legion Post 49
Town of Hubbardton	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Hubbardton Town Hall
Town of Orwell	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Orwell Town Hall
Town of West Haven	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	West Haven Town Hall

Article 7: Shall the voters of the School District authorize a transfer from the general fund surplus balance in the amount of \$500,000 to the capital improvements and repairs reserve fund?

Article 8: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Thirty-One Million Twenty-One Thousand Six Hundred Thirty-Five Dollars \$31,021,635.00 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?

Article 9: To elect the following officers to serve from their election and qualification until March following the election and qualification of their successors:

- A. School Director, Benson for a term of three (3) years
- B. School Director, Benson for a term of two (2) years
- C. School Director, Castleton for a term of three (3) years
- D. School Director, Fair Haven for a term of three (3) years
- E. School Director, Hubbardton for a term of three (3) years
- F. School Director, Orwell for a term of three (3) years
- G. School Director, West Haven for a term of three (3) years
- H. School Director, West Haven for a term of two (2) years of three (3) years
- I. School Director, West Haven for a term of one (1) year of three (3) years

INFORMATIONAL HEARING:

Said persons and voters are further notified and warned that the meeting on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:30 P.M. at the Fair Haven Union Middle High School in Fair Haven, Vermont will also serve as an informational hearing to discuss Articles 7, 8 & 9 which will be voted on by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

Dated at Fair Haven, Vermont January 23 2024

Timothy Smith, Chairman
Slate Valley Unified Union School District

Received and Recorded January 23, 2024

Elisabeth MacKay, Clerk
Slate Valley Unified Union School District

TOWN OF NEW HAVEN

The New Haven Planning Commission has begun its work on updating the Town Plan, and wants to hear from the community.

Please bring your comments and suggestions to the initial **TOWN PLAN PUBLIC FORUM, Monday, February 12, 2024, 7:00 p.m. at the Town Offices at 78 North Street, New Haven.** The current Town Plan can be found on the Town's website at: www.newhavenvt.com and clicking on "Planning Commission" to the left. If you are unable to attend the public forum, please send your suggestions or comments to the Zoning Administrator: newhavenzoning@gmavt.net, or call 802-453-3516. The Planning Commission meets the second Monday of each month, and the public is always welcome. *Thank you!*



Coaches vs. Cancer

THE MIDDLEBURY UNION High School boys' basketball teams raised over \$2,375 to donate to the American Cancer Society, much of it collected during the JV and varsity games against Mount Abraham on Thursday, Jan. 25. The Tiger coaches and the players, shown here in their Coaches vs. Cancer t-shirts before the game, thank everyone who helped organize and promote this event, and give a special THANK YOU to all who donated to this great cause.

Independent photo/Steve James

Auclair pleads guilty to killing her husband

By ALAN J. KEAYS
VTDigger.org

A Monkton woman has pleaded guilty to conspiring with her son to kill her husband more than three years ago, heading off a trial that was set to begin next week.

Angela Auclair, 51, pleaded guilty on Jan. 23 in Chittenden County Superior Court, criminal division, in Burlington to a charge of conspiracy to commit first-degree murder in the 2019 death of her husband, David Auclair, 45, in Hinesburg. At the time of the killing the couple lived in Monkton.

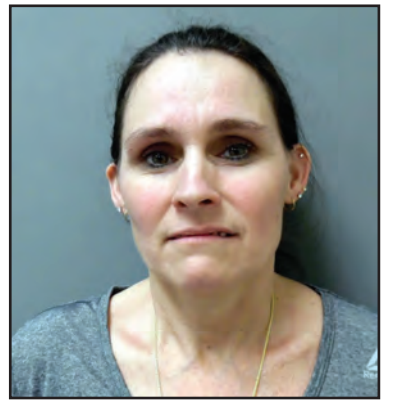
Other charges that had been brought against Auclair, including aiding in the commission of first-degree murder and obstruction of justice, were dismissed as part of the plea agreement.

The plea deal calls for a proposed sentence of 18 years to life for Auclair, according to court records.

Judge Kevin Griffin ordered the state Department of Corrections to prepare a pre-sentence investigation ahead of the sentencing hearing set for April 29. Such reports aid judges in determining the appropriate sentence for a defendant.

Auclair had been set to stand trial in the case starting on Feb. 5. She has been held without bail since her arrest in December 2019.

Auclair's son Kory Lee George,



ANGELA AUCLAIR

35, who was also charged in the case, reached a plea deal with prosecutors in September. He pleaded guilty to conspiring with his mother to kill his stepfather at a trailhead in Hinesburg and, like his mother, now faces up to 18 years to life in prison.

George had agreed to cooperate as a prosecution witness during his mother's trial, according to court filings in his case.

According to documents filed along with his plea agreement, he and his mother had discussed killing David Auclair weeks earlier and then lured him to the trailhead where the shooting took place on July 11, 2019. David Auclair was shot 11 times, the court filing stated.

Attorneys in the case could not be reached for comment by VTDigger.

VUHS students find a bullet in a hallway

VERGENNES — Vergennes police on Jan. 26 responded to a report that two Vergennes Union High School students found a bullet in the hallway that runs between the school's high school gymnasium and its nearby concession stand.

Police said the students reported they first tossed the bullet into a trash can, but then realized they should report it and retrieved it and turned it into administrators. Police said video of the hallway confirmed their story, but did not reveal how the bullet got there in the first place, something that remains under investigation.

Police said they stepped up patrols in the general area, but that there appeared to be no threat to the school community.

In other action between Jan. 22 and 28, Vergennes police conducted nine cruiser patrols, one traffic stop and two VIN inspections; processed seven fingerprint requests; responded to a false alarm; and also:

- On Jan. 22:
 - Dealt with two fender-benders, taking a report about one that had occurred at VUHS two days earlier and responding to one in the Shaw's Supermarket parking lot.

- Attempted to process a request to serve a court order from Lebanon, N.H., police on a person they were told was a patient of the Valley Vista rehab facility, but were informed by the Valley Vista folks that the

Vergennes Police Log

identity of patients was confidential.

- Determined a report of a light left on in an empty Main Street building was not a problem.

- Helped a Main Street resident remove an unwanted man from her apartment; police also counseled her to have her landlord fix her front door lock.

- On Jan. 24:
 - Heard from a woman that an older man whose identity was unknown was making her uncomfortable at work and near her residence; police are keeping an eye out for a potential suspect.

- Spoke to a Vergennes Union Elementary School student who was refusing to attend class and convinced him to do so.

- In responding to a dispute between two women at a Second Street residence ended up arresting a man also living there for failing to comply with the Sex Offender Registry. Cited on Jan. 25 was Joshua Parizo, 39, who police said was transported to the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility and lodged there for lack of \$1,000 bail.

Police said Parizo came to their attention because one of the

women allegedly assaulted him. That woman was involved in what was essentially a landlord-tenant dispute because, police report, she was the unwanted tenant who had been allowed to live at the home for six months.

Police also spoke with the two women, both on the scene and at the station the next day. They informed the homeowner she would have to go through an eviction process to remove her tenant, and suggested the tenant should look for a new place.

On Jan. 25 were told by a VUHS parent her child was being harassed by another student, an issue also reported to administrators.

- On Jan. 26:
 - Took a report that a car parked on Main Street had been vandalized.

- On behalf of one woman checked the welfare of another woman on Green Street, who police learned was fine. They also were told by the woman they checked on that the caller had mental health issues, and that she had blocked the caller six months ago.

- On Jan. 27:
 - Ended up referring a case to Vermont State Police that twice drew city police and the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad to the West Main Street area. First they responded to a report of a man who appeared intoxicated

and disheveled walking near the cemetery near the Pantown town line, but found no one.

However, soon afterward both agencies were called to a Hillside Drive apartment after they learned the man had gone there because it was the home of a relative, and that he had obviously been beaten up, according to police. A couple questions soon revealed the incident causing his facial and other injuries had occurred in Pantown in state police jurisdiction. City police then notified troopers of the case and that VARS was transporting the man to Porter Hospital.

- In an unrelated case on West Main Street dealt with a threat being made to a woman along that roadside, apparently, police said, for attempting to break up a fight involving three men who had been riding together along with her in a pickup. They had stopped, police said, apparently to remove one man for refusing to stop making unwanted sexual advances to the other two men, with punches ensuing on the side of the road.

The woman told police when she intervened, the man who the other two men wanted to remove from the truck then threatened to shoot up her apartment. Police said they spoke with her about obtaining no-stalking and no-trespassing orders as part of their follow-up on the incident.

Police call untimely death of Bridport man suspicious

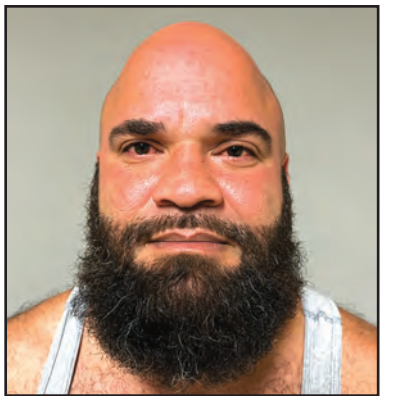
BRIDPORT — Vermont State Police are investigating what they're calling the "suspicious death" of a Bridport resident, whose remains were found at his Swinton Road home shortly before 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 24.

Police identified the deceased as 44-year-old Stephen Nuciolo Sr. Troopers said they received a report that he had died in the home overnight.

Nuciolo's body was taken to the Chief Medical Examiner's Office in Burlington; police were not sure if his death was by natural causes, accidental, self-inflicted or the result of foul play. Following an examination on Thursday, Jan. 25, the medical examiner informed state police that the death appears suspicious.

Police provided no additional details and promised to provide updates as the investigation continues.

This case is in its initial stages and involves members of the VSP's Major Crime Unit, the Bureau of



STEPHEN NUCIOLO SR.

Criminal Investigations, Crime Scene Search Team, Field Force Division and Victim Services Unit.

Preliminary investigative work by the state police indicates this was an isolated event, and they said there is no known threat to the community.

Investigators ask that anyone with information on this case call the state police in New Haven at 802-388-4919. Tips also may be submitted anonymously online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

Donations to the Nongame Wildlife Fund will help at-risk wildlife

MONTPELIER — Vermont's Nongame Wildlife Fund is essential to the conservation and restoration of some of Vermont's most at-risk wildlife, including bumblebees, butterflies, mussels, birds and mammals. Thanks to a

checkoff option on the Vermont state income tax form, donating to the fund is easy and impactful.

"Every dollar Vermonters donate to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on their taxes is nearly tripled," says Rosalind Renfrew, the Vermont

Fish and Wildlife Department's Wildlife Diversity Program Manager. "Public donations

leverage matching federal grants, meaning that every dollar donated secures another \$2 to \$3 in federal funds for Vermont's wildlife."

For over 35 years Vermont's Nongame Tax Checkoff has been helping to recover species that were once on the brink of extinction in Vermont, like the common loon, osprey and peregrine falcon. Most recently, the bald eagle was removed from Vermont's list of endangered species in 2022. The Nongame Wildlife Fund supported their reintroduction at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area and

years of monitoring and nest protection to ensure that eagle numbers were robust enough to declare the species recovered.

"Nongame Checkoff donations have made possible some of our greatest conservation success stories, and they continue to fund frontline work on behalf of our most at-risk species," said Renfrew. "Last year saw species like the eastern meadowlark and rue anemone wildflower added to Vermont's threatened and endangered species list, and we're already taking action to support their populations. The Nongame Checkoff is one of the most direct ways Vermonters can conserve Vermont's biodiversity."



Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 11B, 12B, 13B and 14B.

CITY OF VERGENNES NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on February 26, 2024, as the first order of new business, for the following purpose:

To consider site plan and conditional use review for application #2023-47 by Matthew Wagner for a change of use of a portion of 10 Green Street from retail to restaurant. Reviews will consider Article VII, Article VIII, and Section 1608.

Please note that the hearing will be held as a "hybrid meeting", with participation either in person, by Zoom, or by phone. The in-person meeting will be held in the conference room at City Hall.

Join by computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84252901890>, meeting password: 689859.
Join by phone: Dial 1 (929) 205-6099; Meeting ID: 842-5290-1890; Meeting Passcode: 689859.

For participants joining by phone:
To raise your hand during the meeting, press *9.
To mute/unmute during the meeting, press *6

If you experience any difficulty in accessing this meeting, contact the City of Vergennes Zoning Administrator at 802-877-1232.

You must participate in the public hearing either in person or in writing, in order to take any subsequent appeal. The City of Vergennes is an "on the record" appeal municipality with regard to appeals to Environmental Court from Development Review Board decisions. This means that the Environmental Court shall only consider testimony or information provided during public hearings on the application. Interested parties should therefore assure that their participation in the public hearing proceedings is complete and represents the totality of their desired considerations.

A copy of the application is available for public review by contacting David Austin at zoning@vergennes.org.

January 23, 2024
David Austin, Administrative Officer

Meeting of the ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 14 February 2024 at 12pm

A meeting of the Addison County Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) will be held on 14 February at 12pm (in person at the ACRPC office, 14 Seminary St. with Zoom option). Details can be found at: <https://acrpc.org/acrpc-remc/>

Meetings are held quarterly, with future meetings scheduled for the:
• Second Wednesday of May • Second Wednesday of November
• Second Wednesday of August • Second Wednesday of February

The REMC conducts All-Hazards preparedness planning and coordinates with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), and the statewide Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

The REMC is made up of Local Emergency Management Directors and Emergency Services Representatives from each municipality in the region. Representatives from fire departments, emergency medical services, law enforcement, media, transportation, hospitals, the Department of Health district office, organizations serving vulnerable populations, and any other interested public or private individual or organization, are welcome to attend and participate! For more information, contact ACRPC Emergency Management Planner Andrew L'Roe at alroe@acrpc.org or 802-388-3141 x3.

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police working out of the New Haven barracks in the past week have dealt with a couple traffic crashes, issued a couple citations for driving under the influence and investigated some domestic violence cases.

In the first traffic accident, troopers on patrol came across a one-car crash on Route 7 at Town Hill Road in New Haven on Jan. 23 at 11:19 a.m. Police report a vehicle was facing south on Route 7 waiting to turn left onto Town Hill Road when several southbound vehicles drove around it. Then Kayla Perlee, 31, of Bristol, who was driving a 2020 Subaru Forester southbound on Route 7, attempted to avoid the turning vehicle by exiting the roadway off the southbound shoulder and collided with a utility pole.

Perlee sustained minor injuries in the collision and the Forester was totaled due to damages sustained in the crash. State police were assisted by the New Haven Fire Department and Bristol Rescue Squad.

Later that same Tuesday, at around 7:35 p.m. state police responded a report of a two-vehicle crash on Monkton Road near Church Road in Monkton. Police report that Stephanie Fitzgerald, 35, or Williston was driving a 2004 Toyota 4-Runner northbound at around 40 mph when the hood became unlatched and obstruct her view. The Toyota crossed the centerline and sideswiped a southbound 2023 Tesla driven by Jennifer Kiewit, 47, of Bristol. Both vehicles came to uncontrolled rest on the shoulders of the road. No injuries were reported, but both cars were damaged.

Meanwhile, state police were

called to investigate the suspicious death of Bridport resident Stephen Nuciolo Sr. on Jan. 24. See full story on Page 14B.

While investigating that death on Jan. 25, Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos showed up on the scene and trooper ended up citing her for refusing to take a test showing if she had been driving under the influence. See Full story on Page 1A.

In an unrelated case, troopers were notified of a suspicious vehicle near Upper Plains Road in Salisbury on Jan. 24 at around 10:40 p.m. Police found the vehicle and identified the driver as Robert Morin, 58, of Salisbury. They ended up citing Morin for driving under the influence — test refusal.

Separately, authorities reported that in January the Vermont State Police — Bureau of Criminal Investigations looking into a report regarding Alan Byrnes, 34, of Shoreham and allegations of domestic assault that took place in Shoreham. Police allege that Byrnes caused bodily injury to a juvenile household member, and on Jan. 23 trooper cited Byrnes for domestic assault.

In a different case, on Jan. 27 were called to look into a fight that had occurred shortly after midnight that Saturday at a home on Route 22A in Pantown. Police said that Jason Fuller, 42, of Vergennes had willfully caused serious bodily injury to a household member. On Monday, Jan. 29, Fuller voluntarily came to the New Haven barracks, where he was cited for first degree aggravated domestic assault. The Addison County Sheriff's Department took him to the Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division, where he appeared before a judicial officer.

ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

February 1, 2024



Celebrate the Year of the Dragon during a celebration of Lunar New Year on Feb. 11, at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. Enjoy free activities all afternoon, purchase delicious food by local vendors, and see demonstrations by Shelby Kimmel in her Korean drumming group "Washington Samulnori" (pictured bottom left), Chinese painting by Yinglei Zhang (artwork pictured middle right), and Tae Kwon Do with Master Kellie Thomas (pictured bottom right).

COURTESY PHOTOS

Celebrate Lunar New Year close to home and learn

The Year of the Dragon is right around the corner — sounds pretty fierce... in a good way. Feb. 10 is Lunar New Year — a celebration of family, feasting and good fortune observed by more than a billion people around the world, particularly in East and Southeast Asia and in diasporic communities.

BY **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

Around Addison County, there hasn't been much in the way of celebrations for Lunar New Year, but this year will be different. Addison County BIPOC+, in partnership with Middlebury's Town Hall Theater, will present their first annual Lunar New Year Celebration for the whole community on Sunday, Feb. 11.

This free event showcases dance, art and crafts from different Asian traditions, and culminates with a conversation with E. Tammy Kim, contributing writer for *The New Yorker* magazine and founding co-host of the podcast "Time to Say Goodbye." Moderating the talk will be Serena Kim of Swift House Inn and Rachael Joo, American Studies professor at Middlebury College. Food and beverages will be available for purchase from vendors such as Stone Leaf Tea House, Sabai Sabai, and Rice.

"Food is a big part of Lunar New Year," said HaQuyen Pham, who together with Natasha Chang, co-organized this event and facilitates Addison County BIPOC+: an affinity space for self-identified Black, Indigenous, People of color (BIPOC) and family members (+) living in

and around Addison County.

"At the root, it's about welcoming in the New Year with family and community," Pham said. "We hope to provide a central place to gather and celebrate together as Asian Americans; as well as to bring in our wider Addison County community."

"I have wonderful memories of my grandmother's cooking," remembered Chang, who works as a psychotherapist in Middlebury. "I have more of the diasporic experience... My father left the Los Angeles area where all of my Korean family stayed, so I didn't grow up with the immersive experience... At this stage in my life I am really wanting to stay connected to certain practices of Korean culture..."

SEE LUNAR ON PAGE 3

THE MONTH IN POETRY



Susan Jefts is a poet, editor, and writing mentor from the southern Adirondacks. Her poetry book, *Breathing Lessons*, was published this fall by Shanti Arts Publishers of Maine and can be found on the publisher's site, the usual online outlets, and in local bookstores. Her poems have been published in the anthologies *A Slant of Light*, *Quiet Diamonds*, *Birchsong*, *Poems in the Time of Covid*, and *Every Drop of Water*, and in the journals *BlueStone Review*, *Blue Line*, *Parnassus*, *Big City Lit*, *Zig Zag*, *The Literary Gazette*, and *Fired Up*, among others. She is currently taking new clients for editing their manuscripts and individual works, and offers workshops using poetry to explore our connections to the natural world. Her website is SusanJefts.com.

This little poem is like a gem shining forth on the soft edge of night just before meeting the dawn.

First it feels like a painting, then a piece of music, then a scene from a play. In just a few words, a whole world is created. We see a far-off light through the woods, from across town. And even though it focuses on just one light, I get the feeling of two lights — the one in the distance and the one that might be from the narrator's own home. The lights of two people, both awake in the dark of winter.

We're invited to board the wings of the poem, to trust the narrator's knowledge of place and direction. Suddenly we are there in the space where that distant light dwells, watching over the calligrapher's shoulder in the moment of her creating. Allowed in a way, into a private inner sanctum.

How many times have we had our own little night travels, standing at our window looking across fields or through the backyards of our neighborhood, wondering whose light we're seeing, forging invisible connections we're not even aware of?

So much feels possible in the spareness of a season like this. So many ways there are to see and be seen, even through wide stretches of woods and towns. Even in the dark of winter.

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

BOTH AWAKE

*a light sparkles
a tiny diamond*

*from a house
across the river*

*through winter woods
the other side of town*

*a chinese calligrapher
transcribes a story*

alone in stillness

before sunrise

— By Patricia LeBon Herb

Patricia LeBon Herb is a painter and poet who lives in Middlebury. Her poems have been featured in the *Redwood Writers 2023 Poetry Anthology 'Phases'*, *Zig Zag Lit Mag*, *Borders in Globalization Review*, and the Swedish literary magazine *Provins*. Her artwork has been reproduced on the cover of books by Oxford University Press and Rowman & Littlefield. Patricia is of Belgian-Native American descent and an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Her Native name is Ziibinggokwe, Turtle Clan. She will open her studio in Middlebury this fall: Oct. 5-6. For more information, see lebonherbart.com.

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Katy Foote



Jenna Hunsinger



Tom Van Sant



Christy Lynn



Jesse Norford

LUNAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Having the celebration here in Middlebury is a homecoming of a particular type.”

In addition to delicious food, Town Hall Theater will glow with paper lanterns and feature a variety of Lunar New Year presentations on its main stage, as well as crafting in the Byers Studio. The outline of activities includes:

12:30-1:30 p.m.: Tae Kwon Do demonstration with Master Kellie Thomas

1:30-3:30 p.m.: Family-friendly storytime and dragon-themed crafts and activities

“I HAVE **WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF MY GRANDMOTHER’S COOKING** ... HAVING THE CELEBRATION HERE IN MIDDLEBURY IS A HOMECOMING OF A PARTICULAR TYPE.”

— *Natasha Chang*

3:30-4:15 p.m.: Performances and Demonstrations on the THT main stage: Chinese fan dance, Korean samul nori drumming, Chinese wushu martial art

4:30 p.m.: Chinese calligraphy/painting demo with Yinglei Zhang of Middlebury

5:30-6:30 p.m.: A conversation on Asian American identities with *The New Yorker* contributor E. Tammy Kim on transnational Asianness and shifting perspectives on Asian America.

“Lunar New Year has been an important part of our identities and that of our communities,” Chang and Pham said. “In the past, we needed to travel out of town in order to find celebrations, so we are excited to ring in the Year of the Dragon with our friends and neighbors right here in Addison County.”

Chang and Pham are very aware that February is Black History Month, and so there will also be a dedicated slideshow on the main stage of the theater featuring Black Civil Rights and Asian Civil Rights.

“It’s important to acknowledge that this celebration is happening during an important time of another BIPOC group that we strive to work in solidarity with,” Chang explained.

“Town Hall Theater is dedicated to showcasing a diversity of voices and traditions,” THT Executive Director Lisa Mitchell said. “We look forward to shining the spotlight on Lunar New Year and look forward to partnering with Addison County BIPOC+ for many years to come.”



Pictured here are weapons Charlotte Xu will use in a wushu demonstration.

“Lisa and the Town Hall Theater team have been incredible,” Chang praised. “This event wouldn’t be what it is now without their support and generosity.”

Will we see this event become an annual fav?

“It’s a hope,” Pham said smiling. “Yes, it’s definitely a dream.”

All activities of this event are free, thanks to grant support. Space for E. Tammy Kim’s evening discussion is limited and must be reserved via townhalltheater.org or by calling the box office at 802-382-9222.

Editor’s Note: For more information on Addison County BIPOC+ visit their Facebook page @ [addisonbipoc](https://www.facebook.com/addisonbipoc).



Contributing writer for The New Yorker magazine and founding co-host of the podcast “Time to Say Goodbye,” E. Tammy Kim will host a conversation during the Lunar New Year celebration on Feb. 11, at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. Registration required for this free event.

PHOTO / SARAH SHATZ

VERMONT Sun

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TAKE OUR VIRTUAL TOUR!

Comedy show comes to Town Hall Theater in Middlebury

Friday, Feb. 9, at 7:30 p.m., the sketch comedy troupe Stealing From Work will be gracing (or perhaps disgracing) the stage of Middlebury's Town Hall Theater with their newest show "Artificial Irrelevance." The group's past shows have been described as "irreverent," "witty," "incisive," "crude," and "sexy," and in the depth of Vermont winter, that may be exactly what Middlebury needs.

Stealing From Work was founded in 2011 by Angie Albeck and Marianne Dimascio, and for over a decade the group has been touring their shows around Vermont. The last time Stealing From Work performed at the Town Hall Theater was in fall of 2022 during the circuit of their last show: "Something Old, Something New, Nothing Borrowed, Often Blue." Those who remember that show will be particularly excited for this one as the cast remains the same.

"Artificial Irrelevance" was directed by Seth Jarvis and written by group founder Marianne Dimascio. Dimascio has been writing and performing for decades; her comedic acting career includes performing with Middlebury Acting Company, Saints and Poets Productions, Vermont Shakespeare Festival, and Vermont Stage as well as writing for The Assembly (Immediate Consumption), Middlebury Actors



SEE COMEDY ON PAGE 11 Stealing From Work will perform a show Friday, Feb. 9, at 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

LOVE LINES

Share the love
Send a special message to your Valentine through the *Addison Independent*. Messages will be published on Thursday, February 8. It's free!

DEADLINE:
Friday, Feb. 2

HOW:
Email: advertising@addisonindependent.com
Online: addisonindependent.com/reader-submissions
Mail: 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT

ART ON EXHIBIT

DAVIS FAMILY LIBRARY

110 Storrs Avenue, Middlebury
For more info visit middlebury.edu/library or call 802-443-5494.

"The Lesbian House (1972-1973): Photographs by Bee Ottinger, class of 1970." Middlebury College Special Collections's new exhibition of photographs by alumna Bee Ottinger. On display in the atrium through April.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury
Visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com for more info.

"Winter Compositions" featuring new work by Jim Westphalen and Dale Najarian. Vermont photographer Jim Westphalen studies the unique quality of light, and the contrasting tones of the built landscape against the natural one, that comes with the winter season. Dale Najarian's Shadow series merges the realistic quality of a photograph with the abstract translation of a scene. She explores the perspective that shadows create, and uses figures in motion to capture the ever shifting relationship between light and dark. On view Jan. 9-Feb. 17.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant St, Middlebury
Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"A New Path: Paintings in oil and watercolor" features a solo show of work by retired veterinarian Dr. Tom Munschauer. His exhibit shows larger format paintings in oil and watercolor. His strong sense of graphic design and composition are evident in his approach to painting. His imagery includes flora and fauna, landscapes, and anything that might spark his interest. On view Jan. 12-Feb. 17.

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 14



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Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. There is a new person in your life who may become a source of inspiration, Aries. It's a new year and you are ready for all the novel experiences you can encounter.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, you could be feeling more grounded in your personal life than you have in some time. The people you surround yourself with accept and love you unconditionally.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, if a suggestion goes against your instincts this week, give it careful consideration nonetheless. This person may have some good ideas that you may not have thought of.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, you tend to be good about not letting work life bleed into your personal affairs. However, this week you may need to have some carryover to accomplish all that lies ahead.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Some good news may arrive this week that will put you on cloud nine, Leo. Just don't let this enthusiasm distract you from getting all of your business wrapped up on time.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. A charming person may come into your life this week, Virgo. At first he or she may be a whirlwind and confuse you for some time. Eventually, you may catch on and go with the flow.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, use whatever opportunities you have to speak to older family members and jot down the memories they have.

Time is fleeting and you want to learn all you can.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Surround yourself with people who bring positivity into your life, Scorpio. It is alright to take inventory and distance yourself from others who do not generate positive vibes.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. People who believe they have a lot of power are going to be all around you this week, Sagittarius. Don't fall prey to any intimidation tactics. Continue to do your own thing.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Dreams have been entertaining and awfully vivid lately, Capricorn. But you can't put too much stock in them. They may simply be your subconscious mind trying to work through things.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Express gratitude when you are gifted something, Aquarius. This is something you have had your eye on for some time but never purchased yourself.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. You're likely to be very busy soon, Pisces. Some loud and busy people may come into your life in the next few days. It may prove hard to find a quiet moment afterwards.

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FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEB. 2 — James Joyce, writer (d)
FEB. 3 — Simone Weil, philosopher and activist (d)
FEB. 4 — Rosa Parks, activist (d)

FEB. 5 — Errol Morris, filmmaker (76)
FEB. 6 — François Truffaut, filmmaker (d)
FEB. 7 — John Deere, inventor (d)
FEB. 8 — Elizabeth Bishop, poet (d)

CALENDAR

FEB. 1-18
2024



THURSDAY, FEB. 1

INTRODUCTION TO BUTOH IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 1, 3 p.m., Dance Theater, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. The dancers of Middlebury College class DANC1017 will present "Introduction to Butoh" — led by Professor Messi Chavez. All are welcome to this free showing of the students' final project for the winter term. The dancers will explore new movements and possibilities.

FRIDAY, FEB. 2

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN RIPTON. Friday, Feb. 2, west side of Frost Mountain. Moderate hike of 4.5 miles round trip with several views of the Adirondacks. Microspikes or snowshoes required depending on conditions. Meet at the parking lot in East Middlebury on the uphill side of Sand Hill Bridge, on Route 125 over the gorge. May end the outing with a stop at the Waybury Inn for a beverage and snack. More info contact Anne Christie at 802-388-4347 (home) or 802-989-9771 (cell). More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

PHOTOGRAPHY OPENING IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 2, 4-7 p.m., Photoplace, 3 Park St. Opening reception for "Monochrome," juried by Henry Horenstein.

ART OPENING IN BRANDON. Friday, Feb. 2, 5-7 p.m., Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center St. Come see works by students in Rutland Northeast

schools at this annual show.

SATURDAY, FEB. 3

KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. A sandwich supper and then on to the games. King Pele involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking.

MILES DONAHUE AND FRIENDS IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The House of Jazz winter offering features Miles Donahue, a Middlebury College music professor, who is fluent in both saxophone and trumpet, and is a celebrated composer and recording artist. He has been hailed as a jazz treasure and one of the best kept secrets of the genre. Tickets \$25 advance/\$30 at the door/\$35 table (includes one drink). More info and tickets at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222.

TUESDAY, FEB. 6

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB: BREAD LOAF SECTION ANNUAL MEETING IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6:30-8:15 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Court. The Bread Loaf Section of the GMC will hold its 49th Annual Meeting with a brief social time followed by the meeting at 6:45. Following the business meeting, at about 7:15, GMC Director of Field Programs

Keegan Tierney will present an inside look at the projects that the club and volunteers have completed during recent and unprecedented challenges and will describe the club's response to the impacts of changes in climate and trail use patterns. Light refreshments. Free and open to the public. More info online at www.gmcbreadloaf.org.

"WHISPERS FROM THE VALLEY OF THE YAK" BOOK DISCUSSION IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Lincoln resident Jackie Tuxill will read from and discuss her new memoir, which chronicles her quest to understand her difficult childhood and who she is beyond "wife," "mother" and "daughter." Born in 1942 to medical missionary parents in China, Tuxill has traveled extensively, spending time in India, Tibet, Alaska and Europe's navigable inland waterways. Tuxill's fellow Lincolnite, the author John Elder, says that Tuxill's journeys, "offer readers a dramatic counterpoint to their customary worlds, which is the true gift of fine travel writing."

EXHIBIT TALK AND TOUR IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6 p.m., Davis Family Library, Middlebury College. Join Middlebury alumnae Bee Ottinger and Karla Baehr for a discussion of representation, feminism, and their experience embracing their sexuality after attending Middlebury in the 1960s. The talk will be followed by a tour of the new exhibition in the library,

"The Lesbian House (1972-1973: Photographs by Bee Ottinger, class of 1970.)" Ottinger's photographs depict life at the Los Angeles Lesbian House, a halfway house affiliated with the Gay Community Service Center established in 1972 to provide a home for lesbians who had been rejected from their families.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7

HEARTS AND LEAVES PAINT NIGHT IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Feb. 7, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Join fellow paint adventurers for a Valentine themed paint night. Leave your critical self judgment at home and let your inner artist out. All supplies are provided. Space in limited, please register at ilsleypubliclibrary.org.

FRIDAY, FEB. 9

PATRICK FITZSIMMONS IN HANCOCK. Friday, Feb. 9, 4-6:30 p.m., Snow Bowl, Route 125.

"STEALING FROM WORK: ARTIFICIAL IRRELEVANCE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The very real and not-at-all-automated minds behind the Vermont sketch comedy troupe "Stealing from Work" are back with their new review for 2024, "Artificial Irrelevance." The new show contains sketches relevant for our times, or at least for an evening of distraction and laughs. Tickets \$20,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753	Please see the MCTV website, www.middleburycommunitytv.org , for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 388-3062.	
<p>MCTV Channel 1071 Friday, February 2 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 4:30 a.m. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration 6 a.m. State House Dept. Of Corrections - Health Services 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church 9:06 a.m. Gov Scott 2025 Budget Address 10 a.m. Selectboard 11:36 a.m. State House - Budget Adjustment Act 12:48 p.m. State House - Response To Flooding & ANR Resiliency Efforts & Act 250 Commission Report 3 p.m. Energy Week 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church 5:30 p.m. State House 7 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 9:02 p.m. State House - Budget 11 p.m. State House Corrections Saturday, February 3 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 4:53 a.m. State House 6:05 a.m. GovScott 2025 Budget 7 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 8:01 a.m. Press Conf. Attorney General - Refunds to Vermonters 8:19 a.m. State House</p>	<p>10 a.m. Selectboard 11:36 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 12:37 p.m. State House 3:06 p.m. Gov Scott 2025 Budget 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 6 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. State House 8:25 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour Sunday, February 4 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 5 a.m. Gov. Scott, Mont. Happy Hour 7:56 a.m. Press Conferences 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 12:30 p.m. Energy Week 1:30 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 3 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Energy Week, Public Affairs Monday, February 5 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 5 a.m. Addiction Recovery Channel 6 a.m. State House, Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8:30 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 6 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 5:30 a.m. Energy Week 6:30 a.m. Public Affairs 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard, Press Conf. 4 p.m. Congregational Services 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Wednesday, February 7 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass, Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs Thursday, February 8 Overnight: State House, Public Affairs 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Services 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 7 p.m. State House, Public Affairs 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Dr. John Campbell</p> <p>Channel 1091 Friday, February 2 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 7:06 a.m. Howe Library Lecture - The Poetry of Everyday Wonder 8:12 a.m. State Board of Education</p>	<p>10:33 a.m. ACSD Superintendent's Report 11:30 a.m. ACSD Board 2:30 p.m. Hannaford Career Center Board 8 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 9:06 p.m. Poetry of Everyday Wonder Saturday, February 3 5 a.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 6 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 7 a.m. Howe Library - Adair Mulligan - Linking Lands Alliance - Wildlife Corridors - Climate Change 8:37 a.m. State Board of Education 10:58 a.m. Tai Chi 11:25 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5:30 p.m. Word Time With Miss Markee 5:55 p.m. The Poetry of Everyday Wonder 7:05 p.m. Pacific Crest Trail Hike 8:30 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 9:30 p.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc. 11 p.m. Pacific Crest Trail Hike Sunday, February 4 6 a.m. All Brains Belong Vermont 7 a.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc. 10 a.m. State Board of Education 12:21 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont</p>	<p>8 p.m. Howe Library Lecture Monday, February 5 6:30 a.m. Pacific Crest Trail Hike 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 9 a.m. Authors and Poets 10:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 7 p.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc. 10 p.m. All Brains Belong Tuesday, February 6 5 a.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc. 6:30 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. Food & Cooking Programs 10:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 9 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 10 p.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc. Wednesday, February 7 5 a.m. Authors and Poets 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 6 p.m. Howe Library Talks 10 p.m. Authors and Poets Thursday, February 8 5 a.m. Howe Library Talks 7:05 a.m. Tai Chi 7:30 a.m. All Brains Belong VT 8:30 a.m. State Board of Education 6 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 7 p.m. Otter Creek Audubon Soc.</p>

available at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222.

SATURDAY, FEB. 10

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN SHELburne. Saturday, Feb. 10, Shelburne Farms. Hike the Farm Trail from the Welcome Center. Moderately difficult; 4-5 miles. Bring a snack or lunch, water, and dress to the weather in thermal layers. Ankle gaiters and hiking poles are recommended. Be prepared for ice and snow with boot traction, aka microspikes. For details including meeting time and possible carpooling from the Middlebury area, contact Ruth Penfield at 802-458-1116 or ruthpenfield@gmail.com. More at gmbreadloaf.org.

ARTIST RETROSPECTIVE IN NEW HAVEN. Saturday Feb. 10, 3:30-5:30 p.m., Tourterelle, Route 7. Come celebrate the colorful art of Alice Murdoch. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served.

COLBY CREHAN AND MARSH LIGHTS IN LINCOLN. Saturday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. to Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. Colby Crehan and Marsh Lights plays acoustic folk-grass music with a hyper-literate edge and beautiful execution. The group's strong rapport built over years of performing together makes for a band that can go light and heavy, solemn and joyful, fast and slow. Doors open at 7 p.m., music begins at 7:30 pm. \$15/\$20/\$25 or pay what you can. More info at burnhampresents.org.

VERMONT MANDOLIN TRIO IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The trio of Jamie Masefield, Will Patton and Matt Flinger brings together three of Vermont's finest mandolinists for a rare evening of bluegrass, jazz and roots music in the unique setting of three mandolins. Joined by journeyman bassist Pat Melvin, the group performs music of Bill Monroe, Django Reinhardt, J.S. Bach and everything in between. Tickets \$20/\$30 table, available at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222.

LC JAZZ WINTER THAW CONCERT IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. A favorite event of the season, bringing neighbors and friends out from their homes and into the warmth of the Vergennes Opera House. Great music provided by many familiar faces in a 17-piece orchestra with singers to boot. Free will donations benefit the high school music scholarship fund.

SUNDAY, FEB. 11

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 11, 12:30-6:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. Lunar New Year is a celebration of family, feasting and good fortune observed by millions of people around the world, particularly in East and Southeast Asia and in diasporic communities. This free

event by Addison County BIPOC+ showcases dance, art and crafts from different Asian traditions, and culminates with a 5:30 p.m. talk with E. Tammy Kim, contributing writer for The New Yorker and founding co-host of the podcast "Time to Say Goodbye." A variety of Lunar New Year activities will include 12:30-1:30 Tae Kwon Do demonstration with Master Kellie Thomas; 1:30-3:30 Family-friendly storytime and dragon-themed crafts and activities; 3:30-4:15 Performances and Demonstrations on the THT main stage: Chinese fan dance, Korean pungmul drumming, Chinese wushu; and 4:30 Chinese calligraphy/painting demo with Yinglei Zhang. Free admission, food available for purchase.

TUESDAY, FEB. 13

MIDDLEBURY ACTING COMPANY GENERAL AUDITIONS IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 13, 5-7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Auditions for MACo's 2024 season. Email Melissa at melissa@middleburyactors.org for information and appointments.

BIXBY BOOK CLUB IN VERGENNES. Tuesday, Feb. 13, 6-7 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. The book for February is "Under the Whispering Door" by TJ Klune. A delightful queer love story from the author of the New York Times and USA Today bestseller "The House in the Cerulean Sea." Come and discuss. Didn't read or finish the book? No worries! This is a no-judgment book club. Books can be reserved by emailing Martha at Martha.Sanborn@bixbylibrary.org.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14

"KLIMT & THE KISS" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Feb. 14, 11 a.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. It is perhaps the most popular poster on student dorm walls from Beijing to Boston. Painted in Vienna around 1908, the evocative image of an unknown embracing couple has captivated viewers with its mystery, sensuality and dazzling materials ever since it was created. But just what lies behind the appeal of the painting — and just who was the artist that created it? Tickets \$15, available at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222.

"NORTH BY NORTHWEST" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St., Middlebury Community Classic Films Club's Hitchcock Series continues with this 1959 film starring Cary Grant, who stars as an innocent man mistaken for a spy in one of director Alfred Hitchcock's greatest thrillers. Screened in Jessica Swift Community Room followed by discussion. Popcorn, coffee and tea.

THURSDAY, FEB. 15

EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL READING AND Q&A IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 15, from 7-8:30 p.m., in the college's Wright Theater. Mandel is

TOP PICK



"The Stones and Brian Jones" will screen on Thursday, Feb. 15, at 7 p.m., at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL SELECTS WILL PRESENT THE VERMONT PREMIERE OF "THE STONES AND BRIAN JONES" ON THURSDAY, FEB. 15, AT 7 P.M., AT TOWN HALL THEATER IN MIDDLEBURY. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE AT TOWNHALLTHEATER.ORG, OR AT THE DOOR.

author of six novels, most recently "Sea of Tranquility," which has been translated into 25 languages and was selected by President Barack Obama as one of his favorite books of 2022. Her 2014 novel "Station Eleven" won the 2015 Arthur C. Clarke Award and aired as a limited series on HBO Max. Organizers called this an exciting opportunity to listen and ask questions to an author who has a pulse on the anxiety of the country in such a beautiful way. Free and open to the public.

"THE STONES AND BRIAN JONES" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. This MNFF Selects offering features revealing interviews with all the main players and incredible unseen archive footage released for the first time, "The Stones and Brian Jones" explores the creative musical genius of Jones, key to the success of the Rolling Stones, and uncovers how the founder of what became the greatest rock and roll band in the world was left behind in the shadows of history. Tickets \$14 advance/\$16 at the door, available at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222 or midfilmfest.org/ selects.

TOURNESOL IN MONKTON. Thursday, Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m., Russell Memorial Library. Come hear the sounds of a 1930s Parisian café, gypsy jazz tunes, torch songs in the spirit of Edith Piaf, jazz standards and some Latin beats. Free. Part of the 5-Town Musical Library tour.

SATURDAY, FEB. 17 GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB

SNOWSHOE IN HUNTINGTON. Saturday, Feb. 17, to Cowles Cove Shelter. Strenuous snowshoe on the Beane Trail and Long Trail with possible bushwhack through Huntington Gap. This will be an adventurous outing of 6-8 miles with elevation gain of more than 1,000 feet. There will likely be unbroken trail but we may find tracks over the gap. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for details. More at gmbreadloaf.org.

MIDDLEBURY ACTING COMPANY GENERAL AUDITIONS IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 17, 1-4 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Auditions for MACo's 2024 season. Email Melissa at melissa@middleburyactors.org for information and appointments.

KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH. Saturday, Feb. 17, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall, Route 7. A sandwich supper and then on to the games. King Pede involves "trick-taking" such as in Hearts and Spades or Pitch. This is a game of skill so come prepared to use your strategic thinking.

DANA ROBINSON IN RIPTON. Saturday, Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m., Ripton Community House, Route 125. The Ripton Community Coffee House presents Vermont musician Dana Robinson, a fixture on the United States folk music scene for years. From performing at Carnegie Hall to providing music for Ken Burns' documentaries, Dana Robinson has created music that has permeated the culture in its own quiet way. Tickets: general admission \$15.

UPCOMING MUSIC

Lincoln music series brings Marsh Lights to the stage on Feb. 10

Burnham Presents will host their monthly music event on the second Saturday this month with Colby Crehan and Marsh Lights, Saturday, Feb. 10, at 7:30 p.m.

Marsh Lights plays acoustic folk-grass music with a hyper-literate edge and beautiful execution. Crehan and her band-mates have received accolades, including Vermont Vocalist of the Year and Vermont Song of the Year (Tammie Awards, Barre-Montpelier Times-Argus). Crehan was also the long time lead vocalist of The Bluegrass Gospel Project.

Marsh Lights' songs explore bravery, darkness, spirituality, and grace with lyrics that often employ metaphoric places and female heroes and perspectives. And Marsh Lights pulls from the old songbook of PossumHaw, particularly the songs found on their last recording, the live 2017 album Limberpine.

"While I don't write autobiographical songs," Crehan said, "I can always relate to the



Marsh Lights with Colby Crehan will perform at Burnham Hall in Lincoln on the second Saturday of February for the regular monthly music series Burnham Presents.

characters and stories in the songs in a deeply personal way. I hope our listeners will feel the same connection."

In addition to Crehan's lyrical pieces, the band also plays instrumentals written by banjoist Ryan Crehan and mandolinist Stephen Waud. "The instrumentals are high-energy, expressive and a lot of fun. They provide a great contrast and really set the stage on fire" Crehan said.

Crehan is joined by her husband, Ryan, who provides warm harmony vocals and banjo playing that is sometimes plaintive and other times hard-driving. Ryan also draws the audience in as front man for the group.

Also on the stage is Charley Eiseman, long-time friend and musical collaborator. Eiseman's equally warm vocals join the Crehans for hauntingly sweet three-part harmonies. Eiseman plays lead acoustic guitar with nuanced blues

and jazz inflections.

Waud brings amazing mandolin chops to the stage, equally equipped to fire up the crowd or mine tender turns of musical phrase. Waud previously performed with the Modern Grass Quintet.

Mitch Barron, a long-time essential presence in the Vermont folk music scene, brings his skilled upright bass playing to the stage, along with deep, rich vocal backup.

Bread and Bones (Richard Ruane, Mitch Barron and Beth Duquette) will play a short opening set before Marsh Lights takes the stage.

Doors open at 7 p.m.. Music begins at 7:30 p.m., for two sets. Admission is on a sliding scale: general to generous \$15/\$20/\$25. All funds after expenses go directly to the performers. Refreshments will be available at the break.

Trio takes over Town Hall Theater on Feb. 10

The Vermont Mandolin Trio, made up by Grammy-nominated Matt Flinner, Jamie Masefield, and Will Patton, will be coming to the Town Hall Theater on Saturday, Feb. 10, with a sound that will be entirely new to most listeners. The three mandolinists, who will be accompanied by bass player Pat Melvin, have developed a style that falls somewhere on the intersection of bluegrass, roots, and jazz, making for a unique genre of upbeat and often improvisational music.

Masefield, Patton and Flinner come from drastically different musical backgrounds, each of which can be heard in what has become their shared sound.

Masefield's origin is in traditional New Orleans Jazz. Between 1996 and 2006, Masefield toured the country with his group, the Jazz Mandolin Project. Today, mandolin is



The Vermont Mandolin Trio, with bassist Pat Melvin, will perform at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Saturday, Feb. 10.

oftentimes more associated with bluegrass and Appalachia but of course it's a key component of jazz as well and Masefield

reminds his audience of this with his lively and captivating jazz sound. Besides touring his

SEE MUSIC ON PAGE 9

COMMUNITY DANCE EVENTS

Learn West African Dance in Middlebury

Shake things up this winter and go check out a West African dance class taught by Soriba "Simbo" Camara at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Middlebury. Presented by Addison County BIPOC+, there will be three more classes this month featuring traditional rhythms and steps of Guinea.

Classes will be held Mondays, Feb. 5, Feb. 12 and Feb. 19, from 5:15-6:15 p.m.

All levels, abilities, and bodies welcome. Classes involve vigorous movements with a focus on rhythm, songs, culture, and dances traditionally performed for rites of passage, courtship, celebrations, and other events.

Musicians provide live accompaniment to help participants understand the communication between drummers and dancers. You will learn the unique "break" for different dance rhythms that signals a change in the music and/or dance.

Admission is based on a sliding scale of \$15-20 for single class. Donations are welcome to subsidize those with tighter budgets. Cash, check or Venmo accepted. You can pre-pay/register on Venmo @Soriba-Camara.

Dancing is done barefoot. Wear loose, comfortable clothing you can move (and sweat) in. Lapa (wrap skirt) or dabas (loose pants) optional. Don't forget a water bottle.



Soriba "Simbo" Camara will continue teaching West African dance classes for three more weeks at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society in Middlebury. Lessons cost \$15-20 per session. Donations welcome.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Master teacher Soriba "Simbo" Camara began his traditional African dance training at the age of five in Conakry, Guinea, West Africa. In 1998 he joined the National Ballet Djoliba, where he was a soloist for five years. Simbo subsequently became a

principal dancer at the acclaimed Les Ballets Africains de Guinée. He has also directed and choreographed for Ballet Sourakhata de Guinée, with over 50 dancers and drummers. Simbo is now based in Bristol, teaching locally, around the country, and internationally.

MUSIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

music, Masefield is also a drystone mason living in Monkton, and his projects can be seen all around the northeast.

Patton started on the piano as a child but took up strings in his teenage years, quickly playing for a range of genres: folk, bluegrass, jazz. He graduated from Middlebury College having found a deep connection to the green mountains. Despite this love for Vermont,

Patton has traveled far during his music career, gaining influence from time spent in Brazil, the Caribbean, and Paris. He has collaborated many times with Parisian guitarist Ninine Garcia, winning this dynamic duo critical acclaim both at home and abroad.

Grammy-nominated Flinner has been playing banjo and mandolin from the start and dedicated himself to bluegrass from a young age. Living in Ripton, Flinner has spent the last several decades of his life touring with the Matt Flinner Trio and the Modern Mandolin quartet. He also writes musical compositions, some

of which have been performed by the Ying Quartet and the Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

The Vermont Mandolin Trio will be an exciting spectacle of music, sure to bring something new to audiences' ears. This evening is part of Town Hall Theater's Wintertide Music Series, which will feature Sweden's award-winning Lena Jonsson Trio on Friday, March 22. Mark your calendars!

Tickets are \$20-30 and are available at townhalltheater.org or by calling 802-382-9222. Lounge-style table seating or traditional riser seating available.

PUZZLES

sponsored by SPARROW ART SUPPLY

ACROSS

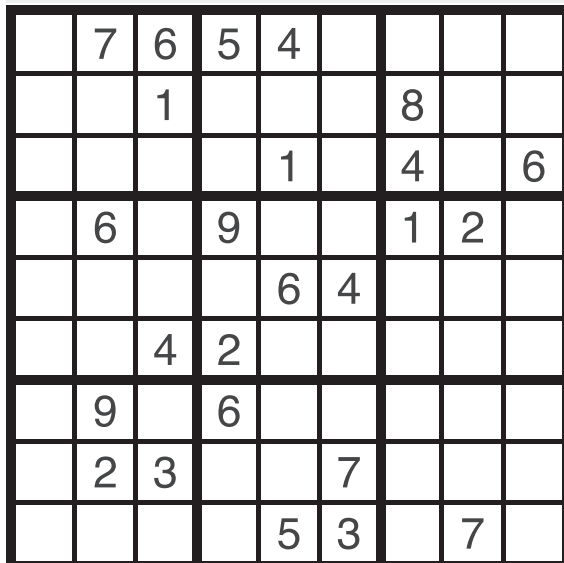
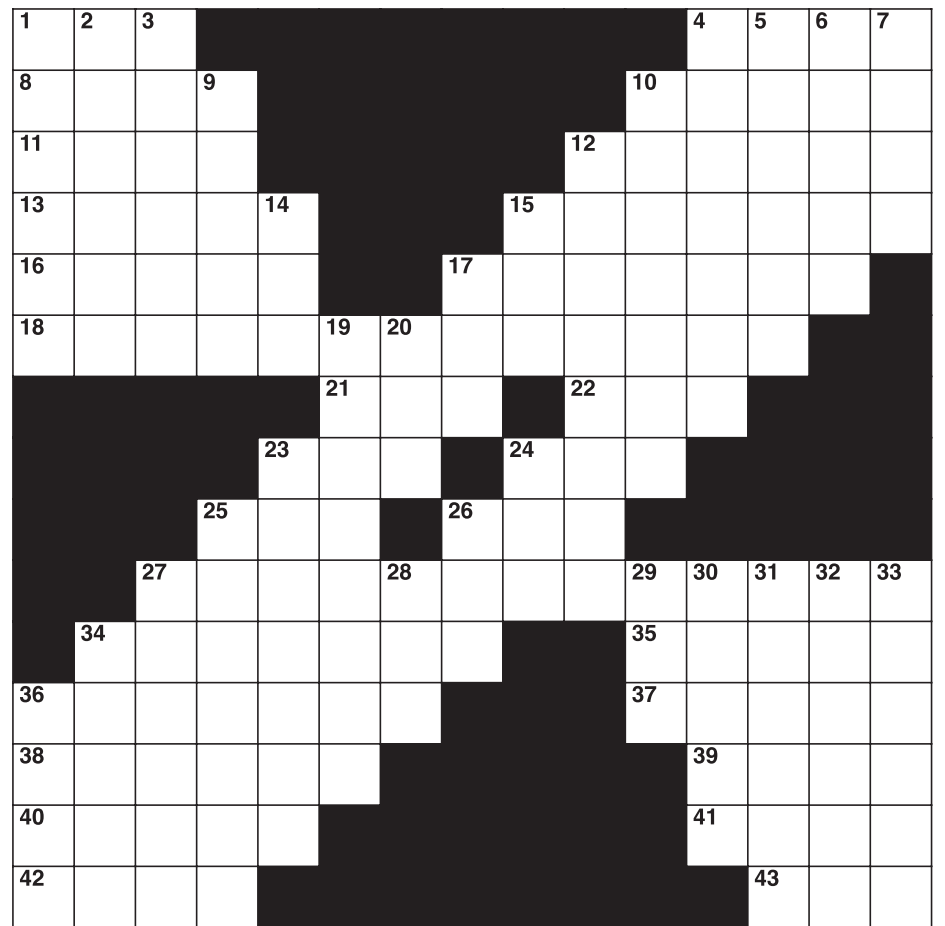
- 1. One point south of due east
- 4. Coagulated blood
- 8. Fortifying ditch
- 10. Devotee of Hinduism
- 11. Trunk of a tree
- 12. Bank note
- 13. Capital of Guam
- 15. Study again
- 16. Covered with hoarfrost
- 17. Opening
- 18. Legendary Rolling Stone
- 21. Stray

- 22. Computer storing system
- 23. Signal
- 24. Pitching statistic
- 25. Human being
- 26. Malaysian isthmus
- 27. The "Blonde Bombshell"
- 34. A gland
- 35. Bluish greens
- 36. Endangered
- 37. Three-dimensional
- 38. In a way, precipitated
- 39. God associated with dissolution

- 40. Blemished
- 41. Flow or leak slowly
- 42. Disco legends The Bee __
- 43. Midway between south and southeast

DOWN

- 1. A way to board
- 2. Get down
- 3. Highly seasoned sausage
- 4. First day of month
- 5. Eurasian shrubs
- 6. The organ that bears the ovules of a



Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

Level: Medium

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.

flower

- 7. Small lake
- 9. Belief
- 10. Sunrooms
- 12. Metric weight unit
- 14. Vasopressin
- 15. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 17. One-time family room staple

19. Got back together

- 20. Anger
- 23. Sang merrily
- 24. Sea eagle
- 25. Military men
- 26. Kilo yard (abbr.)
- 27. Found in the sea
- 28. Protects from weather
- 29. Type of

medicine

- 30. City along the Rhine
- 31. Animal disease
- 32. Martini ingredients
- 33. Get away
- 34. Lack of disunity
- 36. One-time European Commission officer

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COMEDY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Company (Flash Forward), and Vermont Stage (Winter Tales).

Sound design by Jess "Julie" Wilson, so thanks to her, audiences will be able to hear every joke and witticism and enjoy a moment of levity in otherwise trying times.

By the troupe's self assessment, "Stealing from Work is immature comedy for mature audiences only." Tickets are \$20 at townhalltheater.org or by calling 802-382-9222.

CAST BIOS

Cael Barkman

Barkman is a veteran member of Stealing From Work and is excited to be back for another show. Their other acting creds include performing in the comedic murder mystery Rumors at the Waterbury Playhouse. Their skill set extends beyond sketch: Barkman was featured in this past fall's staged reading of "Straight White Men," here at the Town Hall Theater.

Chris Caswell

With recent acting credits including "Linda in The Thin Place" and "Emma in Annapurna" both with Vermont Stage and Rachel in Dirt Road Theater's premiere production of "The Ties That Bind" by Tamar Cole. Caswell is an accomplished actor as well as vice president of Off Center for the Dramatic Arts where she hoes the monthly new play reading series Playmakers originated in 2013 by Seth Jarvis.

Alex Hudson

Hudson is an alum of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in NYC and The University College Dublin.

She is an acting teacher and meditation coach and founded The Creative Mindfulness School. She performs in local theater as much as possible.

Jory Raphael

After studying acting at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Theatre Institute Raphael moved on to Chicago to specialize in improv comedy. He recently performed in Middlebury Acting Company's production of "A Christmas Carol."

Amy Halpin Riley

Riley developed her comedy chops through Chicago's

Second City Conservatory, Improv Olympic, and Upright Citizens Brigade. She co-founded Full Circle Theater Collaborative and works in education at the Flynn and Vermont Stage.

Geeda Searforce

With an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts, Searforce teaches for the Vermont Young Playwrights Program. She has been with Stealing From Work for a decade as well as continuing dramatic acting for Messenger Theater Company, the Chelsea Repertory Lab, Middlebury Acting Company, and Vermont Stage Company.

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Pets In Need

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Addison County's Humane Society

Betty

Betty came in with her sister, Brenda, and is the more reserved one. She is still a bit shy and would most likely appreciate a low-energy home.



Brenda

Brenda came in with her sister, Betty, and is the more outgoing of the two. She is mellow and sweet-natured.

Bruce

Bruce is 4 years old. He is a sweet, full-cheeked handsome cat that is super affectionate. He had been living outdoors for quite a while, but now he really enjoys being inside and snuggling up in his bed. He is a quick learner and masters feeding puzzles in no time!



Foxtrot

Foxtrot, affectionately called Foxy, is sweet and timid. We estimate her to be around a year old. She has been around many cats, but not many people, and adjusting to a new home will take time. Foxy spends a lot of time with her cat friends and should be adopted with one of them.

Andes & Reeses

Andes and Reeses are 2-year-old German Shorthaired Pointer/Husky mixes that came from a dog sledding business. Andes is the blue-eyed female and Reeses is male. They are 48 pounds each. They are bonded litter mates and need to go to a home together. The best environment for Andes and Reeses is a quiet home where they can slowly get used to new routines. These energetic pups are looking for owners willing to take them on daily hikes and walks and can provide them with space to run. Andes and Reeses would be okay to go back to the sled dog community, and would also be fine becoming house pets together. Their new owner needs to be patient when bringing them into a home, and having access to the outside while transitioning into their new home would be best for them. Andes and Reeses are dog-friendly but should be the only dogs in a home setting. They are shy when introduced to new people and it is important that they are given time to warm up at their own pace. Together, they boost each other's confidence and it helps them when having to adapt to new situations. They have adjusted well to walking on a leash and love playing with toys. Andes and Reeses are very treat-motivated and are eager to engage with puzzle toys.



Want to learn more?

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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

— GET AHEAD BY PLANTING SEEDS INDOORS —

The holidays are over, and we find ourselves in the cold, dark days of mid-winter. As a gardener, you may feel that the planting season is so far away. Don't worry as you can start many plants indoors by seed soon.

BY **AMY
SIMONE**

Garden centers already have seeds available and will bring in more as winter wraps up. Seeds also can be found in many hardware and grocery stores. Some communities have seed swaps and seed "libraries."

For a wider variety, find a seed company that offers the types of plants you want to grow and order a catalog or shop on its website. Seed providers that test their seeds in a growing climate similar to yours are ideal.

Carefully review the information on the seed packet, and create a chart of seed-starting and transplant dates. If you have plants that should be started 10 to 12 weeks prior to the last frost and some to start 8 to 10 weeks before,

a consolidated planting session at 10 weeks prior will suffice.

Before planting day arrives, gather any necessary supplies. Starting seeds does not need to be complicated or expensive. The main components are containers, planting media and a reliable artificial light source.

Containers can be made of plastic, silicone, wood, peat, fiber or other materials. Most importantly, they should be sturdy, sterile, free from harmful chemicals and have drainage holes.

Choose a soilless planting medium with peat moss and perlite and/or vermiculite. When ready to plant, moisten the mix and pack it firmly into the container to within three-quarter inch of the top. If you are filling several seed flats, sometimes it is easier to pre-moisten the mix in a larger container or bucket, then move to your final container.

Sow the seeds and cover with more of your planting medium to the necessary planting depth. Moisten the soil and seeds with a spray



Amy Simone is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from South Burlington.

mister, then cover with a plastic dome or plastic wrap. Be sure to label the plants.

Planted seeds need to be kept at a temperature between 65-75 F until they germinate. Electric heat mats are useful during this period, but another option is to keep the trays on a shelf over a heat register.

Remove the plastic from the germinated plants and place no further than 6 inches from a strong fluorescent or LED light. Leave the light on for 14-16 hours a day.

Note that once germinated, cold-weather seedlings prefer temperatures between 55-65 F. Moving these seedlings to a basement or sun room is an option.

Keep the planting medium moist, but not soggy. It can dry slightly between waterings, but seedlings should not be allowed to wilt.

Give the young seedlings a 50 percent diluted fertilizer. After that, apply full-strength fertilizer weekly.

In February, you can plant bulbing onions that are dependent on long day length. The bulbs should be transplanted outdoors 4-6 weeks before your last frost. This ensures that they will receive the required daylight hours for the development of large bulbs.

Cold-tolerant plants such as pansy, sweet alyssum, snapdragon, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, head lettuce, leeks, kale and collards have start dates in February and March. You can start heat-loving plants like peppers, tomatoes and eggplants from seeds indoors in March to compensate for our shorter growing season.

Once spring arrives, follow instructions on the seed packets for outdoor planting times, paying attention to dates before or after the last frost. You can find information on frost dates at garden.org/apps/frost-dates. Be sure to gradually acclimate your tender seedlings a week prior to transplanting them in the garden.

Enjoy this early start to the growing season.



For best results, seedlings require a reliable artificial light source for 14 to 16 hours per day.



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PUZZLE

SOLUTIONS

FEB. 1, 2024



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7	9	5	6	8	2	3	4	1
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6	4	8	1	5	3	9	7	2

ADD YOUR PIECE!
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EMAIL CHRISTY@ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM TO FIND OUT HOW.



IPJRE Insights

Hiring a professional service provider can be tough sometimes. Think of your real estate agent as a service provider. Just like in other industries, there is no shortage of licensees in the real estate world in Vermont. Selling or buying real estate is a nuanced process. The good news: there are highly qualified, successful agents that can help you throughout the process! (We have four right here in our office!)

5 tips to consider when hiring a real estate professional:

- 1 Look for an agency that has dedicated, full-time professionals. Just like you hope for your car mechanic or physician, you'll want to find a REALTOR that has extensive experience and is available for you.
- 2 Ask your friends, neighbors and family members if they've had interactions and experience with any top-quality agents—they'll be happy to give their opinions! Satisfied clients, customers, and our colleagues in the industry are key to our success. If you were referred, be sure to tell the agent who sent you!
- 3 Professional REALTORS abide by a Code of Ethics. Part of this code is to provide you with honest opinions on pricing, strategize with you (rather than tell you what to do) and help guide you when it comes to disclosures and contract negotiations. If you've hired an experienced professional, be open to their guidance—they've got your best interests in mind!
- 4 Be sure you trust and feel comfortable around the agent and with their firm. This relationship can last for months (sometimes years!). You'll want to know you can have an open and honest discussion.
- 5 Interview agents you're considering using. Start with these questions:
 What is your fee and how is it paid?
 How long have you been in this field and in what capacity?
 What is the greatest value you bring to a real estate transaction?
 What do I need to do to prepare to buy/sell a house/land parcel?
 Do you work with a team and do you have support staff?

These questions are intended to start a conversation; there are no right or wrong answers. You will know what feels and sounds right. Follow your instincts!



photo © ERICKILLORIN.COM

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EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street,
 Middlebury
 For more info visit
photoplacegallery.com.

"Monochrome." In this exhibition, artists explore the beauty and powerful expressive ability of monochrome photography. Any capture method and all processes, including black and white, alternative process and monochromatic toning, are welcome. Juror Henry Horenstein selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view Feb. 2-23, with an opening reception Feb 2, from 4-7 p.m.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Rd, Middlebury
 For more info visit middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions.

"Derrick Adams: Sanctuary" featuring 50 works of mixed-media collage, assemblage on wood panels, and sculpture that reimagine safe destinations for the black American traveler during the mid-20th century. On view Jan. 26-April 14.

"David Plowden: Portraits of America." This exhibition is arranged around the major themes that dominated the artist's body of work: locomotives, steam ships, steel mills, bridges, small towns, and the agricultural landscapes of the Midwest. On view Jan. 26.-April 14.

CALENDAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

generous admission \$20-\$25, or pay what you can. Refreshments, including coffee, tea and baked goods are available. Doors open at 7 p.m. Advance tickets

recommended to guarantee a seat, available at rcch.org.

SUNDAY, FEB. 18

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SLEDDING IN LINCOLN.

Sunday, Feb. 18, Lincoln Gap. Get your heart pumping with a climb on the closed road up to Lincoln Gap and delight in the speed of descent. Good snow required, contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 to get additional details. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

TUESDAY, FEB. 20

"GARDENING WITH ORNAMENTAL GRASSES" IN

MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 20, 1 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Middlebury Garden Club welcomes Silvia Jope, a landscape designer from Chittenden County, who will discuss how she incorporates ornamental grasses into her landscape designs. Free and open to the public.





First call for 2024 Vermont Studio Center applications

Artists and writers from near and far can now apply for 2024 residencies at the Vermont Studio Center. Applications will be accepted Jan. 10-Feb. 15. Residencies will take place April-Dec.

Thirty-five-percent of accepted applicants will receive a full fellowship for their residencies — meaning the \$12,000 cost of the four-week program will be funded by donations and foundation partners. The remaining two-thirds of residency participants will receive a partial fellowship.

And, for the first time, alumni of the Vermont Studio Center need apply only if they would like to be considered for a full fellowship. To learn more about the new alumni benefit, visit vermontstudiocenter.org/alumni.

Residencies at the Vermont Studio Center occur in two-, three- and four-week sessions throughout the year.

Through this competitive program, artists and writers across mediums and genres stay in Johnson and enjoy private studios in which to work. They are provided with time and space to unplug — to focus on individual creative practices and projects while taking in the inspiring Vermont landscape and culture.

The application process includes juried examination of five visual artist works, three minutes of video or a writing sample, depending on artists' mediums. Applicants submit their work as either a visual artist or a writer for consideration.

Judging happens anonymously, with the jury seeing work only in order to avoid bias.

For those accepted, VSC residency includes a private room in a shared house, a private

studio, meals, and access to the Visiting Artist and Visiting Writer Program — a mentoring service to residents that sparks dialogue within the community and offers the chance for residents to receive constructive feedback on their work.

Residents can share their work through resident presentations and open studio events.

All residents participate in the Community Contribution Program, which builds a sense of community on campus and locally in the area, by helping with tasks in the kitchen, school arts program, visual arts, grounds, Mason

House library or the writing program.

The sessions allow residents the chance to network and attend presentations from visiting artists and writers.

To learn more about residency opportunities with the Vermont Studio Center and apply today, visit vermontstudiocenter.org/fellowships.

The application period ends on Feb. 15.

For more information visit vermontstudiocenter.org.

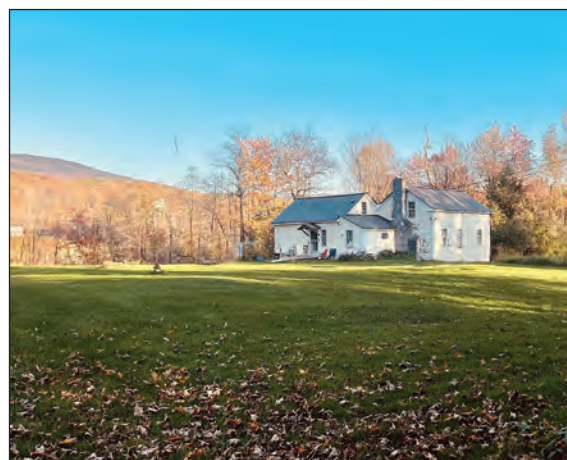
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THT Presents
**House of Jazz:
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February 3 at 7:30pm



THT Great Art Wednesday Presents
Klimt & The Kiss
February 14 @ 11:00am



Stealing from Work Presents
Artificial Irrelevance
February 9 @ 7:30pm



MNFF Selects Presents
The Stones and Brian Jones
February 15 @ 7:00pm



THT Presents
**Wintertide Concert
Series: Vermont
Mandolin Trio**
February 10 @ 7:30pm



THT Presents
**Feb Break Camp:
Circus Smirkus**
February 19 - February 23
9:00am or 1:00pm



THT and Addison Cty BIPOC+ Presents
**Lunar New Year
Celebration**
February 11 from 12:30-6:30pm



Middlebury Community Players Presents
**Vanya and Sonia and
Masha and Spike**
February 29 - March 2 @ 7:30pm
March 3 @ 2:00pm



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