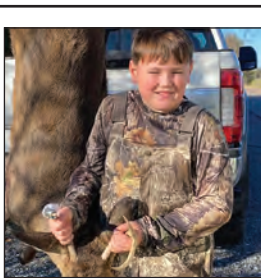


**Year in Art**  
In 2024 we covered 105 local artists, actors, musicians and a lot more. Check out Arts + Leisure.



**Oh, deer ...**  
It wasn't a banner year, but many bow, muzzleloader and young hunters persevered. See Page 1B.



**Dig out**  
Help our first responders deal with fires fast — shovel snow from around hydrants. Page 2A.

# ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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**Students on stage**  
BRIDGE SCHOOL SIXTH-GRADER Amelie McCue, right, negotiates with Gwendelyn, a magical animal, in the Middlebury school's student-written musical, "Hijinks at High Noon," which was staged late last week. See more photos on Page 8B.  
Independent photo/Steve James

## Deer hunt produces fewer trophies in '24

Overall take is lowest in past decade

By ANDY KIRKALDY  
ADDISON COUNTY — With the final numbers in, it's official: 2024 was the least productive deer-hunting season in Addison County in at least nine years.  
This fall and winter — counting deer taken in rifle season, each of the two archery and muzzleloader seasons, and Youth and Novice Hunting Weekend — the county's seven wildlife reporting stations weighed 776 deer.  
That's the fewest over at least the past nine years. The second-lowest count over that span was 1,141 in 2016 — or 365 more than hunters bagged this year.  
This year's numbers include 484 bucks taken in the 16-day rifle season that ran from Nov. 16 to (See Deer season, Page 7A)

## MAUSD gets some good news on budget

By MARIN HOWELL  
BRISTOL — A lot can change in a month, particularly during the budget-building season — sometimes for the better.  
That was perhaps a takeaway from the Mount Abraham Unified School District Board's Dec. 17 meeting, during which Superintendent Patrick Reen told board members the most recent tax-related information provided by the state and other updated figures have changed the district's financial picture dramatically.  
While district officials just last month were weighing several staff reductions in order to limit overall tax rate increases to 6%, they now (See Mt. Abe, Page 2A)

## Taxpayers could pay more for Ilsley update

By JOHN FLWOWERS  
MIDDLEBURY — Barring a surge in private donations and/or winning additional grants, Middlebury taxpayers could be asked to absorb a greater chunk of the \$17 million Ilsley Library expansion-and-renovation project than was originally anticipated, according to town officials.  
Nothing has been decided yet. Acting Middlebury Town Manager Tom Hanley said the picture will likely become clearer following a Jan. 7 selectboard meeting that will include fiscal year 2026 budget discussions.  
"We're around \$1.5 million short (on the library project financing) right now," Hanley told the (See Ilsley, Page 19A)

## 'I was doing what I was meant to be doing'



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE PRESIDENT Laurie Patton discusses the nine-and-a-half years she's spent leading the institution during a recent interview. Patton will step down from her post at the end of this month to become president of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in Cambridge, Mass.  
Independent photo/Steve James

Patton recalls lessons and successes from nearly a decade of leadership

By MARIN HOWELL  
MIDDLEBURY — Reflecting on the nearly 10 years she's spent leading Middlebury College, there's a moment President Laurie Patton says she'll never forget.  
One of her earliest memories is coming to the former Middlebury town offices in 2015 — then located at 94 Main St. — to meet with town officials for an introductory visit featuring cake and punch.  
"It was lovely, and I remember thinking that there was a deep sense of 'this is what my parents taught me to do,' to be in a town like this with people who are leading the town out of their brains and the goodness of their heart because they believe in this kind of community," she recalled. "I was doing what I was meant to be doing; that's what it felt like."  
It's continued to feel that way, Patton acknowledged during a recent interview with the Independent. Middlebury has become a big part of her life, a development she said doesn't surprise her given how her post at the college has always felt like a good fit.  
"I wouldn't take on any leadership role that was not a (See Patton, Page 8A)



**By the way**  
The Vermont Chamber of Commerce recently announced three new hires, including Middlebury selectboard member Isabel Gogarty, as the organization's program associate. Gogarty until recently served as wellness educator at Middlebury Union Middle School. "Isabel's (See By the way, Page 19A)

## Chronology 2024 - A Year In Review

Schools, storms, housing, eclipse & more made news

Editor's note: As the year draws to a close we have a vague feeling that not much has changed over the past 12 months. But look at the stories we covered, and you will see that 2024 was quite a year on many fronts. Yes, there were some painful moments, but much was achieved, as well. And wasn't the eclipse a nice diversion? Relive some of those memories in this round up of the year that's ending and then have a wonderful 2025.

### January

As a new year kicked off in Addison County, seniors in the 5-Town area gathered for the inaugural meeting of "Elder Eagles," a weekly offering of the Bristol Recreation Department geared at providing local golden-agers with a chance to get together and take part in various activities

each week.  
January brought news of plans for a new four-level, mixed-use building on South Pleasant Street in Middlebury that would host offices for Marble Trail Financial and a penthouse residence for one of the owners of that business. The Middlebury Development Review Board unanimously OK'd plans for that building, which called for an 8,800-square-foot building (See January, Page 9A)



**January 11**  
OVERNIGHT HIGH WINDS during the Jan. 9-10 winter storm took down this tree on Drew Lane in Middlebury. Bristol, Lincoln, and the eastern side of Middlebury along the mountains were particularly hard hit by the storm, where more than 3,000 customers lost electricity.  
Independent file photo/John S. McGriff

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# Help your responders: Shovel out hydrants

ADDISON COUNTY — When our local volunteer fire department firefighters drop everything they are doing to respond to an alarm — time is everything.

The one thing they don't need is an obstacle that will cost them valuable seconds. Getting a charged water hose line into a structure fire fast is what saves lives and property. Just a two-minute delay getting water onto the seat of the fire can be the difference between saving a home and lives, and disaster.

You know what often costs firefighters those precious two minutes, and usually more time than that? Having to shovel out a fire hydrant.

You know what we can all do to make sure that doesn't happen? Shovel out around the hydrants in our neighborhoods after snow falls.

The department urges neighborhoods to get together and agree which household will shovel out which hydrants. Of course it's a job for able-bodied shovelers, and everyone should be careful. Don't over-exert yourself. And shovel from the sidewalk side of the



**CLEARING SNOW FROM around fire hydrants saves valuable time for firefighters and could save a home or business building.**  
Photo courtesy of Walter Stugis

hydrant - don't stand in the street.

The *Independent* thinks this is an important public safety initiative. So when you shovel out a hydrant, take a picture and send it to us, so we may publish it in future editions. Send it to [news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com) and

tell us where the hydrant is, who shoveled, and who took the picture. Let's have some fun while we're saving life and property.

It is a great way to thank our firefighters by making their job safer and easier.

# Shoreham septic gets a break

By JOHN FLOWERS

SHOREHAM — The state Legislature this past biennium made some headlines for decisions that led to increases in various fees and taxes, for purposes ranging from childcare expansion to vehicle registration.

But it could have been a lot worse for folks in the town of Shoreham, who — thanks to support from local lawmakers, an engineering firm and state environmental officials — were spared from having to make an estimated \$1 million upgrade to the community's tiny wastewater facility.

That upgrade was to be triggered by new phosphorous-reduction rules for wastewater facilities. Bill S.213 of 2024 (also known as the Flood Safety Act) mandated that "No person directly discharging into the drainage basins of Lake Champlain or Lake Memphremagog shall discharge any waste that contains a phosphorus concentration in excess of 0.80 milligrams per liter on a monthly average basis."

While Shoreham's small wastewater system has only 81 users and currently discharges around 10,000 gallons per day into a nearby swamp (and not directly into Lake Champlain), it was at risk of

triggering S.213's phosphorus rule. That would have required not only a roughly \$1 million equipment upgrade at the Shoreham facility, but also thousands more in annual operating costs.

"Shoreham produces around 85 pounds of phosphorous per year at the plant. That's a couple of fertilizer bags. It's not a huge contribution to that area," noted Robert Clark, a senior project engineer with Otter Creek Engineering who's been helping the town evaluate its sewer facility for improvements. The community launched the facility in 1998, thanks to state and federal grants, with an eye toward attracting measured residential and business growth.

Shoreham's small wastewater system currently costs around \$94,000 annually to operate, according to Steve Goodrich, the town's selectboard chairman. He and his colleagues feared the phosphorus mandates in S.213 might make the municipal system too expensive to upgrade and run.

"It would have required them to change the entire treatment process," Clark said of the state's phosphorous rules. "Right now, (Shoreham) uses a recirculating sand filter. It basically mimics what happens in our natural

environment. We recirculate the wastewater through sands and gravels that have biological activity happening in them."

Added Clark: "This system itself is not really designed to remove phosphorus; it provides phosphorus reduction, but not at the levels the state needed."

In addition to putting Clark on its team, the town hired Montpelier-based environmental attorney David Mears to help Shoreham plead its case for relief from a costly project that seemed more applicable to larger municipal sewer plants.

Folks within the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and local lawmakers — including state Sen. Chris Bray, D-Vt. — agreed to go to bat for Shoreham. The parties agreed to a compromise that will exempt Shoreham from a million-dollar retrofit, yet still require the town to make more modest phosphorus reduction and monitoring fixes to its facility.

The "Shoreham exemption," passed as part of S.213, relates to "municipally owned secondary sewage treatment plants" that "discharge less than 35,000 gallons per day ... using recirculating sand filters in the Lake Champlain drainage basin, permitted on or before July 1, 2001, unless the plant is modified to use a technology other than recirculating sand filters."

While Shoreham dodged a costly bullet that could have placed its wastewater system in financial jeopardy, local officials said they realize the future need to connect more customers to reduce operating expenses. The community continues to explore possible development of the Farnham property, consisting of 312 acres of town-owned land in the village. The land is being sized up for possible residential, business, gravel and parkland uses.

# State begins avian flu testing

## Regular farm inspections to begin ramping up soon

By EMMA COTTON  
VTDigger.org

Earlier this month at the University of Vermont dairy farm in South Burlington, Jess Waterman climbed up to an opening in a large storage tank, inserted a long metal dipper, and pulled out a test tubes' worth of raw milk.

Gathered around Waterman — a dairy farm inspector with Vermont's Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets — stood a handful of dairy farm inspectors, taking notes. They watched as Waterman transferred the milk into a vial to be sent to Cornell University, where scientists will test it for highly pathogenic avian influenza, also called HPAI, a form of avian influenza that is deadly to poultry.

The dairy inspectors were learning the sampling process,

which they plan to soon conduct on about 425 dairy farms across Vermont each month. It's part of an effort to keep Vermont's farms free of the virus, and allow farmers to take quick action if it's identified in their milk supply.

Vermont's testing regimen follows an USDA announcement that it would begin testing the country's milk supply for the avian flu, which has circulated globally since 2022. Last spring, highly pathogenic avian flu began to spread among dairy cows. "This is the first time that we're aware of in the history of the world that HPAI jumped to dairy cattle," said E.B. Flory, dairy section chief at the Agency of Agriculture.

Since the spring, avian flu has spread to hundreds of dairy herds in at least 16 states. At least 60 people — mostly farmworkers — have

caught the virus, according to *The New York Times*.

No Vermont dairy herds have tested positive for the virus. The closest states with dairy herds that have tested positive for the virus are North Carolina and Ohio, and those cases were not recent, Flory said.

The federal plan to take test samples from silos at regional processing facilities that contain milk from multiple states didn't seem to make sense for Vermont, Agency of Agriculture officials said. If testing yielded a positive result, they wouldn't know which state the infected milk came from, or which farm.

"For us in Vermont, we export over 80% of our milk, and we were concerned that our milk will end up in other states, mixed with other

(See Avian flu, Page 3A)

# Mt. Abe

(Continued from Page 1A)

believe they can draft a budget that could translate to a *decrease* in taxes for most MAUSD towns without eliminating positions.

"It seems evident to me that we can put together a budget that I think voters will appreciate that doesn't require us to go so far as to issue RIF (Reduction In Force) notices," Reen told the board.

Board members ultimately directed Reen to further explore such an option, particularly one that would result in a 0% tax rate increase for the most affected town in the district, most likely Starksboro under current scenarios.

During the Dec. 17 meeting, Reen presented four different options for an FY'26 spending plan, as well as more information on budget-related questions the school board had asked.

Those questions included what cuts in the district's central office could look like. Reen noted that district officials are looking to take advantage of attrition for a vacancy they're anticipating in the central office, which would result in the reduction of one Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) job.

To do so, the district would merge two fulltime positions, an accounts payable clerk and an administrative assistant for facilities.

Budget figures presented on Dec. 17 factor in an estimated 11.9% increase in healthcare premiums, as well as updated projections from the state that now appear more favorable for the district. Reen noted the district received a first draft of its estimated long-term average weighted daily membership (LTWADM), which is currently projected at 1,970.37 students, an increase of 4.87 from what was anticipated in November.

District officials also received estimates from the state on what MAUSD towns' Common Level of Appraisals will be, as well as the "Dec. 1 letter" from the state's tax commissioner forecasting the education tax yields — a measure of how much in education taxes the state will collect to distribute to towns — and non-homestead tax rate for FY'26.

"So basically, all of those really critical pieces of information are new since last time we met, so in combination all of those things

change the financial picture significantly," Reen said. But he also added there remains "a healthy degree of skepticism" in the current figures as certain projections are expected to change.

With that in mind, Reen presented the board with four different options for directions the district could take in building an FY'26 spending plan. Those options were:

- Option 1: Making all the staff reductions previously eyed as a way to limit overall tax increases to the board's 6% target. The 15.4 fulltime equivalent (FTE) positions previously identified were largely in the classroom and included 6 FTE eliminated unfilled positions and a 9.4 FTE reduction in force.
- Factoring in updated information from the state, that budget scenario is now expected to result in a post-CLA tax rate decrease ranging from 5.65% in Starksboro to 15.7% in New Haven, for those who pay education taxes based on the value of their home.
- Option 2: Not eliminating any positions. That option is expected to result in tax rate impacts ranging from an around 1% increase in Starksboro to an about 11% decrease in New Haven.
- Option 3: Stick with the board's current target of a "no more than 6%" overall tax rate increase.

According to Reen's presentation, the district could meet that target while spending \$763,525 above the level service budget the board was previously looking at. That budget scenario is expected to result in tax rate impacts ranging from a 6% increase in Starksboro to a 5.82% decrease in New Haven.

Reen noted Option 3 is around \$3.2 million more than Option 1 without making any of the reductions previously being weighed to meet a 6% target.

"We took some additional reductions out with that central office position in Option 1 and revenue has changed, but the lion's share of this is the result of the information we've gotten from the state in the first couple weeks of December; a \$3 million dollar swing from what we were initially projecting," Reen said. "The sentiment from districts around the state is 'This was unexpected,' and now we're waiting for 'is it going to swing back; is it going to correct

somehow and if so, how much?'"

Reen also presented the board with an "Option 1.5," which would not require the district to issue any reduction in force but would take advantage of attrition.

"That (attrition) would be current positions that are unfilled and positions that over the next several months become vacant," he explained.

Option 1.5 would eliminate the 6 FTE vacant positions identified and factor in the 1.0 FTE proposed reduction in the central office. Reen noted Option 1.5 would also allow the district to add back \$400,000 of the \$600,000 for facilities it took out of the budget last year to trim spending.

"What will add to a potential benefit to this is, relative to the uncertainty of the yield and LTWADM, if we get news that is not in our favor, that \$400k that we're talking about putting back toward facilities could become \$300k, could become \$200k, could become \$0," Reen said. "We could adjust that to stay at a tax rate that we think is going to meet voter approval as we face whatever ups and downs are yet to come."

The tax impact of Option 1.5 is expected to range from a 1.44% increase in Starksboro to a 11.31% increase in New Haven.

Following Reen's presentation, several board members expressed interest in further exploring Option 1.5, with some suggested changes. The board also discussed the question of whether to pursue staff reductions in this budget cycle that the district may have to inevitably make later down the road. Multiple district officials said they'd like to avoid making bigger changes for the upcoming fiscal year when it's not essential.

"One of my first thoughts when it became clear what the impact of the information that came out was ... This is the time that we've been looking to buy; it found its way to us without having to do something pretty dramatic to buy the time," Reen said.


Board members directed Reen to look further into Option 1.5, particularly to explore an iteration that would limit tax rate increases in the most impacted town to 0%. The school board is expected to adopt an FY'26 spending plan in January to present to voters.



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### Solstice

HEAVY SNOWFALL ON Saturday prompted Town Hall Theater to cancel its Winter Solstice luminary parade, but a group of younger theater-makers still celebrated the shortest day of the year with a show inside on the THT stage. The show, led by Barbara Paulsen, featured puppets maneuvered by the kids. Above, 10-year-old Sarah Miranda-Ngaiza holds a mask while she delivers her lines directly to the audience. Right, a young puppeteer crouches behind a screen while managing a rabbit.

Independent photos/Steve James



## City studying sewer tap-on fees

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — With a complete overhaul of its sewer system scheduled over the next few years, what should Vergennes charge homeowners and developers to connect to the system?

Vergennes City councilors are still working that out.

The Council continued preliminary discussions on the issue at its Dec. 10 meeting.

They met with John Jackman, a former Vergennes resident and asset manager. In his first meeting with the council on Oct. 22, Jackman had recommended a connection fee of \$11,814.60 per 210 gallons of daily usage, an amount that applies to a single-family home or apartment. On Dec. 10 his final recommendation was \$1,943.

The current sewer connection fee is \$1,340 per unit.

Last week, councilors said they were receptive to a lower number or a sliding scale after listening to developer Peter Kahn discuss the question. In a later interview, City Manager Ron Redmond told the *Independent* the decision on the connection fee question would not be settled until sometime next year, and said at the meeting no decision will be made until city officials get input from an analyst it will hire to study the larger sewer rate question.

“We are going to have a rate analyst look at fees in general,” he said at the meeting. “We are going to have a strategy and a policy.”

At the meeting, Jackman said he lowered his recommendation substantially after a series of meetings with former city manager Mel Hawley. Jackman said Hawley’s knowledge of how the construction of the wastewater collection system was funded allowed him to revise his figures downward.

Specifically, Jackman said, Hawley was able to pinpoint many sewer lines that were funded by grants and developers, and not by city ratepayers, thus the cost of the sewer collection system upon which he based his recommendation was less than his original estimates.

Jackman said he also used cost estimates that he said were not artificially inflated by COVID-era construction prices in estimating per-foot construction pricing for new lines.

Kahn, who is working with a partner on a proposal to build 74 units of mostly workforce housing on land behind the city police station on Main Street (a project that could eventually add 50 more units), said he was happy with the lower price point. But he still had suggestions for further concessions for his project and for other developers.

First, he suggested making no cost distinction between a one-bedroom unit projected to use 210 gallons a day and a three-bedroom unit that would use three times that much capacity. He said the higher cost for service for units that could house families “is a little counterproductive to this goal of creating more housing. That’s an upfront gateway to enter ... That’s an \$800 per unit change from what it is now.”

Kahn also talked about other upfront infrastructure expenses involved in installing water and sewer lines to buildings, citing his Claybrook housing development off West Main Street as an example. Adding higher connection fees would make it harder for developers to break ground, he said.

“I have hundreds of thousands of dollars going to the city of Vergennes for Claybrook,” he said.

Kahn and Deputy Mayor Dickie Austin discussed the issues. Kahn suggested basing the connection fee on what the city has actually spent in the past 30 years on the sewer system instead of a less accurate estimate of a replacement cost.

Austin said he understood that point, but that, “What’s been spent on the sewer system in the last 30 years is not nearly enough.”

“But that’s what we’re buying,” Kahn said. “And the infrastructure that’s about to be built.”

Austin said that was the point, that Kahn and others would be “buying into a system that the city will guarantee will exist.”

But Kahn said connection fees are the wrong place to look for the city pay for that guarantee.

“You can’t possibly charge enough with a hook-on fee to pay for the system,” he said. “It’s got to be user fees.”

Later, Kahn expanded on that point. He pointed out that companies like Green Mountain Power and Vermont Gas Co. do

not charge hook-up fees, but rather rely on their customers’ regular payments to fund their operations and/or make profits. He suggested low or even no connection fees as way to attract more development and ratepayers and thus more funding.

“It is the ratepayers that keep the system going,” he said. “Adding more ratepayers has got to be a good thing. Making a prohibitive hook-on fee and getting less ratepayers seems counterproductive.”

Some councilors said they were receptive to considering new approaches. Councilor Cheryl Brinkman said, for example, looking at a sliding scale for different size units and developments was worth discussing, and Councilor Sue Rakowski agreed.

“I like including developers in this discussion, and maybe approaching this in a tiered fashion,” Brinkman said.

Hawley also weighed in with a letter to the council, which read in part: “The City needs housing. David Shlansky, Peter Kahn and Cornerstone are providing the lion’s share of new residential development in the City. Let’s not hit them with unwarranted fees. We need them.”

## Bridport crash claims N.J. couple’s lives

BRIDPORT — Two New Jersey residents are dead following a single-vehicle crash on Monday, Dec. 23, on Route 22A in Bridport, near Carrs Lane.

Vermont State Police identified the deceased as Mark Axelrod, 78, and Francine Axelrod, 76, both of River Edge, N.J.

Police said their investigation indicated Mark Axelrod was driving the couple’s 2015 Chevy Impala south on Route 22A at around 11:30 a.m. when it

gradually left the southbound lane, struck a telephone pole, overturned, and came to a stop, upside-down. Both Mark and Francine Axelrod were pronounced deceased at the scene.

Police described the road conditions as being dry; both Axelrods were wearing seatbelts, according to state police.

Neither speed nor impairment are suspected as contributing factors at this time, according to

state police. The investigation is in its early stages and the cause of the crash is still unknown. Anyone who witnessed the crash or has any relevant information is asked to call the New Haven Barracks at 802-388-4919.

State police troopers were assisted on scene by members of the Addison County Sheriff’s Department, Bridport Fire Department, Middlebury Regional EMS and Town Line First Response.

## Avian flu

(Continued from Page 2A)

states’ milk. And, what do we do when our milk is mixed with 12 or 15 other states, and there’s a positive?” Flory said.

Without on-farm testing, officials would have had to scramble to trace the positive test result back to its origins in Vermont so they could deploy procedures to quarantine the herd. The process of locating the farm could be disruptive to the dairy community and potentially mean infected cows aren’t being appropriately handled as quickly as

they could be, Flory said.

Instead, Vermont is taking “a step above” the USDA’s minimum requirements by sampling at the farm level, she said. It’s one of only three states to conduct on-farm testing, and is home to many more farms than the other two states moving forward with the more time-intensive process.

Vermont’s program will be funded entirely by the USDA, giving the state resources to carry out the wide-scale testing.

While the pasteurizing process

typically kills pathogens, officials want to reduce the risk of spread as much as possible.

“What we do not want to happen in Vermont ... is that this virus continues to spread, and that it mutates and becomes something that humans can contract and then spread to each other,” Flory said.

If milk were to test positive for avian influenza through the state’s sampling process, the agency would work with farmers to restrict moving animals, vehicles and people in ways that might cause the virus to spread.



## Addison, VT Homeowner Recommends Bristol Electronics



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# Happy Holidays to all!





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Editorial

Yes, Virginia...

*Editor’s note: Although we’re a day late this year, this editorial about the credibility of Santa Claus appeared more than 100 years ago in The New York Sun. It was written by Francis Pharcellus Church, an assistant to the paper’s editor. A true Christmas classic, it has outlived its writer, the recipient, and the newspaper that gave it life. Its most famous phrases are often recalled and sometimes parodied. Here we reprint the famous letter and response, partly in the hopes that parents will take the time to read it aloud to children of appropriate ages and for all to reflect on the less commercial aspects of this holiday season. We also take special note of this editorial’s perspective of “truth” and the fact that the young girl wrote to The Sun — a print newspaper serving New York City — because it was trustworthy. In an era in which journalism has come under attack by the president-elect as the “enemy of the people” and social media influencers gain followers by being outrageous and by fueling public anger, we hope Vermonters will reject such hate and strive to search for the facts of each issue confronting us, as well as for the truth they reveal.*

\*\*\*\*\*

“We (The Sun) take pleasure in answering at once and thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of *The Sun*:

*Dear Editor:  
I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, “If you see it in The Sun, it’s so.” Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?*

*Virginia Hanlon  
115 West 95th Street*

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men’s or children’s, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world around him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that’s no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby’s rattle and see what makes noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, not even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.”

Wishing our readers  
good tidings throughout the  
New Year —  
from all of us at the  
Addison Independent.

ADDISON COUNTY  
INDEPENDENT

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Editor/Publisher: Angelo S. Lynn

Assistant Editor: John S. McCright

Reporters: John Flowers  
Andy Kirkaldy  
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Multimedia: Megan James  
Photographer: Steve James  
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Walking into winter

JUST AS WINTER arrived on the calendar with the solstice on Saturday morning, so too did it arrive in the atmosphere as several inches of snow fell in Addison County, including on this side street in Middlebury.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

Could crisis be something else?

“Happy new year!” “Happy new year!” With The Holidays soon to be past, you’ll hear it from just about everyone you meet on the street. It’s a pleasant greeting. Friendly. Well-meaning. Cheerful.

But I am not cheerful. I am glum. I am grouchy. I do not think 2025 will be a happy year in our corner of the world. I anticipate 2025 with dread. I fear the actions of our next President. Lately it seems there’s always a lump in the pit of my stomach and a rising anxiety.

So many systems and institutions seem broken now. Riddled with cracks. And in through those cracks pour grief, anger, fear, outrage, anxiety. I am angry and fearful. I am grouchy. Seeking to help me calm down with a different perspective on things, our wise daughter introduced me to a traditional Chinese parable. This is how it goes:

Once upon a time, there was an old farmer who had worked his crops with a trusty horse for many years. One day his horse ran away. Upon hearing the news, his neighbors came to visit. “Your good horse is gone,” they said sympathetically. “Such bad luck!” “Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see,” the farmer replied.

The next morning the horse returned, bringing with it two other wild horses. “How wonderful!” the neighbors exclaimed. “Not only did your horse return, but you received two more. What great fortune you have!”

“Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see,” answered the farmer.

The following day, his son tried to ride one of the

untamed horses, was thrown, and broke his leg. The neighbors again came to offer their sympathy on his misfortune. “Now your son cannot help you with your farming,” they said. “What terrible luck you have!”

“Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see,” replied the old farmer.

The following week, military officials came to the village to conscript young men into the army. Seeing that the son’s leg was broken, they passed him by. The neighbors congratulated the farmer on how well things had turned out. “Such great news. You must be so happy!”

The man smiled to himself and said once again, “Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see.”

The story stops there, inconclusive. How does it end? We’ll never know.

The moral of this story is that no event, in and of itself, should be judged as good or bad, lucky or unlucky, fortunate or unfortunate, but that only time will tell the whole story. So even events that appear terrible, like the election of our next President appears to me, may prove to have a “silver lining,” an unforeseen upside.

I try to imagine what such an upside might be. Congress begins to function as an independent body again, summoning courage just in the nick of time to check a dictator’s ambition? His declaration of martial law and cancellation of elections provokes an uprising that drives him into exile in Moscow and we are rid of him forever? Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see.

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

Ways of Seeing

By Abi Sessions



You know those annoying people who manage to bake thousands of cookies over the holidays with seemingly little effort? This year, a dream came true for me: I became one of those annoying people. I didn’t plan to go all Keebler elf. I had no baking schedule, no stockpile of ingredients, no preselected recipes. I was inspired by a tip from a perky blogger who shared a cookie recipe I liked, and that launched me into a nearly constant cycle of cookie baking in December.

Conquering the cookie challenge

You know those annoying people who manage to bake thousands of cookies over the holidays with seemingly little effort?

This year, a dream came true for me: I became one of those annoying people.

I didn’t plan to go all Keebler elf. I had no baking schedule, no stockpile of ingredients, no preselected recipes. I was inspired by a tip from a perky blogger who shared a cookie recipe I liked, and that launched me into a nearly constant cycle of cookie baking in December.

The recipe was preceded by an 18,000-word introduction on the blogger’s family history dating back to the Norman Conquest, eventually describing how the recipe was handed down from the blogger’s Aunt Betty (just a neighbor, really, but such a sweet lady). It then went on to explain each ingredient, presumably for bakers who had never heard of all-purpose flour or salt.

I was on day three of reading the recipe intro when the blogger dropped this advice: Leave a pound or two of butter on the counter all month. Then, she said, should the urge to “cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy” come over me, I could act on it without having to wait for the butter to soften. That hourlong process is 54 minutes longer than my attention span. It was like she knew me.

Once I adopted the soft butter trick, it all clicked.

I started making dough in the evenings, sticking it in the fridge and then baking the cookies in the mornings while I waited for my coffee to brew.

I never thought I had it in me to become a high-output cookie baker, given how much I dislike, well, baking cookies. I am more the “spread batter in prepared pan” type than the “drop dough by teaspoonfuls” type.

Standing in front of the oven swapping out trays of cookies every nine to 11 minutes is fiddly work compared to, say, making brownies: one pan, a half hour, done.

Yet here I was, all December, not just scooping out teaspoonfuls of cookie dough, but also forming balls that I then coated in sugar. Sometimes I even rolled out dough and cut it into fanciful shapes. By doing most of the work in a pre-caffeine half-slumber, I hardly dwelled on the drudgery of portioning out up to 128 chunks of dough two inches apart. If I thought, “This could have been a bar cookie,” I never said it out loud.

Over a few weeks, I made dozens and dozens of cookies. I loved having a variety set out on the table for visitors. I did not, however, love having to walk by them multiple times a day and resist the urge to grab one, or five.

I had the willpower to pass up the generic sugar

(See *Jessie*, Page 5A)

Letters  
to the Editor

Did you know Frost, I asked you

Wasn’t he the guy who wrote poetry up in Ripton, you said, when I asked you, if you knew Frost. If you ever bumped into him. On one of his trips down the mountain.

Driving through East Middlebury. Where everyone knows everybody. It’s likely even a bard would stop for a drink at the Waybury. Give the impression he was local

enough. Take a few lines he could use back to his cabin. Up there in the cathedral of pines Hazlett Upson planted. Famous around here, back then, across the nation. For his *Saturday Evening Post*

Alexander Botts Tractor Stories. And his house, the Dragon’s Den, just below Bread Loaf’s Inn, The fields Stafford Dragon mowed for Frost and him. Frost telling a reporter once, when he was

asked how his poems sounded so natural, that he got his best lines from a Dragon in Ripton, Vermont. Giving in to saying our state’s name, to locate where in the world Ripton is. Saying, the word he used when

reading, reciting one of his verses. Wanting, it seems, to want us to believe he was one of the guys, stopping after work to raise a glass, toasting his horse. Shaking, he would write, “his harness bells.” Dusting the snow off.

Filling in his tracks. Making it hard to know if they were leaving or coming back to the village. Its country store. Or waiting for the snow to stop. Before starting out again, Frost might have told you, where they had to go.

Gary Margolis  
Cornwall

Nonprofits also play vital role in offering housing

Carly Berlin’s informative piece entitled “Vermont loosened Act 250 rules for housing. Here’s where developers are responding” highlighted some progress that has been made since the passage of the much-needed HOME Act in 2023.

One featured developer is contemplating a 74-unit development in Vergennes. What the article doesn’t mention is that the parcel under consideration could support 130 units according to local zoning, and such a project would have widespread support among city residents.

In a city of just 1,500 households, those 55 unbuilt homes could have a significant impact not just on the availability of affordable housing and overall vitality of the community, but also on the ability of the city to pay for long-overdue sewer upgrades and ease tax burdens while maintaining local schools. The rules already allow these 13 acres to be developed without a state Act 250 permit.

What is the purpose of developing a 13-acre parcel and achieving less dense, less environmentally sustainable housing in the bargain?

Meanwhile, the Legislature has tasked various state agencies

(See *Shanbacker letter*, Page 5A)



# Vaccines are our lifeboats

Dreaded diseases that we have forgotten about because vaccines have eliminated them are threatening to return.

Along with public health and sanitation efforts, vaccines are the single most lifesaving interventions in the history of medicine. Before vaccines, 10% of infants were dying of what are now preventable diseases. Thirty to 40% of children did not live to their 5th birthday, dying of preventable infectious diseases. Today the death rate is 95% lower. Walk through any cemetery in Vermont and look at the little headstones. Most are the graves of young children who died of preventable diseases.

I’ve been a pediatrician long enough to have cared for infants with pertussis, babies who cough so hard and frequently that they often stop breathing. They can’t eat, they can’t sleep and it lasts for weeks to months. It is heartbreaking because there is nothing we can do for them, except put them on a respirator as a last resort. I lost a patient to chicken pox in the 80s. My teachers told me about rubella-associated birth defects, deafness and sterility from mumps, and perhaps more than any other disease, the ravages of polio. Summer epidemics of polio left behind death, children in iron lungs to breathe for them, paralysis, a lifetime of disability.

Vaccines have largely relegated these diseases to the past. But political forces now threaten to resurrect them and their ravages for no good reason. President-elect Trump told *Time* magazine in an interview in late November that he would consider getting rid of some vaccines for children, “if I think it’s dangerous, if I think they are not beneficial.” He has repeated the disproved association of MMR vaccine

(measles, mumps, rubella) with autism. The paper that speculated on this association in 1998 was retracted by the medical journal, *The Lancet*, and its author, Andrew Wakefield, who continues to promulgate this dangerous lie, has been stripped of his medical license.

Trump’s nominee to run the Department of Health and Human Services, RFK Jr., has suggested the polio vaccine might have caused a wave of cancers “that killed many, many, many, many, many more people than polio ever did.” And he has said the idea that the vaccine resulted in a drastic decline in polio cases is “a mythology” that is “just not true.” These statements and conviction are demonstrably false and engender distrust of the medical profession and public health. And the lawyer who advises RFK Jr. is going to request that the FDA review the polio vaccine and suggest it be removed from the market.

While RFK Jr. recently said he wasn’t going to take away anybody’s vaccines, he also said, “People ought to have a choice, and that choice ought to be informed by the best information.” In fact, Trump and RFK Jr. oppose school vaccine mandates, leaving parents to decide whether to vaccinate their children. But if even a small percentage of parents decide not to immunize their children, our herd immunity will fail, and these diseases will return. Leaving vaccine decisions up to each state’s health department will likewise guarantee the return of these diseases.

Consider the injected polio

vaccine used in the U.S. It helps the immune system recognize the virus and fight it off before it gets to the nervous system and causes paralysis and death, but it doesn’t stop transmission of the virus. Vaccinated people can still carry and shed the virus in their stool. Though not ill with polio, they can be a reservoir of the polio virus that can easily infect the unvaccinated.

When a national immunization system breaks down, as it did when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989, infectious diseases quickly surge back. Diseases as horrible as diphtheria killed thousands (more than 140,000 cases and more than 4,000 deaths).

We are always swimming in a microbial sea and vaccines are our lifeboats. We’re all in this together. Vaccine success depends on a social contract we have all adhered to for more than 70 years.

*We are always swimming in a microbial sea and vaccines are our lifeboats. We’re all in this together. Vaccine success depends on a social contract we have all adhered to for more than 70 years.*

Without immunizations and robust public health measures, children will die. I worry about unvaccinated children spreading dangerous infectious disease to vulnerable populations: newborns before their routine first vaccines, children under the age of 1 before they receive their MMR vaccines, children and adults whose immune systems are compromised, the elderly.

Untoward reactions to vaccines rarely occur, and CDC officials monitor a large database where the public, doctors and vaccine makers report vaccine side effects. Surveillance is robust.

Although Trump is known for his frequent lying, I take him at his word about vaccines, and I worry. We all should worry. His policies are most likely to make America sick again.



## A peaceful moment

TWO DEER PAUSE for a moment, perhaps reacting to a sound or movement, while foraging for fodder in the snow.

Photo by Dottie Nelson

# Shanbacker letter

(Continued from Page 4A)  
with gathering feedback and reporting to the general assembly on strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing. I hope they consider making it as easy as possible for municipalities to receive “Tier 1A” designations under the new rules so that Act 250 no longer limits residential development in areas with municipal water and sewer.

Finally, I’m personally a big fan of the new housing going up in Vergennes, which the article mentions will be for a mix of “workforce” housing and “people with lower incomes.” As far as I know, the “workforce” units rent for more than \$2,000 per month,

and the “lower income” units rent for around \$1,500-\$1,800. To be clear, this is laudable and necessary in an area where “market” rents can be north of \$3,000.

That said, when we talk about affordable housing, I think it’s important to recognize that Vermont’s nonprofit affordable housing network is delivering deeply affordable (and highly energy efficient) housing for less than \$1,200 per month on average. Moreover, we are doing so at a variety of income levels, from people on fixed incomes to those working full-time and earning \$50,000 or more per year. This is also critical workforce housing,

senior housing, and low-income housing that deserves as much attention as Act 250 reform.

It’s vital that progress on regulatory reform and new housing stock include our most vulnerable neighbors, and that demands ongoing investment in Vermont’s affordable housing network. When we highlight the success of our for-profit developers, let’s also highlight the affordable housing ecosystem into which they fit. We play complementary roles and it’s important to remember the full picture.

Elise Shanbacker  
Vergennes

# Jessie

(Continued from Page 4A)  
cookies but not the rugelach, with their soft, buttery dough and fragrant filling of crushed pecans, raisins and cinnamon. (I am looking into an offsite rugelach storage unit for next year to save me from my gluttony-induced indigestion.)

Unlike me, Mark didn’t assign any guilt or calorie counts to the cookies or attempt to avoid direct eye contact with the kitchen table. He also couldn’t understand why I put out all those cookies and then (a) tried not to eat them and (b) yelled at him when he did.

“They’re bad for you,” I told him, as I arranged concentric circles of molasses cookies, still warm from the oven, on a platter. Nothing says love like encouraging those you care about to overindulge and then chiding them for doing so.

To save up a supply of cookies

to give away, I had to stop us from eating them as fast as I baked them. So I hid them everywhere — in the pantry, in the freezer, in my cheek pouches. Given my memory, which is even flakier than my rugelach dough (ha), I expect to be discovering random Ziploc bags full of cookies well into spring.

This holiday baking frenzy was fun, but I’m glad it’s over. I don’t want to bake, or even look at, another cookie for the next 11 months. I’ve rolled up the parchment paper, stashed the cooling racks and given away the last of the cookies. It’s like it never happened.

In fact, if it weren’t for the fine layer of confectioner’s sugar dust that has settled throughout the house, you’d never know I had baked a single cookie.

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# Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)  
So many systems and institutions are broken, riddled with cracks. What if those cracks could let in not fear, but light, so that we might see more clearly? What if those cracks could let in not anger, but kindness, so that we might heal

our communities? What if this crisis could be an opportunity for something better? Maybe so. Maybe not. We’ll see.

*Abi Sessions, formerly of Cornwall, lives in Weybridge with her husband, Bill.*

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ADDISON  
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# Obituaries

## Helen Louise Marsh, 94, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Our mother, Helen Louise Marsh, passed from this world into the next, early on Dec. 18 at the age of 94. She was a fighter, having successfully made it through surgery for a perforated duodenal ulcer six days earlier. She was always clear that she didn't want her obituary to say, "She died surrounded by her loving family." So we won't say that!

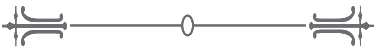
Mom was born on Aug. 31, 1930, in Albany, N.Y., the first child of her parents, Arthur and Helen Pellman. She was both a terror and a delight to her parents. She attended the Albany Academy for Girls, and then got her B.A. from Cornell University, where her parents had met. After Cornell, she worked for an advertising agency in New York City. She told us that "Madmen" was very accurate.



HELEN LOUISE MARSH

who loved to talk books, and then almost anything else with her. They joined their lives together and moved to Middlebury, Vt., where Charlie taught for many years at Middlebury Union High School and Mom worked as a secretary for several departments at Middlebury College.

Keeping beautiful gardens and feeding the birds was very important to Mom. She fought squirrels and bears to keep the birds fed. Even after Charlie and Mom moved to an independent living cottage at the Residence



## Michelle Agnes Morrissey, 68, of Vergennes

VERGENNES — Michelle Agnes Morrissey, 68, of Vergennes, passed away on Nov 23, 2024, at the Helen Porter Rehab & Nursing Center in Middlebury after a long illness with recent complications. She died surrounded with much love and support from family and friends. Shelly had a wonderful personality, and we will dearly miss her shining light.

Shelly was born in Kenosha, Wis., on June 10, 1956. She was the daughter of Mary Caroline Morrissey and James Arthur Morrissey. She was the 11th of 14 children and the aunt to 36 nieces and nephews. She was a loving sister, aunt, godmother, cousin and friend. Shelly was raised in Wisconsin, Ohio, and New Jersey, and settled in Vermont with the family in 1970.

After an adventurous trip through Burlington High School, Shelly was the leader of the pack through the 70s, 80s and 90s. Shelly worked in a few different roles over the years, including bartending at The Other Place and Murph's Tavern, where she excelled at making customers feel welcome and entertained. Shelly worked as a photo developer at Photogarden in Burlington and



MICHELLE AGNES MORRISSEY

Williston, where she developed her own considerable photography skills. Her sparkle brought her to pal around with celebrities, such as Lyle Lovett and Larry, Daryll & Daryll from the Newhart show. She worked for many years capturing photos of college students for area schools. Her lively personality shined while volunteering at The Three-Day Stampede for many years.

One of Shelly's greatest joys was being with family and friends. She had many talents and loved to share her knowledge. Shelly was a great cook and led the preparations for the large family holiday feast for years. She had a love of all animals and was a dog mom to many dogs over the years and also knew the names of most pets in the neighborhood. She is survived by her faithful companion, Ruby Blue.

Shelly left us with the same exuberance and indomitable spirit with which she led her life. She was a free spirit who would drop everything and show up for the people she loved and who loved her. When hospice care was needed

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at Otter Creek, Mom maintained her gardens, in the end with a lot of help from her stepdaughter, Stephanie Sabukewicz, and some from us.

Mom was like the Energizer Bunny — she kept going and going. She played Wordle every day with us until the last few days. She loved her many friends in Middlebury and at the "Rez," as well as at St. Stephen's Church. She led the New Yorker magazine discussion group at the Rez for a long time, and more recently attended it as a participant.

Mom is survived by her daughters, Pam and Lisa, and her sister, Sarah Pellman, of Albany, N.Y. Our youngest sister, Eve, predeceased her in 2015. Mom was also predeceased by her husband, Charles Sabukewicz, almost two years ago. Mom is lovingly remembered as well by her grandchildren Melissa, Rhys, Elena, Peter, Kelly, Madeline and Nolan, and many great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Homeward Bound, 236 Boardman Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753 or online at <https://www.homewardboundanimals.org/donate/>.

for people in her circle, Shelly showed up. When there was a devastating loss, Shelly showed up. When family or friends needed help, Shelly showed up. And she made everything *fun*. Who else but Shelly could make tough stuff fun — but she always did!

Shelly is survived by her siblings and their spouses, including Judy, Jim and Linda, Beth (Mike), Tom and Debbie, John and Marge, Dick, MaryKay and Peter, Beth, Maureen and Denny, and Joanni and Gary. She is also survived by nephews and nieces Michael, Amy, Christine, Gina, Karen, Wendi, John Jr., Kate, Harry, David, Austin, Kendra, Jesse, Shannan, Jaimee, Jason, Kyle, Chris, Audrey, Sharon, Logan and Melanie; great nieces and nephews Laney, Jasper, Avery, Jack, Oliver, Fineas, Evan, Maddie, Lucy, Maggie, Mila, Theo, Robbie, and Waylon; and several cousins. Shelly made friends easily and had several lifelong friends including Deb, Leigh and Annie.

Shelly was predeceased by her parents, Mary Caroline and James Arthur Morrissey; her brothers Mike, Ron and Bill; and her sister Carol; as well as dear friends Larry and Clifford.

There will be a graveside service held at Mount St. Joseph Cemetery in Bristol early next summer. There will be a celebration of life service and luncheon immediately following. Details will be posted at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Shelly's name to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation c/o The Three-Day Stampede, 711 Dan Sargent Rd, Starksboro, Vt., 05487, or Homeward Bound of Addison County, 236 Boardman St, Middlebury, Vt., 05753.

Please visit [awrth.com](http://awrth.com) to read Shelly's full obituary and share your memories and photos.

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NIGHT  
OUT?**

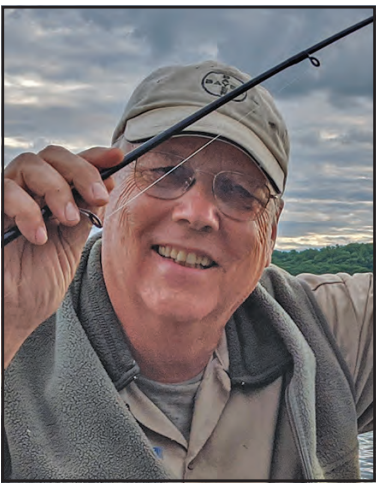
Read the Community and Arts & Leisure calendars every Thursday.

## Robert Edward Henley, 78, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Robert Edward Henley, 78, passed away Dec. 19, 2024, at his home, where he stepped into the presence of Jesus Christ and heard the words he'd longed to hear his whole life.

"Well done, my good and faithful servant." — *Matthew*, 25:23.

Born on the eastern shore on July 22, 1946, to Robert and Marion Henley, he was the only son of two children. He spent summers in high school and through junior college working with his sister Nancy's husband, Bobby Fooks, who was a contractor at the time. This gave him key training in woodworking, and in his early years as a teacher, he pursued a dream of opening his own business selling grandfather clocks and cabinet making.



ROBERT EDWARD HENLEY

In 1968 while in junior college, he joined the navy, enlisting as a Seabee during the Vietnam War. After being discharged, he married Linda Joyce Henley of Philadelphia, Pa., and then attended seminary. They had four children and were married for 52 years.

In 1980, Robert was called to

pastor Grace Baptist Church in Middlebury, Vt., for 44 years, where he lived and taught at Middlebury Union High School as the beloved woodshop teacher. After retiring from teaching, he dedicated a large portion of his life to serving the Middlebury and Bristol communities.

Using his expert craftsmanship, he built his home of 36 years and his boat, which brought his family joy as they traveled Lake Champlain, the Hudson River, and

# Monkton fire deemed suspicious

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police are looking into a suspicious fire at a Monkton home.

On Dec. 15 at around 11:30 p.m., the Monkton Fire Department was dispatched to a report of a structure fire at 1237 Tyler Bridge Road. Firefighters found the structure fully involved, and their fire suppression efforts were isolated to an exterior attack due to the instability of the structure.

Despite the fire department's efforts, they couldn't save the structure.

As part of his scene assessment, Monkton Fire Chief Curtis Layn contacted the Addison County Fire Investigation Team, which responded to the scene. Addison County Fire Investigators determined the fire to be suspicious. They contacted the state officials for help in determining the origin and cause of the blaze.

Fire investigators Det. Sgt. James Wright and Assistant State Fire Marshal Tim Angell are probing the fire's origins.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Det. Sgt. Wright at the New Haven state police barracks at 802-388-4919, or the Vermont Arson Tip Award Program hotline at 1-800-32-ARSON (1-800-322-7766). The state program will pay up to a \$5,000 reward for

information leading to an arrest.

Meanwhile, state police this week reported progress in their investigation of an apparent sexual assault in Salisbury that occurred back on June 29.

After a lengthy investigation, state police have cited Jason Purdy, 50, of Granville, N.Y., for sexual assault, after allegedly having had nonconsensual sexual contact with a juvenile.

Purdy turned himself in at the Rutland state police barracks on Dec. 18 and was issued a citation to appear in Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division, on Jan. 27 to answer the charge of sexual assault.

In other recent activity, state police:

- Reported that on Dec. 9 just before 10 a.m., Cyrus Bedard, 35, of Salisbury began repeatedly calling 911 for non-emergency purposes and harassing the dispatchers. These calls continued throughout the day, tying up 911 answering services with 56 calls. Troopers responded to Bedard's location where they cited him for disturbing the peace via electronic communications.
- On Dec. 19 at around 8:30 a.m., responded to a report of a family fight at a Ridge View Drive home in Leicester. After investigating, troopers said they

a few jaunts into the Ocean and Inland Waterways. Sailing was a huge passion in his life, along with audiobooks and going on the family's annual vacation to Ocean City, N.J.

Robert leaves behind his wife, Linda Henley; his five children, Tammie Chenoweth, Jennifer Burrows, Robert Henley, James Henley, and Lisa LaRose; along with six grandkids; his sister, Nancy Humphreys; his niece, Sharon Fooks; and his two beloved dogs, Ollie and Ginger.

He is predeceased by parents, Robert and Marion Henley, and his nephew, Robert Henley.

A celebration of life will be held at Valley Bible Church, 322 East Main St., Middlebury, Vt., 05753 at 2 p.m., Dec. 28, 2024.

His legacy of sermons can be listened to at [www.gracebaptistmiddlebury.com](http://www.gracebaptistmiddlebury.com).

Memorial contributions can be made to Grace Baptist Church.

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

## Vt. State Police Log

determined that Craig Disorda, 49, of Leicester, caused two household members, including a child, to fear imminent bodily injury, and that he had allegedly caused physical pain to the adult. Police cited Disorda for two counts of domestic assault.

- On Dec. 22, announced another charge of home improvement fraud against Michael Kenyon, 46, of Vergennes — the fourth time he's faced this charge during the past three months — all in different cases.

In this incident, state police said they'd received a call on Nov. 11 from a Bristol resident who said they'd hired Kenyon through Valley Pool and Spa Service LLC to provide pool equipment and installation. Kenyon allegedly received an upfront payment for the pool equipment and installation. The Bristol resident said when the work wasn't done and the equipment wasn't received, they tried to cancel the job, but Kenyon didn't follow up or provide a refund. He's due to answer this charge in Addison County Superior Court, criminal division, on Jan. 27.

**Snowy romp**

**MIKI, A 4-YEAR-OLD spaniel-poodle mix, front, shakes off while romping in the recent snowfall in New Haven. Kaku, a 3-year-old labradoodle seems to be on the lookout for more excitement — possibly a squirrel?**

Photo courtesy of Maggie Eaton

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# Deer season

(Continued from Page 1A)

Dec. 1; 63 deer shot in the October Youth/ Novice Hunting Weekend; 131 taken in the two-part archery season that includes parts of October, November and December; and 98 killed in the two-part muzzleloader season also over the past three months.

For sure, the closing of Orwell's Buxton's Store in November had an impact on the numbers. According to Department of Fish and Wildlife Deer Project Leader Nick Fortin, Buxton's did not report any deer before it closed.

Also, some hunters took advantage of the online reporting Fish & Wildlife now offers. According to Fortin on Monday morning, 323 muzzleloader and archery hunters reported deer online this year in Addison County.

However, that number does not represent a major increase from 2023, he said: A year ago, 305 hunters went online to report deer taken in Addison County. For the purposes of apple-to-apple reporting, the *Independent* will not roll the online numbers into its count.

Offsetting those factors: Jerusalem Corners Country Store in Starksboro has become a popular reporting destination for hunters in the southeastern Chittenden County, Rack 'N Reel in New Haven might be the busiest reporting station in Vermont, and relatively new station Backwoods Gun & Tackle in Bridport appears to have picked up some of Buxton's hunting patrons.

Based on early reports, the results the *Independent* recorded appear to be part of a larger trend of unproductive 2024 hunting in the department's Wildlife Management Units that include Addison County and adjacent areas, Fortin said in an email.

"Your results track what I'm seeing," he wrote. "It was a tough year in the valley."

In particular, Fortin expects final statewide results to be OK for most seasons, but not for the regular rifle season. Those, Fortin said, as was the case in Addison County, started well and then fizzled out. He had no good explanation why numbers dropped.

Fortin projected the state's "overall kill to be up a little bit from last year" when all seasons are combined. It will be a few weeks before full statewide results are calculated.

"But it looks like every season will be up except the rifle season," he said. "It's early, but it looked like we had a really good opening weekend, and then — pow! — it fell off a cliff. Our overall regular season is probably going to be down by 8 or 9% from last year, and be the lowest in probably seven or eight years."

The county numbers as tracked by the *Independent* over the past nine years are:

- In 2024, 776 deer (484 rifle, 63 youth/ novice, 131 archery, 98 muzzleloader).
- In 2023, 1,074 deer (676 rifle, 93 youth/ novice, 145 archery, 160 muzzleloader).
- In 2022, 1,141 deer (636 rifle, 89 youth/ novice, 234 archery, 182 muzzleloader).
- In 2021, 1,133 deer (590 rifle, 121 youth/novice, 214 archery, 208 muzzleloader).
- In 2020, 1,745 deer (647 rifle, 105 youth/novice, 528 archery, 464 muzzleloader).
- In 2019, 1,324 deer (594 rifle, 142 youth, 258 archery, 330 muzzleloader).
- In 2018, 1,345 deer (571 rifle, 110 youth, 274 archery, 390 muzzleloader).
- In 2017, 1,189 deer (554 rifle, 110 youth, 161 archery, 264 muzzleloader).
- In 2016, 1,064 deer (573 rifle, 94 youth, 206 archery, 191 muzzleloader).

### RIFLE SEASON WRAP

Despite the comparatively low numbers, almost 500 hunters did weigh deer in the county during rifle season, and some were trophy bucks.

In the final two weeks of rifle season, four hunters brought down bucks that topped 200 pounds and had them weighed at Rack 'N Reel: Charles Bradford shot a 202-pounder with a 10-point antler rack in Addison, and Raymond Stearns took down a 202-pounder with an eight-point rack in Ferrisburgh.

Tucker Brunelle brought in a 215-pounder with an eight-point rack he shot in Richmond to be weighed at Jerusalem Corners Country Store, and Rack 'N Reel handled a 200-pound buck with a 5-point rack that Nicholas Bushell killed in Charlotte.

Also, Chuck Welch had a good outing



**TRISTAN STEARNS TOOK down this 113-pound doe during the early muzzleloader season in Shoreham.**

Photo courtesy of Backwoods Guns & Tackle

in Bridport, taking down a 197-pounder with an 8-point rack that had a 19.5-inch antler span, according to his hunting buddy Chris Gordon.

Waltham offered productive ground for two hunters: In that town Kathleen Ambrose shot a 196-pound buck with an 8-point rack, and Kevin Kayhart brought down a 194-pound buck with a 10-point rack.

Back on opening weekend, two deer were taken that tipped the scales at more than 200 pounds: The biggest was one of the larger ones shot locally in recent memory: McGregor Butler brought down a 226-pound, 8-pound buck in Shoreham, and Jamison Bannister killed a 201-pound, four-pointer in Addison.

Overall, deer weight also bounced back slightly this year, according to *Independent* calculations. The average weight of a buck handled in Addison County during rifle season this year was 145.9 pounds. That's 2.3 pounds more than the 2023 number.

During the past decade the rifle-season average hovered around 147 or 148 pounds, but this decade has seen smaller deer: 144.9 pounds in 2022 and 143.7 pounds in 2021 before 2023's low point.

Unsurprisingly, the weight range in which most bucks were taken this rifle season was between 140 and 149 pounds (84), followed by 130-139 (77), 150-159 (75), and 120-129 (67).

### SUCCESSFUL HUNTERS

The following hunters had deer weighed at an Addison County wildlife reporting station: C&S Hunting Supplies in East Middlebury, Green Mountain Trails End in Bristol, Lincoln General Store, West Addison General Store, Backwoods Guns & Tackle in Bridport, Rack 'N Reel in New Haven or Jerusalem Corners Country Store in Starksboro.

They are listed by town of kill, pounds and antler point.

#### C&S HUNTING SUPPLIES

Dwight Dunning, Ripton, 106-pound spikehorn; Toby Rheäume, Salisbury, 175 pounds-8 points; Steven Fritton, Ripton, 184-8; Matthew Slocumb, Ripton, 150-6; Corey Newton, Ripton, 100-2; Colten Butler, Shoreham, 155-5; Joshua Laroque, Leicester, 133-4; Gage Provencher, Middlebury, 140-4; Blake Emilo-Webb, Ripton, 151-8; Maurice Rheäume, Salisbury, 115-3.

#### BACKWOODS GUN & TACKLE

Chuck Welch, Bridport, 197-8; Christopher Payne, Bridport, 186-8; Taylor Patterson, Shoreham, 176-10; Peter Smith, Addison, 170-8; Steve Myrick, Bridport, 160-8; Dylan Lanpher, Shoreham, 160-5;

Kevin Desforges, Shoreham, 157-5; Kyle Trudo, Shoreham, 149-6; and Maverick Payne, Bridport, 145-6.

Also, Bruce Cram, Cornwall, 142-8; Ramsey Bronson, Shoreham, 140-4; Robert Douglas, Shoreham, 137-9; Gabriel LaBerge, Shoreham, 132-8; Courtney Whittemore, Orwell, 131-6; Tyler Tatro, New Haven, 128-5; Justin Seguin, Weybridge, 125-8; and Alan Christian, Orwell, 125-5.

Also, Devin Dwire, Salisbury, 121-6; Brent Warren, Ripton, 120-2; Taryn Burns, Shoreham, 120-4; Joseph Miller, Orwell, 119-6; Shawn Gero, Cornwall, 117-6; Brian Mattison, Shoreham, 115-3; Anthony Miller, Middlebury, 113-4; Zachary Welch, Bridport, 108-4; Lee Terrier, Cornwall, 105-3; and Derek Hathaway, Ripton, 104-4.

#### W. ADDISON GEN. STORE

Brian Blake, Cornwall, 166-8; Emily Heywood, Shoreham, 146-4; Russell Bishop, Shoreham, 178-8; Steve Fillion, Addison, 140-4; Nicholas Audet, Bridport, 135-4; Chris Bingham, Middlebury, 130-3; Russell Bishop, Shoreham, 138-4; Philip DeVoid, Weybridge, 165-6; Christopher Gallipo, Shelburne, 161-8.

Also, Sylvie Gallipo, Shelburne, 140-7; Nick Madison, Shoreham, 140-3; Carter Leggett, Cornwall, 120-3; Jay Smits, Bridport, 150-7; Christopher Mulliss, Addison, 150-4; Heather Lavalla, Ripton, 155-7; Eugene Bradford, Ferrisburgh, 125-4; James Bodette, Leicester, 105-4; and Shelly Bishop, Shoreham, 146-8.

#### JERUSALEM CORNERS STORE

Anthony Porter, Huntington, 112-3; John Miles, Starksboro, 90-2; Brian McCormick, Bristol, 161-7; Chad Beauvais, Warren, 121-6; Camden Fox, Starksboro, 132-4; Zebulon Cox, Ripton, 155-8; Percy Jennings, Charlotte, 108-4; Kristopher Tenney-Lawyer, Huntington, 122-6; Trevor Weston, Huntington, 127-2; and John Chamberlain, Lincoln, 97-2.

Also, Douglas Mobbs, Starksboro, 128-4; Devin Belisle, Starksboro, 140-8; Brian Heffernan, Starksboro, 131-8; David Little, Huntington, 130-3; Donald Gilbert, Hinesburg, 131-4; Kyle Taft, Huntington, 153-4; Austin Meader, Starksboro, 146-7; Sierra Dessureault, New Haven, 141-3; Matthew Atkins, Lincoln, 113-7; and Violet Whitcomb, Bristol, 136-6.

Also, Neil Comstock, Huntington, 147-6; Peter Pizzagalli, Huntington, 128-2; Randy Little, Huntington, 98-2; Grant Lewis, Huntington, 118-2; Patrick Fitzgerald, Huntington, 103-3; Cory Emmons, Huntington, 104-2; Albert Dickerson, Huntington, 134-6; Christopher Breen, Bristol, 159-7; Danielle Mobbs, Starksboro, 90-2; and David Whitcomb, Starksboro, 156-4.

Also, Robert Bordeaux, Williston, 127-4; Erik Coleman, Starksboro, 148-5; Nancy Lowell, Hinesburg, 149-10; Rodney Orvis, Starksboro, 121-6; Eric Mashia, Hinesburg, 140-8; Frank Flemings II, Huntington, 121-2; Lawrence Phillips, Huntington, 113-8; Matthew Clow, Hinesburg, 180-7; and Markian Fedyniak, Huntington, 128-7.

Also, Ben Smith, Lincoln, 154-4; Luke Moultroup, Richmond, 185-9; Matthew Brace, Huntington, 133-8; Chad Niquette, Hinesburg, 115-6; and Eric LaRose, Lincoln, 138-6.

#### GREEN MT. TRAILS END

Tim Butler, Middlebury, 170-6; Donald Pepe, Shoreham, 157-3; Rich Dessureault, New Haven, 156-8; Timothy Bouvier, Waltham, 144-7; Kenneth Lafountain, Monkton, 136-7; Logan Steady, Shoreham, 130-4; Travis Guilmette, Monkton, 121-5; Ryan Fraser, Shoreham, 112-3; and Richard Mason, Starksboro, 92-2.

#### RACK 'N REEL

George Coro, Bristol, 128-5; Craig Bunten, Ferrisburgh, 124-8; Ryan Fortune, New Haven, 148-8; Justin Bora, Charlotte, 165-9; Logan Cody, New Haven, 131-4; Leon Demers, New Haven, 140-7; Chauncy Barrows, Ferrisburgh, 108-4; Brian Baillargeon, Lincoln, 131-7; Charles Holbrook, Ripton, 146-8; Mark Livingston, New Haven, 141-7; Gavin Graves, Waltham, 124-9; Mitchell Jackman, Waltham, 156-10; and Rheel Gevry, Addison, 173-8.

Also, Logan Corliss, Middlebury, 144-4; Stephen Winn, Charlotte, 143-8;

Trixie Zeno, Starksboro, 116-4; Jon Boise, Monkton, 179-8; Michael Forbes, Bristol, 146-4; Dennis Smith, Middlebury, 136-7; Eben Clifford, Bristol, 123-6; Dyllinger Higbee, Monkton, 140-6; Daniel Stearns, Ferrisburgh, 112-7; Jeff Lathrop, Bristol, 130-5; Travys Cousino, Monkton, 170-8; Richard St. George, Charlotte, 191-8; and Carter Harvey, Charlotte, 129-7.

Also, Corey Hutchins, Ferrisburgh, 139-10; Michael Hinsdale, Ferrisburgh, 102-3; Todd Jennings, Starksboro, 117-2; Kevin Kayhart, Waltham, 194-10; Bethany Hallock, Salisbury, 187-8; David Yandow, New Haven, 139-10; Charles Commiskey, Weybridge, 143-5; Thatcher Mobbs, Hinesburg, 127-6; Terry Aldrich, Cornwall, 108-6; Fitzpatrick, Ripton, 115-2; Paul Wildasin, Waltham, 161-6; Jonathan Martin, Middlebury, 161-6; and Craig Newton, Waltham, 161-7.

Also, Daren Muzzy, Ferrisburgh, 134-4; Ryan Cornellier, Hinesburg, 115-5; Brandon Curtis, Monkton, 127-6; Brian St. Cyr, Stowe, 148-8; Justin Quenneville, Whiting, 125-6; Peter Johnson, Charlotte, 117-3; Kevin Haight, New Haven, 151-5; David Fuller, Bridport, 155-6; Brian Ladeau, Weybridge, 128-4; David Wemette, New Haven, 150-4; Michelle Brace, Ferrisburgh, 158-7; Robert James, Weybridge, 153-8; and Elliot Diana, Lincoln, 125-10.

Also, Dylan Preston, Ferrisburgh, 156-6; Daniel Stein, Ferrisburgh, 135-4; Christopher Daigle, Jay, 130-2; Matthew White, Starksboro, 100-2; James Duclos, Cornwall, 139-4; Matthew Duval, Bristol, 145-6; Donald Lathrop, Bristol, 108-6; Johnathan Hill, New Haven, 133-6; Patrick Murphy, Waltham, 158-8; Garrett Boschen, Charlotte, 149-4; Elizabeth Clark, Lincoln, 122-7; Timothy Fisher, Orwell, 151-7; and Bailey Smith, Ferrisburgh, 155-8.

Also, Eric Raymond, Cornwall, 157-6; Zachary Lavoie, Starksboro, 110-5; Ben Paquin, Pantton, 148-8; Daniel Bromley, Warren, 141-8; Dorothy Muzzy, Ferrisburgh, 157-6; Jonathan Audy, New Haven, 161-6; Tabitha Vincent, New Haven, 118-5; Timothy Wildey, New Haven, 154-5; Brian Larock, Hinesburg, 180-9; Charles Bradford, Addison, 202-10; Lyle Webb, Ripton, 175-5; Donald Keeler, Middlebury, 163-8; and Jeffrey Jerger, Ferrisburgh, 140-3.

Also, Travis Little, Addison 155-6; Mitchell Gallison, Shoreham, 85-4; Ryan Mobbs, Hinesburg, 156-4; Thomas Ayer, Hinesburg, 135-4; Scott Curtis, Monkton, 115-5; Samuel Martin, Charlotte, 113-5; Brian Fox, Bristol, 95-2; Casey Huizenga, Starksboro, 158-9; Joshua Hurlburt, Monkton, 119-7; Patrick Needham, New Haven, 172-8; Robert Sturtevant, New Haven, 172-4; Christopher Palmer, Bolton, 137-6; and Brian Novak, Cornwall, 137-6.

Also, Raymond Stearns, Ferrisburgh, 202-8; Jeffrey Fortune, Ferrisburgh, 156-8; Michael Leonard, Monkton, 128-8; Patrick Deering, Cornwall, 157-8;

Tyler Pockette, Stockbridge, 168-8; Gabriel Sands, Weybridge, 136-7; Edward Campbell, Ferrisburgh, 145-5; Wyatt Stearns, Shoreham, 143-5; Timothy Yandow, New Haven, 173-10; Ethan Gevry, Addison, 145-4; Thomas Kennett, Dorset, 133-7; and Charles Charron, New Haven, 146-6.

Also, Briena Flynn, Waltham, 146-3; David Rheäume, New Haven, 158-6; Joshua Ranney, Weybridge, 130-4; Isaac Preston, Ferrisburgh, 138-5; Alyth Hescock, Shoreham, 145-6; Camron Curtis, Monkton, 97-4; Gerald Racette, Ferrisburgh, 103-6; Bradford Ogden, Monkton, 114-4; Erin Dalley, Monkton, 157-8; John Masterson, Bristol, 120-2; Justin Huizenga, Monkton, 167-4; Daniel Fifield, Middlebury, 143-6; and Taylor Bessette, Ferrisburgh, 145-4.

Also, Charles Cushman, Ferrisburgh, 141-8; Meghan Russell, New Haven, 139-8; Logan Balestra, Bridport, 176-8; Adam Loven, New Haven, 128-6; Calihan Butler, Bristol, 137-8; Kristin Butler, Bristol, 189-8; Christopher Pratt, Monkton, 122-4; Micheal Carter, Bridport, 147-4; Ashtin Stearns, Ferrisburgh, 138-5; Richard Brunet,



**CHUCK WELCH SHOT this 197-pound buck in Bridport last month. It had an 8-point rack that, according to hunting buddy Chris Gordon, had a 19.5-inch antler span.**

Photo by Chris Gordon

Waltham, 133-3; Frank Stanley, Monkton, 128-2; Alan Lafrance, Ferrisburgh, 157-6; and Deven Dubois, New Haven, 155-8.

Also, Richard Lattrell, Lincoln, 154-5; Daniel Crossman, Lincoln, 116-4; Darwin Cousino, Ripton, 141-6; Tucker Brunelle, Richmond, 215-8; Cody Purinton, Huntington, 138-8; Gary Grant, Bridport, 166-6; Michael Shannon, Addison, 135-7; Dylan Arthaud, Charlotte, 162-4; Wright Myrick, Bridport, 150-6; Gregory Mckenney, Bridport, 157-8; John O'Brien, Shelburne, 188-8; Sam Hurlburt, Monkton, 138-4; and Solomon Lapell-Kuni, Moretown, 146-8.

Also, Peter Viau, Weybridge, 145-6; Andy Gendreau, Monkton, 173-6; Davin Torrey, Ferrisburgh, 156-8;

Rejean Lafleche, Ferrisburgh, 156-6; Jacques Litch, Orwell, 141-6; Stanley Bigelow, New Haven, 144-6; Michael Lucier, Ferrisburgh, 149-6; William O'Bryan, Ferrisburgh, 118-4; Alan Clark, Lincoln, 105-3; Donna Seguin, New Haven, 98-6; Calvin Kennett, Bennington, 132-4; William Tobin, Hancock, 181-7; and Timothy Brown, Hinesburg, 90-6.

Also, Maverick Livingston, New Haven, 152-5; Carl Murray, Ripton, 167-6; Jacob Rochon, Ferrisburgh, 147-5; Scott Stearns, Ferrisburgh, 161-4; Bruce Pulling, Addison, 109-3; Jessica Harakaly, Ripton, 183-5; Matthew Sweeney, New Haven, 133-5; Stephen Gutowski, Ferrisburgh, 150-8; Tommaso Zullo, Ripton, 126-3; Greg Lutton, New Haven, 171-4; Jay Torrey, Salisbury, 141-6; Eric Jennings, Starksboro, 156-6; and Owen Bromley, Starksboro, 157-8.

Also, Bret Mobbs, Richmond, 121-4; Nathan McCormick, Goshen, 128-5; Kelly Kayhart, Waltham, 159-5; Joseph Demers, Ferrisburgh, 117-5; John Myers, Brandon, 113-4; Matthew Myers, Bristol, 134-6; Carter Fitzsimmons, Ferrisburgh, 133-6; Richard Greene, Charlotte, 124-4; Tupper Hinsdale, Ferrisburgh, 151-4; Rodney Bourdeau, Salisbury, 120-4; Anna Ouellette, Ferrisburgh, 102-4; Chad Kennett, Pantton, 175-7; and Stephen Fleming, Bristol, 137-2.

Also, Jared Hubbell, New Haven, 113-5; Nathan Begins, Duxbury, 143-6; Andrew Peet, Williston, 161-2; Christine Paquin, Waltham, 160-10; Michael Jewell, New Haven, 112-3; Charles Brutkoski, Brandon, 123-4; Bonnie Spencer, Brandon, 179-8; Carroll Griggs, Bristol, 100-2; Adam Streeter, Ferrisburgh, 135-6; Sean Hamel, Bolton, 123-2; Kaylee Maloy, Sudbury, 174-6; Travis Bachand, Starksboro, 133-5; and Brent Jocelyn, Bristol, 150-6.

Also Patrick Blaise, Pantton, 111-4; Steve Morrison, Salisbury, 176-8; Christopher Tan, Ferrisburgh, 145-5; David Livingston, Bristol, 156-8; Donald Stearns, Hinesburg, 141-8; Shawn Lacey, Williston, 146-8; Christopher Brown, Starksboro, 171-7; Brian Hayes, New Haven, 134-5; Michael Lefebvre, Ripton, 125-4; Dana Kamencik, Williston, 139-7; Dean Gilmore, Addison, 148-8; Ronald Harvey, Orwell, 140-4; and Brenden Hoag, Starksboro, 121-4; and

Matthew Titus, Monkton, 134-5.

Also, Paul Norris, Pantton, 145-6; Adam Terry, New Haven, 144-6; Chad Whittemore, Waltham, 168-4; Liam McGuire, Addison, 159-6; Thomas Charnley, Monkton, 164-8; Brad Sprague, New Haven, 169-8; Randall Bayliss, Weybridge, 132-3; Nicholas Bushell, Charlotte, 200-5; Dylan Peterson, Ripton, 114-5; Duane Kehoe, Shoreham, 127-5; Roger Brace, Lincoln, 146-7; Patrick Whitley, Weybridge, 147-8; and Randall Stearns, Ferrisburgh, 146-8.

Also, Zane Leno, New Haven, 170-5; Jacob Hanlon, Starksboro, 104-2; Patrick Foley, Weybridge, 110-2; Wayne Burleigh, Charlotte, 139-6; Danny Grace, Bristol, 117-5; Alice Johnson, Charlotte, 170-6; Tracey Pecor, Starksboro, 114-2; Eugene Roy, Middlebury, 130-4; Larry Butler, New Haven, 130-6; Trevor Denton, Hinesburg, 150-10; Ryan Breen, Jericho, 126-6; Logan Ladeau, Bristol, 119-4; Adam Bolduc, New Haven, 109-4; and Britney Aube, Williston, 145-6.

Also, Thomas Kilbourn, Addison, 178-6; Beau Gevry, Addison, 158-5; Rene Paquette, Ripton, 142-8; Daniel James, Weybridge, 158-5; Brian Cota, Monkton, 145-6; Charles Ouellette, Ferrisburgh, 123-5; Matthew Merchant, Hinesburg, 173-5; Ben Debisschop, Middlebury, 154-6; Darrin Hinterneder, Bristol, 140-4; James Sprague, Huntington, 164-6; and Jesse Otis, Middlebury, 148-8.

Also, Joseph Zeno, Middlebury, 117-5; Louis Poirier, Salisbury, 155-4; Charles Whittemore, New Haven, 188-8; James Choiniere, Addison, 153-4; Ethan James, New Haven, 154-5; David Livingston, Bristol, 156-8; Brandon Tierney, New Haven, 96-3; Shawn Williams, Charlotte, 147-5; Richard Ambrose, Addison, 112-5; and Kathleen Ambrose, Waltham, 196-8.

#### LINCOLN GENERAL STORE

Lawrence Martell, Middlebury, 147-7; Richard Malzac, Middlebury, 147-7; Thomas Hanley, Lincoln, 109-1; Wayne Visser, Weybridge, 152-8; Lawrence Masterson, Lincoln, 105-4; Wyatt Cavoretto, Lincoln, 125-2; Justin Lucia, Lincoln, 157-8; Snapper Henry, Lincoln, 124-6; Hailey Brown, Lincoln, 98-1; Greg Tucker, Lincoln, 167-7; Ross Brooker, Charlotte, 178-4; and Peter Brown, Lincoln, 130-5.

Also, Ronald Brown, Lincoln, 161-8; Cole Shepard, Lincoln, 97-5; Bryan Peck, Ripton, 135-6; Joshua Tucker, Monkton, 131-4; David Jerome, Lincoln, 141-5; Aaron Fay, Essex, 151-8; Bryan Waters, Ripton, 140-8; Linwood Chamberlain, Ripton, 127-2; Margo Casco, Lincoln, 100-4; Robert Patterson, Lincoln, 135-6; and Wilder Wheelock, Lincoln, 147-8.

Also, Brian Donnelly, Lincoln, 123-4; David Newton, Hinesburg, 96-5; Kyle Bezanon, Lincoln, 158-5; Craig Cheever, Lincoln, 149-4; Dominic Saunders, Bristol, 127-5; Michael Donnelly, Starksboro, 119-5; Jared Malzac, Ripton, 162-8; Dakota Catella, Warren, 148-4; and Nathaniel Reynolds, Lincoln, 177-8.

## 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.

! Just the tree! No wreaths, ornaments, garlands, tinsel, wire, or other decorations.



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Solid Waste Management District

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# Patton

(Continued from Page 1A)  
work of the heart as well as a work of the head,” Patton said. “For that reason, I’m not surprised, and I knew leaving would be difficult.”

Patton will step down from her post at the end of this month to become president of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in Cambridge, Mass.

### THROUGH THE YEARS

Her time at Middlebury College began in 2015, when Patton took office as the institution’s 17th president — and the first woman to hold the position since the college was founded in 1800.

Through the years, she’s helped the institution check off multiple accomplishments and weather more turbulent waters, from a global pandemic to tensions playing out on the national level.

“The time that I’ve been president has been nationally a time of a lot of increased polarization, increased wealth inequality, racial tension and attack on higher education,” Patton said. “Those four things are super hard to manage.”

Navigating challenging times has taught Patton a lot about leadership.

“I think that in tough times there’s a kind of clarity that’s necessary, so being forced to be clear about your own values and the values of the community you’re leading is super helpful and helps you lead in those moments,” Patton explained.

That clarity has been combined with Patton’s leadership style, one that she describes as both intense and informal, mission-driven and connected.

“I think that combination of skills and dispositions helps you lead in tough times,” she said. “If someone had said when I started ‘Oh, this is what you’re going to have to lead through,’ I would have not quite known how to respond, but now that I can say that I have done that I know exactly the formula that it takes to be an anchor in a community, and it’s those four qualities.”

Middlebury College Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration David Provost highlighted Patton’s approach to leadership during an Oct. 24 ribbon-cutting for the new 5MW solar array on Middlebury’s South Street Extension.

He credited Patton with encouraging the institution to pursue partnerships such as the one that brought about the solar array.

“One thing that is in the spirit of Laurie Patton is that of collaboration, and she pushes us every day to find the right partners,” he said.

Through such collaborations, the institution has seen various achievements and made progress on several initiatives throughout Patton’s presidency. Those include:

**Finances.** College officials in a May 2 press release announcing Patton’s departure highlighted successful fundraising as one of the accomplishments from her tenure, noting that the past three years

## Highlights of Patton’s presidency

Departing Middlebury College President Laurie Patton at an October town-gown luncheon highlighted several accomplishments college officials and collaborators have achieved throughout her nine-and-a-half-year tenure. Those include:

- Envisioning Middlebury, a planning effort launched by Patton in 2016 that resulted in development of a strategic framework to guide the institution.
- Record high application pools during the past five years.
- Increased overall financial aid by 8-10%.
- Diversifying the senior leadership team — now between 30-45% diverse, as compared to 0% in 2015.
- Faculty salaries moved up from mid-range of NESCAC institutions.
- Strengthened faculty governance through redesigned meeting patterns, committees and the Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Doubled mental health staff and programming.
- Started several new programs/centers, including a Black Studies program, the Abenaki Language School and Middlebury School Abroad in Taiwan.
- Multiple accomplishments in athletics, including 13 NCAA Championship teams, 35 NESCAC Championship teams and 45 Academic All-Americans.
- Securing large grants such as a major grant from the Ford Foundation for the Bread Loaf School of English and a \$25 million grant to establish the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Collaborative in Conflict Transformation, the largest programmatic grant in the institution’s history.

have seen the largest fundraising totals in the institution’s history.

Patton and other college officials have more recently been focused on raising funds for Middlebury College’s “For Every Future” campaign, the largest fundraising campaign in the institution’s 224-year history. The drive aims to raise \$600 million to support initiatives aimed at enriching students’ experiences and helping prepare them for the world after graduation, such as by increasing financial aid and supporting experiential learning opportunities.

The college began counting toward the campaign in July of 2021 and had raised \$504,669,804 as of last week. The institution is now two years ahead in its fundraising for the campaign, Patton said.

“We are now past \$500 (million), so I’m super excited about that,” she said. “That was one of my goals for my last six months, so I’m happy to report that’s happened.”

Energetic fundraising is one piece of how the institution has been able to grow its endowment by around \$588 million since 2016, compared to \$64 million of overall growth in the previous decade. The college endowment’s value stood at \$1.598 billion in June.

Patton attributes that growth to a couple factors as well — the college’s endowment, like many others, experiencing a surge during COVID and a more disciplined spending policy.

Patton acknowledged that working toward more disciplined spending has at times been painful, and the institution still has progress to make toward reaching its target 5% spend rate. She said while the institution’s effective spend rate is under 5% of endowment earnings, its spend rate relative to its yearly take-out is closer to 5.5%.

“That has gotten us to more wealth than we’ve ever seen before, and we’re still not quite there yet,” she said.

**Energy2028.** Middlebury College continues to make progress on its Energy2028 initiative, a 10-year plan that sets four climate goals for the institution to meet, such as using 100% renewable energy by 2028 and phasing out direct fossil fuel investments in the endowment.

Patton noted that the college has decreased the endowment’s fossil fuel exposure by 34%, surpassing its Energy2028 phase-out target of a 25% reduction by 2024.

The institution in 2023 secured \$7 million in gifts to support its Climate Action Program, which as of 2024 has funded 52 undergraduate fellowships that support students in their efforts to tackle climate change through various disciplines.

Middlebury College’s main campus has reduced its energy consumption by 12%, largely through efficiency improvements, putting the institution on track to meet its Energy2028 goal of reducing energy consumption by 25%.

“We will continue to push towards that 25% by continuing to renovate buildings to be more efficient in their energy use, as well as to build, if we are building buildings, to make them much more energy efficient,” Patton said.

The new solar array on South Street Extension will provide the college with 40% of its total

*“I always sat next to people who I probably was going to disagree with about stuff. Always, always humanize people, and also insist on being humanized yourself.”*

— President Laurie Patton



**FROM GROWING ITS endowment to the construction of new buildings on two of the institution’s campuses, Middlebury College has checked off several accomplishments throughout President Laurie Patton’s tenure. While she will step down from her post at the college next week to lead the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Patton plans to reside in Shoreham and remain a part of the Middlebury community.**

Independent photos/Steve James

electricity, helping the institution take a big step in its efforts to achieve 100% renewable energy use by 2028.

**Infrastructure.** During Patton’s presidency, the college has renovated four buildings — Munroe Hall, Warner Hall, Dana Auditorium and the Johnson Memorial Building — in accordance with the principles of universal design, making the spaces more accessible to all.

The institution in 2021 opened a new residence hall at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (Calif.) and is nearing completion on a new dorm building to replace Battell Hall on the Middlebury campus.

The college has also raised almost \$35 million for construction of a new art museum that will be built near the current site of Battell Hall.

“I’m really excited about the opportunities that the new museum will afford us around democracy in the arts,” Patton said.

The Middlebury Board of Trustees has chosen architectural firm Allied Works to design the museum. The local firm McLeod Architects will serve as the Middlebury representative for the design and planning process.

“(Allied Works’s) vision was all about wonder and creating a sense of wonder as you open up the arts for democratic participation and use the arts, as the students have taught us, to create a greater sense of the public square,” Patton said. “That’s something that I will take with me that the students really showed me.”

Patton said the hope is for construction on the new museum to begin in 2026.

**Town and gown.** Throughout Patton’s tenure, Middlebury College has worked on and supported a variety of projects around town. Larger projects include construction of College Park and the new town offices at 77 Main St., and more recently the ongoing expansions of the Otter Creek Child Center, Town Hall Theater and the Ilsley Library.

The college has also played a key role in Stonecrop Meadows, a 218-unit mixed-income housing project to be built in phases on 35

acres off Middlebury’s Seminary Street Extension.

“A lot of what I do is just cheerlead,” Patton said. “This was something that I spent some time helping formulate, but the real work was done by David Provost.”

College and town officials have also worked together on smaller initiatives, Patton noted. Those include internships at local organizations, such as the Henry Sheldon Museum and Town Hall Theater.

“The artistic life of this community is really remarkable,” Patton said.

The departing president noted that making progress on various initiatives has at times required tough conversations. Remaining committed to having those conversations and maintaining relationships has been a key part of how the institution has been able to make strides in areas like fiscal discipline while keeping the community intact, she said.

“I made sure I always sat next to people who I probably was going to disagree with about stuff,” Patton said. “Always, always humanize people, and also insist on being humanized yourself.”

The relationships she’s forged and the time she’s spent at the college have shaped Patton over the decade. She said she’s even more resilient now and has learned to trust her gut in leadership more.

“There are times when every leader has to think through, ‘Am I really doing the right thing?’ If you have humility, you should be doing that, and then you need to just go ahead,” Patton said. “Knowing what the right thing has been, I trust that more and more because when I’ve made the decision that wasn’t my gut usually something doesn’t quite work.”

While at Middlebury College, Patton has begun the practice of starting each day with gratitude letters.

“If you’re an extrovert and you get energy from people and you start your day with thinking of two or three people whose work you could never do, who are so much more skilled and intelligent in this particular area than you, which is almost infinite, and you’re grateful for that, then you end up having energy for the rest of the day,” she said. “If you don’t begin and end with gratitude and appreciative inquiry you will burn out super fast.”

### MIDDLEBURY AND DEMOCRACY

Patton has acknowledged that



Middlebury taught her about “the work of our democracy and the common good,” lessons she’ll take into her next role at the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

“I would say the most important thing for Middlebury to know, both the college and the town, is my commitment to democracy and my thinking about democracy happened here,” Patton said.

She pointed to Vermont traditions like Town Meeting Day and the group of people that take on leadership “that is really about the custodianship of a set of traditions.”

“In Vermont, democracy has a face. We know each other, and we make fun of ourselves because we’re such a small community, but it does feel that democracy is human still in Vermont and humanized,” Patton said. “I love that side of it, and I want to fight for that, and also perhaps take that experience and think about how that could work at the national level.”

Patton has already begun attending events that she’ll eventually preside over in her new role, as well as sharing her vision for the academy. That vision is about the power of the local, she said, and how to tell better stories about what’s happening at the local level that can embrace bipartisanship and work across differences to address climate change, for example.

“I don’t think I could make this a signature of my presidency of the academy without experiencing and being and living in the local, and so that is why when I’m not in Cambridge and living in Cambridge, I will be living in Vermont and engaging in that community,” she said.

Patton and her husband, Shalom Goldman, will remain at their home in Shoreham, from which Patton will commute to the academy headquarters. Goldman, Pardon Tillinghast Professor of Religion at Middlebury College, will continue to teach at the Bread Loaf School of English following his retirement in 2025.

Patton noted that there is no blueprint for a president emerita seeking to remain a part of the community, but she’s looking forward to finding her new role among the people and place she’s grown fond of.

“The choice to remain part of the community is because of those bonds of affection that have occurred,” she said. “My husband and I looked at each other, and we said, ‘This is home.’ That’s a fact, and so that’s what we needed to build our lives around.”

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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 1A)

standing 47 feet, 4 inches tall. New owners took over at Vergennes eatery 3 Squares Café in January. Matt and Danelle Birong sold the restaurant to longtime friends Scott Collins and Jody Hayes, a couple with deep ties to the state's restaurant sector. The new owners planned to partner with Matt Birong on the catering side of the business, the 3 Squares food truck.

The maple season got off to an early start for some when warmer winter daytime temperatures allowed county sugarmakers to begin collecting and boiling sap about a month or so before the season would traditionally be in full swing. That was the case for the team at the Heffernan Family Sugarworks in Starksboro, which had already made over 1,500 gallons of syrup by early January.

Middlebury Democrat Esther Charlestin in January launched her bid for governor. Charlestin, a former Middlebury selectboard member who served for a year as the first Dean of Climate and Culture at Middlebury Union Middle School, listed addressing Vermont's lack of affordable housing, improving the quality of public education and confronting the impacts of climate change as some of the issues she planned to stress throughout her campaign.

Three longtime members of the Mount Abraham Unified School Board announced they would not seek re-election when their terms expired in March. Those outgoing incumbents were: New Haven representative Sarah LaPerle, Bristol representative Kevin Hanson and former MAUSD Board Chair Krista Siringo, who also represented Bristol.

A group of over 20 Vergennes-area teens were busy helping out their community through various projects, including building a playground at the John Graham Shelter and helping fund and install an owl barn and plantings at the Otter Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. Those hardworking teens were members of the Vergennes Leos Club, a group affiliated with the Vergennes Lions Club.

As legislators returned to the Statehouse for the start of the 2024 session, local lawmakers firmed up their statewide priorities for the year. Those included boosting the state's housing stock, continuing the fight against climate change and assisting communities in making millions of dollars in overdue repairs to school buildings.

With January bringing colder temperatures, the small group of houseless campers under Middlebury's Cross Street Bridge and along the Otter Creek further downstream vacated the area for warmer accommodations. Area human services providers suspected the area would continue to be an appealing spot for houseless individuals once the weather improved, and local nonprofits continued to explore ways to connect the local houseless population with homes and the services they need.

Architects in January were ironing out plans for the major



## January 11

MIDDLEBURY'S MARY HOGAN Elementary School students witness the raising of a Black Lives Matter flag at their campus for the first time on Jan. 4. Fourth-grade Students Elias Urang, left, — who engineered the BLM flag effort — and Sarah Miranda-Ngaiza pull on a rope to send the flag skyward.

Independent file photo/Steve James



## February 8

THE TRADITION OF Middlebury College February graduates skiing at the Snow Bowl in caps and gowns returned this weekend after a three-year hiatus. Cornwall native Faith Isham shows her pride in the Class of 2023.5 by giving a cheer as she ascends the mountain on Saturday with many of her classmates. She descended the ski slope elegantly on a snowboard with cap in hand.

Independent file photo/Steven James

## February

Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos in February faced growing calls for her resignation or removal from office, with some of those appeals coming from people she'd represented in criminal court cases. The backlash came after Vekos was cited on Jan. 25 for suspicion of driving while under the influence after she drove to inspect the scene of a suspicious death at a Bridport home. Vekos on Feb. 12 pleaded not guilty in Addison Superior Court, Criminal Division, to a misdemeanor charge of driving under the influence. Around that time, she also drew criticism following the release of an email she sent to local police leaders stating she "no longer feels safe around law enforcement," while seemingly questioning the intellect of area law enforcement officials.

In the second month of the year, voters started getting a clearer picture of the pool of candidates

competing in municipal and school board races on Town Meeting Day. Nine Addison residents sought three open spots on their town's selectboard. Two people stepped up to fill an open spot on the Ferrisburgh selectboard, and three candidates emerged for two spots on the Middlebury selectboard. Two Bristol residents were also vying for an open seat on their town's selectboard.

A cool creation began taking shape in Panton, where David Clevelenstine was working on a 14-foot ice tower, the third he'd made in the past four years. The Collins Aerospace engineer said he enjoyed building the ice structures and that his family and others in the community enjoyed looking at them.

Crafty Addison County residents produced around 80 quilts for children living through trying circumstances, and those quilts in February were on display at the Gather space in Middlebury. The effort, organized by the Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community, was known as the Peacemaker Quilt Project and was fueled by donated fabric and labor.

A dynamic duo took over the reins of the Better Middlebury Partnership on Feb. 26. BMP board members named Kelly Flynn and Kathryn Torres as the new co-directors of the organization, filling the role previously held by Karen Duguay.

Volunteers helped tackle projects on local farms in February through "working bee" groups organized by the Addison County Relocalization Network. The initiative, an offshoot of the nonprofit's Farmer Climate Network, assembled local food producers, ACORN staff and other volunteers to complete various jobs on area farms, such as prepping garden beds or planting trees.

The Mount Abraham Unified School District launched a book study group to help start conversations about diversity, equity, and efforts to address racism in the district and broader community. Participants planned to read and discuss Ibram X. Kendi's "How to Raise an Antiracist." The effort was part of a longstanding educational effort in the Bristol-area district, but also followed a few disturbing racial incidents that had occurred in the prior year.

The Vergennes Area Rescue Squad sought to increase the per capita rate paid by communities it serves as the primary ambulance and emergency medical services provider. The increase from \$8 to \$15 per capita came after VARS had increasingly been struggling to meet its chartered goal of providing 24/7 services to those communities. VARS representatives stated that the organization had lost volunteer strength since the pandemic and needed stronger funding to raise wages to attract and retain more full- and part-time employees.

Middlebury officials in February were working on a 10-year plan for upgrading the community's 54-mile municipal water system, some of it over 100 years old, which had been springing an alarming number of leaks in prior (See February, Page 9A)



## February 15

FERRISBURGH CENTRAL SCHOOL students Zoe Burkett, Allie Curtis and Tenn Donovan practice their new skill of plate balancing on Feb. 5. They had just learned the art from circus educator Troy Wunderle, there for a week-long residency at the school.

Independent file photo/Steve James

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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 9A)

months. The system's condition and shortcomings drew increased scrutiny after a water surge that swept through the water mains in January, exposing weaknesses in the network of underground conduits.

February brought the end of a sweet run for longtime sugarmakers Dave and Sue Folino. The pair sold their sugaring operation, Hillsboro Sugarworks, to Heffernan Family Sugarworks, a neighboring team of sugarmakers who planned to merge the maple farm with their own and continue producing syrup under the Hillsboro Sugarworks name.

## March

March in Addison County started off with county voters rejecting most of the school budgets proposed locally on Town Meeting Day, joining a wave of failed budget votes around the state. Voters in the Lincoln and Addison Central school districts approved proposed spending plans on the first try, but elsewhere budget proposals were defeated in the Mount Abraham Unified, Addison Northwest, Slate Valley Unified Union and Otter Valley Unified Union school districts.

The Middlebury Police Department in March was preparing to launch its own Unmanned Aerial System — aka “drone.” The program was expected to give local officers an extra set of eyes in the sky to help find missing persons, monitor active shooter situations, inspect natural-disasters, and document crime and accident scenes.

About 300 support staff and technical workers at Porter Medical Center voted on March 3 to unionize, a move that was expected to lead to collective bargaining negotiations with Porter's administration later in the year. A union representative at the time looked forward to talks that they hoped would lead to a contract to improve wages, benefits, working conditions and the quality of patient care.

With spring on the horizon, locals in March reflected on a winter that saw record-warm temperatures and below-average snowfall. Some local businesses — such as ski areas and a company offering ice fishing trips — were affected by the warm weather, which reflected a larger trend of warming winters driven by human-caused climate change.

State Rep. Caleb Elder, D-Starksboro, announced he would take a pass on re-election to the Addison-4 House seat he first won back in 2018 and instead run for one of two seats representing Addison County, Huntington, Rochester and Buel's Gore in the state senate. He told the *Independent* that his decision to do so was based on the belief that he could get more done in the senate.

The A. Johnson Company in Bristol was entering a new chapter in March, after closing its lumber mill and stopping retail sales in the months prior. General Manager and co-owner Ken Johnson,



### March 7

BRIDPORT RESIDENT ANDREW Manning waits his turn to chime in at Bridport's Annual Town Meeting. Citizens across Addison County turned out for their annual gatherings with fellow residents.

Independent file photo/Steve James



### March 21

DESSERT LOVERS AND math enthusiasts both had a lot to celebrate this past Thursday, March 14, fondly known as “Pi Day,” since the day's date (3.14) corresponds with the first three digits of the mathematical constant pi. Shoreham librarian Abby Adams sampled four different options.

Independent file photos/Steve James

whose great-grandfather started the lumber business in 1906, acknowledged that the mid-sized manufacturer of boards simply lost a “technological arms race” to bigger or more specialized lumber companies.

County residents in March were gearing up for a highly anticipated celestial show on April 8 — a total solar eclipse. Among them were Tom and Lee Ann Golper, who together had traveled the world chasing eclipses since 1998.

Voters in the Addison Northwest School District communities on March 26 rejected a fiscal year 2024-2025 spending plan for the second time in a 21-day span. The

vote was closer in lighter turnout the second time around: Voters said no, 745-727, or 50.6%-49.4%, to a proposed \$27.5 million spending plan.

The Vermont Supreme Court in March suspended Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos's law license after she failed to properly respond to questions about her fitness following her arrest on a charge of driving while under the influence.

Mary Hogan Elementary School teachers asked the Addison Central School District board at a March meeting for more resources — and to preserve a key, student discipline position that was slated to be cut

— following a growing number of student behavior issues. They told the board that the behavior problems had been shrinking all children's learning opportunities and affecting working conditions for educators.

Those reports were confirmed by data collected in the Addison Central School District over the previous seven months, which charted both minor and major K-12 student behavior incidents in the district's schools. According to information unveiled by ACSD officials in March, there were 1,172 documented minor or major behavior incidents within the school system between August and March.

## April

The afternoon of April 8 saw thousands of people flock to Addison County to take in a super-rare occurrence of the moon eclipsing the sun. Groups of Vermonters and visitors spread themselves around town greens, highway pull-offs, community parks, school grounds, cemeteries, parking lots and back yards to get the best view — through protective glasses — of the celestial magic and the eerie cloak of darkness it generated.

Most of our area school districts in April had to deal with fiscal year 2025 budgets that were defeated on Town Meeting Day. The Addison Northwest School District board trimmed \$257,737 from an already twice-defeated budget. Vergennes-area voters OK'd that \$27.25 million spending plan on April 30 by a 1,346 to 932 tally.

Mount Abraham Unified School District residents on April 16 again rejected — this time by only 57 votes — a revised, \$35,957,401 spending plan that was \$1.36 million less than the budget they'd defeated on March 5.

While the Addison Central School District didn't have to deal with budget revotes, it did find itself having to recruit new principals for three of its seven elementary schools — ones in Cornwall, Bridport and Shoreham.

Big news in Vergennes in April: Vermont officials announced a proposal to site a secure juvenile detention facility on state-owned land in the Little City. Tentative plans called for locating the 20,000-square-foot, 14-bed facility on 8 acres on Comfort Hill's west side, near an existing solar array.

Rep. Joe Andriano, D-Orwell, announced in April that he wouldn't seek a second term representing the Addison-Rutland House district, citing low legislative pay as a reason for his decision to take a pass on re-election. Andriano, a lawyer, was among a growing number of the state's part-time lawmakers who complained about compensation levels that hadn't budged in more than a decade. A bill seeking to boost legislative pay failed to gain traction during the 2024 session.

While Andriano announced his impending, voluntary departure,

(See April, Page 11A)



### April 4

The Eddy Farm School for Horse & Rider in Middlebury had great weather for its annual Easter Egg Hunt and Open Barn this past Sunday. Alicia Odell, an Eddy Farm manager, “releases the hounds” to canvass the grounds for eggs.

Independent file photos/Steve James



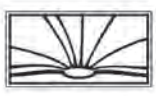
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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 10A)

a majority of Addison County's legislative delegation urged State's Attorney Eva Vekos to resign, citing her Jan. 25 arrest for driving under the influence after having driven herself to a Bridport home on an untimely death report. Vekos would plead not guilty to the charge.

Beeman Elementary School parent Morgen Doane raised concerns about students and educators getting the support they need in wake of a growing trend of classroom evacuations — largely in 1st grade — spurred by students exhibiting disruptive behavior. "We have heard stories of teachers asking for help with students and not getting it," she told the board at an April meeting. Beeman was not alone in confronting that problem. Staffing challenges were among several obstacles local school administrators throughout the county were facing in their efforts to respond to student misbehavior.

The *Independent* told the story of Lincoln's Will Wallace-Gusakov, a seasoned woodworker who spent six months in France in 2023, helping to rebuild the 700-year-old Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral, which was severely damaged by a fire in 2019.

A new county nonprofit popped up in April: Addison County Animal Advocates, which announced plans to partner with the Addison County Sheriff's Department to promote animal welfare by investigating nonemergency concerns and providing support when the situation demands it.

There was sad news in April for the many fans of WVTK-FM disc jockey Bruce Zeman's long running "Wake Up Crew" morning show. Zeman — a tireless animal rights activist as well as radio personality — announced he was hanging up his microphone, as he and his wife and pups were relocating to Delaware.

Never underestimate the power of coffee and the kindness of those who drink it and serve it. Dozens of people contributed to a GoFundMe campaign that raised around \$30,000 in just a few days to help keep popular Royal Oak Coffee in business.

## May

Middlebury residents on May 7 voted 956-200 in favor of a \$17 million makeover of their town library. The project — of which \$4.4 million will be covered by local taxpayers — will pay for a major expansion and renovation of the Ilsley Public Library at 75 Main St. Work is slated to begin early next year. Most of the library's book collection will be stored at a warehouse in Vergennes, while a smaller portion will be housed — along with basic library services — at the National Bank of Middlebury's Duclos building, adjacent to Printer's Alley.

Middlebury College President Laurie Patton announced in May that she'd step down from her job to lead the Cambridge, Mass.-based American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Patton — Middlebury's 17th president and the first woman



**April 11**

MANY PEOPLE, LIKE this couple out behind the Monkton Town Hall, took a relaxed approach to eclipse viewing. With nothing else to do, this offered many people a chance to really unwind.

Photo by Buzz Kuhns

to hold that post — took office in 2015.

Several Vermont School districts in May were still trying to get a fiscal year 2025 budget passed. Among them were the Mount Abraham Unified School District and the Slate Valley Unified Union School District, which includes Orwell. Residents of the SVUUSD on May 9 defeated, for the third time, a proposed spending plan, while MAUSD officials began preparing for a third budget vote in June.

The local field for various Vermont House and Senate contests began to take shape in May. Lincoln Democrat Jeanne Albert and Starksboro Democrat Herb Olson were among the first to declare, both for the Addison-4 House district. One of the incumbents in that two-seat district — Starksboro Democrat Calen Elder — decided to run for lieutenant governor rather than seek re-election to the Vermont House of Representatives.

Speaking of veteran leaders moving on, longtime U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., conveyed to the *Independent* some of the



**May 23**

THE LATE RALPH FARNSWORTH went all over collecting interesting things that he stored in his New Haven barn and showed as a quirky museum. After he died in 2022, his family started deacquisitioning some of the stuff. Ralph's son Michael shows off a beauty at a May auction.

Independent file photo/Steve James

highlights of his storied, 48-year career as a federal lawmaker. Leahy exited the Senate at the end of his final term, in 2023.

The Addison Central School District hired three news principals in May. Jennifer Urban, who had been serving as acting principal of Shoreham Elementary, was picked

to take the reins of Bridport Central School. Nadya Bech-Conger was named new leader of Cornwall's Bingham Memorial Elementary School, and Lashawn Whitmore-Sells, became top administrator of Shoreham Elementary School.

In an example of global politics having a local impact, more than 100 Middlebury College students formed an encampment on campus in solidarity with the people of Gaza, joining a nationwide student movement protesting Israel's war with Hamas. The students dismantled their encampment roughly a week later, after having signed an agreement with college officials supporting calls for an immediate ceasefire of hostilities in Gaza.

Many Panton residents in May began mobilizing opposition to one of the biggest proposed solar arrays in the history of the state: A 50-megawatt installation that would be sited on 300 acres off Route 22A. The array — pitched by Freepoint Commodities of Stamford, Conn. — would spread across roughly 2% of Panton's land. Some residents signed a petition urging state and local authorities to reject the plan, based in part on its potential impact on the viewshed.

Stewards of the Ripton Community Coffee House took a well-deserved bow after a 29-year run of hosting wonderful live entertainment. Richard Ruane and

(See May, Page 12A)



**May 16**

At Middlebury College's Bicentennial Hall this past Thursday, three of Chemistry Professor AJ Vasilou's upper class students stage a "Wizard Chemistry Show" that demonstrated fun and practical aspects of the study of chemistry. Molly Daly of Cornwall gets to ride a cart powered by air.

Independent file photo/Steve James

  
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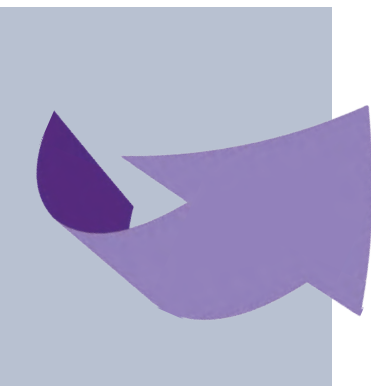
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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 11A)

Andrea Chesman helped create and shepherd the coffee house shows, which came to an end this past fall.

Lloyd Komesar announced in May that he would step down as producer of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Association, an annual event he had co-founded 10 years earlier. Komesar would make MNFF10 his swansong as producer, after which he helped recruit the festival's first ever executive director, Caitlin Boyle.

## June

Sadly, we found out in June that more Addison County residents need help putting food on their tables. During the first quarter of 2024, low-income residents made 2,947 visits to Middlebury-based Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects' surplus- and gleaned-food repository on Boardman Street — a 41% increase from the 2,085 visits during the same period of 2023, HOPE officials reported in June.

A state plan to build a locked facility for "justice involved" youth in crisis on 8 acres on Comfort Hill in Vergennes came into sharper focus in June. State officials unveiled an architectural rendering of the proposed facility at a public meeting. Among other things, officials shared that the facility would offer a six-bed program to provide short-term "stabilization" of youths in crisis, probably for stays of up to two weeks before a move to other Department for Children and Families facilities, and an eight-bed program to provide longer-term mental health care for those with that need.

Addison County's Aug. 13 primary picture also gained some clarity. Based on candidate filings, it was clear that primaries would be needed to whittle down the field of Democrats and Republicans vying for the two House seats representing the Addison-4 House district (Bristol, Starksboro, Monkton and Lincoln), as well as for the two seats representing Addison County, Rochester, Huntington and Buel's Gore in the state Senate. The Addison-4 filed included three Democrats — Jeanne Albert and incumbent Rep. Mari Cordes of Lincoln plus Starksboro's Herb Olson — and three Republicans — Monkton's Lynne Caulfield and Renee McGuinness, plus Chanan Hill of Bristol. The state Senate field included Democratic incumbents Christopher Bray of Bristol and Ruth Hardy of Middlebury, along with Starksboro state Rep. Caleb Elder running for the senate as a D; and Republicans Lesley J. Bienvenue of Leicester, Huntington Republican Landel James Cochran and Bristol Republican Steven Heffernan.

Officials at the Counseling Service of Addison County this month spoke candidly of efforts to more creatively deliver services in a post-pandemic era marked by short staffing and a surge in clients of all ages dealing with mental health problems stemming, in part,



### June 6

THE NEW ADDITION to the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury appears to be literally rising out of the ground late last week as workers raised steel girders from the basement floor toward the sky. A Bread Loaf Corp. official said the project seems to be on track to open by New Year's Eve.

Independent file photo/Steve James

from isolation.

The impacts of the COVID pandemic were indeed lingering. Mount Abraham Unified School District parents conveyed concerns to the MAUSD board about some students they said are "falling through the cracks," in terms of not getting the extra supports needed get the most out of their learning experiences.

As the spring sports seasons wound down, Addison County high school athletes found themselves in the thick of the playoff action. In one week, five local teams vied for state championships — and three won them.

First the No. 2-seed MUHS boys' tennis squad defeated Champlain Valley in the Division I final. Then the Mount Abe-Vergennes cooperative boys' lacrosse team beat Green Mountain Valley for the D-III title.

That same evening saw the unlikely pairing of a No. 6 seed and No. 8 in the D-II baseball final — and those two teams happened to



### July 4

INTREPID CYCLISTS ON their own or in small groups braved the rain and sometimes chilly temps during the 10th Vermont Gran Fondo.

Independent file photos/Steve James



### June 13

VERGENNES UNION HIGH School seniors have a Ted Lasso moment during their commencement exercises on June 7 when they pass by a big sign that says "Believe."

Independent file photos/Steve James

be Mount Abe and MUHS. After a cray finish to the game, the Tigers walked away with the crown.

The other finalists was Tiger boys' lacrosse, which rallied from six goals down to push CVU into overtime, but the Redhawks ultimately prevailed.

Other local athletes won state titles on the track. MUHS junior Jazmyn Hurley was dominant at the D-II championship meet, winning titles in the 100, 200, 400 meters. Mount Abraham senior Siena Stanley claimed the other victory for a local athlete with a big win at 3,000 meters. In D-III, VUHS senior Calder Rakowski won the 800 individual race and competed on the winning Commodore 4x800 relay team with classmates Riley Gagnon and Calvin Gramling and junior Grey Fearon.

Not all the MAUSD news was discouraging in June. District residents finally backed a fiscal year 2025 budget for the 4-town district that includes Bristol, New Haven, Monkton and Starksboro. The third time proved to be the charm, with the \$35.4 million spending plan winning approval by a 1,243-743 margin.

Also on the school budget front, Slate Valley Unified Union School District stakeholders breathed a collective sigh of relief, when constituents (which included Orwell residents) went to the polls and passed a fiscal year 2025 budget — on the fifth try. The margin OK'ing the \$30,810,135 spending plan was 930 yes to 794 no.

In other education news, new Addison Central School District Superintendent Wendy Baker began her new role, with some big challenges on her agenda. They included a tough budgeting forecast for fiscal year 2026 and keeping the Ripton Elementary School vibrant with fewer than 40 enrollees.

Exiting Middlebury College President Laurie Patton described some of her final goals, from advancing fundraising efforts to ensuring the continuity of various initiatives she'd jumpstarted during her nine years leading the institution.


Vergennes residents got some welcome news after having been startled by school tax increases. Thanks to a surplus, the city (See June, Page 13A)



### July 11

THE TOWN OF Bristol hosts one of the biggest and best July 4 parades in Vermont, and this year's edition was no different. These horses didn't let a Revolutionary War re-enactors' gunfire ruin their parade.

Independent file photos/Steve James



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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 12A)  
council approved a fiscal year municipal budget of \$3.318 million that would limit the municipal tax rate hike to 1 cent, or around 1%.

## July

Tragedy struck Middlebury's homeless community at the end of June: Steven Parsons, who had been living in the small encampment behind Ilsley Library, took his own life in the trees near the Marble Works. In early July, the folks who knew Parsons, as well as the larger Middlebury community, were still processing the loss.

Local human service worker Tyler Proulx noted a common lament among Parsons and the rest of the homeless. "It's that sense of 'no way out; I feel like I'm playing against a stacked deck,'" Proulx said, referring to the hurdles of inflation, a lack of available permanent housing, and the challenges of reclaiming one's sobriety and/or mental health.

The conversation around homelessness continued. Later in the month, the Charter House Coalition temporarily suspended its practice of taking in additional homeless people on an emergency basis once the shelter's 25 beds are full. Shelter officials made the move because of growing concerns for the safety of the facility's guests and staff.

The Turning Point Center of Addison County landed a \$100,000 state grant to acquire outdoor vending machines dispensing free Narcan, a medication that rapidly reverses the effects of opioid overdose. The machines were slated to be installed in Middlebury and Vergennes by the fall.

The Ripton community rallied behind a Black family targeted in a racist incident on the Bread Loaf campus. A young man in a dark, old-model pickup truck slowed on Route 125 as he neared the mom and two children and yelled, "Go home (f-word) n\*\*\*\*rs," and sped off.

A new OSHA rule threatened local fire and rescue groups, requiring firefighters and rescue personnel to participate in far greater training, planning and equipment/vehicle replacement mandates. Local officials worried this would dry up an already shallow volunteer pool.

A tractor-trailer transporting compressed gas on Route 7 in Ferrisburgh caught fire for unknown reasons. The same thing happened at almost exactly the same spot on that highway, the year before. This time, 12 fire



## July 11

THE 40TH YEAR of the Festival on the Green started off this week with some great talent. Under the tent on the Middlebury town green, Samirah Evans let her New Orleans roots show in an appearance with her and, The Handsome Devils.

Independent file photo/Steve James

departments responded and the damage was arguably greater. Plus, two people were injured.

Kathleen Ramsay, Middlebury's town manager for 12 years, announced she'd step down in early September to take a new job with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival hired Caitlin Boyle, a nationally known, Vermont-based consultant in the film industry, as its first-ever executive director.

Two locals were honored in July: It was announced that Ellen Kahler will be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame. The Starksboro resident has spent nearly two decades collaborating with other Vermonters to strengthen the state's food system through her role as executive director of the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund. Lincoln musician Michael Chorney was recognized for his many contributions to the state's arts community when he was awarded the 2024 Herb Lockwood Prize in the Arts.

Folks saw a lot more bears lumbering through their properties than usual during the summer. A bear expert said county residents' increasing reports of bears passing through backyards and rummaging in garbage cans were on par with what officials had been hearing from Vermonters in other parts of the state. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Black Bear Project Leader Jaclyn Comeau said there were a few factors behind the increasingly



## August 1

VERGENNES RESIDENT HUNTER Warner, 8, visits the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad on July 20 to donate two-dozen ice cream gift certificates to its members. They took him for a ride in one of the agency ambulances while he was there, which Hunter said was the favorite part of his visit.

Photo courtesy of Holly Weber



## August 15

GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER linemen pick up an electricity transformer that was broken when it smashed onto Route 116 after its utility pole fell during the 60 mph winds on Friday evening. Power was restored in the area by Saturday morning.

Independent file photo/John S. McCright



## August 22

THE WEATHER THANKFULLY cooperated for Bristol's annual community festival called Pocock Rocks, which shut down Main Street for five hours this past Saturday afternoon and evening. Callie Szavejko, 5, of Monkton (left) and her pal Nora Zeno, 5, of Starksboro show off colorful mugs at the face-paint booth

Independent file photo/Steve James

common encounters, notably bears more often associating homes with food and the state's bear population having bounced back in recent decades.

For the second year in a row, it was another wet July. Remnants of Hurricane Beryl dumped several inches of rain on parts of the county, especially Monkton and Starksboro, which received upwards of six inches of rain late on July 10 into the morning of July 11. Fortunately, the damage was not nearly as devastating as the flooding of 2023.

It did, however, prompt important contingency planning conversations, such as the town of Middlebury's effort to site an emergency access across train tracks to make sure the Seymour Street neighborhood could be accessed by the largest emergency response vehicles during future flood events. Twice recently, the road was completely impassable where it dipped down under the railroad tracks near Greg's Meat Market after flash floods covered the road in eight- to 10 feet of water for a short time.

In Bristol, officials continued to seek solutions for a stretch of Briggs Hill Road that was badly damaged by 2023 flooding and has experienced more erosion since then.

And Wildlife officials said the heavy rainfall and flooding would likely result in a decline in some fish and herptile populations. While those populations are expected to bounce back within a few years, experts note that it's unclear how species will fare as severe storms become increasingly common due to climate change

## August

The month kicked off with a dire prognosis for the Vermont healthcare system from Dr. Bruce Hamory, an independent clinician hired by the Green Mountain Care Board to recommend ways of revitalizing the state's financially floundering healthcare delivery network. "This will require (See August, Page 14A)

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# Chronology 2024

(Continued from Page 13A)

concerted system transformation, sustained over time ... and unrelenting effort,” Hamory said of the challenge ahead, one he stressed will require effort from all healthcare stakeholders.

One of his recommendations was greater use of home-based care as part of a broad, cost-saving strategy. But at the same time, the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and U.S. Congress have been pounding nonprofit home health agencies with Medicare reimbursement-rate cuts making those agencies less capable of maintaining current services, let alone setting them up for playing a greater role in an evolving health care system. “These are the headwinds we face,” said Deb Wesley, executive director of Addison County Home Health & Hospice.

Three board members of the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District —chair Jeff Schumann, vice chair Doug Perkins and treasurer Lynne Peck — resigned abruptly at the end of July, leaving the district with three vacancies to fill in early August.

The primary elections at the start of the month saw victories for Democratic Senate incumbents Ruth Hardy and Chris Bray, who defeated a challenge from Rep. Caleb Elder of Starksboro. On the Republican side, Bristol’s Steven Heffernan and Huntington’s Landel Cochran prevailed, finishing ahead of Lesley J. Bienvenue of Leicester. In the Addison-4 House race, incumbent Mari Cordes and Herb Olson edged out Jeanne Albert in the Democratic contest. In the GOP primary, Chanin Hill and Renee McGuinness defeated Lynne Caulfield.

Esther Charleston, an educator and former selectboard member from Middlebury, won the Democratic Party’s nomination to face Gov. Phil Scott.

Goodro Lumber got an unlikely pair of new owners: James Burgess and Andrew Noh, entrepreneurs in their 30s who recently left the biotech world in the greater Boston area to helm the lumber business in



**September 26**

HOW ABOUT ENTICING unregistered voters in Vergennes with ice cream? Cedar Winslow, the Bixby Library’s community engagement manager, is ready to hand out lu.lu ice cream and election information to anyone registering at the library on Sept. 17.

Independent file photo/Steve James



## August 8

ADDISON COUNTY FAIR and Field Days is always a great place to land in early August, and these youngsters are getting a full measure of fun on the midway at this year’s fair.

Independent file photo/Caroline Jiao

East Middlebury.

Addison County Fair & Field Days brought together sheep shearers, skillet tossers, dairy cow lovers and fairway revelers for four days of fun, fried food and agricultural sharing. It did rain a little bit, of course.

The rollout of Maple Broadband, Addison County’s nonprofit provider of high-speed fiber-optic internet service, picked up steam, doubling its customer base, from 144 to 361, and more than doubling the miles along which its cables are hung on utility poles, from 103.7 to 225.4 miles.

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival kicked off its 10th year, featuring screenings of 130 films, a visit from four-time Academy Award winner Oliver Stone, and a whole lot of mingling. It marked the end of an era, too: Founding producer Lloyd Komesar announced it would be his last leading the festival.

Local filmmaker Andy Mitchell attempted to break the Guinness world record for “most dogs to attend a film screening” at Middlebury’s Memorial Sports Center. Folks were invited to bring their dogs to a screening of the Netflix documentary Mitchell directed called “Inside the Mind of a Dog.” A good time was had by all, but the effort fell short of breaking the record by about 10 pooches.

In education news, a pair of elementary schools got new principals: Lashawn Whitmore-Sells took the helm in Shoreham; Jenny Urban in Bridport. Longtime childcare worker Ashley Bessette of New Haven was appointed as the Addison County Universal Pre-K Coordinator, replacing Meg Baker, who took on a new role at the University of Vermont.

And the Willowell Foundation revived the well-loved Walden Project, an outdoor public education program formerly run through Vergennes Union High School for 24 years that was one of several items cut from the Addison Northwest School District’s fiscal year 2025 budget. The resurrected Walden Year will be run in connection with area school districts and the Community College of Vermont.



## September 26

COL. SILAS ILSLEY and wife, Mary Osborne Ilsley, who donated \$50,000 to build Middlebury’s public library a century ago, arrive at the Main Street institution on Saturday to celebrate its 100th birthday. Middlebury Community Players provided the costumes worn by Amy Mincher and Joe McVeigh.

Photo courtesy of Joe McVeigh

A massive infusion of new money — \$125 million to be exact — into Vermont’s childcare system through last year’s Act 76 helped create 1,000 new childcare slots statewide and spurred a renaissance in the industry here in Addison County, which had sustained major losses in childcare offerings during the COVID pandemic. Local and state officials celebrated the sector’s growth at a gathering at Mary Johnson Child Center.

The Climate Economy Action Center of Addison County launched a new free program called Addison County Energy Navigators, which offers one-on-one support for local renters and homeowners in identifying ways to reduce their homes’ carbon footprint.

## September

September began with some exciting openings: A new trash and recycling drop-off station opened in New Haven. An inclusive playground accessible to children of all physical abilities opened at Bristol Elementary School. And a new childcare center opened in Salisbury in the town’s former elementary school building.

But something else new to the area was much less welcome: Officials began warning Vermonters about the risk of EEE, or eastern equine encephalitis virus, a rare and sometimes fatal mosquito-borne disease that killed a New Hampshire man, and infected someone in Chittenden County in August. The Vermont Health Department designated several Addison County towns as having a higher than average risk for infection.

The town of Middlebury began considering a homeless encampment policy that would give community officials more guidance on potentially regulating temporary settlements of homeless individuals within the shire town. For comparison, they were eyeing a policy already in place in Montpelier.

And then tragedy struck: An airplane crash in Ferrisburgh claimed the lives of four people, including a 15-year-old girl learning to fly and her mother, who had flown up from Connecticut for brunch at the Basin Harbor resort.

Middlebury College in September welcomed students back — 2,774 were enrolled at the Middlebury campus for the fall semester. That’s a slight decrease from the previous fall when the college anticipated around 2,800 students.

The Addison Northwest and Mount Abraham Unified school districts announced a new partnership that will allow students in those Vergennes- and Bristol-area learning communities to take certain classes at either of the districts’ high schools while

(See September, Page 15A)



## September 12

HOMEWARD BOUND COUNTED 86 dogs and their people at this past Saturday’s Woofstock, an annual fundraiser for the Addison County Human Society. The event ended at the town pool, which is closed for the season, but left the water in the tank for one last canine dip.

Independent file photo/Steve James

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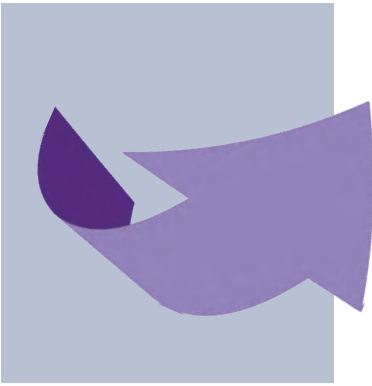
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**October 10**  
YOUNG CHILDREN ARE silhouetted against an evening sky as they stand on the sledding hill behind Ferrisburgh Central School Oct. 1 during a garden party and picnic that kicked off the school's educational theme, which this year unites language and nature in events throughout the school year. Photo courtesy of Rae Donovan

*(Continued from Page 14A)*  
maintaining enrollment in their sending schools. The initiative is designed to ensure students have access to a variety of courses that meet their needs and interests by offering students opportunities to take advantage of courses offered in either district. The collaboration was expected to kick off during the 2025-2026 school year. MAUSD also began considering expanding its middle school to include sixth-graders.

In Ripton, things were heating up over enrollment at the elementary school. Parental backlash over K-1-2 combined class came to a head with the sudden resignations of both the teacher of that multi-grade class and Ripton Elementary Principal Megan Cheresnick. The ACSD board flirted with the concept of suspending kindergarten and grade 1 instruction at RES for the rest of the 2024-2025 academic year.

But Ripton parents and community members — fearing that removing two grades from a school with only 39 students would bring RES closer to shuttering for lack of enrollment — met with school officials to repair frayed relationships and preserve the K-1-2 class, the teacher of which withdrew her resignation.

A non-profit initiative called the “Vermont Futures Project” was busy writing a plan to help preserve the state’s health in the long term. The cure, according to VFP officials, is in large part predicated on the state boosting its population — from the current 646,000 to 802,000 people — and its housing inventory — from the current 300,000 to at least 350,000 non-seasonal units by 2035. “At the core of this is, ‘People are the solution,’” VFP Executive Director Kevin Chu told the *Addison Independent*.

A panel on Vermont’s housing policies, held at Middlebury College as part of this year’s Clifford Symposium, offered this takeaway: The state’s housing crisis is among the most complex

and pressing issues facing us. As a result, the state’s approach to addressing its housing deficit needs to be multi-faceted and consider the various economic and societal issues the housing crunch is intertwined with.

Organizers and supporters of a major expansion of Middlebury’s Otter Creek Child Center gathered at the Weybridge Street facility to mark the ceremonial start of a \$10 million, 7,000-square-foot addition that will allow the center to add 77 childcare slots.

Middlebury’s Ilsley Public Library celebrated its 100th birthday with a party and cake for everyone.

## October

As October began, local folks heard Vermont Health officials urging residents to take steps to prevent mosquito bites after an Addison County horse tested positive for Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). The Salisbury horse, which was tested on Sept. 23, was unvaccinated and is now deceased. EEE spreads through the bite of an infected mosquito and is rare but can cause serious and life-threatening illness in people and some animals. Many locals were glad to see the first hard frost arrive.

The first of the month also saw Middlebury residents go the polls to weigh in on a June 25 selectboard decision to give Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) a free easement to funnel natural gas to St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church at 3 Main St. The vote was triggered by a citizens’ petition drive by a resident who has maintained that while St. Stephen’s is entitled to its choice of fuel, VGS should be required to pay fair market value for the town easement through town land. Citizens voted, 601-416, to back the free easement.



**October 17**  
ORGANIZER ELIO FARLEY, with a bullhorn, helps hype the crowd during a walk on Main Street to kick off the third annual Pride Festival in Middlebury this past Saturday. Independent file photos/Megan James

Two local libraries learned this month that they had been awarded very big grants to improve their infrastructure. Bristol and Salisbury are among 14 Vermont communities whose public libraries will share \$15.9 million in federal funding for much-needed capital projects. The Salisbury library has won a \$978,807 ARPA grant

that will help fund the repair or replacement the building’s HVAC system, a new plumbing system, water systems upgrades, as well as interior and exterior renovations for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. Bristol’s Lawrence Memorial Library will receive \$483,000 in ARPA funds that *(See October, Page 16A)*



**October 17**  
A HARVESTER CLEARS a cornfield, loading up a truck sitting deep among the corn stalks. Before you know it winter is drawing closer and the hazy summer days in the beautiful Vermont countryside will soon be just a distant memory. Independent file photo/Steve James



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**November 21**  
THE STAGE AT the Mount Abraham Union High School Auditorium is decked out with a dramatic set in the form of a Jazz Era cruise liner and some Mount Abe actors singing and dancing in sailor costumes during a rehearsal Monday evening of “Anything Goes.”  
Photo by Buzz Kuhns

(Continued from Page 15A)  
will help pay for a new HVAC system, building envelope repairs for structural integrity, as well as electrical and mechanical system updates.  
Further south, just outside of Addison County, the Brandon Free Public Library has nabbed a \$1.4 million ARPA grant that will help subsidize installation of a four-story elevator with related renovations and improvements for ADA compliance, and repair or replacement of windows for energy efficiency.  
Conspicuously absent from the 2024 Vermont Department of Libraries list of ARPA beneficiaries was Middlebury’s Ilsley Public Library, whose boosters had hoped to secure \$1.5 million VDL grant. Officials said they will have to do a little more fundraising.  
The town of Middlebury recruited a familiar face to temporarily serve as its top administrator. Tom Hanley — who retired last fall as the shire town’s police chief after more than 30 years of service — began serving as Middlebury’s interim town manager while the selectboard considers a permanent replacement for former Manager Kathleen Ramsay.  
Later in the month, the Middlebury selectboard hired a new town manager, Mark A. Pruhenski,



**November 7**  
TURNOUT WAS BRISK at polling stations throughout Addison County on Tuesday. Bea Hooper, who celebrated her 18th birthday the day before casts her ballot in Middlebury.  
Photo courtesy of Caitlin Myers

the current town manager of Great Barrington, Mass. He is slated to start work Jan. 15.  
Around the same time, Bristol found out that it would need to replace its top administrator. Bristol Town Administrator Valerie Capels announced that she would retire at the end of the year.  
Lincoln residents and wildlife officials in October were looking for a black bear cub that had been orphaned after a local hunter shot and injured the bear’s mother. The young sow was shot on Sept. 21 and had to be put down, Vermont Game Warden Dale Whitlock told the *Independent*. “(The hunter) shot a sow, and it was a mother that had been raising two cubs all summer, and all the locals had been watching the cubs grow,” he said. “While it wasn’t technically illegal for him to do that, it wasn’t ethical.”  
A spike in Middlebury’s houseless population in October prompted a renewed sense of urgency among town officials to enact an “encampment policy” to delineate which parts of the community’s public property should be off limits for overnight, outdoor stays.  
After battling a devastating cold snap and heavy rains throughout 2023, orchards around Addison County have enjoyed a much sweeter apple season this year. This month, local orchardists reported plentiful crops and more agreeable weather this fall, and they say there’s still fruit prime for the picking as the season winds down. “We had a great season,” Aaron Stine of Monkton’s Stine Orchard told the *Independent*. “The weather was very good, and  
(See *Ocotober*, Page 17A)



**November 14**  
NEW HAVEN RESIDENT Jen Grilly, shown here working on a knitting project, recently helped establish the new Grieving and Weaving program at the New Haven Community Library.  
Independent file photo/Marin Howell



**November 28**  
CHILDREN AND ADULTS alike got an early taste — literally — of Thanksgiving at Shoreham Elementary School this past Thursday. That’s when the school invited the community in to enjoy a luncheon of turkey, taters, stuffing, gravy and apple crisp. William Haigh, left, and fellow second-grader Landon Stearns can’t wait to dig in.  
Independent file photo/Steve James

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(Continued from Page 16A)  
our crop was incredible — that includes apples, four kinds of pears, plums, everything did really well this year.”

The Vergennes Union High School Class of 2025 set a goal of raising \$3,500 for its Senior Walkathon, which was held on a cool and mostly cloudy Thursday, Oct. 24, on behalf of the Wounded Warrior Project. Before the seniors started on the nine-mile journey from school auditorium to the shore of Lake Champlain at Button Bay State Park, the roughly three-dozen seniors who walked heard good news that they had raised more than \$4,000, and the total was steadily growing as donations kept coming in.

Meanwhile, out on Lake Champlain, Mount Abe sophomores Hailey and Isayah Isham netted a title this month when the twins became the 2024 Vermont High School Bass Fishing Champions. In a boat operated by team Coach Carroll Isham, the Ishams reeled in six bass — including the event’s largest, a 5.3-pound large-mouth — totaling 23.84 pounds.

The Friends of the Vergennes Opera House continued to make progress toward a planned February groundbreaking for the theater’s All Access Project, which will upgrade and provide handicap access to not only the theater but also to Vergennes city offices. In October it got word of a \$500,000 Congressionally Directed Funding grant — an earmark.

An inescapable metallic hum could be heard at the October unveiling of the new Middlebury Resource Recovery Center constructed by PurposeEnergy. That hum — emanating from an onsite, 1,014-kilowatt generator — played like a symphony for PurposeEnergy officials. The



## November 21

DOUGLAS ANDERSON AND Lisa Mitchell, artistic director and executive director, respectively, of Middlebury’s Town Hall Theater, stand in the Doug and Debby Anderson Rehearsal Studio and gallery that’s taking shape in the new addition to the THT building. Work on the space is expected to wrap up this winter with a gala opening in late spring or early summer.

Independent photo/Steve James

din provided tangible proof that the plant was successfully receiving organic waste from local food/beverage industries and transforming it into renewable energy that’s being fed into the statewide electricity grid.

Once upon a time, most Vermont communities had a general store where you could buy anything from paper clips to smoked bacon. Local gossip was thrown in for free. At the end of October we sadly lost another formerly vibrant general store when Buxton’s Store in Orwell closed its doors. The owners pointed to rising costs, fewer workers, and competition

from a big box store just down the road as contributing to the decline

## November

November brought change to the composition of Addison County’s legislative delegation to Montpelier, one that mirrored gains statewide for the Republican Party.

In the race for two Vermont Senate seats, Bristol Republic Steven Heffernan outpolled incumbent Bristol Democrat

Christopher Bray to win the second seat along with the top vote-getter, Middlebury Democrat Ruth Hardy, also an incumbent. Bray had served more than a decade in the Senate after first winning a seat in the Vermont House in 2006.

Meanwhile, another long-serving Democratic incumbent, Vergennes Rep. Diane Lanpher, lost her seat to Ferrisburgh Republican Rob North in a four-way race for two seats in the Addison-3 District that includes Vergennes, Ferrisburgh, Addison, Panton, Waltham and a slice of New Haven. North was the top vote-getter. He will join incumbent Rep. Matt Birong, D-Vergennes, in Montpelier. Birong edged Lanpher for the district’s second seat.

Another newcomer was Democratic first-time candidate Herb Olson, who successfully ran for a vacancy in the Addison-4 district that includes Bristol, Monkton, Lincoln and Starksboro. The Starksboro resident will join Democratic incumbent Mari Cordes of Bristol in the Statehouse. Incumbents prevailed elsewhere on the ballot around the county. They also backed incumbent GOP Gov. Phil Scott’s reelection bid, but joined the rest of the state in voting against the President-Elect.

In Panton, residents in an advisory vote said no, 307-100, to a proposed 50-megawatt, 220-acre solar array, but the vote was advisory only. The Vermont Public Utilities Commission will have the final say.

In an effort to keep the Henry Sheldon Museum’s collection relevant and vibrant, the Middlebury institution announce in November its “Shape the Sheldon” campaign. Coco Moseley, rounding out her first year as the Sheldon’s executive director, said the 140-year-old museum has a sound foundation, but she believes (See December, Page 18A)



## December 12

SCORES OF PEOPLE get into the holiday spirit on Saturday, Dec. 7, through a series of “Very Merry Middlebury” events held in an appropriately snowy downtown. Maddy Quesnel, 8, and her brother Max, 4, of Salisbury enjoy hot chocolate at the Hot Cocoa Hut at Cannon Park.

Independent file photo/Steve James



## December 5

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE STUDENTS grab a bite to eat during a Holidays on The House event at the Middlebury clubhouse last year. The program, which offers free meals, activities and support for students staying on campus during winter break, will return this year. Organizers are hoping to expand the offering to include more activities and serve more students.

Photo courtesy of Annette Franklin

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# Ilsley

(Continued from Page 1A)  
Independent. “The fundraising and the requests for grants goes on.”

Middlebury residents in early May voted 956-200 in favor of the proposed major makeover of the Ilsley. It’s a project that’s slated to begin next spring and will largely involve removing the Ilsley’s 1977 and 1988 additions, while retaining and restoring the original 1924 building and equipping it with a new 8,000-square-foot, two-story addition on its northeast side.

A refurbished, 28,000-square-foot Ilsley is expected to be ready during the summer of 2026. It will boast double its current space for youth services, a new activity room, a new conference/flex room that would be accessible during and after library hours, a new early learning area, new spaces for high-schoolers and middle-schoolers, a new outdoor programming area, two additional small meeting rooms, a larger community meeting room, and redesigned adult reading rooms and gathering spaces.

Library leaders and town officials put together a plan to pay off the \$17 million price tag. Among other things, it called for \$2 million in grants, \$500,000 in federal rebates, \$4 million through the town’s local option tax surplus fund, and \$4.5 million in gifts and pledges.

That financial gameplan took a hit in October when the Vermont Department of Libraries (VDL) *didn’t* approve Ilsley’s request for a \$1.5 million grant comprised of American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funds. That forced the Ilsley Library to ratchet up its fundraising goal from \$4.5 million to \$6 million. The fundraising harvest currently stands at \$5,072,000, with the effort recently getting a nice assist in the form of a \$1 million pledge from Middlebury College.

But with construction slated to begin this spring, Ilsley project financing is still lagging, Hanley reiterated.

Ilsley Library Director Dana Hart acknowledged the new funding challenge.

“Yes, due to the library project unfortunately not receiving any grant award funding from the VDL’s recent allocation, there is the possibility of (a) shortfall,” she stated through an email exchange.

Hart stressed that Isley officials will leave no stone unturned in their search for ways to limit — or even negate — the need for any additional taxpayer commitment to the project.

She specifically pointed to three grant applications, submitted to the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (\$25,000), the Hoehl Foundation (\$25,000), and a Libraries Transform Communities (\$20,000).

“In the spring, we will submit a \$500,000 Congressionally Directed Spending request for the Save America’s Treasurers

program, and a Walter Cerf grant application for \$25,000,” Hart added. “We also intend to apply for the next round of capital improvement grant funding from the Vermont Department of Libraries. Grant details have not yet been made available, so I am not sure what amount we will be able to apply for, but I do know that the department has \$10 million to give away in this round of funding. We will likely not know the outcomes of those grant applications until the summer or fall.”

The selectboard will review all available options, including weighing the use of additional local option tax (LOT) surplus. Middlebury launched its local option tax in 2008 to help pay off debt on the \$16 million Cross Street Bridge. The 1% taxes on rooms, meals, sales and alcohol has been generating more than \$1 million annually, substantially more than is needed for debt service and maintenance of the span. As of last week, the LOT surplus fund stood at around \$1.4 million, according to Hanley.

Middlebury College has also been contributing \$600,000 annually to help draw down the 30-year bridge bond.

Town officials have been using some of the LOT surplus each year (with voter approval) to help cover capital improvements, thereby lessening the burden on local taxpayers.

Ultimately, voters gave the town permission to bond up to \$17 million for the Ilsley renovation. But officials stressed voters would be consulted if their portion of the total needs to be raised.

An interruption in the construction to search for more money would raise project costs by around \$300,000 for every six months of postponement, officials noted.

“The board is committed to getting this project off the ground on time,” Hanley said.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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# By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)  
ability to launch initiatives like the Chamber’s upcoming Vermont National Civics Bee and her expertise in organizing impactful events make her an invaluable addition to the Chamber’s mission of driving statewide economic progress,” reads a Chamber press release announcing the appointment. Also joining the state Chamber’s staff were Emily Hurd as marketing & communications director, and Maggie Talty as tourism marketing & sales associate.

The Middlebury area’s unemployment rate spiked from 1.8% in October to 2.4% in November, according to a report released by the Vermont Department of Labor (DOL). The county’s workforce was placed at 19,408, of which 459 were jobless and looking for work, according to the DOL. Middlebury’s November rate mirrors that of the state, which was also tabulated at 2.4% — a bump of one-tenth of one percentage point compared to October. The November unemployment rates for Vermont’s 17 labor market areas ranged from 2.1 % in Burlington-South Burlington and White River Junction, to 3.3% in Derby. Meanwhile, the comparable U.S. rate in November was 4.2%, an increase of one-tenth of one percentage point from October.

The Kelly Brush Foundation (KBF) has just received a \$62,750 state grant it will use to “engage and inspire individuals to take advantage of adaptive-accessible mountain biking opportunities throughout Vermont,” according to a press release from the Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing. Launched in the name of Middlebury College alumna Kelly Brush after she sustained a spinal cord injury in a 2006 NCAA alpine ski race, the KBF is dedicated to ski racing safety and promoting


active lifestyles for those who’ve experienced spinal cord injuries. The \$62,750 grant was among a combined total of 16 awards through the state’s “Transformational Tourism, Events, and Regional Marketing (T-TERM) Grant Program.” The T-TERM grant program was created to help events and communities offering unique visitor experiences to expand and/or market themselves to attract more out-of-state visitors and increase overnight stays.

Snow will accumulate during the coming weeks, and the U.S. Forest Service wants to encourage all snowmobile riders to put safety first out. Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) officials are advising snowmobilers to exercise caution, heed to all gates and signs, and to stay off roads and trails that are closed. Weather permitting, snowmobile use is allowed on designated trails within the GMNF for four months, from Dec. 16, 2024, to April 15, 2025. The GMNF and the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) maintain more than 345 miles of National Forest System trails that are part of the larger statewide snowmobile network. The maximum speed is 35 miles per hour on state and federal land. The U.S. Forest Service is also warning the public of the dangers associated with riding, hiking and skiing on frozen water. Operators must maintain control of their snowmobile while riding, keep to the right at all times, wear helmets, and stay on designated trails only. All snowmobiles must be legally registered, have liability insurance, and operators must purchase a VAST Trails Maintenance Assessment decal. Riders are encouraged to pack a flashlight, cell phone, food, and extra warm clothing in case of an emergency. Trail users are encouraged to visit the VAST trail update at vtvast.org/trails for


specifics on trail conditions and closures.

Vermont 2025 hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, as well as the 2025 regulations for these activities, are now available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department’s website (vtfishandwildlife.com) 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 beginning Jan. 1. “License sales have helped pay for some of

Vermont’s greatest conservation successes,” said Interim Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Andrea Shortsleeve, “from managing habitat for game species like the white-tailed deer and black bear to protecting habitat for nongame species like bald eagles and common loons.” License buyers can also easily add a \$15 Habitat Stamp to their purchase to further support habitat conservation in Vermont. 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.



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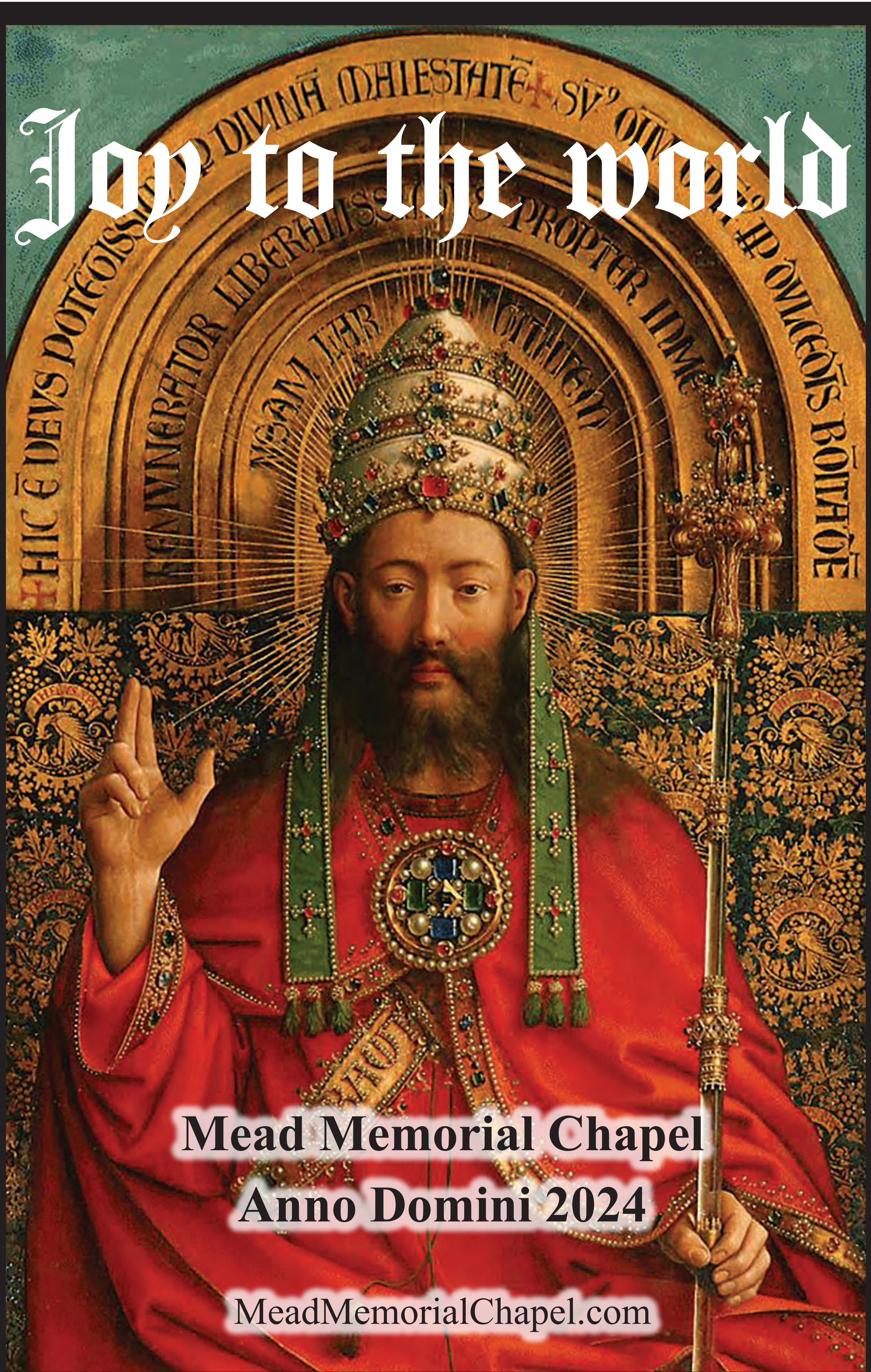
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## Mixed bag for boys’ hoop

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**  
ADDISON COUNTY — In high school boys’ basketball action late last week, Vergennes broke into the win column, Otter Valley split two home games, and Mount Abraham dropped its season opener.

Monday games, including Middlebury hosting U-32 and VUHS hosting Fair Haven, were played after the early holiday deadline for this edition.

**COMMODORES**  
On Monday, the Commodores pulled away from host Stowe in the second half to prevail, 56-42, and improve to 1-2.

VUHS Coach Eric LeBeau said his team struggled in the first half, but played better after the break. LeBeau said senior forward **Spencer Gebo** had a strong game, finishing with 19 points and 13 rebounds.

**OTTERS**  
On Dec. 18, the Otters opened their home game against Mill

River with an 18-0 run on the way to a 66-19 victory. Twelve Otters scored, led by **Conor Denis** with 11 points, **Logan Letourneau** and **Logan Denis** with eight points each, and **Brayden Meza** with seven.

On Saturday, visiting Hartford came away with a 50-40 victory over Otter Valley in a back-and-forth game. The Hurricanes led at the half, 26-19, but Lucas Politano’s 14 third-quarter points helped OV take a 35-31 lead after three periods. Hartford, however, took charge again in the final quarter.

Politano finished with 18 points for OV and Connor Denis added seven, as the 3-1 Otters absorbed their first setback. Ryan Murphy led Hartford with 20 points.

**EAGLES**  
On Dec. 20, host Randolph rode a big second half past the Eagles, 51-39. Mount Abe led at the break,

(See Jump, Page 3B)

## Score BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls' Basketball	
12/20 Mt Abe vs Burr & Burton.....	51-26
12/20 U-32 vs MUHS .....	37-31
12/20 Peoples vs VUHS .....	51-44
12/20 Fair Haven vs OV .....	55-31
12/23 OV vs Burr & Burton (FHU).....	Late
12/23 Mt Abe at Fair Haven.....	Late
Boys' Basketball	
12/18 OV vs Mill River.....	66-19
12/20 Randolph vs Mt Abe .....	51-39
12/20 Hartford at OV .....	50-40
12/20 VUHS vs Stowe .....	56-42
12/23 Fair Haven at VUHS .....	Late
12/23 U-32 at MUHS .....	Late
Boys' Hockey	
12/18 South Burlington vs MUHS .....	10-3
12/21 Burr & Burton vs MUHS .....	7-3
12/23 St. Albans at MUHS .....	Late
Girls' Hockey	
12/18 MUHS vs Brattleboro .....	10-0
12/21 MUHS vs Rutland .....	7-0
12/23 MUHS at Stowe .....	Late

## Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Girls' Basketball	
12/28 VUHS at Williamstown .....	3:30 PM
12/28 Fair Haven at OV .....	2:30 PM
12/30 MUHS at Harwood .....	7 PM
12/30 Mt Abe at Montpelier .....	7 PM
1/2 Mt Abe at Fair Haven .....	7 PM
1/2 MUHS at St Albans .....	7:30 PM
1/2 Northfield at VUHS.....	7 PM
1/4 MUHS at OV .....	7 PM
Boys' Basketball	
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
12/30 VUHS at Twinfield .....	7 PM
12/30 Mt. Abe at Mt. Anthony .....	7 PM
1/3 Mt Abe at OV .....	7:30 PM
1/3 Harwood at MUHS .....	7 PM
Boys' Hockey	
12/27 Brookline at MUHS.....	7 PM
12/28 U-32 at MUHS .....	7 PM
Girls' Hockey	
12/27 U32 at MUHS .....	5 PM
12/28 TBD at MUHS .....	5 PM
Wrestling	
12/27 .....	OV at Berkshire Tournament
12/27&28 VUHS/Mt Abe at MUHS Tourn	
12/28 .....	OV at Lebanon Tournament
1/4 .....	OV at Keene Tournament
1/4 .....	VUHS/Mt Abe at MAU Tournament
Indoor Track	
12/28 .....	VUHS/Mt Abe at UVM
Gymnastics	
12/27 CVU at MUHS .....	6 PM
12/30 MUHS at Harwood .....	6:30 PM
1/4 MUHS at Burr & Burton.....	1 PM
Dance	
1/4 MUHS at Burr & Burton.....	1 PM
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men's Basketball	
12/30 Brandeis at Midd .....	2 PM
1/3 Cortland vs. St. Joe's (Midd) .....	4 PM
1/3 Vassar at Midd .....	6 PM
1/4 Tourney Cons/Final .....	3/5 PM
Women's Basketball	
12/31 Midd at Springfield .....	1 PM
1/1 Midd vs Ithaca (Springfield).....	Noon
1/4 Midd at Oswego .....	1 PM
Women's Hockey	
1/3 Midd at Endicott .....	5 PM
1/4 Midd at Nichols .....	2:40 PM
Men's Hockey	
1/4 Midd vs Canton (Boston).....	7:30 PM
1/5 Midd vs TBN (Bos).....	2:30/5:30 PM

## Girls’ hockey nets two wins

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**  
RUTLAND — The Middlebury Union High School girls’ hockey team picked up two big wins on the road late last week and carried a 2-0-1 record into a scheduled Monday game at Stowe that was played after the early holiday deadline for this edition.

Next up for the MUHS girls is their annual holiday tournament this weekend. At 5 p.m. on Friday at the Memorial Sports Center, they’ll take on U-32, and on Saturday at 5 p.m. they’ll face off against the winner of an earlier game on Friday.

On Dec. 18, the Tigers rolled past host Brattleboro, 10-0. McKenna Raymond led the MUHS attack with five goals, Kenyon Connors scored twice, Nova Bojanowski scored once and added three assists, Ireland Hanley had a goal and an assist, and Maggie Collins scored once.

On Saturday, the Tigers blanked host Rutland, 7-0. Details of that game were not reported.

## Eagles only girls’ hoop winner

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**  
ADDISON COUNTY — Mount Abraham was the only winner among local high school girls’ basketball teams in action late last week. Monday games were played after the early holiday deadline for this edition.

**FAIR HAVEN TOURNEY**  
The Eagles and Otter Valley both played at Fair Haven’s annual Mary Canfield Tournament.

On Friday, the Eagles went on a

17-2 run that spanned the second and third quarters in a 51-26 victory over Burr & Burton in the tournament’s first round. Leading the way, as Mount Abe improved to 2-0, were **Louisa Painter** (14 points, five assists), **Hazel Guilmette** (10 points, three assists, three steals) and **Meredith Dufault** (seven points, four rebounds).

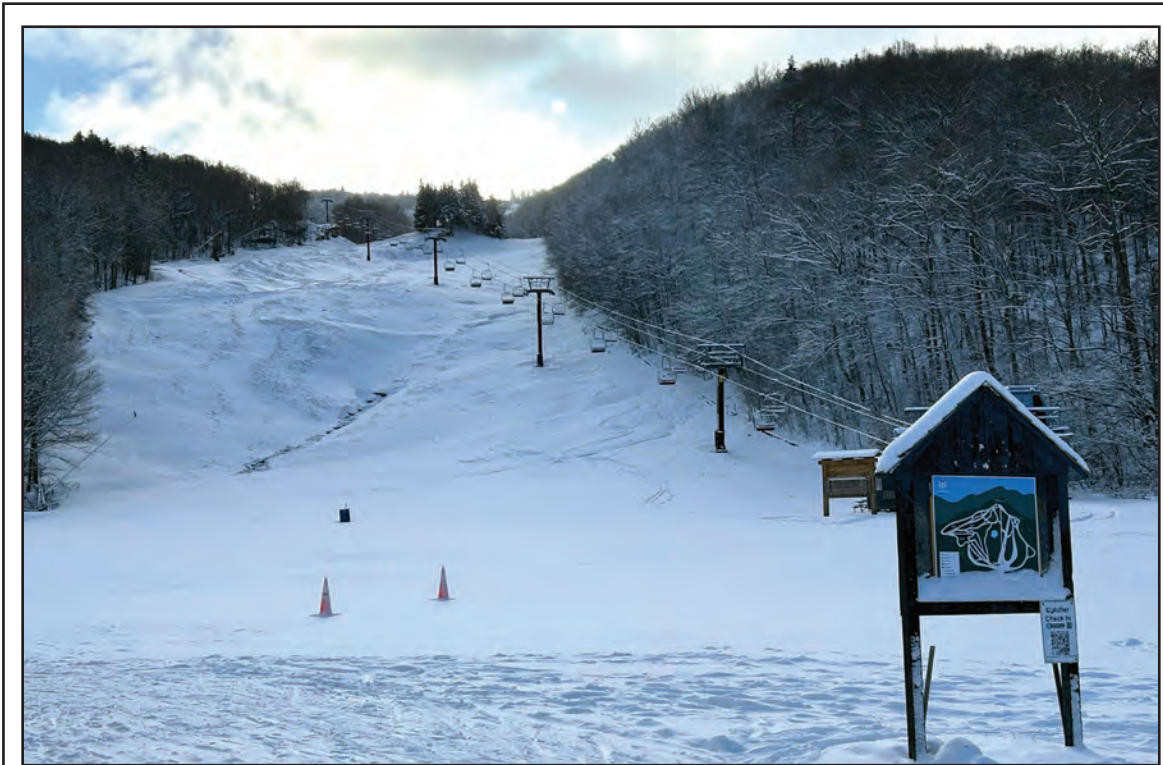
The Eagles were set to play Fair Haven (1-1) on Monday in the second round of the tournament.

On Friday, the defending Division II champion Slaters defeated the Otters, 55-31. Fair Haven broke open the game with a 7-0 first-quarter run, followed by a 10-0 second quarter surge.

For the Slaters, **Kate Hadwen** finished with 22 points, and **Izzy Cole** tossed in 15.

**Matelin LaPorte** paced OV with 13 points, and **Leann Thomas** added seven points.

(See Jump, Page 3B)



### Skiers wanted

**ALL I WANT for Christmas is enough snow to get the Worth Mountain chairlift open for skiing and riding! The Middlebury Snowbowl has been open since mid-December for skiers to get on the mountain off the Sheehan Quad lift and Magic Carpet, but like many ski areas in Vermont there has been limited terrain. With luck, and cooperative weather, some trails off the Worth Mountain lift will be open late Christmas week.**

Independent photo/Angelo Lynn



**BRYCE WOOD SHOT** this 153-pound, three-point buck in Shoreham during the opening weekend of rifle season. It was his first deer.

Photos courtesy of Backwoods Guns & Tackle



**RILEY FLEMING SHOT** the biggest buck taken in county limits during the October Youth/Novice Weekend. It was a 184-pound, six-point buck Fleming took down in Ferrisburgh and weighed at Backwoods Guns & Tackle.

## Youth deer hunters enjoy their weekend

### October days proved successful for many, but numbers down overall

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**

ADDISON COUNTY — The Vermont Department for Fish and Wildlife’s Youth and Novice Hunting Weekend for deer saw fewer youthful hunters successful than in past years in Addison County, but several still weighed impressive specimens at five of the county’s wildlife reporting stations.

In all, 63 hunters 15 or younger or first-time hunters in the presence of experienced hunters had 63 deer weighed in a county reporting station after taking the animals that weekend, Oct. 26 and 27. That’s the lowest count since at least 2016; a more typical number is in the 90s. The 2023 Youth/Novice Weekend count for Addison County was 91.

The numbers for this year’s newcomers weekend mirror lower local weights and to an extent lower takes for the other seasons

— rifle season in late November, and archery and muzzleloader seasons that run in October and November and then again in the first half of December; see related stories in this edition.

The closing of Buxton’s Store in Orwell, a popular deer reporting station, almost certainly had some effect on the local numbers. But Backwoods Gun & Tackle in Bridport appears to have picked up some of its hunting clientele, and Jerusalem Corners Country Store in Starksboro and Rack ’N Reel in New Haven continue to lure hunters from Chittenden County to weigh their animals.

The largest buck weighed locally during Youth/Novice Weekend was handled by Jerusalem Corners Country Store, but shot in Hinesburg by Owen Francie; it was a 195-pound, 9-point buck.

Next on the list was a

184-pound, 6-point buck that Riley Fleming shot in Ferrisburgh and took to Backwoods Gun & Tackle to have weighed.

The bronze-medal buck was Noah Gorton’s 170-pound, six-pointer. He shot it in Middlebury and had it weighed at Rack ’N Reel.

The following hunters were successful during Youth/Novice Weekend and brought their deer to a county reporting station, a list that also includes Lincoln General Store, Green Mountain Trails End in Bristol and two stations that did not report any action that weekend, West Addison General Store and C&S Hunting Supplies in East Middlebury.

Hunters are listed by name, town of kill, pounds and points if bucks, and pounds if does.

**LINCOLN GENERAL STORE**  
YOUTH: Tyrell Vaughn, Lincoln, buck 162 pounds-4

points; and Robert Newman, Huntington, doe 112 pounds.

**Jerusalem Country Store**  
YOUTH: Wilder Wheelock, Starksboro, doe 94; Owen Francis, Hinesburg, buck 195-9; Mason Atkins, Lincoln, buck 166-6; Darien Haselton, Huntington, buck 105-2; and Owen Lafreniere, Huntington, buck 154-7.

**GREEN MT. TRAILS END**  
YOUTH: Logan Davis, Starksboro, male.

**BACKWOODS GUN & TACKLE**  
NOVICE: Adam Gill, Cornwall, doe 55.

YOUTH: Riley Fleming, Ferrisburgh, buck 184-6; Austin Rheau, Cornwall, buck 152-6; Colten Butler, Shoreham, doe 139; Camille Plouffe, Bridport, doe 120; Taryn Burns, buck 115-2; Nathan Abbott, Shoreham, doe

(See Youth Page 4B)

## Bow and muzzleloader hunt numbers down

### Deer take hits a nine-year low

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**

ADDISON COUNTY — This fall and early winter, deer hunters using bows and muzzleloader guns locally had the least success in the past nine years.

During the two archery seasons, which ran from Oct. 1 to Nov. 15 and from Dec. 2 to 15, hunters had 131 deer weighed at one of Addison County’s seven official reporting stations. Numbers in the past eight years have ranged from a low of 145 in 2023 to a high of 528 in the COVID fall of 2020.

In the two muzzleloader seasons, which ran Oct. 31-Nov. 3 and Dec. 7-15, hunters using those weapons had 98 deer weighed in Addison County, again the lowest total in nine years. The next-lowest count again came in 2023 (160), and the highest in 2020 (464), a year that set a county record for an overall annual deer harvest.

Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife Deer Project Leader Nick Fortin said what is being reported to the *Independent* appears to be part of a larger trend of unproductive deer hunting in the Champlain Valley in 2024, though he had no ready explanation.

“Your results track what I’m

seeing. Actually looks like (Wildlife Management Units) F1 and F2 (which include most of Addison and Chittenden counties) will have the largest declines in buck harvest anywhere in the state,” Fortin wrote in an email. “Not as bad in the mountains, but it was a tough year in the valley.”

Certainly, hunters still brought in a few trophy bucks to the seven country reporting stations: C&S Hunting Supplies in East Middlebury, Rack ’N Reel in New Haven, Backwoods Guns & Tackle in Bridport, Lincoln and West Addison general stores, Jerusalem Corners Country Store in Starksboro, and Green Mountain Trails End in Bristol.

Anthony Andrews shot the largest deer taken in any of those seasons, one he killed in Lincoln during the early bow season — a 218-pound buck with a 10-point antler rack weighed at Rack ’N Reel. James Dragon also brought a big buck to Rack ’N Reel early in the bow season, a 194-pounder with an eight-point rack he shot in Sudbury.

Lincoln General Store handled a 210-pound, 8-pointer that Porschea Sweetser took down in Huntington,

(See Bow Hunt, Page 4B)

*“Actually looks like (Wildlife Management Units in Addison and Chittenden counties) will have the largest declines in buck harvest anywhere in the state. Not as bad in the mountains, but it was a tough year in the valley.”*

— Nick Fortin of Vt. Fish & Wildlife



# Contemplating Mount Rainier, Douglas fir and the wonder of Christmas

Stepping out the front door of the National Park Inn, our eyes were drawn at once to the impressive peak of Mount Rainier straight in front of us. Towering more than 11,500 feet above where we stood, reaching to an elevation of 14,411 feet above sea level, its perennially snow-and-ice-covered summit was bathed in the textured red glow of winter morning light.

My wife Deborah and I had come to Washington for the wedding of our second-oldest son. Cross-country travel being as time-consuming and pricey as it is,

we figured that as long as we were spending the time and money to get there, we should stay a few days extra and maybe find one of the West Coast national parks to visit.

When we learned that the southwest entrance to Mount Rainier National Park was less than a two-hour drive from our son's house, and that the historic inn at Longmire was running an off-season half-price two-night lodging special, our decision was made. We booked a stay and arranged for a rental vehicle with available snow chains — a required accessory for winter visitors to the park even at Longmire, which is only a half dozen miles into the park on one of its few lower-elevation stretches of road that is open year-round.

Arriving after dark on the first evening, driving past a trio of elk at dusk just outside the park gate, our initial glimpse of the park's famous peak was under a bright moonlight which gave it a soft, fairy-tale-like, and almost welcoming appearance as I snapped a few long-exposure photos across a field lined with snow-covered trees and dotted with frosted flowers. The next morning's view of the intimidating

tower of rocks and ice eliminated any illusion of softness, however, and we were quite content to admire it from a distance. An hour after breakfast, we began our first hike along the Wonderland Trail. It took us at once from the inn and visitor center into a thick and quiet old-growth forest of evergreens dominated by majestic Douglas fir, with a scattered mix of red cedar, western hemlock and lodgepole pine. Fresh tracks of black-tailed deer and something else we took

to be coyote preceded us along the snowy trail. Bold Douglas squirrels walked out on fallen trunks to watch us pass.

When the trail bent to the right, we found ourselves walking along the Nisqually River with views upriver of the rocky southeastern slope of Rainier. Eventually we turned onto a different trail and crossed the Nisqually on a log bridge made of a massive fallen tree, and into a much narrower cut carved by Paradise River, a tributary of the Nisqually. From there the trail began a steeper ascent a little distance from the river. As our elevation grew, so did the amount of snow on the ground, until we found ourselves looking out as through a frosty windowpane through snow-laden bows of fir and hemlock at the 53-foot drop of Carter Falls.

It may have been the quiet of fresh snow on the ground, or the fact that we had the trail to ourselves, that made the place feel weighty and still. But I think it was the trees themselves. The Douglas firs, which we later learned were many centuries old with some approaching a thousand years in age, felt holy and solemn like we had entered a cathedral or sanctuary. Although the name of the trail at first seemed somewhat pretentious, I indeed quickly found myself raptured by a sense of wonder. Especially with the massive Douglas firs.

And though the snow on the



A HALO OF clouds hovers over Mount Rainier in mid-December during our columnist's visit to Washington State.

Photo by Matthew Dickerson


ground was enough to put me in a holiday spirit, it was more than mere snow that had me thinking about Christmas. It was that sense of wonder and delight along a trail called Wonderland. Thanks to a book I've been working on that is coming out in a couple months, I have spent much of this year thinking and writing about wonder and delight that comes from spending time in nature. If the Christmas story is true, then the Divine Being who called the Douglas firs into existence, and created a world with the geologic forces of tectonic plates, glaciers and erosion that thrust Mount Rainier toward the sky and then spent eons carving and shaping it — that very Divine Being then entered into that creation as an infant born in a manger in the village of Bethlehem in the first century of what we now refer to as the Common Era. And if this

(See Dickerson, Page 3B)



THE COLUMNISTS SPOTTED these blossoms of frost illuminated in the first morning light with Mount Rainier looming in the distance.

Photo by Matthew Dickerson



### Upcoming Events

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

Friday, December 27:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, December 31:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating  
and:  
Free Public Skating 7:00-8:30 PM  
courtesy of the Town of Middlebury!

Thursday, January 2:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, January 7:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, January 9:  
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

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# Boys' hoop

(Continued from Page 1B)  
22-15, but Ghost Eli Messier scored 20 of his game-high 24 points in the second half as Randolph took charge.  
**Hayden Lutz** scored 16 to pace the Eagles in their opening game, and **Charlie Germon** chipped in nine.

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# Girls' hoop

(Continued from Page 1B)  
The 1-1 Otters were set to take on Burr & Burton in the other second-round tournament game on Monday.  
**TIGERS**  
This past Friday, visiting U-32 got past Middlebury, 37-31. Clara Wilson led a balanced Raider attack with 13 points.  
**Louisa Orten's** 16 points led the Tigers, and **Kassidy Brown** tossed in nine points as MUHS dropped to

1-1.  
**COMMODORES**  
On Friday, visiting Peoples rallied in the second half to deal the Vergennes girls their first loss, 51-44. VUHS had led at the break by eight. Peoples' Daisy Berg scored all 13 of her points in the second half, Wolf Amelia Rossiter also scored 13 points, and Sophie Beck scored all seven of her points in the fourth quarter for the visitors.  
**Ashtin Stearns** (17 points) and **Georgia Krause** (10 points) reached double figures for the 2-1 Commodores.

# Dickerson

(Continued from Page 2B)  
world of mountains, trees, rivers and waterfalls is a place where the Divine came and dwelt, then it is indeed a holy place: a temple or sanctuary or cathedral of sorts.  
One of the theological themes of that book I've been working on is the oft-repeated Biblical message that the wonder of nature ought to be a pointer to the greatness of its Divine Creator, and that delight in nature can lead to delight in its Maker. The biblical writers from the prophets and psalmist through the first-century apostles and Jesus himself repeatedly invite us to be attentive to nature: from starry heavens, mountain peaks and oceans to birds, flowers, rivers and trees. In the wonder of nature, we are invited to see the wonder of its Divine Creator.  
On one hand, there is a weightiness to that belief that nature is not only the creation of a Divine Being, but that it became their dwelling place when the Divine took on human flesh. This should inspire awe and perhaps even a little fear. If the world is the work of a great Artist, then to respect that Artist should call one to respect their art. To defile or desecrate or exploit creation — what we often call nature — is to dishonor the Creator. When our actions destroy that which is full of wonder, we destroy pointers to the Divine.  
At the same time, however, the wonder of nature can also restore our souls. Christmas is supposed to be a time of wonder and delight, as is often reflected in beloved Christmas carols as well as the festive decorations of the season. Yet for many it is a time of stress, anxiety, and even loneliness. Certainly these past few years have been times of increased anxiety for many.  
Taking the time to be attentive to snow-laden hemlocks or the

maple sticks scratching the sky; to the winter birds at your feeder or half hidden in the brush along the edge of the field; the call of a barred owl on a cold night or the tracks of deer through the woods and that fleeting glimpse of a black nose before the white flag pops up; to the peaks of our Green Mountain State, or to snowflakes and rivers and waterfalls glistening with frost and ice; any or all of this can begin to restore some of that wonder and peace. Even looking at the stars on a clear and cold winter night, and pondering the infamous star of the wondrous Christmas story that led a company of astrologers from the east on a long journey to Bethlehem where they found the Maker of mountains and maples wrapped in baby's clothing in a manger.



**THIS STAND OF Douglas firs felt holy and solemn like we had entered a cathedral or sanctuary.**  
Photo by Matthew Dickerson

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Youth

(Continued from Page 1B)  
104; and Wesley Felion, Addison, doe 103.

Also, Malachi Clish, Shoreham, doe 100; Mckenna Whitney, Shoreham, doe 95; Ashlynn Ketcham, Shoreham, doe 90; Todd McCray, Cornwall, doe 73; Eli Larocque, Shoreham, doe 70; Noah Hanson, Shoreham, male; and Case Pope, Bridport, female.

**Rack 'n Reel**  
YOUTH: Brett Wood, Shoreham, male; Milo Kinsman, Monkton, doe 106; Lawson Trombley, Ferrisburgh, doe 89; Connor Baslow, New Haven, male; Wyatt Jennings, New Haven, doe 124; Jayden Martell, doe 118; Eleanor Hurlburt, Monkton, female; Camden Fox, Hinesburg,



CASE POPE

buck 109-2; Sage Stevers, New Haven, buck 100-2; Alivia Germain, Panton, doe 111; Noah Gorton, Middlebury, buck 170-6; and Myra Haselton, Orwell, buck 134-5.

Also, Rudy Devoid, Addison, doe 83; James Bahrenburg, Ferrisburgh, female; Reed Shepard, Monkton, doe 109; Maya Cousino, Ferrisburgh, buck 157-7; Brayden Fay, Bristol, doe 112; Wyatt Parks, New Haven, male; Alivia Briggs, New Haven, doe 100; Jackson Angier, Ferrisburgh, doe 104; Abel Trombley, Ferrisburgh, doe 106; Jake Jerome, Middlebury, male; Isabella Kilbourn, New Haven, buck 142; and Remington Cousino, Bristol, doe 110.

Also, Abigail Hurlburt,

Monkton, doe 114; Piper Steady, Orwell, doe 113; Patrick Bora, Ferrisburgh, buck 140-5; Celia Barnes, Cornwall, doe 106; Shealyn Zeno, New Haven, buck 99-2; Kohlton Flemings, Waltham, female; Isabella Audy, New Haven, buck 102-4; Carson Kimball, Brandon, buck 118-2; Violet Whitcomb, Starksboro, buck 85-2; Alexis Freegard, Weybridge, doe 135; Kayla Rose, Richmond, buck 111-2; and Bella Roell, New Haven, male.

NOVICE: Abby Brunton, Middlebury, doe 101; Lucinda Pollitt, New Haven, buck 170-4; Keeegan Cardinal, Starksboro, doe 127; Shannon Brown, Whiting, doe 114; and Phoebe Mason, Starksboro, buck 115-4.

Bow hunt

(Continued from Page 1B)  
also during the October archery season.

The following bow and muzzleloader hunters had deer weighed at an Addison County reporting station this year. They are listed with town of kill, deer gender and weight, and points if a buck.

**W. Addison Gen. Store**  
BOW: Russell Bishop, Shoreham, 137-pound doe; and Timothy Birchmore, Addison, doe 100.

MUZZLELOADER: Evan Fleming, Panton, 110 doe; and Adam Graves, New Haven, 115 doe.

**C & S Hunting Supplies**  
BOW: Gary Whitman, Ripton, 117 pounds, 2 points; William Geehan, Lincoln, 151-5; and Richard Miller, Middlebury, 118 doe.

MUZZLELOADER: William Geehan, Lincoln, doe 103; Nicholas Carrara, Middlebury, doe 120 and buck, 100-2; Hunter Warner, Cornwall, doe 13; David Leggett, Middlebury, doe 94; Raymond Gale, Salisbury, buck 102-3; Joseph Dragon, Ripton doe 85; Scott Jarvis, New Haven, doe 115; Matthew Calcagni, Bristol, doe 92.

**Lincoln General Store**  
BOW: Edward Lafayette, Lincoln, buck 134-8; Donnie Sargent, Lincoln, buck 173-6; Porschea Sweetser, Huntington, buck 210-8; Brian Rossier, buck 183-6; Shawn West, Jericho, buck 173-6; Stanley Sargent, Lincoln,

buck 121-2; Brian Rossier, Lincoln, doe 134; and Ronald Dusablon, Charlotte, buck 143-6.

MUZZLELOADER: Sarah Lathrop, Lincoln, male fawn; Sommer Lathrop, doe 67; Elizabeth Clark, doe 115; Kurt Naser, doe 103; Jody Atkins, doe 130; Roger Regnaud, New Haven, doe 100; Ty Combs, Lincoln, doe 100; Kaiden Pelland, Ripton, buck 141-6; David Patterson, Lincoln, buck 107-2; Jody Brown, Ripton 57 female; Brian Donnelly, Lincoln, 115 doe; and Edward Lafayette, Lincoln, doe 91.

**Jerusalem Country Store**  
BOW: Codey Corse, Starksboro, buck 100-2; Edward Lafayette, Lincoln, buck 101-1; Stefan Johnson, Starksboro, male fawn; Brody Barnard, Starksboro, male fawn; Robert Wener, Sudbury, buck 135-8; Nolan Whitcomb, Shelburne, buck 177-9; and Adam Whitcomb, Starksboro, doe 108.

MUZZLELOADER: Mary Taft, Huntington, doe 125; Patrick Hendee, Starksboro, doe 88; Reiss Hendee, Starksboro, doe 78; Scott Blaise, Huntington, fawn 43; Josh Quebec, Huntington, fawn 86; Kennet Russin, Huntington, doe 106; Allen Dennis, Huntington, doe 94; Bernard Young, Huntington, doe 100; Charles Levarn, Monkton, doe 80; Adam Thompson, Starksboro, buck 150-5; Ethan Wener, Ripton, doe 103; and Pernell Bedell, Bristol, doe 107.

Also, Austin Lafayette, Lincoln, doe 109; Gregory Harriman, Huntington, doe 120; Jason Raymond, Huntington, doe 122; Larry Haskins, Huntington, doe 105; Clinton Alger, Huntington,

doe 110; Jonathan Jennings, Hinesburg, buck 147-10; Kyle Bedell, Waitsfield, doe 188; Wesley Allen, Richmond, doe 89; Grayson Conrad, Lincoln, female; Cory Jennings, Hinesburg, Doe 57; Samantha Slayton, Starksboro, buck 101-6; and Anthony Porter, Bristol, buck 112-3.

**Rack 'N Reel**  
BOW: Anthony Andrews, Lincoln, buck 218-10; James Dragon, Sudbury, buck 194-8; Brendon Huestis, Shoreham, buck 187-4; Eric Hall, Brandon, buck 178-8; Ashley Latulippe, Shelburne, buck 174-8; John Chamberlain, Lincoln, buck 172-7; Luc Charlebois, New Haven, buck 167-10; Cooper Laroche, Middlebury, buck 165-8; Timothy Flynn, Waltham, buck 162-6; and Randy Paquette, Sudbury, buck 162-8.

Also, Frank Raymond, Middlebury, buck 160-6; Katie Chamberlain, Shoreham, buck 160-6; Zachary Comeau, Bridport, buck, 159-8; Bradley Nadeau, Rutland, buck 157-5; Andrew Raymond, Ferrisburgh, buck 157-6; Lawrence Leclair, Lincoln, buck 154-5; Dalton Smith, New Haven, buck 153-8; Sally Torrey, Ferrisburgh, buck 153-8; Michael Ellis, Panton, buck 152-8; and Marc Aube, Williston, buck 150-6.

Also, Matthew Bartlett, Bristol, buck 150-5; Ryan Mobbs, Hinesburg, doe 148; Pierre Collette, Waltham, buck 145-8; Jack Bodington, Hinesburg, buck 145-7; Erik Carruth, Ferrisburgh, doe 145; John Connor, Bridport, buck 143-6; Charles Peet, Huntington, buck 140-6; Daniel Heath, Bristol, buck 140-6; Tyler Hebert Bristol, buck 139-6; Mason White, Monkton, buck 138-6; and Jason Garvey, Charlotte, 136-6.

Also, James Towle, Addison, buck 135-3; Dwayne Roberts, Addison, buck 134-8; Maxwell Flynn, Waltham, buck 133-10; Rusty Conant, Addison, doe 130; William Maloy, Sudbury, buck 132-6; Dylan Stearns, Ferrisburgh, doe 129; Stephen Davis, New Haven, buck 125-3; Pierre Laroche, Cornwall, doe 124; Brock Quesnel, Shoreham, doe 123; Nathan Huestis, Bridport, doe 120; and George Torrey, Ferrisburgh, buck 120-5.

Also, Devin Belisle, Starksboro, doe 119; Christopher Fortin, Charlotte, doe 118; Eric Bingham, Middlebury, buck 117-4; Blake Bowen, New Haven, doe 116; Colin Jennings, New Haven, doe 116; Linwood Chamberlain, Shoreham, doe 114; Paul Jerome, Lincoln, doe 113; Brady Lloyd, Salisbury, doe 113; Christopher Crane, Walden, doe 112; Dalton Smith, New Haven, doe 111; and Kevin Brennan, Monkton, doe 110.

Also, Lyman Gaudette, Charlotte, doe 110; Shawn Russell, New Haven, doe 109; Patrick Fitzgerald, Huntington, doe 109; Scott Brace, Ferrisburgh, doe 107; Sean Kehoe, Charlotte, doe 106; Kari Whitman, Ripton, doe 105; Ayden Trombley, Cornwall, doe 103; Jacob Rochon, Vergennes, doe 103; Jordan Stearns, Middlebury, doe 103; Travis Kilburn, New Haven, doe 103; and Christopher Fortin, Charlotte, doe 101.

Also, Kassi Garrow, New Haven, doe 101; Eugene Bradford, New Haven, doe 100; Christopher Ardell, Benson, doe 100; Leo Fagga, Bristol, doe 99; Patrick Creeley, Montgomery, doe 99; David Rheahme, New Haven, doe 98; Nevaeh Preston, Ferrisburgh, doe 96; Connor Lang, Colchester, doe 95; and Jeremy Lattrell, Shelburne, doe 95.

Also, Christopher Melendy, Starksboro, doe 95; John Mleuch, New Haven, doe 93; Michael Bingham, Middlebury, doe 91; Dylan Stearns, Ferrisburgh, doe 87; Hunter Navari, Colchester, doe 85; and Robert Shortsleeve, Hubbardton, doe 70.

Also, Charles Rockwell, Bristol, buck 170-6; Darcy Spear, Lincoln, buck 156-9; Robert Leggett, Middlebury, doe 150; Dalton Smith, New Haven, buck, 148-6; David Bissonette, Williston, buck 140-7; Jonathan Lapell, Fair Haven, buck 130-5; Jeffery Brown, Addison, doe 127; Peter Funk, Cornwall, doe 121; John Cole Ferrisburgh, doe 120; Christine Paquin, New Haven, doe 120; Conrad Marsano, Middlebury, doe 118; and Lee Lapell, Benson, doe 117;

Also, Jeremy Lattrell, Lincoln, doe 114; Ethan Hallock, Ferrisburgh, doe 110; Scott Blaise, Ferrisburgh, doe 110; Adam Loven, New Haven, buck 105-7; Johnathan Thresher, Salisbury, doe 104; Dewey Barrows, Ferrisburgh, doe, 104; Jacob Choiniere, Bristol, (See Muzzleloader, Page 10B)



Festive Holiday Sweater Coloring & Decorating Contest

Let’s spread some holiday cheer together! Help us decorate the Addy Indy office by designing your own festive holiday sweaters. **Here’s how:**

**GET STARTED:** Cut out the sweater template printed here or download a printable version to cut out at [addisonindependent.com/contests](http://addisonindependent.com/contests).

**MAKE SOME MAGIC:** Decorate your sweater with all the holiday flair you can imagine! Glitter, markers, stickers, jingle bells.....

**SUBMIT YOUR MASTERPIECE:** Drop off or mail your decorated sweater to 58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 by **Friday, January 3rd.**

**WIN BIG:** Our judges will select three winners to receive an amazing prize from our contest sponsors. Winners will be announced in the January 9th edition of the Addison Independent.

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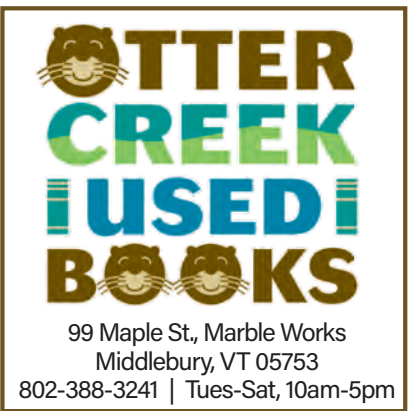
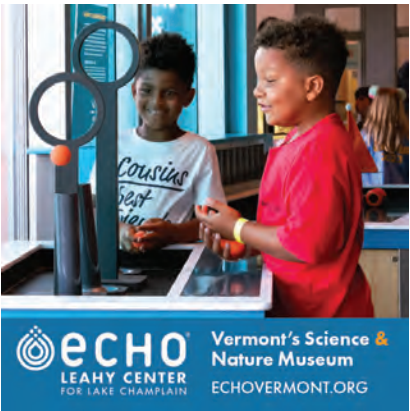
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Age Group: ☐ under 5 ☐ 5-6 ☐ 7-8 ☐ 9-11 ☐ 12-15 ☐ 16-Adult





# community calendar

**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 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.

**jan 11 SATURDAY**  
**Monthly Wildlife Walk in Middlebury.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 8-10 a.m., Otter View Park, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Join Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust to help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. More info call 802-388-6019.

**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.

**Takeout Roast Pork Supper in Vergennes.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main St. across from the Opera House. Menu includes roast pork, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, vegetable, applesauce, roll and dessert. Takeout only. Preorder only. \$12. To preorder call 802-877-3150 before 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 9.

**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 16 THURSDAY**  
**Cabin Fever Lecture — The Bobolink Project in Vergennes.** Thursday, Jan. 16, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library, 258 Main St. Mass. Audubon Grassland Bird Biologist Hyla Howe will tell us about The Bobolink Project and how you can help. Free and open to the public.

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

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

**Al-Anon meetings in Middlebury.** For a list of online meetings visit vermontalananonlateen.org. Online Sundays, 7:15 p.m. and Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

**Midday Mindfulness in Middlebury.** Gather, 48 Merchants Row, noon-12:30 p.m., Wednesday-Friday. Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community hosts this half-hour of mindfulness. No experience necessary Midday Mindfulness, Wednesday-, Thursday, Friday, noon-12:30 p.m.

**Monthly Zen Community Potluck.** Connect with others in the community. Last Wednesday of every month at 5:30 pm at Gather, 48 Merchants Row. Free. Bring a dish. Hosted by Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community.

**Simple Silent Meditation.** Weekdays, Monday-Friday, 7:00-7:40 am, at Otter Creek Yoga. Hosted by Bread Loaf Mountain Zen Community at Otter Creek Yoga, MarbleWorks. Open to all, regardless of experience. Free.

**Tai Chi classes in Middlebury.** Congregational Church, 27 N. Pleasant Street Fall Prevention Tai Chi, Tuesdays 10-11 a.m., Contact Lindsay Hart lindsayhart09@gmail.com.

Fall Prevention Level 1, Fridays, 10 a.m., Ilsley Public Library, 75 Main St. Contact Wendy at wcacovey@gmail.com or 802-238-5217 to leave a message. Ongoing tai chi practice, Tuesdays, 11:15-12:15

p.m. Contact Lindsay Hart lindsayhart09@gmail.com.

Yang 24 for Beginners, Mondays 4-6 p.m., starting Sept. 12. Contact Elizabeth Wirls wirlselizabeth@gmail.com

**Tai Chi Classes in Vergennes at Bixby Library. CLASSES FOR BEGINNERS:**

- **Tai Chi for Fall Prevention: Sun Style (Short Form):** Every Tuesday & Thursday 11:10 AM-12 PM in the Otter Creek Room. With regular practice, Tai Chi improves balance by strengthening muscles and coordination; simultaneously, it strengthens the mind, enhancing calmness and confidence in not falling. Thus, both physically and mentally, Tai Chi is a highly effective exercise for fall prevention. This program is not just for folks with balance challenges. It can help improve flexibility and strength. The simplified movements of this short form are easy and satisfying to learn, adaptable for all ages and abilities, and are an excellent introduction to basic tai chi principles. Contact Lee Francis (lfrancis839@gmail.com) to for more information.

- **Tai Chi Yang 24 Short Form: Every Tuesday 11 AM-12 PM in Bixby Hall:** The Yang 24 Form is the most popular tai chi form around the world right now. It is also known as the simplified form as it is 24 unique moves that were derived from the Yang 108 Long Form. Suitable for all levels of tai chi practitioners, beginner and experienced. Contact Beverly Blakeney (beverlyblakeney@gmail.com) for more information.

- **Tai Chi Sun 73 Long Form: Every Wednesday 11 AM- 12PM in Bixby Hall:** Sun Style Tai Chi can be very suitable for all levels of tai chi practitioners, and especially beneficial for seniors and beginners. Experience with Sun Short Form for Fall Prevention is required. Contact Beverly (beverlyblakeney@gmail.com) for more information.

### ONGOING CLASSES:

- **Tai Chi: Short Form Sun Style Practice: Every Tuesday 10-11AM (no class October 1) in the Otter Creek Room:** This class is for anyone who has completed the formally called TCA, Levels 1,2,3 class. We will practice the form in whole. We will also review any questions about the moves. Contact Dan Bagley (bagzs@yahoo.com) for more information.

- **Tai Chi: Short Form Sun Style Practice Part 2: Every Thursday 10-11AM (no class October 3) in the Otter Creek Room:** This class is for those who have completed the first part of the form formally called TCA or want to learn and review it again. We will start with the movement "Tie the Coat" and proceed to the end of the form. Contact Dan Bagley (bagzs@yahoo.com) for more information.

- **Tai Chi Yang 24 Short Form Practice: Every Tuesday 10:00-10:50 AM starting September 10 in Bixby Hall:** This is a practice class for those folks who are familiar with the Yang 24 form and would like to practice and deepen their skills. For more information, contact Beverly Blakeney (beverlyblakeney@gmail.com)

- **Tai Chi Sun 73 Long Form Practice: Every Wednesday 10-10:50 AM in Bixby Hall:** This is a practice class for those folks who are familiar with the Sun 73 form and would like to practice and deepen their skills. For more information, contact Beverly Blakeney (beverlyblakeney@gmail.com).

For more information about all the programs, visit bixbylibrary.org/events.

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**Reader Comments**

Here's what one reader has to say about us!

A subscriber from Vergennes writes:

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Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.

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### Flash of red

JOIN OTTER CREEK Audubon and Middlebury Area Land Trust on their monthly wildlife walk and you may catch a glimpse of a red-bellied woodpecker like this one. The walk meets at Otter View Park, at the corner of Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. in Middlebury, at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 11.

Photo by Susan Humphrey





# Lincoln

Have a news tip? Call Dawn Mikkelsen at 453-7029

NEWS

LINCOLN — Town Meeting 2025 will be here before you know it so now is the time to circulate petitions if you are interested in running for local office. There will be seventeen town and school positions up for election. In order to run for office, you will need to complete a petition containing signatures of at least twelve Lincoln voters, along with a consent form allowing your name to be on the ballot. These two documents must be submitted to the town clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 27.

Please visit the town website at [lincolnvermont.org/election-meeting](http://lincolnvermont.org/election-meeting) for all the links to the necessary information you will need for Town Meeting, including information on which positions are up for election and the blank petitions and consent forms. Paper copies are also available 24/7 outside the town office in an envelope near the entrance door.

Incumbents, if you are not planning to run again, please let the town clerk's office know so people are aware that there will be a vacant position if no one runs.

Another Town Meeting deadline is coming up on Wednesday, Jan. 15, when you must have your

petition to add an article to the Town Meeting agenda into the town clerk's office by 7 p.m. Sixty signatures are required for this petition. Blank petitions can be found on the town's website and paper copies can also be picked up outside the town office any time day or night.

*Incumbents, if you are not planning to run again, please let the town clerk's office know so people are aware that there will be a vacant position if no one runs.*

Lincoln Sports would like to thank those who have given to their annual fund. The funds are used for ongoing programming, maintenance and camperships. If you would like to make a donation, please visit their website at [lincolnsports.org/donate](http://lincolnsports.org/donate). Grants have come through for the trail project to begin in the new year. The ARPA funds, granted by the town, have been used for two parking

upgrades. The community is invited to attend their monthly meetings, generally held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Burnham Hall. Due to the holiday, the next Lincoln Sports meeting will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 8.

**PLEASE NOTE**  
The town office will be closed Wednesday, Jan. 1 through Friday, Jan. 3.  
Until next time ... Wishing You All A Happy New Year!



UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT Extension Plant Pathologist Ann Hazelrigg (left) advises Pat Sabalis, a Master Gardener Helpline volunteer from Underhill, as they examine a specimen submitted to the Helpline for identification.

Photo courtesy of Debra Heleba/UVM Extension

## Gardener Helpline can help identify plants

By DEBRA HELEBA  
Extension Community Horticulture Program Director  
University of Vermont

Did you receive a poinsettia as a gift and are wondering how to extend its life through the winter? Is your favorite houseplant dropping its leaves? Or are you already thinking ahead to spring and want to know when to start your seeds indoors?

The University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Helpline can answer all your home horticulture questions. Although the trained volunteers who staff the Helpline won't be taking phone calls again until April 2025, the online Garden Helpline is open 24/7/365. You can go to [go.uvm.edu/gardenquestion](http://go.uvm.edu/gardenquestion) to post your question any time.

When you submit your question, please provide as much detail as

possible. Photos help, and you will find tips for submitting up to three per question on the website. Volunteers will research your question and provide science-based answers and additional resources via email within three to five business days.

So who are these trained volunteers?

Currently, more than 30 UVM Extension Master Gardener volunteers staff the Helpline throughout the year. They are all graduates of the Vermont Extension Master Gardener program. After finishing the 16-week comprehensive gardening course, they completed a 40-hour internship to become certified.

As Helpline volunteers they respond to a wide range of questions, even in winter, from beginning to experienced gardeners as well as homeowners who need answers

about landscaping, backyard composting, and other topics. Although at this time of year the majority of questions pertain to indoor gardening, houseplants, and preparing for the upcoming growing season, your questions don't need to be pertinent to the season.

Did you get a soil test done in the fall? Volunteers can interpret the results and provide management recommendations to implement this spring. Curious why your bush beans failed to sprout this past summer? They can help you find answers to that question as well.

Keep in mind that the Helpline can only respond to questions from Vermonters, but if you live out-of-state, you can find your Extension Master Gardener program at [go.uvm.edu/mg-find](http://go.uvm.edu/mg-find).

Extension Master Gardener volunteers cannot provide personal

site visits to home gardens, nor can they respond to questions from commercial growers. If you are a commercial grower, you can submit plant samples and pest and disease questions to the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic at [www.uvm.edu/extension/pdc](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/pdc).

The Garden Helpline is a free service provided by the UVM Extension Community Horticulture Program, which offers training and support to Extension Master Gardener and Vermont Master Composter volunteers. In 2024, Helpline volunteers responded to more than 800 questions from the public.

You can learn more about the program at [uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener](http://uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener). And be sure to check out our gardening resources page at [go.uvm.edu/garden-resources](http://go.uvm.edu/garden-resources) for more gardening information.

## SPREAD THE WORD

Email it to:  
[news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)

## STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

### Mount Abraham Union High School

#### Safoura Camara

Mt. Abraham Union High School introduces Safoura Camara as its student of the week. Safoura lives in Bristol with her parents, younger brother Abe, and two dogs. Safoura has earned academic honors and high honors throughout her high school career and received the French Language Department Award in her sophomore year. Last summer, she was selected to attend Green Mountain Girls State program, an experience that deepened her understanding of leadership and government.

Safoura has developed a passion for social studies, particularly American Studies and U.S. Government and Politics. She values learning about people, governments and how the world works. She has also really enjoyed AP English Language and Composition. These classes have not only expanded her understanding of the world but also honed her critical thinking and communication skills. Her favorite teacher, Ms. Dewitt, has been a significant influence during Safoura's high school journey. As her advisor, Ms. Dewitt's understanding and compassion have made a lasting impact on her. Safoura is actively involved in several extracurricular activities, such as the Eagle Leadership Society, Community Council, and the Tutoring Board. She served as captain of the Girls' Varsity Soccer team this fall and has a passion for lacrosse, hoping to play at the collegiate level. She says her involvement in all these activities has allowed her to develop her leadership skills and build meaningful connections.

Outside of school, Safoura volunteers at the Bristol American Legion and assists with community events through the Eagle Leadership Society. She also holds a part-time job at Tourterelle, where she hosts and helps coordinate events. In her spare time, Safoura enjoys hiking and skiing, as well as spending time with friends and crafting.

Safoura says, "High school is what you make of it. If you approach it with a positive attitude and a willingness to work hard, you'll find it rewarding and full of opportunities. Of course this isn't always easy. It's often tempting to feel discouraged or wish things were different instead of putting in the work to move forward. But adopting this mindset has given me so much. By being prepared, participating, asking for help when you need it and taking ownership of my education, I have achieved more than I expected to."

After high school, Safoura plans on attending college. The Mt. Abraham community wishes her all the best in her future endeavors!



Safoura Camara  
MAUHS

### Otter Valley Union High School

#### Jazmin Rivera

Jazmin Rivera is Otter Valley Union High School's Student of the Week. Jazmin lives in Pittsford with her parents, older brother and her dog, Sugar.

Jazmin has enjoyed how many opportunities she has had at Otter Valley, whether it is doing the morning announcements, participating in clubs, being a teacher's assistant and so much more. Her favorite class is AP Lit, as she has always loved Literature studies. She is a student representative on the OVUU school board as well as co-president of the debate team. Jazmin is also a member of student government and is on the Pride committee, which is responsible for planning assemblies and spirit days. In addition to debate team, Jazmin is on the yearbook committee and the Broadcast Club. She says her favorite is Spirit Committee.

During the summers Jazmin works as a lifeguard, and during the school year she dogsits and babysits. She says she loves being able to help out busy people by taking some stress off of their hardworking hands. In her spare time Jazmin can be found hanging out with friends, reading books, and listening to music — anything from Tupac to Gracie Abrams.

Jazmin says the most important thing she has learned from school is that although people doubt you, their assumptions should not dictate what you are capable of. "People's thoughts of you should not impact who you actually are. I learned this from elementary school and probably will still be learning this through my college experience," she says.

Jazmin has set her sights on studying criminology in college and then going on to law school to become a defense attorney. She has applied early decision to the University of Miami and should know any day now if she has been accepted. All of us at Otter Valley hope for the best for Jazmin as she moves on.



Jazmin Rivera  
OVUHS

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Students of the Week from all area high schools are entered into a raffle to win a \$100 gift card to The Vermont Book Shop.

The winner will be chosen at the end of the school year.

Students of the Week are chosen by school teachers and administration.

Best of luck to all Addison County students!

If you are interested in advertising in Student of the Week contact [advertising@addisonindependent.com](mailto:advertising@addisonindependent.com)

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Congratulations, Safoura and Jazmin

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# Vergennes zoning tweak proposed for flexibility

**By ANDY KIRKALDY**  
VERGENNES — A proposal to allow Vergennes zoning officials greater flexibility in handling some applications, notably for proposals to create more housing units, is working its way through the channels.  
The proposal would allow Zoning Administrator David Austin or the Vergennes Development Review Board (DRB) to approve some applications if they conformed with more lenient state housing-density standards, even if they would not yet be allowed by existing city zoning and subdivision regulations.

A separate provision in the proposal, Austin told the Vergennes City Council on Dec. 10, would clarify how zoning officials could handle expired permits — those that were granted, but upon which applicants did not act in a timely manner.  
Austin said the amended regs would “clearly establish a defined

expiration date for permits” and “put in place an enforcement process” for expired permits.  
The planning commission adopted the proposed changes at its Dec. 2 meeting after a public process, and on Dec. 10 the council agreed to hold a required public hearing on the amendments. That hearing is scheduled for Jan. 14 at 6 p.m. during a regular council meeting.  
Austin explained to the council on Dec. 10 the need for the changes related to state law.  
“It is to allow my office, along with the development review board, to review permit applications and issue decisions in cases where our zoning and subdivision regulations are not in sync or not in conformance with state statutes,” Austin said. “And there are a number of situations where that is the case, and there are already folks coming forward.”  
Austin did not clarify the kinds of cases at the meeting. Planning

Commission Chair Shannon Haggett shed some light on the question in an email and separate interview.  
Haggett said eventually a more comprehensive and time-consuming rewrite will incorporate new state law, but planners wanted the DRB and Austin to be able to approve appropriate projects in the meantime.  
“Until we can reconcile more completely in a meaningful way, we want to be able to say yes in cases where state rules are more lenient than our rules, so we have authority to go with the state rule,” he said.  
What’s on the drawing board now, Haggett was asked.  
“In a nutshell, I know he (Austin) has some folks who are seeking to convert single-household uses to more than three-households,” he said. “In a place like Vergennes, where there is general availability of water and sewer service, the state allows greater residential unit densities than our current regulations permit.”  
Austin outlined to the council another reason why the interim changes should be adopted. He or the DRB could find itself having to deny under city laws a project

that would be legal under state law, and it could prove to be costly.  
“If denied based on city regulations and appealed to Environmental Court ... they’re going to win,” Austin said. “And they’re going to have a permit, and we’re going to have a bunch of legal fees to pay.”

Councilors unanimously agreed to warn the amendments.  
In the meantime, Haggett said work would be ongoing on a permanent fix.  
“We’re engaged in the process of reconciling our regulations to state statute, but honestly, a big part of that is trying to figure out exactly what those inconsistencies

are, and the best way to address them,” he said. “The current proposed amendments are more or less a Band-Aid fix that will allow the zoning administrator and the DRB to positively act on applications that would be permitted by the state, but not by our regulations, while we try to sort it all out.”

*“Until we can reconcile more completely in a meaningful way, we want to be able to say yes in cases where state rules are more lenient than our rules, so we have authority to go with the state rule.”*

— Zoning Administrator David Austin

## Vergennes Lions ending busy half year

**By Larry Simino**  
VERGENNES — The Vergennes Lions have had a very busy first half year. It started with the chicken barbeque on the park with Vergennes Day. Next, the Annual Lions Charity Auction was successfully held online with many folks getting some incredible buys and the club netting close to \$8,000.  
While fundraisers were going on, several members helped install accessible ramps on people’s homes, and others helped collect food for the Vergennes Community Food Shelf — a need which appears to be growing. Thankfully, our neighbors are very giving so most of the needs were met. Thanks to everyone who donated food items.

Another ongoing project is the collection of clear plastic wraps which gets turned into Trex lumber. The club receives Trex benches for donation to locations around our communities.  
In cooperation with the Vergennes Rotary, a “breakfast with Santa” was held on Saturday, Dec. 14, at the Vergennes Methodist Church. The Vergennes Leo Club also assisted.  
At the second meeting in December, some Rotary members attended the Lions meeting, and everyone was encouraged to bring a toy for the Toys for Kids project. Santa Claus and “Elfie” were there to accept the toys and answer questions about Santa and his flight on Christmas eve.  
In 2015, the Marine Corps League approached the Lions about getting involved in collecting Toys for Kids. They suggested that the club keep all donated toys for distribution in the Greater Vergennes area. This year was one of the most successful years, with 461 children getting at least two toys, and some also getting knitted hats, scarves, mittens, etc. This project ended Saturday, Dec. 21, when the children were given the opportunity to “shop” for their parents at the Vergennes Area Rescue.  
This part of the project is co-sponsored by the Vergennes Rotary Club. Special thanks to Addison County Home Health Physical

Therapies for again hosting the Toys for Kids shop, and their staff helping with the whole project, as well as hosting a donation barrel in their Vergennes and Middlebury offices. Also, many thanks to everyone who donated toys through the red barrels that were located at Jackman Fuels, Gaines Insurance, Kinney Drugs, Dollar General, Shear Cuts, and the Vergennes-Panton Water District Office. Through donations, over \$800 in gift cards were given out for teenagers.  
Special mention must be made for the donation of 17 bicycles by Green Mountain Foster Bikes (a project of Addison County United Way), totaling 20 bikes given out.  
The one project still underway is the Cash for Christmas 50/50 ticket sales. The drawing will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 8. Tickets are selling for \$10 for one, \$20 for three or \$40 for eight. The winner will receive half of all ticket sales and the club will get the other half. If anyone is interested in any tickets, checks for the appropriate amount may be sent to Vergennes Lions Club, PO Box 93, Vergennes, VT 05491, along with the names you wish to have on the tickets. Someone will be receiving a nice check to help pay for Christmas buying.  
That address is also good for anyone interested in joining the

club. More people are welcomed and needed to help meet the needs of our communities.  
Many thanks to everyone for helping support Vergennes Lions Club projects.

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### The Magical West

THIS YEAR'S BRIDGE School musical, "Hijinks at High Noon," boasted a blend of western tropes and magic. Written by a dozen students in the Bridge School's Oldest Language Art Class, it featured bandits who rob a bank and are tracked down by townsfolk and a magical hoofed animal. It played to family and friends this past Thursday. Pictured clockwise, from top left photo, are Calvin Quackenbush (center), Ethan Claflin (left, behind table) and Gus Halter (right, behind table); Mari Voorhees (L) and Ely Marcotte; Ellie Riordan (L) and Maya Robbert; (L-R) Phoebe Downs, Hayden Bowdish, Amelie McCue, Maxwell Newton; Ethan Claflin (L) and Gus Halter; Eliza Caldwell (L) with Phoebe Downs; Claflin and Halter, again; and (L-R) Ely Marcotte, Mari Voorhees and Hattie Savoulidis.

Independent photos/Steve James



## Area Religious Services

The Addison Independent prints these free listings on a space-available basis throughout the year. Send new and updated information including schedules, staff, phone numbers, e-mail and Web addresses, to sarahp@addisonindependent.com, or by mail or in person to our office.

This religious service listing is also online at [addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com).

NOTE: Plans may change. Contact your pastor for more information.

Addison  
ADDISON COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH. Addison Four Corners, Routes 22A and 17. Worship, Sundays 10:30 a.m.

HOPECOMMUNITYFELLOWSHIP. Kauffman's Farm, 2867 Mountain Rd. Pastor Jeff Kauffman, [hcfpastor@gmail.com](mailto:hcfpastor@gmail.com), 802-759-2922 or [hopecommunityfellowship.org](http://hopecommunityfellowship.org). Sundays, 10 a.m.

WEST ADDISON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 18 Church St., West Addison, off of Route 17 & Jersey Street. The Rev. Paul Hoffman & Rev. Mike Doran. Sunday worship, 9 a.m.

Brandon/Forest Dale  
BRANDON BAPTIST CHURCH. Routes 7 and

73 West, Brandon. Pastor Bob Bove. 802-247-3339 or [brandonbaptistchurch.org](http://brandonbaptistchurch.org). Sunday services, 11 a.m.

BRANDON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, U.C.C., 1 Carver St., Route 7, PO Box 97, Brandon. The Rev. Sara Rossigg. Pastor. 802-247-6121. [brandoncongregationalchurch@gmail.com](http://brandoncongregationalchurch@gmail.com). Sunday worship 10 a.m., year-round.

BRANDON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 1 Franklin St., PO Box 55, Brandon, 802-282-7532, Rev. John Hardman-Zimmerman, [hzfam@hotmail.com](mailto:hzfam@hotmail.com), [www.brandonumc.com](http://www.brandonumc.com). Main service, Sundays, 11:15 a.m.

FOREST DALE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP. 1895 Forest Dale Road, Brandon. Barry Joe Tate, pastor. [communications@wesleyan.org](mailto:communications@wesleyan.org). Sunday worship, 10:30 a.m. Fully accessible. 802-465-8565.

ONE CHURCH (formerly Lifebridge Christian Church). 97 Frog Hollow Road, Roger Foster, pastor, [roger@church.one](mailto:roger@church.one), [www.church.one](http://www.church.one). 802-247-5433. Sunday, 9 and 10:30 a.m.

LIVING WATER ASSEMBLY OF GOD. 76 North St., Forest Dale. Scott Carlson, pastor. [pastorscott@livingwaterog.org](mailto:pastorscott@livingwaterog.org). 802-247-4542. Sunday worship in-person, 11 a.m. and via Facebook. Thursday Night Bible Study 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

OUR LADY OF GOOD HELP ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (ST. MARY'S). 38 Carver St. Fr. Maurice Moreau, OFM Cap. [ourladyofgoodhelp@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:ourladyofgoodhelp@vermontcatholic.org). Mass schedule: Saturday, 4 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. Reconciliation Saturday, 3:15-3:45 p.m. or by appointment. 802-247-6351.

SAINT THOMAS & GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH. Route 7, Brandon village, corner of Prospect Street, 802-247-6759. Email: [stand1820@gmail.com](mailto:stand1820@gmail.com). Web: [www.stand.org](http://www.stand.org). The Rev'd Nancy Ludwig, Priest-in-Charge. Sunday worship at 10 a.m. Other worship opportunities and activities are announced through our weekly email newsletter (sign up through the website).

Bridport  
THE BRIDPORT CHIRCH CCCC. (Conservative Congregational Church Conference). 54/72 Middle Rd. Bob Bushman, pastor. 802-758-2227 or [bridportchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bridportchurch@gmail.com). Sunday worship service, 10:30 a.m.; Sunday Bible study, 9 a.m.; Wednesday fellowship, noon, (bring your lunch).

SAINT BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH. Part of the combined mission of St. Mary's in Middlebury. Father Brandon Schneider, Parish Administrator. St. Bernadette in (See Services, Page 9B)

# Happy Holidays!

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# Services

(Continued from Page 8B)

Bridport offers Mass Saturdays, 7:30 p.m. 802-388-2943, [www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org](http://www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org), [abvmmary@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:abvmmary@vermontcatholic.org).

Bristol  
BRISTOL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP. 802-453-4773 or 802-453-8473. Home church Meetings. Worship Sundays, 10 a.m. Location varies.

BRISTOL FEDERATED CHURCH. 37 North St., Chris Heintz, Interim Minister. 802-453-2321. [www.bristolfederated.org](http://www.bristolfederated.org). Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m. (except 3rd Sunday of the month when we offer our 3rd Sunday Children's Church at 9 a.m., pancakes served at 8:30 a.m. Every Sunday in person and on Zoom via link at. Messy Church four times/year. Check website for dates.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BRISTOL (behind the park). 10 Park St. Isaac Dzomeku, pastor, 802-453-2551. [fbc.bristol.vt@gmail.com](mailto:fbc.bristol.vt@gmail.com). Sunday service, 9:30 a.m. Puppet Ministry every 4th Sunday. A welcoming, family-oriented church. Contact person Mary Purinton.

SAINT AMBROSE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. 11 School St. Fr. Steven R. Marchand, pastor. Call 802-453-2488. Masses, Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., Wednesdays 9 a.m., Saturday, 6:30 p.m.; Sunday, 8:30 a.m., Confessions: Sunday, 7:30-8 a.m., Tuesday, 7-8 p.m. or by appointment.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH. 839 Rockydale Road. Tom Ferguson, pastor. 802-453-4712. [BristolVt.AdventistChurch.org](mailto:BristolVt.AdventistChurch.org), [tferguson@nnec.org](mailto:tferguson@nnec.org). Bible Study Saturday, 9:30 a.m.; worship, Saturday, 11 a.m. or by Zoom.

Charlotte  
CHARLOTTE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 403 Church Hill Road. Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, pastor. 802-425-3176, [charlotteucc@gmavt.net](mailto:charlotteucc@gmavt.net), [www.charlotteucc.org](http://www.charlotteucc.org). Services in-person or via Zoom. Sundays 10 a.m.: Worship service and Sunday school.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. 2894 Spear St. Rev. James E. Zuccaro, 802-425-2253, [carmel@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:carmel@vermontcatholic.org). Sunday Masses, 8 and 11 a.m. Weekday Masses, Wednesday, 8 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday, 5:15 p.m. Confession, Saturdays, 4 p.m. at St. Jude's in Hinesburg, or by appointment.

Cornwall  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CORNWALL. 2598 Route 30. 802-462-3111 or [CornwallCongregationalChurch@gmail.com](mailto:CornwallCongregationalChurch@gmail.com). Sunday worship 10 a.m.

East Middlebury  
EAST MIDDLEBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Corner of Routes 125 and 116. Myungso Lee, pastor, [myungohope@gmail.com](mailto:myungohope@gmail.com). Sunday Worship, 9 a.m. All are welcome.

VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH. 322 East Main St. Rev. Ed Wheeler, pastor. 802-388-7137. Sunday school, 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:45 a.m.

Ferrisburgh  
NORTH FERRISBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 277 Old Hollow Rd. The Rev. Sunjae Lee, pastor. 802-425-2770, [nfumc@gmavt.net](mailto:nfumc@gmavt.net) or [nfumchurch.org](http://nfumchurch.org). Sunday worship, 10 a.m., in the sanctuary or via YouTube. Sunday school, 10 a.m. Call for information on youth group and adult education.

Hinesburg  
SAINT JUDE THE APOSTLE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. 10759 Route 116. Rev. James E. Zuccaro, 802-425-2253. Saturday Mass, 4:30 p.m.; Sunday Mass, 9:30 a.m. Weekday Masses Monday, Friday, 8 a.m. Confession, Saturday, 4 p.m., and by appointment. 802-482-2290, [stjude@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:stjude@vermontcatholic.org).

Lincoln  
SUNRAY MEDITATION SOCIETY AND SUNRAY PEACE VILLAGE. 2202 Downingsville Rd. 802-453-4610 or [sunray.org](http://sunray.org). Home of the Green Mountain Ani Yunwiwa and Vajra Dakini Nunnery. Cherokee Ceremonial Cycle on new moons; Cherokee and Tibetan Buddhist teachings offered. Come join us to renew the Sacred Hoop in these times.

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BREAD LOAF MOUNTAIN ZEN COMMUNITY. Gather, 48 Merchants Row. Zen Talk and Conversation: Everyday spiritual reflection from a Zen Buddhist perspective. Sundays 8:45 a.m. All are welcome. Free. Followed by social hour with coffee and snacks, 10-11 a.m. Simple Silent Weekday Meditation: Weekdays, Monday-Friday, 7-7:40 a.m., Otter Creek Yoga Studio, Marbleworks. Open to all, regardless of experience. Free.

BUDDHIST SANGHA IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday evenings, 5-6 p.m. on Zoom led by Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society's Dinah Smith. Open to the public. All meditation practices and levels of experience welcome. Zoom link and more info at [cvuus.org/connection/sangha](http://cvuus.org/connection/sangha).

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY. Corner of Duane Court and Charles Avenue. Rev. Patricia Hart and Rev. Christina Sillari interim pastors.

802-388-8080. [cvuus.org](http://cvuus.org). Sunday service onsite and online, 10 a.m. Programs for children explore social justice, a study of other faith traditions, human sexuality, and more. Small Group Ministry and Vespers services offer other options.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MIDDLEBURY, UCC. 2 Main St. The Rev. Andrew Nagy-Benson, Senior Pastor; The Rev. Elizabeth Gleich, Associate Pastor. 802-388-7634. [www.midducc.org](http://www.midducc.org). Services at 10 a.m. in person and livestreamed on [facebook.com/MiddUCC](https://facebook.com/MiddUCC). Our mission is to live as Jesus taught, loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves. We are an open and affirming church of The United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS. 133 Valley View Drive, Buttolph Acres. Clerk's Office: 802-388-3102. Travis Park, Bishop, Middlebury Ward. Sunday meetings: Sacrament Meeting 9 a.m.; Organization meetings 10 a.m.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH. 52 Merchants Row. Pastor Bob Henley. 802-453-3003. [gracebaptistmiddlebury.com](http://gracebaptistmiddlebury.com). Sunday morning worship and Sunday school, 10 a.m. Wednesday Bible study and prayer, 7 p.m. via Zoom (email for invitations). Visitors welcome.

HAVURAH OF ADDISON COUNTY. 56 N. Pleasant St. Middlebury. Shabbat services and Torah study, Weekly Hebrew School. Holiday celebrations and Community events. We are a lay-led, non-denominational and inclusive Jewish community. Contact [hheddirector@gmail.com](mailto:hheddirector@gmail.com) or visit [havurahaddisoncounty.org](http://havurahaddisoncounty.org). On Facebook at HavurahofAddisonCounty.

MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH (AMERICAN BAPTIST) "Always looking to Jesus." 97 S. Pleasant St., Middlebury. Sunday services at 10 a.m. (in-person and livestream on [youtube.com/memorialbaptistchurch5157](https://youtube.com/memorialbaptistchurch5157)) Sunday adult Bible study 9 a.m.; Sunday School for preK - high school at 9 a.m.; childcare (9

a.m.-11:15 a.m.) for ages 0-4; with Wonder Kids (ages 2-5) and Children's Church (ages 6-9) during the sermon time. Small groups during the week. Wednesday night devotions 7 p.m.; Thursday noon Bible study. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Allen, pastor. [www.memorialbaptistvt.org](http://www.memorialbaptistvt.org), 802-388-7472, [membaptistvt@gmail.com](mailto:membaptistvt@gmail.com).

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING (QUAKERS). Havurah House, 56 North Pleasant St. (Route 7). 802-989-7034. [middleburyquakers.org](http://middleburyquakers.org). [tombaskett@gmail.com](mailto:tombaskett@gmail.com) 802-388-6453, [jrosenbe@middlebury.edu](mailto:jrosenbe@middlebury.edu). Meetings for worship and children's programs, Sundays, 10-11 a.m., both in-person and or via Zoom.

MIDDLEBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Corner of Route 7 and Seminary Street. Pastor Rev. Myungso Lee. [middumc@gmail.com](mailto:middumc@gmail.com). 802-388-2510. Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors. A Reconciling Congregation. Worship, Sundays, 11 a.m., in-person or via Zoom. Links at [www.umcmiddlebury.org](http://www.umcmiddlebury.org).

SAINT STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH. On the green in Middlebury at 3 Main Street. The Rev. Paul V. Olsson, Rector. [www.ststephensmidd.org](http://www.ststephensmidd.org) and [ststephensmiddlebury@gmail.com](mailto:ststephensmiddlebury@gmail.com). Sunday Services: 8 a.m., in-person only; 10:30 a.m., in-person and via Zoom. Link at <https://zoom.us/j/360635588>, password StStephen. All are welcome.

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MONKTON FRIENDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 78 Monkton Ridge. Paul Hoffman, pastor, 802-453-3020. [monktonfriendschurch@gmail.com](mailto:monktonfriendschurch@gmail.com). Sunday worship/youth education program, 9 a.m.

New Haven  
NEW HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 91 Town Hill Rd. Pastor Abigail Diehl-Noble. 802-282-6944. [pastornewhavenchurchvt@gmail.com](mailto:pastornewhavenchurchvt@gmail.com) and [www.newhavencongregationalchurch.com](http://www.newhavencongregationalchurch.com). Worship and Sunday School in our Children's Church, Sundays at 10 a.m.

NEW HAVEN UNITED REFORMED CHURCH.

1660 Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7). Rev. Andrew Knott, pastor. 802-388-1345. [newhavenvermonturc@gmail.com](mailto:newhavenvermonturc@gmail.com), [www.nhurc.org](http://www.nhurc.org). Morning Worship Sundays, 10 a.m. Sunday School/Catechism, 11:15 a.m. Evening Worship, 7 p.m. Also available on YouTube and SermonAudio.

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ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH 73 Church Street, Orwell 802-671-8139. Rev. Fr. Julian Asucan, Pastor & Rev. Fr. Romanus Igweonu, Parochial Vicar. Sunday Mass at 11:15 am. Email: [westernvermontchurches@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:westernvermontchurches@vermontcatholic.org).

Panton  
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worship, 10 a.m. Sunday school during the school year.

SAINT ELIZABETH ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. 169 South Main St. Rev. Father Scott A. Gratton. 802-728-5251. [OLAOLV@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:OLAOLV@vermontcatholic.org), [ourladyvt.org](mailto:ourladyvt.org). Mass Saturday, 4 p.m. Adoration, Saturdays, 3-3:45 p.m. Confession, Saturdays, 3-3:45 p.m.

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SALISBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST). The Rev. John Grivetti, pastor. Sundays, 10 a.m.

Shoreham  
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Vergennes/Waltham  
CROSS LIFE CHURCH (formerly Assembly of God Christian Center). 1759 Route 7, Vergennes. Pastors Guy Miller and Tana Miller. 802-877-3903, [office@crosslifechurchvt.org](mailto:office@crosslifechurchvt.org), [www.crosslifechurchvt.org](http://www.crosslifechurchvt.org). In-person services Sundays, 10 a.m. Wednesday prayer group, 9-10 a.m.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH. 73 Church St., Waltham. Pastor Philip VanderWindt. 802-877-2500. Sunday worship services are 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. in person.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERGENNES (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST). 30 S. Water Street. The Rev. Elliott Munn, pastor. 802-877-2435, [vucc@vergenesucc.org](mailto:vucc@vergenesucc.org), [www.vergenesucc.org](http://www.vergenesucc.org). In-person and online services, Sundays, 9:30 a.m. Yoga, second

Saturdays; 9-9:45 a.m., gentle/chair yoga, 10-11:15 a.m., flow yoga.

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VERGENNES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 121 Main St., Vergennes, across from the Vergennes Opera House. Street parking. The Rev. Mike Doran and Rev. Paul Hoffman. 802-877-3376. Sunday worship, in person & online, 10:30 a.m. [vergeneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com](mailto:vergeneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com).

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH. 862 Route 7. Senior pastor Tim Taylor; Youth and Music pastor John Kaufman. 802-877-3393. [victoryvt.org](http://victoryvt.org) Sunday services: Bible hour 9:30 a.m., Worship services 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Prayer and Bible study for adults. Deaf interpretation available. Holiday events: Ladies Lunch at Rosie's in Middlebury Thursday, Nov. 21, 11:30 a.m.; Men's Prayer Breakfast, Sunday, Nov. 24, 8 a.m.

Weybridge  
WEYBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 2790 Weybridge Rd. Rev. Caryne Eskridge, pastor. 802-545-2579. [weybridgechurch@gmail.com](mailto:weybridgechurch@gmail.com), [www.weybridgechurch.org](http://www.weybridgechurch.org). Worship Sundays, 10 a.m.

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WHITING COMMUNITY CHURCH. Brett Cody, pastor. In-person services, Service Times: Sunday School: 9:30 a.m., Sunday Morning: 10:30 a.m.; Wednesday Night Kids & Youth, 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Night Bible Study, 7 p.m. No masks required.



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Photo by Dottie Nelson

Muzzleloader

(Continued from Page 4B)

doe 101; Jody Conant, Weybridge, doe 101; Robert Bachand, Fayston, Dow 100; Liana Wilks-Dupoise, Brandon, doe 97; and Jay Rogers, Ferrisburgh, male 77.

MUZZLELOADER: Adam Paquin, doe 148; David Gagnon, New Haven, doe 133; Conrad Marsano, Middlebury, doe 129; Levi Loven, New Haven, doe 125; Cole Shepard, Lincoln, doe 124; Justin Bolduc, Addison, doe 114; Eugene Bradford, Ferrisburgh, doe 114; Christopher Griggs, Lincoln, doe 111; and Dewey Barrows, Ferrisburgh, doe 111.

Also, William Whittemore, Ferrisburgh, doe 110; Jerad Gorton, New Haven, doe 109; Mark Choiniere, Bristol, deo 107; Erik Mashia, Hinesburg, doe 105; Eric Bingham, Middlebury, doe 104; Finnley Vincelette, Bristol, doe 102; Matthew Calcagni, Ripton, doe 98; Jody Conant, Weybridge, doe 88; Nathan James, New Haven, female fawn; and Timothy Flynn, Waltham, female fawn.

Also, Bryan Harrington, Essex, buck 168-8; Christopher Hanson, Monkton, buck 153-7; Kevin Haight, Waltham, buck 132-4; Zachary Thompson, Lincoln, buck 129-2; Brian Hayes, New Haven, doe 123; Peter Scott, New Haven, buck 121-4; James Akerman, New Haven, doe 120; Rowan Nelson, Weybridge, doe 115; Ryan Zeno, Panton, doe 115; and Philip Hardway, Addison, buck, 112-6.

Also, Gary English, Salisbury, doe 111; Scott Blaise, Ferrisburgh, doe 110; Charles Cushman, Panton, buck 102-5; Jacob Choiniere, Bristol, doe 101; Jonathan Jennings, Addison, doe 101; Jody Conant, Weybridge, doe 101; Lian Wilks-Dupoise, Brandon, doe 97; Brady Lloyd, Salisbury, doe 92; Joseph Hill, Panton, male 82; David Horton, Cornwall, male 68; and Brett Flegenheimer, Bridport, male 62.

Backwoods Guns & Tackle

BOW: Steven Rheume, Cornwall, buck 180-7; Jim Ryan, Shoreham, buck 169-6; Justin

Bushey, Addison, buck, 158-8; Karl Kaufmann, Bridport, buck 143-7; Chance Hall, Orwell, doe 123; Tanner English, Salisbury, doe 117; Renee Plouffe, Bridport, doe 113; Victor Fifield, Ripton, doe 105; and Gary English, Salisbury, doe 78.

MUZZLELOADER: Scott Tremblay, Shoreham, doe 126; Scott Whitman, Ripton, doe 120; Destiny Gero, Cornwall, female fawn; Brian Trombley, Shoreham, female fawn; Colten Butler, Shoreham, doe 143; Renee Plouffe, Salisbury, doe 131; Todd Seguin, Weybridge, doe 125; Tristan Stearns, Shoreham, doe 113; Amos Ranney, Bridport, doe 108; Brent Warren, Cornwall, doe 140; and Noah Hanson, Cornwall, doe 112.

Green MTN Trails End

BOW: Robert Karzmarczyk, Ripton, buck 172-8; Cory Jennings, Hinesburg, 130-5; and Lonnie Lavallee, Bristol, female fawn.

MUZZLELOADER: Matthew Mcguire, Bristol, doe 99.

The Evergreen Christmas Fern

By SUSAN SHEA

Tromping through our woods in December in search of a Christmas tree, I often notice an evergreen fern, one of the few green plants on the forest floor this time of year, other than young conifers. An easy fern to identify, it grows in fountain-like clumps and has glossy, dark green leaflets, or pinnae. This is Christmas fern (Polystichum acrostichoides), named for its evergreen habit and the shape of its leaflets. Each leathery, lance-shaped leaflet has a lobe at its base, creating a leaf shape my college botany professor described as looking like Santa’s boot. Others have noted the leaflets’ resemblance to Christmas stockings.

Christmas fern grows throughout eastern North America. It is related to the uncommon Braun’s holly fern, which grows in cool, moist forests in much of New England. Occasionally the two species hybridize, producing the rare Potter’s fern, named for Henry Potter, a Vermont farmer and botanist.

Christmas fern grows in a variety of woodlands and on shady, rocky slopes. It tolerates a range of soil acidity and moisture levels. This fern is most abundant in northern hardwood forests, especially those with rich, calcareous (limy) soils. I once visited a red oak-northern hardwood forest with rich soils which had the tallest and healthiest-looking Christmas ferns I’ve ever seen, some with twisted leaves.

In winter, the fronds of these ferns are often flattened against

the ground. Studies have shown that the first hard frosts stimulate development of a hinge zone at the base of the stem, which causes the fronds to fall over. The prostrate fronds benefit from the warmth and protection of leaf litter, which helps to prevent the leaves from freezing. Humidity is trapped beneath the ferns’ leaves, reducing desiccation. The leaves continue to photosynthesize during winter at a reduced rate. When fiddleheads emerge in spring, covered with silvery scales, the old fronds die.

Spring Christmas ferns include fertile fronds in the center of the clump which grow taller than the sterile fronds. The uppermost leaflets of the fertile fronds are smaller than the others and bear spores in tiny cases called sporangia. If you check the undersides of fertile leaflets in summer, you can see brown masses of these spore cases. In late summer or early fall, when the sporangia are ripe and dry, they split open and the spores are dispersed by the wind.

Each fern produces millions of spores, but only a few will land in suitable habitat. In contrast to flowering plants, ferns and their relatives such as club mosses undergo two very different developmental stages during their lives (sometimes called alternating generations). There is a gametophyte, or sexual phase, and a sporophyte, the familiar, spore-producing phase. According to the Peterson Field Guide to Ferns, by Cobb, Farnsworth, and Lowe, if a spore lands in a moist, shady spot, it develops

into a gametophyte: a flat, green, heart-shaped body with sex organs that grows underground. When stimulated by water, sperm from one gametophyte swim to the female organ on another gametophyte and fertilize an egg. The egg divides and grows into a tiny fern, a new sporophyte, at first anchored to the gametophyte. Ferns also reproduce vegetatively; horizontal stems, or rhizomes, grow outwards and develop new fronds and roots. When the connecting rhizomes die, the ferns become separate plants.

Christmas fern is easy to grow and makes a good ornamental for shade gardens. It’s best to purchase nursery-grown plants so as not to deplete wild populations. People have used this fern for a variety of medicinal purposes, including to treat rheumatism, stomachache, pneumonia, and toothache.

Wildlife also eat Christmas fern. Ruffed grouse feed on leaves in fall and winter. Deer may browse the fronds during harsh winters when food is scarce. Wild turkeys eat the young spring leaves. Ground-nesting songbirds such as ovenbirds and veery sometimes nest in clumps of Christmas fern.

When you walk in the winter woods, look for the splashes of green made by the hardy Christmas fern — and for the stocking shape of its leaflets.

Susan Shea is a naturalist, writer, and conservationist based in Vermont. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.

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1900 Jersey St., S. Addison, VT 05491

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jmasefield@gmavt.net

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vermontwindowtreatments.com



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Call 802-388-4944 or email advertising@addisonindependent.com for details.



# CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

**AL-ANON OFFERS HELP** and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit [vermontalanonlateen.org](http://vermontalanonlateen.org) for links and list of other meetings in the region. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS** in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS** is a 12 step program offering recovery from compulsive eating and food behaviors. For meeting times and general information please visit [www.oavermont.org](http://www.oavermont.org) or call (802)863.2655.

Public Meetings

**VERGENNES FREE THINKERS** Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting [vergennefreethinkers@gmail.com](mailto:vergennefreethinkers@gmail.com) for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

Public Meetings

**THE TURNING POINT CENTER** of Addison County is open for in-person services, Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm, 54A Creek Road, Middlebury. We are available by phone 24/7 at 802-388-4249.

**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.

Help Wanted

Services

**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.

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.

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



Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 13B and 14B.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



## Addison County Parent/Child Center

### VAN DRIVER JOB OPENING Addison County Parent/Child Center

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

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

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

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

### Long-term substitute teacher in the Preschool classroom

**Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) is seeking a long-term substitute in the Preschool classroom of our Addison County Early Learning Center in New Haven, VT.**

This is a full time position, 8:00am - 4:00pm, Monday - Friday from mid-February, 2025 to mid-June, 2025.

Head Start is a federally funded, national child and family development program that provides comprehensive services for pregnant women, children from birth to age five, and their families. Services for children promote school readiness and include early education, health, nutrition, mental health, and services for children with special needs. Services for parents promote family engagement and include parent leadership and social service support.

Interested applicants can apply at <https://www.cvceo.org/careers>.

CVCEO/Head Start is interested in candidates who can contribute to our diversity and excellence. Applicants are encouraged to include in their cover letter information about how they will further this goal.



THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

### Woodworks Finish Applicator

**Silver Maple Construction** seeks a reliable, self-motivated cabinetry finisher to join our dynamic team. This is a full-time position in a state-of-the-art woodworking facility with excellent benefits. We offer a diverse range of custom products, from cabinetry and millwork to architectural masterpieces. We are searching for an independent self-starter who thrives with minimal supervision.

*If you believe you are the right fit, we invite you to embrace the opportunity to join us on our journey toward excellence and innovation.*

#### Total Rewards

- Competitive Weekly Pay (based on experience)
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- AND More!



To learn more, please visit [silvermapleconstruction.com](http://silvermapleconstruction.com), email [hr@silvermapleconstruction.com](mailto:hr@silvermapleconstruction.com), or call our office at (802) 989-7677.

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities



United Way of Addison County would like to thank each and every individual who volunteered across Addison County this year.

**We wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!**

To learn about volunteer opportunities in the new year, please reach out to Amy Hoekstra at [amyh@unitedwayaddisoncounty.org](mailto:amyh@unitedwayaddisoncounty.org).



Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted



### Nursery/Greenhouse Manager

*Full Time, Year Round position available now!*

Our successful and locally owned retail Lawn, Garden, Farm & Pet Center is seeking an experienced, qualified, and highly motivated individual to manage a thriving plant sales department.

Responsibilities include: Ordering, Care, Inventory Management, and Sales of Greenhouse and Nursery Plants, Seeds, and Bulbs, plus a genuine interest in providing knowledgeable customer service. **Extensive Horticulture knowledge a must!**

Qualified Candidates must have a dedicated work ethic and be able to perform moderate lifting, work hard in the busy seasons, and enjoy a very flexible schedule in the winter.

Full-Time Benefits include Generous Wages (based on experience) plus Bonuses, Paid Vacation and more!

Please send your Resume along with Salary History and References to:

**Middlebury AGWAY Farm & Garden,**

**Attn: Jennifer Jacobs**

**338 Exchange St. Middlebury, VT 05753**

**or by email to [info@middleburyagway.com](mailto:info@middleburyagway.com)**

**Middlebury Agway 338 Exchange St. – Middlebury, VT.**

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 INDEPENDENT

Serving Addison County, Vt., Since 1946

Addison Independent

# CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

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

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notices         | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted       | <input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks  | <input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted       | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personals       | <input type="checkbox"/> For Sale          | <input type="checkbox"/> Cars               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings** | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free**          | <input type="checkbox"/> For Rent          | <input type="checkbox"/> SUVs               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found** | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent      | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales    | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat         | <input type="checkbox"/> Boats              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden   | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities   | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals           | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption        |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals   |

\*\* no charge for these ads    Spotlight with large ✓ \$2

### PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of words: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

# of runs: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spotlight Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Internet Listing: **\$2.00**  
TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.



# Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

## For Rent

**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an

## For Rent

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.

**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

## Help Wanted

## Help Wanted

### MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH SCHOOL

#### COACHING POSITIONS

Middlebury Union High School is seeking coaches for the following:

- JV Baseball
- JV Softball

**Applicants must possess a strong knowledge of coaching principles with previous coaching experience preferred. Must possess strong organizational skills and the ability to communicate and relate to student athletes.**

**Interested parties should send a letter of interest, resume, and three current letters of reference to:**

Sean Farrell/Athletic Director  
Middlebury Union Middle School  
73 Charles Avenue  
Middlebury, VT 05753

Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled. E.O.E.



### PRESCHOOL CLEANER

We are seeking an individual to clean our Orwell Preschool Program after the school day. We anticipate that this would take 30-45 minutes Monday through Friday. Hours can be flexible as long as it is after 4:30pm when the program is closed for the day. This would include sweeping and mopping the floors, cleaning the bathroom, and general disinfecting of common spaces.

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@mjccvt.org](mailto:dylan@mjccvt.org).

The Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## For Rent

**MIDDLEBURY BRIARWOOD APARTMENTS** is currently taking wait-list applications for 2- br apartments. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply- rent based on income- 2 person minimum occupancy. Equal Housing Opportunity. Handicapped accessible. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www. SummitPMG.com.

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

**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.

### 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.

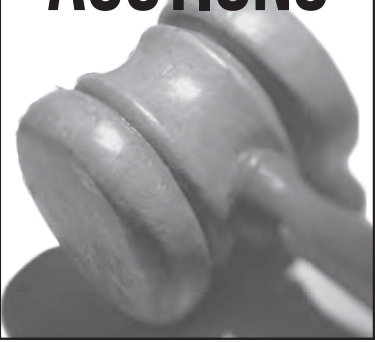
**HAY FOR SALE** Over 1500 square bales of 1st cut hay for sale. \$4 per bale. Also 300+/- bales of 2nd cut hay on tarped wagons - \$4 per bale. Located at 864 Smead Rd., Salisbury, VT. First come, first serve. Call 802-352-4686.

**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.

## AUCTIONS



### MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT.125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT

Happy Holidays check back next week for the Market Report!	
BEEF	\$
Iroquois	3.80
Nop	9.60
Blue	1.50
J. Allen	2.50
Sunder	4.00
Vorse	4.00
P. Livestock	2.00
CALVES	\$
Barne	0.00
Elysia	0.50
White	4.00
J. Will	5.00
Sunder	7.60
Wilcox	9.00

Total Beef - 155 Total Calves - 212  
We value our faithful customers.  
**Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.**  
call 1-802-388-2661

## Pet of the week

Send us your pet!  
[news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)

## Four rescued from icy swamp

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police and other area emergency responders on Saturday, Dec. 21, converged on a swampy area off Shard Villa Road in Salisbury to rescue four people who had become submerged in the frigid waters.

Middlebury Fire Chief Dave Shaw said the four individuals had been traveling in the area on off-road vehicles — one of them a snowmachine — and had fallen through ice in a swamp near the Goodrich Farm methane facility.

Also responding to the scene were officials from Middlebury Regional EMS, Vermont State Police and the Salisbury Fire Department. Shaw said all the rescued folks were successfully warmed up and declined further services.

Meanwhile, police enforced

## Middlebury Police Log

Middlebury's overnight winter parking ban downtown area almost every night in the past week, and ticketed and towed on vehicle on Dec. 21.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Cited Rodrigo Cardoso De Lima, 44, of New Haven for driving under the influence (second offense) and violating his conditions of release, following a stop at the intersection of Route 7 and Exchange Street in Dec. 16. Police said Cardoso De Lima also refused to provide an evidentiary breath sample.

### TOWN OF SALISBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Salisbury Development Review Board (DRB) will hold a Public Hearing in the Town Office (25 Schoolhouse Road) at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, to consider the following:

#### Application 2024-13

An application from Applicants and Property Owners Thomas & Patricia Manley (parcel ID #0207012), 389 Plains Road, in connection with a proposed two-lot subdivision, total 3 lots, (Minor subdivision), Lot 1 - 3.34acres, Lot 2 -2.73acres, and Lot 3 - 45.1acres, from a 51.21-acre lot. This property affects and is located at 389 Plains Road and is zoned in the Low-Density Residential District, (LDR).

This application is pursuant to §2.4.3E, §3.1.1, §6.0.1(3), §6.0.5, & 6.5.1 of the Salisbury Unified Development Regulations.

cipation (either oral or written) is a prerequisite to an interested person's right to take any subsequent appeal from the DRB's decision. See 24 V.S.A. §4465(b) and §4471.

These hearings will be conducted with in-person and remote access. Those wishing to participate remotely must obtain the necessary remote access codes. Access codes (for online or phone) are available by contacting the Salisbury Town Clerk during regular business hours prior to 3:00 PM on January 14, 2025. The Salisbury Town Office is open on Tuesdays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM and Thursdays from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Application materials are available for inspection in the Town Office during regular business hours.

Anna Scheck  
DRB Clerk

### WARNING

#### COUNTY OF ADDISON ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A Section 133(3)(a), the taxpayers of the County of Addison are hereby given notice that the annual meeting to discuss the final budget for 2025-2026 will be held at 9:00 am on Monday, January 27, 2025. The meeting will be held in the County Clerk's office at the Frank Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury.

More information and extra copies of the budget may be obtained by contacting the Addison County Clerk at 802-388-1966 or [addisoncountyclerk@gmail.com](mailto:addisoncountyclerk@gmail.com).

Patricia Ross, Assistant Judge & Nicole Wilkerson, Assistant Judge

REVENUE	2025-2026
County Tax 0.005678567 Estimate	\$ 379,667.00
Interest Earned	\$1000.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$15.00
Passports	\$10,000.00
Wills for Safekeeping	\$8,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$398,682.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Court</b>	
Contingency	\$200.00
Contracted Services	\$6,640.00
Dues & Membership	\$1,550.00
Insurance	\$2,950.00
Passport/Budget Advertising	\$2,000.00
Office Expense	\$2,450.00
Court Personnel	
Benefits	\$6,602.00
Salaries	\$70,786.00
Audit	\$ -
<b>Court Subtotal</b>	<b>\$93,178.00</b>

<b>Probate Court</b>	
Contingency	\$470.00
Dues	\$235.00
Supplies/Equipment	\$25.00
Training & Education	\$420.00
<b>Probate Court Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,150.00</b>

#### EXPENSES CONTINUED

<b>Sheriff's Building</b>	
Building & Grounds	\$10,000.00
Capital Improvements	\$25,000.00
Custodial	\$2,600.00
Inspections	\$3,000.00
Insurance	\$6,500.00
Utilities	\$19,000.00
<b>Sheriff's Building Subtotal</b>	<b>\$66,100.00</b>
<b>Sheriff's Department</b>	
Insurance/Bonds	\$29,000.00
Office Supplies	\$800.00
Radio	\$1,500.00
Telephone	\$4,000.00
Training	\$34,000.00
Valcour/Spillman Personnel	\$5,300.00
Total Benefits	\$15,028.00
Total Salaries	\$103,626.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$193,254.00</b>
Sheriff Capital Reserve	\$45,000.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 398,682.00</b>

### TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING CONDUCTED-IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM LINK

#### AGENDA

MONDAY, JANUARY 13TH, 2025 | 7:00 PM

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 13th, 2025 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at the Town Offices, 77 Main Street, to consider the following agenda. The hearing is also available to participants via Zoom video link. Interested persons wishing to participate in this meeting/hearing may do so by attending and/or submitting written comments to J.R. Christ at [jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org](mailto:jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org)

Please try to attend on time, as we will be delivering the oath at the beginning of the meeting.

- Call to Order
- Approval of December 9th, 2024 DRB minutes
- Public hearing business- Hearing participants must take an oath administered by the DRB chair.
  - Application (file #2025-024:255.000-SP) is a request by Ilsley Public Library for a Site Plan review, dimensional (footprint) waiver and parking waiver related to the expansion and renovation of its existing facility located at 75 Main Street in Middlebury. The Applicant proposes the removal of two earlier additions that were made to the original library and the construction of a new two-story addition and associated sitework. The property is identified as parcels #024:255.000, 024:254.000, 024:253.000, 024:252.000 and 024:251.000 in the Central Business Zoning district.
  - Deliberative Session (if needed)- separate Zoom links will be provided to DRB members via email.
  - Other Business
  - Adjournment

#### Zoom Meeting Invitation

Date/Time: January 13th, 2025 7:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81441011833?pwd=PT6aBwzGpKmBMjpUsubaWDTCeGcEMG.1>

Meeting ID: 814 4101 1833 Passcode: 217362  
Dial-in number: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

### TOWN OF NEW HAVEN PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

#### Review of Proposed 2025 Town Plan

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.  
New Haven Town Office, 78 North Street, New Haven

The New Haven Planning Commission invites all residents of the Town of New Haven, VT to attend the public hearing on the proposed 2025 Town Plan slated for Monday, January 13, 2025 at the New Haven Town Office, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT at 7:00 p.m.

The New Haven Town Plan was last updated in 2016 and adopted on March 7, 2017. Upon approval by voters on July 28, 2021, the Enhanced Energy Plan was made part of the Town Plan. The Planning Commission is now proposing amendments to the 2017 Town Plan in order to bring it into compliance with recent statutory requirements, as well as update data, maps, and other information within the plan. These amendments include:

- Over-arching Goals
- Updated Tables, Graphs, and Maps
- Flood Resilience Plan
- Introduction to Enhanced Energy Plan
- Updated Goals and Objectives for each of the following Chapters:
  - Population
  - Local Economy
  - Utilities and Facilities Plan
  - Transportation
  - Natural Resources
  - Land Use
  - Flood Resiliency

The proposed amendments do not call for substantial changes to the zoning districts or zoning map, nor do they alter the designation of any land area.

A copy of the proposed 2025 New Haven Town Plan can be found on the town website at: <https://www.newhavenvt.com/> or by emailing the zoning administrator at: [newhavenzoning@gmavt.net](mailto:newhavenzoning@gmavt.net). If you are unable to attend the hearing, written comments and suggestions can be emailed to [newhavenzoning@gmavt.net](mailto:newhavenzoning@gmavt.net) or mailed to: Town of New Haven Zoning Administrator, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT 05472.

- Reported the driver of a dark-colored sedan fled from an attempted traffic stop on Ossie Road on Dec. 16.

- On Dec. 17, took into protective custody a very drunken man, for whom they arranged transportation to a “safe, supervised location.”

- Were informed of an alleged road-rage incident involving two drivers traveling south through Middlebury via Route 7 during the early evening of Dec. 17.

- Received a report on Dec. 17 that someone had used a local resident's stolen credit cards to make purchases at area businesses.

- Investigated a potential burglary at a Cottage Lane residence on Dec. 18.

- Took an extremely intoxicated man to Porter Medical Center on Dec. 18. Police said they measured the man's blood-alcohol content at 0.338%. For comparison, the legal limit for driving is 0.08.

- Responded to a report of an unresponsive man in a vehicle parked off Court Street on Dec. 18.

- Arrested Timothy E. Edwards, Jr., on an outstanding warrant in the Court Street area on Dec. 18.

- Responded to a shoplifting complaint at TJ Maxx on Dec. 18.

- Responded to a reported disturbance at a Valley View apartment on Dec. 18. Police said a man had fled from the apartment upon their arrival and were told he had been “disruptive and argumentative.”

- Intervened in a local domestic dispute on Dec. 19.

- Responded to a report of a man “aggressively asking for money” at The Centre shopping plaza on Dec. 19. Police said the man was gone upon their arrival.

(See Middlebury, Page 15B)

## Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this **ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on **Pages 14B and 15B**.

Addison County  
Courthouse (1)

Addison County Regional  
Planning Commission (1)

Ferrisburgh (1)

Middlebury (1)

New Haven (1)

Rutland Northeast  
Supervisory Union (1)

Salisbury (1)

Slate Valley USD (1)

State of Vermont (1)

Vergennes (1)

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ADDISON COUNTY  
INDEPENDENT



# Middlebury

(Continued from Page 14B)

- Responded to a shoplifting complaint at Hannaford Supermarket on Dec. 19.
- Checked on the welfare of an East Middlebury resident on Dec. 19.
- Responded to a reported domestic disturbance in the Perkins Lane area on Dec. 19. Police said they separated the parties in question.
- Encountered a “suspicious” person behind a closed Route 7 South business at around 11:35 p.m. on Dec. 20. Police said after a brief conversation, the person got into a vehicle and sped away. Police said the case remains under investigation.
- Responded to a report of two vehicles doing doughnuts in the Hannaford Supermarket parking lot on Dec. 20.
- Checked on the welfare of a houseless person who had sleeping in a tent near Merchants Row on Dec. 20. Police said they offered the person resources — including overnight shelter — but the person declined.
- Responded on Dec. 20 to a reported death at the retirement community off Lodge Road. Police said the deceased — 89-year-old Lois Woolsey — had died from natural causes.
- Met with a local resident on Dec. 20 who had been concerned about recent drone sightings in the Northeastern states.
- Checked on the welfare of a houseless person who had been camping near Merchants Row on Dec. 21.
- Responded to the Greg’s Meat Market parking lot on a report of a vehicle doing doughnuts on Dec. 21.
- Helped with a medical call at Vermont Sun Fitness off Exchange Street on Dec. 21.
- Helped a stranded motorist on Route 7 South on Dec. 21.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS tend to a person who had fallen through a floor opening in the Main Street area on Dec. 21.

# Vergennes Police Log

VERGENNES — Vergennes police ended up helping a student who was reported to have left their school at about 12:23 p.m. on Dec. 16 amid “concerns for her well-being” among the officials and teachers who helped find her.

Police said they found the juvenile near Route 7, and that she was “provided services.”

In other action between Dec. 16 and 22, Vergennes police conducted 16 traffic stops and a dozen cruiser patrols, responded to one false alarm, processed one pre-employment fingerprint request; and also:

On Dec. 16:

- Looked into a report of a suspicious man on Main Street trying to enter a vehicle that was for sale and determined there was no problem.
- Went to Vergennes Union Elementary School on a “Doughnut With a Cop” visit.
- Received another three voicemail messages from a Hillside Acres resident with known mental health issues.

On Dec. 17, went to Main Steet on a report of a domestic dispute and discovered the issue was that a woman had walked away from her residence and her caretaker; police contacted her caretaker to pick her up.

On Dec. 18:

- Received an anonymous tip on an open case.
- Helped move a disabled vehicle that has been obstructing traffic off Main Street.
- Conducted a radio interview with 92.1 FM (WVTK) about the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Highway Safety Campaign.

On Dec. 19, dealt with the caller who’d left a vulgar phone message on the Vergennes Union High School voicemail. Police said the caller was dealing with a mental health issue.

On Dec. 20:

- Enforced the city’s winter parking ban.
- Took a report that an intoxicated patron of the rehab program at One Alden Place had left the program.
- Dealt with a minor two-vehicle crash at the intersection of Main and South Water streets.

On Dec. 21:

- Enforced the city’s winter parking ban.
- Participated in the Shop With a Cop program at the Boys & Girls Club on Armory Lane.
- Discussed with VUHS administrators a student who might be using drugs. School officials said they have a safety plan in place and will keep police informed.

## PUBLIC NOTICE POLICY WARNING

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District Board will conduct a public hearing at their meeting on January 13, 2025 at 6:30 P.M. and take action on the following policy:

**C8 Pupil Privacy Rights**  
**C13 Students Who Are Homeless**  
**C22 Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities**  
**C25 Enrollment of Non-Resident Students**  
**C71 Possession and Administration of Prescription Medication and Emergency Medication**  
**D6 Minimum, Optimal and Maximum School District Average Class Size**

C22 Student Activities [Elementary] (to rescind)  
C23 Student Clubs and Activities [Secondary] (to rescind)  
C24 Interscholastic Sports (to rescind)  
C30 Student Medication (to rescind)

Copies of the policy are available on the district website at [slatevalleyunified.org](https://slatevalleyunified.org)

Brooke Olsen-Farrell  
Superintendent of Schools

SPREAD THE WORD      Email it to: [news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)



## Thousands on the wing

THE SNOW GEESE were spotted on West Road in Pantton. A farm on Jersey Street and the distant Adirondacks serve as a backdrop.

Photo by Jeannette Armell

## Public Notices

can be found in this  
***ADDISON INDEPENDENT*** on Pages  
**14B and 15B.**

### CITY OF VERGENNES NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the City of Vergennes that the City Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 6:00 P.M. for discussion of the final draft of the revised Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. This public hearing will be held as a hybrid meeting with participation remotely through Zoom or In-Person at Vergennes Fire Station, 50 Green Street, Vergennes.

Join by Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/561577976>  
• Join by Phone: Dial: 1 (312) 626-6799  
• Meeting ID: 561 577 976  
• Meeting Password: 1234

For participants joining by phone:

- To raise your hand during the meeting, press \*9
- To mute/unmute during the meeting, press \*6

If you experience any difficulty in accessing the Zoom meeting, contact David Austin at 802-989-6315.

**Statement of Purpose:**

1. To establish a defined expiration date for all Zoning Permits and to establish Enforcement Procedure for expired Permits.
2. To enable the Zoning Administrator and Development Review Board to review Permit Applications and issue Decisions where City of Vergennes Zoning and Subdivision Regulations are not in conformance with current State Statutes.

**Geographic Area Affected**  
All Districts

**Table of Contents of Proposed Amendments – There is no change in the Table of Contents.**  
CHANGES ARE PROPOSED TO ARTICLE II, Section 201(C), ARTICLE III Section 307, Section 308, and ARTICLE VII, Section 702.

A copy of the full text of the final revised version of the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is available for public review by contacting David Austin at [zoning@vergennes.org](mailto:zoning@vergennes.org). Copies are also available for review at the office of the City Clerk.

December 18, 2024  
Betsy Sullivan  
City Clerk  
City of Vergennes

### TOWN OF FERRISBURGH NOTICE OF HEARING

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 7 pm, at the Town Hall.

Application Number 24-116: Two-Lot Subdivision Applicant(s): Cheryl and John DeVos; 128 Bayview Road; Rural Agricultural (RA-5) District; tax id no. 04/01/06. Hearing continuance.

Application Number 24-123: Site/Sketch Plan Review. Applicant(s): Clark Hinsdale; West Side of Greenbush Road and Route 7; Rural Agricultural (RA-5) District; tax id no. 05/01/91. Three-Lot Subdivision.

The above files are available for inspection at the Town Clerk’s Office.

Persons wishing to appear and be heard may do so in person or be represented by an agent or an attorney. Communications about the above hearings may also be filed in writing with the Board or the Zoning Administrator.

**Pursuant to 24 V.S.A 4464(a)(1)(C) and 4471(a), participation in this local proceeding is prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.**

### STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO. 24-PR-07591 IN RE ESTATE OF JACK L. GOODMAN

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of Jack L. Goodman, late of Middlebury, Vermont  
I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**  
Dated: December 17, 2024

William E. Goodman, Executor  
C/O Powers & Powers P.C.  
1205 Three Mile Bridge Road, Middlebury, VT 05753  
802-388-2211  
[adam@powerslawvt.com](mailto:adam@powerslawvt.com)

Publication: Addison Independent  
Publication Date: 12/26/24  
Address of Probate Court: Addison Probate Court, 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753.

### 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

### PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

Guidelines for Distinguishing Between Primary and Specialty Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.  
Vermont Proposed Rule: 24P050  
**AGENCY:** Department of Financial Regulation

**CONCISE SUMMARY:** The rule prescribes guidelines for distinguishing between “primary” and “specialty” mental health and substance abuse services. This revision designates interprofessional consulting and peer support services as “primary” mental health and substance abuse services and makes technical and stylistic changes to the rule.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:** E. Sebastian Arduengo, Department of Financial Regulation, 89 Main St, Montpelier, VT 05620 Tel: 802-828-4846 Fax: 802-828-5593 E-Mail: [Sebastian.Arduengo@vermont.gov](mailto:Sebastian.Arduengo@vermont.gov)  
URL: <https://dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/legal-general-counsel/proposed-rules-and-public-comment>

**FOR COPIES:** Anna Van Fleet, Department of Financial Regulation, 89 Main St, Montpelier, VT 05620 Tel: 802-828-4843 Email: [anna.vanfleet@vermont.gov](mailto:anna.vanfleet@vermont.gov)

### Email your Public Notices

to [legals@addisonindependent.com](mailto:legals@addisonindependent.com)  
and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ORWELL PLANNING COMMISSION ORWELL TOWN PLAN UPDATE

The **Orwell** Planning Commission will hold an in-person public hearing on January 15, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Orwell Town Office, 436 Main Street, Orwell, Vermont, with a virtual option. This hearing is held pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4441. This notice is issued pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4444(b). At this meeting, the ACRPC will also conduct a consultation with the municipality regarding its planning efforts. ACRPC’s Local Government Committee shall review Orwell’s Town Plan to determine whether the Plan:

- (1) is consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302;
- (2) is compatible with its regional plan;
- (3) is compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region;
- (4) contains all the elements included in 24 V.S.A. §4382;

The following list highlights the sections and other topics substantially amended in the proposed document. Other minor changes were also proposed.

- (1) The addition of a Village Center section,
- (2) Review and update of all Goals and Policies,
- (3) The addition of a Flood Resiliency element,
- (4) The addition of Forest Block and Habitat Connectivity data and maps,
- (5) Substantial updates to the Housing, Economy, and Energy sections.

Copies of the Orwell Town Plan can be viewed at the Orwell Town Office, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission Office, located at 14 Seminary Street in Middlebury or on Orwell’s website: <https://townoforwellvt.org/>

**Join Meeting Virtually: <https://meet.google.com/kru-tina-nxm>**

**Phone:**

**(US) +1 347-896-0734 PIN: 514 093 845#**

Questions, please call either:  
Katie Raycroft-Meyer, Community Planner Addison County Regional Planning Commission 802 388-3141  
or  
Joe Andriano, Orwell Planning Commission Chair 802 948-2032





# THANK YOU!

READERS • ADVERTISERS • COMMUNITY

As we embrace the joy and spirit of the holiday season, we're reminded of the importance of giving back and supporting what matters most. At *The Addison Independent*, our mission to provide high-quality local news continues. We rely on support from readers through subscriptions & newsstand sales, advertising revenue and now donations through our ADDY ALL-STARS supporters. All three legs are critical for the support and stability of our operation.

Since launching the ADDY ALL-STAR campaign in the early spring, 320 passionate supporters have joined us, raising an amazing \$37,856 to support *The Addison Independent*, Addison County's weekly newspaper serving 23 vibrant communities. Your generosity is a testament to the power of local journalism and its role in sustaining our democracy.

Our next goal is to reach **500 ADDY ALL-STARS**. This milestone will ensure we can uphold the vital role local journalism plays in shaping our community and our lives. This season of giving, consider becoming a sustaining member yourself — or make it a thoughtful gift for loved ones!

By reading, advertising and joining the ADDY ALL-STARS, you're contributing to a movement that protects and sustains local journalism. Your support helps preserve the heart and soul of Addison County, ensuring stories are told, voices are heard, and our democracy remains strong into the new year and beyond.

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A LOOK BACK AT ANOTHER YEAR OF INCREDIBLE  
**ARTS+LEISURE**

The Addison Independent

December 26, 2024



**2024**

YEAR IN REVIEW



2024  
IN REVIEW

LOOKING BACK AT A YEAR'S  
WORTH OF ARTS & LEISURE

Well, we did it again team! For the ninth year in a row, this tabloid section has found its place in the weekly pages of *The Addison Independent*. Bringing you 52 issues and over 800 pages, we featured the work of more than 105 local artists, actors, musicians, filmmakers, adventurers, authors, photographers, craftspeople and more; saw more than 53 exhibits and 21 film events; suggested about 165 don't-miss events happening right here in Addison County; learned 31 garden lessons from the University of Vermont Extension's Master Gardeners. We analyzed five poems with Susan Jefts; featured family-friendly events with a monthly MiniBury page; and followed local artists outside our county for 35 events in neighboring towns. Oh, and we followed the real estate market with a look at 33 featured properties listed this year, plus a series of advice columns from local realtors.

Regular annual events like the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, various music series, spring and fall open studio weekends, and the local theater performances were punctuated



Elsie and her family welcomed Nova (formerly Willow) home in the fall. This little love-bug came through the foster program at Homeward Bound. For more photos and stats on Homeward Bound's work this year, check out pages 8-9.

COURTESY PHOTO BY HOMEWARD BOUND

by a special travel log summer series from Steve and Judith Harris's road trip through the South; the opening of K Grant Fine Art Gallery in Vergennes; and the closing of Norton's

Gallery of Woodcarvings — a staple of the Shoreham landscape for over 30 years.

Flip through this section and take a look back at 24 features, a highlight of exhibits and more from 2024.

It wows me every year, just how much art we have to offer right here in Addison County. What a gift it is that we can share all of this incredible work and good news with our community; and we have you — our loyal readers and supporters — to thank.

If you haven't already, consider adding a monthly donation to your subscription and become an **ADDY ALL-STAR**. This is the best way to ensure we can keep up this focused work on our arts community. We're excited to continue publishing the *Addison Independent's* Arts + Leisure section and rely on your support and participation to help make it an engaging, creative and fun companion every Thursday.

Thank you!

— Elsie Lynn Parini, Arts + Leisure editor

Want to learn more about how you can donate to the Addy Indy? Visit [addisonindependent.com/all-stars](https://addisonindependent.com/all-stars).



HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR

MAY 2025 BE FULL OF PEACE, JOY AND  
ARTS+LEISURE



# 6 Art Exhibits To Remember

HERE'S A LOOK BACK AT SIX EXHIBITS FROM AROUND ADDISON COUNTY FROM 2024. A SPECIAL WELCOME TO K. GRANT FINE ARTS IN VERGENNES!



## Edgewater Gallery

"Domestic Alchemy" with works by William Hoyt and Kate Gridley opened at Middlebury's Edgewater Gallery on the Green in mid-September. Contemporary realist painters Gridley and Hoyt interpret the idea that the kitchen is the heart of our domestic life, conveying the connections created, and the warmth and familiarity of the kitchen.



## Art on Main

"In and Out of the Garden" featured the works of guest artist Annelein Beukenkamp, alongside pieces from veteran Art on Main artists. Coinciding with the exhibit, renowned gardening expert Charlie Nardozzi gave a talk at Bristol's Rocky Dale Gardens in mid-July, and Beukenkamp offered a watercolor painting demonstration.



## Sheldon Museum

A Vintage Fashion Festival was held in August as an interactive component of the exhibit "From Homespun to Couture: Fashion in Historic Middlebury." Fashion historians, accessory makers and mending artists were available to answer questions, plus hairstylist Ray Lingle gave a demonstration of vintage hairstyling at the Middlebury museum.



## Sparrow Art Supply

This was the debut exhibit for Sparrow Art Supply at their new location on Main Street in Middlebury. With a nod to Robert Frost's iconic poem, "Nothing Gold Can Stay," seven artists explored growth, transition and renewal in "Green Gold: A celebration of new beginnings." From ephemeral landscapes to abstract compositions, this collection invited contemplation of and appreciation for life's golden moments.



## Jackson Gallery

In January, Tom Munschauer, the long-time Middlebury veterinarian, showcased his paintings in oil and watercolor at the Jackson Gallery, in the lower level of Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. His strong sense of graphic design and composition are evident in his approach to painting. His imagery includes flora and fauna, landscapes, and anything that might spark his interest.



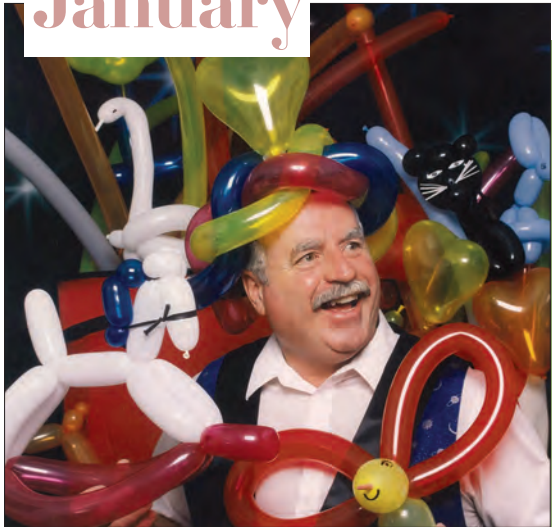
## K. Grant Fine Arts

The Little City of Vergennes welcomed a new fine art gallery this past summer. K. Grant Fine Arts, at 37 Green St., opened its doors with an exhibit called "Soft Openings" in early August. The exhibit "celebrates the lush, transient beauty of Vermont summers through the diverse perspectives of five Vermont-based woman artists," said owner Kristen Grant.



# 2024 IN REVIEW

## January



### Hocus Pocus!

Master Magician Blaine Goad performed his Hocus Pocus Magic Show at the Vergennes Opera House in mid-January. "Performing magic for families and folks of all ages is such great fun," said Goad, 76. "When I perform, I have the best seat in the house because I get to see the wonder and amazement on everyone's face."



### Author visits

Renowned author Emily St. John Mandel visited Middlebury on Feb. 15 for a book reading, signing and Q&A with the community at Wright Theater on the Middlebury College campus. Ahead of the visit, Associate Professor of Theater Michole Biancosino held a book group gathering at The Vermont Book Shop in Middlebury to discuss Mandel's work, including "Station 11."

## February



### Pig Race is on!

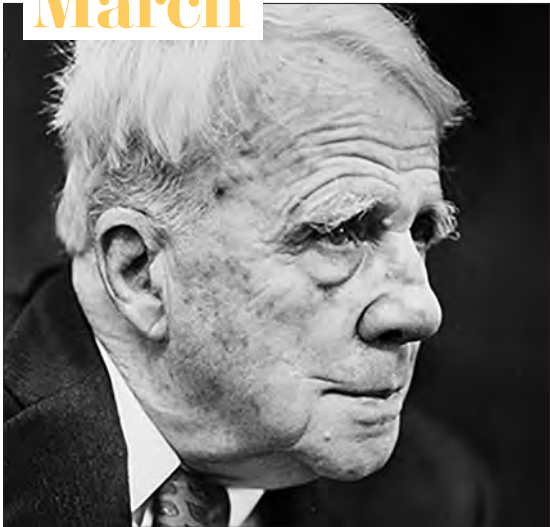
This classic Nordic ski event, with a legacy dating back to the 1970s, was founded by the late Blueberry Hill Inn owner Tony Clark as an opportunity to have fun on the snow with "guaranteed jumps, spills, singletrack challenges, agility obstacles, and maybe a touch of early spring mud." This year's revival in Goshen was held March 16.



### Student sews

MUHS junior Mirabelle Markowski was the costume designer for the Addison Repertory Theatre's production of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" this year. She did everything from start to finish — "from drawing the look, to making the templates, to creating the clothes and finishing with alterations and accessories," she said. The performance was held in early March.

## March



### Frost turns 150

The Vermont Book Shop and Town Hall Theater teamed up to honor the life and work of legendary poet Robert Frost. The March 29 literary event celebrated Frost's 150th birthday and featured some of the writer's most famous pieces. Frost scholar Jay Parini was on hand to share stories of the legendary poet and dive deeper into Frost's writing during a Q&A.



### Only 100 days

Middlebury Acting Company brought Abigail and Shaun Bengson's "Hundred Days" to Middlebury in early spring. The theatrical concert — described as "an uncensored, exhilarating and heartrending true story about embracing uncertainty, taking a leap and loving as if you only had 100 days to live" — was performed by Grace Experience and Stephen Shore.



# 2024 IN REVIEW

## April



### Arts honor

Lincoln couple Janet Fredericks and Tom Verner have for decades contributed to the arts in the Bristol 5-town area and abroad as the founders of that organization Magicians Without Borders. The pair was recognized for their creative efforts at the 5-Town Friends of the Arts annual gathering at Holley Hall in Bristol on April 7.



### Classical for all

The Heath Quartet performed a free concert of classical music at the Mahaney Arts Center on April 28. This was the British quartet's 11th concert for the Middlebury Performing Arts Series. These free concerts for the community have been supported by the generous Sunderman Family Concert Fund for the past 20 years.

## May



### New novels

Addison County authors Julia Alvarez and Carolyn Kuebler both published new novels this spring. "The Cemetery of Untold Stories" by Alvarez was released on April 2; Kuebler's debut novel, "Liquid, Fragile, Perishable," was released in May. The duo appeared at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury, where Kuebler moderated a Q&A with Alvarez about her latest novel.



### Opera!

David Weinstock was once again a trusty reviewer of various performances this year, including the Opera Company of Middlebury's presentation of "La Fille du Regiment" that took the stage at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury at the end of May and early June. It "was called an opera comique," he said, "but today's audience will instantly recognize it as a rom-com."

## June



### Rugs raise funds

Thirty of the late Suzanne Douglas's rugs were available to bid on via silent auction beginning in June, to benefit the Henry Sheldon Museum. The opening of the auction coincided with a celebration of life held for Douglas, who served for 25 years as staff at the Sheldon and died in January.



### Creature creations

Explore Bristol artist Diana Bigelow's enchanting creature collection at her 80th birthday open house on June 22. Visitors were welcome to marvel at her 200 whimsical creations crafted from natural materials collected from beaches, deserts and forests around the world.



# 2024 IN REVIEW



## Cat-Daddy visits

Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society, had what Director of Development Hannah Manley called a "once in a lifetime opportunity" in July, when the-one, the-only "Cat Daddy" Jackson Galaxy came to visit. Galaxy came for a one-on-one with a few of the felines, and to offer a workshop for staff and select volunteers.



## Off to kick cancer

Sarah King performed a "temporary farewell" concert at Grand Point North in Burlington on July 27 before she began surgeries for her recently diagnosed thyroid cancer. The Ripton-based Americana singer-songwriter was diagnosed just 72 hours after her newest album "When It All Goes Down" was released.



## Norton's no more

Norton and Marlene Latourelle closed Norton's Gallery of Woodcarvings at their home in Shoreham after 33 years as they headed into retirement. The couple held sales looking for new homes for the eclectic collection of animals (particularly dogs), insects, vegetables and cupcakes Norton had carved out of wood for more than half a century.



## Lincoln sessions

Pine Tree Flyers will perform in Lincoln on Sept. 7 to kick off the second season of Burnham Presents with Celtic, Quebecois and American music. "Our first season was so wonderfully received," explained Beth Duquette. "We have another lineup of great musicians that we're excited to share with everyone."



## Beyond the Page

The community was invited to explore the text "The Strangers' Case" — a passionate defense of refugees from the play "Sir Thomas More," which penned more than 400 years ago by William Shakespeare (we suppose). Through storytelling and exploration, workshop participants will inform the creation of an original theatrical work by Beyond the Page teaching artist Louis Reyes McWilliams.



## Snuggle in

The second annual Snugfest was held in Ripton, after a successful first year, on Sunday, Sept. 29. Festival-goers enjoyed music by LaMP, Jennifer Hartswick, Nick Cassarino and Friends, Bad Smell, and The Middle Ages. There was also an artisan market, charity auction, and sustainable fashion show.



# 2024 IN REVIEW

## October



### Fall Follies

This October, the Vergennes Opera House stage welcomed a drag/burlesque variety show — Pride Edition. Audiences came to celebrate love and diversity with a fabulous evening (for those 18+) of comedy, burlesque, drag and pole performances that showcase the talents of the local LGBTQ+ community.



### Invitation to Awe

Middlebury College Museum of Art presented the exhibit "An Invitation to Awe" in the fall. This exhibition featured older paintings and prints displayed in conversation with contemporary objects, scientific equipment, and interactive work that compelled the viewer to think of how awe is experienced through senses other than sight and to expand their own understanding of where awe lives now.

## November



### Broadway Direct

Elisa VanDuyne and Bill Carmichael Walsh once again led the annual holiday singing and dancing review "Broadway Direct" for the 19th year at the Vergennes Opera House. This year the magic doubled with two performances in early December — an evening show and an afternoon matinee.



### Shakespeare's turn

The Middlebury College Theater Department punctuated this election season with a presentation of "King Lear" by William Shakespeare held in Wright Theater. In a new adaptation of arguably one of the greatest tragedies ever written, Michole Biancosino and Alex Draper (both professionals and educators in theater arts at Middlebury College) dove head-first into these intense discussions of what it means to hold power.

## December



### Designer delights

The shop Artists & Revolutionaries re-opened on Main Street in Vergennes this fall, and clothing designer John Michael has hit his stride creating his eco-friendly fashion label that was born in Brooklyn and raised in the Hudson Valley. John Michael's pieces are "size-free, age-free, handmade clothing."



### Clay connects

Middlebury Studio School welcomed assistant studio manager Saisorn Peemanao into long-time studio manager and clay instructor Kathy Clarke's leadership role. Clarke will continue to teach pottery classes, and reflected on her decades as a leader with the arts studio.



# Pets of 2024

Homeward Bound,  
Addison County's Humane Society  
shared some stats of the amazing assistance  
they provided our communities this year.

Adoptions: **636**

Animals surrendered to the shelter by their guardians:

Strays taken in: **142**

Strays returned to their owners: **62**

Animals actively enrolled in our PetCORE program  
(assisting low-income pet owners):

**125 PetCORE clients** owning a total of **157 cats** and **99 dogs**

Animals served through the Pets in Crisis: **12**

Animal served through Spay the Mom program:  
**9 mother cats, 42 kittens**

## Thank you!



Bringing Essential V



If your dog is struggling with  
issues or is suffering from  
remedies are available! For  
Dr. Swasey at Addison County  
Veterinary Services to learn  
could improve your pet's co  
quality of life.

- Dr. Megan Swasey, DVM
- Peggy Hoare, Veterinary
- Deb Orvis, Client Service

meganswaseydvm@g





## Pets In Need

### HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

#### **Baldi**

**Baldi** is an energetic and loving boy. We estimate him to be 4-5 years old and he will require a patient and understanding person that understands his quirks. Baldi seems to have some separation anxiety and can get stressed out or upset when he thinks people are leaving him. He got along with more submissive cats in the home but has not gotten along with them in shelter. He has no experience with dogs.



#### **Bell**

**Bell** is a super adorable and affectionate personality compacted into a tiny, petite body. Her favorite napping spot is under the blankets and she moves around like a turtle in her shell! She enjoys wet food and treats but her favorite thing is love. Bell gets along with other cats but has little experience with dogs.



#### **Haribo**

**Haribo** is a beautiful long-haired boy who arrived as a stray. He is affectionate, independent, and relaxed. Haribo has gotten along with cats that respect his space. We are unsure if he gets along with dogs.



#### **Sid**

**Sid** is a funny and unique guy who came to us as a stray. He is very affectionate and it has taken him some time to warm up to people. Now he begs for attention and also enjoys treats and wet food. Sid gets along with other cats but we are unsure about dogs.



#### **The Bobtails**

**Bobby, Beau, Tippy, and Bongo** are a group of adult cats that were brought in together as strays. They are all very nervous but have made great progress in their acclimation to home life and with their socialization! They absolutely love treats, tuna, and chicken, & food is the way to gain their trust and love. They would enjoy being adopted in pairs to a calm and quiet home. They all get along with other cats but we are unsure about dogs.



## Want to learn more?

Call or check our website. We may have a pet for you!  
802-388-1100 | [HomewardBoundAnimals.org](http://HomewardBoundAnimals.org)  
236 Boardman Street | Middlebury, VT

Veterinary Care to You & Your Pet!

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## Paws To Consider

with Dr. Bri Letaw, Medical Director,  
Bristol Animal Hospital

**Q: My cat is drinking and urinating a lot.  
What could this mean?**



**A:** There are multiple reasons why a cat can have these clinical signs. After an exam, your veterinarian will likely recommend a urinalysis to look for infection, crystals, protein and concentration. Depending on what that looks like they might suggest bloodwork and abdominal x-rays. A couple causes they will be looking for are urinary tract infections, urinary stones, diabetes, kidney disease or cancer.



Bristol Animal Hospital, 167 Monkton Rd., Bristol  
(802) 588-7387 • <http://bristolvtvet.com>



PUZZLES

sponsored by SPARROW ART SUPPLY

ACROSS

1. Central processing unit  
4. Taxi  
7. Body part  
8. Papal court  
10. Young women making their public debuts  
12. Metal shackles  
13. Joseph's wife  
14. Licensed professional  
16. Partner to cheese  
17. Mild fruits  
19. File format  
20. Province of Indonesia  
21. Beloved grilled

- foods  
25. Bar bill  
26. Don't know when yet  
27. Whale ship captain  
29. Touches softly  
30. Mock  
31. Red-brown Pacific sea bream  
32. Summer entertainment options  
39. Protective crust  
41. Cool!  
42. Behave in a way that belittles  
43. Denial  
44. A place to sleep  
45. Electronic

- counter-countermeasures  
46. Intestinal pouches  
48. SE Asia family of languages  
49. Sound  
50. Select  
51. Give the impression of dishonesty  
52. Witness

DOWN

1. Of cadmium  
2. Deliver a sermon  
3. Inner regions of a shadow  
4. Aggressive dog  
5. Smells

1	2	3							4	5	6			
7								8				9		
10			11					12						
13							14	15			16			
17				18			19				20			
21					22	23				24				
				25				26						
		27	28				29							
		30				31								
		32				33				34	35	36	37	38
39	40				41					42				
43				44						45				
46			47							48				
49											50			
	51										52			

1	3						4	
	2					9		5
5								
	1		4	6	8			9
					3			
	4	2		5		7		
		9			6			
		5			1		3	8
			8		4			

Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

Level: Medium

6. Twofold  
8. Former OSS  
9. Computer language  
11. Indian groom  
14. Automobile  
15. Hairstyle  
18. Atomic #76  
19. Guy (slang)  
20. Ladies' undergarments  
22. Furniture with open shelves
23. Back-arc basin  
24. Partner to flow  
27. A type of horse  
28. Possesses  
29. Split pulses  
31. Small amount  
32. Flat-bottomed riverboat  
33. Not good  
34. Atomic #31  
35. Assist in committing a crime  
36. Chauvinists
37. Get away  
38. One of a people who speaks a Semitic language  
39. Civil rights college organization  
40. Combustible dark rocks  
44. Grocery container  
47. Central nervous system

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 15.



44 Main St  
Middlebury, VT 05753  
(802) 989-7225  
  
Tuesday - Saturday  
10:30AM - 5:30PM  
  
info@sparrowartsupply.com  
sparrowartsupply.com  
@sparrowartsupply

WISHING YOU  
Happy Holidays!

We hope you're having a magical December!  
Thank you for shopping with us this holiday season.  
We wish you a happy and creative new year!

CLOSED DECEMBER 29 - JANUARY 4  
for our annual inventory assessment!  
Open again for regular hours on January 7





# ART ON EXHIBIT

## BIXBY MEMORIAL FREE LIBRARY

258 Main Street, Vergennes

For more info visit [bixbylibrary.org](http://bixbylibrary.org) or call 802-877-2211.

**"Biosphere in Your Backyard"** follows the themes of explore, enrich, enjoy and interprets the library's records through a biosphere lens, considering how the landscape around us can influence the history we create. On view in the Kerr Room, with accompanying book displays in both the Vermont Room and the Children's Room, through December.

## 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.

## 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.

SEE MORE EXHIBITS ONLINE AT [ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM](http://ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM)



**ARIES:** March 21/April 20. You are likely to question information you receive this week, Aries. Investigate things further, but remain receptive to what others are saying.

**TAURUS:** April 21/May 21. Taurus, it is time to solidify plans and any grand schemes you may have; otherwise, you may not know which path to take. For now, start outlining your ideas.

**GEMINI:** May 22/June 21. Practice your communication skills, Gemini, as you are likely to need them this week. You may need to resolve a sticky situation and serve as a voice of reason.

**CANCER:** June 22/July 22. Cancer, this week you may be looking to clean house, so to say. You are tossing away old beliefs and habits and are ready to embrace something new. It might be an exciting time.

**LEO:** July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, everything that you are going through right now is part of a cycle that has a beginning and an end. If you wait it out, you will find that patience pays off.

**VIRGO:** Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, maintain open lines of communication. Some may offer advice, while others may seek it. Be receptive to the former and do your best to accommodate the latter.

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Do what you can to help others in need, Libra. Offer your services and insight, and be prepared to help in other ways as well.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, you are giving off an energy lately that others might be attracted to. Don't be surprised if your fan club increases in the next few days. Enjoy the attention.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Communication from a former friend or an old roommate may catch you by surprise this week, Sagittarius. Embrace this opportunity to reconnect.

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, you've been waiting patiently to say something and looking for an opportunity to share your input. You might need to interrupt if you feel it is important enough.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Your mind feels as if it's going in a million different directions, Aquarius. One way to alleviate distractions is to direct your energy to an assortment of small projects.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19/March

20. Pisces, sometimes it seems like what you are saying is going in one ear and out the other. Don't let your frustration get the best of you. Keep trying to be heard.

**Happy New Year!**

Wed-Thurs 11am-5pm  
Fri 11-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm  
Sun 12-4pm  
Closed Mon-Tues

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DEC. 27-DEC. 31

**Yule Love it sale** **4 DAYS ONLY**

20% off floor/demo models  
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25% off regular-priced merchandise  
Huge selection of sale items up to **75% off!**

In Stock Items only (this applies to all)

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802-388-3559 [www.middleburysewnvac.com](http://www.middleburysewnvac.com)  
OPEN: M-F 10-5 and Saturday 9:30-4

## FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DEC. 27 — Manuela Sáenz, revolutionary & spy (d)  
DEC. 28 — Seth Meyers (51)  
DEC. 29 — Pablo Casals, cellist (d)

DEC. 30 — LeBron James, basketball player (40)  
DEC. 31 — Jacques Cartier, explorer (d)  
JAN. 1 — Satyendra Nath Bose, mathematician & physicist (d)  
JAN. 2 — Christy Turlington, model (55)



CALENDAR

DEC. 26-JAN. 22  
2024-2025

SUNDAY, DEC. 29

**HOLIDAY MOVIE IN SALISBURY.**  
Sunday, Dec. 29, 2 p.m., Salisbury Town Hall, 918 Mapwle 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.

FRIDAY, JAN. 3

**SAP LINE FOLK BAND IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Jan. 3, 6 p.m., Front Salon, Middlebury Community Music Center, 6 Main St. Sap Line is old-time fiddler Fiona Stowell, New England piano and clawhammer banjo player Emmett

Stowell, Maine Maritime/Scottish fiddler and tenor banjo player Owen Kennedy, and singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Grace Martin. Together they tap into their various communities of musicians and mentors who came before, sharing their legacy in dynamic, high-spirited performances. Pay What You Can.

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

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>MCTV Channel 1071</b> Through the Night: Public Affairs, 2024 News <b>Friday, December 27</b> 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 6:30 p.m. Energy Week 7:30 p.m. Bulletin Board 8 p.m. Press Conf., Public Affairs <b>Saturday, December 28</b> 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 29</b> 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 <b>Monday, December 30</b> 4:30 a.m. Energy Week 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. Public Affairs, Bulletin Board 10 a.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs 5 p.m. Bulletin Board 5:30 p.m. Selectboard, Public Affairs <b>Tuesday, December 31</b> 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, January 1, 2025</b> 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, January 2, 2025</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. Public Affairs, Bulletin Board  <b>Channel 1091</b> Through the Night: Arts and Education Programs <b>Friday, December 27</b> 6:20 a.m. Yoga 6:55 a.m. Tai Chi 7:20 a.m. Bulletin Board Vermont 7:30 a.m. State Board of Education 1 p.m. Sharpe Takes 1:45 p.m. Green Mtn Book Festival 4 p.m. Sharpe Takes 8 p.m. Festival On the Green <b>Saturday, December 28</b> 5 a.m. Sharpe Takes 6:30 a.m. All Brains Belong 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 12 p.m. Brattleboro Literary Festival 3 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 4 p.m. Romeo & Juliet at THT 6:50 p.m. Bulletin Board 7:03 p.m. Sharpe Takes - Conlon 7:36 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra	10 p.m. The Horse Traders 20th Anniversary <b>Sunday, December 29</b> 5 a.m. All Brains Belong 6 a.m. Green Mtn Book Festival 11 a.m. Sharpe Takes 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 4 p.m. Dido & Aeneas Youth Opera 5 p.m. All Brains Belong 6 p.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 7:30 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 9:30 p.m. Taconic Chamber Players <b>Monday, December 30</b> 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:35 a.m. Tai Chi 7 a.m. Chair Yoga 7:30 a.m. State Board of Education 2 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 6:35 p.m. Tai Chi 7 p.m. Bulletin Board 7:30 p.m. Dido & Aeneas 9 p.m. Sharpe Takes <b>Tuesday, December 31</b> 5:15 a.m. Bulletin Board 5:32 a.m. Tai Chi	6 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. State Board of Education 5:04 p.m. All Brains Belong 6 p.m. Sharpe Takes 6:37 p.m. Bulletin Board 7 p.m. School Board Meeting/s <b>Wednesday, January 1, 2025</b> 6:15 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. "A Child's Christmas in Wales" 3 p.m. All Brains Belong 4 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 5 p.m. Bulletin Board 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 7 p.m. Taconic Chamber Players <b>Thursday, January 2, 2025</b> 4:30 a.m. Bulletin Board 6:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6:55 a.m. Yoga 9 a.m. All Brains Belong 10 a.m. Bulletin Board 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 p.m. School Board Meeting/s	



# TOP PICK

Beaver Meadow Falls are highlights. Microspikes required. Options for a different return route. Contact Barry Francis at [barryfrancis@gmavt.net](mailto:barryfrancis@gmavt.net) or 802-349-9206 to register or for more information. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](http://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**MONTHLY WILDLIFE WALK IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Jan. 11, 8-10 a.m., Otter View Park, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. Join Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust to help survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. More info call 802-388-6019.

**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 [vergenesoperahouse.org](http://vergenesoperahouse.org).



FIREWORKS, ICE SKATING AND JAZZ ARE ON THE CALENDAR FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE, CHECK IT OUT! FOR THOSE WHO DON'T WANT TO STAY UP UNTIL MIDNIGHT, THERE'S ALSO A COUNT DOWN TO NOON YEAR PARTY AT THE ILSLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY STARTING AT 10:15 A.M.

## THURSDAY, JAN. 16,

**"IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Jan. 16, 1 p.m., Middlebury Marquis Theater, 65 Main St. Ilsley Public Library is partnering with Marquis Theater for the next film in the Middlebury Classic Film Club series. Join fellow community film lovers to see the films at the theater, followed by our usual short discussion of the film. The popcorn is on us Free and open to the public.

**CABIN FEVER LECTURE —**

**THE BOBOLINK PROJECT IN VERGENNES.** Thursday, Jan. 16, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library, 258 Main St. Mass. Audubon Grassland Bird Biologist Hyla Howe will tell us about The Bobolink Project and how you can help. Free and open to the public.

## SATURDAY, JAN. 18

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SKI OR SNOWSHOE IN GOSHEN.** Saturday, Jan. 18, Goshen Dam. Cross country ski or snowshoe to Goshen Dam from

Goshen. About 4 miles round trip on easy grade. Contact Morris Earle at [morrisearle@gmail.com](mailto:morrisearle@gmail.com) or 802-734-0984 for information or to register. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](http://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**CHORAL CHAMELEON ENSEMBLE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. This incredibly dynamic ensemble is renowned for their innovative programming and fearless exploration of vocal artistry. Called "America's Test Kitchen for choral music," they boldly experiment and champion unexpected and new combinations of music. Tickets \$25/20/10/5, available at [go.middlebury.edu](http://go.middlebury.edu).

## WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22

**CHORAL CHAMELEON ENSEMBLE IN MIDDLEBURY.** Wednesday, Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m., Robison Hall, Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Rd. Choral Chameleon deepens their campus connection with an exciting mixed-repertoire concert performed alongside Middlebury students, featuring a new work written just for Middlebury by founding Artistic Director Vince Peterson. Tickets \$25/20/10/5; streaming tickets \$15/5 available at [go.middlebury.edu](http://go.middlebury.edu).



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# Holiday 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE OPEN HOUSE  
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CHRISTMAS DINNER  
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NEW YEAR'S EVE  
LONDON GMT TOAST AT 7 P.M.  
BAR ONLY  
6 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

ALL NEW  
NEW YEAR'S CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH  
11:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.



*New Year's Resolutions, 2025...*

*My New Year's resolution is to effectively and efficiently utilize new technologies while also prioritizing quality time with my family and friends. - Courtney*

*In 2025, I look forward to balancing my work and volunteer commitments with starting to play tennis again! - Sarah*

*Spend more time with people that I care about and less time worrying about things that actually don't create a fulfilling life. - Beth*

*My new year's resolution is to Live Authentically and continue to carry forward community-mindedness and outward acts of kindness and meaningfulness whenever possible. - Jamie*

*To recognize where and when I can support local businesses. Whether it's shopping locally for consumer goods or supporting local events, I hope to engage more with my immediate community. - Levi*

*In 2025, I hope to be able to provide a different kind of learning experience to my colleagues around the State. I've always been interested in teaching and training and I hope to get my feet wet with some new opportunities. - Amey*

*A happy and healthy New Year to our neighbors, friends, and colleagues. Let's get excited for 2025!*



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# Swing into the New Year with Joe's Big Band

**W**hat's your new year's resolution? Want to watch more live music? Want to learn how to dance? Want to have a great time? Start one day early and come to Town Hall Theater on Dec. 31, from 8 p.m. 'til midnight, to see and dance along to Joe's Big Band.

Based in Burlington, Joe's Big Band is made up of 17 incredible jazz musicians from all over the Champlain Valley. From swing to contemporary, jazz to blues, Joe's Big Band does it all and will keep you on your toes. If you're hesitant to dance, do not fear. Starting at 8:30 p.m., you will get the chance to learn some swing dances before the band begins playing at 9 p.m. This is the perfect place for both first-time dancers and previous lovers of swing. You're also welcome to kick back and take it all in from a comfortable chair.

Joe's Big Band puts on timeless performances; you'll recognize the songs and sounds of Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Stevie Wonder, Brian Setzer and others.

Gracing the stage with vocals is Annette Franklin. Franklin has been a part of Joe's Big Band since 2001 and has performed in countless choir and musical productions in her hometown of Middlebury.

Joe's Big Band has been sharing their talents for over 30 years. In the '80s, the band was formed by Joe Levesque and since then, they haven't stopped performing. For years, Joe shared his love of jazz at weddings, dances, cruises, and concerts all around northern Vermont. After Joe's passing in 2004, the band continued to perform, tirelessly providing audiences with lively shows and nights of great fun.

Come party with this awesome band on New Year's Eve. Tickets are \$40 and available at [townhalltheater.org](http://townhalltheater.org), by calling 802-382-9222 or at the box office. Ticket discounts available through the Cady Fund.



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## Here's to new beginnings in 2025. Happy New Year!

Make 2025 your Real Estate Year!

**According to the NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun:**

- The worst of the housing inventory shortage is coming to an end,
- Mortgage rates are stabilizing near 6% and job additions are continuing.
- A 9% increase is forecasted in home sales in 2025.

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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 1-800-669-9777.

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# PUZZLE


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DEC. 26, 2024

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### 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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