



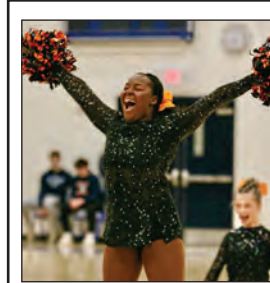
Lights, action

Adding night skiing has given the Middlebury Snowbowl a major shot in the arm. See Arts + Leisure.



OV on top

The House of Noise was rocking as the OV boys topped Mt. Abe in the D-II playoffs. See Page 1B.



Gotta dance

The Tiger dance team was outstanding at Saturday's State Championship. See Page 3B.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 78 No. 8

Middlebury, Vermont ♦ Thursday, February 22, 2024 ♦ 44 Pages

\$1.50

Ilsley project's tax impact shaved

\$16.4M plan could cost residents \$4.5M

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — When Middlebury voters endorsed a local option tax back in 2008, they saw it — in tandem with a \$9 million gift from Middlebury College — as a means by which neighbors and visitors would help pay off debt on the \$16 million Cross Street Bridge. Sixteen years later, the local option tax has been paying even bigger dividends, as Middlebury's 1% tax on rooms, meals, sales and alcohol continues to generate

"It's the greater community paying for resources that are in the shire town. (Using the local option tax) is a fair way and the only way that we have for the greater community to support the resources."

— Brian Carpenter

revenues that substantially outpace the annual debt service and maintenance for the bridge.

This has allowed the town (with

voter permission) to funnel hundreds of thousands in surplus local option tax funds toward other local public works and capital projects that Middlebury residents would otherwise have to absorb on their own.

And the Ilsley Public Library could soon join the list of local option tax surplus beneficiaries.

The Middlebury selectboard is exploring the idea of using that surplus to pay off \$4 million of the projected \$16,442,936 cost of renovating and expanding the Ilsley Library at 75 Main St. This could be combined with another \$8 million that

(See Ilsley, Page 10A)

MAUSD fighting racism with book group

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — The Mount Abraham Unified School District wants to start conversations about diversity, equity and efforts to address racism in the district and broader community.

It comes as part of a longstanding educational effort in the Bristol-area district, but also after a few disturbing racial incidents over the past year.

The conversation starter is a book study group that will read and discuss Ibram X. Kendi's "How to Raise an Antiracist," a nonfiction book that explores how to teach and talk with children of all ages about racism. The group is open to all district staff and residents.

The effort is intended to build on MAUSD's goals related to equity and engagement in antiracist work.

"We developed this book study around (this) book ... as a consideration of how we can partner with the community around antiracism," explained Julie Pettis, an instructional coordinator for social emotional learning & equity in the district and a part of the team organizing the book study. "We stood at the basis of 'if we want to continue working toward

(See Mt. Abe, Page 11A)



BOUNDBROOK FARM ASSISTANT Zack Pittel, left, and Lilah Krugman of ACORN help process soybeans at the Ferrisburgh farm on a recent Sunday. The project was part of ACORN's new working bees initiative, which assembles local growers and volunteers to help tackle various projects on area farms.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

'Working bees' tackle projects on local farms

Volunteers help growers with needed tasks

By MARIN HOWELL

FERRISBURGH — It's often been said that many hands make light work, and that's certainly the idea behind the volunteer "working bee" groups being organized by The Addison County Relocalization Network (ACORN).

The initiative is an offshoot of the nonprofit's newly established Farmer Climate Network and assembles local food producers, ACORN staff and other volunteers to tackle various jobs on area farms, such as prepping garden beds or planting trees.

ACORN Outreach and Programs Coordinator Lilah Krugman said the projects are intended to get more

community members onto local farms, encourage information sharing and help local growers complete tasks that advance the goals of their operation.

"Farmers work alone a lot, and it can be hard to find the hands or the time to do projects that are both necessary and also more fun," she said. "In our brainstorming sessions, we thought about something that might be fun for folks and also a way to engage in peer-to-peer learning. The working bee brigades seemed to really fit into that for us."

Krugman explained that the idea behind the working bee brigades comes from a similar initiative that's part of (See 'Working bees,' Page 14A)



Honk for peace

AROUND A DOZEN Vermonters gathered on Court Square in Middlebury on Feb. 15 to draw attention to the dire emergency unfolding in Gaza, where people are fleeing Israeli bombs. Bristol residents Deborah Lundbech (left) and Linda Brown, along with Whiting's Dan Brett, were among the group demanding a ceasefire. See more photos on Page 15A.

Independent photo/Steve James



A extremely rare solar eclipse will unfold over our area on Monday, April 8, and folks are already making plans to maximize viewing potential for as many as possible — including school children. For example, Addison Central School District this week said it planned an (See By the way, Page 7A)

Three vie for pair of spots on Midd. board

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury residents will see a single contested election on the Town Meeting Day ballot: A three-person competition for two three-year terms on the town selectboard. It features, in alphabetical order, former longtime Middlebury Town Planner Fred Dunnington, former Selectman Travis Forbes, and incumbent Selectman Farhad Khan.

Incumbent Lindsey Fuentes-George chose not to run for re-election.

The Independent posed four questions (with a word limit) to each of the three candidates. Their responses follow:

1. Most pressing issues for Middlebury; how would you tackle them?

Dunnington: Property tax burden (See Middlebury, Page 16A)

Steele in the Sahara



MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH School French teacher Michelle Steele and her family ride camels in the Moroccan desert this past fall. Steele was on a Fulbright sabbatical in the North African country, where she interviewed teachers about how the educational system there is trying to de-emphasize French colonial influences.

Photo courtesy of Michelle Steele

Teacher brings back lessons from Morocco

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — There's an extra spring in French teacher Michelle Steele's step as she navigates Middlebury Union High School's maze of hallways these days.

Globetrotting, cultural

immersion and networking with counterparts in another country will do that if you're a language educator.

Steele returned to the classroom last month after having spent the previous four months on a Fulbright sabbatical

in Morocco. While there, she interviewed 30 teachers in eight schools stretching from Casablanca to Guelmim, studying ways to make French curriculum more reflective of the diverse communities in which it (See Steele, Page 7A)

2 towns see many run for selectboards

Four more seeking seats in Addison

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON — The lakefront town of Addison this year boasts the highest per capita interest in running for office in Addison County, with nine candidates vying for three selectboard seats, (See Addison, Page 9A)

Six in Lincoln eye leadership roles

By MARIN HOWELL

LINCOLN — Lincoln's Town Meeting Day ballot will feature two contested races for openings on the town's selectboard.

Incumbents Bay Jackson and Bill Finger will not seek re-election after their terms expire on March 5, and four Lincoln residents are running to fill the seats. (See Lincoln, Page 8A)

Index

Obituaries.....6A
Classifieds.....10B-11B
Service Directory.....8B-9B
Entertainment.....Arts + Leisure
Community Calendar.....6B
Arts Calendar.....Arts + Leisure
Sports.....1B-5B



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Vergennes, Ferrisburgh cut a deal for fire coverage

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES/FERRISBURGH — After about three weeks of mediation, the Ferrisburgh selectboard and the Vergennes City Council reached an agreement on how much the town should pay Vergennes for the city fire department to serve as the first responder for West Ferrisburgh and much of the southern end of the town.

The selectboard on Monday, Feb. 12, and the council on Tuesday, Feb. 13, approved in principle a deal that calls for a three-year contract that will take effect on July 1, 2024 (Fiscal Year 2025) and run for three years, including FY26 and FY27.

Ferrisburgh agreed to pay Vergennes \$119,000 in FY25, \$127,000 in FY26, and \$135,000 in FY27.

Officials also confirmed Ferrisburgh agreed to pay the full originally budgeted amount of \$104,676 to the city for fire service in the current fiscal year.

The selectboard had been withholding payment for city fire protection because of its discontent with the decades-old formula that had been used to calculate the cost to Ferrisburgh, as well as Pantan and Waltham.

After mediation started on Jan. 19, the selectboard at its Jan. 23 meeting as a show of good faith agreed to pay half that budgeted amount, which voters had approved in March 2023 as part of the town's FY24 budget.

According to a joint statement released on Thursday by Vergennes Mayor Chris Bearor and Ferrisburgh Selectboard Chair Clark Hinsdale, the fire coverage agreement also retains the existing service area. The Vergennes Fire Department will remain the first responder for all of Ferrisburgh west of Otter Creek and all of Ferrisburgh south of the intersection of Tappers

Crossing, just north of Vergennes. The Ferrisburgh Fire Station is on Route 7 about two miles north of that line.

The last remaining formality, per the statement, is that lawyers from both municipalities must prepare a contract for officials from both communities to sign.

In Feb. 15 interviews, Hinsdale said now that both sides have agreed in principle the Ferrisburgh selectboard would formally approve the deal subject to that final condition on this Tuesday, Feb. 20. Bearor said the council would do so on Feb. 27.

Hinsdale acknowledged the amount is higher than Ferrisburgh might have initially preferred to pay. In the fall of 2023 the selectboard offered the city \$60,000 for the current fiscal year, an offer that was not warmly received by city officials.

FORMULA FOR PAYMENT

However, Hinsdale said one of the arguments that the selectboard had made all along was the unfairness of the four-decade-old formula used to assess Ferrisburgh, Pantan and Waltham for protection by the city fire department.

It relied on annually calculating the grand list value of the property protected in each community by the city fire department, and then dividing the cost of the fire department using a ratio of the value of the property covered.

Ferrisburgh had countered by studying the number of calls of service the Vergennes Fire Department made in each

community and saying the cost should be divided on that basis, which would reduce cost to the three towns.

But costs are rising for the city fire department, including payments on a \$1.4 million bond to fund buying and fitting up two used vehicles, heavy rescue and ladder trucks. With that in mind Hinsdale said the money Ferrisburgh will be paying Vergennes over the coming three years falls within a percentage the selectboard believes is reasonable.

"Even though it was more money than we entered the process talking about, we feel like our payment is more representative of the calls they made on our behalf," Hinsdale said. "They unilaterally decided to upgrade what they have for equipment, and we agreed based on a principal we had enunciated to pay our fair share."

Hinsdale said the selectboard, as well as municipal employees, are also happy a complicated formula, which has to take into account communities' Common Levels of Appraisals (CLAs) every year, no longer needs to be calculated and followed.

Bearor agreed. "It's nice that we have a three-year deal," he said. "It will make it easier to bill. I know it was a little confusing on the formula."

Bearor also hopes the agreement with Ferrisburgh can serve as a template for similar arrangements with Pantan and Waltham, creating simplicity and longer-term cost certainty for those communities as

"Now we can go to the other two towns with the same idea, whatever kind of three-year contract they would like. I think it will just make it easier for everybody down the road."

— Vergennes Mayor Chris Bearor

ANWSD holds firm on its adjusted budget

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — While lawmakers in Montpelier last week debated last-minute changes in the state's school-funding laws, the Addison Northwest School Board met on Feb. 12 and decided not to make further adjustments to the \$28,232,078 spending plan it'll put before voters on March 5.

At a Jan. 29 meeting, the board had removed \$750,000 of proposed capital improvements, a decision that followed an open letter to the state's school officials from key legislators warning of new, potential "policy levers" to curb school budgets.

The letter said lawmakers were concerned that many school districts were spending too freely under some provisions of Act 127, Vermont's new school funding law.

The letter pointed in particular to a complex tax-rate cap that has since been scrapped.

ANWSD Board Chair John Stroup said last week that board members believe removing the \$750K in capital spending last month was their appropriate answer to the concerns in Montpelier.

"We feel we have already done our part," Stroup said.

Lawmakers have given local school districts the option of taking more time to consider their budgets and then hold votes in April, but Stroup said last week ANWSD would almost certainly not follow that path.

"It is very unlikely we are going to postpone our budget vote," Stroup said. "We are going to move forward with our budget vote on Town Meeting Day. We have a good

budget that we have worked on for many months. And we adjusted it one time based on what we learned from Montpelier. We feel very good that it provides services we need."

There is at least modest good news on the ANWSD tax front.

ANWSD Director of Finance and Operations Elizabeth Jennings wrote in a Feb. 15 email to the *Independent* that exactly where tax rates will land remains unknown, but that the most recent projections from the Agency of Education indicate the district-wide rate will be \$1.5910 per \$100 of assessed property value. That figure is more than 2 cents lower than the \$1.6182 officials originally projected.

The current FY24 district-wide rate is \$1.5411, so a rate of \$1.5910 would be a 3.25% increase if it proves to be accurate.

But because of rising property values and the related impact of towns' low Common Levels of Appraisals (CLAs) school tax rates are still expected to rise between roughly 30 and 40 cents in ANWSD's five communities.

Board members last week also stuck with their decisions on how to handle a projected \$1.7 million surplus from FY23, opting not to apply any to tax relief. They have said using the entire surplus might save only a few pennies on tax rates, and thus devoted it to capital or emergency purposes — specifically

well. "Now we can go to the other two towns with the same idea, whatever kind of three-year contract they would like," he said. "I think it will just make it easier for everybody down the road."

Ferrisburgh and Vergennes had for more than a year been talking about a new contract with little progress, including with the Addison County Regional Planning Commission's help, before the communities in January agreed to mediation.

Hinsdale and Bearor praised mediator Adam Powers. For most of the talks Powers served as a go-between with the sides separated. Bearor acknowledged the sides' offers were "way off to start," and Powers did good work to bring them to an understanding "that's very fair on both ends" after direct talks reached a stalemate.

"I can't thank Adam Powers from Powers & Powers enough," Bearor said. "He was fair. He was good to work with. And he got both of our sides. He was listening. He was going back and forth and explaining what the others were trying to do, and I appreciated that."

Hinsdale and Bearor also praised the effort and comportment of all the officials on both sides.

"Whenever we interacted directly, everybody conducted themselves as ladies and gentlemen," Hinsdale said.

"I really appreciate the hard work from everybody on both sides," Bearor said. "On both sides people worked really hard and put a lot of hours into this to get to where we are. I'm proud of that."

Bearor also hopes the agreement can serve as a longer-term template.

"After two years we're going to have to talk and dig into things," he said. "But hopefully everybody's on the same page then that we all want the same thing."



CHRIS MURRAY GOT a lift to enable him, and Olivia Lane, to paint a mural on the silo at Middlebury's Bridge School in July 2018. This week the deteriorating silo was dismantled for safety reasons.

Independent file photo/Trent Campbell

Bridge School bids farewell to iconic silo

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — For around 70 years, the proud old farm silo standing near the intersection of Route 7 and Exchange Street served as a familiar, friendly beacon to those entering and exiting Middlebury's northern gateway. The 80-foot-tall granary probably survived decades of brutal winds, heavy snowfall, cascading rains, and even the seemingly inexorable retreat of the family farm, which divorced the silo from its true *raison d'être*.

It remained a beloved, if not superfluous addition to a main building that over time transitioned from farm to mini shopping mall to a private school. Folks at the Bridge School embraced the silo, which since 2018 has borne a wonderfully painted visage that's given students, parents, staff and passersby an extra greeting on their way to and from work.

Alas, while the colorful silo seemed sturdy to the naked eye, a recent inspection revealed signs of distress, noted Jen Grilly, chief administrator of the Bridge School, an independent institution that educates kids in kindergarten through 6th grade. The silo is made up of scores of concrete blocks, each roughly 18 inches long and 12 inches wide.

"A parent pointed out some cracks in the side, and the bricks at the top were starting to crumble. So, we had a structural engineer come out and assess it," Grilly said late last week.

The engineer gave a sobering report.

"It's bowing in the center and is also caving in at the bottom," a dejected Grilly said. "It's missing stabilization rings around it, which have popped over the years. It's gotten to the end of its life."

Bottom line: The silo needed to be removed before potentially becoming a danger to the school children over which it has stood vigil.

"We talked to folks about whether we could save it," Grilly said. "You could put some money into saving it by stabilizing it, but it wasn't going to be a long-term solution. We'd be putting off the inevitable. It really needed to come down."

Bridge School officials contacted Nop's Metalworks, which dismantled and removed the silo this week. Work began Monday, Feb. 19, which was the beginning of February break. Plans called for the silo remnants to be cleared from campus by the start of school on Monday, Feb. 26.

It's the wisest, safest, and really only course of action, officials acknowledged. But it comes with some pain.

"It's one of the saddest days in Bridge School history," Grilly said of silo's demise.

DIFFERENT AND SAME

Generations of Bridge School alumni will take the silo loss particularly hard, as will artist Chris Murray, who designed the delightful faces that adorned the silo. Murray (also dad to a Bridge School alum) and Olivia Lane

(See *Silo*, Page 3A)

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Feb 22 - Feb 28

More broken water pipes prompt Middlebury to ask for emergency declaration

By JOHN S. McCRIGHT

MIDDLEBURY — An unprecedented series of water main breaks and leaks in Middlebury over the past month has prompted the town to urge residents in some neighborhoods to boil their water before drinking it — including boil-water notices in some areas that are new in the past week — and for everyone to conserve water.

On Thursday morning, Feb. 15, the town reported additional water main breaks overnight that resulted in the expansion of the precautionary boil water notice to customers of town water in the Mainelli Road, Pond Lane and Industrial Avenue areas. At least two businesses that depend on town water are affected — the Cabot/Agri-Mark cheese plant and Aqua ViTea kombucha maker. But on Tuesday, the town lifted the boil water notice for Mainelli Road, Pond Lane, and Industrial Avenue areas after receiving acceptable test results from the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory.

The water situation is worsened by the fact that the town reservoirs

are low, said Interim Emergency Management Director Tom Hanley.

“What I’m worried about is what if we have a significant fire?” he told the *Independent*.

The town is trying to get bulk water deliveries, in addition to bottled water to distribute to affected water customers.

The town water system experienced a surge in late January that has caused repercussions throughout the distribution area. Public Works believes that the surge caused a high-pressure wave to travel through the system, causing breaks at weak points in the lines. The water system has experienced at least 20 breaks since the initial surge.

The Water Department had plans to replace a valve on Cady Road at mid-week. Once done, water samples will be sent to the state for analysis. Hanley said the town hopes the boil water notice will be rescinded this week. The system has been consistently flushed with chlorinated water, which should reduce any potential for bacteria.

The boil water notice still applies

to:

- Route 7 South from 1129 (former U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station) to Lower Foote Street.
- All of Cady Road.
- Maecliff Court.
- Lower Foote Street south of the farm (Foster farm? Another farm?) to Route 7 intersection.
- Case Street from Airport Road to the north entrance of Mead Lane.
- Airport Road, Munson Road, Butternut Ridge, Mead Lane, Drew Lane and the Lindale Mobile Home Park.

Consumers in the listed areas are instructed to boil their water for one minute before consumption. Hanley said the boil water advisories are being issued strictly as a precaution because periods of low or no pressure caused by a break or leak increase the very low probability that outside contaminants could enter a water system. He emphasized that Middlebury water is not now nor was it ever contaminated.

A regularly updated list of advisories continues to be available on the homepage of the town’s

website — townofmiddlebury.org. Also, town crews have been personally notifying citizens located within the precautionary boil water advisory areas both when the advisories are issued and when they’re lifted.

“Combined with the varying ages and materials of the town’s mains — some are made of cast iron and approaching 100 years old — the nature of the ‘pressure wave’ has made it difficult to predict when the breaks and leaks will fully subside,” Hanley said.

With Public Works crews working extreme hours to make repairs, it appeared that the number of breaks and leaks was dropping and that the event was ending. Unfortunately, the number increased again. In addition, some have raised concerns about some hydrants being left open. This is part of the effort to bleed air and flush the system, and

is controlled and supervised daily by the Water Department.

Hanley said the public should know that breaks and leaks could occur throughout the rest of the winter.

As a result of the situation, the town has submitted a request for a “local declaration of emergency” from Gov. Phil Scott. If granted, the town will receive additional assistance from the state, including the possible delivery of potable water for citizens without water. Hanley said the town would hope to get some financial assistance from the state, as well.

Dealing with this situation has not been cheap. Hanley said the town has spent \$500,000 in the last few weeks dealing with it, much of it for pipes, parts and valves.

And the toll on the Public Works Department employees has been significant, too. Hanley said a crew

was out this past Thursday night until 3:30 a.m. fixing three broken pipes.

“These guys are wiped,” he said. Hanley explained that an initial investigation showed the surge responsible for the breaks and leaks was likely created by a fire hydrant that froze in an open position. After the hydrant thawed, water flowed through it to such a high rate that it caused a “pressure wave” throughout the town’s system, damaging mains and further weakening infrastructure in susceptible areas. An outside engineering firm has been retained and the investigation will continue to fully confirm the cause and assist with system maintenance concerns and future planning. Middlebury police are also investigating to determine if someone was tampering with the hydrant, whether in malice (See Boil order, Page 6A)

Silo

(Continued from Page 2A)

(class of 2011) painted the faces for free in July 2018.

The painting was about more than just pretty faces; Murray and Lane created it to symbolize that “we are all different and we are all the same, every day.”

“This mural brought so much joy to our community and visitors to the area,” reads a Bridge School letter to the stakeholders, informing them of the difficult silo decision. “This image will hold a special place in our community and hearts forever. Thank you, Chris and Olivia, for

this wonderful gift.”

While removed, the silo continues to give to the Bridge School community.

Nop workers have salvaged the metal top to the silo, which will be repurposed as a cap to a new gazebo that’ll take the silo’s place on the Bridge School campus. Some of the rescued, intact cement bricks will be sold and/or auctioned off to raise funds for the gazebo, a spot for students to perhaps contemplate the agricultural pillar that once towered over their campus and caressed Middlebury’s rural skyline.

The gazebo is being designed by current student Maxwell Newton, with input from current students and staff.

“The silo is a big part of the charm of Bridge School and we will miss it, but replacing it with a gazebo will be a net positive for the students” reads a statement from the Bridge School board. “It will allow more sunlight into the classrooms and will be an inviting gathering and learning spot for the school community.”

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



FOLKS FROM NOP’S Metalworks were busy this week dismantling and removing the former 80-foot-tall, 70-year-old silo that was a popular feature of the Bridge School and a local landmark for those entering and exiting Middlebury’s northern gateway. The top will be used in a new gazebo on the same site.

Independent photo/Steve James

ANWSD

(Continued from Page 2A)

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 federally Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds.

According to Superintendent Sheila Soule, the budget prioritizes continuing to close the achievement gap between low- and higher-income students, which according to graphs 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.

See more budget details online at tinyurl.com/ANWSDdetails2024.

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



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Editorials

'Perfect storm' drives school taxes, but what can be done?

This Town Meeting, passing school budgets will be no sure thing. That's largely because tax rates are set to increase by double-digits, even if school budgets are held to rational increases.

High tax rates are being driven by a rapid rise in housing values, as expressed in the Common Level Appraisal for each town; and because of a loss of federal aid that had been flowing into district schools for the past three years related to the pandemic. Those two factors, when added to the biggest costs associated with education spending — labor (teacher and staff wages), health care and building expenses — are seeing school budgets reflecting double-to-triple inflationary increases.

Specifically, MAUSD will be voting on a budget that's 9.2% more total spending than the year prior but sees a decrease in per pupil spending of 1.2%. ANWSD in Vergennes will see a budget increase of 11.6%, but with per pupil spending just under 6%. And ACSD is eyeing a 6.5% budget increase, with an increase in per pupil spending at 9.9%.

Taking the \$50 million ACSD budget as an example, the primary drivers of higher costs this year include a 16.4% increase in employee health care premiums (a \$765,874 increase); a 4.5% increase in student transportation costs; a potential 16% increase in the Patricia Hannaford Career Center tuition rate; a likely increase in the negotiation of the district's teacher contract; a commitment by the board to ask voters to fund approximately six full-time-equivalent positions created with federal money to overcome challenges posed by the pandemic; and a new Child-Care contribution tax that could add \$100,000-\$120,000 to the bottom line. Of those costs, only the added positions meant to handle the problems that arose from the pandemic could be considered optional — and even those positions continue to be needed, district board members say, because students have not yet made up from the "lost time" during the months of remote learning imposed during the pandemic. Perhaps those costs can be trimmed in future budgets, but board members felt those positions were still crucial for the upcoming school year.

Then there's the impact of Act 127, the so-called "pupil-weighting law" which seeks to change the education funding mechanics in Vermont by assigning different "weighting standards" for students. Essentially, the law weighs students who need more resources higher than those who don't. In practice, that allows school districts with more "weight" to be able to spend more per pupil without raising taxes. It's one reason why Mount Abe's budget is going up 9.2% in total spending, but it's per pupil cost is actually down 1.2% — mostly because of the difference in student weighting, not because of any noticeable rise in enrollment.

On top of this complicated formula, which tries to create an equal opportunity for education for all Vermont students, taxpayers must consider the CLA, which is adjusted town-by-town and equalizes fair market value of a person's real estate. Because most town appraisals have not kept up with the rapidly rising real estate values of the past few years, the CLAs are lower than they should be. In the ACSD district, for example, the towns' CLAs range from 68.33% in Salisbury to 77.07% in Weybridge (compared to 100% of current value.) Tax rates in the ACSD are expected to jump from a low of 14% in Middlebury to a high of 27% in Cornwall. Other school districts in Addison County are comparable.

The combination of the various forces driving this year's tax rate increases is what some school board members have described as the "perfect storm." The real question is what, if anything, can be done.

In our assessment, not a lot this budget cycle.

School board members have worked overtime these past few months to whittle down budgets to what they think are the bare essentials to produce quality education. They did that knowing this perfect storm of events would drive tax rates into the stratosphere. Taxpayers can second-guess their school directors if they choose, but cuts to the budgets won't see great shifts in tax rates (if any) and would see likely cuts to personnel and programs serving critical student needs.

It should also be some relief that next year's tax rates won't face this same "perfect storm."

Health care costs will still be a big driver of costs next year as will CLA's that will likely remain undervalued, but inflation is already down to a 3-4% rate and going lower, the loss of federal pandemic funding will be assimilated by then, extra teachers and aides hired through federal pandemic funding could be more fully reduced, and perhaps the state legislature will take a page out of history and reinstate state subsidies for school construction.

But this overview of the forces driving tax rates higher and general support of upcoming district school budgets is no substitute for each reader taking an active interest in school spending, and questioning board members on their decisions at the upcoming annual school meetings and informational sessions. They expect you to come with questions and have scheduled the meetings throughout next week, with votes set on or before Town Meeting Day.

Angelo Lynn

Taxpayers get great news!

It's not often any town's taxpayers get such good news. But that happened recently when the Middlebury selectboard learned the proposed \$16.4 million rebuild of Middlebury's Ilsley Library might be accomplished with a \$4.5 million bond vote.

That unlikely math came about as Ilsley officials announced they expect to raise \$8 million through private donations, state and federal grants, and private foundation money, leaving \$8.5 million for the town to pay. A conversation started by town officials then explored how \$280,000 in surplus money from the town's local option tax per year could finance \$4 million of the project's cost, leaving \$4.5 million for taxpayers to pay via a bond. (See a detailed story on Page 1A.)

The \$4 million bond is not nothing, but considering the town would be able to rebuild its 100-year-old library for that small amount, it's an opportunity that should garner the town's wholehearted support.

In addition to all the benefits the new library will bring its users, the project would rekindle energy to revitalize the back of the library toward the Otter Creek and Cross Street Bridge — turning a grossly underused area of the downtown into another oasis. To top it off, the National Bank of Middlebury has generously donated use of the lower area of the Duclou Building at 30 Main Street to the library while the new building is being built.

It's a win-win-win for the library, the town, and taxpayers.

Angelo Lynn

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INDEPENDENT**
Periodicals Postage Paid at Middlebury, Vt. 05753

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E-Mail: news@addisonindependent.com • E-Mail Advertising: ads@addisonindependent.com
Editor/Publisher: Angelo S. Lynn

Published every Thursday by the Addison Press, Inc. Member Vermont Press Association; New England Press Association; National Newspaper Association.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In State — 6 Months \$36.00, 1 Year \$50.00, 2 years \$90.00; Out of State — 6 Months \$44.00, 1 Year \$60.00, 2 years \$110.00. All print subscriptions include online access. Discounted rate for Senior Citizens, call for details. 802-388-4944. Online Only — 1 Week \$3.00, 1 Month \$6.00, 6 Months \$25.00, 1 Year \$44.00.
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Phoenix of a sort

AFTER NOP'S METALWORKS took down the 70-year-old silo in front of the Bridge School early this week, somebody rescued and stacked the formerly 80-foot-tall structure's intact cement bricks. The colorful keepsakes will be sold to raise funds for a gazebo at the school just off Exchange Street in Middlebury.

Independent photo/Steve James

Gaye's musical message endures

Recently, I got the urge to listen to Marvin Gaye's album "What's Going On?" I'm fortunate enough to own the CD and, yes, I still have a CD player. My intention was to listen as I putzed around the house. However, before long, instead of dancing and singing as I cleaned, I found myself listening, deeply, to the lyrics. And I was reminded that 50 years ago an album that was singable, danceable, and lyrically perfect was also a message to humankind, one that ultimately said, "We need to do better. We can do better."

In his sultry, melodious voice, Marvin Gaye names numerous troubles plaguing the world in the '70s: war, poverty, inflation, racism, drug abuse, and environmental degradation. The songs describe the devastation these problems were placing upon so many communities and the world. These same problems still ravage communities across the globe.

The titular song "What's Going On?" focuses on war and anti-war protests. At the center of the lyrics, written by Al Cleveland, Marvin Gaye, and Renaldo Benson, is an urging for dialogue, to restrain from violence by talking to each other.

"Mercy, Mercy Me (The Ecology)" — written by Gaye — mourns pollution of the sky, the wind, the oceans, the soil; the loss of animals, birds, fish.

"Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)" delineates socio-economic problems, such as inflation and police violence.

Other less remembered songs on this album are equally relevant today.

In "Flyin' High (In the Friendly Sky)" Gaye sings about a perennial problem among humans: drug use that stunts the possibilities of individuals, their families, and communities.

For me, "Save the Children" has always been the most poignant song on the album. Songwriters Cleveland, Gaye, and Benson lament the world that is being left to young people. They ask the question, "Who really cares?"

How contemporary are the songs on Gaye's 1971 album? Let's see:

Census data revealed that child poverty rates rose after pandemic era policies ended, rising from 5.2% in 2022 to 12.4% in 2023 according to a report by Jennifer Ludden.

CDC data reported that in 2022 over 100,000 people in the USA died from drug overdoses; two-thirds from fentanyl.

Do I need to list the number of wars and conflicts that people are living with in 2024?

Or the devastation that climate change is causing the Earth?

Or that communities of color and low-income people of all races are disproportionately impacted by extreme weather, rising sea levels, wildfires, and other climate-related crises?

At this point, you're probably wondering about this downer of an album. Let me assure you that it is anything but that. And I suppose that is the point: Music can be poignant with significant meaning and also bring pleasure. If I asked you for a list of such songs, I'm sure you could come up with at least ten.

(See *Ways of Seeing*, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Ruth Farmer



You don't know me; let's talk

I was standing in the bulk spice section of the co-op the other day, scooping a portion of dried thyme leaf into a little bag, when I noticed another shopper at my elbow. As I started to put the thyme jar away, she said, "You can leave that out. I need some, too."

I said, "Sure. Here you go." But I didn't stop there. Instead, I did what I always do when interacting with people in stores: I kept talking.

I can't help myself.

"You know how it is these days," I said, resisting the urge to wink. "Nobody ever has enough ... thyme."

She smiled and murmured something vague. I had no choice but to keep going.

"It was a joke," I said. "About time. Because we're all so busy."

"Ha, ha," she said politely (using those words, as opposed to actually laughing). "That's funny."

"That's funny" is a kind way of saying, "That's not funny." But who could blame her?

I slunk away, like I always do when I humiliate myself in public. It's a regular occurrence.

It seems to happen mainly at grocery stores, but that's because those are pretty much the only places I ever go. I'm sure I'd embarrass myself in nail salons and auto dealerships, too, if I spent more time in them.

It's not just that I talk to people in supermarkets; I'm

also clumsy. A few months ago, for instance, in the cart lobby on my way out of the store, I dropped a full gallon of milk. It split open on impact, spraying carts, shoppers and walls alike. Everyone loved it.

Then there's my distractedness. One year at Hannaford, the day before Thanksgiving, I was rushing to escape the crowds and noise at the front end of the store. The second my groceries were bagged, I took off for the door, my fully laden cart approaching 30 mph on the straightaway.

Just before I reached the exit, the clerk who had rung up my order yelled — to the amusement of the 5,000 other customers — "Ma'am! Are you going to pay for all that?"

Still, the chattiness is my biggest issue. It's a trait I inherited from my mother, who unleashed her wit on shoppers and salesclerks whether they were ready for it or not.

One time as she was checking out, the high-schooler who was scanning her groceries glanced at the man in line behind her. Not sure whose stuff was whose on the conveyor belt, the girl said, "Are you together?"

My mother, without missing a beat, said, "I am. I don't know about him."

She was the only one of the three of them who laughed out loud. Or at all.

(See *Jessie*, Page 5A)

Around the bend

By Jessie Raymond

Letters to the Editor

ACSD hopefuls all deserving

I write in support of four candidates for the Addison Central School District Board: Barbara Wilson, Mary Heather Noble, Ellen Whelan-Wuest and Laura Harthan.

Only Laura would be new to our Board. And to my knowledge, none of the candidates have any electoral challengers. My current Board colleagues, who are seeking reelection, do so out of an abiding commitment to build even stronger educational environments for our kids. Led by our chair, Barbara Wilson, they bring experience, enthusiasm, optimism, and respect for each other, even when we disagree.

Our community should be proud of the schools scattered across our district, from the most rural elementary schools to our high school. But we also face serious challenges. Over the next few years, we will be forced to confront high hurdles to meet the ambitious goals laid out in our newly developed strategic plan. We need to improve educational outcomes, retain and attract a diverse workforce, and convince our political leaders to fund our schools appropriately. We'll be working alongside a new superintendent, Dr. Wendy Baker, who brings a wealth of experience and determination with her.

I believe these candidates will work tirelessly to ensure that we meet or exceed our local kids' educational needs. Your active support for our Board work is critical. Please join me in voting for all four of them on election day.

Jamie McCallum
ACSD Board member
Weybridge

Rapping up a commentary

A political entertainment industry rap

Got fossil fuel
AK's
A MAGA chip on my shoulder
Let's me smolder
Be bolder
Brass balls bigger than a monkey's
Fueling fake news junkies
I can go left or go right
There just for the fight
Don't ask me to care
Or really be aware
In it for 'likes'
And access to mics
Politics is entertainment
Show up for the arraignment
But just as a claimant
Make a cross fingered statement
Then back to where I came
With zero sum gain
And absolutely no shame
But I will never refrain
From bellowing my claim
Of plenty others to blame
As I name names

So
Do we continue to sustain
Or will we step up and complain.
Paula Nath
Middlebury

Library project merits support

Consider: What social institution is now and has historically been the most successful at improving the lives of the general public, while at the same time harboring little to no harm and trouble?

Answer: The library.

While many of our social institutions are failing, the library has been quietly doing its job, standing by but not intruding. The library is a friend to everyone in the community and even those who consider themselves to be outside of the community. Because I have such confidence in the library as a social institution, and confidence in our local Ilsley Public Library, I am writing this letter to show my support for the upcoming bond vote to fund the library expansion, and to ask you to support it too.

I'm nearly certain I will not be supporting with my tax dollars everything on the ballot. The library expansion may be the only

(See *Eckles* letter, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

ACEDC urges support of pro-housing legislation

Editor's note: The following is a letter from the Addison County Economic Development Corp. board sent on Monday to Sen. Chris Bray, chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Energy, and Rep. Amy Sheldon, chair of the House Committee on Environment & Energy, and to members of those committees.

Dear Committee Members: We are writing on behalf of our member businesses and businesses in our region to express our strong support for the tri-partisan housing proposals that have been introduced in H.719 and S.311.

The impact of the current housing shortage cannot be overstated. The lack of available and affordable housing affects our ability to attract new individuals and families to our region and serves as a substantial obstacle to business development and economic growth. The shortage of affordable housing is consistently identified by the businesses in our region as one of the top issues impacting their ability to attract and retain employees for every level of their workforce.

The ACEDC board, representing businesses across all sectors, business sizes and business stages, recognizes the critical importance of taking action now to address the housing deficit. The regulatory and municipal zoning changes, tax proposals, funding and other proposals, as included in H.719 and S.311 would make it easier, less expensive and faster for the private and public sectors to build more housing and more affordable housing, while continuing to avoid sprawl or provide incentives for development outside of designated areas.

These bills represent a responsible and sustainable approach to increased housing development that will work to meet Vermont's unprecedented housing supply challenges while continuing to maintain the stewardship to environmental protection that we all prioritize.

We urge you to support these important initiatives when they reach your respective committees and work to ensure final passage during this legislative session. To encourage the development

of more housing, which will help ensure the overall well-being of our communities, and foster responsible economic growth, action is needed now.

Thank you for considering the needs of all Vermonters.

- Sincerely,
- Jason Larocque, ACEDC Board president, Otter Creek Engineering**
 - Gina Larrow, Co-Op Insurance**
 - David Castle, Mechanical Advantage**
 - Christopher Lapierre, National Bank of Middlebury**
 - Ryan Bartlett, Collins Aerospace**
 - Mark Foster, Foster Brothers Farm**
 - Richard McKerr, town of Middlebury**
 - Robert Ortmyer, Porter Medical Center**
 - Renny Perry, city of Vergennes**
 - Susan P. Ritter, Middlebury College**
 - Darcy Tarte, Board member**
 - Bill Townsend, J.P. Carrara & Sons**

Clarifying the intent of wildlife bill

Sen. Bray is chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

I am writing to share information on S.258, "An act relating to the management of fish and wildlife."

Because there is quite a bit of misinformation circulating about this bill, I am urging you to look at the bill online at bit.ly/3151qVj so you can read for yourself what it does, and does not, do.

The wildlife of Vermont is held in public trust, "owned" equally by every Vermonter. It is appropriate to manage that population in the best interest of all of residents, hunters and non-hunters alike. The bill focuses on mutual respect, and provides a means for hunters and non-hunters to sit together on a reformed advisory Fish and Wildlife Board (FWB).

The bill assigns all rulemaking for fish and wildlife matters to the commissioner. This is in line with how most boards operate: they advise and give recommendations to the agency they serve.

The FWB will expand its role to advise the commissioner regarding

game species (its current role) and non-game species. This includes the habitats for both, because in nature, there is no differentiation between these groups and the habitats they share.

The board will be made up of 15 Vermonters "...[with] a history of involvement with and dedication to fish and wildlife, including a knowledge of fish and wildlife biology, ecology, and the ethics of fish and wildlife management."

The board will be balanced with consumptive members (people who hunt, fish and trap) and non-consumptive members (people who engage in other wildlife activity such as watching, photographing, or listening to wildlife). Vermonters have differing relationships with wildlife, and the FWB needs to reflect this diversity.

The board's members will be appointed in equal numbers by the governor, Senate and House.

The rulemaking directed by the commissioner will be based on science:

"The rules shall be designed to maintain the best health, population, and utilization levels

of the regulated species and of other necessary or desirable species that are ecologically related to the regulated species. The rules shall be supported by the best science available through Department and peer reviewed research."

In short, science, not sentiment, will determine the department's rules.

Finally, the bill will make permanent the recent moratorium on hunting coyotes using hounds, and it will correct three "errors" in a Fish and Wildlife rule brought before the General Assembly's rule-reviewing committee (LCAR) this past November.

The corrections include the definition of a public trail; the definition of trapping (restoring it to its original language); and clarifying that all types of trapping must be set back 50 feet from public trails.

While only 1 in 7 Vermonters hunt, we all share an interest in keeping our wildlife healthy, and this bill brings everyone's voice into the conversation while ensuring that the trained professionals at the Department of Fish and Wildlife manage using the best science available. This is a positive and respectful path forward for our state.

If you have further questions, concerns or comments, please let me know by sending an email to cbray@leg.state.vt.us.



Legislative Review

by Senator Chris Bray
D-Addison County,
Huntington & Buel's Gore

Be wary of candidates who are running as a 'block'

The recent oversight in the town of Addison's election process, failure to remember selectmen's terms, was unfortunate. However, if I read the Vermont statute correctly, the selectman... "serves until a successor is elected."

On another topic, I was pleased to see so many people interested and running for the three open seats on the board.

It certainly shows that we have some dedicated neighbors who care deeply about our community. I am dismayed, however, that three of the candidates have formed a "block" and are advertising and running as a group. It is our responsibility as citizens and voters to vote for the "individuals" most qualified, not the block of three who could, if elected as a block, control

the decisions of the board. A "representative democracy" depends on a diversity of opinion, the ability to hear and discuss issues, and a connection with constituents. Let's vote for the individuals who can best lead our town.

**Tim Buskey
Addison**

There are alternatives to simply forgiving student debt

Many of us recently received our letter on the student debt crisis from Senator Bernie Sanders.

I find many politicians to be half right on the issue of student debt. Many on the left think student debt should be forgiven, as the high payments are crushing many people's futures. Many conservatives point out that forgiving student debt shifts the financial burden to those who didn't borrow the money, including people who didn't go to college. As is typical in politics

today, what is missing is the middle ground that recognizes the legitimate concerns expressed by both sides.

The biggest problem with student debt is interest rates. Many student loan programs are administered by predatory lenders who charge credit card rates after the first late payment. Reforming student loan programs to charge little or no interest would be a logical compromise and a big step in the right direction.

Expanding post-graduation

opportunities for debt reduction or elimination in return for working in under-served regions and with under-served populations is an additional win-win reform opportunity.

None of these ideas are new, but our students need action as they weigh their educational choices. They deserve a clear and stable set of policies to work with as they plan the education and training they need to successfully enter the workforce.

**Clark Hinsdale
North Ferrisburgh**

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

What most came through to me listening to the album was the love that emanates throughout. The lyrics aren't just about problems but hope that problems can be solved and faith that they will, if we care enough. This requires determination but also love. Love radiates from the lyrics, moving beyond caring for partners, relatives, and friends.

A more powerful love is that which goes beyond the tribe. The songs in "What's Going On?" urge listeners to care about the issues that trouble the world in which we live. This often requires looking

beyond our physical and emotional fences.

For instance, some states are offering expanded child tax credits to alleviate poverty rates. Alliances among psychologists, counselors, law enforcement, and health care workers in some communities are being formed to help those with substance use issues. Many states, including Vermont, New York, and Massachusetts, have enacted laws to ensure that people, regardless of race or income, have access to clean air and water. Numerous organizations are bringing together Palestinian and Israeli peace activists.

None of the issues that Marvin Gaye sang about were new in 1971, and the issues persist in 2024. Listening to the album reminds me that we as a species have the ability to make significant changes that might make prospects for the future less bleak. As I look around at the problems we are facing, I know that many people are doing their best to mitigate them. I'm keeping faith and looking around, asking, What's going on?

Ruth Farmer is a published essayist and poet. She is sole owner of Farmer Writing and Editing (www.ruthfarmer.com).

Jessie

(Continued from Page 4A)

On the way home after the thyme incident, I found myself reliving all my worst grocery store moments. Soon, the all-time winner came back in a wave of embarrassment.

I was third in the checkout line at Shaw's during some sort of promotion. Shoppers earned stickers they could collect and later redeem for things like dishes or knives.

The gentleman in front of me asked whether I was saving stickers and, if so, whether I would like his. So — of course — I started talking. I told him I kind of remembered a similar program from my youth.

"Me too," he said. "My mother

used to paste stamps into a booklet, and there was a catalog of products you could buy with them."

"Yes!" I said, as the memory grew clearer. "Our supermarket had a showroom next door where you could trade in the stamps for blenders and things — even bicycles, if you had enough stamps."

We fell silent, both of us trying to recollect what the stamps were called. I could picture them: light green with red writing and perforated edges.


Suddenly, the name hit me. And in typical Jessie fashion, I blurted it out without thinking: "S&M Green Stamps!"

Oh, no. No, no, no. We both knew instantly that I had meant "S&H Green Stamps." But it was too late.

He laughed and said, "Whoa. I bet you'd redeem very different things with those stamps." For once, I didn't say anything; I was too busy looking for a dark hole to crawl into and never come out of.

Let's face it: Shopping would be less awkward for me — and for my helpless victims — if I could learn to stop talking.


But who am I kidding? If the S&M Green Stamps episode didn't cure me, nothing ever will.




Addison, VT Homeowner Recommends Bristol Electronics

Bristol Electronics installed our solar panels early this summer and all the sunny days have been pushing our meter backward at a good rate. It feels good to be contributing to "the grid". Working with Chris, Steve, Dave and the other B.E. employees was a pleasure. They were well informed, patient and flexible as we worked through some early unforeseen roadblocks. We strongly recommend this company if you are interested in having solar energy at your home installed by a responsive, responsible company.

The Fishers – Addison, Vt





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Eckles letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

thing I support. I'm definitely one of those people concerned about the money, and my property taxes going up so high that it becomes unaffordable to stay in my home — and where else would I go? Sometimes we have to make hard decisions. But the library expansion makes my extremely short list of what I will say yes to.

Why do I think it's essential? For one thing, it's a bargain; the Ilsley Library anticipates that two thirds of the funding for the expansion will come from grants and private fundraising. The expansion and updates to the building will save money and build value into our town over the long run by not deferring maintenance into an antiquated heating system, flooding basement etc. The Ilsley Library expansion is designed for the next 100 years, and serves everyone in the community and beyond, including our grandchildren and their children.

I applaud our library trustees for their vision, persistence, and dedication in planning not just for the current needs of the library in serving our community, but for the next hundred years at least. As a former library board trustee, I know the steadfast dedication,

careful consideration, and regard for library patron input passed from one elected board to the next over many years until at last we come to this point of a bond vote.

A public library offers so many things to people for free — and without any problems resulting! I have never heard of any problems stemming from the presence of library. The presence of the library gives resources to the community to simply help each person get what they need to be and do better. Maybe you haven't used the library for many years. We all go through different phases in

our lives and you may not have visited the library recently, yet the library is there without any bother to you, ready for your future needs: finding out more about a diagnosis, a college, career, travel. The library is a safe and pleasant place to be, explore our interests, and if we choose, to connect with others who share our passions. As such it is a pillar for the mental health of our community, not just in Middlebury but for visitors from surrounding areas as well.

**Alice Eckles
Middlebury**

Your Partner in Eldercare



Our nurse Vanessa Wolff (left) provides caring support to every member of our adult day community.

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ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

Judith Marie Desautels, 57, of Lincoln

LINCOLN — Judith Marie Desautels, 57, of Lincoln, Vt., passed away on Feb. 13, 2024, with her loving family by her side, due to complications from end stage renal disease.

Judy was born in Burlington, Vt., on July 16, 1966, the daughter of Gilbert Joseph and Mary Jane (Schmaldienst) Mongeon, and graduated from Winooski High School in 1985.

Judy will be remembered as the most beautiful, kind and caring person you would ever have the pleasure to meet. To experience the life journey with her was a true blessing. Judy and her husband Craig met 36 years ago while working together. Together they have endured many of life's challenges, but even on the most challenging days, they always were there for each other.

She was a natural mother, and so proud. She cherished every child she had ever met, including nieces, nephews, cousins, and children from the pre-school and her beloved bonus granddaughter, Ally. She loved them all and



JUDITH MARIE DESAUTELS

frequently spoke of them. She most enjoyed spending time with family, whether it was at a rustic deer camp, summer camp, sitting by the river watching her sons fish or just simply sitting around a bonfire with her boys. It was important to her to be with people she loved and the people around her felt that love in every hug, smile and conversation. Joy to Judy was to join in someone

else's joy.

Judy was predeceased by her mother, Mary Jane (Schmaldienst) Mongeon, and her father-in-law John A. Desautels Sr. She is survived by her father, Gilbert J. Mongeon; mother-in-law Diane S. Desautels; as well as her husband and partner in life for 36 years, Craig Desautels; their sons Dakota and partner Tianna, Tyler and Jackson; her beloved bonus granddaughter, Allison; sister Susie Robinson and partner Will Pate, sister Nancy (Matt) Villemaire, brother Tom (Meghan) Mongeon, brother-in-law John (Kirstin) Desautels Jr., sister-in-law Angelique (Wade) LaBelle, brother-in-law Lance (Jess) Desautels; and her many, much loved nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

In Judy's honor, please consider organ donation. To register or for more information, please see the following sites:

Organ Donation in Vermont (vtheticsnetwork.org). RegisterMe.org.

A celebration of life and services will be held at a later date. ♦

Richard 'Dick' Andre Choquette, 80, of New Haven

NEW HAVEN/WILLISTON — Dick Choquette, 80, a longtime resident of New Haven, more recently Williston, passed away on Feb. 19, 2024, surrounded by his wife and daughters at his home, following a progressive neurological disease.

Dick was born May 27, 1943, in Bennington, Vt., to the late Albina (Bathalon) and Dorily Choquette. He was raised on his family's dairy farm in New Haven, attended Beeman Academy and later went on to graduate from Champlain College. He married Carol Bolduc and raised two daughters, Michelle and Krissy. Carol passed away unexpectedly in 1995. Dick was blessed to meet Sandra (Thompson) Choquette and he embraced Sandra's four adult children. They were married in 2003. Dick worked as a Contracts Administrator at the former Simmonds Precision. Dick also joined the National Guard and was deployed to Vietnam in the late sixties, where he proudly served his country.

Dick was an avid sports fan. He loved watching the Yankees and the Giants, especially with his daughters. One of his true loves was Whitetail deer hunting, and he enjoyed many years chasing after the "big one" throughout the United States and Canada with his close group of hunting buddies. He always looked forward to the hunting breakfast he shared with



RICHARD "DICK" ANDRE CHOQUETTE

them. He had a great love for the outdoors, including working in the family sugar house each spring with his brother and sisters. In one of his last special memories of his life, Sandra took Dick on a cross country road trip, eventually ending up at a lodge in Montana. This had always been a dream for him to visit Montana and was never happier.

Dick is survived by his wife, Sandra of Williston, Vt.; daughters, Michelle Choquette and her partner Les Velders of Brooklyn N.Y., and Krissy Bolton, her husband Gabriel, and their two children, Malin and Nora of South Burlington, Vt.; stepchildren Michele Sands (Clint

of Minnesota, Michael Thompson of Williston, Vt., Tiffany Shaw (Josh) of New Haven, Vt., and Ginger Cloud Ohl (Darren) of Barre, Vt. Dick is also survived by his three stepgrandchildren, Christopher Thompson of Bridport, Evan Holland (Alayna) of Minnesota, Tori Holland of Minnesota, and one great-granddaughter, Harlow of Minnesota. Dick is survived by all of his siblings, Albert (Jeannine) Choquette of New Haven, Jeanne Choquette of New Haven, Claire Lathrop (Jim) of Rogersville, Tenn. and Louise Dorazio (Tom) of Dennis, Mass. He also is survived by two nieces (Lorraine and Megan) and four nephews (Pierre, Jason, Justin and Matthew). He will be sadly missed by all who knew him with his quiet and kind, yet funny, demeanor.

A service will be held at Saint Peter's Catholic Church in Vergennes on Saturday Feb. 24, at 11:30 a.m., followed by a celebration of life held at the American Legion Post 14 in Vergennes. The family wishes to thank the caring staff at Home Health and Hospice, with a very special mention to his nurse, Sage, who provided compassionate care and support for Dick and the entire family.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to UVMHC Home Health and Hospice in Williston, Vt., or your local hospice. ♦

Roger Harold Sleeper, 86, of West Addison

WEST ADDISON — Roger Harold Sleeper, 86, of West Addison, passed away peacefully at his home on Feb. 11, 2024. Roger battled both prostate and pancreatic cancer and was in remission for many years.

Roger was born in Lebanon, N.H., on Nov. 5, 1937, the son of Harold and Louise Stevens Sleeper. After graduating from Hartford High School in 1956, he attended Bryant University and transferred to Champlain College, where he majored in accounting. He also met the love of his life, Mary Ellen Fisher. The greatest passion of his life was for his wife Mary. They were married at the West Addison United Methodist Church in July 1958 and were married for 58 years until her passing. Roger and Mary resided and raised their family in West Addison next to Mary's parents' family farm.

Roger is survived by his four children: his son Mark and his wife, Mary of Ferrisburgh and their children, Michael of Bolton; Daniel and his wife Megan of Franklin, Mass., and their children Lochlan and Rowan; Nikole Brock of Fairfax and her children Noah, Melanie, Joseph and Gabriel; Corey Owen of Colchester and his children Sidney Owen and Mason Child; Roger's son Greg and his wife Julie of Colchester and their children Bradley of Colchester and Emily and her husband Eli Dandurand of Underhill; Roger's son Jeff and his wife Jeannette of Vergennes and their daughter Allison and her husband Mike Sorrell of Havertown, Pa., and their daughter Maggie; Amy Sleeper of San Diego, Calif.; Theresa and her husband Yukio McDonough of Waltham and their children Malia and Austin; and Roger's daughter Janet and her husband Reg Menard of New Haven and their children Jenna Cloutier of New Haven, Andrew Cloutier and his finance Lena Kirillova of South Burlington, and Reagan Menard of Middlebury.

Roger is also survived by his brother-in-law John Fisher of Anaheim Hills, Calif.; Roger's stepbrothers, Harold Clark and his wife Patricia of Dover, N.H.,



ROGER HAROLD SLEEPER

and Ernest Clark and wife Ann of Dover, N.H.; and stepsisters Lian Obrey of Groton, Conn., and Barbara McCreedy of Old Orchard Beach, Maine. Roger also leaves many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Roger is predeceased by his wife, Mary; Mary's parents, Harold and Gertrude Fisher; Roger's parents, Harold and Louise Sleeper; granddaughter Sarah Sleeper; his sister Marilyn Reed and brother-in-law Frank Reed; sisters-in-law Linda Fisher and Ing Mae Fisher; stepmother Sally Cleary; and stepmother Barbara Clark Sleeper.

Roger was born into a musical family and continued the tradition by playing the saxophone in high school and college. He sang in high school, college and church choir. Roger also enjoyed waterskiing, boating and in his younger years competing in western style horse shows and trick riding, breaking a few bones and winning many ribbons.

Later in life Roger spent many hours researching genealogy. Roger is a descendant of Thomas Sleeper, who was among a group of families that sailed from Bristol, England and founded Hampton, N.H., in 1640. Roger cherished the many moments he spent with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, whom he was proud of and loved very much. He also enjoyed spending lots of time at the Fisher family lakeside camp while enjoying and telling

stories around the campfire. Roger had lots of pride in keeping the waterfront clean. Roger was also an avid walker.

Roger's accounting career consisted of working at General Electric, Applied Graphics, Business Systems of Vermont, and Add-On Accessories. He also assisted local businesses such as Yankee Kingdom Orchards and the Addison Four Corners Store. In 1968, Roger and Mary with brother-in-law Frank Reed and sister Marilyn opened Roger's snack bar in West Addison. After the first summer, Roger and Mary took over ownership and operated it for 10 years until the business was sold. Fifty-five years after opening the business, it is still in operation and is now known as Goodies.

During his lifetime Roger also served his community through the West Addison Methodist Church, the Addison Volunteer Fire Department, as a Boy Scout troop leader, and he served the town for several years. Roger had a passion to make a better world for all, which was evident in his work, community and family.

Roger and family would like to express sincere gratitude for the excellent care by very good friends Jack and Louisa Anderson, who checked on Roger for many years.

In accordance with Roger's wishes, there are no calling hours. A graveside service will be for family only. A celebration of life will be held Saturday, March 30, at 11 a.m., at the West Addison Methodist Church in West Addison. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society; online at donate.cancer.org, or by mail to American Cancer Society, PO Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to the Town Line First Response Squad.

Roger was truly blessed.

"A limb has fallen from the family tree. I keep hearing a voice that says, 'grieve not for me.' Remember the best times, the laughter, the song. The good life I lived while I was strong. Continue my heritage, I'm counting on you."

— Unknown ♦

Edwin Charles James, 88, of Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Edwin Charles James, 88, of Shoreham, Vt., passed away peacefully on Feb. 14, 2024, surrounded by his loving family and friends. The son of Edwin T. and Marcella, he was born in Middlebury, Vt., on Sept. 24, 1935.

In 1937 his family moved from Weybridge to the family farm in Shoreham. He was a graduate of Shoreham High School and East Coast Aerotech. He then joined the Army and was stationed at Fort Benning, Ga. He returned home to marry his beloved wife MaryJane Swinton on Aug. 27, 1961, and lived the rest of his life with her and his son in Shoreham. He milked cows on his farm for 30 years and then worked at Shelburne Airport for 10 years as a mechanic on planes.

Ed was a private pilot and co-owned his own plane with his beloved brother-in-law Nelson and loved to take family and friends for rides. He also traveled to Lithuania with his airplane buddies. Ed enjoyed vacationing in Maine with his wife and son every summer. He was a lifetime member of Shoreham Congregational Church, where he sang in the church choir as well as the Gospel Choir. For many years he was the clock winder



EDWIN CHARLES JAMES

for the town clock in Shoreham as well as a selectman, Justice of the Peace, and a member of the board for Tri-town water.

Ed used his dad's sawmill and operated it for many years to do his woodworking projects. He made numerous pieces and gave them away lovingly. Ed had a love for music, singing and was a friend to all, including all animals as well. Dad also loved to read and write; as he wrote many letters, poems and published several books. He had an amazing sense of humor and always had a joke to share.

With all the vulnerable old pipes in the ground, and some broken pipes still buried in soil and clay, it could be three to six months before

the water system is put back to normal, though that doesn't mean boil water notices will continue that long.

Dad always had Oreos on hand as he said he never had a bad one! He said it was easy to make friends if you shared Oreos with everyone.

If everyone had a dad like Ed, the world would be a much better place. He was kind, gentle, patient and welcoming to everyone he met.

Ed leaves behind his loving wife, MaryJane; son Edwin S. and wife Stacy of Shoreham; grandchildren and great-grandchildren; his brother, Dan and wife Ginny of Wisconsin; sister Sandra Adams and partner Joy Livingston of Hinesburg, and sister Jenny Purinton of Utah; many nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and his cats, Marmalade and Dewey.

A special thank you to his church family, neighbors Chuck and Karen Herrmann and Art and Charlene Remnick, Shoreham First Response and the amazing staff at Porter Medical.

A memorial to celebrate his life will be held on Saturday, May 4, at 11 a.m., at Shoreham Congregational Church. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to: Homeward Bound, Addison County Humane Society, 236 Boardman Street, Middlebury, VT 05753, or Shoreham Congregational Church, P.O. Box 177, Shoreham, VT. 05770. ♦

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 and 11 a.m. on Friday for Monday's paper. Email obits@addisonindependent.com or call 802-388-4944 for more information.

Boil order

(Continued from Page 3A)

or carelessness.

BOTTLED WATER

Drinkable water may be obtained 24/7 at the Middlebury Police Department at 1 Lucius Shaw Lane. For those under a boil water order or those without water, bottled water is now available at the police department. The water bottles contain 5 gallons of water and weigh about 40 pounds. Stop at the lobby window and you will be directed to the garage where the water is stored.

You may also bring your own container and fill it at the police station.

You can also bring your own container to the Department of Public Works on Route 7 South during work hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

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"The town understands the incident has caused a great deal of inconvenience to our citizens, and we thank them for their continued patience as our crews work to repair the unprecedented number of breaks and leaks," Hanley said. "Water conservation remains integral to the town's ability to manage this situation and your cooperation is greatly appreciated."

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Steele

(Continued from Page 1A)

is spoken. “It was an incredible experience,” Steele said during a recent interview. “It was very refreshing.”

Steele’s trip — which spanned September through December last year — was made possible through her selection as a Fulbright Distinguished Teacher for 2022-2023, one of only 20 educators nationwide. Steele’s husband, Mike, and their three children (ages 8-13), also made the trip.

She’s already penned a research paper about her trip, titled, “De-centering French: How Moroccan Education is Diverging from France and Creating More Culturally Responsive Curriculum.” She’s going to use her research and experiences to create a more diverse French curriculum, one that recognizes that French language is rooted far beyond Champs Elysees and Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

Steele’s research paper can be found online at bit.ly/Steele-Fulbright.

Morocco, on the northwest edge of Africa, was a French protectorate from 1912-1956. That relationship was preceded by violent French military campaigns against the nation, for which its citizens continue to resent their erstwhile invaders.

That resentment, according to Steele, was on frequent display during her stay.

“There are a lot of feelings toward the French. When I would start a conversation in French, there were assumptions about me being French,” she said, alluding to a frosty reception. But if she engaged a Moroccan in Arabic, she said she got a completely different, warmer response.

French language continues to be a staple language in Moroccan schools and government, but is losing traction among the masses, according to Steele.

“English is spoken more by the younger generation. If I got a younger cab driver who knew I was American, he would immediately switch to English,” she said.

Moroccan students begin learning English in grade 7, according to Steele. Children pick up additional English skills through the internet and film imports.

“They’re interested (in English) and don’t want to learn French, for a variety of reasons,” she said. “English seems more valuable to them in the job market; it’s more international.”

Steele arrived in Morocco expecting to adjust to cultural differences. For example, Morocco is primarily an Islamic country. She had prepared to occasionally wear a hijab — a traditional head scarf that women are expected to wear in some Muslim countries. But she found the hijab to be optional in Morocco, so she didn’t wear one. And since non-Muslims weren’t allowed into Mosques, Steele didn’t encounter other religious dictates.

Islamic culture in Morocco is clearly less restrictive and less patriarchal than in other Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Steele learned.

She and her family saw the “Barbie” movie there in the theater. Women pursue careers outside of the home.



MICHELLE STEELE, AN MUHS French teacher, got the most out of her Fulbright research in Morocco. Here, she chats with a local man over a cup of hot mint tea, a ubiquitous refreshment in the North African country.

Photo courtesy of Michelle Steele

Per Islamic tradition, there was a “call to prayer” five times per day, and Steele would plan her days around it. But she found no animosity for not being Muslim.

Her experience shattered many stereotypes that had emerged in the U.S. regarding Islam following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

“I went there to be open-minded, for it to be a learning experience. I have to say I learned so much, and it really changed my whole world view, and my view of Islam,” she said. “It was really transformative, how open minded, welcoming and educated everyone was there. And what an important part of daily life the religion is.”

She found Moroccans had a genuine affection for Americans. She was proudly reminded, on several occasions, that Morocco became the fledgling United States’ first ally in 1777. That’s when the North African country offered U.S. ships unfettered access to its waters.

LAID-BACK SOCIETY
Steele smiled as she spoke of the “reverse culture shock” she’s experienced since her return to the faster-paced, colder setting of the U.S., compared to the warmer, more-laid-back society she’d just left.

“Things happen on a different time scale in Morocco,” she joked. Each school she visited provided her with the same welcome: A sit-down conversation with the person in charge, always accompanied by a cup of super-hot mint tea.

“They serve the tea extra hot on purpose, so that you have to sit and chat and chat while it cools down,” she noted.

That long tradition of socializing is even more apparent come 4 p.m., when the Moroccan streetside cafes begin teeming with people talking politics, sports and an infinite number of other subjects while lingering over a hot beverage. Or a game of Pachisi.

Steele didn’t even have to leave Morocco to witness the cultural

juxtaposition with a typical, frenetic day at a U.S. school system.

“I visited the American Academy in Casablanca, to make a connection with an International Baccalaureate school while I was there, and it was hilarious,” she said. “I didn’t meet the principal, no one gave me tea or cookies, they just shoved me in a class, and it was ‘go, go, go’ all day.”

Morocco’s culture of socializing forced Steele to come out of her shell, and for the most part, she was glad she did.

“In the U.S., I was used to doing a lot by email and text; this was not the case (in Morocco),” she said. “You talk to your cab driver, your produce guy, your general store guy. You stop and have conversations; people are curious.”

And that curiosity only grew when they found out Steele spoke fluent French and some Arabic.

She spoke of a gregarious Uber driver who kept inviting the Steele clan to his house for dinner.

“They want your life story everywhere you go,” she said, confessing there were times she wished she could have simply ordered her groceries online to avoid lengthy conversations after a long day.

“That was a big adjustment.”

The Steeles became big fans of North African cuisine. Couscous. Zaalouk. Tfaya. Fresh meats, vegetables and spices cooked in a tagine — a traditional simmering pot.

“The food in Morocco is incredible. Everything is very fresh and local,” she said. “The food was so healthy and just about everything is made by hand.”

Including garments. Steele’s attire for this interview included a beautiful, multicolored Moroccan scarf.

“I bought clothes that didn’t have tags. They were made on the sewing machine in the market,” she said.

The Steeles’ three children went to a private Moroccan school,

“I learned so much, and it really changed my whole world view, and my view of Islam. It was really transformative.”

— Michelle Steele

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)

early release of students that day to make sure kids are well positioned for the once-in-a-lifetime celestial event. Parts of the seven-town district will be in total darkness around 3:30 that afternoon, with locals and tourists expected to jockey for the best vantage points. Ripton Elementary School Librarian Mel O’Neill is leading the way in partnership with colleagues across ACSD schools to plan fun eclipse activities for PreK-12 students leading up to the eclipse. More details to come.

The *Independent* is compiling a list of eclipse-related activities to be offered by local groups, businesses, clubs and schools. If you have an eclipse gathering to promote, please inform us at news@addisonindependent.com.

Hey Bristol residents: Your own Lawrence Memorial Library invites you to partake in its 2024 bookmark design contest to celebrate and show your love for LML. To enter, collect a bookmark template at the library or download it via the link below. Create to your heart’s content and be sure to drop off your entries at the library by the end of this month. Winning bookmarks will be printed and shared with patrons during the months to follow. To learn more and to print the template: tinyurl.com/mr3j7nu.

The 8th annual Indoor Yard Sale to benefit the Brendon P. Cousino Med47 Foundation will be held at the New Haven Town Hall at 78 North St. on Friday, Feb. 23, from 2-7 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 24, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be an abundance of treasure from which to choose — something for everyone. This is always a well-organized event, featuring clean, gently used items. Customers get the added satisfaction of knowing that 100% of the money they laid out for their purchases will support Med47 Foundation’s goal of awarding thousands of dollars for scholarships to area tech students and supporting area rescue squads and first-

responders. The foundation also organizes and stages the “Haunted Forest” in Bristol as another top fundraiser. For more information contact Cindy at med47foundation@gmail.com or 802-233-8334.

A meeting to organize Pollinator Pathways groups in Starksboro and Bristol will take place on Monday, March 4, at 4 p.m. at the Starksboro Library off Route 116. This initial meeting will be about getting acquainted and hearing attendees’ concerns and ideas for how to move forward. Are there subjects you’d like to study? Projects you’d like to undertake? All ideas will be welcomed. Children of attendees are welcome to read books and play with toys at the library during the meeting. Registration for the meeting isn’t essential, but organizers want an idea of how many might show up. Declare your interest at margigregory@gmail.com.

Attention Isley Public Library patrons: Did you know that in addition to books and other items, you have access to free and discount museum passes to local museums and recreation spots? And you can reserve them for free at tinyurl.com/28mtx32n. All you need is your Isley Public Library card. The library has just added a new pass to Wonderfeet Kids’ Museum in Rutland. Other pass partners include Billings Farm & Museum, the ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, the Henry Sheldon Museum, the Makery at Patricia Hannaford Career Center, the Shelburne Museum and Vermont State Parks.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have risen 4.2 cents per gallon during the past week to \$3.24, according to GasBuddy. Prices are 5.4 cents higher than a month ago and 23.9 cents lower than a year ago. The cheapest station in Vermont: \$2.93; the most expensive: \$3.39. Meanwhile, the national average price has risen 8.7 cents to \$3.26 — up 16.7 cents from a month ago, down 11.6 cents from a year ago.

ADDISON COUNTY School News Briefs

With GPAs of 3.4 or better, four local students were named to the dean’s list at Rochester Institute of Technology for the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year. They include: Addison Mayhew and Griffin Paradee, both of Bristol;

Will Larocque of Salisbury; and Reilly Lawson of Vergennes. Mayhew and Paradee are in the new media design program. Larocque is studying computer engineering and Lawson is studying game design and development.

EARL G. BOOSKA
February 19, 1984 -
February 19, 2024

Daddy,
It’s been 40 years since we lost you but it seems like just yesterday. We miss you and love you more than you’ll ever know. You’re in our thoughts all the time.
We love you,
Your Family



Bristol cop resigns following remarks

BRISTOL — A law enforcement officer with ties to Addison County has resigned from his post at the Bristol Police Department and other agencies in the state following remarks he made during a Vermont Criminal Justice Council meeting on Feb. 7.

During the meeting, Michael Major, who formerly represented the Vermont Police Association on the council, was heard making

disparaging comments in reference to a migrant worker who was testifying in support of proposed changes to a fair and impartial policing policy.

Major resigned from the council during the public meeting and afterward called Bristol Police Chief Bruce Nason with his resignation. According to Nason, Major was hired to the department in March 2020 as a part-time police officer for

patrol and worked a couple of shifts with the force in 2023.

Nason told the *Independent* via email that “Major’s comments do not reflect the views of the Bristol Police Department or the officers that seek to make the Bristol community safe and welcoming to all.”

Major has also resigned from his post as a deputy sheriff with the Chittenden County Sheriff’s Department.



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Lincoln

(Continued from Page 1A)

Joe Martell, Ken Stockman and Bern Terry are seeking the three-year seat being vacated by Finger. Amanda Allen is running unopposed to fill Jackson's two-year seat.

The remaining year of a three-year seat vacated by former Selectman Alan Schmidt in August will also appear on the March 5 ballot. Victor Atkins II and Brett Bassett are running to finish out the term.

The *Independent* posed questions to all of the Lincoln candidates to learn more about their candidacy, prior experience and plans for how they'd serve the town if elected. Responses from Stockman, Allen, Atkins, Terry and Martell are printed below.

Comments from Bassett were not available as the *Independent* went to press.

1. Tell us about your background.

Terry: I majored in Economics at Middlebury College. During that time, I volunteered as a Big Brother and raised funds for United Way. I've worked for 30 years in healthy aging and eldercare. I represented Addison County with the Center on Aging at UVM for 10 years, and now serve on the board of HOPE. My wife Katie Shepherd has lived in Lincoln since 1998.

Atkins: I am a 46-year-old

lifetime Lincoln resident. I am a fifth-generation Atkins to grow up on our little farm. My kids are the 6th. I'm currently self-employed there. We make maple syrup, raise beef and pork.

I left my job as a maintenance manager three years ago in May to try to pursue my dream of making my living on our farm. I have no experience in civil service to date but with ambition and a commonsense type approach to things I hope to be able to serve the town of Lincoln in a positive manner. I'd consider myself a conservative with a frugal mindset.

Stockman: I am a relatively new Lincolnite, moving with my wife, Maria, to South Lincoln in 2021. Professionally, I have been a strategy consultant and Global Talent Development Leader with IBM since 2004. Prior to IBM, I was a global marketing and product development professional with several private and public organizations and my own marketing consulting firm.

Maria and I have five "adult" kids and four grandsons — with one more on the way! In my down time and depending on the season, I enjoy skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing, hunting, boating, gardening, "playing" on my excavator or tractor, or walking around South Lincoln with Maria.

I currently serve as board



AMANDA ALLEN



BERN TERRY



VICTOR ATKINS II



KEN STOCKMAN

president for the United Way of Addison County and membership director on the board of the Vermont Association for Talent Development. When called, I also help with set construction for the Middlebury Community Players and the Opera Company of Middlebury.

Martell: I've lived here in Lincoln most all my life. I worked in the town of Middlebury for a few years. I drive a school bus here in Lincoln.

Allen: I moved to Lincoln about eight years ago from Harpers Ferry, W.Va., where I managed a recreational outfitter. I began my career there as a white water river guide and spent over 10 years cultivating and leading teams, developing internal systems, managing change, representing company interests to local authorities, and coordinating large expansion projects.

I've always had an entrepreneurial spirit and being a part of the growth of that business challenged me to be creative and helped me refine my leadership and communication skills. When I moved to Vermont I took my leadership and project management skills to local nonprofits. I'm focused on communications, detailed planning, systems thinking, and continuous improvement. I currently work from home where I live with my husband and six-year-old. I have a Regents Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in painting and art education from Shepherd University.

2. Why run for town office?

Atkins: My motivation to run

for selectboard comes from being asked by several individuals.

Stockman: My desire to join the Lincoln selectboard is rooted in my lifelong volunteer spirit and my firm belief that government of the people and by the people is the finest ideal for making life more tolerable and productive for all.

For most of us, our day-to-day connection to government is not at the federal level at all, but at the local level where we seek to ensure that daily life reflects our values, morals, principles, and dreams. The more I've come to realize this over the last few decades of my life, the more I have sought to plug in and contribute to community service. With my tenure in the United Way ending in the spring of 2025, I feel it is time to begin shifting my focus from community welfare to community action.

Martell: My concern, the reason I'm running, is due to our roads. Our roads are in very bad shape.

Allen: When I first moved to Lincoln I was immediately interested in becoming involved locally as a way to meet people and learn about the community, but I took some time to start my family and get settled in. After seeing our town clerk share concern about the lack of candidates for our local positions in the Front Porch Forum, I decided it's time! I'm now in a place where I feel confident I can participate in a meaningful way. I know that I have skills and experience that could be beneficial to our local efforts and I'm excited to share them.

Terry: I did not seriously consider running until I found out

we had three open positions and very few candidates. This seemed like a great opportunity to serve so I jumped in to give back to the community that has been my home for the past 16 years.

3. What are the most pressing issues Lincoln faces?

Stockman: Like most small towns in rural America, I believe Lincoln's most pressing issues are survival and societal sustainability. Whether it's K-12 education, safety, communication, or infrastructure, surviving means battling the negative forces of rural decline and population shifts by building resilient and accommodating communities that resist these forces as best as possible.

Sustainability, as I see it, means maintaining relevance in the lives of the families that live here from generation to generation. When communities become unsustainable, their character, essence, or draw begins to fade. The uniqueness of Lincoln lies in its location, its people, and its unmistakable sense of individuality and independence. Surviving means bolstering all the qualities that have kept families here for generations while attracting new families that support that independent energy.

Martell: When we lost our road crew, the last few years it's been a one man show and it's too much for one man. We've got to get our crew back. I've been here most of my life and this is the worst I've seen.

It's more than a one-man job. We have one man, and we have some part-time help coming in and with part-time help, it's costing us

a fortune.

Allen: Lincoln is going through a lot of change right now. There are folks with historical knowledge transitioning out of important town roles and new voices are coming in. Managing change is difficult and it's important to have thoughtful leaders engaged. It's also important to make Lincoln an affordable and enjoyable place to live for people and families in all stages of life.

Terry: I do not have a pre-set agenda, but the most pressing issues I hear about when speaking with Lincoln friends and neighbors are: our budget/taxes, our Highway Department/roads, our school, the work of our Planning Commission, and the possible need for a professional town administrator.

Atkins: Town issues I hear about: We (the town) can't hire anyone to work with the road foreman. Aging infrastructure without a solid plan in place to be replaced. Taxes that are pushing young and old out of the town. Concern about our school and its budget, funding, etc.

4. How would you help the town address those issues?

Martell: If we can get a crew back here, we can get our roads back to what they were. I know that if I get on the board, with the power of pushing everybody and helping everybody and getting people behind us we can get back to where we were.

It's not a one-man deal. It's going to take the whole town to help get there, but I know we can do it.

Allen: I will advocate for clear, timely communication, transparency in processes, and

(See Issues, Page 9A)

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Addison

(Continued from Page 1A)

including three incumbents.

Board Chairman Roger Waterman drew four opponents for a two-year term: retired nurse Elizabeth Armstrong, pig farmer and kiln-dried firewood marketer Ethan Gevry, Agency of Transportation worker Geoffrey Grant, and Michael Hollis, an artist and former employee of Apple and Gap Inc.

Incumbent Jeffrey Kauffman has one challenger for three more years: Eliza Spencer, a consultant for a firm that handles federal contracts who is now also helping upgrade the town's website.

Incumbent Peter Briggs is being challenged the self-employed Levi Barrett for a one-year seat.

Due to an error in the 2022 town report, Briggs should have been on the 2023 ballot for two years. With advice from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the selectboard decided to create a one-time, one-year term to allow the town to return to its normal election rotation of two- and three-year terms in the future.

The *Independent* asked all the Addison candidates to reply to the same five questions/prompts. Last week we published responses from Armstrong, Barrett, Briggs, Grant and Hollis. This week, Waterman, Spencer, Kauffman and Gevry have their say.

Prompts and responses follow:

1. Please tell us about yourself.

GEVRY: I have lived in Addison almost 28 years, I'm a fourth generation Addison resident. I am a member of the Addison Volunteer Fire Department and have been for 12 years. I also served on the Addison Planning Commission. I own and operate two businesses in Addison, the first being Champlain Valley Farm, raising natural pigs as well as harvesting and selling hay. My second business is Gevry Firewood LLC, which I own and operate with my father. We sell kiln-dried firewood in our immediate area and across the Northeast.

KAUFFMAN: My wife Carol and I have lived in Addison since 1997. We have counted it a privilege to raise our eight children here and be part of this wonderful community. I am bi-vocational, have been in the ministry since 1984, and currently work as a manager of a Curtis Lumber location. I have been on the board over 20 years, and during that time (by default as the board chair) have served as the Zoning Administrator, Town Health Officer and Animal Control Officer. I worked at the school for a number of years as a substitute teacher, a classroom teacher and finally as the custodian. During my years at the school we realized significant savings on utilities and became an Energy-Star rated building for four consecutive years. I believe my experience there will be an asset with the town's recent acquisition of the building.

SPENCER: I grew up in Addison, went to Addison Central and Vergennes Union High School before attending college and graduate school out of state. I moved back to Addison a year ago and have enjoyed reconnecting with the wonderful community we have. I have master's degrees in Business Administration and Public Administration. I work remotely as a senior manager for a consulting firm and manage multi-million-dollar government contracts, mostly serving the Department of Veterans Affairs. I also serve on the board of a Vermont-based arts organization, have volunteered with other community organizations, and am currently managing the town of Addison website redesign along with the town clerk and assistant town clerk.

WATERMAN: I moved into Addison in 1996. I've lived in Addison County my whole life. I've been in farming or the farming industry my whole life. My wife and I on our own milked cows for 14 years (until 2007), and then we milked goats for four years. I worked for Bourdeau Brothers from 2007 to September of last year. I just recently started my own business. I'm doing some property maintenance, some mechanical work, basically plying the skills I gained along the way. I've served on the selectboard two different times. In the early 2000s the town asked me to fill out the term of a lady who was leaving. And I was elected and served another term. Fifteen years later the town was short a selectboard member, and I filled out somebody's term. I've

won another couple terms.

2. Why run for the selectboard?

KAUFFMAN: I am running for another term because I am excited about the things happening in town and want to see them through to completion. We are currently in the process of refurbishing the Town Hall, planning uses for the school, completing a rewrite of the zoning regs and the town plan by the Planning Commission.

SPENCER: Service to community runs in my family. Both of my grandparents served in the Vermont legislature, and my grandmother was the first woman elected to the selectboard in Addison. When I moved back to town, I started attending selectboard and DRB meetings because I was interested in learning about what was happening in town and had a personal interest in the Addison Town Hall project. I saw how important it was for meetings to be prepared in advance and efficiently run, and how they present an opportunity for dialogue with citizens. Meetings should accommodate respectful disagreement and open and transparent communication about town affairs. I decided to run because I want to improve communication, collaboration, and respect for the work everyone is doing for our town.

WATERMAN: I feel I have some projects I'd like to complete, but it's up to the voters to decide. This service to the town is because I love the town. My kids have flown the coop. It gives me something I feel I do a good job at. If this door remains open and I can continue to serve, great. If the door closes, it's not going to be the end of me.

GEVRY: I decided to run for a position on the selectboard because I love my town and want to continue to see it thrive in years to come, I also feel being younger I can provide new and helpful insight as a member of the board. I have a passion as well for being involved in town government and providing to my community.

3. What qualities would make you a good selectboard member?

SPENCER: I like to lead with kindness and empathy, and with respect for the work each person is contributing towards shared goals. My professional work experience directly applies to the work of the selectboard: managing teams and budgets, and providing fiscal responsibility to the public. I also have a background in communications, and I want to use that experience to better communicate to and with the town. This includes building the town website to be informative and accessible, with available meeting agendas and minutes for all boards and committees, and timely notifications of town events. This way everyone can be aware of what their tax dollars are supporting.

WATERMAN: I'm fairly conservative. I feel I can see both sides of an argument. And really the most important part is I don't have an agenda. The job of a selectman is pretty easy if you run it through the filter of what the townspeople told you to do. And they tell you that every Town Meeting Day when they pass the budget — this is what



ETHAN GEVRY



JEFF KAUFFMAN



ELIZA SPENCER



ROGER WATERMAN

we want done. You can't overlay your own wishes on top of what the town wants you to do.

GEVRY: I have several good qualities that would make me a good selectboard member. I'm a people person through and through. I like being able to assist people and talk with people. Being a business owner in a service-based industry, I have a knack for dealing with people and issues that might arise. I have the ability to look at a situation, listen to what's involved and come up with a solution that works for all parties. I also am in town full time, so I can be available to assist with things that a selectman would be needed for during the work day.

KAUFFMAN: I believe I bring experience, stability, creativity and transparency to the board. During my tenure we have successfully navigated some lingering issues with outside-the-box thinking (i.e. Tri-Town Water agreement with Tri-Town Road, gaining title to the town hall, Country Club Road, reserve funds for equipment replacement and a vigorous truck replacement program).

4. What issues do you feel particularly strongly about?

WATERMAN: There are things that should get done whether I'm in office or not, and they should get done right. Some of the criticism of the selectboard is because people don't realize how long it takes to get something done when it's got to be run through all kinds of filters. The town of Addison has a lot going on. For instance, a year ago we voted on having a website. We contracted with a company that came highly recommended by citizens, and after six months of non-performance we went with someone else. Are people upset that we didn't get this done? Yes, but we thought we had it taken care of. We're moving forward. We're getting it right. On the Town Hall I think we're making progress. Are we making progress as fast as people want? I think some people think we're going too fast, and some people think we're not going fast enough. On the school building we jumped through all kinds of environmental testing to try and get liability protection and it took an extra year. Again, if it had been me steering the ship, it could have been done with a snap of a finger. But the voters said this is what we want, and that's what we did.

GEVRY: Issues I feel particularly strong about are making sure our tax dollars are being put to good use for the needs of the town, but also making sure the people of the town are in support of the things that are done and needed. I also feel that the preservation of our town is huge not only so Addison stays Addison, but also so my kids

and my kids' kids can live here and enjoy it the same way I did and be proud to be from Addison.

KAUFFMAN: I feel strongly about financial accountability and keeping taxes as low as possible by responsible budgeting. I want to see all townspeople have the highest possible use of their property, and all property owners treated equally and fairly. With the new Community (former school) Building, I look forward to the community using the building for game nights, craft sales, dinners. I believe we have great opportunity for business to blossom. My experience at the school and knowledge of the building will be called upon as the recently appointed manager of the school building.

SPENCER: I'm particularly interested in ensuring that the Town Hall project proceeds, both preserving the history of the building and providing a space for town offices and for the community to come together. The town voted and approved a design for the Town Hall and that vote needs to be respected. I'm also interested in the former school building. While the town now owns the building, we need to make sure we have all the information about the safety of the building, the cost, and put together several researched plans before we move forward with the building.

Nothing should be done without communicating the ideas, benefits, and risks to the town.

Additionally, I am interested in our zoning laws and town plan. As a person who recently moved back to Addison who is looking for housing, our current zoning laws and plans do not leave many options to build more housing for new Addison residents. As a selectboard member, I'd like to work with the Planning Commission to ensure that our town has opportunities to grow.

5. Why should Addison residents vote for you?

WATERMAN: I'm not as much concerned about that as much as Addison residents get out and cast their votes. People forget democracy is a show up and participate system. On electronic devices from the comfort of their own home they can fire off things that sometimes seem not very positive. Sometimes they seem very lopsided. Those same people will not show up ... so walk the walk, talk the talk, show up and vote.

SPENCER: I love Addison and have felt embraced by the community. I bring skills and experiences that directly apply to municipal government; I am a clear communicator, have a strong work ethic, and I commit to doing a job well. I have a deep respect for the community I have chosen to make my home. It is a beautiful

town, and I want to help ensure it's a great place to live for a long time. I want to serve the town and its residents, foster community, and drive increased communications. I see so many opportunities for the town and can't wait to get started if elected.

You can contact me directly at Eliza4Addison@gmail.com.

GEVRY: Addison residents should cast their vote for me because I'm an eighth-generation Addison resident who has strong ties to the community and has community involvement. Also as a taxpayer in Addison and a member of our community I want to make sure the taxpayers in the town

of Addison are happy with the decisions of the selectboard. I know how to run a successful business, and that comes into play with the town making smart business decisions as a town to help keep taxes at a reasonable point. Being that I'm 27 years old I have years and years left to be a service to the town and my neighbors, and I feel that my knowledge I possess would be beneficial to the town.

KAUFFMAN: I've appreciated the confidence of the voters of Addison, and, if re-elected, I will continue to balance the "will of the people" and the "confines of the Law." I'll continue to work hard, listen well and act ethically.

Issues

(Continued from Page 8A)

appropriate feedback loops. I'll use my experience, skills, and passion to help identify, inform and organize initiatives.

Terry: I would listen to Lincoln residents and learn from experienced members of our selectboard. I would work to understand and respect varying opinions about the issues facing our town. I would enjoy discussing town issues with Lincoln residents, and explaining the pros and cons of selectboard decisions.

Atkins: I'm sure if elected I'll learn of more issues. To help address issues I'll educate myself on the facts and approach issues with a common sense proactive mindset to create progress the town can be proud of.

Stockman: I still have much to learn about Lincoln but what I bring to the party is years of experience as a consultant, manager, and leader with a honed ability to collaborate with people to get stuff done. I will leverage this experience to identify needs, options, and solutions and endorse those that provide the greatest perceived value.

I have become adept at listening first, thinking second, and speaking last. My father used to say, "You have two ears and one mouth, so you should be listening twice as much as you speak." These words have guided my success in consulting and what I hope to bring to the Lincoln selectboard.

I am motivated to jump in and get to work — physically, if and where necessary. I hope to model behavior by pacesetting then using democratic principles to ensure that all people feel heard and considered.

5. Anything else to share?

Allen: While I'm not a native to Lincoln or Vermont, I've poured a lot of love into my little piece of this town. This is the "better life"

I've always dreamed of for myself and my family. It would be an honor to help make life better for others in Lincoln too.

Terry: We are a small community with many needs, and limited financial resources. I like to listen, learn, build consensus and to make informed decisions. My approach to the selectboard would be to manage with care, and to serve our community without imposing my beliefs or opinions.

Atkins: Most town residents know me or my family, our morals and work ethics. We have been a mainstay in the town for generations. I look forward to working with the rest of the selectboard members if elected.

Stockman: I believe in the idea of a "Return on Community Investment" (ROCI) as a measure of community performance that is just as rigorous as Return on Investment (ROI) as a measure of stock or retirement fund performance. As "investors" in our community (through time, service, money, or sweat equity), we should collectively expect a return on that investment in the form of quality of life, community capacity, social equity and inclusion, and financial impact. And for people who seek to live out the rest of their lives in the community, this ROCI can be as important as the ROI they hope to see in their Social Security accounts or our 401Ks.

A positive return means that we're managing our "account" appropriately, or engaging people who can seek out positive returns versus letting our investments dwindle from lack of attention. It is this outcome that prompts my involvement.

Martell: At this point, that's the only issue I want to really talk about, is to get our roads back the way they used to be and to get them safe for everyone.

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Ilsley

(Continued from Page 1A)

Ilsley officials are confident can be raised — \$6 million through private contributions, \$2 million through state and federal grants and \$55,000 through private foundation money.

That would leave around \$4.5 million for Middlebury property taxpayers to absorb for the \$16.4 million library makeover.

A 20-year, \$4.5 million bond would add \$117 annually for the owner of a \$300,000 home in Middlebury. In the case of a 30-year bond, it would be \$98 annually for the same homeowner.

"I've been struggling with asking taxpayers to pay too much, and we struggle with that each year," selectboard Chair Brian Carpenter said during a Feb. 13 board meeting, at which the panel OK'd the final design, pricing and a May 7 vote date for the Ilsley project.

"Sometimes, good ideas fall out of the sky."

And good library news apparently comes in twos.

The National Bank of Middlebury has offered the Ilsley rent-free use of the first floor of its Duclos building at 30 Main St. during library construction, should voters OK the project (see related story).

"I think you've stunned the crowd, because you've stunned me," Selectman Dan Brown told Carpenter following disclosure of the latest library project news. "This is fabulous."

It should be noted that while Middlebury voters face the prospect of "only" paying \$4.5 million of the total \$16.4 million price tag, they'll still have to endorse the entire amount at the May 7 bond vote. That's the way bond banks do business, officials explained — towns are on the hook for the full cost of the bond regardless of where they expect to get the money. The payback, however, would reflect

the lighter, \$4.5 million toll on Middlebury taxpayers.

Also significant: The town won't initiate a bond issue unless or until Ilsley boosters secure the needed grants and have pledges in place for the \$6 million in private donations.

The latest good financial news makes the project look much more attainable than just a few months ago, supporters acknowledged. The \$16.4 million price tag appeared daunting — especially in light of an expected big increase in education property tax requests to fund the fiscal year 2025 Addison Central School District budget.

GENESIS OF AN IDEA

So Carpenter, Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay and Ilsley backers recently conferred on ideas to lower the Ilsley project tax toll. They noted the proposed Ilsley budget for FY'25 already includes \$280,000 for "library repairs," should the construction bond fail on May 7.

They asked themselves: What if the town plugged that same \$280,000 into the budget on an annual basis, but used it for debt service on a better library rather than just stopgap for repairs for the Ilsley to limp along until a project could be passed?

"I really feel it's reasonable to look at that," Carpenter said.

The group did some number crunching and found that a \$4 million bond would cover the \$280,000 annual debt service payments for the 20–30-year span of the project payback.

The performance of the local option tax, or LOT, makes selectboard members confident there'll be more than enough surplus to pay off the Cross Street Bridge, finance occasional public works projects and take care of \$4 million in debt for the Ilsley makeover.

For example, during FY'22, the LOT yielded \$1,271,580.

Add that to the \$600,000 annual college gift contribution, and there was a total of \$1,871,580 to cover \$941,097 in Cross Street Bridge obligations that year. This left around \$930,000 in surplus, of which the town dedicated \$622,706 to local capital projects. The remaining \$307,000 was deposited in the LOT surplus fund, which has accrued to more than \$2 million.

Carpenter estimates the LOT revenue will conservatively increase at 2% per year, while debt service on the bridge project will continue to decline.

The Ilsley is among the three most-used (per capita) libraries in Vermont. It has increasingly earned a following among residents in neighboring communities. Weybridge in March will vote on whether to finance 2024-2025 Ilsley memberships for its citizens, in the absence of a local library.

The broader use of the Ilsley has fueled Middlebury officials' resolve to broaden the facility's financial support.

"It's the greater community paying for resources that are in the shire town," Carpenter said of the local option tax rationale. "It's a fair way and the only way that we have for the greater community to support the resources."

Joe McVeigh, an Ilsley Library trustee and member of the organization's project team, was thrilled with the potential local option tax assistance.

"I am delighted that it appears we will be able to build the library that Middlebury deserves while managing to reduce the burden on taxpayers to a manageable amount," he said. "Ultimately, taxpayers would be getting a wonderful building but essentially paying for only about one quarter of the cost. A wonderful solution."

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

Bank offers temporary home to library

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The National Bank of Middlebury (NBM) has for the past 193 years been a very popular place for people to make financial withdrawals and deposits.

Early next year, a portion of the NBM's 30 Main Street headquarters could also become a temporary place for the withdrawal and deposit of books.

NBM President Caroline Carpenter has invited Ilsley Public Library to temporarily relocate its public facing operations — rent-free — to the first floor of the bank's historic Duclos building, at the intersection of Main Street and Printer's Alley. This roughly 4,000-square-foot space would allow the Ilsley to continue offering its core services — including access to a limited collection, public computers, free WiFi, and gathering/study spaces for adults and children — during a potential major renovation and expansion of the library's current headquarters at 75 Main Street.

The NBM offer is contingent on Middlebury residents backing the proposed Ilsley Library renovation project at the ballot box on May 7. And thanks to fundraising, grants and the possibility of support through Middlebury's local option tax revenues, local property taxpayers' share of the estimated \$16.4 million project is likely to be less than 50% of the total (see related story on Page 1A).

"We are pleased and supportive. We obviously believe in the mission of a library and are pleased to be able to offer space so close by — still on Main Street, still in the heart of the community. I'm glad we have the space," Carpenter told the *Independent*.

"What a great use for that building, to have it be the temporary library."

Officials said the library's temporary relocation to the Duclos building would likely begin in early 2025 and conclude during the summer of 2026, once the Ilsley makeover has wrapped.

Library Director Dana Hart expressed gratitude to NBM for its offer, which would allow continuity of services during construction.

"It's an awesome space. It's big, open and light-filled. It's not going to take much work at all to make that a fantastic library," Hart told selectboard members at a recent gathering.

She noted Ilsley project liaison Judith Harris has already mocked up a tentative floor plan to see if library operations could proceed in the Duclos building. The answer, at this point, is "yes."

NBM's unanimous offer solves what only a few months ago remained a daunting challenge for Ilsley officials: How to accommodate the library's considerable assets and functions somewhere in or near downtown for around 18 months while the current building was out of commission.

The NBM's offer checks virtually all the boxes.

"And this is great news from a cost-saving standpoint, because the space is being donated," Hart added.

A draft "letter of intent" between the town and NBM spells out



THE ILSLEY LIBRARY could take up temporary residence in the first floor of the National Bank of Middlebury's Duclos building beginning next year.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

major provisions of the agreement. Among them:

- The bank would provide the first-floor space, a library office (on the first or second floor of the building), an outdoor book-drop, handicap access through the teller lobby during bank hours and through the basement entry and elevator outside of bank hours, and occasional use of the basement-level meeting room.

- The town would need to cover the costs of work required to prepare the Duclos building for library occupancy; moving and installing library furniture into/out of the Duclos building; utilities, including electricity, gas and water during occupancy; insurance; and any repairs required to bring the space back to its original state.

Plans call for the selectboard to consider the letter of intent at its next meeting, on Thursday, Feb. 29, according to Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay.

Hart anticipates there would be only two or three library staff in the Duclos building on any given day. Staff not scheduled to be in the building would work remotely.

"We are well prepared to do this after the pandemic," she said of off-site operations, that can include purchasing books, planning programs, and answering reference questions.

"I do not anticipate needing to furlough employees, although we will likely use fewer substitute hours," Hart said.

STORAGE SPACE

While the Duclos spot would be of enormous help, Hart continues to search for a storage space for

the majority of the Ilsley's physical collection.

"Ideally, we would find a storage space where we are able to setup shelves," she said. "In this scenario, patrons could still request books, and a librarian could go and collect books from the storage space. Otherwise, we will have to pack the books up in boxes for storage, in which case we wouldn't have access during the relocation period."

Regardless, Hart said the Ilsley would rely heavily on interlibrary loan to augment its collection during the relocation period.

"We will also be encouraging library patrons to take advantage of Homecard, a program that allows Ilsley patrons to borrow books from the public libraries in Bristol, New Haven and Vergennes, among many others," she said.

The Sarah Partridge branch library in East Middlebury would also play a larger role in library operations during the relocation period, according to Hart.

"It is possible we might open the branch library for more hours each week, or move some portion of our collection there," she said.

But for now, Ilsley project boosters are pleased to have a safety net of temporary library space, pending a positive May 7 vote on the project.

"As word of this project gets out, our community partners are really starting to step up and want to know what they can do to support us," Hart said. "We're very grateful to the bank for offering this; it's huge."

Reporter John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



"It's an awesome space. It's big, open and light-filled. It's not going to take much work at all to make that a fantastic library."

— Library Director Dana Hart

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Mt. Abe

(Continued from Page 1A)
our goal, we need to partner with our community.”

Some MAUSD community members have expressed their appreciation for district officials’ efforts to organize the book study and related initiatives, and said they hope such work continues in the district moving forward.

“This study group is an opportunity for face-to-face rich discussions and connections to be made. These conversations will not only create awareness within our schools, they will also naturally ripple out into the community providing more opportunities for thoughtful discussions about how creating an anti-racist culture benefits all children, white, black and brown,” Bristol resident Deb Merriman told the *Independent*. “My hope is that there is recognition that this work is a process, not a one-time activity, so that efforts will be carried on next year and beyond.”

MARCH BOOK STUDY

Pettis collaborated with Robinson Elementary School Principal Edorah Frazer and Bristol Elementary School Assistant Principal Anne McKinney to organize the book study.

She said the team chose to center the study around “How to Raise an Antiracist” due to the many takeaways Kendi offers for parents, teachers and other readers. The book blends Kendi’s experiences as a Black father and scholar, exploring how systemic racism shows up in various stages of a child’s development and how to talk with them about it.

“He speaks from both the views of a parent and also consideration for how to do the same in schools. We thought there were so many learning targets that we could pull from this book for everyone,” Pettis said.

Participants will get a chance to discuss the book and antiracist work in the district at two book study sessions on March 4 and 18. Both sessions will be held at Bristol Elementary School from 3:30-5:30 p.m. and will offer a Zoom participation option.

Pettis noted that a major focus of these sessions will be discussing ways to continue addressing racism in the district, asking participants to reflect on how the book resonates with their position in the learning community and how they might help support future antiracist efforts.

“We’re really leaning into the ‘so what.’ So, we’re going to have these conversations now, and then how can we make sure this work moves forward and is continued,” she explained.

Pettis said the book study is intended to expand on MAUSD’s goals related to equity and bring more of the community into that work. She noted the effort ties into the transferable skills the district established for its students, as well as objectives outlined in MAUSD’s strategic plan.

The plan, enacted in 2019, includes an equity goal that “all MAUSD students will learn in equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive environments,” as well as specific objectives and actions to realize that goal.

“We’re always thinking of ways to promote this work, our strategic plan has wonderful goals related to equity, and we’re in the process of working on that now. This (book study group) felt like a great way to start building capacity in and outside of school,” Pettis said. “We wanted to partner with the community because we have our students a lot of the time but they’re also outside in the community a lot of the time, so the change really needs to happen there as well.”

CONTINUING THE WORK

Pettis added that district staff have also been exploring ways to promote conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion with MAUSD students. The instructional coordinator has worked with collaborators to design monthly lesson plans for the elementary schools that relate to transferable skills and center around picture books about race.

District staff and community members have also been looking at ways to start similar conversations with students at Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School, such as by screening the Vermont-based musical film “Listen Up,” which explores the experiences and issues of teenagers throughout the state. It touches on racial and social justice

and the reality of being a Black person in Vermont.

“We all are working together on how we can continue this work and build it into a momentum of education,” Pettis said.

Some community members said they are encouraged by MAUSD staff’s efforts to tackle racism in the district through the book study and related programs, particularly in the wake of a couple of racist incidents involving students at Bristol Elementary.

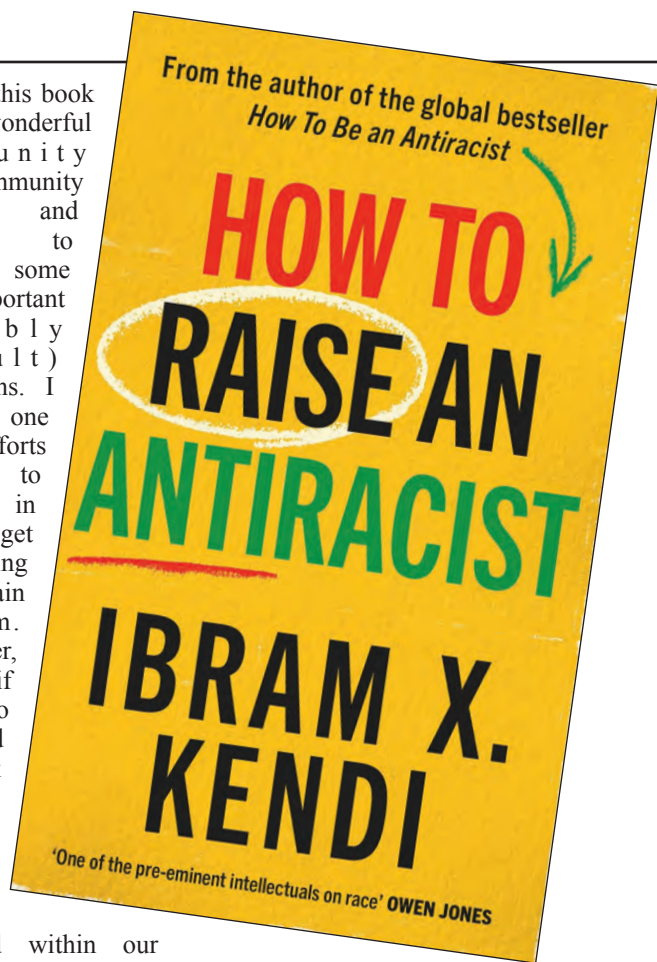
This past December, nearly 100 community members turned out at an MAUSD board meeting, asking district officials to implement antiracist education for teachers and staff and curriculum for students after a student at BES was called a racial slur.

Nakeeya Deas, a local educator and mother of the student at whom the racial epithet was directed, was among those to address district officials at the meeting. In a recent email exchange with the *Independent*, she acknowledged the overwhelming support community members demonstrated in advocating for the implementation of antiracist education in December, as well as the work that some district staff have done to further those efforts in the months since.

Deas appreciates the upcoming book study and said she hopes to see additional, long-term efforts to address racism continue in the district.

“To me, this book group is a wonderful opportunity for community members and educators to have some really important (possibly difficult) conversations. I see this as one of many efforts that need to happen in order to get the ball rolling and gain momentum. I do wonder, however, if those who have joined this book group are those who already support this great need within our curriculum,” she said.

“While I appreciate the platform to hold really important conversations about race, I’m concerned that this could feel much like a pacifier for those of us who are asking for this bigger change. My main objective is to help create something that powers through the changing of the guards, something that surpasses the test of a school year or teacher contract. I



tolerant, kind, informed adults that we would hope for them to become,” she said. “I can say this, this issue of racism is here and it is real. I have received emails from community members who have said that this is the most racist place they have ever lived, that they were dismissed when they asked one of our district schools to deal with racist issues towards their child, that they are scared to have their child enter the school system, that they themselves have experienced the trauma of racism within our district, that their children have felt that there wasn’t a place for them here within our town.

To these community members, I reach out my arms and tell them that this is not the case. There is a community and district for all of us, and we will do the work to make sure that this is so.”

Elissa Cobb, a Bristol resident and member of the school district’s Community Engagement Committee, echoed Deas’s sentiment. She said she is encouraged by the action taken by district staff to create an antiracist culture and underscored the need for such efforts.

“In our culture that centers whiteness in all areas of academics, we must uncover and come to reckon with the horrific harms done to people of color in our country. We must also come to realize the ways in which white-bodied people have also been harmed by racism. In an

educational system, steeped in white-body supremacy, we white-bodied people have unknowingly traded our humanity for pieces of un-earned advantage,” she told the *Independent*.

Cobb added that she hopes this work continues in the years to come.

“Due to the structure of the school year that essentially ends in May and gets off the ground in October, I have found that the good attempts to keep the momentum of anti-racist work at the forefront of our school’s awareness often fails. Each fall we ‘start over,’ often with new staff and always with new kids. Each spring we run out of enough time to realize the fruits of our intentions. And then there is summer, and everything stops,” she said. “My other hope is that we can find a way to keep the momentum of anti-racist actions going continually via trainings for teachers and staff — those who will be the space holders for anti-racism to emerge and fully bloom in our schools.”

Merriman also noted the role of teacher training in ensuring antiracist work continues.

“For this continuity to happen teacher training is essential so that our emerging anti-racist culture is given enough support to foster the discussions, the respect and inclusiveness that will emerge within our schools. It’s really a win-win for all,” she said.

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While learning about soil health, ag and natural resource students have been establishing shrubland habitat for endangered birds.

FFA Week celebrates Ag students

By Hailey Chase, Middlebury FFA Chapter Historian, & Brailey Livingston, Middlebury FFA Chapter Reporter

Middlebury FFA Chapter is a student-led organization focused on developing young leaders. Our chapter mission this term is to educate and recruit young students through our first Discovery Chapter at Middlebury Union Middle School.

National FFA Week, Feb. 17-24, is all about highlighting and promoting our organization. Our chapter is doing just that through social media and giving back to our community, starting with our first responders. We will be making cookies this week and delivering them to the people who help keep our communities safe.

Here is what our FFA advisors have to say about what they've been doing so far this year.

"In **Mechanical Science** at the Hannaford Career Center, we have FFA mini chapters for each of the four pretech sections. Students have been practicing FFA opening and closing ceremonies and understanding Robert's Rules of Order.

We participated in the Hannaford Career Center syrup sale and raised money to pay student dues and put a little extra in the coffers for future projects. We are also pulling together a bluebird house building project for Middlebury Union

Middle School students in late February to introduce 30 students to the FFA and Mechanical Science.

Look for our student's FFA shirts around town at local businesses during the weeks ahead.

— Hayden Thomsen

On Feb. 14, **FFA state officers** visited with Diesel 1 and Sustainable Ag students at Hannaford Career Center. Officers spoke about SAEs (supervised agricultural experiences) and state and national competitions. After a game of "Would you Rather," it was decided that Cummins engines were the popular choice vs Power Stroke engines!

— Gretchen Cotell

Sustainable Agriculture students have been busy! There has been participation at the annual meeting and internships with farmer members of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition. Many thanks to local businesses that have worked with students through the Cooperative Education program: Cutting Hill Beef Company; Bristol Animal Hospital; Valley Wide Veterinary Services; Dr. Rebecca Allen, DVM; Tup's Crossing Dairy Goat Farm' and Middlebrook Equine.

We're raising a flock of mixed-breed laying hens, and a small herd of Boer-cross meat goats with kids expected to be born in April. The

goat meat is sold in cooperation with Smith Family Meats in New Haven.

Seniors are happy to report admissions to colleges are rolling in! All qualifying students will receive three dual enrollment credits in Livestock Production at Vermont State University, Randolph. Some of the college admissions so far are:

- SUNY Cobleskill, in New York:
- Emma Derringer-Beef & Livestock Production, Alexis Holbrook-Duval-Animal Sciences, Elaina Sheldrick-Dairy Production & Management, Maci Forgues-Beef & Livestock Production and Gabriella Currier-Dairy Production & Management.
- Community College of Vermont:
- Shyanne Wedge-Early Childhood Education
- Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa:
- Elaina Sheldrick-Agricultural Sciences

— Kelley Mills

The **Introduction to Agriculture** class at the Hannaford Career Center took third place at the state FFA the Dairy Foods Competition this year. This class covers many topics in agriculture, from food production and dairy science, to maple syrup



production and equine science. The **Natural Resource Management** class at Hannaford has been selling logs from a forestry project to make money for its FFA chapter. In cooperation with the Audubon Society, the class has also been establishing shrubland habitat for the endangered Golden Winged Warbler.

— Aaron Townshend

Diesel Technology students have been troubleshooting how to take an engine out of a bus. With the challenges of tight spacing, but with plenty of ingenuity, the students have figured out that instead of pulling the engine out of the bus, it is more efficient to pull

(See FFA, Page 13A)

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Diesel Tech students figure out how to take an engine out of a bus.



Cutting Hill Beef Company has worked with students in the cooperative ed program.

FFA

(Continued from Page 13A)

the bus body off of the engine!
 Another example of how our kids learn came when diesel student Isaac Preston took an oil sample out of his truck to have it diagnosed at an oil analysis laboratory, giving him insights into what contaminants are present in his oil, and the possible causes of contamination.

— Gretchen Cotell

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The Natural Resource Management class has been selling logs from a forestry project to make money for their FFA chapter.

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'Working Bees'

(Continued from Page 1A) The grassroots agroecological movements of South and Central America. Similar to how worker bees help carry out essential tasks within beehives, participants in ACORN's working bee brigades volunteer their time to complete large or needed jobs on farms.

When exploring possible activities for the Farmer Climate Network, ACORN staff found there was enthusiasm for bringing the working bee structure to the Champlain Valley. "We were thinking of what we wanted our main events to be, and first we were talking about educational events. We threw around educational seminars," Krugman said. "We talked to (local

farmers) and they said, 'We're sick of going to informational events and seminars, we want to do something different; what if we assembled groups to do projects on farms?'"

The nonprofit began brainstorming ideas for working bee projects with local growers this past October at its kickoff event for the Farmers Climate Network. ACORN has received grant funding from the Vermont Council on Rural Development to support the offering through May.

BOUNDBROOK PROJECT

ACORN held its first working bee session this past Sunday at Boundbrook Farm, an organic duck and rice operation in Ferrisburgh. The

Boundbrook Farm team uses a Japanese farming method known as aigamo, in which ducks are introduced to rice paddies to help with fertilization and weed control.

More recently, the farm has been experimenting with growing and processing soybeans to make value-added products like miso and soy sauce.

"Soybeans are commonly grown in Vermont, but this is a special variety of multi-purpose soybeans that we got from Japan," farmer Erik Andrus said of the new endeavor. "As far as I know, these soybeans that we're harvesting are the only ones of this type in North America."

Volunteers on Sunday helped Andrus and farm assistant Zack

Pittel thresh, filter and bag over 40 pounds of soybeans grown at the farm.

Andrus said the soybeans processed this weekend will be used to experiment with recipes for value-added products.

"We're interested in things that would complement our rice business. We already do rice and ducks, so now we're thinking about things like miso and soy sauce that would involve soybeans," he said. "This gives us a little bit to play around with to see what we could do in a culinary way to make those types of products."

Andrus said help from the working bee brigade provided a boost to the farm team as it explores incorporating more soybean cultivation into its operations.

"For right now, this is just something that we tried out in the garden and are processing by hand," he said. "We grew more than we could process by hand ourselves, but not enough to justify equipment purchase yet. Worker bees helps us get that 50-pound bag filled so that we can have enough soybeans to try."

FUTURE TASKS

In addition to helping farmers, Krugman said ACORN is hopeful the working bee brigades will boast benefits for volunteers, such as by connecting participants with local growers.

"ACORN is so positive about getting folks out on farms. Our biggest fundraiser, The Tour de Farms, is all about that, getting folks who might not be as engaged in the food system more energized and have more of an understanding of what really goes on at farms," she said. "That

"We're thinking about things like miso and soy sauce that would involve soybeans. This gives us a little bit to play around with to see what we could do in a culinary way to make those types of products."

— farmer Erik Andrus

"We talked to (local farmers) and they said, 'We're sick of going to informational events and seminars, we want to do something different; what if we assembled groups to do projects on farms?'"

— Lilah Krugman

Bobcat in Cornwall tests positive for avian flu

CORNWALL — A bobcat and two red-tailed hawks found dead in Cornwall recently have tested positive for highly pathogenic avian influenza or HPAI, according to preliminary lab results shared with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department on Feb. 15.

Results of a confirmatory second test take several weeks.

HPAI has been circulating in Vermont since 2022 and has been reported in wild birds including hawks and eagles as well as domestic fowl. The bobcat that tested positive this month is the first detection of HPAI virus in a mammal from Vermont. HPAI is uncommon in mammals, however, there have been HPAI detections in mammals in many other states including Connecticut, Maine, and New York.

Although mammals infected with HPAI are always of interest to wildlife officials, the risk to people from HPAI viruses remains low according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Our recommendations to Vermonters are the same as they've been since HPAI was first detected in our state — mainly, to avoid direct contact with wild birds," said David Sausville, Wildlife Management Program manager with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. "Observe wild birds only from a distance and practice good hygiene around domestic fowl. Practice good biosecurity by keeping domestic fowl and other pets away from areas where wild birds gather, like bird feeding stations or duck ponds."

Officials continue to monitor bird and other wildlife deaths that show signs consistent with possible HPAI infection. More information on best practices around wild birds are available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website. More information for domestic fowl owners is available from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.



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Sewing Lab: Participants can create with fabrics and fibers using our sewing machines, cutting tables, and notions.

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

Games Lab: Magic: The Gathering. This game is a fantasy-themed trading card game that requires critical thinking and strategy.

SIX WEEK CLASS - Begins March 7th

CNC plasma/Welding: Metal sculpture of your choosing or build a small table base, then try the woodshop out and build a wooden top for your table. The legs will be designed in Fusion 360 and provided as a template. Students can add their own twist onto the legs - name, initials, or some other 2d graphic. Students would then cut the parts with the CNC plasma. This will be followed by a series of welding lessons, and eventually, welding the table bases together. Lastly, a small wooden tabletop can be made in the woodshop. For students not interested in making a table, your instructor will help you make a metal sculpture.

Man cited for DUI, third offense

MIDDLEBURY

— Middlebury police cited Richard J. Murray, 57, of Middlebury for driving under the influence, third offense, following a traffic stop on Weybridge Street on Feb. 15. Police said they measured Murray's blood-alcohol level at 0.198% — which is more than twice the 0.08 legal limit for driving in Vermont.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Helped with the safe return of an elderly resident to their Woodbridge Lane family on Feb. 12.
- Served a no-trespass order on a man who was not wanted at a Court Street address on Feb. 12.
- Assisted a local resident on Feb. 12 who was concerned about "disparaging paperwork" left at her last place of employment.
- Tended to a "student issue" at Middlebury Union High School on Feb. 12.
- Assisted staff with a student at Mary Hogan Elementary School on

Middlebury Police Log

- Feb. 12.
 - Assisted a parent who on Feb. 12 expressed concern their son might be experiencing a mental health crisis.
 - Received a complaint about the use of a drone in the South Street Extension area on Feb. 14.
 - Cited Henry S. Romp, 32, of Middlebury for driving with a criminally suspended license on Seminary Street on Feb. 14.
 - Investigated a report of a potential domestic abuse case in the Jackson Lane area on Feb. 15.
 - Collected, for analysis and safe disposal, suspected illicit drugs found in the North Pleasant Street area on Feb. 15.
 - Responded to a noise complaint at 30 South Village Green at around 12:38 a.m. on Feb. 15.
 - Responded to a report of a domestic argument at an Elm Street home on Feb. 16.
 - Responded to a noise complaint in the Court Street Extension area on Feb. 16.

- Helped with a bank fraud-related investigation in the Lower Foote Street area on Feb. 16.
- Investigated what police described as "multiple thefts" from vehicles parked in the Porter Hospital lot on Feb. 16. Police said they subsequently learned the suspects had been using a stolen vehicle, which has been recovered. Police offered no further details at this time.
- Spoke on Feb. 16 with a resident who had asked for advice about a relationship.
- Enforced the town's overnight winter parking ban downtown on Feb. 16.
- Assisted a resident in the McIntyre Lane area who complained of an idling tractor-trailer truck filling their home with fumes on Feb. 18.
- Helped resolve a domestic dispute at a Case Street residence on Feb. 19.
- Responded to a call about a woman allegedly in distress at a South Village Green apartment on Feb. 19.

Vergennes Police Log

VERGENNES — Vergennes a busy week between Feb. 12 and 18, police dealt with a variety of cases in including a problematic convenience

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For Middlebury Selectboard

I am a proud Middlebury business owner of the Dollar Market for the past 28 years, where I can be found most days with my wife, Amtul. It has been an honor serving on the Middlebury selectboard since 2018. We have seen many challenges and changes over the last 6 years, but I am grateful to have been at the table finding solutions and ensuring people are cared for and respected. I also serve as a board member for the Better Middlebury Partnership, Ilsley 100 and MCTV, and am a member of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee.

My main goals for the town include:

1. Supporting a thriving business community with strong retail;
2. Promoting transparency in town leadership and maintaining open channels of communication for all;
3. Working to provide safe streets and schools.

Please feel free to send any concerns or advice you might have for me to: fkhan63@icloud.com

store customer, a parent who wouldn't cooperate with authorities seeking information on a child, a resident on the sex offender registry who is allegedly not complying with its requirements, a city resident violating conditions of release, and an intruder caught on video after hours at a local business.

During those seven days Vergennes police also went out on 10 patrols by cruiser and one on foot, conducted 16 traffic stops, processed four pre-employment fingerprint requests, conducted one pre-employment background check, responded to a false alarm, and:

- On Feb. 12:
 - Took a report of a lost or stolen wallet.
 - Were told by a local dentist of a patient with possible anger issues making his staff uncomfortable.
 - Took a report of a minor one-car accident in the Collins Aerospace parking lot.
- On Feb. 13 went to an Armory Lane apartment to request a parent contact Vergennes Union Elementary School about her child.



Ceasefire

JOANNA COLWELL, ABOVE left, and Margie Beckoff hold a banner with a clear message in front of a group of fellow citizens demonstrating in Court Square in front of the Middlebury Inn on the afternoon of Feb. 15. Around a dozen Vermonters gathered at the busy intersection to draw attention to the dire emergency unfolding in Gaza, as people forced to flee their homes and seek safety in the city of Rafah are now in mortal danger from bombing by Israel, with U.S. funding. Demonstrators came from the groups Extinction Rebellion, Middlebury Showing Up for Racial Justice, Jewish Voice for Peace, and the Vermont Coalition for Palestinian Liberation.

Independent photos/Steve James

- On Feb. 14:
 - Took a report of damage to a parked vehicle from an unknown hit-and-run driver.
 - Cited Kori Martell, 32, of Vergennes for violating a curfew provision of his conditions of release.
 - Cited Ronald Rial Jr., 50, of Vergennes for failing to complete sex offender registry paperwork.
- On Feb. 15:
 - Documented the first of three voicemails during the week from a Hillside Drive resident who police say is experiencing mental health challenges, but is declining help.
 - Attempted to serve a relief-from-abuse order on behalf of St. Albans

- police, but learned the subject no longer lived at the city address provided.
- Attempted to serve a relief-from-abuse order on behalf of New Hampshire judicial authorities to a Valley Vista rehab facility patient, but learned she was no longer at the facility.
- Checked an unfounded report of a Black male going through vehicles in the Kinney Drug Store parking lot.
- On Feb. 16:
 - Took a report from a Vergennes Animal Hospital stakeholder that someone had entered the building after hours and then left when he realized there were security cameras.

- Police said the incident is under investigation.
- Contacted an Armory Lane resident whose phone was shut off and who had failed to show up for a regularly scheduled medical appointment. Police told her to call her doctor's office.
- On Feb. 17 heard from a Champlain Farms convenience store employee that a patron had invaded her personal space and taken an alcoholic beverage from a cooler and started drinking it in the store, leaving only when the cashier started dialing 9-1-1. Police said the incident is under investigation.

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Middlebury

(Continued from Page 1A)

and capital improvement funding are forever pressing. With continually escalating costs for equipment and construction, health insurance, etc. the town needs to redouble its efforts to manage and trim expenditures, while strategically and creatively finding ways to fund the major capital projects on the horizon.

A current example is the creative proposal for funding the Ilsley Library project, by bonding with part of our local option tax revenues. Together with securing the Ilsley Project 100's terrific donor and grant funding, this will, hopefully, make the net \$4M-\$4.5M property-tax funded portion feel affordable to the voters in the May bond vote.

We will need yet more resolve, creativity and alternative funding sources for the projects ahead... our leaky water system... wastewater treatment plant improvements... a new Public Works facility... realigning Charles Ave./Monroe St./ Court St. to a more efficient 4-way intersection... many streets needing paving or reconstruction... increased storm frequency and intensity, requiring flood protection measures and stormwater system improvements for capacity and better filtering treatment...

To tackle the important non-bond-vote issues, including affordable housing... homelessness... energy conservation and initiatives related to climate change, the board should continue to rally the brain power and wonderful caring of Middlebury's citizens.

Forbes: I strongly believe our current housing dilemma has been difficult to hire and retain trade workers within our community due to the lack of affordable housing. We need to clearly identify where housing can be built and make it efficient and affordable for housing developers, and for the younger working class of our future. Being in my profession of construction and concrete, I've noticed multiple housing and development projects in our surrounding towns far exceed what Middlebury has been doing.

Khan: Continuing to upgrade and improve our aging infrastructure so that the town continues to provide the quality of services that its residents expect.

Last year's incessant rain and the recent breakdown due to a surge in the Town water system disrupted service to several neighborhoods. Our aging infrastructure needs to be examined and addressed. A big thanks to our town staff for working long hours during this crisis. Increasing housing opportunities, especially for the workforce segment of the population should be a priority. The current housing difficulties make it troublesome for employers to get and retain a workforce. We need to clearly identify where housing can be built and streamline and expedite the process so that housing developers can construct new housing. As we look at neighboring towns we see more new construction housing activity and we need to lead on this issue, not follow. The growing unsheltered population also is



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FARHAD KHAN

of great concern. Our less fortunate neighbors need resources to get them out of this situation. In response to this scenario, The town has appointed a Middlebury Homelessness task force. We should also be considerate to local businesses that have been gravely impacted by this situation.

2. After the Ilsley Library project, what is the next major capital item to do?

Khan: The wastewater treatment plant and the public works building should be next in line for the capital project. The wastewater treatment plant is approaching its design life and we have to stay ahead of this. That will however largely be funded by the water and sewer fees. The other and last remaining of the public inventory buildings that needs attention is the public works building. It is operationally inefficient, uses an above-normal amount of energy, and does not adequately safeguard the town's vehicle inventory and other

equipment, which includes mission critical vehicles such as snowplows.

Forbes: Over the past 20 years the town had replaced or significantly improved most of the main public buildings including the police and fire stations, town office and recreation building. This has resulted in greater efficiency and operational cost savings, including decreased energy use. The last remaining building that needs attention is the public works building. It is operationally inefficient, uses an above normal amount of energy and does not adequately safeguard the towns vehicle inventory that included mission critical vehicles such as snowplows. For example, if an accidental fire happened at the same time a snowstorm was approaching, plows could be damaged and unable to clear roads. Looking into the future, the wastewater treatment plant is another important building that must be soon upgraded.

Dunnington: Next on the list was to be improvements to our wastewater treatment plant, however, the water system problems could be "bursting" ahead! With the unusual water hammer situation and 18+ water breaks, with water conservation pleas and boil water orders in multiple locations, with the Water Department valiantly working to keep sufficient water in the reservoir, for our daily usage and, critically, for fire protection... water system improvements cumulatively are emerging as the next major item.

The town needs to continue to maintain its ability to keep making progress on our planned capital projects as well as the emergency ones.

3. Should the local option tax be perpetuated after the 30-year Cross Street Bridge payback?

Forbes: This tax revenue has benefited Middlebury taxpayers by gaining revenue from the neighboring

towns that use our services but are not a part of Middlebury's property tax base. The extra revenue from the local option tax has allowed capital improvement projects to proceed with reduced tax increases for local taxpayers. This may also provide a way to partially finance capital improvements including the library and public works projects. It may also be used to pay for some of the infrastructure in new neighborhoods so that housing costs can be kept as low as possible. This will allow families to stay in Middlebury and send their children to Middlebury schools, reducing the per-pupil cost. We may not be supportive of additional taxes, but the local option tax is one that has a benefit to Middlebury.

Khan: I am in favor of continuing to generate funds through the local option tax. For one, the 1 cent tax is collected from everyone who shops in Middlebury, not just Middlebury residents. The revenue from this has seen a healthy growth over the years. Revenues have outpaced debt service historically. Surplus in bridge-related funding is used and should continue to be used to help pay for other municipal infrastructure needs.

Dunnington: Absolutely! Our 1% local option tax is spread over a large base with proven resiliency through recessions. Besides funding Cross St. Bridge debt service and its maintenance reserve, voters have used the strong revenues for several capital improvements... And, it is calculated to have capacity to fund a key portion of the library project. Considering ability to pay, at 10 cents per \$10 purchase, the local option tax seems easier than property tax; payers include the region and visitors, appropriately, given Middlebury's role as a regional center. For offsetting and reducing property taxes, I would vote for a second percent.

4. What makes you a good choice to serve on the selectboard?

Khan: I have been a Middlebury resident for 28 years and have been on the selectboard for over seven years. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me. I am blessed to serve with six wonderful, hardworking and thoughtful colleagues.

I believe I am the right candidate. I own a small business, hence I have an opportunity to communicate and interact with many folks who offer comments, suggestions and criticism. I listen to a segment that otherwise might feel unrepresented.

Being a longtime resident, I feel that I must give back to the community that has been a home to us.

As a small businessperson, I am passionate about the health of our local business community. A thriving business community is an essential part of a healthy economy. Middlebury has experienced some very challenging times during COVID as well as rail/bridge construction. Thanks to some tireless efforts of our town staff, selectboard and everyone involved, we now have a beautiful and thriving downtown.

I am excited to be a part of the upcoming Ilsley Library renovation project. Our community and our future generations deserve a better facility.

Dunnington: I'm nearing 50 years of public service in Vermont local government. From 1981-2013 I served as town planner; I am still aglow from working with the team and the community to achieve the Cross Street Bridge. After 2013 retirement, I have continued volunteering on town archives. I have gathered a useful knowledge of Middlebury in all those years of working with dedicated prior and current board members, town managers and employees, and so many residents, business owners and citizens of the greater Middlebury area. I bring my knowledge, experience, connections and love of Middlebury to this new opportunity to serve.

Forbes: My family & I are a local business who understands the difficulties that housing shortages present to our workers. I have 30 years of experience with heavy equipment and trucks and will bring a great perspective on this. I have also served on the board several years ago and I feel like I made a tremendous impact on my time served. Finally, I have raised kids in this town and want them to have the opportunities to stay where their home is and not have to leave the area, like so many other of our kids have had to do, because there are not opportunities for them.

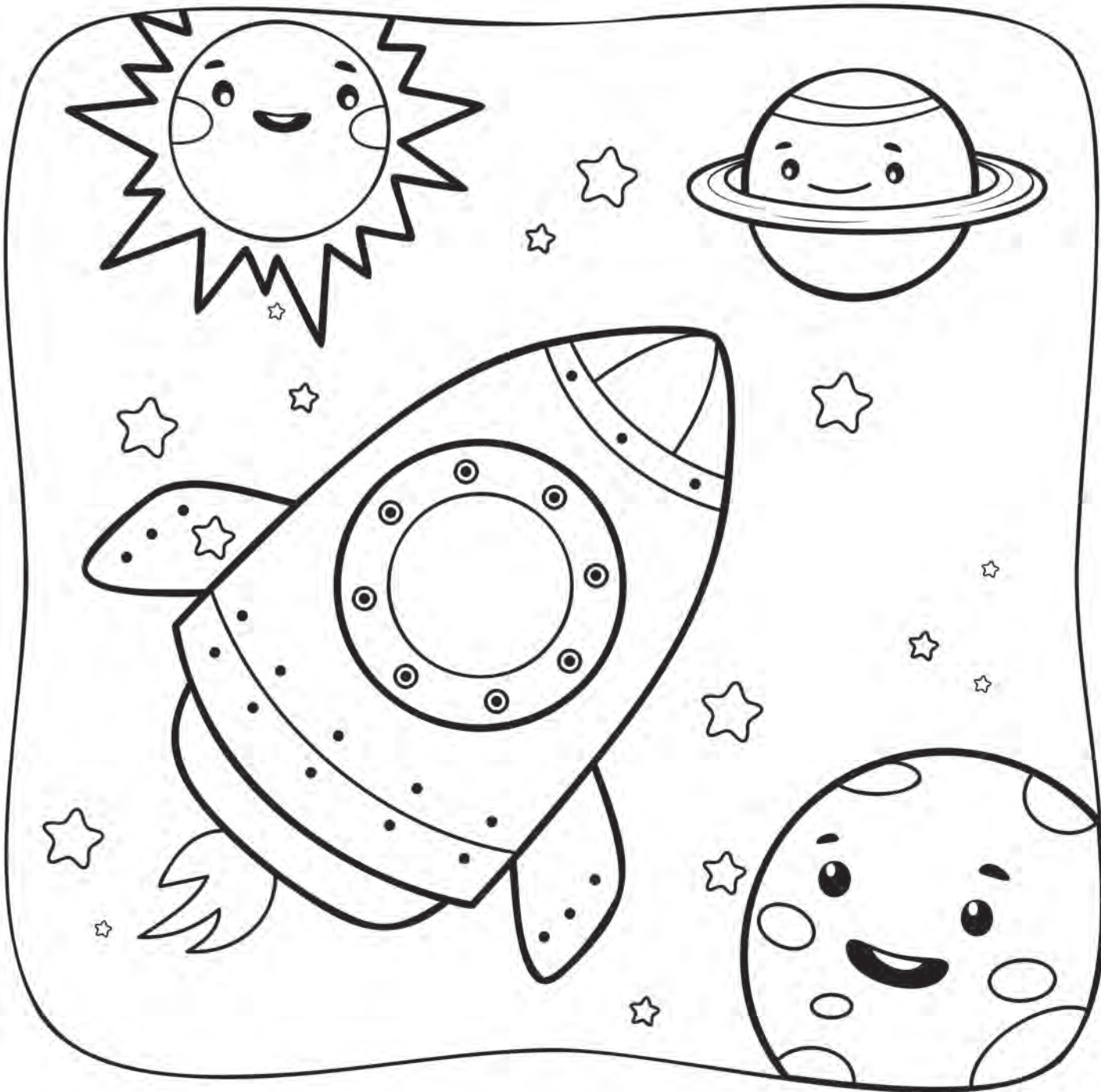
Winter 2024 Cosmic Coloring & Decorating Contest

Escape the snowy winter landscape and embark on an interstellar journey through the depths of space as we invite you to unleash your creativity in our cosmic coloring extravaganza!

Gather your crayons, markers, colored pencils, and glitter to explore the infinite possibilities of space and showcase your artistic abilities. Submit your out-of-this-world masterpiece before **Monday, March 18th**:

- **Online at** addisonindependent.com/contests
- **By Email** to contests@addisonindependent.com
- **By Mail** to Addison Independent, 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753

Feel free to tear out this coloring page, photocopy it, or go to our website for a printable version. Winners will be announced in the March 21st edition of the *Addison Independent*. Two winners from each age group will win a prize from one of our sponsors that can be picked up at the Addy Indy office through April 25th.



Name: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian's name: _____

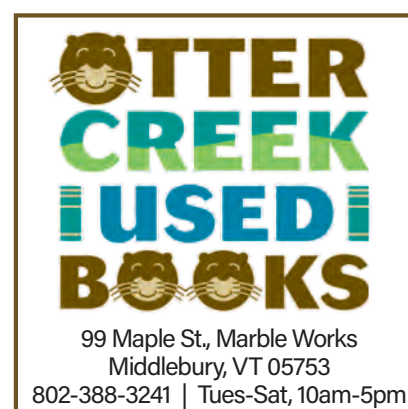
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EAGLE JUNIOR GUARD Hayden Lutz goes up for a layup during Tuesday's first-round playoff game at Otter Valley.
Independent photo/Steve James

OV boys ground Eagles in D-II match

Stingy defense keys Otters in first-round rubber match with Mount Abe

By ANDY KIRKALDY

BRANDON — There were good reasons to expect a competitive first-round Division II boys' basketball playoff matchup on Tuesday between host No. 6 Otter Valley and No. 11. Mount Abraham.

The 12-8 Otters had dropped five of their past seven games entering the playoffs. Meanwhile, the 8-12 Eagles had won three straight, including a victory over Middlebury, which recently upset the Otters. And the Eagles and Otters had split two games in the regular season.

But there were signs right from the start that Tuesday would be the Otters' night — their defense forced five turnovers in the first two minutes. The Otters weren't capitalizing at the other end, however, and a low-scoring first quarter ended with OV up by just 7-5.

Then in the second quarter the

roof of the gym known in Brandon as The House of Noise fell in on the Eagles. In those eight minutes the swarming Otters forced eight turnovers and 10 transition points. They outscored Mount Abe by 26-11 and took a 33-16 lead on the way to a 67-44 victory.

Turnovers were a huge part of the story: The Eagles committed 27, eight in each of the first two quarters, to 10 for the Otters. Coach Mike Stark deployed his speedy Otters in man-to-man and zone defenses in the halfcourt, a fullcourt press, and a halfcourt trap, all of which were effective.

"We didn't want them (Mount Abe) to get any kind of momentum.

So when you go from a zone press to a match-up man it's hard for them to figure out," Stark said. "Our team is pretty versatile one through 12. We can all guard the same guy, so we're able to switch a lot of things and have a lot of different guys cover."

Even though the first period was close in the scorebook, Stark said the Otters had set

the tone. "We talked in pregame that we had to have a strong start. We couldn't come out slow and give these guys any kind of hope," Stark said. "We thrive on momentum. It's our defense first, and our defense turns into transition baskets."

Mount Abe Coach Martin Clark credited the Otters and their packed blue-and-white bleachers.

"They played strong, strong and with confidence. Of course, they've got a great home crowd," Clark said.

For his team, it was just one of those nights.

"We made mistakes, and we can't make mistakes in big games," Clark said. "The ball was not going in for us either."

Still, after a Lucas Politano three-pointer made it 7-1 for the Otters with 2:30 left in the opening quarter, the Eagles did respond with a pair of buckets by senior forward Ian Funke in the paint to make it a two-point game. And their halfcourt man-to-man defense was certainly respectable in the period.

But the Otters opened the second period with a Connor Denis drive for two, and three consecutive fast-

(See Hoops, Page 4B)

Women's hoop advances in postseason

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The fourth-seeded Middlebury College women's basketball pulled away from visiting No. 5 Amherst in the fourth quarter of Saturday's NESCAC quarterfinal to prevail, 59-48. The Panthers thus advanced to this coming weekend's NESCAC final four at top-seeded Bowdoin.

Middlebury (17-8) will take on Bowdoin, at 23-2 the No. 11 team in NCAA Division III, at 2 p.m. Saturday. Second seed Trinity (18-6) and third seed Bates (21-4) will square off at 4:30 p.m. Saturday's winners will meet on Sunday at noon for NESCAC title game and the league's automatic NCAA bid. The Panthers' only NESCAC losses have come to those three teams, all in close games.

In Saturday's quarterfinal, Panther junior Alexa Mustafaj scored 18 points and became the program's all-time leading scorer with 1,606 points. She supplanted 1993 graduate Sladja Kovicinaj at the top of the

(See Panthers, Page 2B)



Great performance

THE MUHS DANCERS hit the floor during their Hip Hop routine at the Vermont State Championships in Vergennes on Saturday. The Tigers — Madelyn Brochu, left, Madyson Hutchinson, Autumn Lowell and Jordyn Rushton — were second in Hip Hop and Pom. See a full story and more photos on Page 3B.

Independent photo/Steve James

Boys' hockey awaits seed

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The boys' hockey team from Middlebury Union High School defeated Rutland on the road on Saturday, 5-2. The Tigers improved to 6-11-1 heading into their final regular season game, which was scheduled for this past Wednesday at home vs. Mount Mansfield after the deadline for this edition.

Heading into that Wednesday game it looked like the Tigers were heading for an No. 8 or No. 9 seed in the 10-team Division II field, with pairings set to be announced by the VPA early on Thursday.

The seed possibly hinges on Wednesday's results for MUHS and U-32. A home or away play-in game vs. U-32 on either Friday or Saturday appears to be the most likely outcome.

On this past Saturday the Tigers finished off a season sweep of D-I Rutland, a win sparked by two power-play goals and two shorthanded empty-netters.

Rutland (1-15-3) took the lead early in the opening period with a goal from Greg Olsen. Soon after, Middlebury's Toby Draper equalized on a power play, assisted by Gavin McNulty. With eight seconds left in the period on another power play, Draper made it 2-0, with assists from Iver Anderson and Jordan Schroeder.

Tiger Kellan Bartlett pushed the lead to 3-1 in the second period with a set-up from Draper, and in the third period RHS made it 3-2 on an Ethan Wideawake goal. In the final minute Collins scored the first empty-netter, and Draper added the second, completing a hat trick and the game's scoring.

RHS goalie Noah Bruttomesso made 14 saves, and TJ Baron made 20 saves for the Tigers.

On the previous Wednesday, visiting Colchester edged the Tigers, 4-3, in overtime. Laker Ben Rolston lit the lamp at 1:25 of the extra session, and Miles O'Brien, Colton Lefebvre and Brody Rassel also scored for Colchester. Laker goalie Kieran Phillips made 20 saves.

Draper scored twice for MUHS, and Gus Hodde had the other goal. In the net Casey Calzini made 10 saves.

Enosburg benefits from MUHS girls' off night

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School girls' basketball team had only one win to show for its improved play over the past four games heading into Monday's home tilt with Enosburg, that positive result being away from home against a decent Missisquoi team.

The Tigers had shown well in their setbacks, scoring 43 points in a loss at Division I's third-place team, Rutland; coming up short in overtime at Vergennes despite foul trouble; and most recently losing by two points on the road to a 13-7 Mount Abraham team on Feb. 15.

MUHS Coach Eric Carter said the Tigers have been making progress at both ends of the floor heading into Monday.

"We figured out how to play

defense as a unit, and we started to knock some shots down," he said.

But the Tigers did not stretch that streak of strong outings on Monday, which brought a 56-24 setback to Enosburg, an 11-8 team to which they had lost by nine points on the road on Jan. 27.

Even though the Tigers were shorthanded — junior guard Lexi Whitney is injured, and junior guard/forward Cassidy Brown was out of town — Coach Eric Carter said Monday was basically just one of those nights for his 5-14 team, in part because of the personnel issues.

"That's what I told them after the game last night. Even great teams, and I'm not putting us in the category of a great team, even great teams have games where the wheels come off the bus," Carter said. "We

(See Tigers, Page 3B)



MUHS FRESHMAN GUARD Isabel Quinn goes for the steal against Enosburg's Cam Benoit during Monday's hoop game in Middlebury.

Independent photo/Steve James

Score Board

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Hockey

2/14 Colchester vs MUHS5-0
2/17 Woodstock vs MUHS.....2-0

Boys' Hockey

2/14 Colchester vs MUHS4-3 (OT)
2/17 MUHS vs Rutland5-2
2/21 Mt Mansfield at MUHS.....Late

Boys' Basketball

2/14 VUHS vs Missisquoi62-50
2/14 Mt Abe vs MUHS53-33

2/16 Mt Abe vs VUHS49-41
2/16 Hartford vs OV61-40
2/17 MUHS vs Enosburg55-51

D-II Playoffs

2/20 #6 OV vs #11 Mt. Abe67-44
2/20 #10 Lake Region vs #7 MUHS 40-27

D-III Playoffs

2/21 #12 Springfield at #5 VUHS.....Late

Girls' Basketball

2/15 Mt Abe vs MUHS31-29
2/15 W. Rutland vs OV70-20
2/18 OV vs Mill River51-20
2/19 Enosburg vs MUHS56-24
2/19 Mt Abe vs Milton47-31
2/19 Colchester vs VUHS50-24
2/20 VUHS vs OV60-30

COLLEGE SPORTS

Men's Basketball

NESCAC Quarterfinal
2/17 #4 Tufts vs #5 Midd66-46

Women's Basketball

NESCAC Quarterfinal
2/17 #4 Midd vs #5 Amherst59-48

Men's Hockey

2/16 Hamilton vs Midd4-3
2/17 Amherst vs Midd5-2

Women's Hockey

2/16 Midd vs Hamilton4-3 (OT)
2/17 Hamilton vs Midd1-1

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Hockey

D-II Playoffs TBA

2/23&24 First Round
2/27&28 Quarterfinals

Boys' Hockey

D-II Playoffs TBA

2/23&24 First Round
2/27&28 Quarterfinals

Boys' Basketball

D-II Playoffs

2/24 #6 OV at #3 Harwood 2 PM
2/28 Semifinal in Barre 8:15 PM
3/2 Final in Barre 3:45 PM

D-III Playoffs

2/24 Quarterfinal 7 PM
2/29 Semifinal in Barre 6:30 PM
3/2 Final in Barre 7:30 PM

Girls' Basketball

2/22 VUHS at Milton 7 PM
2/22 Mt Abe at Missisquoi 7 PM
2/22 MUHS at Colchester 7 PM
2/22 OV at Springfield 7 PM
2/24 Stowe at VUHS 11 AM

D-II Playoffs

2/27&28 First Round

D-III Playoffs

2/27&28 First Round

Wrestling

2/23&24 State Meet at OV

Nordic

2/27 State Meet Classic at Rikert
3/1 State Meet Freestyle at Craftsbury

COLLEGE SPORTS

Women's Basketball

NESCAC Final Four at Bowdoin

2/27 #4 Midd vs #1 Bowdoin 2 PM
2/27 #2 Trinity vs #3 Bates 4:30 PM
2/28 Final Noon

Men's Hockey

NESCAC Quarterfinal

2/27 #7 Midd at #2 Bowdoin 4 PM

Women's Hockey

NESCAC Quarterfinal

2/24 #7 Williams at #2 Midd 3 PM

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

Panthers

(Continued from Page 1B)
 leaderboard. Kovicaj finished with her career with 1,602 points.
 Amherst (19-6) led throughout Saturday's first half, when the Panthers struggled to get good looks against the taller Mammoths in their man-to-man defense. The first quarter ended with Amherst on top, 12-7, with Middlebury staying close thanks to five points from guard Calie Messina.
 The Mammoths stretched the lead to 22-11 on a Reeya Patel three-pointer with 4:19 to go in the second period, but the Panthers cut the lead to 26-18 at the half as Messina nailed a three — she was three-for-four from deep — and a jumper, and Mustafaj, who had a quiet half, added her first bucket.
 In the third quarter, the Panthers' "man" defense ratcheted up a notch while the offense gained traction. Jumpers by Augusta Dixon and Messina and then two Mustafaj free throws at 5:13 cut the Amherst lead to 26-24, and the teams traded buckets over the next few minutes.
 The Panthers tied the game at 33-33 with 53 seconds to go

in the period. Messina missed a three-pointer on the right flank, but Bethany Lucey snared the offensive board and whipped it back out to Messina at the same spot behind the arc. Messina fired again and swished the shot.
 Amherst regained the lead with a free throw at 0:36, but Dixon set up a go-ahead Lucey three-pointer as time wound down, and it was 36-34, Middlebury.
 At 8:46 of the fourth Mammoth Kori Barach drove for two, and the game was tied at 36-36. The Panthers answered with a quick 8-1 run. Messina hit a three, and Lucey set up Brooke Collins for a short jumper. Dixon hit a jumper in the lane, from Messina, who fouled and hit the free throw, and it was 44-37 at 7:20.
 Amherst managed a couple buckets, but the Panthers were now on a roll. Mustafaj nailed a three from the top of the key, and baskets by Collins and Mustafaj pushed the Panther lead to 52-42 at 3:57. The Mammoths came no closer than nine the rest of the way.
 Leading the Mammoths were Maya Cwalini, with 16 points;

Barach, with 12; and Patel, with eight points and eight rebounds.
 Messina paced the Panthers with a career-high 19 points. Dixon finished with nine points, including a coast-to-coast ramble for an acrobatic layup after one of her 15 rebounds, and three steals. Lucey contributed five points, five boards and a team-best three assist. Collins scored six, and she and Gabby Stuart were vital cogs in a defense that forced 17 turnovers and held Amherst to 33.3% shooting.
 Coach KJ Krasco noted the Panthers' better job defensively in the second half. The Mammoths shot 44% in the first half before hitting just seven of 29 (24%) from the field after the break.
 "We embraced their physicality in the third and fourth quarters and made it a lot more challenging for them to get open looks," Krasco said.
 Overall, she was pleased with the Panthers' effort and their many contributors.
 "It was a great team win. I feel like we had some people step up and make some big shots, and also just move the basketball. And that's what we've been emphasizing these



PANTHER JUNIOR ALEXIA Mustafaj puts up a shot on Saturday during the Middlebury women's basketball home NESCAC quarterfinal win over Amherst. Mustafaj became the program's all-time leading scorer during the victory. She's scored 1,606 points in less than three years.

Photo by Will Costello

last couple weeks, playing team basketball," Krasco said.
 The Panthers have also improved over the course of the season and have now won 11 of their past 14, with the losses including by three points at home to Bowdoin and two

points at Trinity.
 Krasco explained why. "It's the kids that are part of the program, the work they've put in. They're more committed than any other team that I've coached here," she said. "They love each other. We

love them. I think they're coachable. I think they want it. And they've shown it. Now it's about putting a 40-minute game so we can keep this thing going ...
 "We believe we can beat anyone we play."

Coach's course puts sports and its lessons in context

Mike Leonard and Scott Langerman are friends — friends and colleagues.
 Together, they offered a Winter Term course at Middlebury College this January, "Sports and Society: How Sports Transcend Their Sidelines."
 Both Mike and Scott live in the sports world. They drew on their professional experience and network of associates to present an overview of the complex interplay of sports and American Life. The course had both a pragmatic and subjective dimension. As the course description read:



Sports (Mostly) KARL LINDHOLM

Middlebury in 1987 and earned a law degree from Yale in 1993. He has spent more than 25 years in the sports and entertainment industries. At present, he is the founder and executive vice-president of Hall of Fame Village Media, the content arm of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.
 He and Vicki are the parents of two Middlebury graduates, Jack '19.5 and Jenny '22 (and son Tom will graduate from Vanderbilt this spring).
 Mike's and Scott's Winter Term course was ambitious and highly organized with four broad weekly themes

was blown away by the care and attention both Scott and Coach Leonard brought to the classroom. It was so unpretentious and engaging. We constantly collaborated with our peers and got the opportunity to learn more about one another."
 Sophomore Meg Simon, an economics major and member of the women's ice hockey team, was "inspired" by the visitors to the class and "the diverse array of careers in the sports world beyond those involving coaching and playing."
 Mike was pleased with the way the course went. "There were opportunities for good discussion. Our intent was to form and foster relationships within the class, to help students connect with one another."

playing were not so bright the next year under the new coach, Mike Leonard. Jack was an undersized first baseman and there was competition at his position.
 Mike appreciated Jack's exuberance, his love for baseball, and his natural way with people, so he asked him to remain on the team in a support role. In that role, Jack became crucial: in time Mike named him Director of Baseball Operations.
 "Jack was uniquely gifted at making people feel connected," Mike said. "His strengths were building culture and relationships. He was an integral part of the program. He did everything! He'd hit grounders and pitch BP; he'd look at film, and scout opponents, collect data during games; he'd show recruits the campus."

Middlebury, Jack died in a tragic accident.
 In her letter to the Middlebury College community, President Patton cited Jack's advisor in American Studies, Michael Newbury, who said, "Jack's unguardedness made it easy for you to feel that you knew him well ... that feeling of openness extended into the classroom where his musings had only good effects on the dialogue he was a part of."
 Coach Leonard offered, "Our program would not be what it is today without Jack's influence. He had an ability to bring people together."
 Scott said that it was particularly satisfying to teach the Winter Term course with Mike as "it was a way to connect with Jack by being with one of his role models. Mike was a wonderful influence on him. And it was a wonderful month for Vicki and me — the happiest month we've spent in a long time."

maintained a relationship after that, meeting for coffee or lunch and animated baseball talk.
 That class in 2017 was in the same classroom, coincidentally, where Jack's dad and his coach met their class this year — and where his sister Jenny, who now works for Fenway Sports Group (FSG), made a presentation to the class.
 Scott and Mike both felt Jack's presence in their class: "He was with us."
 Student Meg Simon felt that connection too. "Although I never had a chance to meet Jack," she wrote, "I feel connected to him through Mr. Langerman and Coach Leonard.
 "I feel inspired to navigate our world with kindness and a smile — like Jack Langerman."

"In this class, students explore the premise that sports are much more than the games they watch on TV. . . . The lessons from sport echo throughout life, and this class will examine them first-hand."
 Mike Leonard is the very successful head coach of the Middlebury baseball team that has earned a place in the postseason in four of the five full seasons Mike has been at the college (two years were lost to the pandemic). The Panthers won the NESCAC Championship in 2022 and have participated the last two years in the NCAA tournament.
 Mike was an outstanding catcher at University of Connecticut and played professionally for four years in the Red Sox system. He has earned bachelor's (UConn) and master's (St. Lawrence) degrees and will be awarded an Ed.D in May from Northeastern in "Organizational Leadership Studies."
 Scott Langerman graduated from

(The Community of Sports; Sports as Change Agent; the Economics of Sports; the Evolution of Sports and Society). The class had a good mix of men and women (18 women and 23 men), athletes and non-athletes, various majors and classes.
 Sophia Hwang, a senior sociology major and captain of the women's golf team, reflected on the class: "I

The friendship between Mike and Scott (and his family) is deep and obvious when you observe their interaction. It goes back to when Scott's son Jack was on the baseball team at Middlebury and Mike was his coach.
 Jack had made the team as a first-year under previous coach Bob Smith, but his prospects for

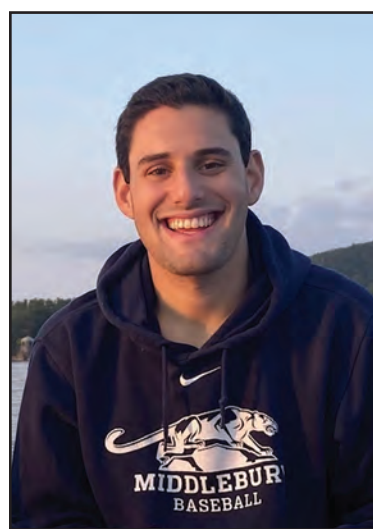
Jack graduated with a degree in American Studies in January 2020, skiing down the mountain in cap and gown at the Snow Bowl with his classmates. He settled in Boston and worked in a marketing firm there.
 Just a year after leaving

Jack Langerman, who graduated from Middlebury College in February 2020 was the Director of Baseball Operations for Middlebury

Middlebury College Baseball Coach Mike Leonard is busy on the field and in the classroom. Leonard taught a class this Winter Term at the College "Sports and Society: How Sports Transcend Their Sidelines."



SCOTT LANGERMAN, MIDDLEBURY College alum (1987) and parent, enjoys a moment with the class in the course he taught with Middlebury baseball coach Mike Leonard in January's Winter Term.




JACK LANGERMAN, WHO graduated from Middlebury College in February 2020 was the Director of Baseball Operations for Middlebury



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE BASEBALL Coach Mike Leonard is busy on the field and in the classroom. Leonard taught a class this Winter Term at the College "Sports and Society: How Sports Transcend Their Sidelines."

On field photo credit: Middlebury Sports Information





Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 22:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Sunday, February 25:
12:45 - 1:45 PM Public Skating

Tuesday, February 27:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating


Thursday, February 29:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, March 5:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, March 7:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, March 12:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

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MUHS dancers show well at Vt. competition

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**
VERGENNES — The Middlebury Union High School dance team at Saturday's state championship competition in the Vergennes gymnasium once again showed it is one of Vermont's top teams, as the Tiger squad finished second in both of its disciplines.

Only Mount Mansfield, winner of both Hip Hop and Jazz, was more successful than MUHS.

The Tigers were second in both Hip Hop and Pom, with South Burlington winning Pom. But South Burlington was only fourth in Hip Hop. Lamoille also fared well, with a second in Jazz and a third in Hip Hop. Teams must choose which two of the three disciplines in which to dance.

The Tiger team members are Cora Blair, Madelyn Brochu, Gedeleine Franklin, Kayla Haugan, Madyson Hutchinson,

Autumn Lowell, Carowyn Maceno and Jordyn Rushton Saturday's complete results were:

Hip Hop: 1. Mt. Mansfield; 2. MUHS; 3. Lamoille; 4. South Burlington; 5. Burr & Burton Academy; 6. Mt. Anthony.

Pom: 1. South Burlington; 2. MUHS; 3. Burr & Burton; 4. North Country; 5. St. Albans; 6. Mt. Anthony; 7. Richford.

Jazz: 1. Mt. Mansfield; 2. Lamoille; 3. North Country; 4. BFA St. Albans; 5. Richford.

The top four teams in each discipline are invited to represent Vermont in the 2024 New England Dance Championships, which South Burlington will host on Saturday, March 9. The Vermont squads will be competing with the top teams from Massachusetts and Connecticut.



MIDDLEBURY JUNIOR AUTUMN Lowell raises the top of her costume to reveal a Tiger at the end of Saturday's state dance competition.

Independent photo/Steve James



THE TIGER DANCERS catch air together during the team's second-place Hip Hop performance at the Vermont Championship performances, held at VUHS on Saturday. Pictured, from left, are Jordyn Rushton, Autumn Lowell and Gedeleine Franklin.

Independent photo/Steve James



DANCER MADYSON HUTCHINSON displays attitude and high elbows during the MUHS dance team's Hip Hop routine at the Vermont State Championships at VUHS on Saturday. The Tigers were second in Hip Hop and Pom.

Independent photo/Steve James



GEDELEINE FRANKLIN ROARS during Saturday's Pom competition in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James



ALL EIGHT MEMBERS of the MUHS dance team get involved in the Pom finale.

Independent photo/Steve James



TIGER FRESHMAN GUARD Tenny Laroche weaves through a swarm of Hornet defenders during her team's Monday home game vs. Enosburg.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tigers

(Continued from Page 1B) thought we were going to be able to handle them here."

The trouble started early on: The Tigers turned the ball over three times in the first minute in the face of a fierce full-court press. Meanwhile, Enosburg hit its first three shots, including a three from Lily Robtoy, to take a 7-0 lead in opening 90 seconds.

The Tigers settled into their man-to-man defense from there, however, and with six first-quarter points from sophomore guard Solstice Binder and a free throw apiece from freshman guard Isabel Quinn and sophomore forward Skyler Choiniere pulled to within 10-8 after the first period.

A Quinn free throw after an offensive rebound made it 10-9 to open the second quarter, but things started going south for the Tigers from there. Robtoy hit back-to-back threes against the 2-3 zone the Tigers played in the second period, and the lead was seven before a Binder putback made it 16-11 at 5:20.

The Hornets then took complete control, closing the quarter with a 14-2 run in which Cam Benoit hit three times from behind the arc,



MUHS SOPHOMORE GUARD Solstice Binder prepares to go up for a shot in the lane against Enosburg during Monday's Tiger girls' hoop home game.

Independent photo/Steve James

Robtoy chipped in four more points, and Gretchen Stiebris hit a fast-break hoop set up by Benoit. The Tigers only answer was a pair of Quinn free throws, and it was 30-13 at the half.

The Hornets opened the second half with a 7-0 run in the first two minutes: a Robtoy drive, a Stiebris move in the post, and another Benoit three. At 37-13 any lingering suspense drained out of the gym.

Robtoy and Benoit led the Hornets with 17 points apiece.

Carter credited Enosburg. "They scouted us well, and really broke our defense down. And we had a hard time even getting a look at the basket. They were well prepared for us," he said, adding, "It takes a lot of energy to break the press, and we played them pretty even for the first quarter. I think they wore us out."

Binder led the Tigers with 10 points, Quinn and Choiniere added four apiece, and freshman Tenny LaRoche scored three.

In summing up, Carter pointed to the JV team's solid win on Monday and the youth on the varsity team — forward Kaitlyn Brown is the only senior.

"The future is bright," he said.

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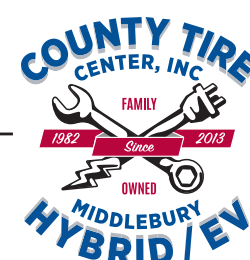
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EAGLE SENIOR IAN Funke gets off a shot in the lane against Otter Valley in Tuesday's D-II playoff game in Brandon.

Independent photo/Steve James



OV JUNIOR DREW Pelkey goes high for a rebound during his team's D-II home playoff game vs. Mount Abe on Tuesday.

Independent photo/Steve James

Hoops

(Continued from Page 1B)
break baskets off turnovers against the half-court trap, making set-up defense moot — Drew Pelkey converted one chance, and Owen Thomas laid in two buckets, and it was 15-5.

Funke and classmate Noah Ladeau answered at the other end to make it a six-point game at 5:50, but the Otters kept coming and closed the quarter on an 18-7 run. Pelkey keyed the surge with 10 points, including two threes; Thomas scored twice; Politano converted in transition; and Denis beat the buzzer with a floater after an offensive rebound. Four points from Eagle guard Hayden Lutz helped limit the OV lead to 17 at the break.

The Otters slowly stretched the lead to 41-21 at 2:25 of the third quarter. Thomas scored twice,

Mark Jackson came off the bench for three points, and Aiden Decker hit a free throw. A Jacob Prouty three-point play and a Funke bucket answered for the Eagles. OV still led by 20, 49-29, after three.

A Ladeau drive to open the fourth quarter cut the lead to 18. But OV scored the next eight points, four by Pelkey, to settle matters.

Funke led the Eagles with 13 points, Lutz scored nine, and Ladeau added six. Funke and Ladeau are the team's only seniors.

Clark pointed to the team's late-season surge as an indicator of its quality.

"I'm really proud of the boys and the way they played the last two weeks of the season," he said.

Unofficially and counting team rebounds, OV had a 27-24 edge on the boards over the Eagles; Stark credited Pelkey and Logan

Letourneau for their efforts on the boards. Funke, Lutz and Aricin Griffin did good work there for Mount Abe.

Pelkey (20 points), Thomas (18), Politano (10) and Denis (six) led the Otters in scoring.

Next up for the Otters is No. 3 Harwood (16-5) on the road on Saturday afternoon, with the winner playing in a semifinal at the Barre Auditorium on Feb. 29. Stark said if the Otters are to advance they will need to follow Tuesday's template of pressure defense and up-tempo offense with unselfish ball movement.

"It's not going to get any easier, and these guys know it. Any given night anything can happen," Stark said. "But the message for these guys is we're 32 minutes from the Aud now."



OV SENIOR AIDEN Decker, flanked by classmate Owen Thomas on the left, leads the Otters in transition against Mount Abe during Tuesday's D-II playoff game in Brandon.

Independent photo/Steve James

Eagle, VUHS girls win vs. rivals; eye home playoff courts

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — Rivalry games highlighted the recent slate of local girls' basketball: Vergennes Union High School defeated Otter Valley, and Mount Abraham got the best of the Commodores.

In other games, VUHS came up short, and Otter Valley split two outings, with the victory ending a long drought.

The Tigers also hosted Enosburg on Monday; see separate story on Page 1B.

VUHS-OV

On Tuesday the Commodores doubled up the Otters, 60-30. Ashtin Stearns scored 20 points to lead VUHS, and Ava Francis (six assists) and Kendra Jackson added 10 and nine points, respectively. Tryphene Miguel chipped in 10 rebounds and four

steals to the Commodores' cause.

Otter Valley's Breanna Bovey scored six points to lead the Otters, who dropped to 2-17 with only a Thursday game at Springfield remaining on their regular-season slate.

The Commodores moved back to .500 at 9-9. They have a Thursday game at Milton and a Saturday morning home game vs. Stowe left on their docket. They appear to be headed for either a No. 7 or 8 seed in Division III.

EAGLES-TIGERS

On Feb. 15 the Eagles rallied in the second half to withstand an upset bid from the visiting Tigers, 31-29. MUHS led at the half, 19-13,

before the Eagles were able to get going on offense after intermission and limit the Tigers to 10 points over the final two periods.

McKenzie Griner led the Eagles with 13 points and eight rebounds, while Solstice Binder paced the Tigers with 13 points. The Tigers dropped to 5-13 heading into Monday's home game vs. Enosburg.

EAGLES On Monday the Eagles pulled away in the second half to defeat host Milton, 47-31. Mount Abe concluded its regular season at 13-7 and looks all but certain to be the No. 7 seed in the upcoming

D-II playoffs. Lake Division rival Missisquoi could be a first-round foe.

Against the Yellowjackets Mount Abe led by just 19-17 at halftime before taking charge. Griner poured in 22 points, and Louisa Painter added nine points. Marlie Bushey's 19 points led Milton (6-13).

COMMODORES

On Monday host D-I Colchester coasted past the Commodores, 50-24. Lakers Dakota Karpinski (16) and Nicole Norton (14) combined for 30 points. Stearns paced the Commodores with eight points as they dropped to 8-9 heading into Tuesday's home game vs. OV.

OTTERS

On Feb. 15 West Rutland's Peyton Guay scored 37 points, setting a new school career points

record in the process, as her team defeated the host Otters, 70-20. The junior pushed her point total to 1,666, 11 more than OV math teacher Greg Hughes scored in his West Rutland career. West Rutland improved to 16-2 with the victory. Bovey led the Otters with nine

points.

On Monday OV snapped a 15-game losing streak by defeating host Mill River, 50-23. Bovey tossed in 23 points for the Otters, and Matelin LaPorte added 11 as OV improved to 2-16 heading into VUHS on Tuesday.



BASKETBALL Wrap-Up



TIGER FRESHMAN LEAH Duguay and Enosburg's Cam Benoit race after a long rebound during Monday's basketball game at MUHS.

Independent photo/Steve James



TIGER SOPHOMORE GUARD Solstice Binder handles the ball against Enosburg's Lily Robtoy during the MUHS girls' Monday home game.

Independent photo/Steve James

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Vergennes boys earn highest seed

Commodores fifth in D3; OV No. 6 in D2; Tigers also host, but are ousted

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**
ADDISON COUNTY — Vergennes, owner of the best record among local high school boys' basketball teams, received the highest seed for an area squad when the Vermont Principals' Association announced pairings on Sunday morning.

The 14-6 Commodores were pegged at No. 5 in Division III and were set to host No. 12 Springfield (8-12) on Wednesday at 7 p.m., after the deadline for this edition. The Commodores and Cosmos did not face one another this winter. The winner of that game will most likely visit No. 4 Winooski (17-3) on Saturday at 3 p.m.

MUHS
 The Tigers entered the playoffs at 9-11 after a 1-9 start and clinched the No. 7 seed in D-II with a win in their Saturday finale.

But a playoff win remained elusive for the program. No. 10 Lake Region visited MUHS on Tuesday for a first-round matchup and put the clamps on the Tigers defensively in a 40-27 victory. Owen Rogers led Lake Region with 15 points, and the Rangers limited the Tigers to eight points in the second half.

Colton Odell paced MUHS with 10 points.

OV/MT. Abe
 Otter Valley received the No. 6 nod in D-II. The 12-8 Otters spent most of the winter ranked in the top four in the division, but lost five of their final eight games. They faced No. 11 Mount Abraham (8-12) in the first round on Tuesday; see story on Page 1B. The teams split two games this winter: The Eagles won in Bristol on Dec. 29, 54-39, but the Otters rolled in Brandon in the rematch on Jan. 13, 81-42.

The winner of that game will visit No. 3 Harwood on Saturday at 2 p.m.

The Eagles earned their No. 11 seed with a strong finish, winning their final three games, including over county rivals VUHS and MUHS. Including OV, the Eagles split two regular-season games with each of their local foes this winter.

REGULAR SEASON

EAGLES-TIGERS
 On Feb. 14 Mount Abraham coasted to a victory over MUHS, 53-33, taking a big lead by outscoring the Tigers in the second period by 16-4. MUHS was within 36-26 after three periods, but the Eagles then hit them with a 17-7 fourth quarter.

Ian Funke (16 points) and **Arcin Griffin** (13) reached double figures as the Eagles avenged an 18-point road loss to Tigers on Jan. 25. **Cooke**

Riney led MUHS with 14 points. **VUHS-Mt. Abe**

On Friday the Eagles ruined any slim chance the Commodores had of moving up to No. 4 in the D-III standings with a 49-41 victory. The Eagles took an 18-8 lead after one period, but VUHS hung tough, cutting the lead to four at the half and pulling to within three points, 44-41 with 2:25 to go, courtesy of two **Devin Brisson** threes.

But Funke scored a couple baskets to extend the lead, and a late **Hayden Lutz** free throw put the game out of the Commodores' reach. Griffin led Mount Abe with 13 points, Lutz scored 11, and Funke chipped in 10.

Ryker Mosehauer tossed in a game-high 14 points for VUHS, and

Oakley Francis added nine. **COMMODORES**

On Feb. 14 the Commodores got late heroics from Brisson to force overtime against visiting Missisquoi, and then took charge in the extra session to defeat the T-Birds, 62-50.

VUHS was down by 46-41 with 50 seconds left before Brisson nailed two three-pointers, the second with 1.8 seconds left to tie the score at 47-47 and force overtime. In the extra period, Vergennes pulled away late to outscore Missisquoi by 15-3.

Francis had a big game for the Commodores with 25 points and 10 rebounds, Brisson finished with 16 points, and Mosehauer chipped in eight points and nine rebounds.

Tabor Rich led four T-Birds in double figures with 13 points. **TIGERS**

The Tigers locked down their No. 7 seed by edging visiting Enosburg on Saturday, 55-51, in their regular season finale. Post players Riney (15 points) and **Kyle Stearns** (14 points) helped MUHS get past the Hornets. Peter Steibris led three Hornets in double figures with 17 points.

OTTERS
 On Friday D-II's top seed, Hartford, cruised at OV, 61-40, building on a five-point first-quarter lead with a 12-0 run in the second period. **Owen Thomas** led the Otters with 15 points.

Brayden Trombly paced Hartford with 12 points.



MOUNT ABE JUNIOR guard Arcin Griffin carries the ball as Otter junior guard Lucas Politano defends during Tuesday's playoff game in Brandon.

Independent photo/Steve James

ACORN 2023 tale as told by the numbers

ACORN, the nonprofit devoted to fostering local foods in Addison County, recently released some highlights of what it accomplished in 2023. They include:

- 14,000 pounds of fresh, locally purchased food distributed to 312 individuals through its Pharmacy: Food is Medicine free healthcare CSA.
- A record \$61,400 in sales between November 2022 and September 2023 at The ACORN

- Food Hub Online Market.
- More than 250 producers catalogued in the 14th Edition of the Champlain Valley Local Food and Farm Guide
- A \$110,675 in grant funding to ACORN to support its diverse range of programming.
- 500 riders pedaling the rolling hills of Shoreham and Orwell at its 15th Annual Tour de Farms.
- \$120,000 directly to Champlain Valley producers.

Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this **ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on **Pages 5B and 12B**

Addison County Regional Planning Commission (1)

Addison Northwest School District (1)

Middlebury (4)

Middlebury Cemetery Association (1)

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (1)

Vergennes (1)

AUCTIONS



MARKET REPORT

ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

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COST			
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Gosliga	1380	1.08	\$1490.40
Wilcon	1560	1.05	\$1638.00
COST			
CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$
Gosliga	97	8.00	\$776.00
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Barnes B&W	107	7.80	\$834.60
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MIDDLEBURY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Middlebury Cemetery Association will be held at the offices of Langrock, Sperry & Wool, 111 S. Pleasant St., Middlebury, VT on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 5pm.

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 11, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at the Town Offices, 77 Main Street, to consider the following application(s).

1. Application request (file #2024-04045.000-SP/CU) by F.W. Webb is seeking site plan and conditional use approval for the development of lot #3 as a "Wholesale Trade" within the Industrial zoning district. The proposed use by F.W. Webb was determined to meet the definition of a "Wholesale Trade" use by the DRB in a hearing held on October 23, 2023. Lot #3 owned by Delineation Corporation is located on Industrial Ave, parcel #004045.000 in the Industrial zoning district.

The hearing will also be available to participants via Zoom video link. The link will be provided on the meeting agenda posted on the Town's website. Plans and additional information regarding these applications may be viewed at the Planning and Zoning Office in the Town Offices or by calling 388-8100, Ext 226. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

David Wetmore
 Assistant ZA

CITY OF VERGENNES NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the City of Vergennes that the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. for discussion of the final draft of the revised Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

This public hearing will be held as a hybrid meeting with participation remotely through Zoom or by phone, or in person at City Hall.
 To join the meeting by Computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9268360439>
 Meeting ID: 926 836 0439
 Passcode: 907999

To join by phone: Dial 1 (929) 205-6099, passcode 907999.

- 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 the Zoom meeting, contact Peter Garon at 802-377-9527.

Statement of Purpose:

The Vergennes City Council amended the Municipal Development Plan for the City of Vergennes on December 12, 2023. The purpose of the proposed amendment to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is to bring them into conformance with the Municipal Development Plan.

Geographic Area Affected

The Northern Gateway District

Table of Contents of Proposed Amendments – There is no change in the Table of Contents.

ARTICLE XVI, Section 1612(E)(3): IS CHANGED TO READ, "GROUND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL IS NOT ALLOWED IN THIS DISTRICT WITHIN 150 FEET OF THE EDGE OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY OF MAIN STREET/ ROUTE 22A."

A copy of the full text of the final revised version of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is available for public review by contacting David Austin at zoning@vergenne.org. Copies are also available for review at the office of the City Clerk.
 February 20, 2024
 Shannon Hagggett, Chair
 Planning Commission
 City of Vergennes

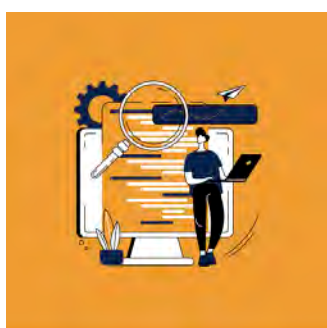
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Girls' hockey blanked in two outings

By **ANDY KIRKALDY**

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School girls' hockey team lost a pair of games last week and unofficially dropped into fifth place in Division II, one spot out of hosting a quarterfinal playoff game.

The Tigers are 9-11, just behind fourth-place Rice (9-9-1), according to the VPA website. If accurate, that means the Tigers will be awarded the No. 5 seed and visit No. 4 Rice in the quarterfinal round of the D-II playoffs.

According to the VPA website, pairings will be announced this Thursday morning (Feb. 22), and first-round games will be played on this Friday and Saturday.

The Tigers lost at Rice on Feb. 3 this season, 3-2 in overtime. Rice enters the postseason on a six-game winning streak, while the Tigers have lost five straight, including the Rice game, three against D-I teams, and one against D-II's second place team, Woodstock, on this past Saturday.

On Feb. 14 D-I host Burlington/Colchester blanked MUHS, 5-0, behind the 21-save goaltending of Leah Boyd. Camryn Poulin scored three goals as the SeaLakers improved to 13-4-1. Ruby Hubbell made 33 saves for the Tigers.

On Saturday host Woodstock (10-6-2) blanked the Tigers, 2-0. Maggie Mello and Gracelyn Laperle scored for the Wasps, and goalie Meridian Bremel made 14 saves. Hubbell stopped 19 shots for MUHS.

Remove fishing shanties when ice is unsafe or by March 31

MONTPELIER — Vermont state law requires that ice fishing shanties be removed from the ice before the ice weakens, according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.



31st this year — whichever comes first. All contents, debris, wood, and supports must also be removed so they do not become a hazard to navigation in the spring.

The shanty must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or loses its ability to support the shanty out of the water, or before the last Sunday in March — the

shanty on the ice can result in a fine and points on your license, and shanties may not be left at state fishing access areas.

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Reader Comments

Here's what one reader has to say about us!

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Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

community calendar

FRIDAY

Feb 23 Med47 Foundation indoor yard sale in New Haven. Friday, Feb. 23, 2-7 p.m., 78 North St. The 8th annual Indoor Yard Sale to benefit the Brendon P Cousino Med47 Foundation. Accepting donations of clean, gently used items. Not accepting clothes, VHS or cassette tapes, outdated electronics, books, car seats, bed pillows, etc. All proceeds to go towards scholarships for local students. More info about donations contact Cindy at 802-233-8334 or med47foundation@gmail.com.

Lenten fish fry in Bristol. Friday, Feb. 23, 5-7 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 11 School St. All-you-can-eat fish fry. Menu includes fried or baked haddock, French fries, cole slaw, fresh-baked dinner roll, beverage and dessert. Cost: \$17 adults/ children 9 and under \$9/immediate family of 5 \$50. More info contact St. Ambrose at 802-453-2488.

SATURDAY

Feb 24 Med47 Foundation indoor yard sale in New Haven. Saturday, Feb. 24, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 78 North St. See Feb. 23 listing.

LEGO contest and exhibit in Vergennes. Saturday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Bixby Enter or just come see the entries in Bixby Library and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Vergennes' annual LEGO event. Registration by Feb. 13. Drop off Feb. 22. More info contact mary.neffinger@bixbylibrary.org.

Voter information panel in Shoreham. Saturday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m., Shoreham Congregational Church, 28 School Rd. Some of the organizations seeking funding on this year's Town Meeting Day ballot will be on hand to give a brief overview of their work in advance of town meeting. They will give an oral presentation, and may also have printed materials available, as well as opportunities for volunteers.

Ice show in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 24, 7-9 p.m., Chip Kenyon Arena, Route 30. Join Middlebury Figure Skating Club for its 2024 show, "A Blast from the Past," a 1960s-themed figure skating show featuring talented skaters from Middlebury College Figure Skating Club, youth skaters and special guests. Tickets \$6, available at www.middlebury.edu/college/box-office or at the door.

SUNDAY

Feb 25 Don't Worry, Be Happy! singalong and storytelling in Ripton. Sunday, Feb. 25, 3 p.m., Ripton Community Church, Route 125. Bring your stories, songs and if you have instruments, bring them along. No charge, open to the public. Call 802-388-6107 with ideas or questions.

Meet your East Middlebury neighbors gathering in East Middlebury. Sunday, Feb. 25, 2-4 p.m., Sarah Partridge Library and Community House, Route 125. The East Middlebury Historical Society invites all to enjoy cookies and punch and get to know your neighbors.

Ice show in Middlebury. Sunday, Feb. 25, 2-4 p.m., Chip Kenyon Arena, Route 30. Join Middlebury Figure Skating Club for its 2024 show, "A Blast from the Past," a 1960s-themed figure skating show featuring talented skaters from Middlebury College Figure Skating Club, youth skaters and special guests. Tickets \$6, available at www.middlebury.edu/college/box-office or at the door.

MONDAY

Feb 26 Legislative breakfast in Bristol. Monday, Feb. 26, 7-8:45 a.m., American Legion, 56 Airport Dr. Bridport Grange and Addison County Farm Bureau invite all to chat with legislative representatives over breakfast. Meal starts at 7 a.m. Program starts at 7:30 a.m. The purchase of breakfast is not required to attend, however it is a nice thank you to our hosts, to help defray the cost of opening their hall so early.

Death Café of Addison County in Lincoln. Monday, Feb. 26, 9:30 a.m., United Church of Lincoln, 23 Quaker St. An international movement started in Europe, at a Death Café people gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss death in a relaxed, open setting with no agenda, objective or themes. It is a discussion group, rather than a grief support or counseling session. Space is limited. Registration required at Eventbrite tinyurl.com/Lincoln-death-cafe. More info contact Louella Richer at lricher@portemedical.org.

Public Bingo in Vergennes. Monday, Feb. 26, 1:30-4 p.m., American Legion Post 14, 100 Armory Ln. Doors open at 1:30 p.m., Bingo starts 2 p.m. Game packets are \$15 each. No limit to the number of packets purchased. "Winner Take All" games are extra and will be sold on the floor for \$1 per sheet. Bring your own daubers or borrow one of ours. Payouts depend on attendance. Food available. More info contact Michelle Eastman at 802-349-6370 or auxiliaryunit14@gmail.com.

Drop-in Korean drumming class in Middlebury. Monday, Feb. 26, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. Learn Korean Drumming. Free this week thanks to support from Addison County BIPOC+. Send an e-mail to Shelby Kimmel at shelly.kimmel@gmail.com for more information.

TUESDAY

Feb 27 Rokeby virtual Winter Book Discussion Group. Tuesday, Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m., Zoom. A discussion of "Mr. and Mrs. Prince: How an Extraordinary Eighteenth-Century Family Moved out of Slavery and into Legend" by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. Registration in advance is required. More info at rokeby.org/2024-virtual-winter-book-discussion-group.

Milk & Honey Quilters Guild quilting presentation in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m., Quilters' Corner at Middlebury Sew-N-Vac, Hannaford Plaza. Quilters' corner owner Carla Berno will share some of her favorite things, tips and short cuts and valuable information on today's threads, fabrics, notions



Spotlight on skaters

MIDDLEBURY FIGURE SKATING Club's annual ice show will take place at Middlebury College's Kenyon Arena on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 7-9 p.m. and again on Sunday, Feb. 25, at 2 p.m. "A Blast from the Past," a 1960s-themed figure skating show, features talented skaters from Middlebury College Figure Skating Club, youth skaters and special guests. Pictured here are skaters in last year's show.

Photo by Melanie Gaiotti

and tools, among other things. Doors open at 6 p.m. Welcome to any who would like to learn more about quilting and meet other quilters.

WEDNESDAY

Feb 28 American Red Cross blood donation in Vergennes. Wednesday, Feb. 28, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Victory Baptist Church, 862 Route 7. In as little as an hour, donors can help ensure lifesaving blood is available for patients. All who come to give in February will get a \$20 Amazon.com Gift Card by email. Details at RedCrossBlood.org/Heart; make an appointment to give blood or platelets by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

THURSDAY

Feb 29 An Evening for Porter fundraiser in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 29, 5-6:30 p.m., Edgewater at the Falls, 1 Mill St. Music by the Do No Harm-onies, a band of Porter Medical Center's own musicians, door prizes, refreshments and cash bar. Join the fun and help raise funds for Porter Auxiliary, an organization that has contributed over \$2.5 million to Porter Medical Center over the years. Tickets \$37, include 1 drink ticket and \$2 processing fee. Available at 802-382-9222, www.townhalltheater.org or tickets@townhalltheater.org.

FRIDAY

Mar 1 Lenten fish dinner in Vergennes. Friday, March 1, 5-6:30 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 58 S. Maple St. Menu includes beer-battered haddock, zesty wedges, coleslaw, mixed vegetables, roll with butter and chocolate chip brownie. Take out or dine in. Cost \$13 adults/\$7 children 6-12 (cash or checks). Call 802-877-3352 to reserve. Leave a message with your name, phone number and number of dinners.

SATURDAY

Mar 2 Used book sale in Middlebury. Saturday, March 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Isley Public Library, 75 Main St. As always, current members of the Friends organization may begin shopping at 9:45.

Youth Ministry Bingo in Vergennes. Saturday, March 2, 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.

TUESDAY

Mar 5 Awe: A talk by Middlebury College professors Katy Smith Abbot and Matthew Evan Taylor in Middlebury. Tuesday, March 5, 5:30-7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The first installment a new, free series created by Vermont Book Shop and Town Hall Theater. "Up for Discussion" is designed to spark community conversation and features local experts in their fields, sharing timely topics that span literature, art, film and contemporary issues. The 30-minute presentation will be followed by a roundtable discussion and sharing of thoughts and ideas. Free, but registration required at townhalltheater.org.

WEDNESDAY

Mar 6 Historical society meeting in Shoreham. Wednesday, March 6, 7 p.m., Platt Memorial Library, Main St. The Shoreham Historical Society will meet in person for the first time in two years. Anyone interested in having an active Shoreham Historical Society is welcome. Bring your ideas. Refreshments will be served.

THURSDAY

Mar 7 "The Tempest" in Middlebury. Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m., Black Box Theater, Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. Come see Auditors Repertory Theatre's production of Shakespeare's story of shipwreck, magic and love. March 7, 8, and 9. ART students take the lead in all aspects of production. Tickets \$10, available at addisonrep.

ludus.com/index.php.
Off Campus: A Middlebury College comedy showcase in Middlebury. Thursday, March 7, 7:30-9 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The comedians of Middlebury College will be coming to the Town Hall Theater with a mix of sketch comedy, standup and perhaps a little bit of improvising. To make matters more confusing, they'll also be performing "Off Campus" on campus later that weekend in the Hepburn Zoo. Tickets \$5/\$10 available at townhalltheater.org, at 802-382-9222, or in person at THT's box office Monday-Friday between 12-5 p.m.

FRIDAY

Mar 8 Lenten fish fry in Bristol. Friday, March 8, 5-7 p.m., St. Ambrose Parish, 11 School St. All-you-can-eat fish fry. Menu includes fried or baked haddock, French fries, cole slaw, fresh-baked dinner roll, beverage and dessert. Cost: \$17 adults/ children 9 and under \$9/immediate family of 5 \$50. More info contact St. Ambrose at 802-453-2488.

"The Tempest" in Middlebury. Friday, March 8, 7 p.m., Black Box Theater, Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. See March 7 listing.

Three one-act plays in Bristol. Friday, March 8, 7 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. The Bristol Gateway Players will present three one-act plays: "Cindy and Julie" by Bruce Kane, "Universal Language" by David Ives and "Blazin' Pistols in Sleepy Ol' Bristol" by Carl Engvall, in collaboration with the Bristol Recreation Department. Admission by donation. Proceeds will be split between the Bristol Gateway Players and the Bristol Recreation Department.

SATURDAY

Mar 9 Wildlife walk in Middlebury. Saturday, March 9, 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 us survey birds and other wildlife. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. Please take common sense: Stay home if you are feeling ill, and wear a mask if you are unvaccinated. More info at 802-388-6019.

Spring Fever craft and vendor fair in New Haven. Saturday, March 9, 9 a.m., New Haven Town Hall, 78 North St. Join more than 20 crafters and vendors at the first annual craft fair for the Michelle Kilbreth Legacy Foundation for Hope. Shop a wide variety of items: jewelry, crochet, woodworking, children's gifts and more. Bake sale fundraiser, too. All bake sale proceeds go to the foundation's scholarship fund for local youth.

Racial Learning for Young Children in Ferrisburgh. Saturday, March 9, 10-11 a.m., Rokeby Museum, 4334 Route 7. Our society does not equip parents well to talk to their young children about difficult social topics like racial bias, social class and other types of inequity. Nonetheless, children observe an unfair world and are curious to learn why. If children are excluded from conversations and information, they can easily internalize harmful, biased messages about themselves and others at an impressionable age. Free. Registration required. More info at rokeby.org/family-group-racial-learning-for-young-children. Continues March 16, 23, and 30.

"The Supreme Court's Role in Reproductive Freedom" in Middlebury. Saturday, March 9, 1 p.m., Isley Public Library, 75 Main St. Join Meg Mott, PhD., for "How to Trust the People with Reproductive Rights," a three-part series examining the history and strategy of securing reproductive rights in the United States. Part 2 is March 16.

Chowder Fest and basket raffle in Orwell. Saturday, March 9, 2 p.m., Farmers Haven, 318 Route 22A. Who doesn't love to taste test some yummy chowder? In the chowder contest, it's \$5 per person to taste. Basket raffle. All proceeds will be donated to Tatum's Totes. Enter your chowder or donate a basket. Contact Farmers Haven or MaKayla Davis 802-349-3038 or Makayla.davis96@gmail.com.

Corned beef and cabbage supper in Vergennes. Saturday, March 9, 5-6 p.m. Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main St., across from the Opera House. Takeout only. Menu includes corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potato, onion, roll and dessert. Cost \$12. Preorder required at 802-877-3150 before 7 p.m. Thursday, March 7.

Around TOWN

Ruth Shattuck Bernstein is new library director in New Haven

NEW HAVEN — As of Feb. 15, Ruth Shattuck Bernstein has taken the helm at the New Haven Community Library as its new library director. “We are so excited to have Ruth join our community in the role of library director. In addition to her exceptional skills and experience, she also fully understands how the public library serves the needs and priorities of our small communities,” stated Darcy Cummings, chair of the Library Board of Trustees.



RUTH SHATTUCK BERNSTEIN

Shattuck Bernstein grew up in Bristol and Lincoln and is a graduate of Mt. Abraham Union High School and Saint Michael's College. She has lived and worked in Addison County as a teacher, parent educator, school library media specialist, assistant librarian and as the library director for the Salisbury Public Library for the last seven years. “Books, libraries, and small-town Vermont are some of my very favorite things.” Shattuck Bernstein said. “My goal is always to make the library truly a place for everyone in the community. I see libraries as centers for connections, resources, learning, and fun, and I am really looking forward to getting to know New Haven!”

“We have had such an outpouring of excitement and support in the community about Ruth coming to New Haven,” said Kristin Swartzentruber, library vice-chair. “Those who know Ruth and have worked with her in the past describe her ability to bring people of all ages together and create community programs and opportunities for all.” The New Haven community will hold a welcome gathering at the library sometime in March for residents to meet its new director and offer input for the year ahead.

The New Haven Community Library is located in the center of New Haven next to the town offices and is open four days a week, including evening and weekend hours. The Library is available to all residents of the town of New Haven, including seasonal residents. It is also available to residents in neighboring communities. The New Haven Community Library serves and welcomes all constituents without regard to race, age, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, color, ancestry, disability, national origin, marital status, military status or views; www.nhcl.org

Bristol Legion Post 19 adopts Veterans' Place in Northfield

BRISTOL — Bristol's American Legion Post 19 has informally adopted The Veterans' Place of Northfield, which provides transitional housing and programs for homeless veterans in Vermont.

For three years the Bristol Legion has made significant donations of funds, merchandise and food to the organization. The Veterans' Place is presently equipped to support 18 male veterans. The objective with each veteran resident is to provide them with the tools they need to move into communities, take on job responsibilities and be self-sufficient within a two-year period.

Each fall Brenda and Steve Barsalou, key people at Post 19 who make all this possible and work very closely with the staff at The Veterans' Place, communicate with the Director of The Veterans' Place to determine what their needs are at this time. Obviously, there is an ongoing need for funds, but Post 19 focuses on the needs of the veterans for their transition into being self-sufficient in their new homes and jobs. Such needs include towels, wash cloths, toiletry items, mattress covers, sheets, blankets, laundry items, dishes, pots and pans, toasters, coffee makers and baking dishes.

The donations of funds and items are collected at Post 19, then delivered between Christmas and New Year each year. This includes all the meal and dessert items necessary for a New Year's prime rib dinner for the residents and staff. To date, the American Legion Post 19 family and community has donated over \$13,000 in cash and merchandise.

Each holiday period as Post 19 prepares to deliver these items members are amazed at the generosity of all who make this possible.

ABOUT THE VETERANS' PLACE

Mission: “Dedication to providing un-housed Veterans with the environment, tools and support they need to transition to independent, sustainable, substance-free, and productive lives.

Vision: To see an end to Veteran homelessness through a statewide, coordinated, accessible network of supports and services, as modeled by The Veterans' Place.

- Goals:
- Wellness support, guidance and accountability.
 - Help navigating medical and administrative needs with onsite nursing and case management.
 - Structured transitional housing with home-cooked meals and residents' vegetable gardens.
 - Transportation assistance.

Anyone wishing to contribute to Post 19's annual cause to benefit The Veterans' Place may contact Brenda Barsalou at bbarsalou@comcast.net, or the Bristol American Legion at (802) 453-2951.

Direct donations can be made to the Veterans' Place, 220 Vine Street, Northfield, VT 05663 or vermontveteransplace.org.



Ski fun

THE MIDDLEBURY UNION High School Nordic ski team took part in a costume relay on Feb. 15 at Sleepy Hollow Ski Center in Huntington. The full team posed in costume for the photo above. It wasn't just the costumes that made the “race” fun; the course also included a nice jump. Pictured, clockwise from right, are Ava Schneider in pink showing some real emotion, local skier Lincoln Miller with his hot chili sauce costume, and Beth McIntosh in blue catching some air. Look for the Tigers in their usual outfits this coming Tuesday, Feb. 27, as they host the first leg of the state Nordic ski championships at Rikert Outdoor Center. The state meet will wrap up on March 1 at Craftsbury Outdoor Center.

Photos by Dave Priganco



STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Mount Abraham Union High School

AJ Donlon

AJ Donlon is Mt. Abraham Union High School's latest Student of the Week. A resident of New Haven, AJ lives with his parents and two sisters. He also has dogs, cats, chickens and goats.

AJ has been on the honor roll each semester of high school. He has found that of the offerings at Mt. Abe, he enjoys science or math classes the most. In particular he has enjoyed Ms. Kayhart's Advanced Placement Biology class, because she made every lesson interesting, engaging, and fun. AJ was selected to represent Mt. Abraham at Green Mountain Boys State during his junior year and was named the 1st alternate to Boys Nation.

A talented musician and a self-taught pianist, AJ serves as the pitch for Mt. Abe's a cappella group, Sweet Transition, and was a member of the first-ever Vermont All-State A Cappella Group. He has also participated in every theater production at Mt. Abe since the 10th grade. In addition, he plays club volleyball and was named

captain of the team this fall. On top of all his extracurricular activities, AJ balances an after-school job at the Expanded Learning Program (ELP) at Beeman Elementary and in the summer he works at the ELP camp.

When asked about an experience or lesson that he has had while at school, AJ shared, “I remember moving to Vermont before the 10th grade and feeling very alone with no friends and no connections, but when a senior took me under his wing and helped me get my bearings, I was very appreciative. We should all remember to give everyone a chance no matter what their background is.”

AJ's natural leadership skills and kind, competent demeanor allowed him to quickly become an important member of our school.

He plans to attend college after graduation and will be missed at Mt. Abe. We wish him all the best with his future endeavors.



AJ Donlon MAUHS

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Middlebury

Students of the Week from all area high schools are entered into a raffle to win a \$100 gift card to The Vermont Book Shop. The winner will be chosen at the end of the school year. Students of the Week are chosen by school teachers and administration

Best of luck to all Addison County students!

If you are interested in advertising in Student of the Week contact advertising@addisonindependent.com

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Keep up the great work, AJ

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Congratulations, AJ



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Telephone: 802-453-3818
larosesurveys@gmail.com



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Stumps Removed
Trusses Set
Trees Trimmed
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Reasonable Rates • Year-round Service • Fully Insured
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24 Hour Emergency Service 453-7014
Brownswelding.com

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ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM



DO YOU SNOW PLOW? YOUR AD SHOULD BE HERE!

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Your local source for window treatments from the nation's most popular brands.
Free in-home consultations!



Vermont Window Treatments LLC
OVER 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

M-F: 8am-5pm
Hours by appointment only
Visit our Facebook page or check us out on Instagram!

802-989-1531 | 3333 Case Street, Middlebury
vermontwindowtreatments.com

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 vermontalanoalateen.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).

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.

Public Meetings

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

Public Meetings

by contacting Vergennes-free thinkers@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.

Services

MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING Services. Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

ODD JOBS; PROPERTY clean up, junk removal, brush cutting, lawn work. Call us today, we do other jobs too! 802-999-2194, John.

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

ARE YOU READY to make a significant impact on people's lives? Ready to be part of a strong and effective team? Then come join VABIR to assist Vermonters with disabilities in reaching their career goals. VABIR is a statewide non-profit with a part-time opening in Middlebury, and full-time positions in Springfield, Burlington and Barre. All positions enjoy a hybrid work model. Part-time salary starts at \$20-\$22 hr., full-time starts at \$41,600. To learn more about the great work we do please visit our website, www.vabir.org.

Help Wanted

THOMAS MECHANICAL, INC./SHEETMETAL SPECIALISTS, INC. We are a full Mechanical Contractor looking for help in all positions. Experienced HVAC Shop Fabricators, HVAC Installers, Pipe-Fitting Welders, Plumbers. We are willing to train any applicant without experience but will learn the trade. We have excellent benefits with competitive starting wages, including full health insurance premiums paid by company and 401k. Please call (802) 863-9577.

Help Wanted

LAKE CHAMPLAIN MARITIME Museum seeks part-time Development Assistant. Integral member of fundraising team, responsible for data entry/reporting and support for mailings/special events. 20 hours/week, \$22/hour. See www.lcmm.org/careers for full position description and application instructions.

For Sale

BUNNIES FOR SALE lops, lionheads and New Zealand (a little older). Better deal if you buy more than one. Little Critters Rabbit Ranch. Phone 802-353-6821 or littlebrat31297@gmail.com

ELECTRIC TWIN SIZE, extra long bed. \$600. 802-897-2831.

For Sale

TUFLINE ATV DISC HARROW. Eight 16" diameter discs. Adjustable cutting angle and height. 52" wide; 347 lbs; 1 7/8" ball hitch. Very good condition. Suitable for wildlife food plots, gardens, or turf development. \$450. Call 802-767-3853.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



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 dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org



Addison County Solid Waste Management District Business Manager Full-Time Position

The Addison County Solid Waste Management District is seeking a motivated and experienced individual to join our team in Middlebury, VT. The Business Manager will perform varied financial duties in support of the District Manager, Treasurer, and Board, with involvement in several functional areas, including: accounts payable/ receivable, payroll, data and human resources benefit management, financial reports, fund reconciliations, vendor relations, IT security accounts, facilities and equipment, and public record retention. This is a critical position involving extensive internal and external communications, as well as the supervision of an Admin. Assistant and Transfer Station Scalehouse Operator.

Schedule: Mon-Fri, with occasional evenings to participate in Board meetings. Office hours are 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

The ideal candidate is detail-oriented, analytical, and versatile. Desired skills and experience include:

- Education - Minimum Associate's Degree, preferably Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Desired course of study - Business Management and/or Accounting;
- Two (2) years experience in full-charge bookkeeping and financial management, preferably in a governmental setting;
- One (1) year of payroll preparation experience;
- Excellent organizational and office skills;
- Ability to pull data from various reports, to create financial statements, general journal entries, A/P, A/R, and reconciliation;
- Excellent computer skills, including knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, QuickBooks, and database management
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, flexibility, and reliability;
- Ability to work independently while maintaining effective working relationships with staff, District Manager, Board, customers, suppliers, and citizens.

We offer **competitive compensation** (salary range: \$65,000 - \$90,000) and a **full benefits package**, including BCBS/VT health insurance, employer-paid HRA, Dental, Eye, Life, and STD/LTD insurance. **Generous sick and vacation leave, training, and retirement contribution match are offered.**

Please submit a letter of interest and résumé to **Teresa Kuczynski** via email at teri@acswwmd.org. OR **Apply on Indeed.com** For questions and a copy of the job description, go to www.AddisonCountyRecycles.org. Open until filled. E.O.E.

Master Plumber

Silver Maple Construction has recently launched a new mechanical division that focuses on providing excellent customer service and specializes in executing complex and innovative residential HVAC and plumbing systems. To help us achieve our goals, we are seeking a skilled and experienced Master Plumber to become part of our team.

At Silver Maple, we strongly believe in offering all our employees equal growth opportunities and providing them with inspiring work while maintaining a flexible and manageable work schedule, unlike what many other companies in this field offer.

Total Rewards:

- Competitive Weekly Pay (based on experience)
- Comprehensive Medical, Dental, and Vision Plans
- 401k Retirement Plan + Company Match
- 15 days Paid Time Off
- 7 Paid Holidays
- Commuter + Mileage Reimbursement
- Life, Disability And Accident Insurance
- Paid Parental Leave
- And MORE!



To learn more: please visit silvermapleconstruction.com email hr@silvermapleconstruction.com or call our office at (802) 989-7677

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Addison County River Watch Collaborative Volunteers

Addison County River Watch Collaborative will be working with partners to conduct river corridor tree plantings, alongside their regular water sampling efforts. If you are interested in helping monitor and care for local streams and/or partake in tree plantings, please email acrcwvt@gmail.com or call 802-434-3236.



We are Hiring!

- Experienced HVAC Shop Fabricators
- HVAC Service Technician
- Field Installers • HVAC Installer
- Pipe-Fitting Welders

APPLY NOW!

At Thomas Mechanical Inc and S.S.I. we design, install and oversee mechanical projects for general contractors. We specialize in heating, cooling, refrigeration, piping and plumbing for buildings. We use skilled technicians to advise on new and existing systems.

We are always looking for great people. Our employees receive paid time off,

Health Insurance - 100% paid, great pay, company uniform, and onsite training. Many open positions require no experience, you will receive training.

Starting pay for entry-level positions is \$20.00/hour with an opportunity for pay increase at 6 months.

Help Wanted: HVAC Installer

- Wages based on experience
- Install and replace HVAC systems for homes and businesses
- 8-hour workday Monday-Friday and some Saturdays
- 3 years of experience preferred, but willing to provide training
- Must have a valid driver's license
- Must be willing to work full-time



Thomas Mechanical Inc. COMMERCIAL * INDUSTRIAL PLUMBING * HVAC & MECHANICAL INSULATION South Burlington, VT



APPLY AT www.thomasmechanicalinc.com 802.865.9119

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: _____

• 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.

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

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

For Rent
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
CORNWALL: SHARE RURAL home with lovely views with senior gentleman who enjoys classical music and reading. No rent (just utilities share) in exchange for cooking evening meals and lending a hand around the house/yard. **Help Wanted**

For Rent
vate bath. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

For Rent
IN BRISTOL VILLAGE: Walk to stores and town green. Sunny one bedroom, well maintained mobile home—very attractive, partially-furnished. Deck, small garden areas for planting, flower beds, overlooking Bristol hills. Available to rent April 1st until Sept. 30th, possibly longer. \$1,300 a month plus electricity and LP gas. Included in rent: internet, water, plowing, mowing. First month plus one month security. Application with background check. One small, gentle breed dog under 20lbs. considered. No texts please. Call 802-338-2362.

For Rent
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.

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."

For Rent
5,000 SQUARE FEET available. Exchange Street, Middlebury, VT. 802-349-8544.

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,

For Rent
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

For Rent
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/RETAIL. 1,250 sq.ft. Exchange Street, Middlebury, 802-388-4831.

Help Wanted

MUSIC CENTER
SUMMER CAMP COORDINATOR
The Middlebury Community Music Center is seeking an enthusiastic and energetic Summer Camp Coordinator for our 2024 summer camp program. The Summer Music Camp Coordinator is responsible for planning, organizing, and overseeing all aspects of the music camp program.

MUSIC TOGETHER® TEACHERS
We are seeking charismatic, playful individuals who can sing in tune, move with accurate rhythm, and are comfortable leading groups, to teach Music Together® in-school and parent/child music classes based in Middlebury and surrounding towns.

Our positions offer competitive pay as well as professional growth and development opportunities.
To apply for either of the positions please visit www.mcmcv.org/careers and send your resume and cover letter to Molly at info@mcmcv.org.

MIDDLEBURY BRIARWOOD APARTMENTS is currently taking wait-list applications for 2- br apartments. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- rent based on income- 2 person minimum occupancy. Equal Housing Opportunity. Handicapped accessible. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

PANTON: NO RENT/UTILITIES in exchange for providing companionship and cooking/sharing meals on a flexible schedule. Private bath. A cat or dog would be welcome! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

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.

VERMONT SOAP
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.

More Help Wanted ads can be found on Page 10B & 11B.
Help Wanted

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
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 d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org

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. 802-349-4212.

Att. Farmers
HORSE BLANKET WASH and repair. Accepting non-leather horsewear of all kinds for cleaning and repairing. Call Sue Miller at 802-377-5945 or email svdwmiller@icloud.com.

WHITNEY'S CUSTOM FARM WORK Pond agitating, liquid manure hauling, drag line aerating. Call for price. 462-2755, John Whitney.

Wanted

OLD & USED GUNS WANTED
Rifles, Hand guns, Shot guns
Top prices paid.
P: 802-775-2859
C: 802-236-7213

Are you Handy?
Mountain Community Health is currently seeking a fully insured handyperson for our medical and dental facility located at 61 Pine St. in Bristol.
The typical tasks for this role include:
- Drywall repairs
- Painting
- Moving furniture
- Assembling office furniture
- Minor repairs to cabinets
- Replacing ceiling tiles
- General repairs
- Odd jobs
If you are interested, please send an email to **Jim Kirby** at: jkirby@mchvt.org.

IMAGINE...
Going to work every day and knowing that **YOU** are helping businesses grow. **YOU** are helping sustain your local newspaper. **YOU** are contributing to a community where people are informed and connected to what's going on around them.
INSPIRED?
The Addy Indy is actively hiring dynamic individuals to join our marketing team.
Contact **Christy** at christy@addisonindependent.com to learn more.

ADDISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
CUSTODIANS
Addison Central School District is seeking Custodians full or part-time and day or night shifts.
These positions are full-year positions. Addison Central School District offers competitive wages.
Employee benefits include:
Health, Dental, Life AD&D, Long Term Disability coverage
• Contribution to up to a family health insurance plan contribution to a Health Savings Account or a Health Reimbursement Arrangement
• Access to a flexible spending account
• Single dental insurance plan funded by the school district with the option to purchase dependent coverage
• Long-term disability plan with a 90-day elimination period, benefit pays 66 2/3% of salary, funded by the school district
• Life insurance valued at \$30,000, funded by the school district
Other Benefits
• Paid time off
• Retirement annuity match of up to 5% of salary
• Employee Assistance Program
Apply by submitting a letter of interest, resume, and three current reference letters via School Spring or by sending a hard copy to:
Tim Williams, Superintendent
Addison Central School District
49 Charles Avenue
Middlebury, VT 05753
Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. E.O.E.

Mountain Community Health We're Hiring!
Staff Accountant: Assists the Chief Financial Officer with the preparation of financial statements, reports and specialized analysis for management team. Maintain financial records to track the organizations assets, liabilities, profit and loss, tax liabilities, and other related financial activities. Accounts Payable, Receivable and Payroll process engagement. Requirements: Accounting or Business degree and/or minimum three years of experience in accounting field
• Understanding of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, Internal Controls and general accounting process and procedures
• Experience with Excel to include Vlookup, pivot tables, statistical analysis, and spreadsheets
• Experience in QuickBooks Enterprise or similar accounting system
• Experience working with large volume of transactions and in complex systems, requiring a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail.
Registered Dental Hygienist: Provides high-quality dental hygiene consistent with accepted standards of care. Evaluates patients and implements treatment regimens under the supervision of the Dentist. Documentation of all findings, treatments and outcomes. Initiates oral health education and prevention activities. Requirements: Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH) from an accredited program with the ability to practice in the State of Vermont • BLS or CPR certification.
Patient Account Representative: Responsible for providing patients with a positive financial experience. Collect payments, set up payment arrangements as appropriate, and advise patients in person and over the phone on their insurance benefits and coverage. Assist patients with eligibility for Medicaid, practice's sliding fee discount program and represents backup to billing functions as required for an FOHC. Requirements: High School Diploma or Equivalent • Associate degree in business or related field a plus • Minimum one year experience in a healthcare billing field • Familiarity with CPT, CDT and ICD-10 codes
• Knowledge of computer applications for medical billing, financial data, spreadsheets, and word processing • Knowledge of medical terminology, procedures, and diagnosis • Working knowledge of dental and medical insurance.
Full Time IT Assistant: Provides technical assistance and support to practice staff with computer systems, hardware, or software issues. Respond to queries, run diagnostic programs, isolate problems, and determine and implement solutions. Assists IT Manager and the Informatics Specialist with operations. Requirements: 1-3 years' experience in technology field and/or customer support role • AS or BS in IT, Computer Science, or relevant field preferred • Knowledge of personal computer hardware and software applications • Ability to deal effectively and courteously with a wide variety of users who have varying levels of computer understanding and experience, as well as outside vendors and consultants.
Dental Billing Specialist: Provides timely and accurate generation of statements for patients or claims to payers while striving to ensure all billing information is correct and in compliance with company policies and procedures. Resolves patient accounts by performing billing and follow-up activities to effectively collect balances due. Assist with greeting patients when they arrive, answering the phone, checking patients in and out and scheduling. Requirements: High School Diploma or Equivalent • Minimum one year experience of medical billing or education • Certified Professional Coder (CPC) certification and FOHC experience preferred • Working knowledge of CDT and ICD10 codes and dental terminology • Read and interpret insurance explanation of benefits.
Dental Office Coordinator: Provides administrative and clinical support for the Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, and other programs. Responsible for maintaining quality assurance for clinic practices, policy and procedures, and patient records in compliance with the State Board of Dentistry, and other agency rules and regulations. Facilitates the daily operations of the Dental Clinic by coordinating patient care, payroll, maintaining supplies, equipment, and inventory, and handling hazardous materials. Requirements: High School Diploma or equivalent, university/college degree is an asset • Minimum two year Medical/Dental front office and/or administrative management experience.
Family Nurse Practitioner - Part Time (0.75 FTE): Work collaboratively and with affinity for working with culturally and economically diverse patient populations, good organizational skills, willingness to work flexible hours and ability to work independently and solve problems. Requirements: Graduation from an accredited school • License to practice medicine in the State of Vermont; CPR Certification • Successful credentialing/privileging by MCH and applicable insurance companies.
RN Case Manager (MAT Program): Primary nursing support for medical providers delivering Medication Assisted Treatment services, including Suboxone, Sublocade, Brixadi, and Vivitrol Treatment for patients being treated for opioid dependence and other substance use disorders. Education and support to patients with chronic substance use conditions in partnership with the MAT Coordinator, LADC counselor, and medical staff. Requirements: Graduate of an accredited school of nursing, minimum bachelor's degree in nursing • Current licensure as a Registered Nurse in the State of Vermont - unrestricted • Evidence of one year of nursing experience, addiction medicine preferred • BLS/CPR Certification
Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
Role is a 50/50 blend of resource coordination and behavioral health counseling. Collaborate with a multidisciplinary team to ensure patients receive holistic care, including access to community resources and behavioral health support. Requirements: Master's degree in social work (MSW) from an accredited program
• Demonstrated experience in resource coordination and counseling, preferably in a healthcare or FOHC setting • Valid state licensure as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) • Knowledge of community resources, social service agencies, and behavioral health best practices • Commitment to maintaining patient confidentiality and ethical standards.
Visit www.mchvt.org/join-our-team for full job descriptions and requirements. Please send your resume and cover letter to HR@mchvt.org. The Human Resources Department will contact applicants who have been chosen to continue through the selection process.

**TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
Selectboard Meeting**
Room 116 – Large Conference Room
Town Offices – 77 Main Street
Thursday, February 29, 2024 - 7:00 P.M.

Also available via Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86429441865>
By Phone: +1 646-558-8656 (not toll-free)
Webinar ID: 864 2944 1865

For those wishing to watch but not participate:
Selectboard meetings are livestreamed to MCTV's YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MCTVVermont>
and also broadcast live on Comcast Channel 1071

AGENDA

7:00 1. **Call to Order
2. *Approval of Agenda
3. *Approval of Consent Agenda
3.a. Approval of Minutes of the February 13, 2024 Selectboard Meeting
3.b. Acceptance of Selectboard Subcommittee Meeting Minutes (if any)
3.c. Applications for Liquor Licenses, Outside Consumption Permits, and Entertainment Permits
3.d. Approval of Grant Agreement and Subgrant Agreement for State Wastewater Pretreatment Grant to WhistlePig
3.e. Acceptance of Report/Update from the Policy Review Committee
3.f. Consent Agenda Placeholder
3.g. Consent Agenda Placeholder
3.h. Town Manager's Report
• Update on High School Wastewater Pump Station Repair
• Resignation of Means Woods Trustee
• Resignation of Addison County Regional Planning Commission Representative & Alternate Representative
• FY24 Year-to-Date Budget Reports

7:05 5. **Director of Public Works Operations Bill Kernan with an update on Water System Issues

7:10 6. *Dana Hart, Library Director, and Joe McVeigh, Ilsley Public Library (IPL) 100 Project Team - Updates on Renovation/ Expansion Project and requests for:
6.a. Continuation of discussion of funding strategy for renovation/ expansion to include the possible use of local option tax revenue to make portion of the debt service payments on a library construction bond, if approved
6.b. Approval of Amended Memorandum of Understanding with Friends of the Library, to add provisions regarding the handling of donations for the capital campaign
6.c. Approval of Letter of Intent with National Bank of Middlebury regarding use of the Duclos Building as a Temporary Library Location
6.d. Approval of Submission of Grant Application and Letter of Support to State Department of Libraries for funding for the library renovation/expansion project

7:30 7. **Preparation for Annual Town Meeting on Monday, March 4, 2024

7:45 8. **Agenda Placeholder
9. **Agenda Placeholder
10. **Agenda Placeholder
11. *Approval of Check Warrants
12. **Board Member Concerns
13. **Executive Session - Evaluation of a Public Employee
14. **Action on Matters Discussed in Executive Session

8:15 15. *Adjourn

* Decision Item ** Possible Decision

OPINION? Email it to: news@addisonindependent.com

**TOWN of MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT WARNING
Annual Town Meeting March 4 and March 5, 2024**

The legal voters of the Town of Middlebury, in the County of Addison, the State of Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Middlebury Union High School Auditorium at 73 Charles Avenue in Middlebury on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. to act on Articles 1 through 5, and to discuss Articles 6 through 8, and on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 from 7:00 A.M. through 7:00 P.M. at the Recreation Center, 154 Creek Road in Middlebury, to vote by Australian ballot on Articles 6 through 8 as provided by the Middlebury Town Charter.

With respect to Articles 6 and 7, the legal voters of the Town of Middlebury are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at the Middlebury Union High School Auditorium for the purpose of reviewing the proposals for issuing bonds for: 1) Phase V of the South Street Infrastructure Project; and 2) the reconstruction of Bakery Lane. Information on the bond proposals will be presented under Article 5 of the Annual Town Meeting Warning.

Article 1 To act upon the reports of the Town Officers.

Article 2 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to adopt the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) in the amount of \$13,609,827 with a portion thereof in the amount of \$8,753,310 to be raised by taxes and \$1,040,700 to be allocated from annual local option tax receipts in excess of debt and maintenance requirements of the Cross Street Bridge to offset spending for Capital Improvements?

Article 3 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote, pursuant to 24 VSA § 2408(a), to authorize the Selectboard to apply up to \$133,450 from the Cross Street Bridge Reserve Fund to offset PD Adaptive Reuse Building debt service expense?

Article 4 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to collect taxes on real property for fiscal year 2024/2025 in TWO equal installments due in the Treasurer's Office on the 15th day of November 2024 and the 14th day of March 2025?

Article 5 To transact other business proper to be done.

[For voting by Australian Ballot on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, polls open from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.]

Article 6 Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Middlebury in an amount not to exceed One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000), subject to reduction from available alternate sources of funding, be issued for the purpose of constructing Phase V of the South Street Project, including the installation of new sewer mains, sewer service lines, sewer manholes, stormwater mains, stormwater catch basin structures, yard drains, new concrete curb, stormwater treatment systems (as possible), traffic calming bump-outs and final paving of the South Street roadway surfaces, the estimated cost of such improvements being One Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$1,500,000)?

Article 7 Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Middlebury in an amount not to exceed One Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,200,000), subject to reduction from available alternate sources of funding, be issued for the purpose of the complete reconstruction of Bakery Lane, including reconstruction of the roadway to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic while also addressing ongoing drainage issues, and the replacement of the existing water main, gravity sewer system, and pressure force main from the Town's wastewater pump station, the estimated cost of such improvements being One Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,200,000)?

Article 8 To elect officers as required by the Middlebury Town Charter.

The legal voters of the Town of Middlebury are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting shall be as provided in Chapters 43 and 51 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Dated at Middlebury, Vermont this 23rd day of January 2024.

Brian R. Carpenter, Chair Andy Hooper, Vice Chair
Heather Seely Lindsey Fuentes-George
Farhad Khan Dan Brown Isabel Gogarty

MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION**

New Haven Municipal Planning Consultation

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) will meet on **March 11, 2024 at 7:00 pm**, for a public hearing with the Town of New Haven's Planning Commission.

The meeting will take place in person with a hybrid option at the New Haven Town Offices, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT, log in credentials below.

As per 24 V.S.A. §4350, ACRPC will consult with New Haven in regards to the municipality's planning efforts, ascertain New Haven's planning needs, identify needed assistance from ACRPC and confirm that the municipality is:

(1) is engaged in a continuing planning process that, within a reasonable time, will result in a plan that is consistent with the goals contained in section 4302 of this title;

(2) is engaged in a process to implement its municipal plan, consistent with the program for implementation required under section 4382 of this title; and

(3) is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/96189409121?pwd=R2hNVzFJM0M0T21Qa3pJYVRAhRhtdz09>
Meeting ID: 961 8940 9121
Passcode: qw8Yry
Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/abYADGWPJx>

Questions, please call either:
Katie Raycroft-Meyer, Community Planner
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
802-388-3141
Peggy Connor, New Haven Zoning Administrator
802-453-3516

REACH THE COUNTY, PLACE YOUR AD HERE. CALL 388-4944

**OTTER VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (RNEU) seeks proposals for 5 construction projects below.

Interested parties may call Pam Reed at 802-247-5757 to schedule a site visit.

Project Timeline:

RFP Issue Date	February 16, 2024
Deadline for site visit	February 26, 2024
Deadline for questions	February 26, 2024
Proposal Due:	March 1, 2024 at 12:00 pm

HVAC Improvements and upgrades projects 1-4. Work to begin as soon school closes, approximately June 17th with completion date anticipated September 30, 2024 optional extension to December 1, 2024

Davis Bacon Prevailing wages apply,
Dept. of Labor, Wage & Hour Division, Davis Bacon Link:
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/rulemaking-davis-bacon>

- OV North: budget \$300,000, construction may begin now
- Lothrop Elementary School: budget \$40,000, construction to begin at close of school
- Otter Creek Academy @ Leicester: budget \$54,000, construction to begin at the close of school
- Otter Creek Academy @Whiting: budget \$54,000, construction to begin at the close of school

AND

- Otter Valley Union Middle High School: Fields Lighting project, budget \$250,000, this project is not subject to Davis Bacon prevailing wages, construction to begin at the close of school to be completed by August 20, 2024.

More information and bid details are available online at:
<https://www.rnesu.org/page/public-bids>

STATE OF VERMONT

**VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT
ADDISON UNIT**

**CIVIL DIVISION
CASE NO. 23-CV-03461**

Vijay Paul and Shalini Paul v. Louise Martinek, Jonathan Weiman, and all other Occupants of 548 Monkton-Vergennes Road, Monkton, Vermont

SUMMONS AND ORDER FOR PUBLICATION

THIS SUMMONS IS DIRECTED TO Louise J. Martinek and Jonathan Wieman

YOU ARE BEING SUED. The plaintiff has started a lawsuit against you. A copy of the Plaintiffs Complaint against you is on file and may be obtained at the of the Clerk of the Court, Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753.

PLAINTIFF'S CLAIM. Plaintiffs claim is for eviction from your residence at the address of 548 Monkton-Vergennes Road, Monkton, Vermont.

YOU MUST REPLY WITHIN 42 DAYS TO PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS. You must give or mail the Plaintiff a written response, called and Answer, within 42 days after the date on which this Summons was first published. You must send a copy of your Answer to the Plaintiffs attorney located at:
Harold B. Stevens, Esq.
Stevens Law Office
PO Box 1200
127 Mountain Road
Stowe, VT 05672-1200
hstevens@stowesq.com

You must also give or mail your Answer to the Court located at:
Vermont Superior Court
Addison Unit
7 Mahady Court
Middlebury, VT 05753

YOU MUST RESPOND TO EACH CLAIM. The Answer is your written response to the Plaintiffs Complaint. In your Answer you must state whether you agree or disagree with each paragraph of the Complaint. If you believe the Plaintiff should not be given everything asked for in the Complaint, you must say so in your Answer.

YOU WILL LOSE YOUR CASE IF YOU DO NOT GIVE YOUR WRITTEN ANSWER TO THE COURT. If you do not send the Plaintiff and the Court your Answer within 42 days, you will probably lose this case. You will not get to tell your side of the story, and the Court may decide against you and award the Plaintiff everything asked for in the Complaint.

YOU MUST MAKE ANY CLAIMS AGAINST THE PLAINTIFF IN YOUR REPLY. Your Answer must state any related legal claims you have against the Plaintiff. Your claims against the Plaintiff are called Counterclaims. If you do not make your Counterclaims in writing in your Answer, you may not be able to bring them up at all. Even if you have insurance and the insurance company will defend you, you must still file any Counterclaims you may have.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE. You may wish to get legal help from a lawyer. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you should ask the Court Clerk for information about places where you can get free legal help. Even if you cannot get legal help, you must still give the Court a written Answer to protect your rights, or you may lose the case.

ORDER

The verified Complaint or Affidavit filed in this action shows that service cannot be made with due diligence by any of the methods provided in Rule 4(d)-(f), (k), or (l) of the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure. Accordingly, it is ORDERED that service of the Summons set forth above shall be made upon the defendant, Louise J. Martinek and Jonathan Wieman, by publication as proved in Rule 4(d)(1) and Rule 4(g).

This Order shall be published once a week and at least seven days apart for two successive weeks commencing no later than the date of this order, in the Addison Independent, a newspaper of general circulation in Addison County, and a copy of this Summons and Order as published shall be mailed to the Defendant, Louise J Martinek and Jonathan Wieman, if an address is known.

Electronically signed: February 9, 2024
/S/ David R. Fenster
David R. Fenster, Superior Court Judge

7 Mahady Court
Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-7741
www.vermontjudiciary.org

Public Notices can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 5B and 12B.

**WARNING
ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 26, 2024**

The legal voters of the Addison Northwest School District, consisting of the towns of **Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes, and Waltham**, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Vergennes Union High School in Vergennes, VT on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:00 PM to learn about the 2024-25 budget and transact any of the following business.

Article 1: To elect the following officers: a) Moderator b) Clerk c) Treasurer

Article 2: To authorize stipends to be paid district officers including the directors, clerk and treasurer.

Article 3: To authorize the Board of Directors, under 16 VSA 562 (9), to borrow money by issuance of bonds or notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the school year.

Article 4: To authorize the Board of Directors to electronically distribute the annual report.

Article 5: To hear and act upon the reports of the Addison Northwest School District Officers.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING
FEBRUARY 26, 2024**

The legal voters of the Addison Northwest School District are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Vergennes Union High School in Vergennes, VT on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 7:00 PM, for a Public Information meeting to discuss Australian Ballot articles warned for vote on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

Hearing will take place immediately following adjournment of the Annual Meeting of said Addison Northwest School District.

Dated this 18th day of January 2024.

Tara Brooks, District Clerk
John Stroup, Chair of Board of Directors
Addison Northwest School District

**WARNING
ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARCH 5, 2024**

The legal voters of the Addison Northwest School District, consisting of the towns of Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes, and Waltham, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the following polling places on March 5, 2024 to vote by Australian ballot on the following articles of business:

Municipality Polling Hours Location

Addison	7:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.	Addison Town Clerk's Office
Ferrisburgh	7:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.	Ferrisburgh Town Office
Panton	7:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.	Panton Town Hall
Vergennes	9:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.	Vergennes Fire Station
Waltham	10:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.	Waltham Town Hall

Article 6: Shall the voters of the Addison Northwest School District approve the Board of School Directors to expend \$28,232,077.99 which is the amount the school board has deemed necessary for the ensuing fiscal year?

Article 7: Shall the voters of the Addison Northwest School District authorize the assignment of \$1,202,107.61 pursuant to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §2804, from the fiscal year 2023 fund balance to the ANWSD Capital Improvement Fund, established by the electorate on March 7, 2017?

Dated this 29th day of January 2024.

Tara Brooks, District Clerk
John Stroup, Chair of Board of Directors
Addison Northwest School District

**TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
PROPERTY TAX BILLS**

MARCH INSTALLMENTS ARE DUE IN THE TREASURER'S OFFICE ON OR BEFORE:
FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2024

Treasurer's Office:
388-8100 ext. 203, 204 or 208
accountclerk@townofmiddlebury.org
Office Hours:
Mon – Fri, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Please allow extra time if you are mailing your payment, postmarks are not accepted as timely payment.

For your convenience there is a secure payment box located between the Town Office and the Library.

**STATE OF VERMONT
SUPERIOR COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
ADDISON UNIT
DOCKET NO.: 23-PR-07818
IN RE ESTATE OF:
BARBARA A. MARQUIS
NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

To the Creditors of: Barbara A. Marquis, late of Cornwall, 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: 02/13/24

Executer/Administrator:
Jeremiah Candido
636 Rt 73, Orwell, VT 05763
(802) 458-5143
jwcandido21@gmail.com

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 2/22/24
Address of Probate Court:
7 Mahady Court
Middlebury, VT 05753

**Hey
Bristol**

Do you want to advertise on the Bristol Beat Page?

Contact Tom at 802-388-4944

ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

February 22, 2024



A huge fireworks display keyed up excited skiers for the first evening of night skiing at the Middlebury Snowbowl on Dec. 15, 2023. Since opening night, the Snowbowl has enjoyed a vibrant and enthusiastic response, paving the way for night skiing to become part of the ski area's regular operations.

PHOTO / TODD BALFOUR

Middlebury Snowbowl lights up more fun

Magical is the word Derrick Cram used to describe the skiing and the community activity at the Middlebury Snowbowl this year. The cozy ski area up Route 125 in Hancock seems to have kicked into a new gear this season.

BY **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

"The ski area launched its first-ever night skiing event, a spectacle

of lights, music, and community spirit," Cram wrote in a blog post shortly after the mid-December event. Cram has been working at the Snowbowl for 25 years, and he now acts as the business manager for the Snowbowl,

Ralph Myhre Golf Course, MiddStore and Rikert Outdoor Center.

"The air buzzed with excitement, culminating in a stunning fireworks display that lit up the night sky," Cram's post continued. "The climax was nothing short of magical, as the slopes' lights turned on, unveiling the beloved runs in a new, enchanting light. The crowd's cheers echoed through the mountains, marking the start of a memorable night."

Regular operating hours at the Snowbowl used to mean the lifts began at 8:30 a.m., and stopped at 4 p.m. Now with the addition of night skiing the lifts turn Wednesday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m.-8:45 p.m. Night skiing is

not available this year on the weekends; and Monday and Tuesdays are open for daytime service during holidays.

"What really stands out to me about night skiing is that it has given Middlebury College students, especially international students, access to engaging winter activities that were previously not open to them because their class schedules wouldn't allow for it," explained Ashley Betton, Group Sales and Event Coordinator for the Snowbowl. "It has also opened up opportunities for several new after-school ski clubs to form in schools around Addison County. We are so proud to help foster these new communities and we

SEE SKI ON PAGE 2

Ice skating show comes to town

The Middlebury College Winter Carnival Ice Show will be held this year on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 25, from 2-3:30 p.m., in the Chip Kenyon Arena on South Main Street in Middlebury. Winter Carnival is celebrating its 101st event with this annual tradition, as well as many others.

The 2024 Ice Show, "A Blast from the Past!" will be a 1960s-themed figure skating show featuring talented skaters from Middlebury College Figure Skating Club, youth skaters from Middlebury Figure Skating Club, and special guests.

Step back in time as the skaters, aged five and up, take the ice to the iconic sounds of the '60s. From classic rock 'n' roll to soulful melodies, our performers will bring the spirit of the decade to life with carefully choreographed routines.

Did you know the Middlebury Figure

SEE ICE ON PAGE 15



Kaylee Dutil-Poulin, from the Champlain Valley Skating Club, will be the featured guest skater at this year's Winter Carnival Ice Show.

COURTESY PHOTO

SKI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

are eager to welcome new generations of alpine skiers and snowboarders."

Simone Duquette-Hoffman, a senior at Middlebury Union High School (who helped reinstate the MUHS ski club with Silas Taylor), has been taking advantage of the new nighttime lift service at the Snowbowl.

"I have been night skiing almost every week this season and multiple times a week when I can!" she said. "I think MUHS has a lot of students who, if given the opportunity, would love to race and be really successful. As I'm sure you know, when MUHS had a more formal race team we were pretty successful. I think night skiing has given kids the opportunity to get a lot more serious about racing without going to a ski academy."

Duquette-Hoffman is not only there to race though; she says she's there for the community and "charming" vibe.

"I really hope night skiing continues to have a fun and welcoming atmosphere while also still being available for racers to train. I think the Snowbowl has done a great job with it, but I do hope that, with all of these new changes, the Snowbowl can keep its charm. The Snowbowl is not a resort type mountain, it never has been, and I think that's a pretty significant part of the community. While night skiing has been an amazing addition,



Patrick Fitzsimmons gives the Middlebury Snowbowl the thumbs up as a venue for musicians. He performed there earlier this month.

COURTESY PHOTO



Liz Reedy will perform on Friday, Feb. 23, from 4-6:30 p.m., at the Middlebury Snowbowl.

COURTESY PHOTO

it feels important to me that it stays focused on delivering the great community experience that it did for decades!"

Part of the fun, community experience Duquette-Hoffman is talking about is the live music that has been held at the Snowbowl on Fridays this winter.

Fridays at the Snowbowl are awesome: the Ski Bum League (of which this writer is a member of the Addie Baddies) sets a course from 1-3 p.m., then an apres ski party gets going with live music, food and drinks, and the lifts stay open until 8:45 p.m. It's a good time!

Musicians to date have included Granville Daze, Bruce Costello, DJ Serena Kim, Remember Baker, Jimmy Goodwin, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Rob "Cooper" Recupero, and Jenny Porter. Coming up this Friday, Feb. 23, Liz Reedy will take the mic from 4-6:30 p.m.

Reedy's music is a refreshing blend of indie folk and acoustic pop, with influences ranging from classic singer-songwriters to contemporary indie artists. Her guitar-led melodies are accompanied by honest, poignant lyrics that speak to the heart. Reedy's ability to connect with her audience through her music is a testament to her passion and dedication to her craft.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

"I USUALLY DON'T PLAY SKI LODGES... BUT I WAS PLEASANTLY SURPRISED BY THE RECEPTION AND HOW ENGAGED FOLKS WERE."

— Patrick Fitzsimmons

“I’M EXCITED TO HELP BUILD A **ROBUST LIVE ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE...** IT’S A SLOW PROCESS BUT THERE IS NOTHING BUT FORWARD-THINKING.” — Ashley Betton

What’s it like performing at the Snowbowl?

Cornwall singer-songwriter Fitzsimmons wasn’t sure what he was getting myself into when he signed on for the gig: “I usually don’t play ski lodges. Most of what I play are original tunes with some choice covers thrown in, but I was pleasantly surprised by the reception and how engaged folks were.”

Fitzsimmons was pleased he played for more than just tips, and “really glad that they’re getting this music series going at the Snowbowl.”

In addition to live music, the Snowbowl has held a pre-holiday craft fair, a Middlebury College employee ski day, the mid-winter Feb Graduation for Middlebury College students, and other events that bring community to the hill. Coming up, on March 9, there will be a Splitboard Festival with demos, tours, prizes and more.

“On the event side, I’m excited to help build a robust live entertainment schedule,” Betton said. “I’m also excited to build a stronger schedule of summer events that give our community an additional way to engage with the Snowbowl. It’s a slow process but there is nothing but forward-thinking, more inclusive language about what it means for the Snowbowl to be open to the public.”



Skiing enthusiasts celebrated the first evening of night skiing at the Middlebury Snowbowl on Dec. 15, 2023, with lights, lifts, live music, and revelry.

PHOTOS / TODD BALFOUR

Supporting all of this extra effort, are some of the “strongest season pass sales” Cram can remember.

“Passholders are the strongest segment of night skiers,” he said. “And the vast majority of our season passes were combo (day and night skiing) passes... That is part of what we were expecting.”

In general, “I’ve been happy with the choices that were made and how it’s been going this year,” Cram said. “I don’t think night skiing is going anywhere for a long time.”

Yep, get this venue on your radar folks

— Middlebury Snowbowl, where the fun doesn’t set with the sun!

Editor’s note: Stay up to date with the Snowbowl with their new app, social media @MiddleburySnowbowl or online middleburysnowbowl.com.



Large lights illuminate the Sheehan lift trails at the Middlebury Snowbowl.



MIDDLEBURY PERFORMING ARTS SERIES
WINTER/SPRING 2024 SEASON



Your Sxxts Are Sh*t: Older Better Letters
Created and performed by Rachel Mars
Thursday, Feb. 29 ■ 7:30 PM
Friday, March 1 ■ 7:30 PM
\$25/20/10/5



Small Island Big Song
Friday, March 8 ■ 7:30 PM
\$25/20/10/5

802-443-MIDD (6433)
go.middlebury.edu/pas



UPCOMING MUSIC

Making Music in Vermont free concert series kicks off at Bixby Library with Atlantic Crossing

Lace up your dancing shoes! On Saturday, March 2, from 1 to 2:30 p.m., the Bixby Library will come alive with the music of Atlantic Crossing.

The concert is the first in the Bixby's Making Music in Vermont Free Concert Series, accompanying the library's newest historical exhibit, "Making Music in Vermont." The exhibit reveals connections between music makers and their local Vermont community through a collection of historical artifacts, documents, and one massive drum. The exhibit is on display now in the Bixby Library's Kerr Room during the library's open hours.

The music performance series complements our 'Making Music in Vermont' historical exhibit" said Cedar Winslow, Program & Outreach Manager at the Bixby Memorial Free Library. "The exhibit was inspired by curator Nancy Remsen's love of music and history, and presents several studies of local music makers' connections to Addison County. Our librarians round out the experience with a selection of music-minded titles from our collection."

But "the Bixby Library is home to much more than just books," Winslow added. "The library also offers a free community gathering space where neighbors from across the county and beyond can connect with one another. This spring, local history, culture, and community play in harmony for our 'Making Music in Vermont' concert series."

The first free concert will be held the first Saturday in March, featuring Atlantic Crossing. For over two decades, this dynamic band has been stirring up the dance floors of New England. Now, they're poised to present an unforgettable concert experience at the Bixby Library. From foot-stomping jigs to soulful ballads, Atlantic Crossing will take you on a journey through Vermont with the power of history and song.

The Making Music in Vermont Free Concert Series will run throughout the spring, with upcoming performances to be announced on the Bixby's Instagram @bixby_library, website bixbylibrary.org, and monthly newsletter bixbylibrary.org/newsletter.



Atlantic Crossing will perform at the Bixby Library in Vergennes on March 2, from 1-2:30 p.m.

COURTESY PHOTO

MORE TUNES



Small Island Big Song brings irresistible oceanic grooves, soulful island ballads, and attention to climate change to the Middlebury Performing Arts Series on Friday, March 8.

PHOTO / GELÉE LAI

SMALL ISLAND BIG SONG BRINGS SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS TO MIDDLEBURY MARCH 8

The Middlebury Performing Arts Series proudly presents the Vermont debut of Small Island Big Song on Friday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m., during their 2024 U.S. national tour. The production is a joyful, multi-platform project celebrating and uniting the seafaring cultures of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, a region at the frontline of the global climate crisis.

Presented against a backdrop of stunning cinematic visuals, some of the most prominent artists from the region perform irresistible oceanic grooves and soulful island ballads collected across 16 countries.

The community is also invited to learn more about the impacts of climate change and to explore how the arts can influence our relationship with the environment in two associated events. First, take in a screening of the film "Small Island Big Song—An Ocean Songline" on Wednesday, March 6, at 4:30 p.m., at the Mahaney Arts Center, followed by a Q&A with the artists. Next is the panel discussion "Climate Change: Our Response as Artists," moderated by Small Island Big Song creator BaoBao Chen and featuring the artists, presented by the Environmental Studies Department's Woodin Colloquium Series on Thursday, March 7, at 12:40 p.m., at the Franklin

SEE SONG ON PAGE 16

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 AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury
Visit edgewatergallery.com, call (802) 458-0098 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com for more info.

"New Work" by Sara Katz. Abstract painter Sara Katz presents a series of new large works on panel this February at Edgewater Gallery at the Falls. Katz's work is informed by her agricultural background, interest in the natural world and Japanese heritage. She finds that painting abstractly most successfully conveys the feelings she has for a place or for a botanical form. She works with a palette drawn from the natural world, varied mark making, and simplified forms from the landscape and botanical world to create her dynamic and bold compositions. On view Feb. 10-March 30.

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.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury
For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

"Traces." An exhibition of photographs that show a hint of people and events come and gone by, as told by the traces left behind. Any capture method and all processes, including black and white, alternative process and monochromatic toning, are welcome. Juror Jeff Curto selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view March 8-29.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Rd, Middlebury
For more info visit middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions.

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 14

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. Take a few days off from work if you find you have been running yourself ragged, Aries. The pressure to be the best may have gotten to you and you need a rest.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Powering through a situation sometimes works, but not if you are feeling ill or injured, Taurus. Prioritize your health right now and take a step back if need be.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, there are always two sides to every story, so resist the urge to weigh in on a situation between friends right now. Get all of the information first and then stay neutral.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Listen to someone's feelings when they come to you and try to vent, Cancer. Exhibit some patience and help this person work through his or her issues.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. A great opportunity is coming down the pike, Leo. You will have to get your timing correct to maximize its impact on your life. Organize all of the elements you can control.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Advice from a loved one prompts you to reevaluate your plans for the coming weeks, Virgo. Step away from the situation to see how things might work.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. It is important to take the reins this week, Libra, particularly if you want to get noticed by those in positions of power.

You need to be your own best advocate.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Sometimes the hardest thing to do in a situation is to stay silent when you don't agree with things, Scorpio. Keep in mind that others may not be ready to hear your advice.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Take ownership of any mistakes you have made and learn from them this week, Sagittarius. That is the only way you can grow as a person and make a difference in others' lives.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, are you ready to accept the consequences of your actions? If you go out on your own when others are warning against it, you will need to confront the consequences on your own.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/ Feb. 18. Aquarius, you may be ready to make a big change, but others may not be there with you yet. You need to find the timing that works for as many as possible.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, it may not be possible to put blinders on for every situation. However, sometimes it is advisable to look the other way in the name of keeping the peace.

We've got the purl-fect yarn to get ewe inspired!



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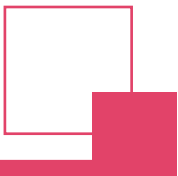
FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEB. 23 — George Frideric Handel, composer (d)
FEB. 24 — Winslow Homer, artist (d)
FEB. 25 — George Harrison, Beatle (d)

FEB. 26 — Christopher Marlowe, playwright (d)
FEB. 27 — Dexter Gordon, saxophonist (d)
FEB. 28 — Brian Jones, Rolling Stone (d)
FEB. 29 — Gioachino Rossini, composer (d)

CALENDAR

FEB. 22-MARCH 9
2024



THURSDAY, FEB. 22

LE CONSORT IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Come hear Le Consort on their North American debut tour. Never heard music by Dandrieu, Merula, Guignon or Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre? Not to worry — Le Consort will introduce you to these unjustly neglected Baroque masters and more, in a program titled "Hidden Treasures of the Baroque." Tickets: \$25/20/10/5, available at go.middlebury.edu/tickets or 802-443-MIDD (6433).

SATURDAY, FEB. 24

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN LINCOLN.

Saturday, Feb. 24, Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Area. A moderately difficult outing of 4-5 miles in Vermont's smallest Wilderness. The area has no established trails and provides habitat for deer, bear and a variety of birds. Heading west from the parking area on York Hill Road, we will make our way towards North and Gilmore ponds. An opportunity for those wanting to brush up on map and compass skills. Wear appropriate clothing for winter conditions, bring water and food. Limit 8 participants. Contact Beth Eliason (betheliason@gmail.com) for more information. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN SHELBURNE.

Saturday, Feb. 24, 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 recommended.

Be prepared for ice and snow with boot traction, aka microspikes. For meeting time and possible carpooling contact Ruth Penfield at 802-458-1116 or ruthpenfield@gmail.com. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

"DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY"

SINGALONG AND STORYTELLING IN RIPTON.

Sunday, Feb. 25, 3 p.m., Ripton Community Church, Route 125. Bring your stories, songs and if you have instruments, bring them along. No charge, open to the public. Call 802-388-6107 with ideas or questions.

TUESDAY, FEB. 27

ROKEBY VIRTUAL WINTER BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP.

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m., Zoom. A discussion of "Mr. and Mrs. Prince: How an Extraordinary Eighteenth-Century Family Moved out of Slavery and into Legend" by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. Registration in advance is required. More info at rokeby.org/2024-virtual-winter-book-discussion-group.

THURSDAY, FEB. 29

AN EVENING FOR PORTER FUNDRAISER IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Feb. 29, 5-6:30 p.m., Edgewater at the Falls, 1 Mill St. Music by the Do No Harm-onies, a band of Porter Medical Center's own musicians, door prizes, refreshments and cash bar. Join the fun and help raise funds for Porter Auxiliary, an organization that has contributed over \$2.5 million to Porter Medical Center over the years. Tickets \$37, include 1 drink ticket and

\$2 processing fee. Available at 802-382-9222, www.townhalltheater.org or tickets@townhalltheater.org.

"YOUR SEXTS ARE SH'T: OLDER BETTER LETTERS" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Feb. 29, 7:30 p.m., Wright Theater, Chateau Rd. Award-winning theater maker Rachel Mars performs a gloriously rude new solo show that unearths the hot-as-hell letters that make sexts blush. Tickets: \$25/20/10/5 available at go.middlebury.edu/tickets or 802-443-MIDD (6433). Repeats March 1.

VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Feb. 29, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Middlebury Community Players' production of Christopher Durang's smash Broadway comedy VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE revolves around late-middle-aged siblings Vanya and Sonia who share the family home in Bucks County, PA, where they bicker and complain about the circumstances of their lives. Suddenly, their movie-star sister, Masha, swoops in with her new 20-something boy toy, Spike. A weekend of rivalry, regret, resentment, and regret ensues. Tickets \$20 /\$17 opening night, available at townhalltheater.org.

FRIDAY, MARCH 1

"YOUR SEXTS ARE SH'T: OLDER BETTER LETTERS" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 1, 7:30 p.m., Wright Theater, Chateau Rd. See Feb. 29 listing.

VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 1, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 29 listing.

SATURDAY, MARCH 2

ATLANTIC CROSSING IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, March 2, 1-2:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Lace up your dancing shoes. As part of Making Music in Vermont, Bixby Library will come alive with the music of Atlantic Crossing. From foot-stomping jigs to soulful ballads, Atlantic Crossing will take you on a journey through Vermont with the power of history and song. The concert is the first in the Bixby's Making Music in Vermont Free Concert Series, accompanying the library's newest historical exhibit, "Making Music in Vermont."

VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 2, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 29 listing.

VOCES8 IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 2, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Middlebury Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Come hear the 2023 Grammy-nominated British vocal ensemble inspire through their music, offering versatility and a celebration of diverse musical expression. Their Vermont debut program, titled "20 Songs from 20 Years," features beloved music from across the centuries and pieces by contemporary composers. Tickets: \$25/20/10/5, available at go.middlebury.edu/tickets or 802-443-MIDD (6433).

LARRY & JOE IN LINCOLN.

Saturday, March 2, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. Larry & Joe play a mix of Venezuelan and Appalachian folk music they've dubbed "Venezualachia," aiming

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.	
Channel 1071	4 p.m. Congregational Service	7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service	5 p.m. School Boards	8:32 p.m. The Story Matters	
Friday, February 23	5:30 p.m. Vote for Vermont	9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass	11 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont	Monday, February 26	
Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	6:30 p.m. Eckankar	10 a.m. Selectboard, State House, Public Affairs	Saturday, February 24	5 a.m. Love your Snake and Lizard	
5 a.m. Gov. Scott, Recommended 2025 Budget	7 p.m. Catholic Mass	7 p.m. Legislative Breakfast	12 a.m. Education Recordings	6:32 a.m. Rain Gardens	
7:30 a.m. Congregational Church	7:30 p.m. Energy Week	10 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs	6 a.m. All Things LGBTQ	8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ	
10 a.m. Selectboard	8:30 p.m. Dr. John Campbell	Thursday, February 29	7 a.m. Tai Chi	9 a.m. Authors and Poets	
3 p.m. Energy Week	Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	7:25 a.m. Love your Snake and Lizard Neighbors	10:30 a.m. School Boards	
4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church	5 a.m. Energy Week	8 a.m. Congregational Services	9 a.m. All Brains Belong Vermont	Tuesday, February 27	
5:30 p.m. Vote for Vermont	6 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs	9:30 a.m. Legislative Breakfast	10:01 a.m. School Boards	6 a.m. Word Time With Miss Markee	
6:31 p.m. Public Affairs	10 a.m. Selectboard, State House, Public Affairs	12 p.m. Selectboard, State House, Public Affairs	4:46 p.m. MUMS Carnival MardiGras	7 a.m. Yoga	
Saturday, February 24	7 p.m. Legislative Breakfast	7 p.m. Special Selectboard	6 p.m. MUHS Band Concert	8 a.m. Tai Chi	
Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	8:30 p.m. Energy Week	9:30 p.m. Eckankar	7 p.m. Love your Snake and Lizard	12 p.m. School Boards	
6:30: a.m. Legislative Breakfast, Press Conferences	9:30 p.m. Eckankar	10 p.m. Dr. John Campbell	8:32 p.m. The Story Matters	5 p.m. School Boards	
10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs	10 p.m. Green Mtn (GM) Care Board	Channel 1091	Sunday, February 25	Wednesday, February 28	
4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service	Tuesday, February 27	Friday, February 23	12 a.m. Education Recordings	5 a.m. Authors and Poets	
5:30 p.m. Eckankar	Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ	6 a.m. All Things LGBTQ	7 a.m. Chair Yoga	
6 p.m. Energy Week	5 a.m. Legislative Breakfast	6 a.m. The Pandemic Blues Project	7 a.m. Tai Chi	8 a.m. School Boards	
7 p.m. Catholic Mass	6:30 a.m. Dr. John Campbell	6:28 a.m. Here We Are - Evie Kiehle Author BHS Student	7:25 a.m. Love your Snake and Lizard	12 p.m. Education Recordings	
7:30 p.m. Public Affairs	8:30 a.m. Vote for Vermont	7 a.m. MUMS Carnival MardiGras	9 a.m. All Brains Belong Vermont	8 p.m. Festival On the Green	
Sunday, February 25	9:30 a.m. Eckankar	8:14 a.m. Blues 101 w/ Ramblin Dan	10:01 a.m. MUMS Carnival MardiGras	10 p.m. Authors and Poets	
Overnight: State House, Public Affairs	10 a.m. Selectboard, Press Conf.	9:30 a.m. MUHS Band Concert	11:15 a.m. Blues 101 w/ Ramblin Dan	Thursday, February 29	
5 a.m. Gov. Scott, 2025 Budget	4 p.m. Congregational Services	10:30 a.m. The SongWriter's Notebook	1:31 p.m. MUHS Band Concert	5 a.m. Festival On the Green	
9 a.m. Catholic Mass	7 p.m. Selectboard	11 a.m. School Board Meeting/s, Legislature Education Recordings	2:30 p.m. Rain Gardens - from Yestermorrow Fall Speaker Series	7:05 a.m. Tai Chi	
9:30 a.m. Legislative Breakfast	9:19 p.m. Legislative Breakfast			7:30 a.m. School Boards, Education Recordings	
11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service	Wednesday, February 28			5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ	
12:30 p.m. Energy Week	Overnight: State House, Public Affairs			6 p.m. All Brains Belong Vermont	
1:30 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs	5 a.m. Selectboard			7:01 p.m. School Board Meetings	

to create a personal and unique sound that blends their distinct backgrounds. Both men are versatile multi-instrumentalists and singer-songwriters on a mission to show that music has no borders. A Burnham Presents concert. Admission: general \$15 to generous \$20-\$25 available at www.burnhampresents.org or at the door. Homemade desserts and beverages available.

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, March 3, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. See Feb. 29 listing.

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

AWE: A TALK BY MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE PROFESSORS KATY SMITH ABBOT AND MATTHEW EVAN TAYLOR IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, March 5, 5:30-7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The first installment a new, free series created by Vermont Book Shop and Town Hall Theater. "Up for Discussion" is designed to spark community conversation and features local experts in their fields, sharing timely topics that span literature, art, film and contemporary issues. The 30-minute presentation will be followed by a roundtable discussion and sharing of thoughts and ideas. Free, but registration required at townhalltheater.org.

AUTHOR RICK WINSTON IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, March 5, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Ilsley and Vermont Book Shop's First Tuesdays series continues as Rick Winston returns to share his latest book, "Save Me A Seat: A Life With The Movies!" Winston's genial and companionable memoir is the chronicle of a lifelong love affair with movies. VBS will be there with books for sale and signature.

WEDNESDAY,

MARCH 6

FILM SCREENING: "AN OCEAN SONGLINE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, March 6, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center 125, 72 Porter Field Road. Filmed over three years on 16 Island nations across the Pacific and Indian Oceans, this grassroots musical follows the ocean highways uniting ancient musical lineages. From Madagascar to Rapa Nui/Easter Island, Taiwan to Zenadth Kes/The Torres Strait. A heartfelt plea for environmental awareness and cultural preservation from those on the frontline of the climate crisis. A Q&A with the artists follows the screening. Free and open to the public. For more information contact the event organizer Allison Coyne Carroll at carroll@middlebury.edu.

THURSDAY,

MARCH 7

"THE TEMPEST" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m., Black Box Theater, Hannaford Career Center,

51 Charles Ave. Come see Addison Repertory Theatre's production of Shakespeare's story of shipwreck, magic and love. March 7, 8, and 9. ART students take the lead in all aspects of production. Tickets \$10, available at addisonrep.ludus.com/index.php.

"CLIMATE CHANGE: OUR RESPONSE AS ARTISTS" DISCUSSION IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, March 7, 12:40-1:30 p.m., Franklin Environmental Center, The Orchard-Hillcrest 103, 531 College St. This panel discussion features performing artists from Small Island Big Song to discuss the impacts of climate change and explore how the arts can influence our relationship with the environment. Free and open to the public. For more information contact the event organizer Lily Hunt at lhunt@middlebury.edu.

OFF CAMPUS: A MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE COMEDY SHOWCASE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, March 7, 7:30-9 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The comedians of Middlebury College will be coming to the Town Hall Theater with a mix of sketch comedy, standup and perhaps a little bit of improvising. To make matters more confusing, they'll also be performing "Off Campus" on campus later that weekend in the Hepburn Zoo. Tickets \$5/\$10 available at townhalltheater.org, at 802-382-9222, or in person at THT's box office Monday-Friday between 12-5 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8

PHOTOGRAPHY OPENING RECEPTION IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, March 8, 4-7 p.m., Photoplace Gallery, 3 Park St. Opening reception for "Traces." Show runs through March 28.

"THE TEMPEST" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, March 8, 7 p.m., Black Box Theater, Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. See March 7 listing.

THREE ONE-ACT PLAYS IN BRISTOL.

Friday, March 8, 7 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. The Bristol Gateway Players will present three one-act plays: "Cindy and Julie" by Bruce Kane, "Universal Language" by David Ives and "Blazin' Pistols in Sleepy Ol' Bristol" by Carl Engvall, in collaboration with the Bristol Recreation Department. Admission by donation. Proceeds will be split between the Bristol Gateway Players and the Bristol Recreation Department.

SMALL ISLAND BIG SONG IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 8, 7:30 p.m., McCullough Student Center, Old Chapel Rd. This sweeping performance unites the seafaring cultures of the Pacific and Indian oceans, a region at the frontline of the climate crisis. Indigenous artists come together with filmmakers and poets to present irresistible oceanic grooves and soulful island ballads collected across 16 countries. Tickets: \$25/20/10/5, available at go.middlebury.edu/tickets or 802-443-MIDD (6433).

REED FOEHL BAND IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 8, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Join us for a night of folk music at its best. Foehl was born into a musical family and raised in a small New England town. His Americana-folk music tells stories with a voice that pushes boundaries while paying homage to tradition. Tickets: Table seating \$37/regular seating \$27, includes applicable fees. Available at 802-382-9222, www.townhalltheater.org or tickets@townhalltheater.org.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

WILDLIFE WALK IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 9, 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 us 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.

"LA FORZA DEL DESTINO" LIVE OPERA IN HD IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 9, noon, Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. In this METOpera HD broadcast, Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts Verdi's grand tale of ill-fated love, deadly vendettas, and family strife, with stellar soprano Lise Davidsen as the noble Leonora, one of the repertory's most tormented — and thrilling — heroines. Pre-show talk with OCM board member Jim Pugh beginning at 11:15 a.m. Tickets adult \$26/student \$12, available at townhalltheater.org or 802-382-9222.

THREE ONE-ACT PLAYS IN BRISTOL.

Saturday, March 9, 7 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. See March 8 listing.

"THE TEMPEST" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 9, 7 p.m., Black Box Theater, Hannaford Career Center, 51 Charles Ave. See March 7 listing.

CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL.

Saturday March 9, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall. Local favorite Adina Gordon will be calling, with red hot music by Red Dog Riley. Tickets \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

RAY VEGA AND HIS SIX PIECE BAND IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, March 9, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. New York born and bred musician Ray Vega is a University of Vermont faculty member, host of Vermont Public Radio's Friday Night Jazz and TRR, as well as Origin recording artist. His Vermont-based ensemble presents original compositions by Vega, which combine elements of Jazz, Latin and Funk. Tickets \$10 advance/\$25 door available at vergennesoperahouse.org.

TOP PICK

BE HAPPY AT THE SUNDAY, FEB. 25 SINGALONG AND STORYTELLING EVENT AT THE RIPTON COMMUNITY CHURCH. BRING YOUR STORIES, SONGS AND INSTRUMENTS FOR A CIRCLE AT 3 P.M.



Chipman Inn Silent Auction
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1pm-3pm
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chipmaninn.com/artauction



by Christopher Durang
Directed by Peter Kristoph

VANYA and SONIA and MASHA and SPIKE

A wickedly funny play about family, regret, hope, and the choices we make in life.

Feb. 29, March 1 & March 2 - 7:30pm
March 3 - 2pm



Town Hall Theater
Middlebury

Tickets: townhalltheater.org or call 802-382-9222
More info: middleburycommunityplayers.org

This production may not be suitable for children under 13. It contains adult language, sexual references, and several mentions of suicide. Parental discretion is advised.

Experienced Farmer/Gardener Needed to help feed hungry neighbors

Little Village Acres is a social venture of the founder of the Vermont Coffee Company. Our mission is to grow and process nutritious food: We cultivate our own land in Middlebury and serve as a processing facility for produce gleaned and donated from local farms. We donate 100% of the food we grow and 100% of the food we process to the hungry, the homebound, and the homeless in our community.

As we plan for the 2024 growing season, we are searching for a part-time, seasonal farmer/gardener who can help us manage the crops needed by our local food shelves. We will have regular volunteer helpers during the growing season and many more for harvest.

We need someone with experience growing crops and processing food, and who can appreciate and supervise our volunteers.

Can you help? Compensation is open for discussion.

Please email farmer@littlevillageacres.com for details.

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Middlebury, Vermont 05753

farmer@littlevillageacres.com

Creative creations on display in Vergennes

The 6th annual LEGO Competition and Exhibit will be held at the Bixby Memorial Free Library this Saturday. Presented by the Vergennes library and the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes, this year's viewing of all submissions will be from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 24.

Entries must consist primarily of LEGO, Duplo, Megabucks, or other LEGO compatible plastic bricks and related pieces. They must be original creations, not based on LEGO-designed kits or instructions found online, in a magazine, etc. Each entry is limited to a maximum of 18x18 inches and must be accompanied by a short description.

Registration deadlines for submission have already passed (that happened on Feb. 13) but it is still an awesome exhibit to check out for any LEGO-type enthusiast. If you're already registered, drop off your creation on Feb. 22, between 3-7 p.m.

Questions can be directed to Anthony Sawyer at Anthony@bgcvergennes.org or Mary Neffinger at mary.neffinger@bixbylibrary.org.



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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

WINTER SURVIVAL TIPS FOR GARDENERS



Nadie VanZandt is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from Panton.

Gazing out your window on a wintry day, you might think that springtime is a distant prospect, but there are many activities you can do this winter to get ready for spring.

Do you have old seed packets tucked away? Organizing them will make planning your spring garden easier. Sift through them and inspect their "sell by" date. When stored

appropriately in a dry and cool place away from direct sunlight, most seeds can last from one to ten years beyond this date, although their germination rate may likely be reduced.

Once you've taken stock of your seed packets, consider grouping them based on planting instructions like direct-sow seeds versus start-indoors seeds. You also could subdivide each group according to recommended planting date.

You can be creative when choosing storage for your seeds. Whether it's recyclable plastic bins

or three-ring binders with transparent pockets, many economical options are available to use for seed storage. With your seed organizer now ready, you can concentrate on garden planning and spend time choosing what seeds to order next.

Another timely project is to prepare your seed-starting station. Start by conducting an inventory of your current supplies. If you use them, take time to ensure that grow lights and warming mats are operating properly and repair or replace any damaged equipment.

Clean your old seedling trays by brushing off loose soil particles and washing in soapy water. Disinfect cleaned trays in a weak bleach solution (soak for at least 10 minutes in nine parts water to one part household bleach, then rinse) or by wiping them with undiluted 70% isopropyl alcohol.

Then don't forget to purchase bags of your favorite seed-starting potting mix and have everything ready for planting.

If you did not get to it last fall, gather your

small gardening tools and clean and sharpen them if necessary. Winter is the ideal time for this essential task.

Snowy days evoke a sense of calm, encouraging us to slow down and appreciate the beauty of winter. Snuggle up by the fire with a good gardening book, or take this opportunity to indulge in gardening publications to draw inspiration from beautiful gardens or learn new techniques.

If reading is not your cup of tea, there is a plethora of online gardening videos and podcasts to check out. In addition, you can find valuable gardening information on the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener Garden Resources webpage (go. uvm.edu/garden-resources).

For gardeners who enjoy writing, keeping a journal is a great way to articulate ideas and solidify plans. Whether you choose to use a traditional journal, write in a designated garden planner or explore the journaling features of software apps, each method will serve you well in gathering your thoughts.

SEE GARDEN ON PAGE 14



Pruning trees and shrubs in winter to remove dead, damaged or diseased wood can stimulate new growth and allow plantings to grow stronger.



PLANT YOURSELF HERE.

Reach readers who are interested in all things gardening and advertise on this page. Contact us today.

PUZZLES

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ACROSS

- 1. Home of Iowa State University
- 5. ___-fi (slang)
- 8. Mottled green and yellow fruit
- 12. Capable of thinking and expressing oneself clearly
- 14. Sports broadcaster Eagle
- 15. Midday
- 16. Kinsmen
- 18. Cable network
- 19. Simpleton
- 20. Brunch beverage
- 21. Fed
- 22. European capital
- 23. Native inhabitants
- 26. Mechanical device
- 30. Rare geese native

to Hawaii

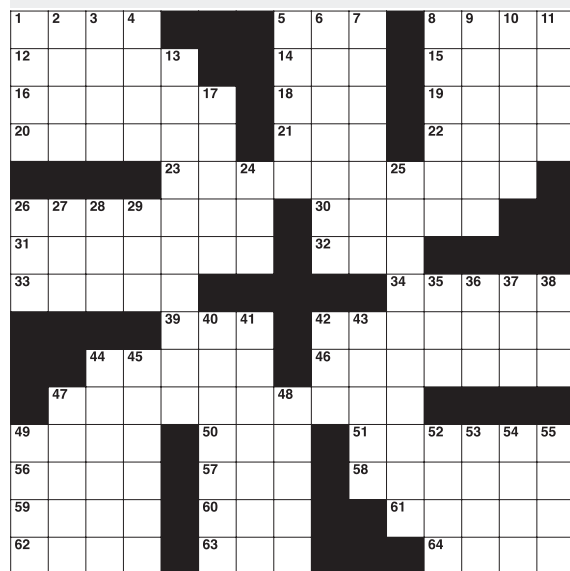
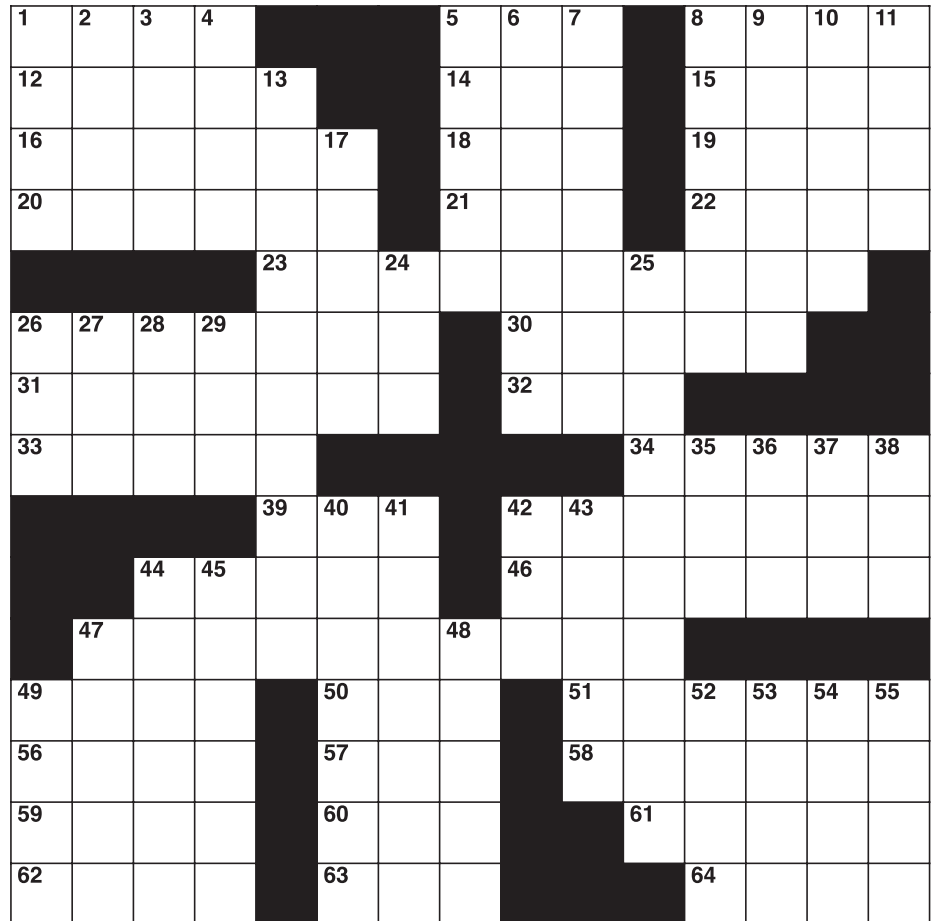
- 31. Bedroom furnishing
- 32. The products of human creativity
- 33. Mass transit option
- 34. Made a mistake
- 39. Sacred sound symbol
- 42. Large N. American reindeer
- 44. Dull and flat
- 46. Partner to huffing
- 47. Written works
- 49. Monetary unit of Serbia
- 50. Midway between east and southeast
- 51. Peninsula of southwestern Asia
- 56. Widely used

multiuser OS

- 57. Aggressive dog
- 58. Varnished
- 59. Hindu queen
- 60. Time units, abbr.
- 61. Farm animals
- 62. Capital of Latvia
- 63. Where golfers begin
- 64. Takes to civil court

DOWN

- 1. One who graduated
- 2. An inspired holy person
- 3. Electronic counter-countermeasures
- 4. A place to store things
- 5. Indian instrument



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

- 6. Spanish saloon
- 7. Whole number
- 8. Not fastened
- 9. Gives a boost
- 10. Lounges about
- 11. Interested in
- 13. Remove salt
- 17. Type of sword
- 24. Naturally occurring solid material
- 25. Gets involved without being invited
- 26. Feline
- 27. Bobby ___, NHL champ
- 28. "Kill Bill" actress Thurman
- 29. Hawaiian dish
- 35. Moroccan coastal region
- 36. Baseball statistic
- 37. Long period of time
- 38. Moved earth
- 40. Central Netherlands city
- 41. Take stock of
- 42. Central processing unit
- 43. Distinctive
- 44. Getting stuck
- 45. Loss of bodily movements
- 47. Veranda
- 48. Abrupt
- 49. What cats do
- 52. Expresses pleasure
- 53. Type of cheese
- 54. Professional STEM organization
- 55. Automatic data processing systems

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.



52 Main St
Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 989-7225

Tuesday-Saturday
10:30 AM - 5:30 PM

info@sparrowartsupply.com
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WE ARE MOVING!

We are moving just a few doors over on Main Street! We will remain open in our current spot **through the end of February**. Come stock up on supplies before we close for a couple weeks!

Stay up-to-date on our grand reopening by signing up for our newsletter at sparrowartsupply.com!



Yummy recipes for your dogs

We recently had an animal lover stop in the office here at the Addy Indy. Our greeters (Roxy and Sequoia) were up to the task and welcomed this visitor with wags and a few woofs. Turns out, this visitor had a couple delicious recipes for homemade dog treats to share.

Have any recipes of your own that your pet pals love? Send 'em on in and we'll share them with the Addy Indy readers.

TUNA FUDGE:

- 1 can tuna in water (including the liquid)
- 2 eggs
- 125 g/1 cup flour
- Pinch of turmeric (optional)

Mix all together.

Smear onto baking sheet (on parchment paper) to make a rectangle — approximately 12" x 13" works best. If edges are too thin or its too spread out, its a pain to cut and edges may burn

Bake at 350 F for 20 minutes +/-

Let cool and break or cut into pieces.

EGG TREATS:

- 2 eggs, whisked and poured into 8" skillet slicked with oil.

Medium heat and do not disturb till bottom is well cooked and spatula can flip it over in one piece and top looks pretty dry.

Once flipped, turn off heat.

Let cool, use pizza cutter to cut into small squares.



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Pets In Need HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Charlie

Charlie is a very shy young cat who we estimate to be a year old. He hasn't shown us his playful side yet. Charlie will need someone willing to give him the time and patience it will take while he adjusts to a new home. He gets along with cats but has never been around dogs.



Savannah

Savannah is a friendly 8-year-old who is ready for a new home where she will be showered with affection! She is very chatty and talks to people with a mix of meows and growls! Savannah seems to have nerve pain in her back legs and is on pain medication that she gets 2 times a day. The pain medication costs roughly \$80 for a year's supply. Savannah has lived with other cats but has a dominant personality with them. She has little to no experience with dogs.

Sutton

Sutton is part of our 3rd party adoption program and is still residing at home. She is a healthy 7-year-old American Longhair and has always been an indoor cat. She is talkative and playful, but can also be an affectionate couch potato. Her owner says she is independent and aloof at times. Sutton will fight with other cats and becomes aggressive toward dogs if they come around her, but she is incredibly sweet with people. She has not regularly been around children, but when children are visiting she is very friendly with them as long as they are respectful. Her owner reports that because she does not get along with other cats or dogs, her current living situation is not working for anyone involved. Being the only pet in the home would be the best-case scenario for Sutton.



Buster

Buster is a very charming 2-year-old, 25-pound beagle. He has happily co-existed with dogs and cats and loves spending time with our staff members.

Grey

Grey is one of three baby guinea pigs born at the shelter to mother Faeya (also available for adoption) on 1/18/24. The very next day an amazing foster volunteer took the family of pigs in until they were ready for adoption. In the foster home, they were extremely well-socialized. Grey's siblings have been adopted and he is ready to bring joy and heart-melting squeaks into a home of his own. With a playful spirit and affectionate nature, Grey is sure to fill your days with happiness.



Want to learn more?

Call or check our website. We may have a pet for you!
802-388-1100 | HomewardBoundAnimals.org
236 Boardman Street | Middlebury, VT



1348 CARVER STREET, BRANDON
\$329,500

THE HOME

A LOOK INSIDE ADDISON COUNTY HOMES FOR SALE

Beautiful and rustic charm to call home

Just three minutes from Brandon, you will find this warm and inviting Gambrel home. Upon entering you will be greeted with the rustic charm of a post and beam living room and a brick hearth with Soapstone woodstove. As you head upstairs to the three bedrooms, your eye catches the view of the snow-capped mountains from the living room window. The loft or office area provides a great view of the post and beams. Downstairs you will find a large full-bathroom and bonus room with built-ins that could be used as a main bedroom. The dining room is enormous featuring a wonderful bay window with seating. There are so many opportunities in this beautiful rustic home. Come and see what real Vermont living is like!



This week's property is managed by RE/MAX North Professionals, The Gridley Group, in Middlebury. More info at midvthomes.com.



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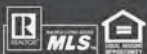
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A landmark in downtown Middlebury since 1814, this structure was the replacement of the original courthouse in this location and built in 1880. Declared the "handsomest courthouse in the state" by the Middlebury Register in 1883, its facade remains as picturesque as ever. Currently used as office space, with many of the original architectural details intact. Includes an elevator, sprinkler system, full basement and three floors above. Air conditioned, 10 foot ceilings, and a security system. Invest in downtown Middlebury and its history!



ipjrealestate.com

34 Main Street, downtown Middlebury
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EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

"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.

GARDEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

If you are more inclined toward doing craft projects, you could build a birdhouse or a bird feeder. Numerous plans are available in books or online to create whimsical houses for your feathered

friends. Better yet, why not create your own design?

Lastly, winter is the ideal time to prune trees and shrubs. Pruning does not need to be an intimidating task. Just focusing on the basics, such as removing dead, damaged or diseased wood (the "three Ds" of pruning) can stimulate new growth and allow your plantings to grow stronger.

However, invest time in learning strategic winter pruning techniques before heading outdoors. You can find expert advice from many online videos.

Time is fleeting, and spring will arrive before long. From first frost to first bloom, take the time to appreciate the quiet of winter while getting ready for your next gardening adventure.



Winter is the perfect time to browse gardening books to explore new gardening topics, learn new techniques or draw inspiration from photos of beautiful gardens.

ICE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Skating Club, a non-profit, partnered with the Town of Middlebury Parks and Rec to run lessons for almost 100 skaters from Addison County and the surrounding area. Club

skaters are ages five to 18 and have been practicing since late October.

During this year's show, the Middlebury Figure Skating Club will present a parent-child number, so there will be more than 100 skaters from the club in the show.

A big thanks to the club's coaches Anna Harrington, MariAnn Osborne, Hannah Harding and Melody Benson. The club is run entirely by a volunteer parent board, who have contributed countless hours to make this program a success.

One of the guest skaters this year will be Kaylee Dutil-Poulin from the Champlain Valley Skating Club. She is a sophomore at the University of Vermont studying Exercise Science with a minor in Nutrition. She has been figure skating competitively for 13 years. She will skate to "Feeling Good" because she has enjoyed it ever since seeing one of her role models skate to it. In addition, this song allowed her to continue her pattern of skating to jazzy and sassy songs, her favorite genre.

Don't miss this Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon of nostalgia, laughter, and awe-inspiring performances at Middlebury College's Chip Kenyon '85 Arena. Open to all. Tickets are available for \$6 via the Middlebury College Box Office (middlebury.edu/college/box-office) or at the door.

ADVICE

FROM
ADDISON
COUNTY
REAL ESTATE
PROFESSIONALS

WHAT IS THE REAL ESTATE INVENTORY LIKE THESE DAYS?

As of this moment, there are 26 homes listed for sale in Addison County. These vary from camp-like properties to a multi-million dollar estate in Goshen and just about everything in between. Only three of these have been on the market for less than 30 days. One would think, with such a limited inventory of available homes, that they would all sell quickly but that's not always the case.



AMEY RYAN
IPJ REAL ESTATE
MIDDLEBURY

One of the issues is the timing for buyers that are hoping to move locally. With less than 30 choices, most home sellers are unwilling to put their house on the market for fear it will sell quickly, then what? Where will they go next? What if the house they seek is not listed for sale? In a "normal" market (pre-Covid era) the number of homes for sale exceeded 200 in a given month. In fact, in July of 2019 there were 215 homes for sale in Addison County!

We are asked, daily, when things will change? When will it shift towards a buyer's market? When will interest rates go down? I wish I had some clarity on these answers. What I do know is that we have our work cut out for us but we'll do our absolute best to get our clients into their next phase of life!

Reach Amey Ryan at amey@middvermontrealestate.com.

The Addison Independent asked nine local real estate professionals for advice on understanding the housing market in Addison County. These columns will publish weekly here in the Arts+Leisure section.



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SUBSTANTIAL PRICE CHANGE ON 2 PROPERTIES IN ADDISON COUNTY



Crown Point Road Bridport

This parcel offers over 120 acres of rolling farm land with generous westerly views of the Adirondack Mountains. Enjoy a combination of open and wooded lands consisting of an estimated 32 acres wooded, 47 acres tillable, 36 acres of pasture, and 6 acres of wetland, including the Braisted Brook. The property is currently enrolled in the State Current Use Program and Forest Management Program to help ease the property tax burden.

MLS: 4951872

Price: \$395,000



1661 Lake Dunmore Road Salisbury

This sweet year round bungalow has been renovated, freshly painted and is move-in ready. Maintenance on this home is at a minimum with the standing seam roof, vinyl windows, updated furnace and a very usable back yard. The present owner added a nice mudroom/entrance in the front and there is a private deck on the back side of the house just outside the kitchen/dining room area. This is a very cute home for those wanting to live with simplicity.

MLS: 4981633

Price: \$275,000



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Discussion features performing artists



Small Island Big Song will perform in Middlebury on Friday evening, March 8.

PHOTO / TONY TSAI

SONG

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Environmental Center. All events are free and open to the public.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Motivated by their concern for the vast and vulnerable

Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, Taiwanese theater producer BaoBao Chen and Australian music producer/filmmaker Tim Cole spent three years visiting artists on their homelands, recording with their guidance in nature, and sharing songs from island to island. The outcomes include two award-winning albums, a feature film, educational programs, and a live concert that has toured around the world across four continents reaching over 200,000 people in live audiences since the world premiere in 2018.

Small Island Big Song features significant artists from throughout the Pacific and Indian Ocean nations, including Sammy, a Madagascan musician whose group Takira Sammy was called one of the world's best 10 bands by *Time* magazine; Vaiteani, the lead singer-songwriter of her eponymous band, one of the most popular acts in Polynesia today; Yoyo Tuki of Rapa Nui, pioneering fusions of reggae, folk, and funk with his mastery of Polynesian ukulele styles; Richard Mogu, a multi-instrumentalist who is a solo artist, session musician, and producer in Papua New Guinea; Aremistic, a Tahitian musician whose performances integrate traditional Polynesian instruments and rhythms with reggae, hip-hop, rock, folk and pop sensibilities; Yuma Pawang, a member of the Atayal tribe of Taiwan who honors preservation, transformation, essence, and social equity in film, music, painting, and performance; Mea Joy Ingram, an 18 year-old Motu drummer and dancer hailing from Papua New Guinea and Australia who represents the new generation of female log drummers emerging from Oceania; and Mathieu Joseph of Mauritius whose dedication to dance earned him the gold medal for dance at Les Jeux de la Francophonie.

Small Island Big Song was awarded the 2019 German Record Critics' Award for Album of the Year, the UK's Songlines Music Award 2019 for Best Asia/Pacific album, and was nominated for the US Independent Music Award for Best Concept Album.

Don't miss this chance to see Small Island Big Song at Wilson Hall in the McCullough Student Center on Friday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for the general public, \$20 for Middlebury faculty/staff and alumni, \$10 for youth, and \$5 for Middlebury College students. For tickets or information, call 802-443-MIDD (6433) or visit middlebury.edu/arts.

This panel discussion features performing artists from Small Island Big Song to discuss the impacts of climate change and explore how the arts can influence our relationship with the environment. Small Island Big Song is a collaborative multi-platform project uniting indigenous musicians across the Pacific and Indian Oceans through song in the face of climate change and cultural loss.

Moderator: BaoBao Chen (Taiwan), Producer/Manager, Small Island Big Song

Having produced and managed Small Island Big Song's two multimedia concert productions, two award-winning albums, documentary, as well as curating world tours across 18 countries in Europe, the USA, Asia and Oceania, BaoBao is one of Taiwan's most prominent producers of cross-cultural arts projects and an ISPA (International Society for the Performing Arts) fellow 2023-25. A vivid storyteller and fluent in English and Mandarin, she has a social media following of 130K+, and has been invited to speak at TEDx, WOMEX, APAP NYC, Stanford Live, and numerous arts festivals.

PANEL PARTICIPANTS AND MEMBERS OF THE SMALL ISLAND BIG SONG TEAM :

Mea Joy Ingram (Motu heritage, Papua New Guinea & Australia)

Mea comes from a long line of drummers and dancers. She was taught by her father, master percussionist Airileke Ingram in the tradition of Manus Garamut, Cook Island Pate, and Gabagaba Motu Mavaru. The Garamut drumming of PNG was traditionally an artform dominated by men, however Mea, having just turned 18, represents the new generation of female log drummers emerging from Oceania.

Aremistic (Tahitian heritage, Tahiti)

(French Polynesia)

Like the lively uplifting Tahitian rhythm he was named after, Aremistic's music could have only come from one island, Tahiti. A natural fusion of the island's cultural mix grounded in his Tahitian heritage, Aremistic's songs and performances integrate traditional Polynesian instruments and rhythms with reggae, hip-hop, rock, folk and pop sensibilities, often sung in Tahitian, French & English in one song. His recent performances at Aotearoa/New Zealand's 'Pasifika festival' and in Europe and the USA expanded his reputation as a voice for the Pacific Ocean.

Tim Cole (Australia), Director/Music producer/Filmmaker

Cole is an Australian music producer and filmmaker who's passionate about cross-cultural arts projects. He has produced numerous albums, films and concerts for Australian aboriginal, Torres Strait islander and Pacifica artists including Archie Roach, Telek, and Shellie Morris. He has also toured internationally with Circus Oz for 8 years as theater and sound designer with seasons on Broadway NYC & West End London. He was a senior music producer at CAAMA - Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association before beginning Small Island Big Song. Cole has received a Churchill fellowship and invitations to speak at the United Nations HQ, APAP NYC, and WOMEX.

Film screening: *An Ocean Songline*

Filmed over three years on 16 Island nations across the Pacific and Indian Oceans, this grassroots musical follows the ocean highways uniting ancient musical lineages. From Madagascar to Rapa Nui/Easter Island, Taiwan to Zenadth Kes/The Torres Strait. A heartfelt plea for

March 6, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Mahaney Arts Center 125
72 Porter Field Road,
Middlebury
Open to the public, free

environmental awareness and cultural preservation from those on the frontline of the climate crisis. A Q&A with the artists follows the screening. Sponsored by the Performing Arts Series, the Environmental Studies

Program, and Committee on the Arts. Run time: 83 minutes.