



## Thanks, Kathy

A constant at Midd. Studio School for decades, a well-known leader passes the baton. Arts + Leisure.



## Under way

High school teams, including Tiger girls' hockey, saw their first action of the season. See Page 1B.



## Sports Report

See our comprehensive look at winter teams at all the local high schools in a special section inside.

# ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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## Trump's deportation plans spark concern

### Some fear effect on farms, workers

**By MARIN HOWELL**  
ADDISON COUNTY — President-elect Donald Trump has made several promises of action he'll take upon entering office next month. Among those promises — carrying out mass deportations of immigrants living in the United States without legal permission.

without legal authorization in 2022. In Vermont, an estimated 1,000 migrant farmworkers — many of them potentially undocumented — work on dairy farms around the state.

So, what would Trump's mass deportation plans mean for Vermont, a state that relies on migrant farmworkers to play a key role in its agriculture industry? (See *Workers*, Page 10A)

## College offers advice for international travel

**By MARIN HOWELL**  
MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury College officials have offered some tips to members of the college community traveling outside of the country ahead of the upcoming presidential inauguration.

over winter break in light of the upcoming inauguration of Donald Trump, who attempted to ban travel from some countries to the U.S. the last time he was president.

Some colleges have encouraged international students to return to campus before President-elect Donald is sworn in on Jan. 20. Middlebury College's International Student and Scholar (See *Travel*, Page 19A)

## Vergennes uncovers \$1.3 million in old fund

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**  
VERGENNES — A recent Vergennes City Council discussion on potential Town Meeting Day ballot items livened considerably when City Manager Ron Redmond said he and the city's clerk and treasurer had learned a city fund with unknown origins contained \$1.3 million.

Redmond told the council on Dec. 10 that the fund was apparently founded back in 2002, but city hall employees can find no records of exactly who created it or (See *Vergennes*, Page 10A)



**By the way**  
Diane Lanpher represented the Vergennes-area in the Vermont House of Representatives for the past 16 years, but she lost a bid for re-election last month. Now the Green Mountain Care Board has hired the Vergennes resident as its Director of Legislative Affairs. In this role Lanpher will be the organization's primary liaison with the Vermont Legislature and will direct, (See *By the way*, Page 10A)

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## Bernie unplugged

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS is widely known as a pretty serious guy who tackles injustice and inequality in America head on. But he showed a lighter side this past Friday, when Vermont's senior senator hosted a Cookies and Carols event at Armory Lane Senior Housing in Vergennes, where he joined with elementary school kids in a singalong. See more photos on Page 17A.

Independent photo/Steve James



## Christmas lobby

THREE-YEAR-OLD LUCY ROT boldly offers her letter to Santa at Middlebury's Maple Landmark on Sunday while sister Eliza sits with the Jolly Gent to provide her wish list verbally. See more of Santa on page 9A.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Middlebury officers honored for heroism

### Police force welcomes new hires, K9

**By JOHN FLOWERS**  
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Police Department has a lot to be thankful for this holiday season.

As 2024 draws to a close, the department is preparing to welcome two new police officers and a police dog, while honoring several of its officers for acts of heroism during the year.

The full department gathered on Sunday, Dec. 15, to celebrate:

- The awarding of three Distinguished Service Medals — MPD's second-highest honor — which is conferred for "outstanding personal bravery

*"Despite the tremendous peril they both faced, neither Sgt. Hayes nor Warden Goodwin employed lethal force, but rather created more distance from the man and tried to convince him to comply."*

— according to the citation

or heroism through which the recipient demonstrates to some great degree characteristics of selflessness, personal courage, and devotion to duty."

Officers Ethan Jones and Jared Harrington earned their Distinguished Service Medals for their actions on Aug. 30. Just after 8 p.m. that Friday, Jones was dispatched to Porter Hospital for a report of a person screaming and causing a

disturbance in the driveway. He found a group of people standing around a vehicle occupied by a man, the man's wife and two children. The man, according to (See *Police*, Page 11A)

## Developers respond to looser Act 250 rules

### Exemptions allow for building more housing in state

**By CARLY BERLIN**  
VTDigger.org

VERMONT — When 10 apartments at the new Armory House building just outside of downtown Vergennes opened in June, they all had tenants within two weeks. To Peter Kahn, the building's developer, watching the new apartments fill up so quickly — most deemed as "workforce housing," and several as affordable to people with lower incomes — underscored the severity of Vermont's housing deficit.

"Seeing firsthand and experiencing the shortage at a personal level really illuminated how deep this problem is," Kahn said.

Kahn's plans for the Armory (See *Act 250 rules*, Page 18A)



DEVELOPER PETER KAHN is using temporary adjustments to Act 250 to build workforce housing in Vergennes. Here he is last week at new residences on Armory Lane.

Photo by Glenn Russell/VT Digger

## Middlebury's public works boss has roots in Vergennes

**By JOHN FLOWERS**  
MIDDLEBURY

Middlebury's new director of public works operations needs little introduction to the highway, water and wastewater departments he'll be overseeing.

David DiBiase, 38, is a lifelong resident of Vergennes, where he currently serves as fire chief. The Vergennes Union High School graduate (class of 2002) has spent most of his career in the construction and/or infrastructure arenas, most recently as deputy commissioner of the Vermont Department of Buildings & General Services (BGS).

But DiBiase was keen on getting closer to the workforce he's asked to manage, and he's now getting a (See *DiBiase*, Page 18A)

## Lincoln discusses school budget & operations

By MARIN HOWELL

LINCOLN — More than two dozen Lincoln residents gathered virtually and in person on Monday to offer input and ask questions about the fiscal year 2026 budget that Lincoln School District officials are developing.

School officials and community members discussed a variety of topics about district operations, including class sizes, food services and facilities. District officials also shared where they are in the FY'26 budget building process and on next steps.

Budget figures shared on Monday reflect \$5,179,245 in spending for the coming school year, up 5.1% from the current one. Local revenues are anticipated to total \$637,850, up 26.7%.

Education spending in the district is expected to be \$4,541,395 for FY'26, an increase of 2.64%. Current estimates project a decrease of 4.67% in per pupil spending, to \$13,995.

District officials noted in budget materials shared on Monday that some elements of the state tax formula have not yet been finalized, but with the information available school board members are "confident that the proposed budget and current formula will likely result in a decrease in both the per pupil and the tax rate from FY25."

The district's homestead tax rate is estimated to be between \$1.10 and \$1.17 per \$100 of assessed property value for FY'26, compared to \$1.26 in the current year.

Lincoln School Board Chair Jeanne Albert said district officials came into this year's budget season with some assumptions and priorities — that they would continue current services and programs but not add new ones.

She added that board members were mindful of large property tax increases this year and thought about fiscal stability and responsibility throughout the budget-building process.

District officials also wanted to keep the year-to-year increase

in education spending below 3%, a goal that's been accomplished in the current draft of the FY'26 spending plan, Albert said.

Superintendent Amy Cole noted that with each budget season district officials have learned more about what it costs to run the district and the Lincoln Community School, and thus have been able to take out contingency lines previously built into the budget and also set some money aside into a reserve.

"One of our goals is to have the savings for the district so that each year we can come out with a conservative budget that really reflects what it costs to run the district," she said.

Cole identified two areas of vulnerability that district officials are keeping an eye on. The first is the cost of tuition. Lincoln kids in middle and high school are offered full school choice, with the vast majority attending Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School.

"Schools send their tuition rates in January ... so we are in a bit of a guessing period about what we think that tuition rate will be," she said. "The second part of that is that we don't know how many kids, and we don't know where they're going to go. We have a pretty good handle on how many kids, but as you know families can move in and out of a district, families can choose to be homeschooled and then decide in the middle of the year they want to go to school at a school."

Tuition is one spending area the district has increased for FY'26, and also set aside some funds for contingency because of those unknowns. The most recent budget figures factor in \$1,993,200 for tuition to Vermont schools for FY'26, up \$261,926 from the current year.

### COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

District officials later opened the floor for community members to ask questions and provide feedback.

One resident asked if Lincoln (See Lincoln Page 3A)

*"One of the solutions that we currently do in our grades 5-6 classroom is that we actually have a part-time math teacher so that the math 5 and 6 are separated apart."*

— Lincoln School Superintendent Amy Cole

## Bristol organization aims to boost literacy

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Those walking around downtown Bristol in recent months may have noticed something new in the works at 10-12 Main St.

The space's new occupant is the Vermont Literacy Network, an early literacy organization that offers programs for students, educators and the community. Through its work, the organization strives to "create a more empowered and literacy-rich community."

Bristol resident Kayden Hamlin started the Vermont Literacy Network back in January, originally opening a facility in Stowe before relocating to Bristol in September. She serves as the organization's executive director.

At the time of launching the Vermont Literacy Network, Hamlin was working as a literacy interventionist in Franklin County and wanted to see if she could expand the reach of her work.

"That was everything that I wanted to do and more, and I just wanted to see how I could do that on my own and see if I could help more students outside of my (caseload)," Hamlin recalled during a recent interview.

That idea led to the creation of The Vermont Literacy Network's individual lessons program, which offer one-on-one support tailored to a child's reading and writing needs.

Lessons are also built around a child's interests. For example, if a student is interested in dogs, lessons could incorporate reading and writing about dogs as much as possible.

Centering programming around a child's interests is a key instructional strategy the Vermont Literacy Network uses in its work with students.

"I like to say that the child is the executor of their learning, and they are in charge of what they learn and how they learn it," Hamlin said. "They're not often given the opportunity to customize their learning, so I think the biggest thing is giving the child the power to be in charge of their learning and the understanding that that is their role and that will be their role for the rest of their lives, so how can we make that connection with them?"

### VARIETY OF PROGRAMS

The organization's offerings have expanded over the past year, and the Vermont Literacy Network now provides programming for educators and community events in addition to its work with students. Programs are offered in person and virtually.

Student programming has largely been geared toward children age 3-9, though the organization is working to expand its offerings into other age groups in the new year. Current student programming includes individual lessons,

literacy labs and book clubs. In the new year, the Vermont Literacy Network will offer a virtual Minecraft book club and American Girl book club.

As for professional programs, Hamlin said the Vermont Literacy Network originally offered programming similar to professional development in a K-12 school.

The organization is now working to rethink and expand its professional programming, such as by offering programs for preservice educators and working with the Vermont State Colleges System to provide courses.

"As educators you have so, so much of that (professional development) that you're required to do, so the goal in taking a step back from the way that we did that programming is now to do more teacher-centric programming," Hamlin said. "A big goal in 2025 is to really reframe how we do it and come up with creative solutions to fill the gaps in what teachers actually need."

The Vermont Literacy Network also organizes a variety of community events, including seasonal book swaps.

"Those are free community events. It's a book for a book; anybody can bring one book in, and they get up to 10 credits and can swap up to 10 books," Hamlin said.

The organization in recent months has also hosted story times, offered virtual read-alouds on its YouTube channel, and this month hosted a "Chocolate Literacy Lab" during Bristol's annual Chocolate Walk. Attendees could visit various chocolate stations in downtown Bristol to practice letter and sound identification.

### SCIENCE OF READING

The Vermont Literacy Network uses a structured literacy and science of reading approach to its instruction. The science of reading refers to a body of research centered

on how the human brain learns to read, and structured literacy is an approach to teaching students literacy skills that's based on that research. It provides explicit, systematic and cumulative instruction on key components of literacy.

There's been a shift in schools around the country toward structured literacy and away from a popular approach known as balanced literacy, particularly in response to concerning literacy rates and declining test scores.

In Vermont, Gov. Phil Scott in May signed into law S. 204, which, in part, directs schools that teach kindergarten through third grade to provide "systematic and explicit evidence-based reading instruction to all students." It's one of several bills related to the science of reading that have been passed around the country in recent years.

"I don't feel like what we're doing at Vermont Literacy Network is coming out of left field," Hamlin said. "Phil Scott has been pushing a lot of bills to promote structured literacy practices within Vermont, so I think we've come at a great time in that, but there's still a lot of work to be done to dismantle these structures and these systems that we've put into place."

Hamlin acknowledges that Vermont Literacy Network doesn't have all the answers regarding literacy education, but said the organization wants to work toward finding those answers while helping Vermonters do the same.

One way it's aiming to do so

is through the Network Learning Community, an offering of the organization that's aimed at engaging educators, parents and other community members around literacy education. The idea is to create an open space where individuals can come together to learn from one another, share resources and connect with experts on best practices.

"With the network the goal is that we are kind of filling the gaps where the information is provided, it's out there, but 'what does it truly mean and how does that apply to me and my life?'" she said.

The network will kick off with a virtual meeting on Jan. 15 from 6-7 p.m.

### LOOKING AHEAD

The Vermont Literacy Network has several other things in the works for the coming year. Hamlin said the organization in March will host an immersive fairytale event at Holley Hall, which will include a marketplace with different vendors, activity stations and a rotating storytime hour with various fairytale characters.

As the organization continues to grow, Hamlin said the goal is for community programming to eventually encompass offerings like book clubs for adults and different writing groups.

The Vermont Literacy Network is also looking to expand its student programming in 2025, ideally providing services for infants all the way up to the high school level. (See Literacy, Page 3A)



*"The child is the executor of their learning, and they are in charge of what they learn and how they learn it."*

— Kayden Hamlin



COMMUNITY MEMBERS BROWSE their options at a free book swap hosted by the Vermont Literacy Network in Bristol this fall. The early literacy organization, which moved into Bristol's Main Street in September, offers programming for students, educators and members of the community.

Photo courtesy of Kayden Hamlin

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### Pathway of light

LUMINARIA LIT THE way to the front door of the Sarah Partridge Community House on Friday evening, Dec. 13, where the East Middlebury Historical Society hosted local residents for a community carol sing. The parlor was filled to overflowing with singers of all ages and the carols were joyful and hopeful. The event was planned by Catherine Nichols. Bruce Yelton and his son, Sam, set up the outside candles. Together Linda Kelton, Sarah Wakefield, Laura Fedderolf and Henry Haskell decorated the Community House with holiday decor. Memorial Baptist Church provided books of carols, and The Waybury Inn ended the evening by providing hot cider and an assortment of festive cookies.

Photo courtesy of Peggy Peabody

## City eyes March ballot items

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The Vergennes City Council last week discussed two necessary and five potential Town Meeting Day ballot items that could be warned for residents to consider.

The first two ballot items are essentially housekeeping items. The first would change one provision in the voter-approved lease between the city and the Friends of the Opera House (FVOH). At issue is the amount of liquor liability insurance required for FVOH, the city and caterers/servers to carry for events in the opera house.

Currently the lease requires \$2 million of insurance, and FVOH and Redmond both have found that no insurance carrier will underwrite a policy for that amount.

“It just isn’t offered,” Redmond said. “There’s no way to get a policy for \$2 million.”

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns missed that item in its review of the lease it conducted for the city, but Redmond said Deputy Mayor (and restaurateur) Dickie Austin eventually discovered the issue.

Thus the lease must be amended, and any sale or lease of city property requires voter approval.

The second is a technical requirement from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service as a condition of a \$500,000 grant toward FVOH’s All Access Project. It “protects the historic features of the Vergennes City Hall/Opera House, to be reviewed and approved by the City Council” through approval of a 15-year easement.

The rest were discussion items that the council must decide on by January if any or all of them will make it onto the Town Meeting Day

ballot.

Some suggestions would create new funds, while others are existing funds, but the city’s professional auditor recommended that voter approval would technically make them more legitimate.

All are preliminary and, Redmond presented them in draft form as a basis for discussion.

• The third potential ballot item would “Request approval from the voters that the annual general fund budgets include an allocation to a Capital Improvement Fund. ... in order to fund repairs and improvements to city buildings, sidewalks, vehicles and equipment.” The Addison Northwest School District has such a fund.

For discussion, Redmond suggested “an amount equaling no less than the equivalent of 1 cent” on the tax rate, which now rises (See City ballot, Page 7A)

## Lincoln

(Continued from Page 2A)

voters will field the district’s FY’26 spending plan by Australian ballot or voice vote. Lincoln residents have previously voted on the school district budget by voice vote.

Voice vote, Lincoln School Board member Rob Backlund said, but there will also be an article asking Lincoln voters whether to move next year’s budget vote to Australian ballot.

Community members also asked district officials about:

**Expiring COVID-era funds.** The school board was asked how Lincoln school is dealing with the sunset of COVID-era federal funding, particularly in regard to mental health resources. Cole explained that the district did not receive Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funding, though the Lincoln learning community did when it was a part of the Mount Abraham school district.

She noted that Lincoln contracts with the Counseling Service of Addison County for a school-based counselor at the school three days a week.

“We have talked about potentially a part-time guidance counselor for those days that she’s not here because, also, the guidance counselors bring something sort of different to the table,” Cole said, though that was ultimately something district officials decided not to do this year.

**Food services.** Lincoln school runs its own food service program. When the district was established,

it contracted with MAUSD to offer pre-packaged breakfast and lunch. Last year, the district shifted to bulk meals from MAUSD that the Lincoln Community School could serve on its own.

Cole said the district began serving its own breakfast this year, reducing its contract with MAUSD. The plan is to end the MAUSD contract next year and make its own breakfast and lunch.

“We’ve been finding cost savings in that area, and we’re going to find some flexibilities,” Cole said.

For example, Cole noted that consulting Food Service Director Brooke Small is connected to the Farm-to-School community and has been able to provide ideas for the district’s food service program.

**Class sizes.** A parent asked how the district is thinking about a grades 3-4 combined class that’s expected to include 25 students next year.

Cole said faculty have been meeting to try and navigate how to address next year’s 3-4 class, and that the plan is to meet with professional staff working in grades 3-6 to try to work out a solution.

“One of the solutions that we currently do in our 5-6 classroom is that we actually have a part-time math teacher, so that the math 5 and 6 are separated apart. That might end up a solution that we build on; it could be additional staff in the classroom,” Cole said. “It’s on our radar, and we don’t have a solution to it yet.”

Cole noted that enrollment projections are fairly steady for the

next couple years, though the district is anticipating a slight increase. Current 81 students are enrolled at Lincoln Community School.

**Facilities.** Former LCS Principal Tory Riley asked about district facilities, both in the short term and how district officials are thinking about long-term facilities planning.

Cole explained that the district developed a first draft of a facilities plan and has been able to access a lot of grant funds for projects. For example, American Rescue Plan Act funds helped support a new floor for the multi-purpose room.

“What I’d really like to do is get out a thoughtful capital improvement plan to be able to say, ‘Hey, so three years from now we need to look at our HVAC system,’ but we need to bring some expertise in, other than me climbing through some HVAC tunnels to figure out what makes sense there,” Cole said. “We have received all of our files from MAUSD, so we actually have somebody who’s going to come out I think over winter break and help me go through all of those files.”

District officials added that the Lincoln School District has been paying around \$120,000 per year on a bond that it took on after withdrawing from the MAUSD, and that bond will retire in November 2027.

More budget information can be found at [www.lincolnsd.org/fy26-budget-information](http://www.lincolnsd.org/fy26-budget-information). The Lincoln School Board will adopt in January an FY’26 spending plan to present to voters in March.

## Literacy

(Continued from Page 2A)

“With that there will have to be a lot more partnerships with the community, local libraries and things like that, because our space is very small,” Hamlin said. “Having to branch out and making connections with the community is something I’m really excited about.”

Other goals for 2025 include opening programming up to include offerings for homeschool students, having more virtual

programming, and eventually to offer at least one program in every county in Vermont.

“That’s a lofty goal, but the intention with that is that there would be a pop-up at a local library or a local park that would just be one day to bring awareness and have that connection of ‘we’re not right here, but we have all of these virtual programs,’” Hamlin explained.

The Vermont Literacy Network’s biggest goal for next year is to

further establish itself in Addison County. Hamlin has thus far been heartened by the community’s engagement with events like the Chocolate Literacy Lab.

“There’s a level of community that is much greater here, I would say in Addison County in general, that I’m very excited to see what’s to come with that and the different relationships that we can form with individual people, but also different organizations,” she said.

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# Editorial

## Trump vs. a free press

While news of the fall of the Assad regime in Syria and those consequences have dominated international headlines this past week, along with worries the Arctic tundra is melting faster than expected, domestically the earth-shattering news was ABC's spineless capitulation to the president-elect.

If you missed the story, ABC settled a defamation suit in which George Stephanopoulos, host of ABC's This Week, incorrectly said Trump had been found liable of raping advice columnist E. Jean Carrol, rather than liable of sexual abuse. In the settlement, ABC agreed to donate \$15 million to Trump's presidential library and pay \$1 million in Trump's legal fees over the suit.

There's a lot to unpack in this story, which *Washington Post* media reporter Erik Wemple does well in a column Tuesday, but here are a few key points.

The March 2024 interview by Stephanopoulos was with Rep. Nancy Mace, R-South Carolina, who the host recalled had "courageously" shared the story of her own rape before being elected. How then, Stephanopoulos asked of Mace, could she endorse Trump for president when he had "been found liable for rape by a jury?"

It took Trump and his team of lawyers 8 days to file suit over the distinction: the jury ruled that he had sexually assaulted Carroll (forcible penetration), but it did not meet the precise definition of rape according to New York state laws at the time. It did, however, meet the common definition of rape, according to Judge Lewis A. Kaplan, who ruled in posttrial proceedings that the jury had found Trump "liable for rape under a common understanding of the offense."

(Kaplan wrote a very descriptive distinction of that understanding of rape versus the New York law, which is detailed in Wemple's column, but we'll spare our readers those unseemly details and instead note Wemple's column is linked in the online version of this editorial.)

ABC had initially defended the interview with Mace because the host's descriptions of Trump's actions were "substantially true," a legal standard that, according to Wemple, "allows for inaccuracies in a narrow bandwidth, so long as the gist of the segment remains accurate."

ABC's capitulation is unsettling because it sets the stage for Trump following through on his threats to punish any negative media of him and go after those who have "wronged" him in the past. True to form, Trump filed suit this week against the *Des Moines Register* and its pollster, J. Ann Selzer, for an outlier poll taken ahead of the election that showed Trump trailing in Iowa by 3 percentage points. *The Register* is owned by the newspaper chain Gannett, which was also named in the suit.

Trump, who has repeatedly called the mainstream media "corrupt," said this week: "I have to do it. We have to straighten out the press."

His comment is bull, of course. Mainstream media has been telling the truth, it's just that Trump doesn't like any truth that reflects poorly of him.

To be clear, Trump has been found guilty of sexual abuse, and several women who allege past relationships with him have alleged rape and sexual assault. ABC did make a mistake in using the broader definition of rape as defined by Judge Kaplan, and they should have recognized the error and made a correction at the time. That said, their case remained solid and winnable; nor are Americans shocked by allegations of rape against Trump, so what damage could there have been to Trump's reputation when the discussion is about the gravity of his sexual assault? In short, ABC did not need to cave. It did so for all the wrong reasons — to make amens, to have access.

As for Selzer and the *Des Moines Register*, conducting a poll and reporting about it is just that. Neither the *Register* nor the pollster did anything wrong.

Therein lies the danger: If Trump sets a standard that any reporting of him that isn't flattering is worthy of a suit or harassment, the nation's freedom of speech is in serious jeopardy.

But that's clearly what he's up to and how experts see it, including Samatha Barbas, a professor at the University of Iowa College of Law. "It's clear that Trump is waging war on the press," said Barbas in yesterday's *New York Times*. "Trump and his lawyers are going to use any legal claim that they think has a chance of sticking. They'll cast a wide net to carry out this vendetta."

And Trump intends to broaden the scope beyond defamation of his character. In the suit against the *Register* and Selzer, Trump is alleging the pollster violated the Iowa Consumer Fraud Act, which prohibits deceptive practices that occur in sales or advertising.

It's a ruse, of course, but it'll cost plenty to defend, and our hunch is that it will have a chilling effect on future news coverage by the *Register* and by Gannett's many news outlets.

Importantly, as part of that *New York Times* story, the reporters noted that "in Mr. Trump's own telling, winning his civil legal actions isn't always the point." In a libel case in which he famously lost to writer Timothy O'Brien, the reporters continued, over Trump's inflated monetary worth, Trump dismissed the loss and the money he spent as a victory of sorts: "I spent a couple of bucks on legal fees, and they spent a whole lot more... I did it to make his life miserable, which I'm happy about."

It's that brazen, narcissistic attitude that is so dangerous to democracy and that rings true of dictators. What's the anecdote? Only the public can defend the press's right to tell truth to power. If they don't, and if GOP leaders in the House and Senate continue cowering to Trump, he'll be able to effectively stifle criticism through harassment and financial intimidation. And make no mistake who will pay Trump's legal bills — one way or the other, the public will. While he lets on that he's pursuing these suits against the media at a personal cost and for the good of the country — nothing could be further from the truth.

Angelo Lynn



### Smiles for Santa

SALISBURY FIVE-YEAR-OLD Colton Decelle is all smiles after meeting with Santa at Maple Landmark in Middlebury on Sunday. His mom, Tiffany, looks pretty happy, too.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Getting trapped in a coat for fun?

Have you ever watched your friend's face disappear into someone else's winter coat?

No? Let me explain.

I was at American Flatbread with some mom-friends a few winters ago when this absurd thing happened. It was a busy night for the restaurant. The tables and chairs were crammed in a little tighter than usual. The people at the table beside us were getting ready to leave.

I watched them all stand up, push in their chairs, linger a bit. They were directly behind my friend, who was engrossed in conversation with the rest of our group. So she didn't notice when these strangers behind her began pulling their coats and scarves off the backs of their chairs and putting them on.

That's when a long black coat dropped like a shroud over my friend's face. And I realized in an instant she was being zipped inside the back of some woman's

apparently quite roomy coat. And the woman had no idea there was someone else in the coat with her! She was facing the other way!

I had an unobstructed view as this woman — who remained completely unaware of the significant contribution she was making to my physical comedy lived experience — simply walked away, the coat sliding up and gracefully off of my friend, who sat there for a second in shock before we all exploded in laughter.

One of the best things about winter's arrival, and the return of our big, long heavy coats, is that I can reenact this ridiculous moment for my kids whenever I want. Whenever we need a little pick-me-up, a little surprise joy, I can stand behind them, drop down my coat and "accidentally" zip them in.

Thankfully they love it as much as I do.

### Clippings

By Megan James



## Lone goose's cry was symbolic

Have you ever been haunted by a sound?

It was a lovely autumn evening, one of many we had this year. We sat outside, my husband and I, enjoying what we thought might be a last time by our fire ring as the air began to chill. Darkness surrounded us, except for those flickering flames — the sky blackened by clouds with just a faint star here or there showing through. Too late for bird calls, quiet in the neighborhood, the fire crackled, we shared occasional words.

Then came the sound: a single goose high above us, flying through the night. Its call surprised me. I love to watch a wedge of geese flying south on a fall day, or north as spring arrives. They are a harbinger of what is coming seasonally, but also a reminder of those with whom we share our world. I usually hear their many voices and look up to locate them, to guess which bit of marsh or lake they might be heading for. A lone goose in the dark seemed different.

I couldn't help but think that it had somehow lost its family, its friends, its way. Why had it not settled in some wetland or perhaps a recently harvested cornfield? Did it feel too vulnerable to come to earth without a cohort? Maybe I was wrong. Maybe it was actually amongst a flock, taking its turn on audio, but that was not the image I held. The sound seemed so solitary, so lost in the night sky. Alone.

I read about how so many in our society are feeling alone. Not the person who is hiking the Long Trail or living in a small house in the middle of the woods. Rather the person who is scrolling through their phone while eating lunch with other people nearby, the one walking into their home with their eyes on that screen. For some people, the pandemic brought the opportunity to walk or bike outside with family or friends. I would see them going by my house, out on the trails, chatting as they passed. For others, it brought further isolation and more dependence on an online sort of life.

But we are, with few exceptions, social animals. We depend on one another not just for access to food or transportation. We need — we require — social

interactions. In-person social interactions. An actual pat on the back, hug, or handshake, because we need physical connection. We need conversation and interactions with others to sort out our thoughts and accomplish needed projects.

I have to confess to feeling depressed this November, but what lifted me out of those feelings was being with other people. Not so much to discuss what I was feeling but to have connections. The settings that lifted me up the most were the two art-based activities with which I am involved. There is something about using your hands and the more creative part of your thinking that enhances the flow of thought, of conversation, and of connectivity, even though each of us works on our own piece. Around that time, I came upon an article citing the ways that art can help us build community, include a wider range of participants with varied viewpoints and experiences to come together. I thought about how I used to be part of a chorus, and the research that singing as a group — particularly in harmony — boosts both physical and mental health. The resurgence of board

games, especially no-competitive ones, likely reflects this need.

Perhaps, as we approach this new year, we might explore more ways to build the arts into our own lives and those of others. Gift a teen (or a parent) with a pottery class, join a community chorus, start a writing group with people of all ages. And as we grapple with the issues of town and school budgets and futures, maybe seek ways to utilize art as well as sticky notes in our efforts to find direction.

Sometimes it seems so dark out there, it seems hard to find our way. Lonely, lonesome, alone — it doesn't have to be that way. Perhaps that goose was calling out for its flock: "Where are you? I am here. Can I join with you?" The isolated person, bent over their screen, may actually be trying to say, "I am here. Come and be with me." Consider art as a way to come together with others where small talk is not required. When (See *Ways of Seeing*, Page 5A)

## Letters to the Editor

### Northlands a boon to city

On behalf of the Vergennes Partnership, a shout out of thanks to Northlands Job Corp students, faculty and administration! The year has seen exceptional collaboration, students got involved with the creation of public art, exhibited their culinary skills, wrapped holiday lights in the park, refurbished the Macdonough Park kiosk and more. Students graduating from Job Corp's various training programs are leaving campus with career-minded goals and valuable skills. Their future is looking bright!

Julie Basol Ferrisburgh

### Book banning opposite of love

I have been struggling for weeks to find the best words to articulate why banning books is not in the best interest of anyone. I've been looking for words to express this in a way that seems less emotional and, arguably, more rational. What I've come to realize is how impossible that task is because the idea of banning books evokes all the emotions and feelings — anger, frustration, confusion, alarm, sadness — and it should!

Books allow people to learn, understand, and connect. They teach us about ourselves and the world around us. Books ultimately help us learn empathy and compassion. Books save lives, in so many ways.

Since learning to write my first word — "love" — I have spent my entire life trying to embody that message. Everything I do or have done both professionally and personally comes from a place of love. Seeing this battle in our school goes against that. Banning books gives way to more hate and more intolerance. It closes the door on learning and acceptance. It creates yet another barrier for us all to become connected.

Banning books is the opposite of love. It is the opposite of education. In fact, it is the opposite of freedom, which our country is supposed to be founded on.

I stand in solidarity with our teachers who show up every day for our children despite all the obstacles they endure.

I stand in solidarity with our fellow community members who are being targeted with more hate.

I stand in solidarity with the folks who just want to live and thrive.

I stand in solidarity with LOVE.  
Angela Scavo, Psychologist  
Middlebury

### Christmas must be coming to the Commons

Two-thirty on Tuesday and I looks out and sees

Our own Santa Claus putting lights on our trees.

It's blowing and snowing and cold as can be

But dear Santa brought Christmas for you and for me!  
*Editor's note: Betty Hempel, who lived at The Commons in Middlebury before she passed away in 2018, wrote this poem more than 10 years ago in honor of Dick Pearson. Dick, who submitted this poem for our holiday coverage, recalled how Betty had seen him out the window of her Commons apartment and was prompted to record her thoughts in verse.*

Dick Pearson Addison

### Group to defend our democracy

I am troubled by what Spanish writer George Santayana, said. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Santayana enjoins us to recognize the echoes of painful history and do what we can to prevent its recurrence. History is cyclical, but we can never anticipate how recurrence will manifest. It's never identical. And (See *Mayer letter*, Page 5A)

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# Letters to the Editor

## Books questioned help children accept themselves

I strongly oppose the removal of any books from our schools. As a family physician I work every day to better the physical and mental health of children in our community. I can attest that accepting children for who they are and providing a safe and welcoming space for all allows for healthy development and growth into their true authentic selves.

For those saying a unit about gender identity is not age appropriate for kindergarten, consider the following: Between the ages of 2 and 4 years old, children develop an understanding for the differences between genders, learn to use gendered pronouns (he/him, she/her, etc.), and can identify their own gender. Imagine you are 4 or 5 years old and your identity and self-expression do not match what your family, friends or teachers

expect of you. This can be confusing and anxiety provoking.

Studies have shown that at least 50% of children and adolescents who are gender diverse or transgender suffer from anxiety and depression (compared to about 20% in their age matched peers) and up to 40% may attempt suicide. How can we help these children? When they are supported to be their authentic selves the risk of depression and suicidal ideation return to the same rate as their peers and rates of anxiety remain only slightly higher.

Having these books available in the classroom signals to children that they are safe and supported in their school.

I would encourage everyone to read these books. They are well-written picture books using age-appropriate language. They deliver messages of self-exploration,

affirmation, and inclusion. They provide words for children to better express what they already feel or know to be true about themselves. There is no sexual content in these books.

I have heard people say "just let kids be kids"; I would argue that these books are helping to do just that for a small yet very vulnerable group of kids. When children are free to be themselves, they focus on what kids should be doing — learning and playing — instead of worrying that who they are is wrong or needs to be hidden.

This world is already a stressful and overwhelming place for our kids. Let's continue to foster an environment of acceptance and respect for all of the children in our community.

**Renee Bratspis, M.D.**  
Middlebury

## ACSD shouldn't consider closing schools at present

Now is not the time for the Addison Central School District Board to tackle the question "How Small is Too Small?" The reasons for not changing the current town-based elementary school configuration are:

- The book banning discussion.
- The complexity of the state-mandated changes in FY26 CLA homestead and non-homestead school district property tax calculations.
- Addressing Ripton parents request to recruit students from other ACSD schools to keep all six grades in their town school during FY26.
- The challenge of passing a FY26 school district budget in March 2025.
- The upcoming school elections for the Ripton, Weybridge, and Middlebury school board seats.

The good news is that I have full confidence in Superintendent, Wendy Baker, and Business Manager Matt Corrente, Director of Operations, who functions as a Chief Financial Officer. They have the expertise and insights to resolve these issues with assistance of the ACSD school board and ACSD staff.

I was shocked when I saw the projected FY26 enrollment numbers on pages 32 and 33 in the budget presentation published with the Dec. 16 school board meeting agenda. The six rows and eight columns contain 48 values that tell stories voters need to know about projected elementary enrollments and classrooms in the Fall of 2025.

They show a projected decline in elementary school enrollments for FY26.

For the numerically challenged I

would add a seventh row between Projected Enrollment and Projected Classrooms.

Here is my summary of the data showing two key forecasts for each town's elementary school for the fall of 2025. It shows the number of K-5 students and number of classrooms:

Cornwall (86 students, 5 classrooms); Salisbury (69, 5); Shoreham (52, 3); Weybridge(47, 3); Bridport (42, 3); Ripton (29, 2); Middlebury (330, 21); All Small Schools (325, 21).

The good news is that the total ACSD K-5 enrollment remains evenly split between Mary Hogan and that Salisbury, which has the newest facilities, and Weybridge are projected to grow by 4 and 5 students respectively.

**McLaughlin**  
Middlebury

## Mayer letter

(Continued from Page 4A) therein lies our dilemma. I don't think Santayana got it quite right. History doesn't so much repeat, as mutate, not unlike a flu virus, and so we are unprepared.

Eduardo Galeano (1940-2015) Uruguayan journalist, writer and novelist observed, "History never really says, 'Goodbye.' History says, 'See you later...'"

Researching my two books about the Nazi years in Europe was a deep dive into the fragility of Germany's Weimar democracy and the rise of the Nazis. A significant portion of blame for the Third Reich rests with the passivity of German people and institutions, such as the press and the church, and extreme polarization of Germany's parliament, the Reichstag, until it was too late to stop Hitler and his minions.

Many of us are concerned about the next four years. Health care,

public health, climate threats, wars and instability, economic distress, threatening marginalized and LGBTQ+ people, demonizing the free press, and perhaps most important of all, threats to our fragile democracy. Here in Vermont, we are concerned for the safety and well-being of migrant farmworkers who are the backbone of our dairy industry.

We have been down this road before, and it ended badly. "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing." —Edmund Burke, (1729 – 1797; Anglo-Irish statesman and philosopher)

Several of us recently met to form a Middlebury-area chapter of INDIVISIBLE, a nationwide organization of more than 8,000 groups, 18 in Vermont, to be the loyal opposition. If you'd like to be part of this effort, see the INDIVISIBLE website: [indivisible.org/resource/guide](http://indivisible.org/resource/guide)

Our next meeting will be in January. We are in the process of registering our group and will communicate about our next meeting. Anyone interested can contact us at [indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com](mailto:indivisiblemiddlebury@gmail.com).

Please join us.

**Jack Mayer, MD, MPH**  
Middlebury

## Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A) social animals of whatever ilk are together, they are often merely going about doing their individual pursuits, but they are with each other, sometimes nudging or even bumping into each other. They feel the comfort and the safety of the

group. That's why the lone goose's call seems so mournful to me. It needs its flock. We all need that.

Laurie Cox is a retired school counselor and longtime Ripton Selectboard member.

# New Rep. learning the ropes

As the newly elected state representative from northwest Addison County, I want to express my great thanks and excitement to the voters of the greater Vergennes area. It was by your enthusiastic response in November that I am gratefully slated to be seated with 49 other new members in the Vermont



**Legislative Review**  
by Rep. Rob North,  
R-Ferrisburgh

House of Representatives. This is the second-largest turnover in the statehouse in history, a testimony to the change that is desired and the amount of work that is ahead of us this biennium.

I have completed the training on state operations with my freshman class and my schedule is booked solid with agency and department orientations along with professional and NGO meetings aimed to acquaint us with all the people with whom we'll be interfacing and the needs felt across the state. It's a bit like being at the end of a firehose at this point and I'm enjoying absorbing as much of it as I can.

I want to encourage you by noting that the incoming class is full of very competent and enthusiastic people from

all across this great state. We enjoyed a wonderful time of bonding during our orientation together at the statehouse. Our class comprises a full one-third of the House and is nearly a 50/50 composition of Democrats and Republicans, and we share much more in common than we differ. This group, along with our more experienced senior colleagues, is poised to work together to solve the many tough problems facing Vermonters.

I plan to keep you informed of our progress as the year gets underway, after being sworn in on Jan 8, via periodic editorials here as well as on Facebook and my website [NorthForVTHouse.com](http://NorthForVTHouse.com). I'm very excited to serve you.

## Nonprofits help in housing crisis, but they need aid

Lately there have been several articles and letters concerning the lack of affordable housing in Addison County. As everyone who reads this newspaper is well aware, Vermont is suffering a serious housing crisis, especially for low-and moderate-income families. Given that it has been years in the making, it's no surprise that solutions are, to put it mildly, extraordinarily challenging to achieve.

As I understand the issues, well-meaning but cumbersome regulatory processes, the spiraling costs for construction, a lack of capital and diminishing government funding are some of the major drivers of the current crisis. Additionally, investors looking for high profits from "churning" real estate and converting leased housing to short-term rentals have greatly exacerbated the housing problem in Vermont and throughout the country.

One ray of hope I've seen is the efforts not-for-profit organizations are making to address this situation in our county. We are fortunate to have Habitat for Humanity, John Graham Housing Services, HomeShare, HOPE and several other groups doing what they can in their respective areas.

I am especially impressed with the efforts of Addison Housing Works after I visited several housing projects the organization has completed. Their stewardship of manufactured housing communities, including taking on major infrastructure improvements

that previous owners neglected, is a prime example. It is clear the organization has had a substantial, positive impact on the lives of the people who live in the properties AHW has built, maintains and manages.

Unfortunately, their waiting lists are long and there is so much more to be done if we are to make

affordable housing available for all our hard-working residents.

I hope folks who have the means will consider donating time and/or money to help our friends and neighbors find lasting and affordable housing solutions.

**Don Miller**  
Middlebury

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

## Letters to the editor

The Addison Independent encourages readers to write letters to the editor. We believe a newspaper should be a community forum for people to debate issues of the day. Because we believe that accountability makes for responsible debate, we will print signed letters only. Be sure to include an address and telephone number, too, so we can call to clear up any questions.

If you have something to say, send it to: Letters to the Editor, Addison Independent, 58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753. Or email to [news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com).

## Your Partner in Eldercare



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## Obituaries

## Scott Morgan Needham, 79, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Scott Needham of Middlebury, age 79, died of pancreatic cancer on Dec. 11 at the McClure Miller Respite House in Colchester. He was born at Porter Hospital in Middlebury on June 5, 1945, to parents Pauline “Polly” (Morgan) Needham and Charles Reynolds “Rennie” Needham.

Scott was raised in Middlebury and was a 1963 graduate of Middlebury Union High School and was one of the first classes to enter the new building as a 7th grader. He also attended the new Mary Hogan Elementary School and was proud to say that Mary Hogan had been one of his teachers.

His college education took him to Massachusetts, where he graduated from Boston University and where, while teaching, he met his wife of 53 years, Marilyn (Ruggiero) Needham. Their first date was at a party of The AFT Teachers’ Union.

They were married on Aug. 29, 1971, and lived and worked in the Boston area until retirement. Scott worked at a few different jobs in his life — security guard, teacher, retail manager. His first job as a teenager was at Lazarus Department Store in Middlebury and his last employment was at Middlebury’s Elderly Services.

While there, he drove a bus, helped raise money for the new building and began ESI College. He always said his favorite job in his lifetime was driving a bus for Elderly Services.

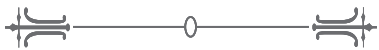


SCOTT MORGAN NEEDHAM

In 2003, Scott and Marilyn took advantage of early retirement opportunities.

They sold their house in Massachusetts and moved back to Scott’s homeland, Middlebury. They bought a new home and built a mother-in-law apartment for Scott’s mother. Polly lived with them for six and a half years until her death in 2009 at the age of 91. Scott and Marilyn thrived in their new environment. Scott reconnected with old friends, where he headed up MUHS Class of 1963 reunions and annual breakfasts. He was very active in the Middlebury Rotary Club, and for many years he was the President of Friends of Panther Hockey, a fan group that provided support for Middlebury College Men’s and Women’s Ice Hockey Teams.

Scott loved to host parties and



## Andrew C. Neil, 52, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — On Dec. 4, 2024, surrounded by his loved ones, Andrew Charles Neil, a Bristol native, born May 16, 1972, passed away after a year-long battle with lung cancer.

Andrew was the happiest when he was spending time with family and friends, working on any of his numerous construction or home renovation projects, or taking time to enjoy his favorite hobby of deep-sea fishing. Although Andrew could be reserved at times, and very stubborn all the time, his deep love and loyalty for his family and friends could always be felt and known. Andrew never hesitated to

give a helping hand to anyone if he was able.

Andrew is preceded in death by his parents, Paul Arthur Neil, died May 5, 2009, and Carolyn Mae (Phillips) Neil, died Sept. 8, 1996. Andrew is survived by his wife, Mallory K. Neil; his sons, Avery Austin-Neil, Nicholas Austin-Neil, Keegan LaPlante and Alex LaPlante; stepsons Skylar Murray and Dominick Ekroos; as well as his siblings Kevin Neil, Brenda Neil, Colleen Culligan, Lisa Clark and Karen Neil.

There will be a celebration of life for Andrew after the holidays. A date will be set for January. ◊

gatherings and was a great cook. He always had a new plan and idea, was a great organizer, and was very generous to all he met.

Scott and Marilyn had a passion for travel. During their time together they visited over 80 countries on six different continents. Their last trip in March 2024 was to Japan and South Korea. Scott always pushed Marilyn to go to exotic places. One of the most exotic was their trip to Myanmar in 2014. They did four African safari trips, which were Scott’s favorites, and visited many countries in Europe, Asia, and South America.

Scott leaves behind his wife Marilyn; a few cousins; fur babies Lily and Daisy; and many wonderful friends. He was predeceased by his parents, brother Stephen, Marilyn’s parents and sister-in-law Carol Ruggiero.

A Memorial Service will be held at the Middlebury United Methodist Church, 47 North Pleasant Street, on Saturday, Dec. 28, at 11 a.m. A reception will follow the service. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Addison County Home Health and Hospice, 254 Ethan Allen Hwy, New Haven, VT 05472.

We want to thank those who supported us during the past seven months of Scott’s illness; ACHHH and nurses Emily and Wayne, Porter Hospital Emergency Department, and all our friends and neighbors. Thanks, too, to Scott for being so strong right to the end. ◊



ANDREW C. NEIL

## Barbara ‘Bobbie’ Andrews, 91, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Our mother, Barbara “Bobbie” Andrews, died Friday, Nov. 29, surrounded by her children. She had written her own obituary, in part because she didn’t want to burden her children with that task, and in part because she valued accuracy and clarity in writing, something she strove for in her professional life. In her own words:

Barbara Andrews was born Sept. 19, 1933, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and grew up on the Corsica River, near the town of Centreville. She was the daughter of Clarence and Margaret (White) Woodward.

She graduated from Centreville High School in 1951 and Penn State University in 1955, and then worked in the Personnel Dept. of the Link Belt Co. in Philadelphia. She married Robert Conquest in 1957 and moved to Norfolk, Va., where he was serving in the Navy, and she worked as a reporter for the Norfolk Evening Paper.

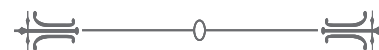
They moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where Bobbie worked in the Public Relations Office of the Cleveland Orchestra and then for the Cleveland Press. Their four children were born there.

In 1970, the family moved to Shelburne, Vt. Bobbie worked as an Early Education teacher and

BARBARA ‘BOBBIE’  
ANDREWS

then for Garden Way, in Charlotte. Later, she worked for the American Cancer Society as Manager of the Hope Lodge, and eventually as Area Director for Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties. She met her second husband, David (Dave) Andrews, an Anthropology professor at Middlebury College, who served on the Cancer Society Board, and they married in 1987.

Shortly after their marriage, they lived for a year in Honduras, as Dave did anthropology research on a Fulbright Scholarship. In 1989 they moved to Middlebury, where Dave continued teaching anthropology at Middlebury



## Frederick James Barnes, 86, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Frederick James Barnes departed this earthly life on Dec. 13, 2024, in Middlebury, Vt., at the age of 86. With him he brings the magnificence of his musical spirit and gifts to his departed family and friends who await his arrival to sing and rejoice again at the sound of the melodies and tones he could raise from a piano, as if sent to him on a ray of light from heaven.

Fred was born the son of Warren Whitfield Barnes and Anna Elizabeth Barnes (née Daw) on June 10, 1938, in Hackensack, N.J. Fred is predeceased by his brothers, Warren and Richard; sister, Doris; and sons Randolph (“Randy”) and Brian. Fred was the proud father of five sons, Frederick Conger, Randolph Warren, and Brian Robert, with his first wife, Eleanor Conger; and Bryce Frederick (Jessica) and Evan Fraser (Brigid), with his second wife, Maureen Fraser. He also leaves behind his seven grandchildren, Coleman Vossbrink, Emerson Sachi, Maya Nicolette, Colin Fraser, Liam Carroll, Clare Cornelia, and Andrew Fraser.

Fred was a Renaissance person at heart. He was filled to the brim with knowledge gained through his varied life experiences, interests, and work as a musician, singer, songwriter, bricklayer, craftsman, health kinesiologist, and avid reader. He could fix or build nearly anything.

As a child of the 1940s and 1950s, he joyfully spent his days outdoors with great ingenuity, building everything from a dam to form an ice-skating pond from a creek, an underground fort (to hide from parents and the “authorities”), a giant sling shot anchored into the ground (to send objects into low orbit), and a cannon made from pipe (only tested on a golf course). He frequently enjoyed the end of the Christmas season by collecting discarded Christmas trees with friends in Hackensack for a spectacular holiday celebration



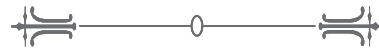
FREDERICK JAMES BARNES

that illuminated the winter evening sky, even drawing the audience and admiration of the local fire department.

Fred was strong-willed at times, but he was friendly with a quick sense of humor and a wellspring of entertaining stories. Fred also possessed enormous compassion for the suffering and dispossessed of the world. After serving his country in the National Guard for six years, he fought injustice throughout his life and was a steady advocate for peace, nuclear disarmament, safe working conditions in the construction industry, and environmental protection.

Fred’s true passion in life was his music. As a child, he was inspired by the legendary jazz pianist Art Tatum with his rendition of Cole Porter’s *Begin the Beguine*, and in his adult years by Bill Evans’ *Waltz for Debby*. Fred spent years as a pianist and vocalist on the Cunard Line cruise ships *Queen Elizabeth 2* and *Countess* and followed this experience with several years as the house pianist for the Sheraton Russell Hotel, on Park Avenue in New York. During this time, he studied with jazz pianist Jack Reilly in Brooklyn, N.Y., and enjoyed mentoring from jazz great and friend Dick Hyman.

Throughout his retirement, living in Middlebury, Vt., Fred remained



## Nancy Ann Klinefelter 93, of Crown Point, N.Y.

CROWN POINT, N.Y. — Nancy Ann Klinefelter, 93, passed away Dec. 14, 2024, at Elizabethtown hospital. She was born Nov. 26, 1931,

in Valhalla, N.Y., the daughter of Helen and George Lee.

Nancy worked for many years with her husband, Jerry, for Commerfords with exotic animals,

College, and Bobbie worked as Manager of Round Robin, a nonprofit shop that benefits Porter Hospital. After retiring, she continued to be busy with volunteer work; as a member of the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society; and with travel, including 13 winters in Prescott, Ariz., where she loved to hike.

Our mother is survived by her husband, David Andrews; and her children, Chip Conquest, Meg Gonzalez, Caroline Shortsleeve and Mark Conquest; stepchildren Brian Andrews and Karen Slater; nine grandchildren, and sister Eleanor Hunt.

A memorial will be held at a later date, in Middlebury. Memorial donations may be made to Champlain Valley Union High School, COTS, or a nonprofit of your choice.

Mom included two other items in her obituary. The first was an editorial directive included on a scrap of paper: “I refuse to ‘pass away’, I do agree to ‘die.’” The other was this: “She thrived on her many work experiences and the love of her children. I am most proud of my legacy — that I leave four children who will always put more into this world than they take out.” No mom, that was you. ◊

active on the music scene as an accompanist, soloist and instructor of students of all ages in jazz piano. Through his music, he made countless friends in the Middlebury community.

Fred possessed the duality of a rose, paradoxical in its splendor and fragrance, with a sharpness that can sometimes inflict pain. Fred suffered the loss of his sons Randy and Brian and battled with memories and experiences from his childhood that never seemed to cease their pursuit of him. At times he struggled with close family and personal relationships, unable to fully comprehend how much he was loved, nor how much joy or pain he brought to others.

But it is love that ultimately prevails and lives in the hearts of those who knew Fred. And with his transition, Fred’s family is eternally grateful to the countless friends, neighbors and professionals from the Middlebury community who supported and cared for him, including his guardian angels at Age Well Vermont, Congregational Church of Middlebury, Middlebury Natural Food Co-Op, and Porter Hospital, along with the friends and staff at Two Brothers Tavern who kept him company, even sometimes before their doors opened for the public.

Fred will be missed by many. While he now walks on the path of the infinite, those he leaves behind will always hear the beautiful sound of his music that remains in their hearts. It is with sorrow and joy we say, goodbye for now.

A Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 11 a.m., at the Congregational Church of Middlebury. Donations in Fred’s memory are welcome at Age Well Vermont, 875 Roosevelt Hwy., Suite 210, Colchester, VT 05446.

Arrangements under the direction of Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Home. Online condolences at: [www.sandersonfuneralservice.com](http://www.sandersonfuneralservice.com). ◊



NANCY ANN KLINEFELTER

and also in circuses. Nancy is survived by her three daughters, Sandy Wood and her husband Tim of Alabama, Robin Berlanti and her husband Ron of Massachusetts, and Raistlin Blackstone of N.Y.; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Nancy will be missed by many. ◊

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

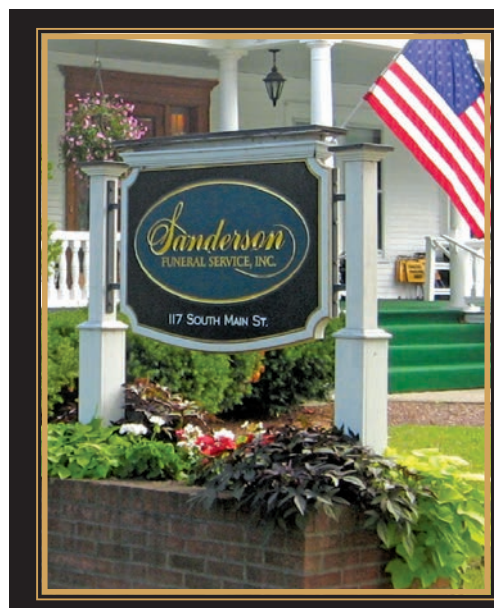
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Best wishes for a very joyous holiday season.

### Carol K. Heinecken, 84, of Cornwall

CORNWALL — Carol Heinecken of Cornwall, 84, passed away peacefully with her family by her side, on Dec. 16, 2024, at Porter Rehab after a three-year progressive journey living with Lewy Body dementia. In its later stages, the journey was eased by the wonderful support she received as part of the Project Independence family in Middlebury.



CAROL K. HEINECKEN

Carol was born Aug. 4, 1940, in Wilmington, Del., the second of five children of Walter Reynolds Kelk and Margaret Vessels Kelk. She attended Edgemoor Elementary School, Mt. Pleasant Junior High School, and graduated from Mt. Pleasant Senior High School in 1958. She enrolled at the University of Delaware, where both of her parents had graduated in the early 1930s, and from which she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education in 1962.

Carol met her husband-to-be, Mickey, while both were students at the University of Delaware. After two months of dating, Mickey proposed, and three months later the captain of the cheerleaders married the captain of the football team. This was certainly not a course of events that they would even dream of recommending to their own children Kevin, Dawn, and Kerri, who made more realistic life-choices. Theirs is a story straight out of a romance novel and 62 years of marriage later that amazing journey of love and happiness on this earth has come to a peaceful end in the loving arms of her family.

Carol came to love Vermont

and the many friends she made after being (somewhat) dragged by Mickey to this wondrously new and beautiful place in 1973. In her early years of living in their special Cornwall home, she immersed herself in being the master-in-charge of raising her kids and loving her third-grade students and fellow teachers at Bristol elementary school, where she taught for 19 years.

Since her retirement in 2000, her life was filled with fun and adventure: Watching her grandchildren, Hayley, Lindsey, Tyler, and Keegan grow from their diaper days to be the very special young women and men they are today; working in her garden; enjoying her early morning walks with one of her beloved golden retrievers; and laughing, with a smile that could melt a rock, with one of her many friends. Her life was filled with joy.

For parts of ten years, she spent

her time with Mickey travelling around much of the U.S. and Canada in a pick-up truck camper rigged with bikes, kayaks and skis, always prepared for new adventures. They then spent many more years traveling to a variety of South American countries. These were not only amazing experiences for both of them, but they also felt they were sending a message to many of their friends that aging is not the end, but the beginning of whole new world — one to be faced with joy and enthusiasm, with eyes wide open. That hope remains to this day.

Sadly Carol's final journey has ended before we expected, but as her favorite song expresses so eloquently, "it's time to say goodbye."

Her immediate family's hearts are filled with the sadness of the moment, but there remains an overpowering sense of joy in knowing that she lived life to its fullest. She will be loved and missed by Mickey Heinecken, Kevin Heinecken, Hayley Heinecken, Lindsey Heinecken, Dawn Heinecken, Kerri Milne, Marty Milne, Tyler Milne, Keegan Milne, Bill Kelk, Peggy Hill, Mary Lou and Steve Donahoe.

Final remembrances will be private, but the entire family wants all to know that this summer there will be a joy-filled "Mickey and Carol celebration of life." Stay tuned.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to Project Independence, Middlebury, Vermont or the Lewy Body Dementia Association. ♦

### Bradford M. McKirryher Jr., 77, of Waltham

WALTHAM — Bradford M. McKirryher Jr. died Nov. 27, 2024 He was born April 21, 1947, to Anita Choquette and Bradford McKirryher. He attended Mount Saint Joseph in Rutland and went on the Vermont Tech.

Bradford worked for 34 years as a process engineer at, Simmonds Precision, Hercules and BF Goodrich.

A ham radio enthusiast, Bradford was a devoted attendee of Lobstercon, a ham radio conference held every year in Maine. He also enjoyed hunting, fishing, cooking, pistol shooting, hiking and spending time with his family. He was member of the loyal Ham Radio club as well as

the Vergennes Eagles Club, for whom he served as first president.

He is survived by his wife, Judith A. McKirryher of Waltham; two sons, Bradford McKirryher III of Middlebury and Christopher McKirryher and daughter-in-law Sarah McKirryher of Vergennes; brother Harland McKirryher of Rochester, sister Barbara Shum and husband Richard, of East Wallingford; nephew Josh Shum and partner Sara; niece Tara House and partner John, two grandnieces and one grandnephew, all of Queensbury, N.Y.; and his black lab, Rosey.

His ashes will be spread at deer camp. There will be no service. ♦



BRADFORD M. MCKIRRYHER JR.

## City Ballot

(Continued from Page 3A)

about \$26,000. As is the case, he stressed all of the financial numbers were suggestions; essentially, they were placeholders.

The fourth potential ballot item would "Request approval from the voters to establish an operating reserve (unrestricted fund balance) set aside to stabilize the city's finances by providing a cushion against unexpected events, losses of income, and large unbudgeted

expenses.

Redmond told the council that the auditor in the past year or so had said best practice for a municipality would be to have an amount equal to 1% of its general fund in such a reserve fund for such purposes, and he said the council could consider that approach.

The fifth, sixth and seventh requests were to seek voter approval to "formally establish" the Vergennes Burying Ground, Otter

Creek Basin, and Fishing Derby funds as official funds "so that residents, visitors, organizations and foundations may make tax deductible donations; and for the city to account for revenues and expenses" for each cause.

As it stands, Redmond said, the Vergennes Burying Ground contains about \$5,000; the Otter Creek Basin Fund, roughly \$4,500; and the Fishing Derby Fund, around \$1,500.

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# The coming energy shortage — we must act

This week's writer David Blittersdorf, president and CEO of Bristol-based AllEarth Renewables.

If we learned that Vermont would be facing a significant water shortage in the not-too-distant future, I suspect we would do a good job of putting differences aside and doing what we'd need to in order to ensure that this vital substance continued to flow. It's time to think about electricity in the same way, whatever our age, beliefs or how we voted in the last election.

When you get up tomorrow morning, look at how many things in your home or apartment are already plugged in and working, and how many more you add even in the first few minutes when you turn on the coffee maker, plug in your laptop and put on several lights in the house. These parts of our lives do not run on Democratic, Republican or Progressive electricity.

Even with strong efficiency measures and our admirable New England frugality, we are an electricity-thirsty society. The transition from an 80% fossil fuel energy supply to electricity is requiring huge increases in renewable generation. That is not going to change; our thirst for electricity is growing and will continue to grow. Not only that, the incoming Trump administration has made it very clear that proposed off-shore wind projects that might help meet that need are out of favor, and those projects are proving expensive even when they do go forward. Where will we get the electricity to power our society?

ISO-New England, the grid operator for the New England

states, predicts a doubling of electric demand by 2050. Why? In large measure because five of the six New England states have public policies that will require electrification. I'd add to this that technology also drives this change, and will move us toward electrification however political winds may shift.

Auto manufacturers aren't going to throw away billions of dollars in EV development, people are not going to stop installing clean and quiet heat pumps, and even giant fossil fuel corporations are not likely to reverse the pivots many of them have made toward having renewable energy projects in their portfolios. Locally, the Vermont jobs and housing we desperately need to create will only add to this need.

It's time to think about renewable energy in a different way. Like a water shortage, an electricity shortage will badly hurt all of us. Energy is the lifeblood of all living things. And we can't pretend that we can rely on our neighboring states and provinces to give us a good deal or special treatment, for they are dealing with the same things. (Even if you really like the family next door, don't you make sure your own family is fed first?) Our current contract with Hydro-Quebec is a good example. While Vermont has a favorable long-term relationship with the provincial utility, HQ faces many of the same challenges, and their first obligation is the Quebec ratepayers, not Vermonters downstream. Oh, and those one GW power lines being built now connecting Canada to Southern New England and New York City need ALL the capacity and

much more than HQ has. My work in renewable energy now spans nearly five decades, which is just about as long as the primary federal law (PURPA) on the subject has been around. Much of that time, especially in the early years, involved what felt like endless battles to change a deeply embedded status quo around electric utilities and power sources. While our work has been a source of pride and some success, the old days are gone, and stories of yesterday will not address tomorrow's electricity shortage. I am looking into the energy future that is coming and working to change our culture of energy blindness and laws so that we Vermonters can live a life of well-being.

Toward that end, my team at AllEarth Renewables and I will be offering a framework for legislation that will let us meet our electric demand, and forestall shortages so that Vermont is not caught flat-footed.

Key elements of this must include:

- Streamlining and simplification of Vermont's power supply programs and processes to ensure that renewable energy projects can be brought on line quickly.
  - A simplified net metering program that is efficient and understandable, and minimizes administrative burdens on utilities, regulators, renewable energy companies and customers.
  - The use of competitive bidding for larger projects in a manner that will promote cost effectiveness and coordination with the responsibilities of our electric utilities under Vermont's renewable energy laws.
- We look forward to working with the legislature and others to implement these ideas.

## Community Forum

This week's writer David Blittersdorf, president and CEO of Bristol-based AllEarth Renewables.



### Work begins!

DEVELOPERS OF STONECROP Meadows, a 218-unit residential neighborhood to be built in phases on 35 acres off Middlebury's Seminary Street Extension, moved in the earthmovers last week and started to seriously clear the ground for project infrastructure. Look for work on the first Stonecrop structure — a large multi-family building — in April or May.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Letters to the Editor

### Timber harvesting creates vital wildlife habitat

The Worcester Range plan is a well-researched plan that includes more old growth forest, more public recreation, wildlife corridors, creation of wildlife habitat and yes, timber harvesting. People who are anti-timber always refer to forest devastation or destruction, since they want to stop harvesting. They rarely mention the vital growth that occurs after a harvest, the creation of important habitat, and hiking trails. I agree that global warming is a problem, driven by population growth and abundant use of energy-dense fossil fuels. I do not agree that stopping timber harvesting is a solution. The planning team includes

a variety of specialties: habitat specialist to wildlife biologist to State lands ecologist to climate forester to basin planner and more. This group of professionals works hard to build a plan that fulfills the ANR Mission Statement: "to protect, sustain, and enhance Vermont's natural resources, for the benefit of this and future generations." The planning team deeply understands forests and the many ways it can be managed to serve multiple interests. Their task is to serve everyone in the state, not just the small group banging the drum loudly and shouting about devastation of the forest. I've been in the forest products industry my whole life and

support timber harvesting. A little less than half of the annual growth in Vermont's forests is harvested every year. That means that we are storing more carbon in our forests every year, while supporting loggers, sawmill workers, flooring and molding shops, homebuilders, cabinet makers, wood carvers and others in Vermont, perhaps even your neighbor, who work with wood as part of making their living. The greatest threat to Vermont's forests is development, not timber harvesting for products we use every day. I consider the plan to be a win for everyone. Kenneth Johnson Bristol

### County emission numbers need some perspective

An article in Addison Independent, Dec. 5, 2024, details the source of Green House Gas Emissions from Addison County for 2022. The article accuses Addison County agriculture of being the worst GHG emitter in the county for 2022, finding that agriculture is the source of 35.1% of all GHG emitters, ahead of transportation and delivered fuels which are basically home and business heating. If one looks at Environmental Protection Agency numbers for 2022, we find that nationwide agriculture contributes about only 10% of GHG emissions. With industry, electricity generation and transportation far in the lead. This is comparing using CO2 equivalents in all cases. Meaning

these are valid comparisons to the Addy Indy article. Addison County is the small view where nationally the larger view gives us more perspective. So why is Addison County agriculture in the lead? Addison County has a concentration of agricultural activity, of dairy farms and many other farm enterprises, like turkey farms. Naturally, the county will have a high concentration of GHG emissions from ag. At the same time, both transportation and delivered fuels increased by a higher percentage (per the article's figures) than agriculture over the past five years. Producing food does seem like an important thing to do. Of course, farmers are concerned about climate change and we're

willing to do our part to reduce GHG where we can afford to. There are many innovative solutions being researched and put into practice. This is where good solid science comes into play. The alarming trend today is that science is being doubted, and even worse, totally ignored by all too many in leadership roles. The new Trump administration being an alarming example. Science may not be perfect, but science is self-correcting. That is the important and transformative reality that enables us to solve problems. Climate change, hunger, health, and producing the best ice cream. Paul Stone Orwell

## A LITTLE ESCAPE HAS COME TO TOWN!



A new form of family entertainment is now open in Middlebury! Midd Escape Rooms is located & run by Middlebury Sweets. We recognize that there are not a lot of things to do for families with kids in Middlebury and wanted to bring a fun activity to the area that people of all ages could enjoy!

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We decided we wanted to try something new, so why not bring some family friendly entertainment to the area? We decided to turn several of our motel rooms into Escape Rooms! We will start out with a couple of rooms and if all goes well, we may expand to as many as 5! The motel & candy store are still open of course!

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- ~ Escape Rooms for all ages.
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Independent photos/Steve James

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# Workers

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
 And what would those plans mean for the state's migrant community? While it's unclear to what extent Trump's campaign promise of mass deportations will ultimately be carried out there's already a lot of anxiety felt by Vermont's migrant workers.  
 "I, and many in my community, feel a lot of fear around the new president that's been elected," said Cristian, who came to the United States from Mexico and previously worked on a dairy farm in Addison County. "Lots of people in the community are thinking about ways to isolate themselves, and some people are afraid to even go out to the store."

Cristian, through an interpreter, spoke of why he came to the United States and why many migrants living around the country have made a similar choice.  
 "I came here because of the lack of opportunities in my country, especially when it comes to economic reasons, and for the work opportunities that are in this country," he said. "That's why thousands of immigrants come into this country; to do the work that can't be done otherwise, like on farms and other kinds of labor."  
**MIGRANT LABOR AND VERMONT FARMS**  
 Many migrant farmworkers come to the United States to find work in the country's dairy industry. As of

2021, 79% of the milk produced in the United States came from farms that employed immigrant workers, with immigrant workers making up an estimated 51% of all the labor in the country's dairy industry.  
 A 2021 study by University of Vermont researcher Bindu Panikkar said immigrant labor is an integral aspect of the state's dairy industry, particularly as it expands and modernizes. According to the study, there were around 1,000-1,500 Central American migrant dairy workers around in the state in 2016.  
 Surveys conducted with migrant farmworkers between 2009-2011 found that many of these migrant workers are potentially

undocumented, come from Central American countries such as Mexico, and worked an average of 64 and a half hours per week at \$7.75 an hour. That is gross pay of a hair less than \$500 per week, though local advocates have noted that today, most migrant farmworkers in Addison County make above that amount.  
 Asked how Trump's mass deportation plans could impact the state's agriculture industry, Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts noted that foreign workers are critical to Vermont agriculture and the nation's food system, "so any big

disruption would be difficult for many."  
 "Vermont is like many other states, we rely on foreign labor in every county, whether it's milking cows or harvesting crops, so any big disruption in labor would be difficult for many families," he told the *Independent*.  
 He emphasized that migrant farmworkers in the state are important and have been a part of our community for years.  
 "They help support our rural economy and have become important members of our community in every corner of the state," he said.

Asked about what Vermont could do in responses to plans for mass deportations, Tebbetts said his agency is watching to see what Trump does, but it's too early to speculate.  
 Brian Kemp is the president of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Board of Directors and manages Mountain Meadows Farm, an organic beef farm in Sudbury. He said while it doesn't seem as though farmers are too alarmed by Trump's plans, there's definitely some concerns.  
 "I would like to think that the president-elect would really rethink this a lot, not only for agriculture, but a lot of our national labor force now is using migrant labor, and I personally would have concerns on what this could do to the country's (See Migrant workforce, Page 16A)

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# Vergennes

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
 why, or any records of deposits or withdrawals prior to 2012.  
 In response to a chorus of questions from councilors, Redmond said what he could say for sure is that the account is a "fixed-income" fund run by Multi-Bank Securities, an institutional fixed-income securities broker-dealer based in Michigan. Fixed-income investments are designed to provide a specific level of interest, while also offering diversification and capital preservation.  
 "I guess it is a rainy-day fund," he said. "I don't know that there is a policy for it."  
 Redmond said he would arrange a meeting with the council and a Multi-Bank official to answer questions.  
 "I'd like the rep to talk to us and tell us what this fund is all about and give us some data," he said.  
 Deputy Mayor Dickie Austin said the fund could be helpful for the two necessary and five potential ballot items the council is eyeing.

"That looks like a big fat seed for a capital fund in our budget," Austin said.  
 Redmond cited another potential ballot item, one recommended by the city's professional auditor — a reserve fund equal to 10% of the city's general fund budget, which would equal around \$400,000.  
 Councilor Jill Murray-Killon asked the obvious question.  
 "I don't understand why we haven't heard about it before," she said.  
 Redmond said Treasurer Betsy Sullivan and City Clerk Sandy Rooney have been finding several surprises during the course of their duties, and he was just happy this was a pleasant one — a fund that previous treasurers had managed by simply reinvesting earnings.  
 "Both Betsy and Sandy have been discovering things and canceling things and asking a lot of questions," Redmond said. "Whoever started this, God bless them."  
 In a later interview, Redmond

described the fund as "a way for the city to invest cash that's not being used," with cash probably being moved in and out as needed or not. Redmond said all city officials have been doing with it is automatically "reinvesting earnings."  
 In the meantime, he said, it appears to be "very liquid," giving the council options as it moves forward.  
 First, he said, the city should follow through on another recommendation or two for a fund that is too big to still be ignored.  
 "The city really needs to have an investment committee, and it needs to understand a little more about this fixed-income account, what it means to the city, what it means to taxpayers. Could some of these earnings be used to relieve the tax burden? I don't know. These are all questions I really want to council to grapple with," he said. "We're going to have a committee, and we're going to have a policy, and we're going to do it right."

# By the way

*(Continued from Page 1A)*  
**track, monitor and advise on legislation and communications throughout our organization.** As a lawmaker, Lanpher was chair of the House Appropriations Committee, where she developed and negotiated the state general fund and transportation budgets. Before being elected to the House, Lanpher worked at the Vermont Department of Health Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs and at the New England Institute of Addiction Studies, where in

**both roles she was instrumental in preventing substance misuse and addiction for Vermonters.**  
**In announcing Lanpher's hiring late last week, her new bosses said, "She understands the drivers of healthcare costs and is uniquely suited to assist the GMCB to make healthcare more affordable for Vermont citizens and businesses."**  
 If you missed the Vergennes Union Middle School stage performance of "Beetlejuice Jr." on Wednesday, there's still a chance to see it tonight, Thursday, Dec. 19, in the school auditorium beginning at 7 p.m. Based on the blockbuster motion picture turned Broadway musical, "Beetlejuice Jr." tells the story of a strange and unusual teenager named Lydia Deetz, who is grieving the loss of her mother and obsessed with death. Luckily for Lydia, she and her father move to a new house haunted by a recently deceased couple and Beetlejuice, a delightful demon with a real zest for life. Sounds like a fun show

for middle schoolers. Tickets are available online at [cur8.com/projects/40148](http://cur8.com/projects/40148).  
**The Friends of the Union Meeting Hall are inviting people to take part in their annual Thankful Tree Display at the Route 7 Hall in the Ferrisburgh village. Each year, they gather messages of thanks from community members and display them in a lighted exhibit into the new year. The display will be up through Jan. 10. This year the Friends will also be sharing a handful of these messages each week on social media to show our community just how much there is to be thankful for. To submit your message of thanks please head online to [tinyurl.com/MtgHouseThanks](http://tinyurl.com/MtgHouseThanks). Submissions may also be submitted via mail to Friends of the Union Meeting Hall, 41 Middlebrook Road, Ferrisburgh, VT 05456. In your letter please include your message, and if you like, your first name and last initial.**

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Dr. Markowitz enjoys hiking, biking, and performing as a musician. He is also a craftsman of repairing fretted string instruments.

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# Police

(Continued from Page 1A) to police, “was suffering from extreme paranoia and delusions,” and had a holstered handgun on his hip.

Jones used de-escalation techniques with the man while calmly telling bystanders to move to safety, according to Middlebury Police Chief Jason Covey. Jones requested help and was joined several minutes later by Officer Harrington and officials from the Addison County Sheriff’s Department, Vermont State and Bristol police. Jones and Harrington served as the primary contact officers.

As Jones tried to distract the man, Harrington ushered the man’s wife and oldest child away from the vehicle to safety. The youngest child remained in

the vehicle, secured in a child safety seat. The man became increasingly agitated and removed and then immediately re-holstered his firearm.

Harrington recognized the rapidly deteriorating situation and told Jones it was time to secure the youngest child. At that point, Jones opened the rear door of the vehicle, unbuckled the child, and carried the child away to safety while shielding the child with his own body as he withdrew from the area.

The man suddenly ran toward the entrance to the hospital but was taken into custody by Harrington and other officers without further incident.

The actions of Officers Jones and Harrington contributed to the successful outcome of



THE MIDDLEBURY POLICE Department saluted some of its finest — as well as welcoming on board a new police dog — on Sunday night. Photo courtesy of Chief Jason Covey



OFFICER AIDAN ALNWICK poses with Guinness two years ago when they worked for the Brandon Police Department. The human and K9 officer were recently hired by the Middlebury Police Department. File photo/Angelo Lynn

this incident. Throughout, they demonstrated compassion, selflessness, courage, and devotion to duty, resulting in the safe resolution of this matter for all involved, according to their citations.

Middlebury Police Sgt. Nathan Hayes earned his Distinguished Service Medal for his actions during the aftermath of a March 20 stabbing not far from the college campus. At around 7:51 p.m. that day MPD received a 911 call about a possible altercation outside a residence on College Street. Hayes and Warden Justin Goodwin of Vermont Fish & Wildlife responded to the scene.

Little did they know, a man had just stabbed another man on the College Street sidewalk, and the victim had fled the scene.

Hayes and Goodwin spoke with the 911 caller outside the College Street home when a man suddenly emerged from the far side of the house armed with knives. The man ignored Hayes’s and Goodwin’s orders to drop the knives. On at least one occasion, the man stepped closer to Hayes and Goodwin while they had their guns drawn, according to police records.

“Despite the tremendous peril they both faced, neither Sgt. Hayes nor Warden Goodwin employed lethal force, but rather created more distance from the man and tried to convince him to comply,” according to the citation.

When the suspect fled, Hayes and Goodwin pursued him on foot. The man ultimately ran into Otter Creek, where he remained

in waist-deep water, refusing to surrender, still armed with the knives.

Hayes de-escalated the situation and used time and communication tactics that led to the suspect eventually dropping the knives and leaving the water to surrender. He was taken into custody without further incident.

“Throughout his interactions with the suspect, Sgt. Hayes displayed a great deal of self-control, compassion, and professionalism,” reads the citation. “His actions directly contributed to the peaceful resolution of this incident without the need to resort to lethal force.”

**NEW POLICE DOG**  
The department also recognized:

- The recent graduation of Officer Amanda Ferrone from the 118th Basic Training Class at the Vermont Police Academy. Ferrone is now in field training and is expected to complete this process in the spring — about a year after her original hire, according to Covey.

- The hiring of Officer Aidan Alnwick and K9 Guinness — a 3-year-old German shepherd

— who will join the department in early January. Alnwick and Guinness currently work for the Brandon Police Department.

“We are excited to reinstate a K9 program at MPD,” Covey said.

Guinness until recently was the property of the town of Brandon, which agreed to sell the dog to the Middlebury for \$12,000. The Middlebury selectboard approved the purchase on Dec. 10.

Middlebury’s most recent canine retired in 2021, Covey noted. Until recently, the county was still home two K9 units — with Vergennes police and Vermont State Police in New Haven — but both of those dogs retired this year.

“Currently, if MPD needs a canine it must request mutual aid from another county, with no guarantee that a unit will be available to respond quickly, if at all,” Covey said.

Alnwick and Guinness are experienced and have been successful, according to Covey. The team is certified in tracking, evidence recovery, and drug detection. The duo has helped MPD with several drug

investigations recently, leading to the seizure of drugs, including crack cocaine and heroin/fentanyl.

Covey called the price of the dog “reasonable given its age and expected working life to be at least seven years. The purchase price of a new untrained dog can far exceed \$12,000. Additionally, the handler and dog must attend many weeks of certification training together at significant expense to the town in wages for the officer attending the training, and overtime costs for the officer’s vacant shifts while away.”

- Residents Kevin Parizo and Michael and Tina Francis, who earned Citizen Service Awards “for exceptional contributions to furthering public safety or assisting the Middlebury Police Department in the fulfillment of its mission to strengthen community connections, relationships and trust.”

- A Physical Fitness Award for Sgt. Casey Covey.

- Drone pilot certifications for Officers Ethan Jones and Darrin Hintereder.

John Flowers is at [johnf@addisonindependent.com](mailto:johnf@addisonindependent.com).



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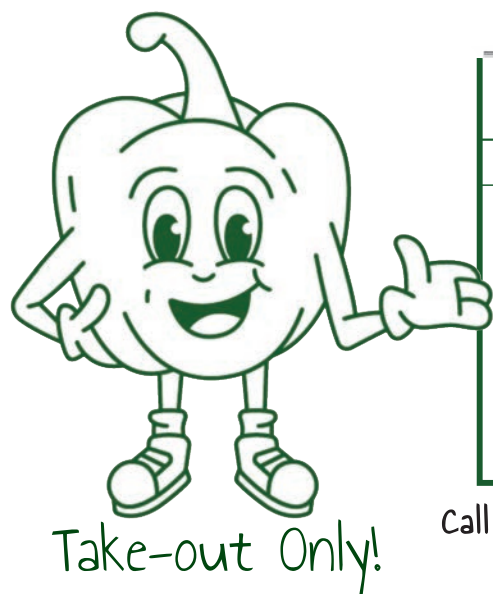
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## Police continue to investigate shooting

BRISTOL — Bristol police are continuing to investigate a death following a report of a shooting on Adirondack View on Nov. 27. Bristol police have received assistance from Vergennes police, Vermont State Police and Homeland Security.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Bristol Police Department, and Bristol Police Chief Bruce Nason said his officers appreciate the continued tips and information they've received.

Between Nov. 10 and 30 Bristol police completed 41 foot patrols and six car patrols, conducted 18 traffic stops, and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School 18 times, at Bristol Elementary School 18 times and at local businesses nine times.

Police also processed 30 fingerprint requests, conducted three welfare checks, verified two vehicle identification numbers, helped one person gain access to their locked vehicle, conducted four sex offender registry checks, facilitated the return of one phone and responded to one alarm that was activated by an equipment malfunction.

In other recent activity as reported by Chief Nason last week, Bristol police:

- On Nov. 10 heard a report from a West Street resident of someone looking into her window. The person was gone when police arrived, and an investigation is ongoing.
- On Nov. 11 responded to Airport Drive for a dog running around loose. The dog and owner were gone when police arrived.
- On Nov. 12 received a report of someone being harassed by phone and opened an investigation.
- On Nov. 13 responded to a dog at large complaint on Vincent Drive. The owner was issued an ordinance violation ticket.
- On Nov. 13 received a report of a theft on West Street and began investigating.
- On Nov. 13 received keys found in the parking lot of Maplefields on West Street.
- On Nov. 14 responded to a motor vehicle crash on Prince Lane.
- On Nov. 15 assisted Bristol Elementary with a truancy concern.
- On Nov. 16 responded to a report of loose horses causing damage to a lawn on Carlstrom Road.
- On Nov. 16 responded to a property damage complaint on Prince Lane.
- On Nov. 16 received a report of a theft on North Street and began

- investigating.
- On Nov. 18 responded to a family fight on Main Street and opened an investigation.
- On Nov. 19 responded to a parking complaint on Airport Drive. The vehicle was moved.
- On Nov. 19 enforced the winter parking ban on roads in Bristol village.
- On Nov. 20 received a threatening complaint on Airport Drive and began investigating.
- On Nov. 20 received a found dog. Police identified the owner and returned the dog the following day. The owner was issued a warning for first violation of a dog at large.
- On Nov. 21 responded to a minor two-car crash on Park Place.
- On Nov. 23 responded to Mountain Street for a report of someone knocking on a door late at night. Police did not see anyone on Mountain Street or in the surrounding area.
- On Nov. 25 helped someone contact counseling services.
- On Nov. 25 responded to a crash on North Street.
- On Nov. 26 received a fraud complaint on Main Street and began investigating.
- On Nov. 28 assisted someone with a handgun theft on Lawson Lane.

### Bristol Police Log

## Vergennes Police Log

VERGENNES — Vergennes police on Dec. 10 took a report of an unauthorized person withdrawing money from an account at the M&T Bank on North Maple Street.

According to police, the account holder complained when someone impersonated them to make the withdrawal.

In other action between Dec. 9 and 15, Vergennes police conducted 22 traffic stops, nine patrols by cruiser and one property watch; processed three pre-employment fingerprint requests; enforced the city's winter parking ban on Dec. 9; and also:

On Dec. 9 were told that a tractor-trailer truck was stuck on the hill by Maplefields, but learned that the driver made it up the hill without

assistance and no response was necessary.

On Dec. 10:

- Began investigating a theft from Kinney Drug Store.
- Checked the welfare of a visitor to town after a caller reported receiving a text message indicating the man had a gun and a bottle of liquor. Police spoke to the man by phone and learned he was in Vergennes for a funeral and was "experiencing significant personal challenges and feeling upset," but had no intention of harming himself or anyone else, and would not be staying alone. Police provided him with contact information for the Counseling Service of Addison County and the 988 crisis hotline.
- Helped Vermont State Police by

responding to a two-car accident at the intersection of Route 7 and New Haven Road until VSP arrived.

• Took a report of fraudulent use of a debit card at Shaw's Supermarket, but later learned the report was inaccurate.

• Were told by a White Street resident via an online report of a lost package. She later reported she learned the package was on the way.

On Dec. 12 attended a meeting at Vergennes Union High School regarding a student with a high number of absences.

On Dec. 13 told a person parked under a Main Street No Parking sign to move the vehicle.

On Dec. 15 provided information to a city resident who was looking for a Christmas tree.

Happy Holidays!

from

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from Esme

Dear Santa I Love  
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Love Makena

### LETTERS TO SANTA . . .

continue to make their way to the Addison Independent. Our local kids are going to keep him very busy this year.

DEAR SANTA,  
ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS A LEAFBLOWER.

HENRY

DEAR SANTA,  
HAVE A GOOD TIME.

ELWOOD

DEAR SANTA,  
ALL SAGE TURNER WANTS FOR CHRISTMAS IS MABEL'S GOAT.

DEAR SANTA,  
ALL I WANT FROM CHRISTMAS IS A LITTLE SISTER AND  
REINDEER.

LOVE, POPPY

DEAR SANTA,  
ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS A TRACTOR TRAILER  
AND LOGGING TRUCK AND A BUCKET LOADER AND TWO  
TRUCKS TO PULL EQUIPMENT.

WILDER

DEAR SANTA,  
ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS TOO MANY  
THINGS.

HUNTER

DEAR SANTA,  
I WILL GO TO SLEEP FOR YOU.

(See more letters on Page 15A)

Dear Santa  
I hope you  
have a Great  
flight  
Love  
Lidia

WHAT?  
Dear Santa,  
All I want for  
Christmas is  
Santa suit

Our best to you,  
with gratitude,  
in 2025.

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**Happy Holidays**



**Back row:** Liz Marino, January Stearns, Heather Foster-Provencher, John Snyder-White, Brenda Jaring.  
**Front row:** Amy Young, Lisa Sargent, Nancy Foster, Mandy Hodson. **Not pictured:** Kellie Peters.

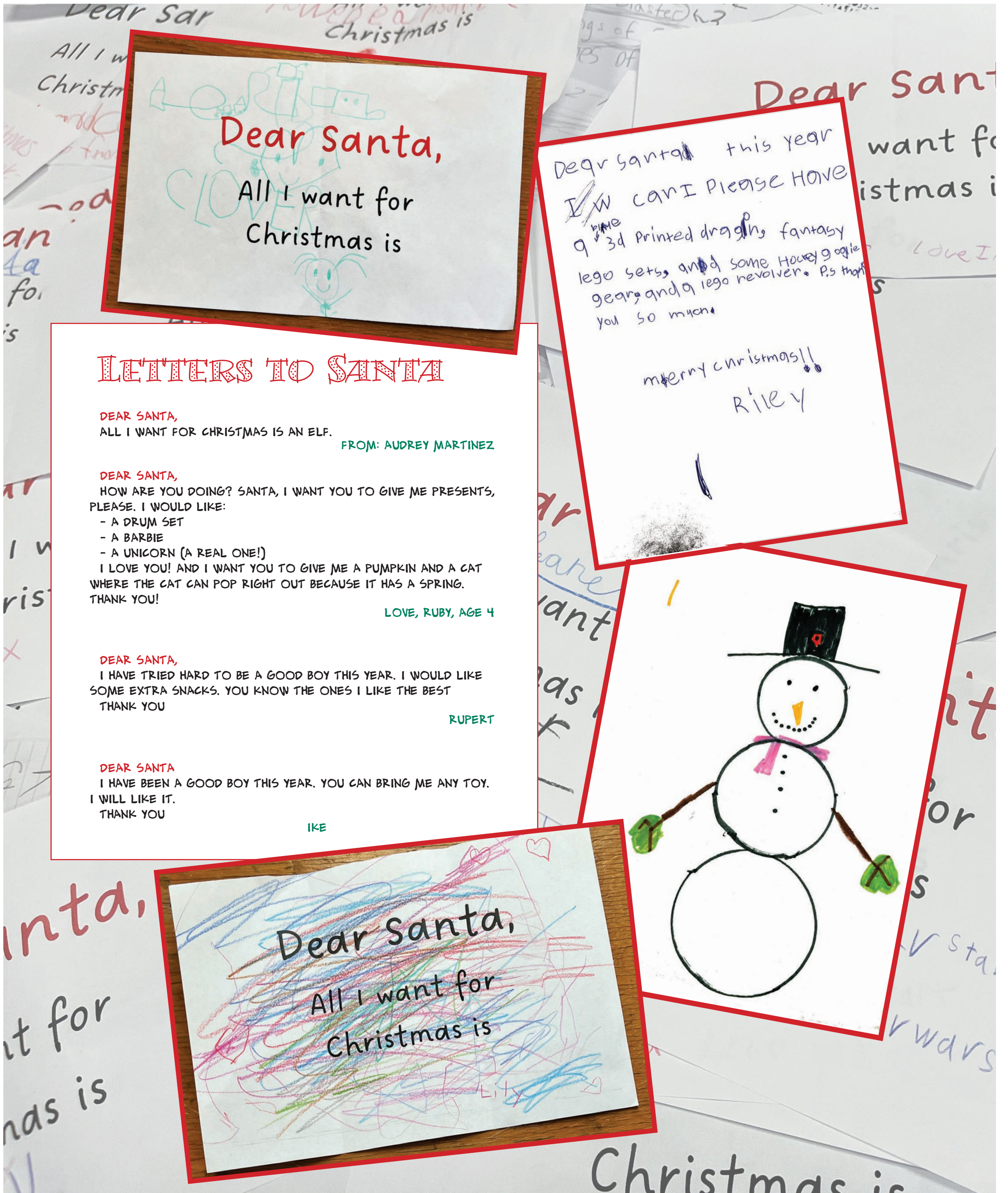
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## LETTERS TO SANTA

**DEAR SANTA,**  
ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS AN ELF.

FROM: AUDREY MARTINEZ

**DEAR SANTA,**  
HOW ARE YOU DOING? SANTA, I WANT YOU TO GIVE ME PRESENTS,  
PLEASE. I WOULD LIKE:

- A DRUM SET
- A BARBIE
- A UNICORN (A REAL ONE!)

I LOVE YOU! AND I WANT YOU TO GIVE ME A PUMPKIN AND A CAT  
WHERE THE CAT CAN POP RIGHT OUT BECAUSE IT HAS A SPRING.  
THANK YOU!

LOVE, RUBY, AGE 4

**DEAR SANTA,**  
I HAVE TRIED HARD TO BE A GOOD BOY THIS YEAR. I WOULD LIKE  
SOME EXTRA SNACKS. YOU KNOW THE ONES I LIKE THE BEST  
THANK YOU

RUPERT

**DEAR SANTA**  
I HAVE BEEN A GOOD BOY THIS YEAR. YOU CAN BRING ME ANY TOY.  
I WILL LIKE IT.  
THANK YOU

IKE

Dear Santa,  
All I want for  
Christmas is




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# Migrant workforce

(Continued from Page 10A) labor force for blue collar jobs," Kemp said.

He noted that in addition to agriculture, migrant workers contribute to sectors such as construction and hospitality.

Kemp spoke of how mass deportations could impact Addison County and other parts of the state.

"A lot of the larger dairy farms are using this migrant workforce to milk their cows, and the general American public has kind of gotten away from wanting to work on farms, so it would be very, very challenging for these dairy farms to find help very quickly to take over that responsibility on the farm," he said. "It would have a huge, negative impact on day-to-day operations on most of the larger dairy farms. By that I mean probably farms milking above 200 head, typically most of those farms have some sort of migrant labor on the farm."

He noted that use of migrant labor is not isolated to Vermont.

"Nationwide is the same scenario," he said. "Our neighbors to the west; New York, Pennsylvania, I'm sure those farms are utilizing migrant labor, and further west, also."

Kemp suggested that the federal

government could look at altering the H-2A Ag Guest Work Visa Program, which allows some employers in the United States to bring in workers from out of the country in order to fill temporary agricultural jobs.

The dairy industry cannot use that H-2A program because of the year-round nature of dairy production.

"If they maybe adapted that program so it could be year-round, I'd think you'd have a lot of the labor force would go through that program," he said. "The fruit and veggie growers come into the country in the spring and work their way north, and a lot of times they end up here in Vermont for the apple season, and then they go home."

"I think if that was looked at and maybe redesigned to allow for either overlap or a longer term and (to) be able to have a rotation of employees, I think that could be an answer to some of the solution

and alleviate some of the concern of all the undocumented labor," he continued.

In the meantime, there are limited options for migrant workers like Cristian looking to work on the state's dairy farms.

*"Helping federal authorities tear apart our communities goes against Vermont values, and mass deportations will not be possible without the cooperation of state and local authorities. One of the most effective things we can do is to push back."*

— Falko Schilling

the migrant community if Trump's large-scale deportation plans are carried out.

"It will be very ugly and painful for people, especially as it relates to separation of families," he said. "Especially for people who recently have crossed because we pay such a large quantity of money to come here — what will those people do if they're deported back? How will they pay this back?"

Cristian said some people are afraid U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials will go on to farms to try and deport people.

"We're not only afraid of being deported, we're also afraid of losing some of our rights," he said.

For example, when it comes to work, fears about having salaries lowered or having a boss hit you or say you can't leave the farm and not being able to do anything

about it.

Cristian noted that the migrant community feels some security thanks to the efforts of Migrant Justice, a nonprofit that's mission is to "build the voice, capacity, and power of the immigrant farmworker community to organize for economic justice and human rights."

He said laws that restrict local police in collaborating with immigration agents — such as through fair and impartial policing policies — have also made immigrants feel somewhat safer.

Falko Schilling is the Advocacy Director for the ACLU of Vermont. He said that strong fair and impartial policing policies are one way Vermont municipalities can work to protect migrant communities from mass deportation.

"Municipalities can make it clear that they do not want their law enforcement resources used to help facilitate immigration enforcement and put limits in place on what local police can do," he said. "One way to do this is to adopt strong fair and impartial policing policies, something we have already seen from many municipalities across the state."

The *Independent* asked what options the state has for protecting migrant communities against any mass deportation efforts carried.

"Helping federal authorities tear apart our communities goes against Vermont values, and mass deportations will not be possible

without the cooperation of state and local authorities," Schilling said "One of the most effective things we can do to push back against the deportations promised by the president elect is to limit cooperation and resource sharing between federal authorities and authorities in Vermont. This includes putting in place laws and rules minimizing information sharing and any official cooperative agreements."

Cristian said one of the best things Americans can do to support the migrant community is to stand with them in solidarity when they are protesting or standing up for their rights.

*If Trump's large-scale deportation plans are carried out "it will be very ugly and painful for people, especially as it relates to separation of families. Especially for people who recently have crossed because we pay such a large quantity of money to come here."*

— Cristian, a migrant worker

Even if Trump's plans for mass deportations are not carried out to the extent promised, Cristian noted the migrant community has already been affected.

"At this point even just hearing that name 'Donald Trump,' among the community causes a level of fear and the knowledge that you could be taken without ever being questioned why you were here," he said.

He said that it's not just undocumented immigrants that are afraid.

"It's also the children of undocumented folks who might have been born here and are therefore Americans that are also impacted by this," he said, adding that it's not just immigrants that are impacted by Trump's rhetoric, but all groups of people, particularly women.

For example, he said that a lot

of migrant mothers that have had children born in the United States are now looking for people who could be responsible for their children if they were deported. Groups in and outside of Addison County, such as Migrant Justice, are working with lawyers to figure out what that process would look like, so that in the instance that there was a mass deportation raid somewhere, Americans could go to those places and take the children involved and later transport them to their parents, avoiding any possibility of children being placed in detention facilities.

Several organizations and community groups around Addison County are working in other ways to support the migrant community, including the local food shelves, the Catholic Migrant Ministries of Addison County, the Open Door Clinic and the Addison Allies Network.

Cristian pointed to another way Americans might be able to provide support should mass deportations take place. He explained that in some cases if immigration agents have someone in custody but are able to figure it out so they are not immediately deported, someone with U.S. citizenship or permanent residency would need to pick that person up from wherever they are in custody.

"People who are willing to do that would be a good thing," he said.

Cristian also offered a call to action to fellow members of the migrant community.

"No matter where they work or what kind of work they might be doing, they shouldn't isolate because staying inside will just cause them to lose the few rights that they've gained over the last several years, and now is the time to stand up," he said.



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from



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### Holiday spirit

IT WAS COOKIES and Carols with Sen. Bernie Sanders at Armory Lane Senior Housing in Vergennes this past Friday. A few dozen of the Vermont Senator's constituents came and enjoyed the treats, the conviviality and the senator's more than passable singing voice. He got help from the Middlebury College a cappella group Stuck in the Middle (below) and a choir of Vergennes Union Elementary School students (middle right) led by Holly Mugford, Kristin DeGraaf and Ashley Bourgeois. Bernie was glad to see Parent/Child Center Director Donna Bailey (below middle). He happily posed with Bixby Library staff (bottom right) Cedar Winslow, Catharine Hays, Kelly Bartlett and Amber Lay, for whom he signed a copy of his book for the library.

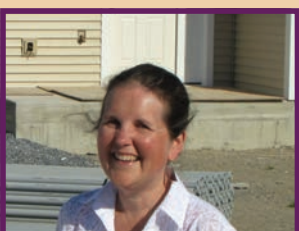
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# Act 250 rules

(Continued from Page 1A)

Lane lot have been guided by recent changes to Act 250, Vermont's land use review law. At first, he'd planned to build nine apartments there, to avoid triggering scrutiny under Act 250, which he feared would add time and expense to the project. But after the Legislature made temporary tweaks to the law last year, he realized he could build 24 apartments without Act 250 kicking in. He quickly added a 10th unit to the building-in-progress, and started hashing out plans for a second, 14-unit building at the same site.

Then, the Legislature passed even bolder Act 250 reforms this year, as part of Act 181. Kahn learned he could add even more homes to the Armory Lane lot without bumping up against the land use law. He has also begun to sketch out plans for a much larger, 74-unit workforce housing apartment complex on a vacant lot near the Vergennes police station. Kahn is shaping that new project around a new, temporary Act 250 exemption for 75 units or fewer in certain areas designated for growth.

"One-hundred percent, we are tailoring the project around that exemption," Kahn said.

The response of developers like Kahn indicates the reforms are beginning to work as intended. Proponents had hoped the temporary carve-outs for housing in Act 181 would clear red tape and encourage compact housing development to ease Vermont's acute housing shortage. Since the law took effect in June, about a dozen housing developments have used the interim exemptions, most of which stipulate that construction has to have begun by 2027 or 2028.

That's based on a VTDigger/Vermont Public review of

development proposals that have received explicit confirmation from an Act 250 district coordinator that the project will not require an Act 250 permit. Still more projects might be moving forward without seeking this official thumbs up, called a "jurisdictional opinion."

## 'SIGNS OF SUCCESS'

The housing projects using the new exemptions span geography and scale. They include the conversion of a nursing home into 40 apartments in Hartford, the construction of a new subsidized senior housing project in downtown St. Johnsbury, and a hotel-plus-apartments development in the heart of Rutland.

"There are signs of success," said Alex Farrell, commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development, about the interim exemptions.

Many developments taking advantage of the exemptions were likely already in the works, but will now have an expedited timeline — a positive outcome, Farrell said. But the bigger impact will come when more developers like Kahn take the exemptions into account early, and expand the number of homes they seek to build.

"I think this coming spring and summer, we're going to see some — probably some really exciting results," Farrell said.

But the exemptions are already encouraging developers to take on projects they may have shied away from otherwise.

In Brandon, Naylor & Breen Builders recently got word that they would not need an Act 250 permit to convert a former arts center into 24 units of housing, using a new exemption for commercial-to-residential conversions.

Tanner Romano, the owner of the company, said Naylor & Breen

is working with several other local employers to create workforce housing. The project is not yet a guarantee, he said. But the fact that it will not need to go through Act 250 means the developers won't have to pour thousands of dollars into permitting, design and engineering fees just to put a permit application together.

"So when you put that exemption into play, it's like, 'OK, now we can take a real crack at this' — without having to put all that money up front and run the risk of either not getting permitted or the project not going, and you've wasted that investment," he said.

Had the project been subject to the typical Act 250 requirements, Romano said, the company probably would have passed on it.

And the exemptions are making a difference for housing developments in some of Vermont's smaller towns, too. In Fairlee, which has fewer than 1,000 residents as of the last census, the small real estate development firm Village Ventures is planning to rehabilitate an existing 10-unit apartment complex at the corner of Bridge and Main streets, and is also planning to build two new fourplexes on the same property. That will nearly double the number of homes at the site. The project is taking advantage of a new Act 250 exemption for building up to 50 units of housing in village centers.

The developers plan to allow the current tenants to stay, and they're planning to apply for low income housing tax credits to keep the apartments affordable to people making less than the median income in the area. Rents will range from \$890 for a one-bedroom to \$1,653 for a four-bedroom, according to Austin Meehan, a development manager for Village Ventures. Several units will be set aside for people exiting homelessness and will come with supportive services, he said.

The hope is to create more housing options in a town that's largely a tourist hotspot for Lake Morey, Meehan said.



REP. AMY SHELDON, D-Middlebury, center, listens as Rep. Seth Bongartz of Manchester urges the House of Representatives to override Gov. Phil Scott's veto of an Act 250 bill during a veto override session at the Statehouse on June 17.

VTDigger file photo/Glenn Russell

"Trying to get this village center activated — and kind of start becoming a job center, and also a housing center — will do a lot to help the area continue to grow, and not just remain a summer destination," Meehan said.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The temporary exemptions to Act 250 were put in place as the state undertakes a mapping process over the next several years, which will determine the law's reach for the future. Administration officials hope lawmakers will extend the interim exemptions this year until the new Act 250 framework is finalized, said Farrell, the housing commissioner.

"What we could end up with right now," Farrell said, "is a sunset of the interim exemptions and then a long gap that creates uncertainty for home builders before the new, longer term exemptions come."

That change is one of several updates to Act 181 that Gov. Phil Scott's administration plans to pursue during the next legislative session. Other proposals include making the exemptions

apply retroactively — assuring projects that were already in the development process before the law went into effect can still benefit from it — and clarifying how they apply to subdividing properties, Farrell said.

Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale, D/P-Chittenden Southeast, one of the chief architects of Act 181, said she "probably hear[s] more of the bad news than the good news" when it comes to the impact of the new exemptions — meaning she gets calls from developers when they hit a snag in the permitting process, rather than when it goes smoothly. She sees more need for permit reform.

"I think there's still more work to do outside of Act 250. People still come to me to talk about the length and obscurity of the (Agency of Natural Resources) permitting process, and, you know, issues that still increase the cost per unit of housing," she said.

Both Farrell and Ram Hinsdale see taking on the appeals process for housing as a priority this coming year. Proposals for reforming how

neighbors can challenge new housing — a key issue at both the local and state permitting levels in Vermont — largely did not make it to the finish line last legislative session.

The issue of neighbor opposition hits close to home for Kahn, the Vergennes developer. Plans for a South Burlington development he worked on faced significant community pushback several years ago, as many neighbors voiced their concerns over the loss of open space. The specter of taking that project through the Act 250 process — with the potential for lengthy, costly delays — ultimately led the developers to abandon it, Kahn said.

He hopes lawmakers ultimately make the interim Act 250 exemptions permanent, to keep easing the path for more housing, he said.

*Editor's note: This story by Report for America corps member Carly Berlin was produced through a partnership between VTDigger and Vermont Public.*

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## DiBiase

(Continued from Page 1A)

chance to do that less than 15 miles from his own doorstep. On Monday, Dec. 9, he officially took over for former Director of Middlebury Public Works Operations Bill Kernan, who retired Oct. 31.

It's a move that that made complete sense to DiBiase.

"There was some change in leadership for the state and it was an opportunity to find something a little closer to home," he said during a recent phone interview. "I had been traveling three days a week to Montpelier. I wanted to get back into the field a little more with this position, compared to what I was doing for the state — which was much more of a full administrative position."

In Middlebury, he'll get a chance to know all his employees

by name and visit them at their worksites. That's a switch from his BGS job, which saw him manage operations for a department with 360 employees in six separate divisions scattered throughout the state. Those divisions included operations and maintenance, design and construction, planning and property management, purchasing and security, general business services and the state curator's office.

This won't be DiBiase's first tour of duty with a municipality.

He worked as Shelburne's water department superintendent (2020-2022), managing an annual budget of \$1.3 million. Shelburne's water includes 60 miles of conduit serving 5,300 connections.

DiBiase's professional journey has also included stints as field investigation and response consultant for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (2011-2012),

operations manager for Monkton's Parker Excavation (2012-2020), logistics specialist for Vermont's Task Force 1 of the United States Army Reserve (2021-2023).

He joined the Vergennes Fire Department in 2002, and has served as its chief since March of 2023. Firefighters develop a transcendent form of kinship over time that comes with many hours of training and mutual trust during life-threatening events.

DiBiase believes he can build that same kind of family rapport with his DPW colleagues.

"Family keeps you close and keeps you grounded; it's kind of the 'anchor,'" he said.

While he's been on board for fewer than two weeks, DiBiase said he's already seen the professionalism of his new colleagues, as well as the appreciation Middlebury residents have for their water, sewer and infrastructure.

He gave a special shout-out to Director of Public Works Planning Emmalee Cherington.

"Seeing all the work she's doing and (the projects) she's pushing out the door, it was very intriguing for me to be part of that," DiBiase said.

"I was excited to get in here and work with these wonderful teams I've gotten to know during the past week," he added.

Tom Hanley, Middlebury's acting town manager, is confident DiBiase will be a great fit for his new job.

"Dave came to us with an impressive background in public works operations and emergency management," Hanley said. "What was most important in fulfilling our need here was his skill, reputation and success in leading and managing large staffs in the infrastructure field. Dave's application for this position stood out among the other (applicants)."

## Christmas Tree Recycling

Turn your Christmas Tree into mulch through Addison County Solid Waste Management District's free Tree Recycling Program!

### Curbside Tree Pickup

Pick up is **EARLY** Saturday, January 4. We recommend putting trees out the night prior to pick up.

Vergennes The Vergennes Lions Club will pick up trees on Saturday, January 4th.

Middlebury The Middlebury Rotary Club will pick up trees on Saturday, January 4th.

### Tree Drop-Off

Christmas tree disposal at the District Transfer Station is free for the month of January. Please only bring these trees to the Middlebury District Transfer Station during regular hours, Mon.-Fri., 7 AM to 3 PM and Sat., 8 AM to 1 PM.

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# Police investigate fraud and retail theft

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police launched an investigation into an alleged felony fraud and retail theft at a Foote Street location on Dec. 12.

## Middlebury Police Log

In other action last week, Middlebury police enforced the town's overnight winter parking ban downtown on Dec. 9, 11, 12, 13 and 16. Officers also:

- Responded to the report of a man sleeping inside Hannaford Supermarket on Dec. 9.
- Responded to a report of a truck towing a sled on Three Mile Bridge Road on Dec. 9.
- Investigated a report of two people driving erratically on Route 7 South on Dec. 10, trying to drive each other off the road. Police said they were unable to locate the vehicles.
- Were asked by Hannaford Supermarket officials to issue a no-trespass order on a woman who they said had been rude to staff on Dec. 10.
- Responded to a reported vehicle-versus-deer collision on Exchange Street on Dec. 10. Police said they euthanized and removed the injured deer.
- Served a temporary restraining order on a person in the Bakery Lane area on Dec. 10.
- Received a report about a houseless person trying to sleep in a Main Street apartment building on Dec. 10.
- Monitored area roadways adjacent to Otter Creek to watch for potential signs of flooding on Dec. 11.
- Responded to a trespassing complaint in the Buttolph Drive area on Dec. 11.
- Checked on the welfare of a person in the South Village Green neighborhood on Dec. 11.
- Investigated a hit-and-run accident involving two vehicles in an Exchange Street parking lot on Dec. 11.
- Responded to a "juvenile problem" at Mary Hogan Elementary School on Dec. 11.
- Assisted with a landlord-tenant disputes in the Cedar Court and North Pleasant Street area on Dec. 11.
- Responded to a report of an intoxicated man lying face-down on the sidewalk near the intersection of Brookside Drive and Woodland Park on Dec. 12.
- Assisted a driver whose vehicle had been leaking a significant amount of gasoline on Academy Street on Dec. 12.
- Responded to a report of someone driving erratically on Court Street on Dec. 12.
- Responded to a report of a drunken man in a wheelchair causing a disturbance in a Court

Street business on Dec. 12.

- Assisted a person who had gotten locked out of their vehicle on Court Street on Dec. 12.
- Received two abandoned bikes on Dec. 12.
- Helped an East Main Street resident retrieve a runaway dog on Dec. 12.
- Assisted Vermont State Police with a reported domestic dispute in Waltham on Dec. 12.
- Searched in vain on Dec. 13 for a reckless driver on Route 7 South, near Plains Road.
- Assisted Vermont State Police at the scene of an accident on Route 125 in Ripton on Dec. 13.
- Cited Patrick L. Cota, 32, of Bristol for driving with a criminally suspended license on Seminary Street Extension on Dec. 13.
- Assisted operators of an Exchange Street business who reported receiving online threats on Dec. 13.
- Investigated a report of someone allegedly driving a vehicle at a Middlebury College Public Safety officer on Hepburn Road on Dec. 13.
- Searched in vain for a man who had been observed at 11:15 p.m. "behaving in a furtive manner" on Middlebury College campus on Dec. 14.
- Responded to the Halladay Road area on Dec. 14 to investigate a reported traffic hazard
- Checked on the welfare of a Macintyre Lane resident on Dec. 14.
- Investigated a disorderly conduct complaint at an East Main Street apartment building on Dec. 14.
- Participated in a Cookies and Milk with Santa activity at Aubuchon Hardware.

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# Travel

(Continued from Page 1A) Services (ISSS) provided a few travel reminders in a Dec. 12 email to the institution's international community.

"As always, ISSS is attentively monitoring immigration-related regulations, policies, and practices so that we can best advise you while you pursue your Middlebury education, post-Middlebury employment, or your scholarly activities or employment at Middlebury," reads the message. "Whenever there is a change of the U.S. president and their administration, it is common for the new president to take executive actions, some of which can be enacted immediately."

"It is understandable that you may have questions or concerns about re-entering the United States in late January and beyond. Yet, it is not possible for ISSS to predict when or what type of executive actions will be enacted on or following the presidential

inauguration," the message continues. "However, the ISSS team is committed to you and providing timely and accurate information and guidance. We will update our ISSS travel updates webpage, if and when necessary."

After taking office in 2017, Trump issued an executive order restricting people from several predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States. The move affected over 17,000 students from the seven countries included in the travel ban who were studying at U.S. institutions.

During the 2023-2024 academic year around 1.1 million international students were enrolled in institutions across the

United States, according to data from Open Doors, an information resource sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

*"Whenever there is a change of the U.S. president and their administration, it is common for the new president to take executive actions, some of which can be enacted immediately."*

— Middlebury College's ISSS

According to Middlebury College's ISSS, the institution enrolls more than 250 international undergraduate students and around 200 international graduate students from more than 75 countries.

The college's winter break started on Monday, and winter term classes begin on Jan. 6. Spring semester classes begin Feb. 10.

In its Dec. 12 message to the college's international community, ISSS listed several documents individuals are recommended to have on their person when

re-entering the United States. Those include: a passport with an expiration date at least six months after the intended date of entry; a valid/unexpired visa for the intended entry purpose; an employment authorization document (EAD) card if applicable; and Middlebury contact phone numbers.

ISSS offered a few other travel reminders, such as noting that U.S. Customs and Border Protection determines one's eligibility for entry whenever they apply to enter the United States, and that travelers should be prepared to answer questions about their purpose while in the U.S.

"ISSS will continue to advise, advocate for, and support you during your time with Middlebury. If there are immigration-related changes that may affect you or your status, we will alert you when we have confirmed updates to share," the Dec. 12 message reads.

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# SPORTS

ALSO IN THIS SECTION:

- School News
- Legal Notices
- Classifieds
- Police Logs



MEMBERS OF THE MUHS girls' hockey team congratulate junior Lia Calzini, second from right, on the first of her three goals vs. Hartford on Saturday in the Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Tiger girls' hockey ties defending champ

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — In a Saturday night girls' hockey game with momentum shifts that lasted until the final seconds of overtime, host Middlebury Union High School and defending Division II champion

Hartford settled for a 5-5 tie.

In the opener for both teams, the Tigers struck first; the Hurricanes answered to lead by 2-1 after one period, MUHS erupted for four straight goals to apparently seize control in the second period. But

the Hurricanes responded with one goal in the second period and two in the third to knot the score — and then both teams had chances in overtime.

Especially considering his Tiger team is incorporating a handful

of younger players into the lineup (as is Hartford), MUHS Coach PJ Lalonde was happy with his team's efforts against a program that had defeated the Tigers, 4-1, in the playoffs this past winter.

"It was a very solid effort from the team for the opening game," Lalonde said. "They're the defending champs from last year. They're a good team. They definitely didn't roll over when we got a lead on them. They definitely gave us their best effort in that third period. But I was really pleased with the way our kids responded. Even though they (Hartford) tied it up, they (Middlebury) didn't give up. They didn't roll over, and they showed some resilience we were really pleased with."

The Tigers also controlled much in the second period, and stretches of play in the other periods, Lalonde said.

"Lia Calzini with the hat trick, she had a tremendous game, (and) McKenna Raymond, those two were definitely the weigh-carriers for us tonight, but overall we had a great effort," he said. "Our supporting cast was great. Everybody just came through in a big way. For a



TIGER GOALIE RUBY Hubbell turns aside a close-range bid by Hartford's Flynn Moreno during the teams' 5-5 tie on Saturday in the Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James

## St. J topples boys' hockey

ST. JOHNSBURY — The Middlebury Union High School boys' hockey team dropped its opener on this past Saturday night, 2-0, to host St. Johnsbury.

Memphis Mastine scored both of the Hilltoppers' goals in the opening period, and St. J goalie Nate Delman made them stand up with 33 saves.

Marek Jablonski made 12 saves for the Tigers, who were scheduled to visit South Burlington on Wednesday.

## Score BOARD

### HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Basketball	
12/13 OV vs Proctor.....	61-13
12/14 VUHS vs Fairfax.....	50-26
12/17 VUHS vs Stowe.....	67-14
12/17 MUHS vs Montpelier.....	51-14
12/17 Mt Abe vs U-32.....	44-31
Boys' Basketball	
12/13 OV vs MSJ.....	57-50
12/13 St. Albans vs MUHS.....	50-37
12/13 Danville vs VUHS.....	47-41
12/16 Colchester vs VUHS.....	49-47
12/16 Essex vs MUHS.....	60-49
12/16 OV vs Springfield.....	56-41
12/18 Mill River at OV.....	Late
Boys' Hockey	
12/14 St. J vs MUHS.....	2-0
12/18 MUHS at S Burlington.....	Late
Girls' Hockey	
12/14 Hartford vs MUHS.....	5-5
12/18 MUHS at Brattleboro.....	Late

## Colchester edges Commodore boys in final seconds

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The Vergennes Union High School boys' basketball team saw a lead over visiting Division I Colchester slip away in the final 35 seconds on Monday, when the Lakers scored four points after two Commodore miscues and escaped with a 49-47 victory.

The 2-0 Lakers also got 33 of their points from junior guard Vinny Wagoner, including six three-pointers, all 13 of Colchester's points in the third quarter, and the two winning free throws with 6.3 seconds left in the game.

Despite the setback and an ongoing problem with turnovers

— 23 on Monday — Commodores Coach Eric LeBeau was happier with his team's performance vs. the Lakers than he was in its opening home loss to D-IV Danville two days earlier.

VUHS had a huge edge over Colchester on the boards, 34-18 including team rebounds, blocked several shots, and, according to

LeBeau, played hard. He said the defense took a step forward, although some wrinkles remain to be ironed out.

"It all starts on the defensive end. It creates offense for us when we're doing it well. I've got a

(See VUHS/Lakers, Page 5B)



VUHS SOPHOMORE GUARD Cohen Howell plays tight defense on Laker Matt Walterscheit while Commodore forward Theo Elzinga stands ready to help during Monday's basketball game in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James



COMMODORE JUNIOR FORWARD Ryker Mosehauer goes up for a layup vs. Colchester during the Monday boys' hoop game in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Tiger wrestlers prevail

MUHS defeats 17 other teams for N.H. tournament victory

AMHERST, N.H. — On Saturday, Dec. 14, the Middlebury Union High School wrestling team won the 32nd annual Milford/Souhegan Wrestling Tournament in Amherst, N.H., claiming five individual weight-class titles in the process.

The Tigers took the championship in a field of 18 teams with 173 points, followed by Milford, N.H. (132.5); Hollis Brookline, N.H. (130.5); Souhegan, N.H. (125); and

Pelham, N.H. (108) in the top five.

The Tigers' individual champions were:

- Freshman Miles Goetz at 106 pounds.
- Sophomore Jason Sperry at 150.
- Senior Avery Carl at 157.
- Sophomore Wyatt Kennett at 165.
- Sophomore Tucker Wright at 175.

Also placing for the Tigers were:

- Senior Alex Sperry, third place at 144.
- Sophomore Parker Carl, fourth place at 190.
- Junior Kameron Raymond, fourth place at 285.

## Only OV boys net a win

Tiger, VUHS hoop teams defeated

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — Only Otter Valley prevailed as the region's boys' high school basketball season got underway in the past week. Vergennes and Middlebury both came up short in their openers, while Mount Abraham was idle. The Eagles will see their first action when they visit Randolph on Friday.

### OTTERS

In the opener for both teams, on Dec. 13 the Otters used a 10-0 run in the fourth quarter to seize control of a tight game with host Mount St. Joseph and claim a 57-50 victory.

Balanced scoring boosted OV.

Brody Lathrop led four Otters in double figures with 16 points, followed by Lucas Politano (13), Logan Denis (12 in his varsity debut) and Connor Denis with 10. OV won without injured starters Logan Letourneau and Drew Pelkey.

The Otters were scheduled to host Mill River on Wednesday after the deadline for this edition.

### TIGERS

On Dec. 13 host St. Albans pulled away from MUHS in the fourth quarter for a 50-37 victory. Kyle Stearns paced the Tigers with 11 points, Cooke Riney scored nine and added 10 boards, (See Boys' wrap, Page 5B)

## Girls' teams start strong

Basketball squads all undefeated

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — Local girls' high school basketball teams got off to a perfect start as the season got underway: Vergennes prevailed in its first two games, and Middlebury, Mount Abraham and Otter Valley all won their openers.

### COMMODORES

The Commodores opened with a home win on Dec. 14, topping visiting Fairfax, 50-26. VUHS led by 16-7 at the half and pulled away after the break. Ashtin Stearns (15 points) and Georgia Krause (10 points)

reached double figures for the Commodores. Also contributing were Summer Gosliga (eight points), Kendra Jackson (nine rebounds), and Amelia Giroux and Ava Francis (five assists each).

On Tuesday, the Commodores thumped host Stowe, 67-14. Stearns led with 18 points, all in the first half, Francis scored 14, and Krause added 12 points as VUHS moved to 2-0.

### TIGERS

On Tuesday the MUHS girls opened by cruising past visiting (See Girls' wrap, Page 4B)

# Longtime volleyball coach Raunecker ‘grew with the program’

Last year, 2023, Middlebury College women’s volleyball team defeated Manhattanville College, 3-0, in Baltimore in the NCAA postseason tournament. That gave Middlebury volleyball coach Sarah Raunecker 500 wins exactly for her career at Middlebury.

500 wins! This notable achievement did not produce a parade through the town or a campus-wide celebration. It’s hard to attract special attention in women’s sports at Middlebury, given the astonishing record of success of the women’s programs,

where all the teams have winning records and some win national championships (multiple times!). Sarah has built on that 2023 success with 18 more wins this fall. Her record in her 30 years as Middlebury volleyball coach is 518-279. This fall’s team had a special season, winning the NESCAC championship as the No. 2 seed and defeating No. 1 seed Colby (undefeated in NESCAC) in Waterville, Maine, and won two games in the NCAA tournament before losing to Juniata (Pa.), the host team and ultimate national champs for the third consecutive year.

Middlebury team members have been highly decorated at the end of this season: two of Sarah’s players, senior Gabbie O’Toole (setter) and sophomore Molly Harrison (outside hitter), were named All-Americans as well as first team All-NESCAC. First-year Annabella Rando

(libero) was NESCAC Defensive Player of the Year. Harrison was NESCAC Player of the Year and O’Toole was the Region 1 Player of the Year.

Coach Raunecker was the NESCAC Coach of the Year (for the fourth time). Her teams have won the NESCAC Championship six times and made eight NCAA tournament appearances (twice in the regional final, the Sweet 16).

Sarah Raunecker’s path to this coaching success was unusual. She attended Middlebury as a student, class of 1992, coming here from Portland, Indiana. She is the youngest of four in her family; her older siblings all attended East Coast schools. Basketball was her sport. She was recruited by Middlebury and Pomona but

was attracted to Middlebury in her school visit.

“I knew volleyball, but I was a basketball player,” she said, looking back. “Most of the other basketball players in my high school played volleyball in the fall, but I ran cross-country.” At Middlebury, she played four years on outstanding basketball teams under Coach Amy Backus (60 wins, 22 losses) and was team captain her senior year. She still plays pick-up hoop at noon.

To be a great coach, you don’t have to be a great player in that sport, but you have to be smart and diligent and in love with the sport you are coaching. You have to enjoy young people and have natural leadership skills: players have to like playing under your leadership.

Sarah Raunecker has those skills and capacities in abundance.

All-American Gabbie O’Toole has this to say about her coach: “Playing for Coach Raunecker has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Her calm demeanor, competitive energy, and steady approach has made her one of the most effective mentors I’ve had.”

And this year’s co-captain (with O’Toole), Caitlin Smith, explained that “her expectations are clear, but she also gives us a lot of space to be ourselves and learn from each other. Coach has taught me a lot about how to remain calm under pressure and see the bigger picture in every situation.”

Sarah describes her coaching values, her “philosophy” thus: “My goal is to do the best I can by our players. I want to create an atmosphere that is fun and competitive. I want them to (See Lindholm, Page 4B)



SARAH RAUNECKER (MIDDLEBURY College class of 1992) has coached volleyball at Middlebury for 30 years and won more than 500 games. This fall her team won the NESCAC Championship and qualified for the NCAA postseason tournament, winning two games (Sweet 16) before falling to eventual champs Juniata College.

Photo credit: Will Costello



Sports (Mostly) KARL LINDHOLM



THE MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE volleyball team (in white) and the MUHS volleyball team have formed a close relationship. The high school team finished its second season as a varsity sport with an 11-3 record. There are 35 athletes in the program.

Photo credit: Amanda Young



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# Girls' hockey

(Continued from Page 1B)

first game, you're never sure what to expect, and they were a lot of fun to watch."

He was happy with the efforts of many younger players, including newcomers, playing important roles.

"The supporting cast is a group of freshman and sophomores, and they really stepped up tonight," he said. "It's going to be nice to see what they have to bring in the future."

The Hurricanes had the first good bid, but Tiger senior goalie Ruby Hubbell gloved Zoe Zanleoni's strong wrist from between circles a minute into the action.

Calzini gave the Tigers the lead two minutes later with the first of her three goals. Senior McKenna Raymond tapped the puck to her at the Hartford blue line, and Calzini bolted past a defender and whistled a wrist shot past Hartford goalie Nella Bowen and into the upper left corner.

But the Hurricanes controlled most of the rest of the period, as the Tigers had trouble linking up and clearing their zone. Hartford outshot MUHS in the period, 13-5, and despite Hubbell's 11 saves took a 2-1 lead.

Aubree Vail tied the game at 6:17 on a wraparound that appeared to take a funny bounce and deflect high over Hubbell and then in.

At 9:16 more Hurricane pressure paid off. Flynn Moreno, stationed high between the faceoff circles, took a feed from Maria Chaput and fired a screened shot into the net's left side.

With two minutes to go in the period, Hubbell kept it a one-goal game by smothering Madison Barwood's low doorstep bid.

Whatever the MUHS coaches said between periods appeared to help: The Tigers came out and dominated, scoring the first four goals of the second period, including three in the first 2:27.

Raymond won the opening faceoff, poking it toward Calzini, who caught the Hurricanes flatfooted for a breakaway, which

she finished by whipping a wrist to the right side with 10 seconds gone.

Next, at 2:06, sophomore defender Sedona Carrara stepped into the attack, firing in sharply angled shot from the left circle low into the far side, with an assist from classmate Julia Morrissey. The Tigers led, 3-2.

Before the rink announcer could provide the details of that goal, it was 4-2 at 2:27, and Calzini had her hat trick. She picked up a loose puck near the center of the Hartford blue line, skated to her left, and fired the puck into the net's right side.

The Tigers then earned three power plays and scored on the third, a solo goal from Raymond, who picked up a puck on the blue line and beat Bowen with a wrist at 10:07 to make it 5-2.

But what appeared to be a safe lead was not. A momentum changer came on a Tiger line change. The defenders skated off, but the offense failed to get the puck in deep. The result was Barwood was left alone at center ice, and Hartford defender Chelsea Stockwell found her. Barwood, an all-star forward, finished the breakaway at 11:38, and the Hurricanes had life.

Hubbell made five saves in the period's final few minutes, including a kick save on a point-blank shot from the slot and a glove stop on Vail, and it was 5-3 entering the third.

### THIRD PERIOD

Hartford kept charging when they returned to the ice: At 6:14 of the third period it was tied, thanks to two goals from Zanleoni, both bullet wristers from between the circles, the second one set up by Moreno.

Shortly afterward, Hubbell made a pad save on Moreno to preserve the 5-5 score, and then with 6:56 to go the Tigers went on a power play and threatened: Defender Ireland Hanley had the best bid early on in a scramble out front. The Tigers kept pressing after the power play, and Bowen did well to deny a point-blank Morrissey backhand with three minutes to go. Later,



TIGER SOPHOMORE FORWARD Julia Morrissey got behind the Hartford defense on Saturday in the Memorial Sports Center, but the Hurricanes broke up her bid at the last second.

Independent photo/Steve James

Kate Kozak had a bid in another scramble with a minute to go.

The Tigers went back on the power play with 13 seconds left in regulation, and then almost won the game as overtime started. But Bowen denied McKenna's strong rush down the left side.

At the other end, Hubbell stoned Zanleoni's initial shot on a rush and then blocked her bid on the rebound.

With 49 seconds left in OT, the Tigers were assessed a penalty, and Hartford pulled out all the stops — but so did Hubbell in a flurry of activity around her net as the score ended at 5-5.

Hubbell finished with 30 saves, and Bowen with 23.

Lalonde said he would be looking for crisper passing as the season progresses, starting with the Tigers' scheduled Wednesday game at Brattleboro and their Dec. 21 and 23 games at Rutland and Stowe, respectively.

"We struggled a little bit in that department. We had some chats about looking for different options. We were a little eager to whack the puck around without taking a look first sometimes," Lalonde said.

"But especially for our younger players there were a lot of good things out there. Things we can work on, but it was a great building block."

Another thing Lalonde said is going right so far is team chemistry. The roster includes three seniors: Raymond, Hubbell and goalie Michaela Charbonneau; six juniors, and 10 sophomores and freshmen.

"We have a lot of disparity in grade levels," Lalonde said. "And they seem to have gelled together pretty well so far, and we hope they can continue to do that. From what we saw tonight, if they can continue that and become a cohesive unit, there's a lot of potential there."

# Schedule

## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

### Girls' Basketball

12/20 Mt Abe @ Fair Haven Tour... 5:30 PM  
12/20 U-32 at MUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/20 Peoples at VUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/20 OV at Fair Haven ..... 7 PM  
12/23 OV vs. Burr & Burton (FHU). 7 PM  
12/23 Mt Abe at F Haven Tour. .... 7 PM  
12/28 VUHS at Williamstown .... 3:30 PM  
12/28 Fair Haven at OV ..... 2:30 PM

### Boys' Basketball

12/20 Mt Abe at Randolph ..... 7 PM  
12/20 Hartford at OIV ..... 7 PM  
12/20 VUHS at Stowe ..... 7 PM  
12/23 Fair Haven at VUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/23 U-32 at MUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/27 MSJ at Mt Abe ..... 7 PM  
12/27 OV at MAU ..... 7 PM  
12/27 Williamstown at VUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/28 MUHS at Mill River ..... Noon

### Boys' Hockey

12/21 MUHS at Burr & Burton ..... 5 PM  
12/23 St. Albans at MUHS ..... 5 PM  
12/27 Brookline at MUHS ..... 7 PM  
12/28 U-32 at MUHS ..... 7 PM

### Girls' Hockey

12/21 MUHS at Rutland ..... 1 PM  
12/23 MUHS at Stowe ..... 6:30 PM  
12/27 U32 at MUHS ..... 5 PM  
12/28 TBD at MUHS ..... 5 PM

### Wrestling

12/21 ..... Mt Abe at St. J Tournament  
12/21 ..... OV at State Duals Tournament  
12/20&21 ..... VUHS at Lowell Tournament  
12/27 ..... OV at Berkshire Tournament  
12/27&28 VUHS/Mt Abe at MUHS Tour  
12/28 ..... OV at Lebanon Tournament

### Indoor Track

12/22 ..... VUHS/Mt Abe at UVM  
12/28 ..... VUHS/Mt Abe at UVM

### Gymnastics

12/21 MUHS at St. J ..... 3 PM  
12/27 CVU at MUHS ..... 6 PM



MUHS SOPHOMORE KATE Kozak carries across the red line with Hartford's Aubree Vail in pursuit during Saturday's girls' hockey game in the Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James

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Tuesday, December 24:  
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Thursday, December 26:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, December 31:  
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# Lindholm

(Continued from Page 2B)

About the game itself, she says: "I love coaching volleyball. Time is not an element. There's no clock; you're not going to run out of time. It's the ultimate team sport. One person cannot control the ball. The rhythm of the game suits me. I'm a calm person."

When Sarah, an environmental biology major at Middlebury, was asked what she might be doing if not coaching volleyball at Middlebury, she said, "I would be a marine biologist, or a high school

science teacher, who coaches."

Sarah and her husband Rob Alberts, local entrepreneur and longtime Middlebury assistant men's basketball coach, have three children, born and raised in Middlebury: Lydia, a teacher at Bridge School; Lois, a senior at Macalester College; and Maxwell, a first-year at Middlebury and a member of the men's basketball team.

Sarah's volleyball coaching origin story at Middlebury is an interesting one. "In the summer of

1993, I was in Middlebury trying to figure out what I would do with the rest of my life, working as a teacher's aide and long-term substitute teacher in Bridport."

The women's volleyball "club" at Middlebury had shown sufficient sustained interest that it was elevated to varsity status in 1994. Athletic Director Tom Lawson hired a coach and asked Sarah to be her assistant. "I handled all the administrative 'stuff,' the transportation, the strength and conditioning, and so on," Sarah

recalled.

The following year, "Tom asked me if I would take over the program. I was naturally concerned about my lack of experience." She attended in the summer of '95 a CAP (Coaching Accreditation Program) in Lake Placid.

"I took over a young team and grew with the program. I will always be indebted to Tom for giving me the opportunity, for believing in me. I love my job. I love my colleagues."

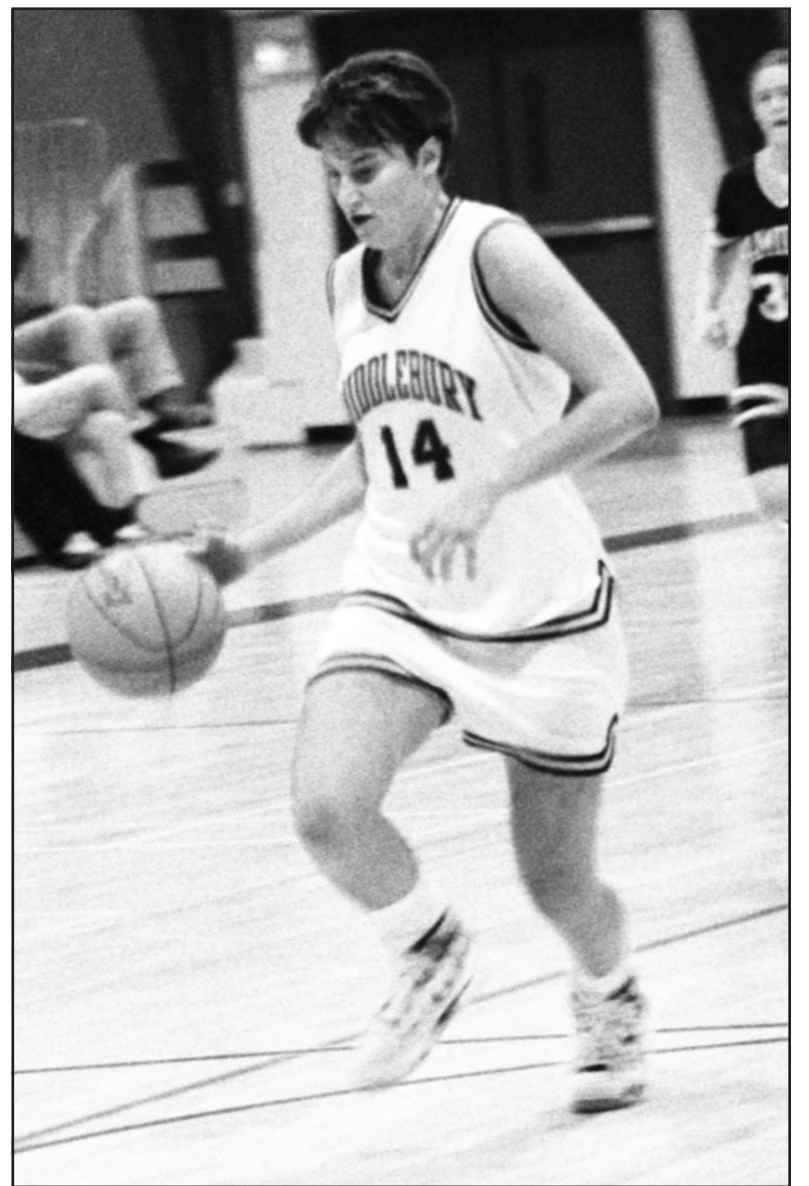
Karen Bartlett '95, the Associate Director of Admissions at Middlebury, was a member of Sarah's first volleyball team. "Sarah showed up every day with energy, enthusiasm, and drills that were new to us. I never worked so hard in my life," she said. "We had a losing season (8-20), but the wins were sweet."

The Middlebury team and the local MUHS girls' volleyball team have formed a close relationship. Local physician Amanda Young's daughter, Ronan, has been a part of the high school team since it gained varsity status two years ago.

"Sarah met with us early in our volleyball adventure to offer support," Amanda said. "In the preseason she sends her players to our gym to meet with the high schoolers and demonstrate skills and drills to get us fired up for the fall. She values the Middlebury College connection to our community through athletics."

Sarah affirmed, "I think it's been a great relationship, both ways!"

Amanda is a Middlebury graduate ('94) and remembers Sarah as a fellow student: "Sarah



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE WOMEN'S Volleyball Coach Sarah Raunecker was a basketball stalwart as a student, playing on Panther teams that went 60-22 from 1988-92.

Photo credit Middlebury College Archives



MIDDLEBURY VOLLEYBALL COACH Sarah Raunecker and her assistant coach Brian Dunlop huddle with their team in an NCAA Tournament game this fall against Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. The Panthers won, 3-1.

Photo credit: JD Cavrich

was my RA freshman year and was a guide for insecure youth trying to find their way.

"Time has passed but nothing has changed. She has a kind heart,

and a friendly laugh ready to share with anyone who needs one."

Karl Lindholm can be contacted at [lindholm@middlebury.edu](mailto:lindholm@middlebury.edu).

Andy Kirkaldy Matt Dickerson Karl Lindholm

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## Girls' hoop

(Continued from Page 1B)

in the Tigers' big win. Next in the scoring column were Lexi Whitney and Louisa Orten (who was making her varsity debut) with eight points apiece. **EAGLES**

Mount Abe opened with a 44-31 victory on Tuesday at U-32. Coach Koran Cousino said her team was hampered by first-half foul trouble and led at the break by only 21-20, but "settled down and played much better" in the second half.

**Mackenzie Griner** led Mount Abe with 10 points and nine rebounds. Among those also making major contributions were **Hazel Guilmette** (eight points, three steals), **Abba Parker** (seven points, six rebounds, five assists)

and **Louisa Painter** (seven points). Clara Wilson scored a game-high 16 points for U-32.

### OTTERS

The OV girls basketball team on Dec. 13 cruised in its season opener, defeating visiting Proctor,

61-13, behind balanced scoring. Freshman **Tegan Boynton** led the way in her varsity debut with 13 points, followed by **Matelin LaPorte** with 11, **Leann Thomas** with nine and **Breanna Bovey** with eight.

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**VUHS SENIOR GUARD** Spencer Grimm makes a move to the basket during Monday's home boys' basketball game against Colchester.

Independent photo/Steve James



**COMMODORE JUNIOR GUARD** Ryan Wright cuts toward the basket during Monday's basketball game vs. Colchester in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Boys' hoop

(Continued from Page 1B) and **Cam Whitlock** chipped in five points.

On Monday, visiting Essex got past the Tigers, 60-49. **Jonah Paquette** led four Hornets in double figures with 14 points. **Riney** scored 19 points to lead all scorers, and **Keenan Chicoine** also reached double figures for the Tigers with 11 points.

### COMMODORES

On Friday the 13th visiting Danville outlasted the Commodores, 47-41, in the opener for both teams. **Andrew Joncas** led Danville with a game-high 20 points. **Ryan Wright** and **Spencer Grimm** each tossed in 10 points for the Commodores.

VUHS hosted Colchester on Monday; see story on Page 1B.

## VUHS/Lakers

(Continued from Page 1B)

bunch of guys who've got a lot of heart and give a lot of effort," LeBeau said. "So defending the basketball has never been a problem one on one. Help and communicating, those are the things we're constantly working on, and we'll get better."

When the Commodores were at their best on Monday, notably in a 9-2 run late in the first quarter, they were effective in transition triggered by strong defense.

The teams traded points for the opening 4:30, and after VUHS junior guard Ryan Wright hit a jumper at 3:30 the Lakers led by 9-8. Then Wagoner hit his second three at 2:45, and the lead was four.

The Commodores buckled down on defense and got the running game going, and junior forward Ryker Mosehauer scored seven points as VUHS closed the period on a 9-2 run. Mosehauer scored inside on a feed from senior forward Spencer Gebo, on the break with an assist from senior guard Reese Paquette, and hit three free throws after twice being fouled while taking the ball to the rack. Wright added a layup after stealing the ball, and the Vergennes lead was 17-13 after one period.

The Commodores lost their offensive momentum in the second quarter, in part because of eight turnovers. After a Wright hoop in transition assisted by sophomore guard Cohen Howell, the Commodores also started missing layups when they didn't turn the ball over. Wagoner also scored seven points in the quarter, and VUHS led by just two at the half, 25-23.

The Commodores dominated the boards and cut down on the turnovers in the third period, and they got six points from Mosehauer, three from Gebo and two from Wright. But Wagoner was bombing away from NBA range and at one point nailed three straight from behind the arc on the way to his 13-point quarter, and the teams were tied at 36-36 heading into the fourth period.

The teams traded buckets, including four straight Gebo points to open the period, and it was tied at 43-43 when Mosehauer hit a jumper at 3:10. A strong move to the hoop by Laker forward Alden Smith at 2:50 made it 45-33; Smith was the Lakers' No. 2 scorer with six points. Wright drove for two at 1:35, and the score was tied again at 45-45.

The Commodores then forced one of the 15 Laker turnovers, and Mosehauer drove and scored to give VUHS the lead with a minute to go, 47-45.

With 40 seconds left, Laker Adam Coburn missed two free throws, and Gebo rebounded. With two Lakers hacking for the ball, Gebo slipped (was tripped?) and fell. He was called for traveling, and then Smith scored on the inbounds play to tie the game.

The Commodores then turned the ball over on the inbounds play, and the Lakers had the ball and called for time with 21 seconds to play. They threw the ball to Wagoner at midcourt, but Mosehauer poked the ball away from him into the backcourt. Both players raced after the loose ball, and Wagoner came up with it. As then headed back

to the offensive end, the players collided, and Wagoner went down. With 6.3 second to go. Wagoner went to the line and swished both.

VUHS called for time and called for a play to give Wright the ball in stride near midcourt. He bolted into the lane and lofted a six-foot floater that looked good, but slowly

rolled off the rim as the final horn sounded.

Mosehauer led VUHS with 22 points, Wright finished with 10, and Gebo added nine. Gebo, Mosehauer and Theo Elzinga all blocked shots and did good work on the boards.

Afterward LeBeau identified

what is working, and what needs work, including more efficiency on the break as well as the defensive communication.

"We have the guys to defend anybody," LeBeau said. "It's whether we can turn that defense into offense in the break."

In all, despite the setback, he saw Monday's game as a step forward.

"I don't feel great right now, but I feel better right now with tonight's effort and losing than the other night when we lost. I felt like we just didn't show up. Tonight we were there," LeBeau said.

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MONTPELIER — The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) is reminding all farm operations that the annual winter manure spreading ban began this past Sunday. Between Dec. 15 and April 1, no manure or other agricultural waste (including compost and spoiled feed) may be spread on agricultural fields throughout Vermont. This annual ban is required by the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), which is a part of Vermont's overall strategy to protect water quality, the working landscape, and natural resources.

The RAPs also prohibit the application of manure or agricultural wastes on frozen, saturated, or snow-covered fields outside of the winter manure spreading ban. Manure does not soak effectively into frozen, snow-covered,

or saturated ground. Manure spread during the winter months therefore has a heightened risk of running off to waterways when the snow and ground finally thaws.

For more than 35 years, restrictions on winter manure spreading in Vermont have been in place to protect water quality. These restrictions have minimized spreading and potential runoff during winter, when field conditions may be particularly susceptible to it. The annual spreading ban requires farmers to either have a storage structure that can hold all agricultural manure and runoff that is required to be collected between Dec. 15 to April 1, which is 107 days, or they must be able to stack all manure produced in a way that meets RAP standards and will not lead to adverse water quality

(See Spreading, Page 7B)

## Free manual helps Vt. makers use green packaging

### Farmers use grant to create new resource

By KATIE SPRING

VERMONT — Big Picture Farm, a Townshend farm that turns goat milk into delicious caramels and cheese, in 2022 received a \$147,800 Dairy Packaging Innovation Grant through the Northeast Dairy Business

### ADDISON COUNTY Business News

Center (NE-DBIC). Their project goal was to eliminate virgin plastic from every aspect of their distribution.

"I'm happy to report that, starting in 2025, we will have successfully eliminated virgin plastic from our packaging line, and 100% of our packaging supplies and materials (across all categories) will be zero-waste, meaning they are either curbside recyclable or home compostable," said Louisa Conrad, co-owner of Big Picture Farm.

Thanks to the NE-DBIC funding, they've not only

transitioned to more sustainable options for everything from their cheese and caramel wrappers to packaging tape and shipping labels, but they've also created an open-source guide for farmers and other Green Mountain makers to use as well.

On making the guide, Conrad said, "We prioritized companies that manufacture the products themselves (versus distributors), and prioritized companies who are U.S.-based and sourcing materials as close to New England as possible. And we also tried to select vendors who have small or at least reasonable minimum-order quantities — as this guide was meant especially for other small New England businesses like ours."

The guide, called "A Vermont Maker's Guide to Greener Packaging," is filled with environmentally friendly packaging options that are recyclable, compostable, and FSC-certified.

This practical guide covers the basics of packaging: shipping cartons, cushioning, insulation, packaging tape, freezer packs, shipping labels, mailers, stickers, ribbon, postcards, pouches & bags, folding cartons, film, printer paper, and, of course, cheese packaging.

Readers will find familiar suppliers like W.B. Mason and its packing peanuts, and less-well-known names, like expandos.com and its cushioning products.

Conrad said Big Picture Farm is committed to keeping these resources current.

And, since the guide is distributed online — check it out at [tinyurl.com/VtEcoPackaging](http://tinyurl.com/VtEcoPackaging) — updating resource listings is possible.

"We will continue to update it as we discover additional suppliers, or as suppliers go off-line," Conrad said. "New technologies are materializing in this field every day."

Lucas Farrell, a co-owner of



LIKE ALL OF Big Picture Farm's packaging, the Vermont company's caramel boxes are made without virgin plastic and can be easily recycled or composted. They have produced a book for other Vermont farms and makers to make packaging more friendly to the environment.

"I'm happy to report that, starting in 2025, we will have successfully eliminated virgin plastic from our packaging line, and 100% of our packaging supplies and materials (across all categories) will be zero-waste, meaning they are either curbside recyclable or home compostable."

— Louisa Conrad, co-owner of Big Picture Farm.

Big Picture Farm, explained that seeing what went into shipping

product directly to customers motivated his team to find better, more earth-friendly ways to connect his farm to consumers.

"One of the main reasons we wanted to spend the energy in the area of our packaging was due to the tremendous growth of e-commerce preceding and especially during the pandemic," Farrell wrote in the introduction to the green packaging guide. "So many materials go into processing, packaging and shipping our products directly to customers, including from our tiny farm in Vermont to folks all across the country."

Editor's note: Katie Spring is communications manager of the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center.



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**LOCAL DAIRY FARMERS** often spread cow manure on agricultural fields not only as a way to get rid of the animal waste, but also to return nutrients to the soil. But manure spreading is not allowed during winter because much if not all of it would run off the land into streams and lakes.

## Spreading

(Continued from Page 6B)

Manure spreading is a common and widespread practice in Vermont agriculture, it enhances soil health and fertility for optimal crop production, plays a pivotal role in the nutrient cycle, and reduces imported nutrients. Per the RAPs,

farms are required to use nutrient management planning to minimize any adverse environmental impact. This includes keeping records of applications that occur including the date, time, amount, field location and weather and field conditions at the time of application.

Questions about the manure spreading ban, spreading before the ban, requests for assistance in the selection of appropriate manure stacking sites, or to request an emergency exemption please contact Nate Sands at 802-224-6850 or Laura DiPietro at 802-595-1990.

## ADDISON COUNTY

# Agriculture News

## Farm to Plate fetes 14th anniversary

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund held its 14th annual Farm to Plate meeting — which carried the tagline “Transformative Action” — Nov. 20 and 21 in Killington.

“We are feeling so energized from this year’s 14th Annual Gathering, which brought together over 300 passionate individuals, all dedicated to finding actionable solutions to the complex issues impacting Vermonters, farms, and our local and global communities,”

organizers said this week in a recap of the event. “Everyone showed up ready to engage in conversation, dive deeply into critical issues, and forge meaningful connections.”

Many participants came away from the gathering with feelings of empowerment, shared purpose, and optimism for tackling tough issues together.

Here are just a few of the sentiments attendees shared: “It was great to be in community

space with all of the folks who were there. Aside from the individual conversations, the whole thing just cheered me up and made me realize that we still have so much possibility, despite national events.”

“I always really appreciate the workshops. The ability to deep dive and have conversations across a spectrum of folks involved in food systems work is always informative and often inspiring.”

## Free grant course offer to Vt. farmers

VERMONT — Agricultural businesses are invited to join a free introductory grant course on Jan. 24 in Berlin.

This one-day course will help businesses navigate the world of grants and will explain the steps of the granting process. This course

is not intended to assist with actual grant writing, but it will help farmers be fully prepared to complete an application.

Participants must be part of an agriculture business.

This course is free and limited to 15 participants. Email

gmprovt@gmail.com to apply for the course. Space is limited, so apply early!

The course was originally scheduled for Nov. 13 but was moved to Jan. 24, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The snow date is Feb. 7.

## MEET Our Farmers

**Holly Menguc**  
Tup's Crossing Farm

A native Vermonter and brief city-dweller, Holly Menguc returned to her roots eight years ago. With very little experience in agriculture, she bravely embarked on a journey to become a goat farmer, inspired by the idea of reconnecting with the land and community she once called home. Today, she manages a herd of 450 goats on 242 acres in Orwell and ships their milk to Vermont Creamery.



### Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition (CVFC): What do you think makes your farm operations unique?

**Holly:** I run two separate herds, an A herd and a B herd, each in their own barn. The A herd kids in the spring and the B herd kids in the fall. This set-up requires a bit more labor but makes my milk check more steady year-round, like it would be at a cow dairy, because I have a constant milk supply. It also benefits me financially because we get a winter pay price premium for milk shipped between October and January.

### CVFC: What are some of the practices you've implemented to support water quality, soil health, and climate smart farming?

**Holly:** There is a protected wetland that runs through this farm that we have kept protected. A farmer before us made four gravel cow fords that go across the wetlands and lead to the far pasture. My goats won't get their feet wet, so we had to build a bridge across the fords because even an inch of water was a no-go for them. We keep our manure in an old bunk. It's not running off, and it gets taken away twice a year to get turned into Moo Doo by the folks at Vermont Natural Ag Products. I don't yet have the equipment to spread it on our own land, which I'd like to do some day.

### CVFC: Why is it important to you as a farmer to be a good steward of the environment?

**Holly:** There's so many aspects to that. One, *why am I here in Vermont?* I'm here in Vermont because I think Vermont is an incredibly special, unique place. And if I'm going to be living here and working the Vermont land, I'm going to try to treat it the best way possible and leave it in a better condition when I'm done farming than how I found it. It's pride of place and pride of being a Vermonter. I know I'm in a very energy-intensive career. I try to appreciate that, “Okay, I did use a lot of water today, but also now I'm regenerating the land the goats are on.” I feel like it's a trade. You have to try to balance your use and what you put back.



To read our full and fascinating interview with Holly, visit us on the web at [www.cvfc-vt.com](http://www.cvfc-vt.com)

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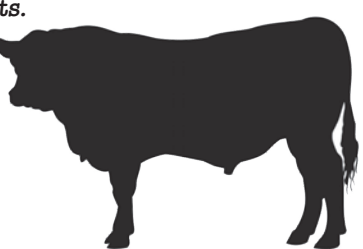
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Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

# community calendar

## dec 19 THURSDAY

**Interlude Monthly Open House in Middlebury.** Thursday, Dec. 19, 3 p.m., 99 Maple St., Marble Works 16. This alternative approach to mental health crisis uses Intentional Peer Support, Trauma-Informed Therapists, the offering of Open Dialogue and more to answer distress. This is a free service, sponsored by the Counseling Service of Addison County. Come to an open house from 3-6 p.m. to meet the staff and see the lovely space. Refreshments, music and a free jewelry workshop will greet you. Questions? Call 802-458-8219.

**"Forest Pest Insects" in Salisbury.** Thursday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St. State Entomologist Judy Rosovsky will discuss the latest information on the spread of emerald ash borer, spongy moths, and the many other insects that are impacting our forests. Part of the Salisbury Conservation Commission's Thursday Series. Free and open to the public.

**Charter House benefit concert and hymn sing in Middlebury.** Thursday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Middlebury United Methodist Church, 43 N. Pleasant St. The 14th annual benefit concert for the Charter House Coalition. An organ prelude by Kevin Parizo will begin at 6:45 p.m. The concert will include both secular holiday music as well as traditional Christmas offerings by musicians from Addison County and beyond. No admission fee but a free-will offering will be taken to support the various programs at Charter House. Reception in Fellowship Hall to follow.

## dec 20 FRIDAY

**Last Minute Fa La La in Bristol.** Friday, Dec. 20, 5-8 p.m., downtown. Get those last-minute gifts when your favorite Bristol shops will stay open until late to help you check off everyone on your list. There's more than just shopping to enjoy. 5 Town Friends of the Arts will offer free gift-wrapping station.

**Christmas Candlelight service in Starksboro.** Friday, Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m., Starksboro Meeting House, 2875 Route 116. A non-denominational program of lessons and carols ed by Michael Blakeslee. Area residents will read the lessons. A 60-year tradition. All are welcome.

**Winter Solstice Celebration with Low Lily in Middlebury.** Friday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. American Roots band Low Lily celebrates the Solstice. This high-energy show will feature instrumentals alongside impeccably arranged songs to honor the season. Between them, the musicians play mandolins, guitars, fiddle and banjo and sing in three-part vocal harmonies. Tickets \$30 table seating/\$20 general admission, available at townhalltheater.org.

## dec 21 SATURDAY

**Middlebury Farmers Market Small Business Saturday in Middlebury.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Mary Kay, 31 Bags, jewelry, paintings, crafts, Hooked by Lexi, authentic African cuisine. 3-D printed toys/gadgets. Live acoustic music by Michael Stridsberg.

**Winter Solstice celebration in Middlebury.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater. Celebrate the longest night of the year. Two classes at Town Hall theater have been preparing for the event creating a play and puppet show based on "The Great Race," which explains how the Chinese calendar was created to depict an animal each year in cycles of twelve years. The event will include a luminary parade after the play starting at the steps of the THT. Lanterns and puppets, including the 20-foot zodiac snake, will circle the Triangle Park fountain and return to THT. Free for all ages.

**"Welcoming the Light" in Ripton.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 3:30 p.m., Spirit In Nature paths, Goshen Rd. Follow the candle-lit path to the campfire at the Sacred Circle for a Winter Solstice celebration. Bring a flashlight and a poem, thought or story to share. Reading of the picture book "Night Tree" by Eve Bunting; make edible ornaments to hang on a tree for the animals. Hot tea and snacks provided. All ages are welcome.

**Bingo in Vergennes.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games start at 6 p.m. A family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by the St. Peter's Historic Preservation Committee to benefit the ongoing restoration efforts for the bell tower and the church.

## dec 22 SUNDAY

**Messiah Sing in Middlebury.** Sunday, Dec. 22, 2 p.m., Congregational Church of Middlebury, 2 Main St. Join the annual gathering of Middlebury singers and players to sing along with selections from Handel's Messiah. Sing favorite choruses or play in the orchestra. Open to all, with donations gratefully accepted at the door. More info contact Jeff at 802-382-7493.

**Reverse Holiday Parade in Brandon.** Sunday, Dec. 22, 5-6 p.m., downtown. Stay in your car, drive up High Street, turn onto Park Street and through the Central Park lot. You'll see beautiful displays, amazing lights, loads of fun and Santa. Take a tour of decorated houses all over town and come back downtown for a Christmas concert at the Brandon Inn at 6:30 p.m.

## dec 31 TUESDAY

**Fireworks and ice skating in Middlebury.** Tuesday, Dec. 31, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Middlebury Rec Park, Mary Hogan Dr. Fireworks begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by free ice skating at Memorial Sports Center.

**New Year's Eve Joe's Big Band in Middlebury.** Tuesday, Dec. 31, 9 p.m.-midnight, Town Hall



**Alleluia**  
MIDDLEBURY'S ANNUAL MESSIAH sing will take place at the Congregational Church of Middlebury this coming Sunday, Dec. 22, at 2 p.m. Join in or just listen to one of the most loved musical traditions of the season.  
Independent file photo/John S. McCright

Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Since his passing in 2004, Joe's Big Band has carried on in Joe Levesque's memory, continuing to evolve into the high-energy force it is today. The band is made up of talented, fun-loving musicians from all over the Champlain Valley who faithfully reproduce the timeless sounds of the masters like Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Stevie Wonder, Brian Setzer and many more. Doors open at 8 p.m. Tickets \$40, available at townhalltheater.org.

St. Restart Medical Education is offering a free community American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR and First Aid course. This class will cover adult, child, and infant CPR, instruction on use of an AED (automated external defibrillator), and adult and pediatric first aid scenarios. Hands-on training. For students who wish to obtain a course completion card, there will be a \$5 fee to cover the American Heart Association fees. Class size is limited to 20 participants, registration required at www.ilsleypubliclibrary.org/cpr-first-aid-course.

## jan 11 SATURDAY

**Cat Café in Vergennes.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library, 258 Main St. Kick off 2025 at the Bixby Library's Cat Café. They partnered with Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society, to bring sweet, adoptable cats to the Bixby. Read, play and cuddle with the kitties, while enjoying light beverages. Limited capacity. Email cedar.winslow@bixbylibrary.org to reserve a 30-minute spot.

**Great Jigsaw Race in Middlebury.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 11 a.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. The 2nd Annual Great Jigsaw Race is happening. Find your puzzling teammates and get ready to race. This year's puzzle is a 500-piece puzzle. We can't wait to see who finishes first. The prize for the winning team is a puzzle of their choice from Sweet Cecily. Register your team of 1-3 puzzlers at www.ilsleypubliclibrary.org.

**Bingo in Vergennes.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 5 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 S. Maple St. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games start at 6 p.m. A family friendly event. All cash prizes, 50/50 raffle. Refreshments sold. Sponsored by the St. Peter's Historic Preservation Committee to benefit the ongoing restoration efforts for the bell tower and the church.

## jan 12 SUNDAY

**Breakfast buffet in Vergennes.** Sunday, Jan. 12, 8-10 a.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall. Omelets to order, scrambled eggs, French toast, bacon, sausage, fruit, plain and blueberry pancakes, maple syrup, sausage gravy on biscuits, corn bread, home fries, mini muffins, juice, milk, and coffee. \$13 adults. \$8 children 8 to 12 years. No cap/cost on family cost. Sponsor: Vergennes Council Knights of Columbus.

## jan 19 SUNDAY

**CPR & First Aid Course in Middlebury.** Sunday, Jan. 19, 11-2 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main

## ARTS, CRAFTS & IDEAS

**Burlington Writers - Middlebury Chapter.** Second and fourth Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., Meeting Room, Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Writers of all genres and skill levels are welcome to join us for this regular meeting of BWW. Each time we discuss the writing of two member writers who have arranged to submit work in advance. We use the MFA style of offering feedback, focusing on the work at hand to help cultivate, inspire and strengthen our individual craft. We look forward to having you join us! For more info contact Andrea Chesman at andreachesman@gmail.com or Masha Harris at masha.harris@gmail.com.

**Fiber Arts Circle in Bristol.** Second Saturdays, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St.

**Fiber Arts Circle in Starksboro.** Mondays, 1-3 p.m., Starksboro Public Library, Route 116.

**Knit and Crochet group in Ferrisburgh.** Mondays, 6:30-8 p.m., North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church, 227 Old Hollow Rd. All are invited, beginner to expert, to hone their knitting and crocheting skills.

**Middlebury Community Music School student salons in Middlebury.** Second Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, on the green.

**Makerspace in Middlebury.** Makers of all abilities design, create, and build in our Woodworking and Sewing Labs. Learn new skills with the help of mentors and access hand tools, equipment, and machines. 802-382-1012.

**Otter Creek Poets in Middlebury.** Ilsley Public Library, Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. For over 20 years a group of poets has met weekly in the library to discuss our work together. The workshop's emphasis is to help each other improve the effectiveness of their new and revised work. Sharing your writing is rewarding, but isn't always easy. The Otter Creek Poets know how to be supportive of both the poet and the poem. Writers and aspiring writers of all ages and levels of experience are welcome, as are poems in all forms and styles.

**Pins and Needles in Brandon.** Tuesdays, 5:30-7 p.m. Brandon Free Library, 4 Franklin St.



### Her own kind of flashy

FEMALE CARDINALS MAY not be as bold as their male counterparts, but this one spotted in Weybridge proves they are just as beautiful.

Photo by Susan Humphrey



## VTFW license, lawbooks are ready

MONTPELIER

— Vermont 2025 hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, as well as the 2025 lawbooks for these activities, are now available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website and wherever licenses are sold.

With ice fishing opening around the state as soon as cold

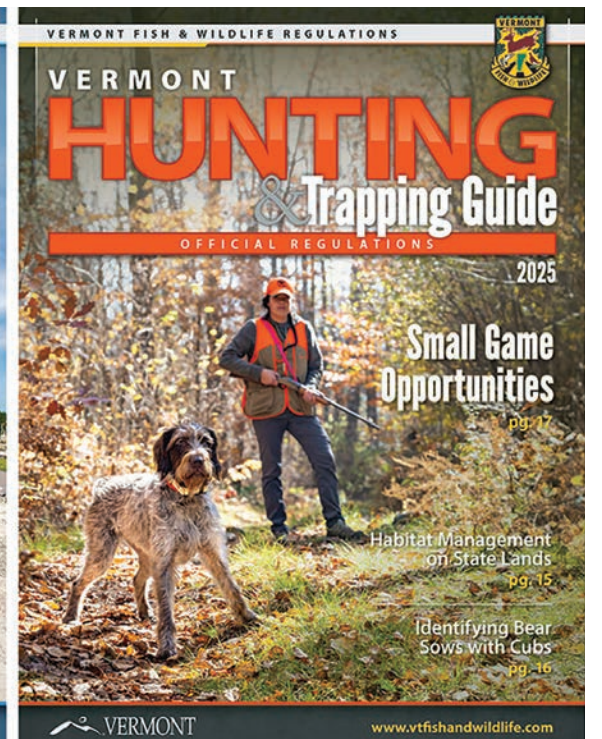
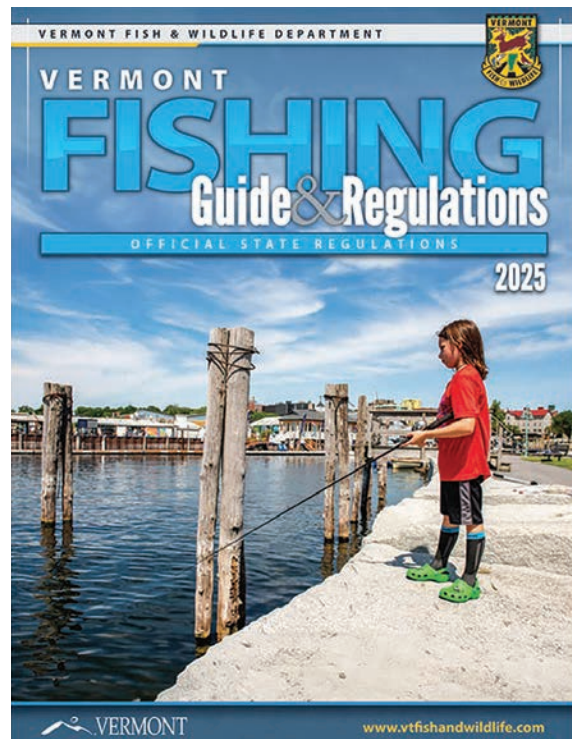


temperatures arrive in January, Vermonters are encouraged to pick up their 2025 licenses at the earliest convenience. Existing five-year, permanent or lifetime licenses can be updated online on Jan. 1.

License buyers can also easily add a \$15 Habitat Stamp to their purchase to further support habitat conservation in

Vermont.

In addition to updating licenses, it is helpful for hunters, trappers and anglers to pick up the current 2025 lawbooks. Printed copies of the 2025 Hunting & Trapping Lawbook and the 2025 Fishing Lawbook are available from license agents statewide. The department's website has links to online versions as well.



THE 2025 HUNTING & Trapping and Fishing Lawbooks, available at licensed agents statewide and on the Vermont Fish & Wildlife website, provide a thorough reference on regulations, offer informative articles on topics like land management for wildlife habitat and feature striking images by New England wildlife photographers.

Photo courtesy of VTF&W

## Monkton

Have a news tip?  
Contact Liz Pecor at rascal0406@gmavt.net

### NEWS

MONKTON — Don't forget to check out the wonderful trees and wreaths that Troop 525 are selling at 265 Mountain Road, south of States Prison Hollow four corners. Prices range \$55 and \$60 for trees and \$25 and \$30 for the hand-made wreaths, all local materials. Deliveries upon request and special orders done also for the

wreaths. If you have questions call George at 802-989-3993.

All are invited to join in for two holiday events at the Monkton Friends Methodist Church in the Ridge. During the 9 to 10 a.m. service, there will be a Children's program. Come and enjoy the nontraditional version of a Christmas message. On Dec.

24, beginning at 7 p.m. there will be a Christmas Eve, Candlelight Service with Christmas hymns and readings. The church be lit only by candlelight at the end of the service as a wonderful way to reflect on the reason we celebrate Christmas. Come and join in on this wonderful annual tradition. Call 802-453-5192 for more information.

## Leicester

Have a news tip?  
Call the Addison Independent at 388-4944.

### NEWS

LEICESTER — The Leicester Historical Society is accepting names for the annual Memory Tree, to be lit at the Four Corners in front of the Meeting House, on

Saturday, Dec. 21, at 5 p.m. You can submit names, one dollar for each name, six names for five dollars, to Diane Benware at 1594 Old Jerusalem Road, Salisbury, VT

05769 until Monday, Dec. 23.

The Memory Tree list will be available on the town website after Christmas.

# STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

## Middlebury Union High School

### Gabe Schmitt

Middlebury Union High School introduces Gabe Schmitt, son of Samantha Farrell Schmitt and John Schmitt, as our student of the week. He has three siblings: Julian, a graduate student at CalTech; Catherine, a science teacher at Rice Memorial High School; and younger brother, Henry, who is in 7th grade at Vermont Day School in Shelburne. The family resides in Middlebury.

Gabe has spent four seasons as a member of three Tiger sports teams: cross country, Nordic skiing, and track and field. He loves being involved in athletics and participating with friends from across the grades, particularly the sense of community and friendship that evolves from being part of a team. A favorite activity is the Best Buddies club, which focuses on inclusivity and creating an awareness of neurodiversity and how people learn differently. He was a key member of helping to plan last year's Neurodiversity Week. Gabe said that a book about learning styles that he read as a child, "Not Your Typical Dragon," made a lasting impact on him.

As a Peer Leader in the fall, Gabe helped our new 9th-graders navigate the transition from middle to high school with ease. Gabe's enthusiasm is contagious and his warm smile is noted by all who encounter him in the classrooms and hallways of MUHS. His positive attitude and outlook are appreciated by our students, teachers and staff.

He spent the spring of his 9th-grade year in Austria while his father was on sabbatical teaching. Gabe says it was an incredible experience in all ways, describing the landscape as beautiful and that he ate "way too much chocolate!" He divides his days between MUHS and the Hannaford Career Center as he is currently in his second year in the Addison Repertory Theater program, where he recently completed a series of children's plays. He also is taking a Western Civilization class, online, at Landmark College and is finding it to be very enjoyable.

Gabe loves his part-time job at EastView where he is employed as a Community Life Assistant. He interacts with the residents and enjoys playing games with them. He worked there nearly full time over the summer and is now there on Sundays.

As he considers what's next after high school, Gabe says he will likely take a gap year and continue to work at Eastview before pursuing college studies. We are certain that a bright future awaits Gabe.



Gabe Schmitt  
MUHS

## Vergennes Union High School

### Mia Kutchukian

Mia Kutchukian is Vergennes Union High School's latest Student of the Week. Mia lives in Waltham with her parents and she has an older brother in college.

Mia has been an excellent student during her time at VUHS, receiving high honors for consecutive semesters and induction into the National Honor Society, where she serves as treasurer. She has developed a particular interest in German. In 10th grade she received the National German Gold Award. Recently she was inducted into the German National Honor Society. Mia spent her junior year in Berlin, Germany. She marks her year in Germany as the most important experience she has had in high school. "I gained language skills, independence, and a new perspective," she says. "I would advise everyone to pursue a language and seek out ways to incorporate it into your life." Upon returning she has continued her studies with VUHS teacher Frau Kepes and at Middlebury College.

Mia has consecutively participated in district music festivals for both band and chorus. During her sophomore year she also attended the All State Music Festival. Currently she is a member of the VUHS Jazz Band and the Commodore Singers. She also contributes to the VUHS girls' soccer, indoor track, and outdoor track and field teams. Green Team; the VUHS school newspaper *The Current*, of which she is the editor; and the Sprachtisch (German Language Table) all take up her time at school. And this year she will take part in the school musical. She got her acting feet wet this fall when she participated in the Middlebury College German Department play.

Mia also volunteers with Vergennes Leos, where she reads to elementary school students and is a part of the Middlebury Havurah. She works at the Woodman Hill Orchard in the fall. When she has spare time, she likes to ski, read, travel, play the piano and spend time with friends.

Mia plans on attending college or university in the fall, though as yet is unsure where. All of us at VUHS look forward to seeing what lies ahead for this bright and gifted student.



Mia Kutchukian  
VUHS

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# Telephone Gap logging project is taking shape

By EMMA COTTON  
VTDigger.org

RUTLAND — After years of debate, the U.S. Forest Service issued a draft plan last week for managing more than 72,000 acres of public and private land, called the Telephone Gap Project, in Rutland County. The controversy largely focused on how much of the land should be opened to logging.

The plan, which spans Brandon, Chittenden, Goshen, Killington, Mendon, Pittsfield, Pittsford, and Stockbridge, has been controversial due to the amount of land it proposed for logging. Green Mountain National Forest land accounts for 45% of area. The Forest Service expects a final plan to be adopted in March, after the public has one last opportunity to make objections. U.S. Forest Service chose a version of the plan, called Alternative C, that differed from previous versions by focusing more on protecting old growth forest and prioritizing timber harvests that are ecologically sustainable.

While there was only a small overall reduction in the almost 12,000 acres originally proposed

for timber harvest, the “big change,” Forest Service District Ranger Chris Mattrick said, is the “types of treatments that were applied to those stands being proposed for harvest.”

Across the region, less than 0.1% of land in New England and New York is occupied by old growth forests, experts estimate. In the 1800s, European settlers cleared the majority of the landscape to create agricultural land. That means many trees are the same age, which can have some ecological drawbacks.

*“We want to go in and be able to make canopy gaps, make small openings” so that the forest has a more complex structure as it ages.*

— Ranger Chris Mattrick

“We want to go in and be able to make canopy gaps, make small openings,” so that the forest has a more complex structure as it ages, Mattrick said. In some places, the land would be managed solely for ecological purposes, with any cut trees left on the ground to decompose and mimic natural processes, he said.

The plan, issued Dec. 3, won praise from a group of environmentalists, including the Vermont Natural Resources Council, Audubon Vermont and William Keeton, a professor of forest ecology and forestry at the University of Vermont, whose comments on the plan influenced the final product, Mattrick said.

The organizations had partnered to “offer a roadmap to the Forest Service on a new model approach on how to manage for old growth protection, how to identify older forests where it would be appropriate to have a lighter touch, to do ecological forestry and try and accelerate the improvement of old forest conditions,” said Jamey Fidel with the Vermont Natural Resources Council. Their proposal also identified suitable areas for commercial forestry, he said.

“To our understanding, this may be one of the first projects nationally to step out and test this approach,” Fidel said.

The partnership of environmental groups made comments because they were concerned the original proposal could have harmed existing old growth stands, he said.

Keeton, with UVM, said he’s “strongly supportive” of the Forest Service’s new plan.

It accomplishes three elements needed to restore old forests on public lands, he said. The new plan protects old forests in the project area, allocates more than 1,000 acres to a new category focused on restoring characteristics of old growth forests, and includes multiple uses for middle-aged forests, “which include management for different kinds of wildlife habitats and, very appropriately, timber,” he said.

“So we have the old forest conservation, we have restoration, and then we have management on some of the remaining mature forests,” Keeton said. “This kind of triad or three-pronged approach is exactly the kind of holistic, forward-looking management that we need on national forests.”

### GLOBAL WARMING

Not everyone agrees. In Vermont, a debate about how to best protect forests has heated up in the last several years. While some environmentalists and scientists see ecological benefits in certain types of forest management, others believe protected forests should be left alone so nature can take over.

Zack Porter, executive director of Standing Trees, a group that (See Emissions, Page 14B)

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**Public Meetings**

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If you are interested in this position, please reach out to Mary Johnson Children's Center at (802) 388-2853 and ask for Dylan or email [dylan@mjcvt.org](mailto:dylan@mjcvt.org).

The Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Got a seasonal gig? Find your dream job with help from the Addy Indy.**

[addisonindependent.com/help-wanted](http://addisonindependent.com/help-wanted)

**ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT**

**Help Wanted**

**Help Wanted**

**Help Wanted**

**TOWN OF SALISBURY ASSISTANT ROAD FOREMAN**

The Town of Salisbury is seeking a Fulltime Highway Technician (CDL Required) to maintain and repair roadways, operate heavy equipment, perform winter snow removal, cut trees/brush, and more.

- Pay Range is minimum \$23 per hour (+) based on experience.
- Additional benefits package. • Paid holidays and time off

**Position Overview**

Work for the Town of Salisbury on a two-person crew performing maintenance, repair, and construction work on Town roadways and equipment.

**Job Description**

Operate Town-owned equipment to install and maintain culverts, work on sand and salt piles, patching roads, mowing roadside, plowing, line striping, and other equipment operations.

**Hours of Operation**

Regular hours are Monday through Friday, from 7:30AM to 3:30PM. Overtime as needed.

**Compensation will be based on experience.**

**Minimum Requirements**

- CDL Required
- Must Comply with DOT Drug & Alcohol Policy

**Contact**

Please contact Willem Jaring, Salisbury Road Foreman, for additional details at 802-349-0306

**Help Wanted**

**Help Wanted**

**Help Wanted**

**WE'RE HIRING!**

**Come join our team!**

Do you enjoy meeting new people, problem solving and working as a team? Are you self-motivated, curious and eager to help others?

**If so, we have the perfect opportunity for you!**

The Addison Independent is seeking a top-notch advertising account representative to develop new and grow established sales accounts in the greater Middlebury and Vergennes areas, plus Chittenden County. Candidate must have strong written and verbal communication skills and be an eager and self-motivated worker.

Full or part-time position available, 20 to 40 hours weekly, depending on your situation. Flexible work schedule and a great work culture. Excellent opportunity for motivated sales person with a desire to succeed!

**To apply, please send resume and cover letter to:**

**Christy Lynn, Advertising Manager**  
58 Maple Street | Middlebury, VT 05753  
[christy@addisonindependent.com](mailto:christy@addisonindependent.com)

**Addison County Parent/Child Center**

**VAN DRIVER JOB OPENING**

**Addison County Parent/Child Center**

We are seeking a van driver who will transport children, youth, and parents to our center from around Addison County.

**Strong candidates** must have a clean driving record and experience with children and families.

**Great working environment and benefits.** This is a 20-hour position with hours split between mornings and afternoons.

Please contact **Donna Bailey** at [d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org](mailto:d Bailey@addisoncountypcc.org)

**Opportunities**

**Opportunities**

**Opportunities**

**Opportunities**

**Opportunities**

**Opportunities**

**New Year's Resolution: Become an RSVP Volunteer!**

RSVP of Addison County connects volunteers age 55 and up with organizations that need their support. RSVP provides a wide range of opportunities from delivering healthy meals to neighbors, helping community members with transportation, to reading to a companion, or providing support to children of all ages. RSVP will help you find an opportunity to fit with your causes, interests and schedule.

**Learn how you can make a difference!**

To learn more, please visit [www.volunteersinvt.org](http://www.volunteersinvt.org) or contact us at 802-468-7056

**ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT**

Serving Addison County, Vt., Since 1946

Addison Independent **CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM**

**ADDISON INDEPENDENT**  
58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753  
802-388-4944  
[addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com) • email: [classifieds@addisonindependent.com](mailto:classifieds@addisonindependent.com)

Cash in on our 4-for-3 rates! Pay for 3 issues, get 4th issue free! An ad placed for consecutive issues runs the 4th time for free!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Or, submit your classified ad on our website: [addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com)

**DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.**

- 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
- \$2 internet listing for up to 4 issues • minimum 2 insertions

- Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted
  - Notices  Work Wanted  Att. Farmers
  - Card of Thanks  Help Wanted  Motorcycles
  - Personals  For Sale  Cars
  - Services  Public Meetings\*\*  Trucks
  - Free\*\*  For Rent  SUVs
  - Lost 'N Found\*\*  Want to Rent  Snowmobiles
  - Garage Sales  Wood Heat  Boats
  - Lawn & Garden  Real Estate  Wanted
  - Opportunities  Animals  Real Estate Wanted
  - Adoption  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**

# Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

## Public Meetings

**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

**CONSTRUCTION: ADDITIONS, RENOVATIONS** new construction, drywall, carpentry, painting, flooring, roofing, pressure washing, driveway sealing. All aspects of construction, also property maintenance. Steven Fifield 802-989-0009.

**MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING Services.** Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

**ODD JOBS: CLEAR SNOW** off roofs. Clear sidewalks. Brush cutting. Interior painting. Low rates. Call John 802-999-2194.

**WE BUY OLD STUFF** Estates, collections, antiques etc. Also hunting and fishing items. Call Erik 802-345-0653.

## Free

**DIGITAL ACCESS** View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at [addisonindependent.com](http://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!

## For Rent

**1000 SQUARE FEET OF RETAIL** available with parking on Bakery Lane in downtown Middlebury. 802-349-8544.

## For Rent

**5,000 SQUARE FEET** available. Exchange Street, Middlebury, VT. 802-349-8544.

**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

**COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE** - 3000 sq ft - Middlebury. Loading dock. Tall ceilings. \$2,500.00 p/month. 802-558-6092.

**FURNISHED ROOM:** East Middlebury. Separate entrance. All included; w/d, wifi, kitchen, & parking. Security and references required. \$675 per month. Text Rochell 802-989-8941.

**LAKE DUNMORE HOME** Private/Modern 1.5 BR house, Lake Dunmore waterfront, 12 miles to Middlebury College/Porter. \$1450/month, 6 month lease. Utilities included. Sleeps 4. Contact at [aaron@balleriq.com](mailto:aaron@balleriq.com)

**MIDDLEBURY SUGARWOOD APARTMENTS** is currently taking waitlist applications for 2, 3, 4 bedroom apartments. Minimum occupancy requirements. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 [www.SummitPMG.com](http://www.SummitPMG.com).

## For Rent

**MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING** available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

**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](http://www.SummitPMG.com).

## Wood Heat

**DRY OR GREEN firewood** for sale. Delivery available. 802-349-4212.

## Real Estate

**BUILDING LOT** approximately 1/2 acre Daisy Lane, East Middlebury, village water, underground utilities, designed septic. Established neighborhood with Little League field. \$105,000. Tel 802-388-2502. Jack Brown.

## Att. Farmers

**1ST CUT, SMALL square,** \$3.25. 2nd cut small square, \$4.25. 802-377-5455.

**HAY FOR SALE** Over 1500 square bales of 1st cut hay for sale. \$4 per bale. Also 300+/- bales of 2nd cut hay on tarped wagons - \$4 per bale. Located at 864 Smead Rd., Salisbury, VT. First come, first serve. Call 802-352-4686.

**WHITNEY'S CUSTOM FARM WORK** Pond agitating, liquid manure hauling, drag line aerating. Call for price. 462-2755, John Whitney.

## Wanted

**WANTED: ZEBRA FINCH,** male or female. Call 802-989-6229.

# Tension building with loggers, climate advocates

By RACHEL ELLIOTT  
VTdigger.org

A possible plan to cut down trees on nearly 11,000 acres of the Green Mountain National Forest is heightening tension between climate advocates and federal officials who claim the logging would help ecosystems.

The U.S. Forest Service hasn't yet made a formal proposal, but in preliminary documents for the project — called the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project — officials suggest that between 4,720 and 10,900 acres of trees in the forest could be subject to logging.

The project focuses on about 32,250 acres of the more than 400,000-acre forest that stretch across Addison, Rutland and Windsor counties, mostly around the town of Chittenden. Removing the trees would be a matter of balancing out the ecosystem, officials say. Eighty-five percent of trees in the area available for logging are more than 80 years old.

Is that a problem? Forest Service officials say, yes it is, because many species of wildlife depend on habitats that come only from young or regrowing forest environments. Increasing the amount of younger forest, for example, would create more areas for deer to seek shelter in the winter. So the Forest Service is considering cutting down older trees, leaving space for new ones to grow in.

But the agency's goals have drawn criticism from activist groups focused on forest conservation and climate change, who say that getting rid of old-growth forest would hurt an important, natural way to combat carbon emissions.

The project is one of the 10 worst logging projects in federal forests in terms of its contribution to climate change, said Zack Porter, executive director of Standing Trees, a group that pushes for policies to protect and restore New England's native forests. Porter said the high percentage of old trees in the project area play a key role in sucking excess carbon out of the atmosphere.

"We want to make sure that decision-makers know that the public cares, that we're watching and, if they don't start changing the way that they take public input into account (and) changing the plans for our public lands, that the pressure is just going to keep mounting," Porter said.

The group organized a protest against the possible logging on Nov. 12 outside the Forest Service ranger station in Rochester, which drew more than 100 people, with speakers expressing fears for the forest and anger at the Forest Service for, in their view, ignoring their concerns.

"I have lived in Vermont since I was 6 years old, and it feels a lot like a place that is away from the rest of the problems of the country," said Viggo Holzhammer, a high school student attending the rally. "It's very much a safe haven. But we have ... been slowly experiencing the effects of everything happening in the country. ... No place is safe, no matter how green it presents itself."

The event was the first in a national week of action by advocacy groups across the country as delegates from more than 195 countries met for the annual U.N. Climate Change Conference in Egypt last month.

Officials with the Forest Service, though, said the project aims in part to support efforts to help ecosystems and landowners better adapt to climate change and forest management.

"The agency's top priority is to maintain and improve the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of current and future generations, including the climate crisis," spokesperson Wade Muehlhoff said. "Forest management focuses on managing vegetation, restoring ecosystems, reducing hazards and maintaining forest health. Old-growth and mature forests are key components to healthy ecosystems."

Muehlhoff said that commercial timber operations happen in less than 0.3% of the Green Mountain National Forest each year. When trees there are cut down, workers sometimes use techniques intended to increase habitat for animals and accelerate the development of mature and old forest characteristics — helping older trees in forests grow even older, undisturbed.

**EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

The activist group wants to get a federal rule passed to require the Forest Service not to log trees in mature and old-growth forests. Porter claimed that, by cutting in these areas, the service is "flouting" several federal executive orders issued this year aimed at combating

climate change.

Muehlhoff denied that the Forest Service has gone against an April executive order from President Joe Biden that requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture — which oversees the service — to "conserve America's mature and old growth forests on federal lands" and "deploy climate-smart forestry practices ... to improve the resilience of our lands, waters, wildlife and communities in the face of ... arising from climate impacts," among other things.

Muehlhoff did not address a question about whether the Forest Service had acted out of step with an earlier January order covering many of the same points.

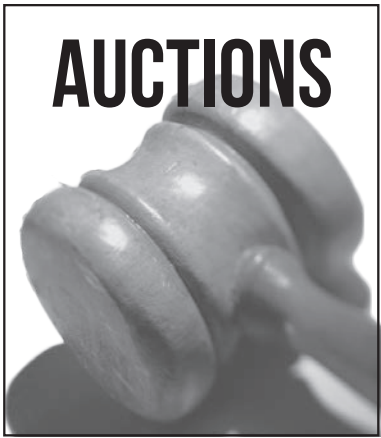
After the November rally, a group of protesters drove a few miles down the road to a recently clear-cut area of the forest to see what the effects of the proposed project might look like. They gathered together at the top of a barren hill tangled with branches and weeds in the middle of otherwise untouched forest. The mood was quiet and solemn, unlike the passionate speeches given less than an hour before.

Anita Pomerance, 88, stopped to count the exposed tree rings on a stump that she determined to be nearly 100 years old.

"The latest news that it's nine years, rather than 20, before we reach an irreversible point (in climate change), that's a terrifying thought," Pomerance said. "I thought it's not going to be in my lifetime, but now it is going to be in my lifetime. ... That's discouraging to know."

When and if the Forest Service releases a proposal to log parts of the project area, people will be able to submit public comments on the plan. So far officials have emphasized that nothing is set in stone.

Clarification: An earlier version of this story mischaracterized the type of logging the U.S. Forest Service has considered for 11,000 acres in the Green Mountain National Forest.



## MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT  
Sales for 12/12/24 & 12/16/24

BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
Iroquois Acres	1690	1.52	\$2568.80
Nop Bros	1485	1.36	\$2019.60
Blue Spruce	1155	1.30	\$1501.50
J. Allen	1125	1.30	\$1462.50
Sunderland	1490	1.24	\$2184.00
Vorsetveld	1820	1.20	\$2184.00
P. Livingston	1785	1.20	\$2142.00

CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$
Barnes Bros	78	10.00	\$780.00
Elysian Fields	99	9.50	\$940.50
White Rock	96	9.00	\$864.00
J. Williams	85	9.00	\$765.00
Sunderland	102	8.80	\$897.60
Wilcon Farm	94	8.50	\$799.00

**Total Beef - 155 Total Calves - 212**

We value our faithful customers.

**Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.**  
call 1-802-388-2661

## Emissions

(Continued from Page 10B)  
advocates against logging on public lands, said "despite claims that (the plan) is an improvement" over the original proposal, the plan "is still an enormous logging project."

Porter, executive director of Standing Trees, objects to logging in areas that are currently roadless and to forest management that's set to take place in areas with older trees. Activities in the project area are expected to produce 254,556 metric tons of total carbon emissions for the 15-year project, or equivalent to 4,039 gas-powered passenger vehicles driven annually, according to the plan. That "flies in the face" of Vermont's Global Warming Solutions Act, which requires the state to reduce emissions, Porter said.

He is also concerned about flood risks that could come from timber

harvesting.

Throughout the last several years, versions of the plan have received thousands of public comments, which was far more than other similar plans proposed on Green Mountain National Forest land in the past, Mattrick said.

Mattrick said it's likely the new attention came from "the interest in carbon stewardship and climate impacts," which are "much more in the forefront of people's thinking today than they were even three, four or five years ago."

"A lot of comments brought that up," he said.

## BALANCING VARIOUS VIEWS

Mattrick said it was a challenge to balance differing views in public comments, along with the broader goals of the U.S. Forest Service's planning process. The mission is to

plan for a wide variety of uses on the land, including "recreation and wildlife and timber management and roads and trails and special uses," Mattrick said. The Forest Service also took a recent executive order from the Biden Administration into account that called for increased protection of old growth forests.

Still, he was happy to see the plan get more public attention than others have.

"It's yours and everybody else's public land, and everybody gets the opportunity to have input into the management of that land," Mattrick said.

Members of the public can comment on the plan until Jan. 17, 2025, on the project's website. A final version is set to be published in March 2025 after potential objections are addressed.

## ADDISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING SERVICES

Addison Central School District (ACSD) seeks to engage a qualified architect-led design team to assist them in creating a phased Capital Improvement Plan. For details regarding the RFP please contact Addison Central School District District Office at 802-382-1270 by December 20, 2024.

## NOTICE OF DESTRUCTION OF PERSONNEL RECORDS RUTLAND NORTHEAST SUPERVISORY UNION

Brandon, Chittenden, Goshen, Leicester, Mendon, Pittsford, Sudbury, Whiting (RNESU, Otter Valley & Barstow Unified Union School Districts)

Let this serve as notice that Personnel Records of employees who were employed at Barstow Memorial School, Lothrop Elementary School, Neshobe School, Otter Creek Academy (formally known as Leicester Central, Sudbury Country and Whiting Elementary Schools), or Otter Valley High School in the 1993 and 1994 school years are being destroyed in accordance with Federal, State and Local Guidelines.

Anyone who would like their record should call Kayla Emerson at the RNESU Office at (802)247-5757 prior to December 31, 2024 to make arrangements to pick it up.

Brooke Dahlin  
Human Resources Coordinator

## STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 24-PR-06496 IN RE ESTATE OF: WALTER ENGLEHARDT

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**To the Creditors of:** Walter Englehardt, late of Granville. 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: 12/09/24

Executor/Administrator: Christyna Hawthorne, c/o Shannon E. Lamb, Esq.,  
PO Box 280, Rutland, VT 05702-0280  
802-775-7141

[sel@vermontcounsel.com](mailto:sel@vermontcounsel.com)

Publication: Addison Independent  
Publication Date: 12/19/24

Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Addison Unit  
Address of Probate Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

## MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE PUBLIC NOTICE

The following roadways are located on the property of Middlebury College:

- Porter Field Road - The roadway which serves Porter Field and extends from South Main Street to South Street.
- South Service Road - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from Hillcrest Road to South Main Street.
- Hepburn Road - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to South Service Road.
- Le Chateau Lane - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to Le Chateau.
- Freeman Way - The roadway which serves the site of the Freeman International Center and extends from Weybridge Street to Gorham Lane and to the Freeman International Center.
- Old Chapel Road - The roadway which serves the lower campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to the Service Building parking area.
- HMKL Way - The roadway which serves the upper campus of Middlebury College and extends from College Street to Kelly/Lang Dormitory.
- Golf Course Way - The roadway which serves the Golf Course, Kirk Alumni Center and Hadley House, and extends from Route 30 to the Hadley House and the Alumni Stadium.
- Ridgeline Road - The roadway which serves the houses of Middlebury College known as Prescott, Palmer, Brooker, Brackett and extends from Route 125 to Hillcrest Road.
- Adirondack View - The roadway which serves the Adirondack View houses, Ridgeline Town Houses, and Ridgeline Suites of Middlebury College and extends from Route 125 to Hillcrest Road.
- Bicentennial Way - The roadway which serves the western campus of Middlebury College and extends from Route 125 to Bicentennial Hall.

The above listed roadways have never been set apart, surrendered or otherwise dedicated by Middlebury College to the public use. All persons using said roadways do so in subordination to the rights and by permission of Middlebury College and are subject to this notice.

These roadways will be closed to public use from midnight Tuesday, December 24, 2024, until midnight Wednesday, December 25, 2024. They will be reopened the following day for public use with the permission of Middlebury College.

Middlebury College  
By: Luther Tenny  
Director, Facilities Services

## FULL PASSPORT SERVICE

The Addison County Clerk located in the **Frank Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury** is available to accept passport applications and provide passport photos.

**REGULAR HOURS**  
Monday - 8:30am to 4:00pm  
Tuesday - 9:00am to 12:30pm  
Wednesday - **Closed**  
Thursday - 12:30pm to 4:00pm  
Friday - 9:00am to 12:30pm

**APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED**  
For appointment, go to [www.addisoncountyclerkvt.com](http://www.addisoncountyclerkvt.com) or call 802-388-1966.

## Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found on **Page 14B**

- Addison Central School District (1)
- Addison County Courthouse (1)
- Addison Northwest School District (1)
- Middlebury College (1)
- Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (1)

## ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT (Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes and Waltham) CHILD FIND NOTICE

Addison Northwest School District is required by federal law to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities. The process of locating, identifying and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find.

Addison Northwest School District schools conduct PreK screening each spring, but parents may call to make an appointment to discuss their concerns at any time. As the school district of residence, ANWSD has the responsibility to identify and provide services to any child with special needs who may require special education and related services in order to access and benefit from public education.

If you have, or know of any ANWSD resident who has a child with a disability under the age of 21 or a child who attends a private school located in Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes or Waltham, Vermont, we would like to hear from you. Sometimes parents are unaware that special education services are available to their children.

Please contact the School Principal (Ferrisburgh Central School - 877-3463, Vergennes Union Elementary School - 877-3761, Vergennes Union High School - 877-2938) or the Director of Student Support Services, Laura Nugent at 877-3332 or [lnugent@anwdsd.org](mailto:lnugent@anwdsd.org).

# Bridport man cited for assault

ADDISON COUNTY — A Bridport man faces charges for allegedly threatening a neighbor with a gun early this week.

Vermont State Police were called to a Crown Point Road address in Bridport on Dec. 16 at around a quarter after 6 p.m. on a report of an altercation involving a firearm that was occurring at a home. Police said their investigation showed that Travis E. Norris, 26, of Bridport threatened to cause serious bodily injury to a neighbor.

Troopers took Norris into custody, transported him to the New Haven state police barracks, and cited him for aggravated assault.

At the conclusion of processing, they lodged Norris at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility for lack of \$2,500 bail.

In a separate case, state police on Dec. 13 cited 24-year-old Brandon Francis on a variety of charges after they responded to a report of a family fight at a Route 116 home in Starksboro. Police said that they determined that Francis (who is identified

## Vt. State Police Log

as a Starksboro resident and as a South Burlington resident) had taken the telephone from a family member as they were attempting to call for emergency services, and then destroyed the phone.

Authorities cited him for unlawful mischief, interference with access to emergency services and, since the incident transpired in the view of children, for committing an offense in the presence of a child.

Further, police said Francis had driven away from the scene on a public highway and later returned shortly before the state police's arrival. Since troopers observed several signs of impairment, they also cited Francis for driving under the influence.

That same evening, Dec. 13, state police responded to a different domestic dispute, this one on Sand Road in Ferrisburgh at 7:24 p.m. After investigating, police decided that Sean Mayo,

54, of Ferrisburgh had caused pain and bodily injury to several family or household members. So they took him into custody, cited him for two counts of domestic assault, and lodged him at Northwest State Regional Correctional Facility with bail set at \$1,500.

The two other crimes that state police reported this week involved driving.

On Dec. 13 at a quarter to 8 p.m., state police responded to a single motor vehicle crash on Otter Creek Highway in New Haven. Authorities cited the driver, identified as 58-year-old Lisa Holwager of South Burlington, for driving under the influence.

And then on Dec. 16 shortly before 6 p.m., troopers conducted a traffic stop after an observed motor vehicle violation on Round Barn Road near the intersection with Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. They cited Kyle M. Bogart, 30, of Ticonderoga, N.Y., for driving with a criminally suspended license.



### Enter the blue jay

A RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER doesn't seem particularly phased by the blue jay invading its space. The pair were seen in a Weybridge yard this past weekend.

Photo by Susan Humphrey

# AREA HOLIDAY SERVICES

If your holiday services are missing from this listing, send them to the Addison Independent and the paper will run them online. Submit holiday services via email to sarahp@addisonindependent.com or call 802-388-4944, ext 109.

**ADDISON COUNTY** — A number of Addison County-area churches have set their schedules for special Christmas events and services. Note that these plans may change.

#### ADDISON

**Addison Community Baptist Church** will have Christmas Eve service at 4:30 on Tuesday, Dec. 24.

**West Addison United Methodist Church** will hold a Christmas Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, Dec. 22, at 7 p.m. This service replaces the regular morning worship service that day. All are invited to attend. No service on Christmas Day, Dec. 25.

#### BRANDON/FOREST DALE

**Brandon United Methodist Church** will hold a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m.

**St. Thomas & Grace Episcopal Church** (Route 7, Brandon village) Christmas Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 5:30 p.m. This will be a family-friendly, festive service with carols and special music. On Sunday, Dec. 29, there will be a service of Lessons & Carols at 10 a.m.

#### BRIDPORT

**Saint Bernadette's Catholic Church** will hold Christmas Day Mass on Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 9 a.m. Please also see the listing for Middlebury - St. Mary's for Christmas Eve. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org.

#### BRISTOL

**Saint Ambrose Roman Catholic Church** will hold Christmas Eve Mass on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. Christmas morning Mass will be held at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 25.

#### CHARLOTTE

**Charlotte Congregational Church** Lighting the Advent Wreath, Sundays, Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22, 10 a.m.; Messiah Sing, Sunday, Dec. 1, 4-5:15 p.m.; Taizé Service of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m.; Christmas Pageant, Sunday, Dec. 15, 10 a.m.; Christmas Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 24, Outdoor Family Carol Sing, 4 p.m., Indoor service of Lessons and Carols with children's choir

and Christmas bells for the children, 5 p.m., Indoor service of Lessons and Carols, 7 p.m., Special offering taken at 4, 5 and 7 p.m.; First Sunday after Christmas, Sunday, Dec. 29, 10 a.m.

#### EAST MIDDLEBURY

**The East Middlebury United Methodist Church and the Middlebury United Methodist Church** will hold a combined Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. at the East Middlebury United Methodist Church.

#### FERRISBURGH

**North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church** will hold its Christmas Pageant on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 10 a.m. and a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m. Both services will be streamed on the church's YouTube channel. To join, search "North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church" on YouTube.

#### MIDDLEBURY

**The Middlebury United Methodist Church and the East Middlebury United Methodist Church** will hold a combined Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. at the East Middlebury United Methodist Church.

**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Saint Mary's) Catholic Church** will hold Christmas Eve Masses on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. (choral prelude at 7:15 pm). Please also see the listing for Bridport - St. Bernadette's for Christmas Day. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org.

**The Congregational Church of Middlebury, UCC** will have Christmas Eve Services, Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. The 4 p.m. service will be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube. Links can be found on our website, www.midducc.org. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! **Memorial Baptist Church** on S. Pleasant Street in Middlebury Will hold a Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service at 4 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 24, and Christmas Day Celebration at 10 a.m., Wednesday, Dec. 25.

**Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church** will hold Advent noontime concerts on Thursday, Dec. 5, 12, and 19, at 12 p.m. Free. All are welcome. Sunday, Dec. 15, Advent Lessons and Carols service at 4 p.m.; Tuesday, Dec. 24, a Christmas Eve pageant and Holy Eucharist, 4 p.m., Carol Prelude at 8:30 p.m., Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist at 9 p.m.; Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 10 a.m. Christmas Day Holy Eucharist; Sunday, Dec. 29, Holy Eucharist 8 a.m., Christmas

Lessons and Carols service. 10:30 a.m. All services are in person with some also being broadcast on Zoom. Visit ststephensmidd.org for Zoom links and more information

**The Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society.** Tues Dec 24: 4 p.m., No-Rehearsal All-Ages UU Nativity Pageant. Family-friendly service. Come be part of our joyful story with Mary, Joseph, Jesus, shepherds, sheep, angels, animals, wise ones, stars, and a UU justice slant. Our casting is inclusive: anyone can play any part and we often have multiples and also unusual animals. Come in costume or wear one of ours. Or just sit, watch, and sing along with the traditional carols. Ends with group candle lighting and singing of Silent Night; 7 p.m.: Christmas Eve Traditional UU Service. Sing along, carols readings from the Christmas Story and traditional lighting of candles and singing of Silent Night. Attend in person or online via Zoom link at cvuus.org.

#### MONKTON

**Monkton Friends Methodist Church.** Sunday, Dec. 22, during the 9 to 10 a.m. service, there will be a Children's program. Come and enjoy the nontraditional version of a Christmas message. Christmas Eve, Candlelight Service with Christmas hymns and readings, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. All are welcome.

#### NEW HAVEN

**New Haven Congregational Church, UCC** will hold a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 24. All are welcome.

#### ORWELL

**Saint Paul's Catholic Church** will hold Mass on Christmas Day, Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 10 a.m., and on New Year's Day, Feast of the Holy Family, on Wednesday, Jan. 1 at 10 a.m.

#### RIPTON

**Ripton Community Church** will hold its annual candlelight Christmas Eve service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 8:30 p.m. Bill McKibben will preside over an hour of "Lessons and Carols" and seasonal music. Light refreshment contributions encouraged. 802-388-0338

#### SALISBURY

**Salisbury Congregational Church** at the Salisbury Meeting House will hold a candlelight service at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 24. All are welcome.

#### SHOREHAM

**Shoreham Congregational Church** will host a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 24, in the Sanctuary. Advent services will be held during worship at 10 a.m. on the following Sundays: Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22. All are invited to attend.

#### STARKSBORO

**Starksboro Village Meeting House** will hold a Christmas candlelight service in Starksboro. Friday, Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m. — A non-denominational program of lessons and carols.

#### VERGENNES

**Saint Paul's Episcopal Church** will hold a service of Holy Eucharist on Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. All are welcome.

**Saint Peter's Church** will hold Mass at 6 p.m. and midnight on Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Christmas Day Mass on Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 10:30 a.m.

**Vergennes Congregational Church** will hold a Christmas Eve candlelight service at 5 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 24.

**Vergennes United Methodist Church** will hold a Christmas Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols on Saturday, Dec. 24, at 7 p.m. All are invited to attend. No service on Christmas Day, Dec. 25.

#### WALTHAM

**Victory Baptist Church** Sunday, Dec. 8 at 2 p.m., The Ark Preschool/Kindergarten Christmas Program; Friday, Dec. 13, evening, Ladies Christmas Fellowship Meeting; Sunday, Dec. 15, 6 p.m., Children's Christmas Program; Sunday, Dec. 22, 6 p.m., Cookies and Carols; Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6:30 p.m., Candlelight Service.

#### WEYBRIDGE

**Weybridge Congregational Church** will hold a Christmas Eve service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 5 p.m. at Weybridge Church. (Masks are welcome.) Participants will sing together and bring the Christmas story into our own time and lives. Kids welcome — activity packs provided with a special bulletin or them to follow along at their own pace. The offering will go to HOPE and the Charter House Coalition. For those who Zoom link to service, please email weybridgechurch@gmail.com.

#### WHITING

**WHITING COMMUNITY CHURCH** will hold Advent services at 10:30 a.m. Sunday mornings and a Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 24.

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES:**

**Tuesday, December 24**  
**4:00 pm** Christmas Eve Pageant and Holy Eucharist  
**8:30 pm** Carol Prelude  
**9:00 pm** Holy Eucharist \*

**Christmas Day, December 25**  
**10:00 am** Holy Eucharist with Carols

**Sunday, December 29**  
**8:00 am** Holy Eucharist  
**10:30 am** Christmas Lessons and Carols Service \*

\*These services will also be broadcast on Zoom

**802.388.7200**

**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**  
 3 Main St. on the Green • Middlebury, VT  
**STSTEPHENS.MIDD.ORG**  
Please visit our website for the latest updates on Christmas worship and life at St. Stephen's

## Memorial Baptist Church

97 S. Pleasant St., Middlebury, VT

10am Sunday Worship (childcare available)  
 9am Sunday Classes for all ages  
 Wednesday 7-8pm Devotions  
 Thursday Noon-1pm Bible Study

Special Christmas Services

4pm Christmas Eve Candle Lighting  
 10am Christmas Day Celebration


MemorialBaptistVT.org

membaptistvt@gmail.com / 802-388-7472



Assumption of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

ST. MARY'S - ST. BERNADETTE - ST. GENEVIEVE



Solemnity of Christmas

Vigil Mass - Dec. 24, 4 pm - St. Mary's  
 Mass at Night - Dec. 24, 7:30 pm - St. Mary's  
 Mass During Day - Dec. 25, 9 am - St. Bernadette

www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org  
 Parish Office 802-388-2943

# Middlebury Lions Christmas Memory Tree



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Paul Bark  
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Megan Barber  
Julia Barnett  
Leon Barnett  
Leslie "Popper" Barnett  
Dr. Lyndon "Bill" Barnett  
Ruth "Nana" Barnett  
Jean Bateson  
Roger Bassett  
Nancy Baumgartner  
Edie Beckwith  
Jack Beckwith  
Monique Bedard  
Ellen Beecher  
Jim Benjamin  
Rhoda Benjamin  
Arthur Benedict  
Edith Benedict  
Leonard Bergeron  
Marie Rose Bergeron  
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Charles E Berry  
Jim Berry  
Gladys Bibeau  
Lorraine Bibeau  
Cliff Bigelow  
Rosaline Bigelow  
Ruth Bigelow  
Frank Bigelow, Jr.  
Frank Bigelow III  
Hilda Billings  
Tom Billings  
Blaise Bilodeau  
Wilfred Bilodeau  
Gramma & Grandpa Bingham  
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Iyen Bishop  
Margaret A. Bishop  
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Maudie M. Bishop  
Norn Bishop  
Roger L. Bishop  
Eileen Bodette  
Charles "Chuck" Booska  
Robert Booska  
Anna Booska-Butsford  
Lindi Bortney  
Bruce E. Bourdon  
J. Andre Bourdon  
J. Andre Bourdon, Jr.  
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Rodney W. Brace  
Skate Brace  
Wayland Brace  
Charles Brakeley  
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Elmer Broughton  
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Geneva Broughton  
Henry Broughton  
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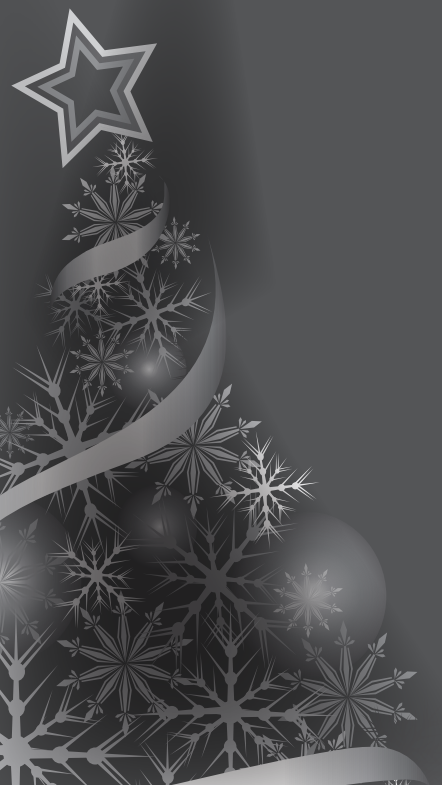
Denise Bushey  
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Cheryl Chizmadia  
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Rolande Cloutier  
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Winfred Cousino  
Clarence Cox  
Ruth Cox  
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Jeffrey Crossman  
Christopher Cunningham  
David Cunningham  
Jack Cunningham  
Janet Cunningham  
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Phyllis Burke Cunningham  
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James Cyr  
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Leonard P. Cyr  
Doris Cyr-Pelkey  
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Lucy Danyow  
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Patricia Danyow  
Bertha Danyow  
James D'Avignon, Sr.  
Patricia D'Avignon  
Ann & Junior Davis  
Grandpa and Gramma Davis  
Uncle Walt Davis  
Maud Dea  
Richard DeBonis  
Beverly Degray  
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Norman Desabrais  
Moses J. Desabrais

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Yvette Desforges  
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Helen Draper  
Miles Dunn  
Ethel Edwards  
Thomas Edwards  
Bob Euber  
Wayne "Buzzy" Euber  
Gene Evans  
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Lori Farnsworth  
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Lynn Farnsworth  
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James Farrell  
Sidney Fenson Sr.  
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Rebecca Fifield  
William Fifield  
Clarence "Bub" Fisk  
Sheldon Fisk  
Rena Fisk  
Syna Fisk  
Elizabeth Fiske  
Jack Fiske  
Thelma Flachsland  
William Flachsland  
Eric & Sue Flanagan  
Brian Foote  
Nancy Foote  
Ralph Foote  
Florence Fortier  
Mary Force  
Leo & Marion Force  
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Janice Forguites  
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Lyle Greenwood  
Peg Greenwood  
Guinness  
Blanche Hallock  
Jesse Hallock  
John Hallock  
Gladys Hallock  
Olga Hallock  
Wayne O. Hallock  
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John & Ivoreen Halpin  
Tom & Irene Halpin  
Andrea Halnon  
Ernestine Hawkins  
Ed Helton  
Lynn W. Hinman  
Guy "Lucky" Hoague  
Marlene Hoague-Lyman  
Bill Holdman  
Myrna Holdman  
Peg Holdman  
Steve Holdman  
Kenneth Hopper  
Sousan Hopper  
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Louise Hubbell  
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Lynn Huestis  
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Nellie Humiston  
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Jane Huizenga  
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Meridith Jermain  
Leonard Jerome  
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Julie Keeler  
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Harold Kelley  
Eric Kemp  
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Darwin Kimball  
Ada Kirby  
Dave Kittridge  
Cynthia Kling  
Beatrice Laberge  
Becky LaBerge  
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Aline LaFountain  
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Carrie LaRose  
Emeline LaRose  
Donna Lawton  
Roland Laverdiere  
Tee Laverdiere  
Dolly Lebeau  
Helen Lebeau  
Marge Lebeau  
Paul Lebeau  
Avvery LeCompte  
James LeCompte  
Jeffrey W. Lienhard, Jr.  
Sandra Liska  
Floyd Litch  
Gisele Litch  
Helen Litch  
Jim Litch  
Tim Litch  
Bradford Seabury Littlefield  
John Longaway  
Donald Longaway  
Bud Lundrigan  
Rhodalee Lundrigan  
Marilyn Lynch  
Doris Magee  
Joani Maloy  
Brian Manchester  
Ferdinand Mayer  
Rael Mayer  
Tim McAllister  
Steve Mc G.  
Sidney McCartney  
Wilma McCartney  
Jack McKinley  
John McKinley  
Mrs. Jack McKinley  
Wesley Mercy  
Daffodil Monty  
Napoleon Monty  
Ray Monty  
Bootsie Morns  
John Moynihan  
Marion Moynihan  
Paul Munson  
Bonnie Murray  
Chan Murray  
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Bonnie Murray  
Howard Murray  
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Janice Neilson  
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David Nuceder  
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Philip O'Brien, Sr.  
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Matt Parizo  
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Eula Pedro  
Vern Pedro  
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Robert Puls  
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Alice Condon Quesnel  
Matt Quesnel  
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Don Richer  
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Mary Riley  
Vern Riley, Jr.  
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Paul Ringey  
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Duncan Rosborough  
Dylan Rondeau  
Adele Rounds  
Lee Rounds  
Robert Rounds  
Shirley Rounds  
Alan Russett  
Lynn B. Ryalls  
Jane Ryan  
Patricia Ryan  
Barbara Sabourin  
Elinor Sanchez  
Jose Sanchez  
Margaret Sanchez  
Michael Sander  
Sarah Sander  
Allen G. Schnable, RADM  
Bruce Seaburg  
Gertrude L. Seaburg  
Harold E. Seaburg  
Walter Sears  
Ronnie Selleck  
Deb Shackett  
Mary Shackett  
Mike Shackett  
Joe Shackett, Sr.  
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Anita Sharp  
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Jourdaine Jourdy Shaw  
Robert Shaw  
Don Shedd  
Harold Shepard  
Lena Shepard  
Susan Shepard  
Andrew Sherman  
Ethel Sherman  
Robert P. Sherman  
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Ted Sheldrake  
Dewey Shiverette  
Flora Shiverette  
Father Shortill  
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Dutton Smith  
Jennifer Smith  
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Michael Smith  
Kay Smith  
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Ada Stafford  
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Katy Wells  
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Edward Wheelock  
Gary Wheelock  
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Deanne Wolff  
Alice Cunningham Worden  
Ronald Worden  
John Zaluki  
Lorraine Zaluki  
Anthony Zawistowski  
Edward A. Zawistowski  
Leo Zawistowski  
Mary Zawistowski  
Stephanie Zawistowski



In memory of Lions listed below who started in 1952 and have served unselfishly. Their work will live on as we fellow Lions follow in their footsteps to serve our Middlebury area community.

**"Not above you, not beneath you, but always with you. We serve."**

## Merry Christmas

- |                       |                      |                        |                           |                     |                         |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Lion Forrest Lowell   | Lion Frank L. Cutler | Lion Tom Brown         | Lion Dr. Ray Collins      | Lion Don Hunt       | Lion Paul Schroeder     |
| Lion Bert Demarais    | Lion Erie Volkert    | Lion Ron Knef          | Lion Bob Brooks           | Lion Al Stillman    | Lion Don Swenor         |
| Lion Harris Thurber   | Lion Stan Lazarus    | Lion Bill Clark        | Lion Greg Lyons           | Lion Dave Van Vleck | Lion Helen Bigelow      |
| Lion Martin Broughton | Lion Harry Browe     | Lion Francis Haggarty  | Lion Irwin Brent          | Lion Ray Giroux     | Lion Cleon Bigelow      |
| Lion Stan Payne       | Lion Paul Munson     | Lion Roscoe Pratt      | Lion Gerald C. DeWitt     | Lion Jim D'Avignon  | Lion Michael Livingston |
| Lion Bob Frett        | Lion Sid Ward        | Lion Floyd "Supe" Peck | Lion Roger Desabrais, Sr. | Lion Rollie White   | Lion Michael Pixley     |
| Lion Ray Mason        | Lion George Saul III | Lion Chet Ketchum      | Lion Maurice Desautels    | Lion Steve Ketchum  |                         |

# ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

December 19, 2024



Kathy Clarke throws a clay pot on a wheel at Middlebury Studio School this past Monday. Clarke is stepping down as studio manager of the local arts school, but will continue to teach and create her own pottery.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

## LOCAL POTTER CONNECTS COMMUNITY WITH CLAY

# A

BY **ELSIE**  
LYNN PARINI

change in the seasons is upon us. Yes, winter is just around the corner, but that's not the only change this season will bring. Middlebury Studio School will see its long-time studio manager and clay instructor Kathy Clarke step back from her leadership position to allow assistant studio manager Saisorn Peemanao to step up.

"I've been thinking about this for two or three years," Clarke said in a recent interview. "I had no real reason to retire — I could have gone on until they put me in the kiln."

But Clarke, recognized Peemanao's dedication after 12 years serving as assistant at MSS, and

figured it was about time for a new guard.

"I'll still be there," at the MSS studio on Route 7 South, Clarke (now 75) reassured. "I'm planning on teaching at least two hand-building adult clay classes."

Phew. For all those who've ever taken a class from Clarke, that news comes as a huge relief.

"I'm currently taking a hand-building class with Kathy," said Catherine Brooks, who's learned ceramics in various classes over the years, at Frog Hollow and elsewhere. "I've been taking this class about six times a year for the last four years. It's not that I'm a hopeless student and just can't get it. It's that with Kathy, she opens up a world of creativity that is limitless."

"I loved taking pottery classes with Kathy as a child and as an adolescent at the old Frog Hollow," said Judson Hescocock, who took classes through his early high school years, and then joined the MSS board of directors in 2021. "More than the pottery, what I enjoyed most was spending time with Kathy and the welcoming and lively environment that she fostered at the studio. Kathy encouraged spirited debates about current events; and her warmth, humor and laughter made the pottery studio feel like a family."

"The engagement you can have with clay... is malleable, it's expansive, you can slam it around and it benefits, it invites you to gain skill and then fly off!" Clarke mused. "You get to watch people of all ages get a seed of an idea

SEE CLAY ON PAGE 3



### HOUSE FAVORITES

**Venison Eggrolls**  
 Chef Michel's Recipe!  
 roasted garlic venison • maple dijon demi



**Bacon Roasted Brussels Sprouts**  
 roasted Brussels sprouts • crumbled  
 bacon • chipotle aioli



**Autumn Harvest Salad**  
 baby field greens • apples • dried  
 cranberries • crumbled blue cheese  
 • toasted almonds • balsamic vinaigrette



**Butternut Squash Ravioli**  
 balsamic brown butter sauce • baby kale  
 • sun dried tomato • asiago cheese



**Pork au Poivre**  
 seared pork tenderloin tips • cracked  
 pepper brandy cream sauce • porcini  
 mushroom • baby kale • warm bread



**The Squeeze Burger**  
 pickled onions • roasted peppers  
 • greens • bacon • cheddar cheese  
 • fried egg

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### SAMPLE MENU

- CURRIED PUMPKIN BISQUE** *toasted pepitas*
- BLACK SHEEP WALDORF SALAD** *bacon, cheddar, candied walnuts, dried cranberries, apple*
- STEAMED PORK DUMPLINGS** *maple soy demi glace*
- THAI BROILED HADDOCK** *toasted almonds, coconut curry sauce, creamed spinach*
- BRIE & BACON CHICKEN BREAST** *balsamic cream, garlicky green beans*
- DUCK LEG CONFIT FIG** *demi glace garlicky green beans, pickled red onion*

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## CLAY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and repeat it  
and repeat it."

Clarke reached back in her memory to a high school vacation she

took to the cliffs of Martha's Vineyard, where there were banks of colored clay.

"I made a fire, set out the pots and fell asleep," recalled the Salisbury resident. "When I woke up they'd all exploded!"

"I was swept up," Clarke said, identifying her relationship with clay at the time.

Honestly, not much has changed. When Clarke starts talking about clay, she can go on and on and on — in a good way.

"I recall the first time I saw a pot thrown — I was 10, on a Sturbridge Village field trip," she said. "The pot was huge and I can still feel the gapping awe."

Clarke has brought that sustained awe to her classes and her art over the decades, starting back in the '80s and '90s when Frog Hollow's clay studio was thriving at 1 Mill Street in Middlebury.

"During the '80s I was a student and mother of a growing family. Frog Hollow was how I got most of my clay education," Clarke said, adding that she also learned from residency studios around the country that offered classes with professional potters; including at Haystack Mountain School in Maine.

Frog Hollow rode the wave of pottery interest that was brought to the U.S. in the '60s by British potter Bernard Leach and his Japanese friend, who eventually became the National Treasure of Japan, Shoji Hamada, explained Clarke.

"A series of professional workshops started happening under the tenure of Judith Bryant and then Bob Green," she explained. "A residency program began with Henry Tanaka, Mary Louise Carter, Luke Sheets, Rod Dugal and Marty Fielding. Some brought Alfred [University — a global leader in ceramic art and engineering] friends and professors to give workshops."

The high was followed by a low — "when the mothership closed," Clarke said referring to the shuttering of the Vermont Craft Center in Frog Hollow in 2009 due to plummeting sales.

"There was still a lot of support to have a community art studio in town," remembered Clarke of those lean early days at MSS.

"Middlebury Studio School is lucky for generous donors like the Seligmans, who gave great support through the Frog Hollow closing,



*Saisorn Peemanao will replace Kathy Clarke as studio manager at Middlebury Studio School. Both Peemanao and Clarke will continue teaching pottery classes at MSS.*

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

making it possible for Middlebury Studio School to gain a footing."

"There were five of us who started Middlebury Studio School when Frog Hollow closed," said Mary Lower, painter, educator and MSS board president. "Kathy, Barb [Nelson] and I taught classes and did whatever had to be done. It was teamwork and the community that helped MSS get on its feet."

"During its first year in 2009, the MSS served 516 adults, children and teens," reported John Flowers in a Nov. 12, 2021, report for the Addison Independent. "By 2019, that number had more than doubled to 1,185 clients, taught by more than 20 artist-educators."

The space crush led to the second location in the Marble Works opening with the support of Alan and Linda Johnson. Today, MSS serves about 1,800 students, taught by four core staff members, 10 clay studio assistants, and about 20 teaching artists, according to Sarah Briggs, who became MSS executive director in 2021.

MSS has "morphed and grew over the years," Clarke said. "Some vibrant, some not."

Kinda like clay — I mean let's be honest, sometimes you throw an excellent piece and

other times it explodes.

"One attraction for me with clay is how it connects so far back in time," Clarke said, alluding to the impermanence of the object and the lasting qualities of its creation. "Sitting around a table with people making pots, laughing, telling stories is ancient, is cross-cultural, is sacred."

"Kathy has a light but powerful influence on what happens at the table," Brooks noted. "First and foremost we grow as potters, but along the way we talk — a lot. Conversations range from contemplative to uproariously funny. I can't help but think that our work is influenced by this community of muddy hands. I am so grateful for having had Kathy as a teacher."

"As a teacher, Kathy is a natural," Lower confirmed, who herself has taught art since 1980. "She knows just the right way to engage hands, minds and hearts in the process of creating. As a maker of community, which is also one of her big talents, you only have to walk into the clay studio to hear it — the laughter, clay being pounded, shaped and carved, and the wheels turning."

"Kathy was always a patient and enthusiastic teacher who cared about helping us become better potters. But, above all, Kathy sought to make us all better people," Hescocock added.

"I am so grateful through all those years working with Kathy," Peemanao said. "I have been learning so much from her as a ceramic teacher and way to work around the studio. Kathy is a person who gives each person total freedom to create and be who they are."

Peemanao, hopes to continue to "pass on what Kathy has created — a joyful, safe place — and to keep harmony at MSS."

After a good 50 years at the wheel, Clarke has nothing but gratitude. She sends thanks to the many volunteers who keep the studio running, the students who keep coming and the donations that make it all possible.

"There are so many worthy places to donate money, and I'm so thankful people see arts as important," Clarke said. "Art feeds people in a way that's not tangible."

**"SHE KNOWS  
JUST THE  
RIGHT WAY  
TO ENGAGE  
HANDS, MINDS  
AND HEARTS IN  
THE PROCESS  
OF CREATING."**

— Mary Lower

What's next for Clarke? Well, teaching of course, but she might also give some of her time to her own artwork. Keep an eye out for some Clarke originals — Lower knows what an amazing artist she is: "Her functional pottery, paintings and drawings, and most of all, her over-the-top, imaginative clay sculptures that smile and wink at me daily in my house and garden."

# Welcome winter with puppets, plays, and light, Dec. 21

**S**olstice is almost here; the days are dark — oh, so dark. The return of the light is a reason to celebrate for many of us. Town Hall Theater is holding an event to celebrate, appreciate and reflect on the peak of darkness and the beginning of winter.

On Dec. 21st, during the solstice, Town Hall Theater welcomes everyone to engage with the traditions of the Lunar New Year, celebrated by China, Korea, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian cultures. Throughout the month of December, two classes of students, aged 5-8 and 9-12 have been exploring the story of the Great Race which explains how the Chinese calendar was created to depict an animal each year in cycles of 12 years. At 2 p.m., on the 21st, you can see actors Nolan Amstrand, Vivienne Rafferty, Tenlyn Wetzel, Bodhi Kenna, Matilda Boyce, Pippa Amidon, and Isaac Rivera perform the story of the Great Race, in a version that they collectively crafted over the course of this month.

Then see the younger class put on a show that specifically focuses on the story of the Dragon and the Rabbit and their journey within the Great Race. You will see Pepper Bright, Finleigh and Elbie Jones, Ferdinand Kelly-



Celebrate the Solstice and Lunar New Year traditions at Town Hall Theater on Dec. 21. Enjoy student performances, a luminary parade, and the debut of a 20-foot puppet snake.

FILE PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

Smith, Miles Poff, and Iris Young act out the bond these two animals form. Led by Barbara Paulsen, this class has been working on puppeteering and their portion of the show will feature puppets created and operated by the kids, complete with a 20-foot-long snake.

Want to join the creating of that snake? Signups are open for a one-time crafting class on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 9 a.m. to noon. Come make puppets and lanterns to take

home and help make the massive snake that will be featured the following week during the solstice performances.

The event will include a luminary parade after the play starting at the steps of the THT. Lanterns and puppets including the 20-foot zodiac snake will traverse from the THT across to Triangle Park, around the fountain, back across Merchants Row (at Main St) returning up to THT.



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# ART ON EXHIBIT

## BIXBY MEMORIAL FREE LIBRARY

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For more info visit [bixbylibrary.org](http://bixbylibrary.org) or call 802-877-2211.

**"Samuel Strong: War Hero and Local Legend"** tells the tale of a battle in 1814, as well as the story of this important figure in Addison County history. Strong wore many hats throughout his life — sheriff, farmer, mayor, legislator, business investor, bank founder as well as soldier. On view through spring 2025.

## EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury

For more info visit [edgewatergallery.com](http://edgewatergallery.com), call

802-458-0098 or email [info@edgewatergallery-vt.com](mailto:info@edgewatergallery-vt.com).

**"Color Dance"** is a juried art competition that features the work of a small group of artists carefully chosen by Terry Norton-Wright. On view Nov. 23-Jan. 7, 2025.

## EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

For more info visit [edgewatergallery.com](http://edgewatergallery.com), call

802-989-7419 or email [info@edgewatergallery-vt.com](mailto:info@edgewatergallery-vt.com).

**"Stood Forever,"** a solo exhibition of new work by American Realist painter Ted Walsh. Walsh sets a strong sense of scene in each of his works in oil. Small details in the composition, representation of light and shadow, and perspective meld to give clues to an intriguing narrative. On view Dec. 6-Jan. 12, 2025.

## JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant St, Middlebury

For more info visit [townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery](http://townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery) or call 802-382-9222.

**"Cultivating our Art: Farmer/Artists' Reflections on Farming as Muse."** This exhibit features artwork by individuals who make their living as both artists and farmers, including Hannah Sessions, Jen Roberts, Laurie Brooks, Louisa Conrad and Lucas Farrell. On view through Jan. 4, 2025.

## K. GRANT FINE ART

37 Green St, Vergennes

For more info visit [kgrantfineart.com](http://kgrantfineart.com).

**"Process & Presence,"** an exhibition featuring new works by two Burlington-based multidisciplinary artists, Jasmine Parsia and Viscaya Wagner. On view Dec. 7-Jan. 31, 2025.

## HENRY SHELDON MUSEUM

1 Park St., Middlebury

For more information visit [henrysheldonmuseum.org](http://henrysheldonmuseum.org) or call 802-388-2117.

**"Model Boats: The Craftsmanship of Jerry DeGraff."** Jerry DeGraff, a native Vermonter from Essex Junction, served four years in the Navy before working many years in local building trades. As he honed his skills as

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 15



**ARIES:** March 21/April 20. It's easy for your mind to wander and get caught daydreaming, Aries. You could be feeling a little restless and in need of a change. A vacation or a night with friends may just do it.

**TAURUS:** April 21/ May 21. Taurus, even if you are trying to save money, this week some situations will arise that will require you to open your wallet. This is why you have an emergency fund.

**GEMINI:** May 22/June 21. Gemini, sometimes people do not know which side of you they might encounter and might keep you at arms' length as a result. Try to be more open this week.

**CANCER:** June 22/ July 22. Exciting things are on the horizon, Cancer. This might be something you have been anticipating for some time.

**LEO:** July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, this week you might need to stick up for someone or fight for a cause you believe in, even if it adversely affects your popularity. Stand your ground in these situations.

**VIRGO:** Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, you might want to swallow your pride and ask for help rather than trying to do everything on your own. Going it alone hasn't helped you in the past, so why should it now?

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Someone steps in and helps you along at work, Libra. Instead of feeling he or she took liberties, thank this person for giving you the extra boost you likely needed at the time.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24/ Nov. 22. Scorpio, try to look at a situation from a new angle and then you might get some of the answers you desire this week. Is someone acting out of character?

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Learn how to deal with conflict in a productive way, Sagittarius. Then you won't get bogged down by others when they are going head-to-head. Aries might play a role this week.

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22/Jan. 20. This week you may find that all of your efforts to build up to a pinnacle moment perhaps didn't give you the feelings you desired. Try getting back to basics.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21/ Feb. 18. Aquarius, something that has been stretching on for quite some time finally gets finished, giving you the closure you need. Share the news slowly with others.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, if what you are doing right now is giving you gratification, you might not need to make many big changes in the weeks to come.

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## FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DEC. 20 — Sandra Cisneros, writer (70)  
DEC. 21 — Samuel L. Jackson, actor (76)  
DEC. 22 — Giacomo Puccini, composer (d)

DEC. 23 — Eddie Vedder, musician (60)  
DEC. 24 — Joseph Cornell, artist (d)  
DEC. 25 — Louise Bourgeois, artist (d)  
DEC. 26 — Ozzie Smith, baseball player (70)

# CALENDAR

DEC. 19 - JAN. 11  
2024 - 2025

## THURSDAY, DEC. 19

**COMMUNITY CAROL SING WITH ROBERT LUDWIG IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Dec 19, noon, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, on the green. An Advent sing-along of favorite sacred and secular songs of the season, including entertaining stories and histories of the carols.

**"JIM HENSON: IDEA MAN" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. MNFF Selects offers this special holiday screening of this Disney+ documentary, directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Ron Howard. A fascinating film, "Jim Henson: Idea Man" takes us into the mind of this singular creative visionary, from his early years puppeteering on local television to the worldwide success of Sesame Street, The Muppet Show and beyond. Tickets \$17, available at townhalltheater.org.

**CHARTER HOUSE BENEFIT CONCERT AND HYMN SING IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Middlebury United Methodist Church, 43 N. Pleasant St. The 14th annual benefit concert for the Charter House Coalition. An organ prelude by Kevin Parizo will begin at 6:45 p.m. The concert will include both secular holiday music as well as traditional Christmas offerings by musicians from Addison County and beyond. No admission fee but a free will offering will be taken to support

the various programs at Charter House. Reception in Fellowship Hall to follow.

## FRIDAY, DEC. 20

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB WALK OR SNOWSHOE IN RIPTON.** Friday, Dec. 20, at Spirit in Nature, Ripton-Goshen Rd. Easy 2-3 miles depending on the number of paths we choose to explore. Gently rolling terrain at a moderate pace. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for more information. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

**CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICE IN STARKSBORO.** Friday, Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m., Starksboro Village Meeting House, 2875 Route 116. A non-denominational program of lessons and carols. Area residents will read the lessons. All are welcome. Holiday cookies and treats and hot cider at the end of the service. Parking available to the rear in the town center parking area.

**WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION WITH LOW LILY IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. American Roots band Low Lily celebrates the Solstice. This high-energy show will feature instrumentals alongside impeccably arranged songs to honor the season. Between them, the musicians play mandolins, guitars, fiddle and banjo and sing in three-part vocal harmonies. Tickets \$30 table seating/\$20 general admission,

available at townhalltheater.org.

## SATURDAY, DEC. 21

**JAZZ BRUNCH IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Edgewater on the Green. Live music, brunch fare, and an exhibition of paintings by Ted Walsh. Free and open to all.

**WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater. Celebrate the longest night of the year. Two classes at Town Hall theater have been preparing for the event creating a play and puppet show based on "The Great Race," which explains how the Chinese calendar was created to depict an animal each year in cycles of twelve years. The event will include a luminary parade after the play starting at the steps of the THT. Lanterns and puppets, including the 20-foot zodiac snake, will circle the Triangle Park fountain and return to THT. Free for all ages

**"WELCOMING THE LIGHT" IN RIPTON.** Saturday, Dec. 21, 3:30 p.m., Spirit In Nature paths, Goshen Rd. Follow the candle-lit path to the campfire at the Sacred Circle for a Winter Solstice celebration. Bring a flashlight, and a poem, thought or story to share. Reading of the picture book "Night Tree" by Eve Bunting; make edible ornaments to hang on a tree for the animals. Hot tea and snacks provided. All ages are welcome.

## KING PEDE CARD PARTY IN FERRISBURGH.

Saturday, Dec. 21 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7. The evening begins at 6:30 with a sandwich supper and then on to the games!

## SUNDAY, DEC. 22

**MESSIAH SING IN MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Dec. 22, 2 p.m., Congregational Church of Middlebury, 2 Main St. Join the annual gathering of Middlebury singers and players to sing along with selections from Handel's Messiah. Sing favorite choruses or play in the orchestra. Open to all, with donations gratefully accepted at the door. For more info contact Jeff at 802-382-7493.

**"SHALL WE DANCE: A NIGHT OF PIANO DUETS" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Dec. 22, 4 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. In their program "Shall We Dance?," pianists Mairi Grewar and Nathan Harris bring a world of dance-inspired piano duet music to the Town Hall Theater stage. Five greats of Romanticism — Schumann, Rachmaninoff, Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak — whirl from the ballroom to the folk gathering and back again, with cameos by Ligeti and Debussy. Tickets \$25 table seating/\$20 general admission, available at townhalltheater.org. Join the artists after the show at

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.	
<b>Channel 1071</b> Through the Night: Public Affairs and in between scheduled programs: our New Community Bulletin Board <b>Friday, December 20</b> Through the Night 6:30 a.m. Energy Week 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Church Service 5:30 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 6:30 p.m. Energy Week 7:30 p.m. Bulletin Board 8 p.m. Gov. Scott, Public Affairs <b>Saturday, December 21</b> Through the Night 7 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 6 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Bulletin Board, Public Affairs <b>Sunday, December 22</b> Through the Night 6 a.m. Energy Week 8:30 a.m. Bulletin Board 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 12:30 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs	4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Bulletin Board 8 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour <b>Monday, December 23</b> Through the Night: 4:30 a.m. Energy Week 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 5 p.m. Community Bulletin Board 5:30 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs <b>Tuesday, December 24</b> Through the Night 7 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Congregational Service 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Energy Week <b>Wednesday, December 25</b> Through the Night 6:30 a.m. Montpelier Happy Hour 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 4 p.m. Energy Week 5 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs 7 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs	<b>Thursday, December 26</b> 5 a.m. Selectboard 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 8:30 p.m. Energy Week 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Gov. Scott  <b>Channel 1091</b> Through the Night: State and Local Arts and Education Programs <b>Friday, December 20</b> 6 a.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 6:31 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Yoga 7:20 a.m. Bulletin Board 8:05 a.m. School Board Meeting/s, Holiday Concerts 12 p.m. Sharpe Takes 12:45 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival 4 p.m. Sharpe Takes 5 p.m. Romeo & Juliet at THT 10 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival <b>Saturday, December 21</b> 5 a.m. Sharpe Takes 6:30 a.m. All Brains Belong 8 a.m. School Boards, Holiday Concerts and Plays 3 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 4:45 p.m. "Keep Up Good Courage" 6:50 p.m. Bulletin Board	7:03 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7:36 p.m. Holiday Concert/s 10:30 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival <b>Sunday, December 22</b> 5 a.m. Holiday Concert/s 7:30 a.m. Green Mtn Book Festival 11 a.m. Sharpe Takes 12 p.m. School Boards, Holiday Concerts 5 p.m. All Brains Belong 6:03 p.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 7:30 p.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 8 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival <b>Monday, December 23</b> 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:35 a.m. Tai Chi 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. Green Mtn Book Festival 12:15 p.m. School Board Meeting/s, Concerts, Readings & Recipes 6:35 p.m. Tai Chi 7 p.m. "The Night Before Christmas" 7:07 p.m. Community Bulletin Board 7:30 p.m. Sharpe Takes 8:30 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival <b>Tuesday, December 24</b> 5:15 a.m. Bulletin Board 5:32 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. The Story Matters	12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. All Brains Belong 6:03 p.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 p.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 7 p.m. "The Night Before Christmas" 9 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Wednesday, December 25</b> 6:15 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. Holiday Concerts, Readings and Recipes 6:30 p.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 4 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 5 p.m. Bulletin Board 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 5:55 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. Taconic Chamber Players Holiday Concert <b>Thursday, December 26</b> 4:30 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Yoga 8:30 a.m. Maine Dark Sky Initiative 9 a.m. All Brains Belong 10:03 a.m. Bulletin Board 12 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 4 p.m. Sharpe Takes 5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 8:30 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival

Edgewater Gallery on Merchants Row for a reception and mingling.

**CHRISTMAS WITH SHANNON AND FRIENDS IN BRANDON.** Sunday, Dec. 22, 6:30 p.m., Brandon Inn, 20 Park St. Brandon Idol winner Shannon Wright is joined by local songstress Jess Crossman and friends to bring you into the Christmas spirit with favorites from yesterday and brand new music. Beverages and desserts will be available for purchase from the Inn. This is a free concert, but donations for the Sons of the American Legion in Brandon are gratefully accepted.

**SUNDAY, DEC. 29**

**HOLIDAY MOVIE IN SALISBURY.** Sunday, Dec. 29, 2 p.m., Salisbury Town Hall, 918 Maple St. A holiday movie showing plus refreshments.

**MONDAY, DEC. 30**

**CRIBBAGE NIGHT IN BRISTOL.** Monday, Dec. 30, 7 p.m., Libanus Lodge, 2 Elm St. No Charge and all are welcome. Join in this growing community activity.

**TUESDAY, DEC. 31**

**FIREWORKS AND ICE SKATING IN MIDDLEBURY.** Tuesday, Dec. 31, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Middlebury Rec Park, Mary Hogan Dr. Fireworks begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by free ice skating at Memorial Sports Center.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE JOE'S BIG BAND IN MIDDLEBURY.** Tuesday, Dec. 31, 9 p.m.-midnight, Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Since his passing in 2004, Joe's Big Band has carried on in

Joe Levesque's memory, continuing to evolve into the high-energy force it is today. The band is made up of talented, fun-loving musicians from all over the Champlain Valley who faithfully reproduce the timeless sounds of the masters like Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Stevie Wonder, Brian Setzer and many more. Doors open at 8 p.m. Tickets \$40, available at townhalltheater.org.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 1**

**FIRST DAY WALK IN FERRISBURGH.** Wednesday, Jan. 1, 9-11 a.m., Button Bay State Park, 5 Button Bay State Park Rd. New Year's Day birding trips are a tradition held by many in the birdwatching community as they begin to fill their annual bird lists. We have combined that tradition with the more recent tradition of First Day Hikes held at state parks across the country. Meet us at Button Bay State Park in Ferrisburgh as we search for overwintering birds.

**FIRST DAY HISTORY HIKE IN CROWN POINT, N.Y.** Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1 p.m., Crown Point State Historic Site. Gather at the Crown Point State Historic Site Museum for a 2.5-mile guided hike, conditions permitting. In addition to the ruins of the two pre-Revolutionary War forts, visit the memorial lighthouse dedicated to Samuel de Champlain. Participants may encounter a colonial era soldier who will tell us how they survived the winter there. Free and open to the public. Wear appropriate footwear and dress for the weather.

**SATURDAY, JAN. 4  
LETTERPRESS PRINTING IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Jan. 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. A hands-on printmaking activity with John Vincent from A Revolutionary Press, who will have his press set up and will guide participants through the letterpress printing methods used in the 19th century. Come to the Kids' Makerspace and make a print to take home with you. Free admission for all.

**MIKE & RUTHY IN LINCOLN.** Saturday, Jan. 4, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Rd. When it comes to chemistry, Mike Merenda and Ruth Ungar have plenty to spare. Onstage, they are Mike + Ruthy, a husband-and-wife duo setting the folk scene ablaze. Singers and storytellers, poets and parents, the two tour with their children in tow, embodying a down-home approach to Americana that is honest, beautiful and raw. Doors open at 7 p.m. Homemade refreshments available. Tickets \$20-\$25 sliding scale. More info at burnhampresents.org.

**THURSDAY, JAN. 9**

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE IN CHARLOTTE.** Thursday, Jan. 9, Charlotte Wildlife Refuge. Chill out and experience some of the many jewels of this biodiverse park with beautiful views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks. Easy 3 miles and a few hundred feet of elevation change. Contact Ken Corey at 802-349-3733 or kencorey53@gmail.com to register. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

**TRUE CRIME PODCAST CLUB: BEAR BROOK IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Jan. 9, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Join fellow

amateur sleuths for a discussion of The Bear Brook State Park murders, Season 1, Episodes 1-4. Listen to this month's podcast on your own before the discussion. Renee will facilitate the discussions with prompts and visuals. This program is for participants 18+. Listen to the podcast wherever you get your podcasts or ask Renee for assistance.

**SATURDAY, JAN. 11**

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE OR SNOWSHOE IN THE ADIRONDACKS.** Saturday, Jan. 11, West River Trail to Beaver Meadow Falls. Moderately strenuous 5.5-mile round trip hike or snowshoe along the Ausable River. Beautiful cascades and Beaver Meadow Falls are highlights. Microspikes required. Options for a different return route. Contact Barry Francis at barryfrancis@gmavt.net or 802-349-9206 to register or for more information. More at gmcbreadloaf.org.

**CONTRA DANCE IN CORNWALL.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 7-9:30 p.m., Cornwall Town Hall, Route 30. Luke Donforth will be calling, with live music by Red Dog Riley. Beginners welcome. All dances will be taught. \$5 to \$10 or pay what you can.

**HARD SCRABBLE IN VERGENNES.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Hard Scrabble is a Vermont-based acoustic band, characterized by tight vocal harmonies and instrumental solos, creating a beautiful blend of bluegrass and acoustic covers. Tickets \$15 in advance or at the door. More info at vergennesoperahouse.org.

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## Special Delivery...

This time of year stresses me out. Too much to do, too much to plan, too much pressure to make it all special.

I'm resisting some of that pressure this year by prioritizing the things I really want to do, and letting the rest slide. We don't have a Christmas tree yet, and I'm OK with that. Our only outdoor decoration — Pengi the holiday penguin — an inflatable I bought in 2020 (a different kind of holiday altogether), has sprung a leak and won't turn on. Pengi had problems last year, too, but we had some enthusiasm to fix him. This year, we're letting him languish in a pile on the wet grass, and I'm OK with that, too.

We haven't gone to any of the holiday events I'm always telling you about in this newsletter.

The one thing I really wanted to do this year is something I've never done before: send out a holiday card. I love getting other people's cards. I love the photos! I love arranging them on the mantel. I love reading long letters detailing the lives of in-laws I barely know. Making a card of our own, however, has always felt overwhelming to me.

But this year, thanks to a photoshoot instigated by my cousin at a family gathering in Cape Cod last summer, we found ourselves with a nice picture of the four of us. It was begging to become a card. We spent the morning of Thanksgiving photoshopping our cat into it. We made sure to enlarge the cat to about 50 times his actual size so as to accurately communicate his significance in our lives. My 7-year-old had the brilliant idea to give the cat a Sherlock Holmes-style pipe and a festive Santa hat.

The result is a whale-size Christmas cat encircling our human family like a benevolent beach overlord. It is, in a word, perfect.

Making our card was a real group effort, full of real holiday joy, and sending it out has been fun, too. We spent time together after dinner this past week making a list of recipients, addressing envelopes, sticking stamps and adding little notes here and there.

I had worried it would feel like just another thing on the to-do list. But it made me feel connected to the people in my life. In the chaos of the season, it made me feel calm.



PHOTO / JONATHAN BLAKE



## Winter Solstice

There are lots of ways to celebrate the shortest day of the year, which falls on Saturday, Dec. 21. Go see a Solstice pageant performed by local youngsters at Town Hall Theater, at 1 p.m., or try a winter solstice storytime at the Platt Memorial Library in Shoreham at 3:30 p.m. Hike along a candlelit path at Spirit-In-Nature trails in Ripton, at 3:30 p.m., for a ceremony around a fire. Or head to the Tillerman in Bristol for caroling in the barn, starting at 5 p.m. The Watershed Center in Bristol hosts a Solstice small celebration with luminaria in the woods starting at 6 p.m.

## Coming Up

### SD IRELAND HOLIDAY TRUCK

*Downtown Bristol, Friday, Dec. 20, 5:15 p.m.*

If you missed the fabulous illuminated cement mixer at Midd Night Stroll, you still have a chance to see it in Addison County!

### BRANDON HOLIDAY REVERSE PARADE

*Sunday, Dec. 22, 5 p.m.*

The floats are stationary, and the viewers drive through in this holiday tradition since the pandemic. Drive along Park, High and Center Streets to see Santas, elves, queens, lights and more.

### WINTER BREAK KICKOFF

*Lawrence Memorial Library in Bristol, Monday, Dec. 23*

Stop by for a wintery scavenger hunt, crafts, snacks and more.

### REINDEER LIVE, AND SLED DOGS LIVE

*ECHO in Burlington, Saturday, Dec. 28, and Monday, Dec. 30*

Visit with real animals at the science museum.

See more online

# MiniBury.com

THINGS TO DO • MEET PARENTS & FRIENDS  
NEWS FOR FAMILIES • TIPS, TRICKS & TRENDS • CALENDAR

# PUZZLES

sponsored by **SPARROW ART SUPPLY**

## ACROSS

1. Miller beer variety
4. Member of people inhabiting Bering Sea islands
9. Stomach
14. Investment vehicle
15. Fictional soccer coach Ted
16. Irregular in botanical parlance
17. Cease standing
18. "American Horror Story" actress
20. Grow milk teeth
22. Plant parts
23. Snow house
24. Most contemptuous
28. Note to repay
29. Old English
30. Wings
31. Financial

institutions

33. Parks and Lopez are two
37. Mr. T's "The A-Team" character
38. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
39. Give off
41. Semitic alphabet letter
42. Farm state
43. Actress Sarandon
44. Back parts
46. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
49. Touchdown
50. One point north of due east
51. Refurbishes
55. Silver and Dogg are two
58. Former Tigers catcher Alex

59. Type of envelope

60. Seriously considered
64. Unhappy
65. Past (archaic)
66. Asian wild dog
67. Old English letter
68. Young domestic sheep
69. Football players need to gain them
70. Witness

## DOWN

1. Dormant Peruvian volcano
2. Norwegian composer
3. Indicates location
4. Pubs
5. Unable to walk easily
6. Electronic warfare-

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	9		3					
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						8	3	

## 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**

support measures

7. World leader
8. Midsection
9. Jewish calendar month
10. Urological condition
11. A small quantity of anything
12. Mountain Time
13. Affirmative
19. Word element meaning ear
21. Carried away
24. Short-billed rails

25. Newborn child

26. Sword
27. Groups of people
31. Prickly, scrambling shrubs
32. Become less intense
34. Polishes
35. Indicates position
36. Songs sung to one's beloved
40. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet
41. Insects
45. Israeli politician

47. Pre-digital

48. Roaming
52. Ambience
53. Brew
54. Late
56. Make ecstatically happy
57. Semitic alphabet letter
59. Blend
60. Dash
61. Self
62. Exclamation of satisfaction
63. Hill or rocky peak

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 13.



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# ASK A MASTER GARDENER



Deb Heleba is the head of the Master Gardener Program and Community Horticulture Program at UVM, and lives in Lincoln.

## TIPS FOR GIFTING LIVE INDOOR PLANTS

**L**ive houseplants can make meaningful gifts during the holidays or any time of year for birthdays, housewarming, and other special occasions. Not only do houseplants improve air quality in the home but a growing body of research shows that the care of houseplants is associated with greater mental health and well-being.

With more than 10,000 species of houseplants available, you may wonder which plants are best for gift giving. Selecting holiday favorites like poinsettia, holiday cacti and cyclamen are good choices. But there are so many colorful houseplant choices that will last well beyond the holidays.

Here are some tips that may help you choose festive and fun plants for your gift giving during the holidays and any time of year.

Select easy-to-grow plants with a flair. The recipient of your houseplant gift may be an experienced green thumb or a beginner. You can play it safe and choose an indoor plant that is easy care and yet interesting and colorful.

Consider those that tolerate a number of light conditions from a sunny, south-facing window to a dimly lit room and thrive under a range of humidity levels. Examples include the African violet (*Streptocarpus sect. Saintpaulia*), Peperomia and Echeveria.

Choose pet-friendly houseplants. Many plants are toxic to cats and dogs, so if the gift recipient has pets, be sure to select a houseplant that won't cause

any harm if ingested. The ASPCA has comprehensive lists of toxic and nontoxic plants for cats, dogs, and horses. See [go.uvm.edu/toxic-non-toxic-plants](http://go.uvm.edu/toxic-non-toxic-plants). Some festive, pet-friendly indoor plants in addition to the above include Bromeliads, Hoya, and the nerve plant (*Fittonia verschaffeltii*).

Select unusual plants. Here's where the fun comes in. You can spice up your houseplant gift-giving by selecting varieties with unusual growing habits, colorful foliage or brilliant blooms.

Many of the plant ideas  
SEE GARDEN ON PAGE 11

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Houseplants come in many shapes and sizes making them versatile gifts for the plant lover.

**GARDEN**

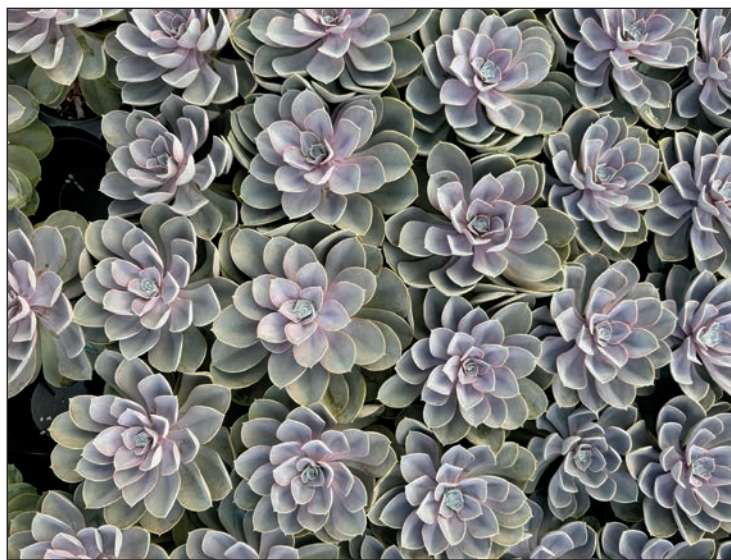
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

mentioned above come in varieties with variegated or unusual leaves, or with a variety of bloom colors. Other examples that fit all three criteria include the unique living stones (*Lithops naureniae*) the fun, pancake-shaped leaves of the *Pilea peperomioides* and the vibrant, non-toxic foliage of the *Calathea*.

Consider a cutting from your own collection. Some of my favorite houseplants were propagated and gifted by friends and family. Whether it is Aunt Dorothy's classic red geranium or Judy's coffee plant, my most treasured indoor plants came from someone else's special collection. Most houseplants are easy to propagate at home which makes for a low-cost and meaningful gift.

Finally, be mindful of live plant transport during the winter months. Since most houseplants originated in tropical locations, they don't tolerate cold temperatures. If you are gifting plants during the winter, be sure to limit the time they are exposed to the cold, including their time in the car and outdoors. A quick trip from the garden center to a warm car to home is fine, but prolonged temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit can damage tropical plants so bundle up that gift.

If gifting a live plant is not possible or preferred, a great alternative is a gift card from a local nursery or garden center. Allowing the recipient to choose their own plant is a wonderful way to give the gift of plants.



*Echeveria* are easy-to-grow, non-toxic succulents that come in a variety of colors.

PHOTO / DEB HELEBA



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with Dr. Bri Letaw, Medical Director,  
Bristol Animal Hospital

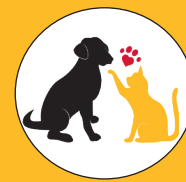


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**Jingle**

**Jingle** is a sweet and affectionate young girl. She has also been described as active and playful. Jingle gets along with other cats and dogs but is stressed out by young children.



**Kriss Kringle**

**Kriss Kringle** is looking for a loving home for the holidays! He is a hefty guy full of love and joy. Kriss would love a warm spot to hunker down for the winter but may want to be an indoor/outdoor in the future. He is very affectionate, some may say jolly! Kriss doesn't seem bothered by other cats but we are unsure about dogs.



**Sam**

**Sam** is a regal Maine Coon we estimate to be between 8-10 years old. If you want to adopt a dog but aren't able to, look no further to the closest that a cat can come. Sam loves belly rubs, spending time outside, and eating yummy treats. He is great around other cats but has no experience with dogs.



**Grizzly**

Hi there, I'm **Grizzly** and I'm a Shepherd/Great Dane mix, but I look more like a miniature Great Dane. But trust me, there is nothing "mini" about the love I have to give. I'm a soft-hearted, dainty soul who appreciates life at a slower pace. I'm not one for chaotic energy or bustling households. Nope, I thrive in a peaceful environment where I can lean in for quiet, comforting snuggles with my favorite people. There's nothing better than that warm, fuzzy feeling of connection. I'm the gentlest of souls, always ready to be your steady, low-stress companion. If you're looking for a sweet, soft boy to complete your calm and cozy life, I'm your guy.



**Rocky**

Hi there! I'm **Rocky**, and I just turned one year old! I'm full of sweet, wiggly energy. One of my favorite tricks? I pick up my own leash and trot around the yard like the silly boy I am! I mean, why wait for a walk when you can walk yourself right? The staff says it's one of the cutest things they've ever seen- and I have to agree. I'm just starting this new chapter of my life, and I can't wait to find the perfect someone to share it with. I can't wait to meet you- I have a feeling big, happy things are ahead!



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# THE HOME

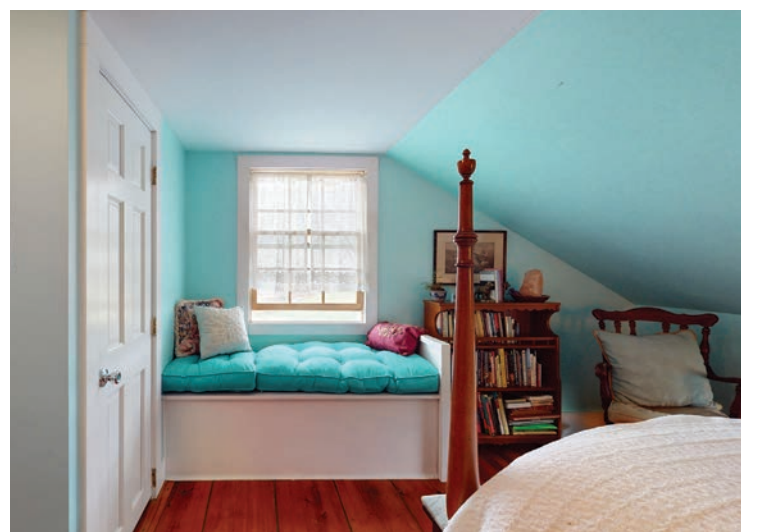
A LOOK AT ADDISON COUNTY PROPERTIES FOR SALE

## Dream big on this Bridport property

There is so much to get excited about with this expansive Bridport agricultural property, the least of which are panoramic views of the Greens and Adirondack ranges. Once a cheesemaking facility and currently a simple livestock farm, the options here are numerous across 240+/- acres (comprised of 140 tillable, 46 pasture, and 38 forest) and several versatile barns and outbuildings. Whether you're an existing farmer or have been vying to join your esteemed neighbors in a new pursuit, this property is ready for the next owner to come in and thrive. A lovely three-bedroom renovated farmhouse is perched in the dooryard to take advantage of the wide-open views. The mudroom with sink and shower invites you back in at the end of a hard day's work. Put your dreams on paper, run your numbers, and make plans to take a close and comprehensive look. This could be the opportunity you've been waiting for. Subject to Current Use enrollment and a VT Land Trust easement.



*This week's property is managed by IPJ Real Estate.  
More info at [middvermontrealestate.com](http://middvermontrealestate.com).*



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# 'Shall We Dance'

FOUR-HANDED PIANO MAGIC COMES TO TOWN HALL THEATER IN MIDDLEBURY

Nathan Harris and Mairi Grewar will perform "Shall We Dance" — incredible, four-handed piano arrangements at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on Sunday, Dec. 22, at 4 p.m. In this afternoon of soaring and playfully choreographed piano music, you can expect to hear five greats of Romanticism: Schumann, Rachmaninoff, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, and Dvorak, with cameos by Ligeti and Debussy. Each half of the duo, visiting from Vienna, Austria, has an amazing and distinct musical background.

Mairi Grewar is a Scottish/ American pianist, currently based in Austria. She is in demand as a répétiteur and currently coaches at Tiroler Landestheater, Innsbruck. In 2017, Mairi graduated with distinction from the Guildhall Artist Master's Program in Piano Accompaniment where she studied with Laura Roberts. During her time at Guildhall, Mairi played in recitals and masterclasses across London, performing at the Barbican, Wigmore Hall, St. John's Smith Square and Milton Court Concert Hall. Since then, she was Assistant Chorus Master at the National Theater in Mannheim, and she recently performed in Korea at the Daegu international Opera Festival.

Nathan Harris is an accomplished piano accompanist, vocal coach, and conductor. He earned a Masters with Distinction in Opera Studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, a Masters in Collaborative Piano at the University of Michigan, and a BA in Music at the University of Chicago. He appeared in the semifinals of the Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall and has performed in countless venues across Germany, Austria, the UK, and the United States. Since 2023, he has taught at the Theaterakademie August Everding in Munich.

His credits as a conductor include leading a production of Die Zauberflöte at Bloomsbury Opera and was an assistant conductor of The Consul, The Long Christmas Dinner and A Dinner Engagement at the Guildhall school.

All ticket holders are invited to the post-show reception at Edgewater Gallery on the corner of Merchants Row and Main Street. Tickets are \$20-\$25 and available at [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org), by calling 802-382-9222 or at the box office.

Experience the magic of four-handed piano with Nathan Harris and Mairi Grewar at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on Sunday, Dec. 22, at 4 p.m., followed by a post-show reception at Edgewater Gallery.



**EXHIBITS**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

a craftsman, a Christmas gift in 1994 gave him the motivation to try his skills at another trade — constructing model boats from scratch. On view through Jan. 4, 2025.

**"From Homespun to Couture: Fashion in Historic Middlebury,"** offers a window onto the sartorial tastes of local women and the growing Middlebury tailoring scene from the 1800s to the early 20th century. On view through Jan. 4, 2025.

**PHOTOPLACE GALLERY**

3 Park Street, Middlebury  
For more info visit [photoplacegallery.com](http://photoplacegallery.com).

**"Poetry of the Ordinary"** features photos that highlight the simple poetic elegance of the ordinary. Juror Blue Mitchell selected approximately 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery, and 40 more for the online gallery. On view Dec. 6-27.

**SPARROW ART SUPPLY**

44 Main St., Middlebury  
For more info visit [sparrowartsupply.com](http://sparrowartsupply.com)

**"Frost & Fable."** Featuring the work of 15 local artists, "Frost & Fable" celebrates the unique ways winter inspires, inviting visitors to step into a world of wonder and imagination. On view Nov. 15-Jan. 25.



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**2505 EAST STREET, NEW HAVEN, VT \$525,000**

This 1875 VT Farmstead sits on 21 acres, features a wrap-around porch with beautiful views, and a large barn. Once a dairy farm, this homestead could become a working farm again. There is a lot of potential for this property with some creative thinking. 36' X 72' of the barn has been restored and a large section with a workshop is heated. Come and see what VT living is all about!



**674 HEITMAN RD, BRIDPORT, VT \$149,000**

"Sweat Equity" means effort and toil which is what you'd need to turn this 2-acre Bridport homestead into a wonderful property with beautiful views! The main home needs substantial work but there is another building in very good condition that could possibly be lived in while the main home is renovated. A heated 2-car garage/workshop and a 3-car garage all add to the value!



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