



## Allman tribute

A band that pays homage to the legendary Allman Brothers will play the THT. Arts + Leisure.



## Playoffs open

A big win for the Commodore boys highlighted the first day of the H.S. postseason. See Page 1B.



## United Way

This agency marshals our resources to help the county. Be surprised by the details in our special pull-out.

# ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 79 No. 43

Middlebury, Vermont ♦ Thursday, October 23, 2025 ♦ 60 Pages

\$2.00

## Local districts share views on education reform

### Input sought on school redistricting

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The Vermont School District Redistricting Task Force is requesting input from individuals and groups as the panel prepares to draw three maps that could greatly influence the manner in which schools are grouped, operated and financed in this state under Act 73.

And to no one's surprise, the state's many school boards have been more than happy to weigh in on with advice on how the public

education delivery system could change for the better, and what parts of it remain productive and should stay intact.

The *Independent* reached out to leaders of four Addison County public school districts for any feedback they've given to the Redistricting Task Force. All four provided copies of letters, resolutions, of a synopsis of testimony they've conveyed to the task force, which most recently (See *Restructuring*, Page 15A)



## Showing up for America

ADDISON COUNTY RESIDENTS joined the millions nationwide who took part in No Kings Day protests in all 50 states on Saturday. Marchers of all ages voiced their support for the country, including in this group near Middlebury's town green. More than 1,000 gathered in the county's shire town. See more photos on Page 8A.

Photo by Caleb Kenna



U.S. SENATOR PETER Welch speaks with Lazy Dog Farm owner Jesse Wilbur at the Orwell farm this past Friday. Welch visited the farm to hear from Wilbur and other local farmers about how their operations have been impacted by the ongoing, historic drought.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Welch hears impact of drought on farms

By MARIN HOWELL

ORWELL — Looking out toward the Adirondacks from Orwell's Lazy Dog Farm, it's hard to miss the vibrant foliage typical of a picturesque Vermont fall. But cast your gaze down toward the pastures at your feet and you'll see a more overlooked picture, one that tells the story of a growing season

that's been far from typical.

An ongoing, historic drought has left grass in the pastures stunted and created large cracks that run throughout the soil, some that recently extended 10-14 inches deep. Dry conditions have left Lazy Dog Farm owners Jesse and Stefanie Wilbur with about half (See *Farmers*, Page 12A)



## By the way

In support of World Polio Day, the Middlebury Rotary Club will be hosting its second annual 2 Mile Walk for Polio on Saturday, Oct. 25, beginning at 11 a.m. in Middlebury's Triangle Park. Please arrive a few minutes early. Adult tickets are \$20, students are \$10, and kids (See *By the way*, Page 10A)

## The search intensifies for the missing college student

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police are actively searching for a Middlebury College senior who has not been heard from since this past Friday evening. Vermont State Police are joining the hunt on Thursday.

On Sunday the town police department said they are looking for Lia P. Smith, who was last seen on campus on Friday evening. According to student newspaper *The Middlebury Campus*, Smith's father reported her missing after she did not respond via cell.

Smith was last seen at 9 p.m. on Oct. 17. She is 5'11", approximately 160 pounds, with brown hair and blue eyes. Anyone with information about Smith or her whereabouts is asked to contact Middlebury police at 802-388-3191 or submit an online tip on the Middlebury police website (See *Student*, Page 13A)

## Federal shutdown threatens Vt. programs

By JOHN FLOWERS

MONTPELIER — Vermont's sound fiscal health might allow it to protect its most vulnerable citizens from the short-term impacts of lost federal funding through the current government shutdown.

But the state's top accounting and human services officials warned a lengthy freeze in D.C. cash — particularly amid President

Donald Trump's threats to financially punish Democrat-led states — could become crushing for the Green Mountain State.

A parade of Scott Administration officials and human services leaders filed before the Vermont Joint Fiscal Committee (JFC) at the Statehouse this past Thursday, Oct. 16, to provide an update on the state's ledgers and the status of Medicaid, nutrition, heating fuel and other

critical assistance programs through day 16 of the federal government shutdown.

Front-and-center at that Thursday's JFC meeting was Vermont Secretary of Administration Sarah Clark, who conveyed the difficulties of trying to steer the state's financial ship through the latest stormy financial waters.

"At least weekly — maybe daily — I might (See *Shutdown*, Page 9A)



## Fun run

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT seniors Georgia Krepler, left, and Silvia Murdoch Meyer lead a group of runners up South Street during the first mile of Sunday's Middlebury Maple Run. About 400 athletes sped through a 5K, 10K or half marathon that morning. See more photos on Page 14A and online at middleburymaplerun.com.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Lincoln Dem to fill Add-4 seat

### Lueders succeeds former Rep. Cordes

By JOHN FLOWERS

LINCOLN — Vermont Gov. Phil Scott announced Friday, Oct. 17, that Lincoln Democrat Karen Lueders will serve the final year of a two-year term vacated this past summer by former Addison-4 Rep. Mari Cordes, D-Bristol.

"I am grateful to the governor for the opportunity to represent Addison-4 in the Vermont House of Representatives," Lueders said of her appointment through a written statement. "I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to find solutions for the complex concerns that affect our (See *Lueders*, Page 13A)

## Medicare help from state likely available

By IAN CURRY

VERMONT — Healthcare experts are expecting a surge in applications for state-run Medicare subsidy programs. These include Vermont's Medicare Savings Programs, which help certain seniors pay the premiums for Medicare Parts A and B, as well as VPharm, which helps pay for drug coverage (Medicare Part D).

This comes after the majority of the 51,600 Vermont seniors currently enrolled in Medicare Advantage were told they would have to find different health

coverage for next year.

"The challenge at this moment is that it's such a huge group ... and so there's a lot of people who need to maneuver their way through complicated systems," said Mike Fisher, Vermont's health advocate.

On Oct. 1, UnitedHealthcare and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT) announced that they would drop all their Medicare Advantage individual plans in Vermont. Individual plans provided by those two companies cover a collective 35,800 people. On Oct. (See *Medicare*, Page 10A)

## Loss of health tax credits hurts Vters

### ACA prices anticipated to surge

By IAN CURRY

VERMONT — The government shutdown entered its fourth week on Tuesday. At its center is a debate on whether to extend Affordable Care Act (ACA) enhanced premium tax credits that would otherwise expire at the end of this year. Looming over the stalemate in Washington is the Nov. 1 start of the open enrollment period for the ACA Marketplace.

Should Congress fail to extend the enhanced tax credits soon, enrollees could see their insurance costs increase by thousands of dollars, even in some cases on a monthly basis.

Enhanced premium tax credits were introduced in 2021 as part of the American Rescue Plan Act to make insurance premiums more affordable. The initiative increased (See *Tax credits*, Page 9A)

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# Council leans toward vote on buying youth club building

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — It appears Vergennes voters are likely to decide in March whether the city should buy the former Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes clubhouse building and land at 20 Armory Lane.

The Vergennes City Council on Oct. 14 for about a half-hour talked about the pluses and minuses of city ownership of the property, which has hosted the city-sponsored Commodore Club for local youths since this past March.

That discussion focused on possible future costs and revenue streams, potential uses in addition to the Commodore Club, and the possible involvement of the towns surrounding Vergennes

in supporting the club and other recreation activities at the property.

Councilors then reached a consensus on proposing a citywide Town Meeting Day vote on the building purchase from the local Boys & Girls Club board, most likely for \$1 or another small sum.

Mayor Chris Bearor summed up the council's thoughts while responding to a question from Vergennes Recreation Coordinator Martha DeGraaf.

"I believe, Martha, the answer is yes, we're willing to go forward with this," Bearor said. "I will definitely reach out to the other selectboard chairs and have an honest conversation about what's on the table and report back."

DeGraaf then agreed to

accompany Bearor to those meetings, saying she had done research on inter-community recreation agreements. She said she specifically looked at situations in which towns donated "outside funds to get resident rates" for their citizens."

She suggested such an agreement might make financial support for the Commodore Club and other activities at the Armory Lane building more agreeable to Vergennes neighbors.

Bearor had earlier in the meeting stressed regional support for a youth club at the site would be important,

*"I would like to see area towns with us in the plan. Because it's not just Vergennes kids."*

— Mayor Chris Bearor

and also pointed out it was not a new concept — area towns had made annual voter-approved Town Meeting Day donations to the Boys & Girls Club.

The background of last week's decision is that when the Boys & Girls Club closed its doors at the end of March, DeGraaf immediately created the Commodore Club to replace it on the 20 Armory Lane property, with the blessing of the Vergennes Parks & Recreation Committee, the council, and the Boys & Girls Club board.

She reported to the council in late September the afterschool and part-time summer club has been successful, with steady, even growing, attendance. DeGraaf credited donors, volunteers, and cooperation with the Addison Northwest School District for the success.

To allow the Commodore Club to operate in the Armory Lane property space, the Boys & Girls Club board and the city in March signed a "Facility Use Agreement." It's a one-year contract that allows the city to occupy the 3,400-square-foot, one-story building and its 1.87 acres through March 3, 2026, which is this coming Town Meeting Day.

The lease also allows Vergennes to purchase the property from the Boys & Girls Club Board, subject to voter approval. That option also expires on March 3.

### PROS & CONS

DeGraaf said last week, as Bearor had requested after the September council meeting, she brought the question of the property's future to the city's rec committee. She reported back that she received a thumbs up because that committee's

(See Club, Page 7A)



VERGENNES RECREATION COORDINATOR Martha DeGraaf stands on the 20 Armory Lane property owned by the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes board at which she now runs a city-sponsored youth club. The city council is leaning toward asking residents if they want to buy the property,

Independent photo/Steve James

# Porter unveils exhibit, time capsule

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Fifty years from now, someone will reach into a nondescript wall at Porter Hospital and pull out a box full of keepsakes. Those carefully selected items will remind the community of Addison County's health-care roots and illustrate how much lifesaving technology has improved since the hospital was founded in 1925.

Porter Medical Center (PMC) President Bob Ortmyer took time at a special Oct. 17 ceremony to imagine the reactions future Porter stakeholders might have upon opening the time capsule that will soon be placed into a wall along the corridor that links the main hospital with its north wing.

The capsule has been packed with a diverse set of future artifacts, including current and vintage surgical tools, messages from local residents and plenty of photos of the Porter staff members and leaders who've helped shape the county's hospital during its first 100 years.

"The time capsule is a gift to the future. It contains memories, messages and mementos that speak to who we are in this moment — our hopes, our challenges and our belief in the power of community," Ortmyer said. "I hope that when it's opened 50 years from now, those who come after us will feel the same pride and purpose that we feel today. I also hope that some of the children that wrote us messages at the birthday party we had in June will be here 50 years from now to hear their

own words revealed."

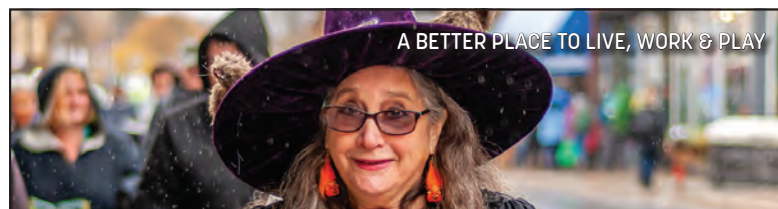
It was a \$118,000 seed gift in 1923 from banker and Middlebury College Trustee William Henry Porter that led to the local hospital opening on June 15, 1925. Since then, Porter has transformed into a modern medical complex, featuring 25 acute-care beds; a 105-bed Helen Porter Rehabilitation & Nursing facility; and around a dozen affiliated physicians' practices. The hospital includes a full-service birthing center; emergency, infusion, surgical, and urgent care services; and an ExpressCare clinic.

Porter in 2016 became an affiliate of the University of Vermont Health Network. The *Independent* in June provided coverage of Porter's 100th birthday party.

This latest Oct. 17 ceremony gave Porter officials a chance to point out the time capsule storage spot and show off a new Porter Centennial Exhibit in the same hallway in which the time capsule will be ensconced. A 42.5-foot-long art installation boasts a variety of photos depicting past hospital workers, on-campus construction projects, and several *Addison Independent* articles covering PMC's growth in facilities and programming.

Hillary Desilets, Ortmyer's executive assistant, was a leader in gathering the time capsule artifacts, while PMC Director of Development Amy Barr was instrumental in compiling the exhibit materials.

Desilets thoroughly enjoyed (See Porter, Page 6A)



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# MAUSD hears feedback on options for district's future

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — The Mount Abraham Unified School District Board recently dove deeper into the options that it's been exploring for educational delivery in the district, but opted to wait until the board's meeting next week to determine which options it will advance for further study.

The school board back in August identified at least seven educational delivery options to evaluate, which included maintaining the status quo with staffing rules and a few possibilities for **grade banding** (grouping students by age rather

than geography) that could result in school closures. On Oct. 14, the board heard feedback from architects, MAUSD staff and community members on those options.

Around 100 people attended the meeting in person or over Zoom. Many residents offered questions and additional input for the board to consider, in several cases asking officials to consider cost-saving options that wouldn't close schools.

"We don't have to be thinking about shuttering schools. We can be creating something empowering, energizing, that brings people to this

part of Vermont," said Starksboro resident and selectboard member Carin McCarthy. "It's something that Vermont is trying to address; bringing families to Vermont, bringing workers to Vermont ... This doesn't have to be a death knell for our county. We can think of this as an opportunity, and I would like us to be creative."

Following public comment, district officials heard from members of the TruexCullins team, an architecture and interior design firm that MAUSD has previously worked with. TruexCullins completed a facilities evaluation report for the district this past November.

Ahead of the Oct. 14 meeting, TruexCullins architects investigated the educational delivery models identified, studying the long-term financial and other impacts of the different options.

"We want to take these plans and really compare them with each other to see if there are any plans that are relatively more advantageous for the district from a cost perspective," TruexCullins Associate Stephen Poston said. "We can't speak to the community and education perspective, but certainly from a buildings standpoint, we can speak to that."

The entirety of the TruexCullins presentation and subsequent discussion can be found on Neat

TV and is recounted in the Oct. 14 meeting minutes. Meeting minutes can be found on the district's website under the "School Board" section of the menu.

TruexCullins architects discussed the seven scenarios identified by the board, as well as two more models included to provide points of reference and bookend the conversation. The presentation highlighted the estimated construction costs, long-term projected savings and other notes to consider for each of the options.

The architects' findings included that "less overall square footage, and fewer facilities of greater capacity yields greater long-term savings," as well as that achieving significant savings through reconfiguration and achieving equity of space requires investment in the district's facilities.

"If reconfiguration is decided upon, there will be some upfront costs in investing in the buildings," Poston said. "None of the buildings is perfect as it is, of course, they all need some upgrades, and in order to do any of these reconfigurations there generally is some sort of addition needed at any of the schools that's included."

TruexCullins team members shared some final thoughts with the board.

"(We) recognize this is a (See MAUSD, Page 7A)

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**Oct 22 - Oct 28**



SEVENTH- AND EIGHTH-graders from the Willowell Foundation's Pond Brook Project remove older wooden timbers from the Bristol Peace Garden. Students are helping out with an ongoing effort to rebuild the garden's wooden foundation, which is breaking down.

Photo courtesy of Megan Walsh

## Bristol Peace Garden project moves ahead

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Community members are making headway on an effort to restore the Bristol Peace Garden.

A team of volunteers are in the midst of a project aimed at rebuilding the garden's wooden foundation, which has started to break down. Project organizers say the initiative is going well,

though it's taken more time and labor than expected. Volunteers are now hoping to raise an additional \$10,000 to support the project.

"You don't know what you're going to get into until you start getting into a project," explained Megan Walsh, who's been leading the effort with Silas Clark. "Really unearthing and deconstructing the garden beds has been a little bit

more intensive than we thought."

The Bristol Peace Garden has been a vibrant part of the Bristol Town Green for over three decades.

The peace garden is constructed in the shape of a circle and divided into seven raised bed "wedges," each representing one of the seven continents. Plants in each of the beds are indigenous to their

(See Peace Garden, Page 7A)

## Newton gets deferred sentence

MIDDLEBURY — Former Addison County Sheriff Peter Newton will serve no jail time after pleading guilty in Vermont Superior Court, Chittenden Criminal Division, to felony lewd and lascivious conduct and a misdemeanor charge of simple assault, in connection with a 2022 complaint that he had allegedly sexually assaulted and restrained a woman.

Vermont Superior Court Judge John Pacht on Wednesday sentenced Newton, 53, of Middlebury to a deferred sentence with two years of probation on the felony lewd and lascivious count, according to the Vermont Attorney

General's Office, which prosecuted the case.

On the misdemeanor simple assault count, Pacht sentenced Newton to six to 12 months of jail time, all suspended, with two years of probation and a permanent conviction. Newton's probation includes conditions that he not work as a law enforcement officer, that he is not to have any contact with the victim, and that he must complete individual sex offender treatment, a separate domestic violence counseling program, and substance abuse and alcohol counseling.

If Newton violates the conditions of his probation, he faces up to

five years in prison on the felony conviction and one year in prison on the misdemeanor, according to the AG's office.

Newton back in June of 2022 originally pleaded not guilty in Vermont Superior Court in Burlington to two felony sexual assault charges, following a months-long investigation into allegations of abuse reported by a woman with whom he was in a relationship.

Newton rejected calls for his resignation as sheriff in the aftermath of his arrest. After the 2022 election, he was succeeded by current Addison County Sheriff Michael Elmore.

## Battery power storage proposed in city

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — A Virginia firm will soon propose a 5-megawatt battery storage plant on a vacant Panton Road lot, a company representative told the Vergennes City Council last week.

The huge batteries could store excess solar power when the sun is shining and send it onto the electrical grid at night.

LightShift Energy Project Developer Logan Dye said the city proposal would be the six-year-old company's third in Vermont and 15th overall, with seven already operable in Massachusetts and Virginia. The other Vermont projects are in Essex Junction, for Global Foundries, and in Northfield. In

all, the company has seven others in various stages of development around the Northeast in addition to the Panton Road proposal.

Dye said he wanted to give the council and the Vergennes community a heads-up that LightShift will file by the end of October for a Certificate of Need — essentially a state permit — with the Vermont Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

Dye told the *Independent* in an email the battery storage plant would cover about three-tenths of an acre on a larger project proposed for 9 Panton Road, land owned by Bill and Connie Houston. He told the council LightShift has an agreement for a 20-year lease for the property. Obtaining a Certificate of Need

is a public process, and abutting property owners will receive written notice and updates on the permitting process, and host communities are also considered interested parties. But there is no local reviews of utility projects that are subject to PUC review. Dye said if all goes smoothly construction could begin in the middle of next year, and the facility could go online in 2027.

The fenced facility would include four boxes containing batteries, another box to convert the direct current (DC) produced by the batteries into the alternating current (AC) used by consumers and forward it into the grid. The project will also include smaller boxes with equipment that will

(See Battery, Page 7A)



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- How to complete your advance directive and other health planning documents.
- What decisions can we make in advance directives?
- How to use advance directives to make a plan for serious illness or end-of-life circumstances.

**Presented by:** Taylor Murray, Vermont Ethics Network Advance Care Planning Program Manager  
**Tuesday, October 28: 4:00-5:30 PM**  
Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

**November 4:**

### Know the 10 Early Warning Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer's and Dementia

Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of Alzheimer's or other dementia. Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. There are 10 warning signs and symptoms. Come to this program to learn more about how to identify and respond to these warning signs.

**Presented by:** Jordan Cotto  
Vermont Chapter/Alzheimer's Association  
**Tuesday, November 4: 4:00-5:30 PM**  
Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

**November 5:**

### Aging with Enjoyment and Meaning

Positive Psychology offers good ideas to help us in our later years. We'll discuss meaning, savoring, adapting, and brain re-training. Amidst problems and worries we face in aging, can we also feel peace and enjoyment?

**Presented by:** Joanne Corbett,  
Center for Positive Aging  
**Wednesday November 5: 4:00-5:30 PM**  
Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

**November 12:**

### Combating Fraud in the Digital Age

Learn how to protect yourself from the growing threats of fraud targeting older adults. This session will cover current computer, telephone, and mail scams, including impersonation fraud, check fraud, phishing and more. Learn how to recognize common fraud tactics and discover practical steps to safeguard your personal information, bank accounts, and businesses. We'll provide easy to understand tips on protecting yourself from identity theft, securing your digital banking, and avoiding falling victim to fraudsters.

**Presented by:** Erin Small, M&T Bank  
**Thursday November 12: 4:00-5:30 PM**  
Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

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# Editorials

## Policy matters, so does truth

As the government entered its fourth week of the shutdown more and more Americans are beginning to grasp the critical issue: Democrats are adamant the budget maintain existing health care subsidies, while Republicans want to cut \$1.1 trillion from Medicaid and Affordable Care Act marketplaces.

That's a stark difference in policy that impacts most Americans. Trump's "big beautiful bill," pushed through this Republican Congress with the slimmest of margins on July 4, is anything but, as American voters are finding out. On health care alone, according to Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates, the bill will cause 15 million people to lose health care coverage and become uninsured, while premiums will skyrocket for 22 million more in 2026, including 5 million small business owners and self-employed workers. The latter is because the Republican bill eliminates the premium tax credit enhancements passed in President Biden's infrastructure bill. Those tax credits made health care more affordable for nearly 24 million Americans, including 30,000 Vermonters.

Two stories on the front page of today's *Addison Independent* explain the impact those cuts will have on Vermonters, and Americans across the country. Reporter Ian Curry interviewed Vermont Health Care Advocate Mike Fisher, who summed up the impact this way: "The loss of the enhanced tax credits is a substantial blow to affordability, and many Vermonters will be priced out of the ability to get coverage."

Not only would the elimination of those tax credits cause premiums to skyrocket, Fisher continued, but Vermont's already-stressed health care insurance companies will be severely hurt, which in turn harms Vermont's hospitals. It's a potential downward spiral that could have serious consequences for Vermonters.

If Republicans in Congress don't budge on the issue, and Democrats hold firm (which they should), Americans will see how the Democrats' priority to protect health care tax credits for those who most need them are countered by Republicans' preference to dole out tax cuts to the wealthy.

A question remains, however: How smart is the American voter? Many Trump supporters were misled during Trump's re-election campaign and have buyers' remorse, but many others still think Trump is king, even as they actively vote against their own self-interests and against America's democracy.

Indeed, if Trump is good at anything, it's how to use social media, and artificial intelligence (AI), to craft false memes, photos, videos and other outlandish displays of propaganda. In the past, for example, he's portrayed himself (an unfit, overweight, orange-tinted hump of a man) as a muscular titan. Most recently, a fake video portrayed him as a military bomber pilot dumping feces on No Kings protesters (when in fact, he's a draft dodger who belittled Sen. John McCain and other prisoners of war as "losers" and brags about grabbing women by the... well, you know.)

Indeed, Trump has been able to snooker enough conservative Americans to remake the Republican Party in his flawed image. Most troubling, however, is that his AI memes, lies, political attacks and misinformation campaigns are part of a strategy that has had a perverse effect: while (most) people understand the memes are political theater, many come to believe no news is real and no news can be trusted. That undermines the truth from legitimate sources and negates the public's understanding of the issues that impact their lives — such as health care, vaccines, climate change, economic trends, education, cultural issues and on and on.

This month, Trump posted an A.I.-generated video depicting the House minority leader, Hakeem Jeffries, in stereotypical Mexican garb, according to a report by the *New York Times*'s Stuart Thompson. The video also used A.I. to make it sound as if Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer was disparaging the Democratic Party. The purpose is simply to degrade our politics.

Dozens of the memes and fake videos have been created and produced by a guerrilla messaging outfit loyal to Trump, Stuart reported. Its leader, Brenden Dilley, a podcaster and defeated congressional candidate, wrote on X during the past presidential campaign: "The truth no longer matters, all you have to do is go viral."

It's a lesson of our times Americans should not ignore. As Trump's popularity wanes, and policy issues start hitting home, we can only hope Dilley's assessment that the American public can't distinguish and value truth from the garbage he's producing is wrong — and Americans will come to understand the harm Trump and MAGA are inflicting on them and the country.

Angelo Lynn

## A rally to remember

The No Kings rally in Middlebury was a sight to behold. About 1,000 people of all walks of life, including 200 or more Middlebury College students, peacefully gathered on the Green in Middlebury in a show of collective concern for the country's future, while demonstrating hope in the strength of our democracy.

The speeches were focused and inspiring. The crowd was spirited, motivated and moved by the words and actions of those fellow Americans around them intent to be a country "of the people, by the people and for the people."

With American flags waving and signs rejecting rule by any dictator or king, it was a dramatic showing of patriotism and what it means to be an independent-thinking American. The concluding words of Pastor Co'Relous Bryant of Lincoln's United Church, in a rousing rendition of MLK's soulful rhetoric, were a particular delight.

These are what MAGA leaders are calling "rioters who hate America?" Only those with dishonest intentions could characterize one of the largest demonstrations in the nation's history so wrongly. For those unable to attend, but want to get a sense of the rally, go to MCTV's live coverage at [tinyurl.com/2k6s627m](https://tinyurl.com/2k6s627m).

Angelo Lynn



### Our future

**THE NO KINGS Day rallies drew people from all age groups, including youngsters like this trio seen in downtown Middlebury on Saturday. That's probably appropriate since the young have the most at stake in terms of preserving civil rights, the environment and democratic norms.**

Independent photo/Steve James

## Here's to letting kids range free

My 90-year-old grandpa reminisced about the neighborhood in Romania where he played street games with childhood friends, clapping and singing routines that put his aging hands in motion as he spoke. Although he no longer recalled what he'd eaten for dinner the previous night, he claimed he could still wander around every corner of his village in his mind's eye.

My dad likewise spoke of playing stickball and jacks and of duckpin bowling in his Bronx neighborhood. He practiced tossing and catching against the front steps of his family's urban apartment, later applying these skills as pitcher on a neighborhood baseball team where he once had his front tooth knocked out by a stray bat.

My own childhood memories are equally vivid. I grew up in a close-knit Jersey shore community, with a gaggle of cousins, friends and siblings. On hot summer days we walked to the local beach club and spent all day in swimsuits, hopping from pool to beach to ocean, building sandcastles, digging for sand crabs, and riding the waves, interrupting our moms' Mahjong games only to gather dimes for ice cream at the snack bar.

Fall and spring evenings, neighborhood kids gathered in the street until our parents called us in. Once, while my sisters and I cheered for our kickball team from the curb, Patrick O'Connell ran into the street and hurled a rock at his brother Timmy, who dashed to a quick getaway. The rock nailed my four-year-old sister smack in the middle of her forehead.

Blood streamed from the cut and Marcy, now feeling its sting, burst into tears. Someone whisked her off to our neighbor's front porch, where Mrs. Bussicchia administered first aid in the form of a damp washcloth, whispering loudly to me, the big sister, in her thick Italian accent, "Donna tella you mamma!" She knew our mom was ill and didn't want to upset her, but her words only triggered me to scoot home, shouting the news. Dad drove Marcy to the emergency room, where she received her first stitches. Back on Park Street, the event marked the end of an evening for the rest of the kids, who were called home to wash up and go to bed.

With the freedom to get injured, that's often what happened, though never too seriously. Well, once Danny Steinberger did get hit by a truck on a rainy day, but he survived with just a broken leg.

Fast forward 60 years. My 10-year-old granddaughter scores a goal for her soccer game. I cheer from the sidelines and reflect on the differences between my childhood and hers. The past 60 years have seen more organized sports, more safety gear, endless video games, and a myriad of technology. Yet even before all that, my childhood friends and I watched way too much tv unless our parents pushed us out the door. Do today's youth have opportunities to play freely, without supervision, according to their own rules? Has that survived?

Fortunately, children in our Bristol Village neighborhood still gather in the street to shoot hoops, collaborate on colorful chalk drawings and

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

### Ways of Seeing

By Alice Leeds



## Back-to-the-office plan might not work

Upon taking office in January, one of the first directives issued by President Trump was to order federal employees to report to work in person. It was clear at the time that this was done with the expectation that many of those workers would, in response, leave their jobs — helping to accomplish Trump's goals of destroying large swaths of our federal government and concentrating power in his hands.

Here in Vermont the administration of Gov. Scott announced in late August that state employees will be required to spend at least three days each week in the office starting Dec. 1.

They were told that more in-person days will enhance productivity and make use of existing, underutilized state office spaces. But the administration has not produced any data to indicate that productivity is likely to improve. And while it's wasteful to maintain office space that's not being used, we can consolidate state offices to a smaller footprint. Less office space means less expense. We should welcome that possibility.

Large organizations of many types have had varying experiences with remote work. For some it seems to work quite well and for others not so much. We just don't know if this kind of general return to office will lead to more productive work. The experts on the running of our state government — our state

employees — were not consulted. What we do know is that this unilateral directive will result in the upheaval of many employees' established, proven workflows, cause chaos in their family lives, and cost them precious time and money. I have personally heard from state employees that many have begun to look for work elsewhere. Of the hundreds of employees who live out of state, it seems clear that we're at risk of losing a large proportion of them.

While it's not clear that this will make our government work better, it's not hard to imagine how it could make things much worse. Hiring qualified people in the current environment is challenging at best, and impossible at worst. It's not unusual for positions to remain open for long periods for lack of qualified applicants. And given our housing shortage we will likely lose out-of-state workers who would be willing to relocate but won't be able to find an affordable place to move to. Positions are unfilled across state government, and the staff is stretched thin in many departments. This has already led to burnout and inefficiencies. With return-to-work we could easily see a dramatic number of resignations that will exacerbate our current, difficult situation.

If the governor's plan is to make our government less effective, a general return-to-office, especially on

(See *Community Forum*, Page 5A)

# Letters to the Editor

## We're lucky to have Porter ER

I want to give a shout-out to Porter's Emergency Room and the ambulance team that took me up to UVM. I became violently ill in the middle of the night on Oct. 1. My husband said I was incoherent by the time he got me to Porter's Emergency Room at 2 a.m. The Emergency team quickly determined that I had sepsis which can definitely kill you if not treated.

I really appreciate the Emergency Room team's readiness and knowledge to figure out what was wrong and move me to UVM. The ambulance team was good, too. They made me as comfortable as possible. I can't say it enough, thank you all. We are lucky to have you.

Flanzy Chodkowski  
Middlebury

## No Kings Day a big success

I am still feeling energized and encouraged by the No Kings rally in Middlebury on Saturday! From the capable emcees Annie Moore Cox and Spence Putnam to the fabulous musicians Nate Gusakov, Nathaniel Rubens Goldfarb, Micah Plante and sound manager Glenn Goodwin, to the array of speakers (Pastor Co'Relous Bryant, Tad Powers, Farhad Khan, Jubilee McGill, Amy Sheldon, Will Hinkle) who addressed different aspects of the stunning abuse of power that turned out more than 7 million people on one day nationwide, the gazebo was alive with inspiration for two solid hours.

The arrival and presence of Bristol Area Indivisible's murmuration of starlings and peace dove was fascinating and joyful. And when the Middlebury College students marched onto the green in a steady stream that kept on coming and coming and coming, at least 200 strong, I wasn't the only one along the sidewalk with tears of joy in my eyes. The tables along the sidewalk with children's activities, t-shirt printing of a block design made specifically for this day, information and merch added to the festival feel.

And oh, the bells, when they rang out!!! And most of all, because of the 1,000-plus people who showed up, with your signs, your voices, and your bells ...

I know we can do this. We are stronger together! If you missed it, you can catch it here thanks to MCTV: [tinyurl.com/2k6s627m](https://tinyurl.com/2k6s627m).

See you at the next one!  
Dorothy Mammen  
Middlebury

## Politician fails to deliver

Addressing the Disabled American Veterans, a presidential candidate, and unlikely supporter, pledged a substantial sum of money, and in turn, failed to write the check. It's the pledge that counts. Actual sacrifice is not part of his DNA.

The vets went home impressed, unwittingly duped, but impressed. (Note: In fairness, legal pressure eventually tracked down some of the missing funds.)

Similar smoke and mirrors tactics can be scaled up to satisfy a general election. But don't expect full disclosure. Unlike some performers, this one is largely who he pretends to be. Obviously, the self-assigned "prize for peace" is more about the prize than peace.

Alec Lyall  
Middlebury

## Suffering goes on in Ukraine

Olha Lychko-Parubocha from Lviv, Ukraine, wants to reach out to you.

I know of Olha since I have been sitting with Quakers at an International Meeting for Worship for World Peace, through Zoom, since Ukraine's invasion by Russia, (See *Heather-Lea letter*, Page 5A)

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# Letters to the Editor

## We must all be ready to protect democracy in 2026

The 7 million Americans who participated in the nationwide “No Kings 2” events on Oct. 18 sent a clear message, Trump isn’t forever. Trump, all the members of his administration, and his sycophants in Congress understand that if Democrats and Independents flip Congress in 2026, Trump’s presidency will basically be over. They realize that the formidable opposition to their policies has already, or will soon, reach critical mass. At the June 14, “No Kings 1”, it was three and a half million Americans, on the 18th it was nearly double that!

Trump and his adherents recognize the momentum to restore our democracy is building. They know they are wildly unpopular and will in some way be held accountable for their transgressions against our citizenry when their terms in office end.

It is not surprising that prior to No Kings 2 Trump, Vice President Vance, Stephen Miller, Deputy Chief of Staff, Pam Bondi, Attorney General, and Karoline Leavitt, Trump’s Press Secretary, along with many other government officials, spread the lie that No Kings 2 was a “Hate America” campaign promising violence. The proof was in the pudding; there were hardly any arrests for violence against people or property on Oct. 18. Leaders of and the vast majority of participants in the

2,700 No Kings 2 events evoked the non-violence epitomized by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King. They were not going to give Trump a rationale for invoking the Insurrection Act.

Of course, Trump, Vance, Miller, and Leavitt were quick to hit the airways on the 18th and since, falsely claiming that the No Kings 2 events were planned and conducted by violent, extremist, democrats who were members of Hamas and other terrorist groups. Really? The reports I’ve read and the media I’ve viewed show millions of patriots in all 50 states peacefully exercising their rights of assembly and free speech.

So what might be next? Trump, members of his administration, and his loyalist lawmakers are fully cognizant that they are in a struggle to maintain their short-term political survival and long-term dominance as reflected by Project 2025. Nothing is more important. They will not hesitate to take any measures necessary to keep control of our government. For them it’s survival!

If you believe in the numerous underpinnings of “No Kings,” if you believe our Declaration of Independence and Constitution are sacrosanct, that the rule of law, equal protection under the law, the equitable distribution of wealth, the honoring of diversity, and preserving our environment must

be protected at all costs, then your path over the next year is clear. Everything possible must be done to enable free and fair elections in the 2026 midterms, ensure massive voter turnout, and sweep away Trump’s Congressional cronies. If that’s accomplished, Trump will be a lame duck with limited power and the desired political dominance of his followers greatly diminished.

Trump and his devotees understand all of the above. It would be naive to think they’re not strategizing and preparing various ways to maintain their power in the near and long-term as envisioned by Project 2025. The Jan. 6 insurrection and Trump’s nine months in office unequivocally demonstrate they are desperate to consolidate minority rule.

Those of us who believe in democracy and cherish the values upon which it is founded, who believe in justice, must also be strategizing and preparing to oppose the continuation, expansion, and/or extension of demagoguery and tyranny. We must be ready, skilled, and resourced if necessary to move from peaceful protest and passive resistance to peaceful, sustained civil disobedience and self-defense. Let’s turn 7 million into 10 million next time.

**Ron Rubin**  
Middlebury

## Don’t let environment get lost among critical issues

I am happy that so many people turned out for the “Kings” protest. However, I am feeling distressed that more people did not mention environmental issues in the list of Donald Trump’s plan to devastate democracy. As usual, people yell the most about issues that hurt people and money is the main issue. Not to say that money is not needed to survive in this world for food, shelter, clothing, vehicles, bills, insurance, heating and cooling, but nothing is ever going to be the same.

The environment is suffering, and it will kill us unless we take care of it! Taxes will go up! Food will continue to go up. Medical bills will go up. Insurance will go up or companies will not provide insurance for climate ravaged areas.

David Gusakov’s letter to the editor on July 24th, was excellent. Global warming has to be taken more seriously. If any life on this planet is to continue to exist, including plants and animals which unfortunately get less mention than people, yet are important to all the ecosystems

of the world, sacrifices have to be made. How about flying less? Wow that’s a horrible thing to consider. Do you really need to go to your cousin’s brother-in-law’s daughter’s wedding in California?

Or visit your son in Idaho once a month? He chose to move there. It is a sacrifice you should accept.

In 4 or 5 years the 1.5 c tipping point will be met, if not sooner. We just passed the tipping point for coral reefs. 80% gone. Climate change is also exponential. One system falls, others will follow sooner. Did you just pass off the smoke from Canada this summer as a passing problem, surely it won’t happen again next year. It can and will.

8.2 billion people and growing. The resources of the planet cannot handle it. We “manage” wildlife for population and decide how many and which ones should be killed. Most species’ balance with each other is entirely out of whack due to us. The same with forests. How much logging? The Telephone Gap foresters are saying logging will save birds! Are you kidding? Who cares if

we kill and disrupt the homes of little creatures just minding their own business as we drive our machinery through a ripped up forest! They are equal to or better than us.

My second husband was a forestry major. He only lasted on his job for one year. He quit because he said the forestry service was more interested in cutting down trees than just letting them alone to grow on their own as they can do without our help, amazingly. Especially if there were less of us needing wood.

Try to cut back on the crap that you buy. Take this seriously people. Vote out the losers and billionaires. I’m getting carried away, so I won’t bore you anymore. One more thing, there was also an excellent letter in VTDigger. Unfortunately, I don’t have the date. It is by Miriam Voran, entitled;

“Environmental Overshoot in our Vermont Backyard.” Please look it up. Very Interesting.

**Pat Stevenson**  
Salisbury

## Community Forum

(Continued from Page 4A) such a short timeline, would be a good way to go about it. This is what Donald Trump has done to our federal government — with disastrous results.

Our state government is

complicated, and our state agencies handle logistically complex operations all the time. Managing workers differently depending upon their needs and the requirements of their jobs is attainable and is exactly what

good managers do. A one-size-fits-all approach is bound to be problematic and is a short-sighted way to handle a deeply nuanced issue. I urge the governor to work with his employees to find a better path forward.

## Heather-Lea letter

(Continued from Page 4A) in February of 2022. Olha works with Friends Peace Teams. She works with those who have been traumatized by war. She also wants to teach others how to do this work. Recently, Olha wrote this article and posted it on the Friends Peace Teams website. Olha and Quakers want to share this information, because we are meant to keep our hearts and minds open to ourselves and others. My hope is that we, in Addison County, Vermont, can do that.

Olha’s message: Lviv is on Fire

On the night of Oct. 4 and early morning of Oct. 5, Russia launched another massive attack on Lviv.

In total, more than 500 missiles and drones were fired at Ukraine.

The target was the city of Lviv. Now the enemy’s tactic is to send as many missiles and drones as possible to one peaceful city. Less than half of them reached Lviv. Still, we tried to calm our fear and fatigue throughout the night.

Not far from the Lviv airport, an explosion completely destroyed private houses. An entire family died in one of them.

The people of Lviv are in

mourning. Stress has been a constant companion in our lives for the past four years.

I just read this Offering from a book entitled Buddhist Wisdom for Every Day. Shantideva wrote this, “Limbs are cherished because they are parts of the body: why then are other people not cherished because they are parts of humanity?”

Let us all do what we can by working on keeping our hearts and minds open.

Thank you for reflecting.  
**Patty Heather-Lea**  
Bristol

## Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A) ride bikes and scooters in endless circles, practicing their latest stunts. They gather in back yards equipped with bouncy houses and trampolines, tossing off their shoes with abandon. A gaggle of them recently spent a week drawing elaborate hopscotch lines down the entire sidewalk lining our street, then hopped along them until the rain washed it all away. Halfway down the street, they scribed the words, “If you made it this far, do the Chicken Dance.” I couldn’t help myself and did, just once.

There’s a special thrill when

a new kitten is adopted into the neighborhood or an occasional skunk slinks across the road at dusk. Up the mountain in Lincoln, where I taught for years, I’ve seen my students biking on River Road with a long board in tow, likely to be hauled into the woods for their evolving fort. On warm afternoons a row of kids often sits in front of the Lincoln General Store lapping ice cream cones. And when winter storms arrive, a welcome snow day is made better by a hearty neighborhood snowball fight and the sculpting of elaborate snow forts.

It’s good to see childhood continuing to thrive in the 21st Century in our little corner of Addison County. I hope children throughout Vermont and beyond still enjoy the kind of fun that carves lasting memories. And I hope the inevitable injuries are all minor ones.

Alice Leeds, of Bristol, taught in a variety of private and public schools and colleges for 40 years. Presently retired, she tries to engage in some useful endeavor each day. She enjoys hearing from readers at [aleeds@gmavt.net](mailto:aleeds@gmavt.net).

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## Elderly Services Inc. ESI College

**Einstein in a Nutshell**

Tuesdays, October 28 & November 4, 10:00-11:30 AM  
Middlebury Regional EMS, 55 Collins Drive

“It would take an Einstein to understand that” is a common phrase implying that Einstein’s relativity is too challenging for mere mortals. Actually, relativity’s basis is simple and straightforward. Understand that, and you’ll see why surprising consequences follow. This course explains how Einstein resolved apparent contradictions in physics, explores relativity’s implications for space and time and shows how Einstein’s 1905 Special Theory of Relativity led to his General Theory - our current theory of gravity. **Rich Wolfson** is Professor of Physics & Environmental Studies, Emeritus, at Middlebury College. He is the author of the book *Simply Einstein: Relativity Demystified* and the Great Courses video *Einstein’s Relativity and the Quantum Revolution: Modern Physics for Nonscientists*.



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**The Rent is Still Too Darn High: Exploring Local Challenges and Solutions to Addison County’s Affordable Housing Crisis**

Wednesday, November 12, 10:00-11:30 AM  
Elderly Services, 112 Exchange St.

What is being done about the housing crisis in Addison County? Explore how Addison Housing Works, a nonprofit affordable housing trust, develops, manages and maintains affordable homes in Addison County, and examine current Vermont housing policies shaping this work. Learn about the challenges and opportunities in meeting community needs, and how state and federal decisions impact local residents. **Elise Shanbacher** is Executive Director of Addison Housing Works, a provider of more than 750 affordable homes in Addison County. A Middlebury College and Harvard Kennedy School graduate, she has more than a decade of experience in housing policy, and previously worked at the National Governors Association. She also serves on several state and local community development boards.



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ADDISON COUNTY

# Obituaries

## Charles Wilbur Robinson, 91, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Charles Wilbur Robinson died peacefully at Eastview in Middlebury, Vt., on Feb. 10, 2025, with his family by his side. He was 91. Charles was born in Ludlow, Vt., to Mary (Mann) Robinson and Lindley Robinson Jan. 2, 1934.

Charles was predeceased by his daughter Martie Schellinger; his son, David Robinson; and his wife, Heather Robinson. Survivors include his brother, Lindley; daughter Robbie Corriss; grandsons Justin and Ethan Corriss; and sons-in-law David Corriss and Kirk Schellinger.

He graduated from Black River High School in Ludlow, Vt. He was then accepted and attended Middlebury College, where he met his wife, Heather Hamilton.

He loved music, especially Dixieland Jazz, and was the band leader and trumpet player in the Old Chapel Six Jazz group at Middlebury College.

Charles was a graduate of Middlebury College, class of '56. Then he went to serve his two years mandatory military service with the U.S. Navy on board the *U.S.S. Iowa* and *U.S.S. Macon*. Upon return from his naval obligations, he obtained a master's degree in education from Springfield College and then went to Dayton, Ohio, to be the Director of Guidance and Training at Goodwill Industries. He and his family returned to the Monadnock area where they settled in Hancock, N.H. He was a counselor at Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Greenfield, N.H., and then took the position of Vocational Director of Rehabilitative Services at Crotched Mountain.



CHARLES WILBUR ROBINSON

In a very brave move, the family took an assignment with World Rehabilitation, Saigon, and Danang in Vietnam from March 1971 to Dec. 1972. He built and trained staff for the first Vocational Rehabilitation Center in Vietnam. Even in Vietnam, Charles was able to form a local jazz band with other U.S. personnel stationed there, which made his time there more sustainable. While Charles was in Saigon, Heather and the children lived in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, in a local community learning about all the cultures, traditions and culinary delights that later was the impetus for their love for traveling the world.

Once back on U.S. soil, he took a position as Director of Vocational Rehabilitation Center of Manchester, N.H., and established one for the New Hampshire Department of Education in Berlin, N.H.

Facing the daunting task of having to put twin girls through

college at the same time, he accepted a position at Assumption College in Worcester, Mass., as the Assistant Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation. As a side note, both his girls, Martie and Robbie, attended Assumption College and obtained a B.A. with a major in Social and Rehabilitation Services, while his son David Robinson served in the United States Army.

Charles' lifelong love of learning brought him to the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, where he received his Doctorate in Education in 1983.

After his tenure at Assumption College, he started a business designing software programs for people with disabilities to be used in school systems. During this time, he and his wife Heather managed to continue with their love of travel with trips to Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia, England, Morocco, and Scotland, to name a few, and summering in Ludlow, Vt., at Lake Rescue in a cabin built in 1934. The town of Ludlow always played a huge role in their life as his parents, Mary and Lindley lived there. Family was the most important and the lake cabin has been a generational constant for four generations. Charles was very active in the Lake Rescue Association for years.

Finally, they retired back to the place where it all began, Middlebury, Vt. First, they lived at Marble Works for a few years waiting for Eastview to be built. Heather and Charles were one of Eastview's first residents. Both were very active in all community aspects of Eastview, and as Middlebury Alumni still participated in auditing courses at the college, used the athletic facilities, and enjoyed Middlebury football games and reunions. Charles continued to play his horn for those social events at Eastview, and later for those who would reside in the Memory Care Unit.

Charles continued to be very active both at Eastview and Middlebury College with his innovative and adaptive ideas for assisting the hearing impaired and wiring classrooms and common rooms with the latest technology.

Heather and Charles were so blessed to be able to live out their final years in Middlebury, a place that held such fantastic memories and friendships, as well as being instrumental in their meeting and subsequent marriage and life of 66 years together.

Above all Charles was a very kind, thoughtful and caring husband, father and grandfather. His passing leaves a huge hole in our hearts as he was one-of-a-kind — that type of man with those qualities are so hard to find these days.

Charles was laid to rest next to his wife, Heather on June 23, 2025, in the family plot in Ludlow, Vt., in the Pleasant View Cemetery. ♦

### Obituary Guidelines

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

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

## W. Landon Dennison Jr., 89, of Hinesburg

HINESBURG — W. Landon "Lanny" Dennison Jr. died at his home in Hinesburg, Vt., on Friday, Oct. 10, 2025. He was 89 years old.

Lanny was born in Princeton, N.J., on Jan. 22, 1936. He attended Deerfield Academy and graduated from Princeton University in 1958 and Jefferson Medical College in 1962.

Lanny married the love of his life, Alison Holland, on July 4, 1960.

Lanny served as the medical officer aboard the *U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln*, SSBN-602. In 1970, he completed his residency at Mary Hitchcock Hospital in Dartmouth and moved his family to Hinesburg to open his dermatology practice.

As a doctor, Lanny traveled to the Northeast Kingdom, Middlebury and St. Albans. He never turned away a patient, taking payment in eggs, crocheted afghans, and even feed for his daughter's horse. It



W. LANDON DENNISON JR.

wasn't unusual for him to stop by a patient's home after church on Sunday.

In addition to being a devoted doctor, husband and father, he was a true renaissance man, painting, tying flies, studying philosophy, hunting, and cycling until the end

of his life. His Vermont connections started early in life and ran deep. He spent summers as a camper and counselor at Keewaydin Camp on Lake Dunmore, where his parents worked each summer.

Lanny leaves behind his wife of 65 years, Alison Holland Dennison; children Meg (Tim Peek), Bill (Deb Dennison), Andrew (Alison Dennison), and Michael (Tiffany Dennison); nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren; and brother Tom (Marianne Dennison).

A celebration of Lanny's life will be held Sunday, Oct. 26, at 2 p.m., at Trinity Episcopal Church in Shelburne with a reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Lanny's name may be made to Trinity Episcopal Church of Shelburne, 5171 Shelburne Road, Shelburne, VT 05482 or Hinesburg Community Resource Center, PO Box 444, Hinesburg, VT 05461. ♦

## Robert Elwin Grant, 91, of Orwell

ORWELL — Robert Elwin Grant, 91, passed away at Helen Porter Nursing Home on Oct. 9, 2025, visited and surrounded by family. Bob was born in Lincoln, Vt., to Elwin and Erma (Ladeau) Grant on June 28, 1934. He grew up in Lincoln and Addison and attended Vergennes High School. He married his wife Joan in Addison in 1962, and they resided in Middlebury until 1997, when they moved to Orwell.

As a member of the Vermont National Guard, Bob graduated from boot camp at Fort Dix, N.J., in July 1957. In the 1960s he worked for the Addison County Commission Sales. He later worked many years at Polymer's Plastics as a machine operator and at Mary Hogan Elementary School as a school custodian and bus driver. For more than 30 years he was a Deputy Sheriff in Addison County and was a lifelong member of the Middlebury Fire Department and a member of the local Masons. Later in life he



ROBERT ELWIN GRANT

continued working as a custodian at the Salisbury Community School.

Bob "never met a stranger" and was an avid conversationalist, with hundreds of stories relating to his time as a Deputy Sheriff. He enjoyed family, especially grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and was proud of who they were and all their

accomplishments. If anyone needed help, Bob was always there to lend a hand.

He is survived by his children, Marsha (Michael) Shepard of Ferrisburgh; Michael (Melanie) Grant of Tallahassee, Fla.; Robert (Beth) Grant Jr. of Orwell; and Joanne (Charlie) Fox of Schoharie, N.Y. He also leaves behind seven grandchildren, numerous great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and his brother Howard "Buster" Grant. He is predeceased by his wife of 60 years, Joan; parents, Elwin and Erma Grant; and two brothers, William Grant and Benjamin Grant. A celebration of life event will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2026, at a time to be determined, at Addison Community Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Addison County Firefighters Association Training Committee. Online condolences at [www.sandersonfuneralservice.com](http://www.sandersonfuneralservice.com). ♦

## Carol Stein Birdsall, 74, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Carol Stein Birdsall, 74, of Bristol, passed away Sept. 22, 2025. She was born April 30, 1951, in Queens, N.Y., to Ruth and Fred Stein. After spending her childhood in New York City, Carol attended SUNY Albany, where she majored in English, made lifelong friends, and met her future husband, Dan.

After graduation, Carol and Dan moved to Santa Barbara, Calif., for several years before settling in Vermont, near Dan's family, where they welcomed their two children, Amelia and Jake. In 1989, Carol earned her master's degree in speech-language pathology from the University of Vermont and began working with the Early Education Program in the Addison Northeast Supervisory Union. She



CAROL STEIN BIRDSALL

dedicated her career to supporting the speech and language needs of generations of preschoolers.

Though she often said she wasn't

musical, Carol had a deep love for music. She was a regular — and an excellent dancer — at all of Dan's gigs and passed on her passion for musical theater to her daughter and grandchildren. She also loved spending time outdoors tending to her vegetable and flower gardens. An avid baker, homemade chocolate cookies were always a staple in her home.

Carol is survived by her husband, Dan; her daughter, Amelia Birdsall Looby; her son-in-law, Brian; and their children, Charlie and Olive. She was predeceased by her parents and her son, Jake. The family extends heartfelt thanks to the kind staff of Crescent Manor for their compassionate care and to the many friends and family who shared their unwavering love and support.

Carol was a thoughtful gift-giver and generous to her core. Throughout her life, she supported a wide range of causes and charities. In her honor, please consider making a donation to a charity of your choice.

A celebration of Carol's life will be held Nov. 22, at her home. ♦

## Porter

(Continued from Page 2A) her role and was pleased to see folks enjoying the Porter photos and keepsakes.

"Anything that connects the community and culture here at Porter is a fantastic project to work on," she said. "It brought me a lot of joy to see folks in the hallways, pointing at things and smiling and laughing."

For more on the Porter centennial, go to [uvmhealth.org/celebrate-porters-centennial](http://uvmhealth.org/celebrate-porters-centennial).

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

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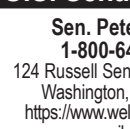


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# Battery

(Continued from Page 3A)  
allow LightShift to monitor the plant's activity.

Dye described LightShift to the council as a "utility-scale storage developer" that offers benefits to power companies and consumers. The company develops, builds and then owns and manages its battery storage facilities, he said.

He called the company's storage plants "an incredibly versatile" power source that can back up the larger grid in periods of instability via its interconnections with utility companies — in this case Green Mountain Power.

"GMP is interested in building out its battery storage portfolio" due to the "grid resiliency" they can offer, Dye said. "We can stabilize grids during periods of instability" and at times even prevent blackouts.

Power to charge the batteries comes from excess power produced at off-peak usage times by traditional sources and also increasingly by solar arrays when other sources are already meeting demand, according to Dye.

At the meeting, for example, Dye said sometimes solar arrays are producing power utilities don't require.

"We can charge on that extra solar and use it to sort of stretch out the viability of those projects," he said.

LightShift can also take advantage of the ups and downs of energy prices.

"We can charge during periods of really cheap power and discharge during periods of peak demand, which can lower utility bills for



**THIS LIGHTSHIFT BATTERY storage plant in Groton, Mass., is similar in appearance and scale to the one proposed for a Pantone Road lot in Vergennes. The facility could store 5 megawatts, enough to power more than 4,000 homes.**

people," Dye told the council. **STORE THEN SELL**

In an email exchange the *Independent* sought to better understand LightShift's business model. Dye was asked because of the grid stability the battery storage plants offer if "GMP and other utilities allow you to store this energy at off-peak and other times when demand is low (net-metered solar is not needed to augment supply, for example), and then feed it back into the grid at market rates?"

Dye replied, "Your understanding is correct. Net metering is not part of the equation, except these projects can be designed to take advantage of high solar production."

Dye also fielded questions from the council, starting with one from Mayor Chris Bearor about the proposed facility's safety. Dye answered that concern in detail after acknowledging that

older plants with outdated battery technology have had incidents.

"We use lithium ion phosphate (batteries), which is safer," he said, adding that in the plant construction "We're using current technology that is now being proven ... as much safer and undergoes much stricter scrutiny."

And, Dye added, the nature of the construction of the plant prevents fire from spreading. If it starts in one battery container, he said, "It is contained." He added firefighters can just "let it burn" until it peters out.

Dye was also asked about what happens when the plant's technology becomes obsolete. LightShift and other similar companies are required to set money aside to remove the facility, he said.

"A very strict requirement is to have a decommissioning fund set up," he said.

# Club

(Continued from Page 2A)  
members believed the building could become a recreation hub, not a facility that just opens for a few hours after school for youths.

"They did a vote that they would like to pursue the city acquiring the building," she said. "We talked about many different possibilities."

In September DeGraaf told the council that evening events for citizens, particularly seniors, could be one of many uses. At last week's meeting citizen and former rec committee chair Kathy Rossier said the land itself could accommodate activities like volleyball or even a small dog park. Bearor also noted that the Boys & Girls Club had for a time rented out a portion of the building, something that could offset carrying costs.

DeGraaf added she and the rec committee would like to seek input and ideas from the community with surveys and open houses to explore possibilities further.

Bearor continued to stress a regional approach. The attendance numbers DeGraaf shared with the council in September showed more Commodore Club members combined coming from Ferrisburgh, Pantone, Waltham and Addison than from Vergennes alone, although Vergennes was the largest single sending community.

"I would like to see area towns with us in the plan. Because it's not just Vergennes kids," Bearor said. "I think we need to look at all the towns and say this is for everybody."

Bearor also stressed building ownership would have ongoing costs. A recent estimate obtained by City Manager Ron Redmond came to about \$70,000 for new roofing and windows, and the mayor said the building "is going to need some work down the road" as well as routine maintenance.

The council also discussed how much information they could present to neighboring towns by January, when selectboards must set their Town Meeting Day budgets. The upshot was nothing concrete.

"We're not going to have a plan by January," Bearor said. "The reality is it's going to be a year or so before it's all squared away."

DeGraaf said she has had informal conversations with other towns' officials.

"Everybody is kind of sitting on the edge of their seats, saying, 'What is Vergennes going to do? Are they going to look into this?'" she said.

Councilors lined up behind the purchase, with the strings attached that came up in the discussion.

Councilor James Dragon agreed with Bearor's point on towns' support and with the concept of expanding uses.

"It's going to have to be more proportional," Dragon said, adding, "It's going to have to be more than the Commodore Club, sustainability-wise."

Councilor Jill Murray-Killon weighed in.

"I think we almost have an opportunity to do something that is self-sustaining if we do it right," Murray-Killon said. "But first we have to acquire this building, if voters approve it, and then put those plans in place."

Councilor Mark Koenig said detailed planning could be done once the building was secured. He described what he thought the council and rec committee could say before the vote: "If we do this (buy the building), these are the kinds of things we are thinking of doing with it. But we're not putting in a huge amount of effort until you say, 'We want you to do this.'"

And, just in case, Murray-Killon brought up one scenario if the property in the long run turned out to be a losing proposition for the city — going back to the voters again.

"We could always ask for permission to sell it," she said.

# MAUSD

(Continued from Page 2A)  
complex issue involving more than building plans and budgets," TruexCullins Senior Associate Cam Featherstonhaugh said. "In addition to potential cost savings, there are many emotional, educational, social, community and extracurricular benefits to consider for students, parents, teachers."

**EDUCATORS' INPUT**  
District officials also heard feedback from educators throughout the MAUSD. In attendance were members of the district's team of administrators and Advisory Council, a cohort that played a key role in brainstorming options for the future of educational delivery in the district last year.

The advisory council gathered feedback from MAUSD staff on the options being explored by the board. That input was compiled into a summary organized around three guiding priorities: improving outcomes for students, improving the teaching and working experience for staff, and financial efficiency.

For each of those priorities, staff highlighted strengths and key concerns associated with the options, such as that grade banding could improve educational outcomes and models requiring multiple moves for students were seen as harmful to student stability and their relationships with trusted adults.

"Staff across MAUSD expressed clear support for grade banding and

a dedicated middle school model as the most educationally sound path forward — offering equity, consistency, and collaboration," reads the summary. "However, they cautioned that implementation must protect relationships, transparency, and community trust, and that financial efficiency cannot outweigh the district's core mission: equitable and high-quality learning for all students."

The advisory council noted that the "the prevailing tone of feedback was marked by grief, apprehension, and concern."

"Overall, staff perceptions reflected a sense that potential risks and losses outweighed perceived benefits of proposed changes at this time," reads the summary. "At the same time, many participants expressed a desire to come together proactively—to regain local control, strengthen shared purpose, and position the district to navigate state-level challenges as a unified community."

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

Board members also reviewed feedback gathered through an online survey that received responses from 592 members of the community. Among other questions, respondents were asked what they believe should be the top priorities when considering a new school delivery system.

Providing high quality education for all students, maintaining or improving student opportunities and supporting teachers and staff

with adequate resources emerged as the top three priorities across respondents in the district's four towns.

District officials acknowledged some shortcomings of the survey and noted it is not intended to be the end-all, be-all of community voice.

"Think of this as a snapshot in time of community feedback," board member Meredith Rossignol said.

In addition to the presentations, board members received information gathered by Superintendent Patrick Reen related to the options and received a document from the board's Starksboro representatives on budget considerations for FY'27 and FY'28.

During the discussion, some board members said they needed more time to consider all of the information provided.

"It was really valuable to go beyond just 'these are the financial constraints,' to 'these are the financial constraints, and these are all the other associated vantage points that help us really think about what does education look like going forward,'" MAUSD Board Vice Chair Mike Dash said. "But on a personal level, I'd have a hard time synthesizing everything that happened today... to say 'Yeah, I'm definitely set on these three at this moment.'"

Board members ultimately decided to table determining which options to study further until the board's Oct. 28 meeting.

# Peace Garden

(Continued from Page 3A)  
corresponding continent, except for Antarctica, which features white plants to represent snow.

The garden was established by staff and students at Bristol Elementary School, who came up with the idea for the peace garden and brought it to life with the help of community members.

Bristol Elementary staff and students have continued to help care for the garden over the years, joining a group of around 30 volunteers who maintain the garden with support from various entities in the community.

Students at BES are among the group of community members working to rebuild the garden with Walsh and Clark. Fifth-graders from the school have been out in the garden each week, helping remove plants and soil around the edges of garden beds, replanting plants on finished beds and making signs that alert residents to the ongoing project.

Seventh- and eighth-graders from the Willowell Foundation's Pond Brook Project have also been helping out by working with Walsh and Clark.

"They've been really great about that heavier lifting part of it," Walsh said. "They've also been doing some removing of soil and a lot of deconstruction work of the timbers."

Volunteers have been working on the project since early September, with much of the preparation work beginning in August. Wood for the project has been milled by New Haven's Stark Mountain Woodworking and cut by Clark.

"All in all, the process has been really fun," Clark said.

He noted the team settled on black locust logs for the project because it is one of the most rot-resistant woods. Clark said it's been a challenge to source the wood since black locust is less common, and that finding longer lengths of the wood has been difficult.

"We were initially hoping to replace it all with single length ... hoping to just use one timber for each length, but the locust that we've been finding has been shorter than that," he explained. "(We're) having to make nice joinery for multiple pieces, so (there is) twice as much cutting."

Walsh said other parts of the project have also required more work. The project is taking more than twice as much time and effort than anticipated, Clark noted. Volunteers were looking to install another one of the garden beds this past Thursday and hope to wrap up the project by Nov. 10.

Walsh said that timeline is dependent on getting timbers in and the bed construction. Students from the MAUSD's Expanded Learning



**STUDENTS FROM BRISTOL Elementary School help remove plants and soil from the Bristol Peace Garden. Volunteers are working to restore the garden's wooden foundation, and local students have been helping tackle that work.**

Photo courtesy of Megan Walsh

Program were set to help peace garden stewards plant fall bulbs at the site this past Friday. Each of the continents has a couple of stewards, who are working with Walsh on redesigning some of the plantings in the garden beds.

"Between now and Nov. 10 the hope is to finish the garden beds, get some bulbs planted in there and, possibly, some perennials as well," Walsh said. "The rest of the perennials will get planted in the spring."

Designing and planting those perennials will be supported by Bristol Botanicals, the greenhouse business run by Walsh and Clark.

Peace garden stewards are also working to raise \$10,000 to support the remainder of the project. Those interested in donating can do so with a check made out to Bristol Peace Garden and sent to Patty Heather-Lea, 38 Pleasant St., Bristol, VT 05443. Community members can also look for a forthcoming GoFundMe for the effort.

Walsh noted the community's enthusiasm for the project and the peace garden as a whole has been

evident to volunteers working on the effort.

"People are constantly coming up and checking in and sharing stories about how much they have really enjoyed the peace garden being a part of their community as a space for kids and adults alike to just be in that space," she said. "It feels like such a great space."

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### Make honesty great again

The No Kings Day rallies on Saturday in Middlebury, Vergennes and Brandon at least matched the excitement at the 2,700 No Kings protests around the country. The message to our elected president was simple: Be nice, follow the law, tell the truth, stop treating your detractors as enemies, and it takes all kinds of people to make a great nation.

Vergennes City Green hosted a lively protest that saw more than 750 participants waving signs and accepting positive honks of support. Nearly 500 showed up in downtown Brandon. In Middlebury, more than 1,000 marched, sang, rang bells and shared a festive spirit. The Rev. Co'relous Bryant of the United Church of Lincoln, below, was among several speakers on the Middlebury town gazebo. His inspiring oration reminded us that this isn't the first time Americans have resisted tyranny and organized for our rights.



Photo by Bill Norlan



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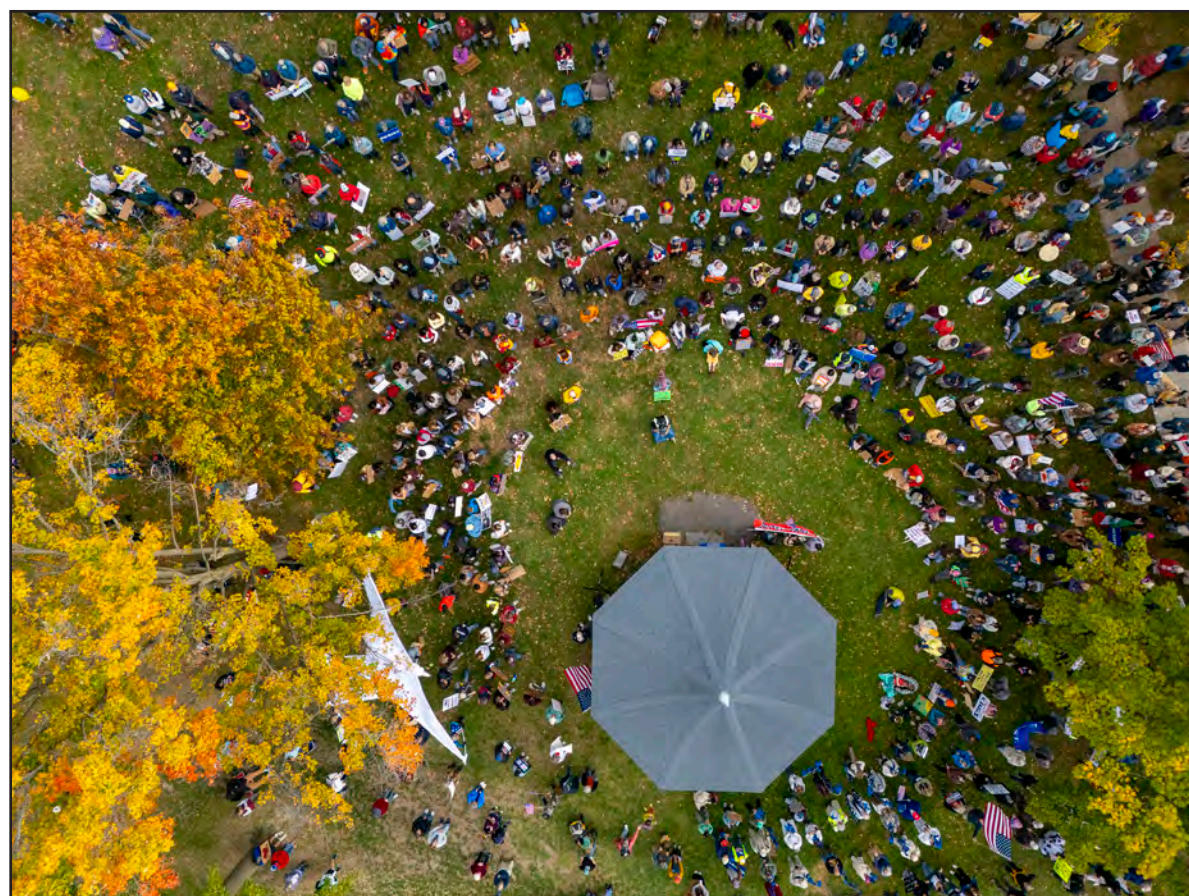


Photo by Caleb Kenna



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Photo by John Diegel

# Shutdown

(Continued from Page 1A) have new information,” she told the JFC, which includes Rep. Robin Scheu, D-Middlebury, and former Rep. Diane Lanpher, D-Vergennes.

“There’s a lot of unknown we’re trying to navigate in partnership with you that is uncomfortable for everybody,” Clark continued. “My mantra is, ‘trying to get as comfortable as I can with discomfort’ — because that’s a constant right now.”

The federal government shutdown began Oct. 1, after Congress failed to agree on a fiscal year 2026 budget deal. Republicans control the U.S. House, U.S. Senate and White House. A proposed stopgap budget resolution passed the House in September but failed to get the 60 votes needed in the Senate. Senate Democrats — including Vermont Sens. Peter Welch, a Democrat, and Bernie Sanders, an independent — have been fiercely opposed to Medicaid and Affordable Care Act-related cuts in the GOP-favored spending plan. Dems contend that the cuts would cause 15 million Americans — including an estimated 45,000 Vermonters — to lose their health insurance.

Clark gave the JFC a list of roughly \$12.3 million in federal budget hits that Vermont’s fiscal year 2026 spending plan has taken in recent months. Among them:

- Three one-time public health grants, totaling about \$5.5 million, aimed at COVID immunization, environmental justice and correcting disparities in health outcomes.
- \$427,530 in support of food purchases for underserved community members.
- A one-time \$757,424 for Mental Health Block Grant that would have supported “youth with serious emotional disturbance and adults with serious mental illness.”
- A \$727,273 in Help America Vote Act funding, specifically related to election security.
- \$347,591 for the SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention program.

In addition to these financial hits, Clark and other state leaders are left wondering what amount of federal funding Vermont can hope to retroactively recoup after Congress strikes a budget deal. Clark suggested it’s been tougher to read the financial tea leaves during the Trump administration.

“The last shutdown in 2018-2019 was a partial shutdown, and we had certainty about the beneficiary programs,” she said, referring to such federal offerings as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Woman Infants & Children (WIC) nutrition program, as well as Medicaid.

“That’s less known for us right now, so as we do the calculus of the risk associated with some of these programs, what’s in the back of my mind is whether the federal government will be reimbursing anything,” Clark said. “There’s certainty in some programs, but not all.”

Medicaid is the largest federal subsidy that Vermont receives, to the tune of \$1.6 billion annually. State officials told the JFC they’ve been assured of Medicaid and WIC funding through the end of this quarter (December), after which the prognosis becomes murky.

Vermont Agency of Human Services Secretary Jenny Samuelson said her office has received no communication from the feds on funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs. The VR program helps civilians and veterans with disabilities prepare for and obtain meaningful employment through services like counseling, job training and education.

Also on Thursday, Samuelson said she was very concerned about the lack of certainty her office had received on SNAP benefits.

Eligible Vermonters (around 31,000 households) receive \$12 million-\$13 million monthly in food subsidies through SNAP. Recipients’ monthly benefits automatically transfer to EBT cards they can use at stores and farmers markets.

In a dose of ominous news, Samuelson said SNAP beneficiaries might discover their EBT cards useless beginning Nov. 1.

She referred to a letter her office received from the USDA last week stating “if the current lapse in the (federal) appropriation continues, there will be insufficient funds to pay for the November SNAP benefits ... They are essentially

*“The critical question is, ‘Do we have confidence any of those funds that are loaned will be retroactively repaid by the federal government?’”*

— Treasurer Mike Piecak

saying that SNAP may end, or not continue, in November.”

**HELP WITH HEAT**  
Matt Cota is executive director of government affairs for the Vermont Fuel Dealers Association, a trade organization that advocates for the interests of the state’s more than 150 certified oil and propane suppliers. He told the JFC that this is the time of year when heating fuel suppliers

are usually able to convey to LIHEAP recipients (around 15,000 families) the amount, and delivery date, for their fuel subsidy.

“That’s not the case this year. ‘Right now, because of the uncertainty, the only thing we can communicate is that we’re not sure what the benefit will be and when it will be available,’” he said. “This, as you can imagine, drives a lot of uncertainty and nervousness among consumers and the fuel companies. Many of our clients that receive fuel assistance have empty tanks now. The colder it gets, and the uncertainty about whether they’ll receive a benefit this year — and whether it will come in the middle of November as it usually does — is generating a tremendous amount of calls to our office and the individual dealers.”

“As of now, the only thing we can say is, ‘We don’t know,’” Cota added.

He noted LIHEAP, “at best,” covers around half of a household’s winter fuel supply.

But LIHEAP has proven to be critical benefit for low-income folks as they try to cover all their basic expenses, noted Josh Davis, executive director of the nonprofit Southeastern Vermont Community Action Inc.

Davis, speaking on behalf of the Vermont Community Action Partnership, urged the JFC to “immediately activate contingency plans” to fund all three LIHEAP programs: the seasonal fuel subsidy, “Crisis Fuel” resources for people whose tanks have run dry during freezing conditions, and the “Emergency Heat” offering for folks who need heating system repairs.

“People who are supported by LIHEAP are not abstract line items; (the program) is a literal lifeline for thousands of Vermonters, many of whom are elderly, single, live on fixed incomes, are working and contributing to their communities, are retired or are disabled, and are all simply trying to make it through the winter,” Davis said.

He added the state’s Community Action agencies are fielding “hundreds of calls from anxious Vermonters. Each one of those calls is a touchpoint with somebody under intense stress.”

That heating fuel stress, according to Davis, is being compounded by the concurrent threats to SNAP, WIC and other federal subsidies.

“So for Vermonters on a fixed or low income, a small cut is proportionately huge,” he said. “We’re putting people into positions of having to make impossible choices of food over medicine, or heat over needed car repairs.”

Can the state dig into its own coffers to keep programs running amid a prolonged federal shutdown?

Yes, but it’s not an easy maneuver, according to Clark and state Treasurer Mike Piecak.

The Agency of Administration oversees a \$50 million reserve fund that the state could tap, with permission from the Vermont Emergency Board.

“In my mind, the \$50 million is when we know something has been cut and is maybe not coming back, so we’re deciding collectively we want to backfill that,” Clark told JFC members.

As of last Thursday, Vermont had \$1.5 billion cash on hand, according to Peicak. Some of that’s committed, some of that is liquid, and some is restricted, he explained.

“When you think about what is unrestricted and could easily be available for the purposes we’re talking about today, it’s in the category of \$700-\$800 million,” he told the JFC. But he noted that buffer isn’t surplus; it’s money the state is holding as it waits to pay its bills.

“So I don’t think the question here is whether we have the capacity in the short- or medium-term to withstand the withholding of federal funds of the government

being shut down for an extended period of time,” he said. “I think the critical question is, ‘Do we have confidence any of those funds that are loaned will be retroactively repaid by the federal government?’ I think that’s the big question, and in some ways unanswerable.”

Piecak cautioned that the loaning would become “spending” if there’s serious doubt of federal reimbursement. And he stressed that spending decisions must come from the Legislature, not the treasurer’s office.

“It’s all about the uncertainty and the scale,” he said. Middlebury’s Rep. Scheu will play a big role in any financial maneuvering the state might have to do in wake of the government shutdown and Trump administration’s threats of penalizing blue states. Scheu is a member of the JFC and chairs the House Appropriations Committee.

She told the *Independent*: “There is no doubt that the federal government shutdown is going to impact all Vermonters and significantly harm many of them, particularly in the areas of nutrition and heat,” she said.

“In terms of Vermont’s own finances, our reserves are full and we have additionally reserved up to \$80 million in carry-forward money from last fiscal year in the event that we have to backfill in some areas. We do not have enough to backfill everything, but we will do our best to minimize harm to Vermonters.”

“While I am confident in Vermont being able to weather this financial storm, I am not confident in the federal government reimbursing us for money they should be sending to Vermont for these programs,” she concluded.

“While I am confident in Vermont being able to weather this financial storm, I am not confident in the federal government reimbursing us for money they should be sending to Vermont for these programs,” she concluded.

# Tax credits

(Continued from Page 1A)

the financial assistance for individuals and families enrolled in health plans bought on the ACA Marketplace. Vermont’s ACA Marketplace is Vermont Health Connect.

The enhanced premium tax credits were also extended to middle-income enrollees who made more than 400% of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL). The FPL for an individual is \$15,650, and for a family of four it is \$32,450.

Since the enhanced premium tax credits were introduced, the number of people enrolled in the ACA Marketplace nationwide has doubled to over 24 million.

These tax credits are especially important in Vermont, both to the nearly 30,000 people who rely on \$65 million worth of subsidies to access health insurance, and to the insurance companies themselves, who need them to sell affordable health plans in the state. And with only two health insurance companies offering plans in the state, Vermonters have few places to turn to for coverage.

“The loss of the enhanced tax credits is a substantial blow to affordability, and many Vermonters will be priced out of the ability to get coverage,” said Mike Fisher, Vermont’s health advocate.

Others, he added, will have fewer options. “Many people are oriented around their health because of a chronic health condition or ongoing condition, and they make very different choices about their health,” he said.

Households making less than 400% of the FPL will still qualify for the standard premium tax credits, though they’ll likely receive less assistance. Vermont also runs its own premium tax credit program known as Vermont Premium Assistance, which helps households making within 300% of the FPL. There are currently 11,000 Vermonters who receive both the federal and state premium tax credits, but for most of those people, the federal credits are enough to cover the cost of insurance. State officials told VT Digger last month that what the \$4.3 million Vermont Premium Assistance provides in subsidies will be nowhere near enough to make up the \$65 million gap left by the loss of federal enhanced credits.

Subsidies received through the enhanced premium tax credit are individualized, but in general, households making less than 200% and more than 400% can expect to lose the most from the expiration of the credits.

**COST COMPARISONS**  
KFF, a nonprofit that provides health policy analysis, compiled nationwide healthcare data to create a calculator that helps people estimate how much their premiums could increase next year. According to that calculator:

- An individual in Addison County with a yearly income 175% of the FPL was paying \$23 a month, or \$274 a year, for the second cheapest silver plan offered on Vermont Health Connect. Next year, that could increase to \$123 a month, or \$1,479 a year — thus an additional \$1,205 a year for health insurance.
- A family of four in Addison County making 350% of the FPL could see their monthly premiums for all four members rise by about 60%, from \$482 a month to \$801 a month. That’s a nearly \$4,000 yearly expenditure increase to \$9,606 — or an additional \$5,600 a year for health insurance.

However, those making just over 400% of the FPL are likely to lose the most. Should that same family of four in Addison County earn \$129,565 a year, or 403% of the FPL, their insurance costs would skyrocket. Currently, that family would be paying \$918 a month for a silver plan. Next year, that same plan would increase to \$3,587 a month, or just over \$45,000 a year. That’s about a third of that family’s yearly income. If that family was enrolled in the cheaper bronze plan, their premiums would go from \$0 a month to \$2,270. That’s over 20% of that household’s yearly income.

“When you say to a family that you need to go from spending 11% to 25% of your income on health insurance, they’ll have to make a decision,” Fisher said.

**INSURERS HIT TOO**  
Not only that, the loss of enhanced premium tax credits will also have a cascading effect on Vermont’s already beleaguered health insurance market. Decisions filed in July by the Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB), the regulatory body that oversees the state’s private insurance market, show that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT) and MVP, Vermont’s two health insurance companies, both asked the state for premium rate increases for 2026 under the assumption that the

enhanced premium tax credits would expire. “If ARPA’s enhancements to the PTC expire at the end of 2025, as they are expected to, most of BCBSVT’s individual subscribers will experience net premium increases that are higher than the increases reflected in the individual filing,” reads the GMCB’s decision on BCBSVT’s proposed rate increases.

The GMCB’s decision regarding MVP’s proposed rate increases contained the same considerations, though it also acknowledges that “The net premium increases experienced by subscribers above 400% FPL will be especially large, as they will no longer receive any PTC, effectively going from a premium limit of 8.5% of their income to no limit.”

This year, BCBSVT requested a 23.5% rate increase for its individual plans and a 13.5% increase for its small group plans sold on Vermont Health Connect. In August, the GMCB approved increases of 9.6% and 4.4% respectively. MVP on the other hand, requested a 6.2% rate increase for individual plans and a 7.5% increase for its small group plans sold on Vermont’s ACA Marketplace. The GMCB approved much lower increases of 1.3% and 2.5% respectively.

“That’s a great reminder for those who think that ‘this isn’t me, I’m not eligible for these subsidies.’ The loss of the tax credits has already resulted in an increase of the cost of premiums,” Fisher told the *Independent*.

**YOUNGER FOLKS LEAVE**  
However, Fisher also emphasized that the loss of the enhanced premium tax credits would worsen the financial health of Vermont’s insurance providers, particularly BCBSVT. The company insures around 230,000 Vermonters, or one-third of the state. However, a multi-year surge in claims has endangered the insurer’s ability to pay out claims and remain solvent. At the end of 2024, BCBSVT posted a record annual deficit of \$62 million. In July, the Department of Financial Regulation noted that BCBSVT only had around \$58 million in reserves to pay out claims, writing in an opinion that, “A BCBSVT insolvency would severely harm an already stressed system that is struggling with nation-leading cost challenges.”

Fisher agreed and added that the loss of enhanced premium tax credits would make it more difficult for BCBSVT to shore up the reserves needed to pay out claims in the future. He said that when premiums go up, the first people to drop insurance coverage are those who are younger, healthier and cheaper for companies to insure. That means, insurance companies are not only left with fewer bill-paying customers, but they’re also left with an insured population

that requires more medical care and are therefore more expensive to cover.

The GMCB’s filings reflect this trend. BCBSVT assumed that the loss of the enhanced premium tax credits, combined with the expected disenrollment of other members, would lead to an 8.7% increase in claims. Similarly, MVP projected a 7.1% increase in claims following an estimated loss of 17% of its individual market membership.

“If we see the kind of projected loss of insureds, that means providers will have a hard time getting paid. Putting more stress on healthcare providers who then have to raise their rates,” Fisher said.

Many of Vermont hospitals are already feeling financial pressure. GMCB data shows that five of Vermont’s 14 hospitals reported multimillion dollar losses last year, with six reportedly having less than 100 days’ cash on hand. Porter Medical Center was not one of these.

Last month, the GMCB set most of the state’s hospital budgets with the goal of stabilizing expenses and reining in the amount they could charge patients and insurance companies for medical care. Commercial insurance rate increases at hospitals were held at 3% for next year and were decreased by over 16% at UVM Medical Center in Burlington with the aim of granting insurance companies and their customers some financial respite. Though members of the GMCB iterated that there’s still much left to do to fix the dysfunctions in Vermont’s healthcare system.

It’s unclear how long the stalemate in Washington will last, but for now, federal lawmakers are dug in for what’s already become the nation’s second-longest shutdown in history. However, Nov. 1, the day next year’s enrollment period for ACA coverage opens, is fast approaching. Soon, millions of Americans, and thousands of Vermonters may face having to buy coverage without the subsidies provided by enhanced premium tax credits. If the credits aren’t renewed by then, one thing is clear to health experts like Fisher:

“The loss of the enhanced tax credits is going to push many Vermonters into very stark choices about how to make ends meet and cover their healthcare needs.”

*“The loss of the enhanced tax credits is a substantial blow to affordability, and many Vermonters will be priced out of the ability to get coverage.”*

— Mike Fisher



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# Medicare

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 13, BCBSVT decided it would also end all employer-sponsored Medicare Advantage plans as well.

With so many seniors on fixed incomes transitioning to traditional Medicare coverage, financial assistance is likely to be in high demand.

"I do anticipate a surge in people applying for the Medicare Savings Programs in 2026," said Sam Carleton, the director of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) at Age Well.

Medicare is not free. Each year, the Social Security Administration sets the monthly premium for Medicare Part B, which covers outpatient care. For 2025, this cost is \$185 a month and is deducted from your Social Security check. Carleton noted that while it's common for next year's premiums to be announced in October, the feds still haven't announced 2026 rates.

"I don't know if the (federal government) shutdown will delay the hearing of that amount," he said.

In the meantime, Medicare Savings Programs exist to help eligible Vermonters pay the out-of-pocket costs associated with Medicare. While Carleton said he expects more people will be

applying to the program following the cancellation of Medicare Advantage plans, he emphasized that the state has the budget. In fact, eligibility for Vermont's Medicare Advantage Plans are being expanded in 2026.

"That's really a step up... (the expanded Medicare Savings Program) is one of the only bright spots on the horizon right now," said Fisher.

Fisher said that for years, his office has received calls from Medicare patients who have delayed or forgone care out of fear of medical debt, but that the expansion of the state's Medicare Savings Programs have helped eliminate that problem among seniors. The newly expanded programs are estimated to save eligible Vermonters a collective \$64.7 million a year on health insurance.

The Qualified Medicare Beneficiary program, which covers Part A and B premiums, as well as deductibles, coinsurance and copayments, was previously only available to Medicare recipients with a monthly income at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Line (\$1,305 for an individual and \$1,763 for a couple). Next year, this program will be extended to those making within 150% of the Federal Poverty Line.

Eligibility for the Qualifying

Individual program, which covers Part B premiums, is also being expanded. Previously, the program was only available to those making between 120.01% and 135% of the Federal Poverty Line. In 2026, eligibility will rise to 202%.

"The expansion will allow that \$185 to stay in peoples' checks," Carleton said.

Carleton emphasized that only those applying to the Medicare Savings Programs starting in January 2026 will be assessed against the new criteria. He added that for some people, that money could go toward a Medicare Supplement Plan, or Medigap plan, which covers the remaining 20% of out-of-pocket health costs Medicare doesn't pay for.

### WHAT ABOUT PART D?

On top of the \$185 Medicare Part B monthly premium, most seniors also must buy a Part D plan from a private insurer to ensure they have prescription drug coverage. Those who don't have Part D or drug coverage such as those provided by former employers, the VA or TRICARE, will end up paying a monthly late enrollment fee.

The costs of Part D plans in Vermont vary widely with monthly premiums between \$8.40 and \$238.60, depending on what prescription drugs you need.

Deductibles can also be as high as \$615. Programs like VPharm exist to reduce the costs associated with Part D coverage. VPharm is available to Vermont seniors enrolled in Part D plans who fall under 225% of the Federal Poverty Line. VPharm can reduce Part D monthly premiums to \$15, \$20 or \$50 depending on income. Like

the state's Medicare Savings Programs, prescription drug programs like VPharm are also likely to be in high demand next year. "I think that there likely will be a surge (for VPharm)," Carleton said.

Part of this comes down to the fact that there will likely be more Vermonters in need of standalone Part D plans next year. Generally, Medicare Advantage plans include coverage

for prescription drugs, meaning people on Advantage plans don't have to look for separate Part D coverage. But with tens of thousands of Medicare Advantage plans set to be cancelled next year, the number of people in need of Part D coverage, and the number of people in need of help paying for those plans will likely increase. However, disbursement that assistance shouldn't be an issue, with Carleton saying, "The state has budgeted for that."

But this points to a larger issue: the affordability of Medicare in Vermont. While the expansion of Vermont's Medicare Savings Programs have significantly reduced the amount of seniors who make too much to qualify for assistance programs, but too little to afford health coverage. Nonetheless, some health experts are worried that gaps still remain.

"When you talk about this many people losing coverage there are going to be people who don't neatly fit in the public assistance boxes," Carleton said.

Those who don't qualify for any of the state's Medicare assistance programs would have to pay a monthly premium for Medicare Parts A and B, a monthly premium for Part D and a monthly premium for Medigap (Part G) should they want coverage of the 20% out-of-pocket costs Medicare doesn't pay for.

"20% is a mountain way too high for many Vermonters who've experienced a hospitalization or even moderate care," Fisher said.

### AFFORDABILITY

In 2025, the monthly premium for Parts A and B was \$185 a month while the average premium in Vermont for a Part D plan and a Medigap plan was \$80.34 and \$271.69 a month, respectively. That adds up to \$537.01 a month in premium payments on top of the thousands of dollars' worth of other Medicare-related out-of-pocket costs like yearly deductibles and copayments.

"For many Vermonters it's prohibitively expensive," Fisher said.

Fisher acknowledged that Medicare Advantage plans were often able to bundle Medicare benefits in a way that was attractive to some seniors, especially those living on tight budgets, though he emphasized that the quality of health coverage was often lacking.

"There has been a lot of low-value insurance in this market where people were marketed things falsely...Lots of people love their insurance company

until they need care," he said.

"However, they also provided plans that people might've been priced out of otherwise," he added.

Carleton agreed, saying that in the long run, Medicare Advantage plans, with its coinsurance and particularities of network coverage, could end up being more expensive than Medigap's monthly premium.

"But that's hard to tell someone who's trying to budget month-to-month."

"I do think there will be people who are forced to make a decision between the monthly predictable cost of Medigap or the 80% coverage of Medicare," he added.

Those who choose not to enroll in Medigap will have to find other ways to cover the remaining 20% out-of-pocket portions of their hospital bills. This could mean coming up with payment plans or enrolling in hospital cost sharing plans. But as Carleton told the *Independent*, the yearly cost of living adjustments to Social Security are often not enough to address the monthly costs of health insurance.

Help is available, but Vermont's shrinking insurance market and rising healthcare costs could mean fewer options for seniors who find that they're falling through the cracks.

"The cost of healthcare is a huge strain on people living on fixed incomes," Carleton said.

For free, confidential health insurance counseling, contact Age Well's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Individual and confidential help is also available 24/7 at 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) or at Medicare.gov.

*"20% (out of pocket for health care) is a mountain way too high for many Vermonters who've experienced a hospitalization or even moderate care."*

— Mike Fisher

*"When you talk about this many people losing (Medicare Advantage) coverage there are going to be people who don't neatly fit in the public assistance boxes."*

— Sam Carleton

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### SPEAKER LINEUP

**MOLLY SOLOMON**  
Executive Producer & President, NBC Olympics

**WEIWEI WANG**  
Executive Director, VT PoC Network

**MOHAMED NOOR**  
Student Speaker, Class of 2027

**CHARLIE SELLARS**  
Sustainability Director, Microsoft

**CAITLIN MYERS**  
Middlebury Professor of Economics & Researcher at National Bureau of Economic Research

## By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 under 12 are free. Rotary will accept Cash, Check and Venmo accepted. Checks can be made out to Middlebury Rotary, with End Polio Now in the memo line. Polio is an illness caused by a virus that mainly affects nerves in the spinal cord or brain stem. In its most severe form, polio can lead to a person being unable to move certain limbs, also called paralysis. It can also lead to trouble breathing and sometimes death.

Addison County Readers will

make a limited number of grants of up to \$600 to help fund early literacy efforts in Addison County preschools, early childhood centers and home daycares. Grant funds may be used to purchase books or help defer the cost of materials, guest visitors, presentations or performances, or for other activities aimed at boosting children's exposure to books and participation in early literacy learning. Grants will be awarded in early 2026; the application deadline is Dec. 5. To apply, go to [tinyurl.com/mrywc3ux](http://tinyurl.com/mrywc3ux). Addison County Readers is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that supports literacy in Addison County through activities such as distributing books, providing educational opportunities and raising literacy awareness. To learn more visit [addisoncountyreaders.org](http://addisoncountyreaders.org).

The Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will be closed in early November in order to implement the final phase of a major computer system upgrade that should greatly improve customer service with faster, easier transactions and more options for online services. All DMV offices and its call center will be closed to the public on Nov. 7 and 10. On Nov. 5 and 6, limited

appointments for service will be available, with only services involving vehicles available on Nov. 6, such as registration and title transactions.

The DMV offices and the call center will resume regular operation on Nov. 12. Online services will be unavailable beginning on the evening of Nov. 5 and will be restored on Nov. 12. In addition, online driver license renewals will be unavailable beginning Oct. 27. All customers who need to renew or replace their identification, driver's license, or learner's permit on or around Nov. 12 should plan ahead. Visit [mydmv.vermont.gov](http://mydmv.vermont.gov) to complete the transaction online or to schedule an appointment at a local office.

The Commission on the Future of Public Education is asking Vermonters to participate in an online survey to help inform the Legislature as it continues its work on education reform in the state. The survey is quick but also allows for longer comments on some questions. The results will be compiled and analyzed for the commission and will be included in the panel's final report and recommendations to the Legislature. Here's the link to the survey: [tinyurl.com/you7uhzbt](http://tinyurl.com/you7uhzbt).

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# UVM Health Network lays off executives

By OLIVIA GIEGER  
VTDigger.org

UVM Health Network announced Monday that it was laying off several top executives at the network level. The change comes as new leadership takes shape with an emphasis on shifting power out of the network and back to its member hospitals.

Porter Medical Center in Middlebury is one of those network hospitals.

The network will phase out the roles of Chief Operating Officer, Chief Medical Officer and Chief of Staff by the end of the year. Jason Williams, who worked as the Chief External Relations Officer at the network level, also decided to leave his post as part of the transition, according to an email the network's new CEO, Steve Leffler sent staff Monday afternoon. It is not clear if the network will fill his position or disperse his responsibilities to others in his department.

In addition to Porter, UVMHN is comprised of University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington, Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin, three hospitals in upstate New York and a home health and hospice program comprise.

High executive compensation at the network has come under scrutiny in recent years. In 2024, 19

executives at the network received a combined \$3 million in end of year bonuses. In a September press release specifically weighing in on the rising cost of healthcare in the state, Gov. Phil Scott specifically called out "perverse financial incentives and executive bonuses paid for by skyrocketing premiums."

The changes come as part of an effort to make the network leaner and more efficient, Leffler said in his Monday email. He officially began the new role last week, after former president and CEO Sunny Eappen stepped down. Leffler will remain in his role as president of University of Vermont Medical Center while also leading UVMHN.

During its September budget decisions, the Green Mountain Care Board, the state's main health care regulator, brought extra scrutiny to the hospital network for the high costs of care at its biggest hospital, UVM Medical Center, and its expensive administrative arm. Eappen's departure was, in part, a reaction to the mounting public pressure, trustees of the hospital and network previously told VTDigger.

Care board chair Owen Foster told VTDigger that a leaner network is a step in the right

direction for the type of change he hopes to see at UVM Health.

"Those decisions were definitely in line with some of the criticisms and concerns that the care board has had about excessive layers of management and lack of local control. It sounds to me like they're making hard decisions," Foster said. "Certainly for those people [who] are impacted, it's painful and difficult, but overall it sounds like it's a necessary course correction."

*"Overall it sounds like it's a necessary course correction."*  
— Owen Foster

As part of his new role, Leffler outlined a vision for a less network-centric organization, which he said would vest more decision making power in the hospitals and those closer to the level of care.

Under Eappen, the president of each partner hospital reported to the network's Chief Operating Officer. Now, they will once again report directly to the network's CEO.

In addition to the layoffs, Leffler announced that the chair of each hospital's board of trustees will have a voting seat at the network board. He added that he will continue working on ways to involve the trustees of the member hospitals more meaningfully,

including decisions on hospital budgets. Right now, the network board holds the decision-making power for its member hospitals' budgets.

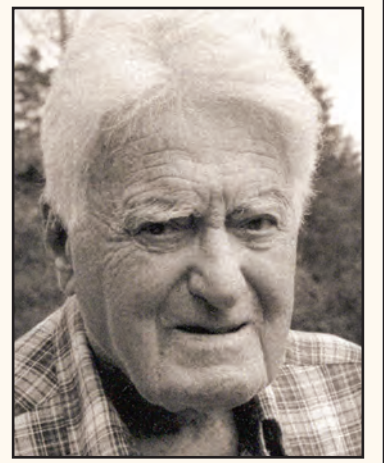
It is likely that the network can expect more changes to follow in time, Leffler said in his email. He promised transparency throughout the process.

"I know change can bring uncertainty, but a few things are clear. We are staying together as a health system. Every health care partner, team and shared service in our health system plays a vital role, and we are stronger because we work as one," he wrote. "These changes are about better supporting you and the work you do as a care provider, so we can stay focused on what matters most: our patients, our people and our mission."

Foster, at the care board, added that changes at UVM Medical Center are likely to be a major component of network-wide change. He noted that in the settlement agreement the hospital made with the care board for exceeding its budget last year, the hospital agreed to allocate resources for a structural transition. Foster said he hopes the hospital addresses its long waitlists for primary care and screenings by moving care out of the hospital.

# Tradition continues with annual Bible talk in Ripton

RIPTON — The Ripton Community Church is, once again, proud to announce the continuation of a long tradition, unique in our region, of the Rabbi Reichert Bible Talk. This year, on Nov. 2, the talk will be delivered by Mitchell Pearl, who has been a lay leader of the Havurah of Addison County for over 20 years.



REV. VICTOR E. REICHERT

He has regularly led worship services and Torah study, as well as other educational programs.

Pearl is a retired attorney, having practiced law in Middlebury for more than 30 years, focused on disability law, estate planning, and civil rights. He has long studied the Hebrew Bible and other topics with the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, and he studies Biblical Hebrew language with Mekom Torah, an offshoot of the Mordechai Kaplan Center. Pearl trained in lay leadership with the Davvenen Leadership Training Institute, run by the Aleph Rabbinic Ordination Program. Mitch and his wife, Maureen, reside in Brandon.

The annual Rabbi Victor E. Reichert Bible Talk is a long-standing tradition lovingly maintained by the Ripton Community Church since 1943, during World War II.

It began when Robert Frost invited Rabbi Reichert to visit him at the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference. Frost had met the Rabbi in 1939 while giving a reading at the Ohio Valley Poetry Society in Cincinnati.

Their friendship deepened and eventually the Reichert family bought a summer home near the Bread Loaf campus. \*Victor and his wife, Louise, regularly attended the Methodist Church in Ripton and each summer the Rabbi was invited by the pastor to deliver a "Bible Talk." He was eventually named "Rabbi-in-

Residence" by the congregation. Since Victor Reichert's passing in 1990 at ninety-three, Havurah — The Jewish Community of Addison County — and the United Methodist churches of Middlebury, East Middlebury, and Ripton are committed to sustaining this ecumenical tradition.

Middlebury College Professor Robert Schine commented on the talk by saying "Rabbi Reichert liked to stress certain aspects of the program: one, it's a 'talk,' not 'lecture.' He liked the informality of calling it the annual 'Bible Talk'. Second, it's about the Hebrew Bible. Third, he liked to give the talk a title that was a puzzle, alluding to, but not naming, the book of the Hebrew Bible on which he would speak (and inviting the congregation to guess the name at some point)."

The Talk will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 2, at the Ripton Community Church, 1329 Route 125 in the village center. Call 802-388-0338 for further information.

\* The Rabbi and the Poet" by Vermonter Andrew Marks movingly documents the relationship between poet Robert Frost and Rabbi Victor E. Reichert.

# Motorcyclist seriously injured in a bad crash

ADDISON COUNTY — A Bridport man was seriously injured in a motorcycle crash on Tuesday afternoon.

**Vt. State**  
Police Log

Christopher Stone, 32, was med-flighted to UVM Medical Center for multiple serious injuries sustained in the crash at around a quarter to 1 p.m. on Oct. 21, according to Vermont State Police.

Troopers responded to a single motorcycle roll over crash on Crown Point Road in Bridport at that time. They report that Stone was driving a 2008 Honda CBR600 eastbound

when his motorcycle exited the north side of the road, went airborne, landed and rolled before coming to a halt in brush.

The motorcycle split into pieces as it rolled. Stone, who was wearing a helmet, separated from the motorcycle as it rolled and continued a short distance before landing in the embankment east of the motorcycle.

Police suspected that speed was a contributing factor in the crash, and the investigation is ongoing.

Troopers were assisted on-scene by Bridport and Middlebury fire

departments and Middlebury Regional EMS.

In other recent activity, state police:

- On Oct. 16 at 4:43 p.m. responded to a report of an incident that occurred on Oct. 3 at an Orwell home. Police investigated and say they determined that Andrew Kukis, 64, of Orwell caused pain and or serious bodily injury to a family or household member. They took Kukis into custody, cited him for first degree aggravated domestic assault and lodged him at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility with

bail set at \$1,000.

- On Oct. 18 at around 12:30 p.m. looked into a disturbance on Upper Notch Road in Bristol. Police alleged that Jason Cousino, 34, of Milton contacted a person he wasn't supposed to. They cited Cousino for violation of conditions of release.

- On Oct. 20 just before 6 p.m. responded to Burpee Road in Bristol for a report of a domestic assault. Police cited Nicholas Trudeau, 44, of Middlebury for domestic assault and lodged him at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility with bail set at \$200.



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# Farmers

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 as much feed as they'd usually produce for their herd of dairy cows.

As a result, they've had to purchase supplemental feed and keep their cows out on the pastures, which is expected to cause damage to the organic dairy farm's bottom line.

"We all kind of expect things can be on and off and fluctuate...10, 20% fluctuations can be a bad year but can be expected, but to make less than half your normal feed; that's pretty huge," Jesse told the Independent.

Stefanie and Jesse Wilbur were among several local farmers who gathered at Lazy Dog Farm this past Friday to talk with U.S. Sen. Peter Welch about how the drought has affected their operations and ongoing efforts to help farmers weather such disasters. Welch was joined by Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts and representatives from various ag-related organizations.

### DROUGHT IMPACTS

Jon Lucas runs Lucas Dairy in Orwell. He noted the ongoing drought was preceded by a wet spring.

"April, May, when normally

we're really trying to get at our crop work, it rained, and it rained a lot," he said. "It really put us behind getting crops in, getting our first cutting, which is usually our most critical cutting of hay was delayed, which also resulted in a poor quality product when we got it off... We all scrambled to try and

*"By the time we harvested, we had had maybe an inch-and-a-half of rain, maybe, for the whole growing season of corn... There's nothing we could really do to outsmart that."*

—Kylie Chittenden of Richville Farms

get corn in the ground or get cows out to pasture, and then the rain stopped."

Lucas said his corn and grass crops struggled due to the lack of rain.

"Our second cut (of hay) was probably half the cutting that it normally is. We did that in early July... and that was the last time we cut hay," he said. "Normally, we would have done four or five cuttings by now."

Lucas said he pastures some heifers at his farm and typically can pasture those animals until October.

"We started feeding hay to those animals and pulling some off the pastures way back in August, because there's just nothing for them to eat on the pastures," he said.

Lucas said he's also struggled with not having enough water for his cows to drink. This summer he began hauling loads of water from



**COWS AT ORWELL'S Lazy Dog Farm greet U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, right, and Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts during their visit to the farm this past Friday. Lazy Dog Farm owner Jesse Wilbur led visitors on a tour of the farm, highlighting how drought conditions have impacted the organic dairy farm's pastures.**

Independent photo/Steve James

a nearby creek, pulling two loads a day on hotter days. He recently had another well put in at the farm.

"It's not up and running yet, but we just had to spend the money and get more water because I don't know when this is going to stop, and I don't really want to haul water all winter long because that's going to be a lot harder to do," he said.

Other farmers shared similar experiences. Jeremy and Kylie Chittenden of Richville Farms said their farm had a nice first cut of feed that quickly went bad.

"Our early feed is testing 22% protein and then the other block of our first cut is more like 9-10% protein," she explained. "So, even though we have a pile of feed, it's not enough in the quality; in order to get the cattle to grow or produce milk or anything we're going to have to compensate with a lot of grain."

Kylie noted farmers are "eternally hopeful for a better day."

"So, we're like, 'well we're just going to keep going because it's going to rain soon,' but 'soon' just didn't come," she said. "By the time we harvested, we had had maybe an inch-and-a-half of rain, maybe, for the whole growing season of corn... There's nothing we could really do to outsmart that."

Kylie said the farm has sourced 4,000 tons of corn and expects to purchase another 2,000 tons, costs that add onto the inputs already paid for crops that didn't grow. She noted the farm has crop insurance, but that won't cover all that's missing.

Other farmers spoke of how the drought has impacted their operations financially. Jesse Wilbur noted Lazy Dog Farm has spent about \$50,000 on supplemental feed.

"(\$50,000) is about 20% of our gross income for the year," he said.

Wilbur said he's been able to sell some assets and considers himself in a fortunate position but noted other farms are in a different situation.

### OPTIONS FOR ASSISTANCE

Welch recently joined U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders and U.S. Rep. Becca Balint in urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to issue



JESSE WILBUR

a Secretarial Disaster Designation for the entire state of Vermont due to the impacts of the ongoing drought. Such action would enable farmers to access disaster assistance, the letter from Vermont's congressional delegation stated.

The letter follows a similar request made by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, which in September asked the USDA to approve a disaster designation for every Vermont county.

"If that were declared it would at least provide some relief; it's modest, but every little bit helps in this context," Welch said.

Farmers acknowledged federal assistance is helpful but pointed to the limitations of such aid.

"All these programs are great, and I think the biggest struggle, and this year it's going to be even bigger with the (government shutdown), is sometimes this money is too late," said Brian Kemp, a local farmer and member of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Board of Directors. "You're talking about checks coming in for '23, '24, but nobody's going to see these checks for this year until '26, '27, and for a lot of farms, they might not be able to weather that storm."

Jessica Hays Lucas is an organizer with the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont. She pointed to efforts to establish a Farm Security Fund that would reimburse farmers for up to 50% of uncovered losses resulting from extreme weather.

A bill to establish the fund

was introduced by state Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Middlebury, and is currently in the House Appropriations Committee.

"It wouldn't make anybody whole, but it would allow farmers to keep farming through these extreme moments of stress," Hays Lucas said.

The Agency of Agriculture on Friday launched an online 2025 Agriculture Drought Impact Survey to capture how drought conditions are impacting the state's farms. Agricultural producers are encouraged to take part in the survey, which is open until Dec. 15.

"The documentation is yet another hassle, but that really does help in terms of my capacity, Bernie's capacity and Becca's capacity to make the case about why we need the help," Welch said.

### BOUNCING BACK

Farmers this past Friday noted that the ongoing drought will have lasting effects.

"This isn't over," Orwell farmer Hans Tudhope said. "Farming goes one year into the next. I figured it's going to take two very good crop

years, consecutive, to recover; that's a good way to describe how serious this is. I've never seen it close to this bad."

Farmers said they'll need a lot of rain before winter.

"If we don't get good weather going into next spring it won't be scary, it will be catastrophic," Tudhope said.

Welch noted that while he can't bring farmers the rain they need, he feels it's important to support them through difficult situations like the ongoing drought.

"This is about us being together as a society, and we all need each other," he said.

In the meantime, farmers expressed that eternal hopefulness Kylie Chittenden pointed to. They noted they've weathered challenging years in the past and will do what they can to get

through.

"I had a picture on my Facebook of our corn pile from (2014) I think, was another terrible year of getting corn planted, and it was very similar to what we had this year," Jeremy Chittenden said. "We made it through, and we'll bounce back, but it's been a very



**VERMONT SECRETARY OF Agriculture Anson Tebbetts addresses farmers at Orwell's Lazy Dog Farm this past Friday. Farmers, government officials and representatives from ag-related organizations gathered that afternoon to discuss how the ongoing drought is impacting Vermont farms and efforts to help farmers weather such disasters.**

Independent photo/Steve James

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# Lueders

(Continued from Page 1A) communities across the state.” Lueders had spent several years politely eschewing her friends’ exhortations that she run for the Legislature.

She figured she was busy enough with the Bristol law practice she shares with her husband, Jim Dumont, and was content serving her community on a series of nonprofit boards, including most recently Addison Housing Works.

“The collective brain comes up with better solutions, almost all the time,” she told the *Independent* on Monday of her penchant for tackling — and solving — problems as part of a small group.

But when Cordes announced in early June she’d be stepping down from her post to take a nursing job in Canada, Lueders again received encouragement to throw her hat into the ring.

Again, Lueders’s initial feeling was, “This isn’t for me.” And aside from that, she believed her good friend and recent Addison-4 candidate Jeanne Albert — a fellow Lincoln Democrat — would get the nod. Albert, a lifelong educator, didn’t advance past the 2024 Democrat primary, which saw Cordes and Starksboro Democrat Herb Olson continue on to the general election and win the two Addison-4 seats.

“She ran in that (primary) and got votes, is excellent, detailed, really informs herself, and thinks about the issues,” Lueders said of Albert.

Still, some of Lueders’s supporters reminded her that Gov. Scott could appoint whomever he wanted, and suggested she throw her name into the mix.

“I said, ‘OK, I’ll talk to Jeanne.’ And Jeanne said, ‘I think it’s a great idea,’” Lueders recalled.

So Lueders in early June became one of five candidates the Democrats’ Addison-4 District Representative Committee considered, and ultimately pared down to two names to forward to Scott: Albert and former longtime Addison-4 Rep. Dave Sharpe, D-Bristol, who had served from 2003-2019 and for several years chaired the House Education Committee.

The other three candidates on the list were Lueders, Robert Demic of Bristol, and Dave Lucey of Monkton.

A week later, the Addison-4 District Representative Committee put out the call for a third name to submit to the governor. The



KAREN LUEDERS

panel met again and took a straw poll on each of five people hoping to join Sharpe and Albert on the governor’s list: Demic, Lueders and Lucey resubmitted their names, along with Bristol’s Bob Bernstein and former Monkton selectboard Chair Stephen Pilcher.

Pilcher — who had resigned his position as Monkton Democratic Town Committee chair to enter the Addison-4 conversation — became the third pick.

But Scott in July chose not to select any of the top three candidates Addison County Democrats had advanced to serve out Cordes’s term, set to expire at the end of 2026. Rather, he asked for the names and contact info for the other hopefuls who hadn’t made the Addison-4 District Representative Committee’s final cut.

### LUEDERS IS PICKED

Scott and top members of his administration met with Lueders on Oct. 14. Her sit-down with the governor lasted around 35 minutes. A couple days later the governor’s office informed Lueders she was Scott’s pick.

Lueders was slated to be sworn in at the Statehouse on Wednesday, Oct. 22.

“Karen has strong ties to her community, which will bring a valuable perspective to Montpelier,” Scott said through a press release announcing his appointment. “With many years of public service, I believe she will be an effective legislator and represent her constituents well.”

Paul Forlenza co-chaired the Addison-4 District Representative Committee, whose members voted on the Addison-4 nominees.

While he said Lueders “has the potential to fairly represent Addison-4 in the Vermont General Assembly,” she did not earn his

vote during the nomination process. He said he was personally leaning toward nominees who were not lawyers, believing the Legislature already has many serving in that vocation. He added he hopes Lueders will become more involved with the Addison County Democratic Committee going forward.

Forlenza currently serves with Lueders on the Lincoln Town Meeting Advisory Committee.

Prior to her service on the Addison Housing Works board, Lueders had volunteered on the boards of Addison County Home Health & Hospice and Habitat for Humanity. Since March of this year, she’s served on a special ad hoc committee appointed by the Lincoln selectboard to study and recommend improvements to voting in Lincoln and at the community’s annual town meeting.

Lueders has come to know the communities of the four towns she’ll represent (Lincoln, Bristol, Starksboro and Monkton) in a variety of ways: through her law practice, through volunteering at local schools, through her children’s friends and their families, and as a patron and participant in the five-town arts community. Until it closed in March 2020 amid the COVID-19 shutdown, Lueders ran the WalkOver Gallery and Concert Room in Bristol for 17 years alongside her law office.

So what will Lueders focus on during the second phase of her civic career, as a member of the Vermont House?

### LUEDERS PRIORITIES

She acknowledged four big issues likely to dominate the Legislature’s agenda when the 2026 session begins this coming January: Considering legislation to further the education reform goals of Vermont’s Act 73; dealing with a health care system that’s in financial crisis; trying to increase the state’s inadequate affordable/workforce housing stock; and dealing with an uncertain federal funding picture exacerbated by an ongoing government shutdown and GOP budget priorities in D.C. that would pare food and health care subsidies for low-income citizens.

“Hopefully every party and every person is caring and thinking about these issues, because they affect all constituents all over the state,” she said. “If we can look at all these issues intertwined, that

would be great.”

As an Addison Housing Works board member, Lueders has gained a keen understanding of how critical it is for a family to have an affordable home. When a family can’t make rent or a mortgage, its financial and emotional wellbeing unravels very quickly, she noted.

“(Housing) is a huge priority,” she said of her agenda as a freshman lawmaker.

As a Lincoln resident, Lueders has become very aware of Vermont’s education reform debate. Act 73 is likely to leaver to regional schools and school consolidations. Prior to this year’s passage of Act 73, Lincoln withdrew from the Mount Abraham Unified School District to former its own, independent public school district.

Lueders said the small Lincoln School District has become a big success, even as it and the state’s entire public education landscape comes under scrutiny of the Vermont School District Redistricting Task Force (see related story, Page 1A).

Lueders said she realizes Act 73 is now law but would like to see the state do a deeper dive into research on small schools and student outcomes before making substantial changes to the current system. She believes Lincoln has a good story to tell, and she’ll share it, along with other feedback she receives from Addison-4 voters.

“I want to be very constituent based. I want to be best listener I can be,” she said. “I really want to hear from all the folks in the four towns, about what is troubling them, what are their challenges, and what will help them out.”

Lueders will try to extend her legislative career beyond the one year left on Cordes’s term. Lueders’s name will appear on the 2026 primary election ballot.

“No matter who got appointed, I believe that person should run again as a matter of principal. If you want to make a difference, show up,” she said.

# Student

(Continued from Page 1A)

at [tinyurl.com/MiddSearch](https://tinyurl.com/MiddSearch). Fellow students may also contact Middlebury College Public Safety at 802-443-5911.

On Monday afternoon, Middlebury police said they were using drones in their search. Middlebury College Public Safety on Tuesday was looking to form search parties; for anyone who wants to volunteer it provided a link posted with this story.

In a message to Middlebury students, college administrators Smita Ruzicka and Demitria Kirby said they are “working closely with the Middlebury police, which is investigating and collecting information at this time. We have been in touch with the student’s family and friends to offer support and learn all we can about the student’s recent activities and whereabouts.”

Ruzicka is Vice President for Student Affairs, and Kirby is Associate Vice President of Safety. Middlebury College President Ian Baucom, Ruzicka and Kirby provided the institution’s latest update late Monday afternoon.

Smith is a senior from California double majoring in computer science and statistics. She is also a successful diver on the Panther women’s swimming and diving team.

At the request of Middlebury police, Vermont State Police will activate its Search and Rescue Team and its first full-scale search will take place Thursday, Oct. 23. In addition, the state police’s Victim Services Unit is working closely



LIA SMITH

with Smith’s family.

MPD conducted a larger-scale search on Wednesday, Oct. 22, in wooded areas on and adjacent to the Middlebury College campus. At the request of MPD, college staff continue to search all campus facilities.

Wednesday’s ground search was conducted by members of the Middlebury police and fire department, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents from the Swanton Sector.

MPD is receiving assistance from other law enforcement agencies, including New York State Police and the FBI.


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**Ready, steady, go!**

MORE THAN 380 athletes took part in Sunday's Middlebury Maple Run. Participants of all ages enjoyed beautiful weather including stunning spots of foliage color as they ran, walked and strolled around Middlebury and Weybridge in 5K, 10K and half marathon races. Burlington's Ian McCallum-Cook of Burlington (pictured left), took home the first place medal in the half marathon. Other athletes included Lois Farnham, top right, and Holly Puterbaugh (just below Farnham) who started the 5K together and both finished it. See more photos online at [middleburymaplerun.com](http://middleburymaplerun.com).

Independent photos/Steve James



# Restructuring

(Continued from Page 1A)

invited public testimony on Oct. 22. As the *Independent* went to press, the panel has one public feedback session remaining — on Tuesday, Oct. 28, from 6-8 p.m. at Winooski High School.

The task force will continue to receive written comments at its regular meetings and via email at [ADM.Redistricting@vermont.gov](mailto:ADM.Redistricting@vermont.gov).

In addition to setting out a process for paring the state's school districts from the current 119, devising a "weighted" student funding formula and a statewide education tax rate, Act 73 also calls for statewide graduation requirements, a statewide calendar, class-size minimums, state aid for school construction, and revised criteria for independent schools to receive public dollars.

All of these objectives represent potentially big changes in a state that, for more than two centuries, has offered local education with a lot of local control. Vermonters have been telling school directors and lawmakers that public schools are getting too expensive. At the same time, many are reluctant to close their local elementary schools, in spite of declining enrollment and surging costs.

Something will have to give, and the Redistricting Task Force in December will fuel the debate with up to three maps that will likely depict fewer districts and fewer small schools.

Here's how the county's four districts have weighed in, so far.

## ADDISON CENTRAL

The Addison Central School District board last week drafted a letter to the task force, with its responses largely based on some questions the task force offered to school officials.

In its preamble, the ACSD board stated, "We continue to have substantial concerns about the implementation of a redistricting mandate, particularly around the existing timeline, a lack of state funding for capital improvements, and a primary focus on structure and finance rather than education itself, and maintaining strong, stable classrooms for kids."

ACSD is the only public school system in the state to operate with a K-12 International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. Would it be able to retain that distinction if thrust into a larger school district? That's one of many issues the Legislature will need to sort out as it develops implementation plans for Act 73 this winter.

ACSD board members were candid in expressing ways in which some district operations might regress — while others could improve — as part of a larger district.

Advantages might include expanded learning and scheduling opportunities, leading to more diverse course offerings, including in the arts, STEM and career and technical education; the ability to fully staff combined elementary schools, meaning fewer multi-age classrooms.

Joining forces can achieve economies of scale, but school mergers without state construction aid would be a bad idea, according to ACSD officials.

"Consolidation could reduce, not expand, opportunities," the board stated.

Other potential pitfalls of being part of a bigger district, according to ACSD board members, include the loss or dilution of the district's IB curriculum; fewer close ties between board members and families; the need for more administrators to manage the larger district; the potential of inheriting other districts' debt, thereby raising taxes; and longer bus rides for some students.

Also weighing on ACSD officials' minds: Act 73 implementation would kick in in two years.

"The current timeline invites instability, which may cause harm to our youngest learners," the board stated.

ACSD — which delivers public education to preK-12 children in

## Bridport-Shoreham school merger plans proceed

Bridport and Shoreham residents are being asked to weigh in on a potential plan to educate K-5 children in a single elementary school, starting in the fall of 2026.

The *Independent* reported in April that Addison Central School District readers were considering merging the two communities' elementary-age students in light of declining enrollment. Shrinking student numbers are currently forcing both schools to create more multi-age classrooms.

A merger of the two student populations would allow the district to offer single-grade configurations for all classes, ACSD Superintendent Wendy Baker noted.

This past June, the *Independent* reported that a working group representing both communities was specifically developing a plan calling for the Bridport PreK program to move to Shoreham Elementary School, and for K-5 students from both towns to be educated together at Bridport Central School (BCS).

ACSD on Wednesday, Oct. 22, was slated to unveil a potential Bridport-Shoreham single-school-model at a community meeting after deadline for this edition. At the same time, the district was scheduled to release on its website, [acsdvt.org](http://acsdvt.org), an online survey to gain more

Another Bridport-Shoreham meeting has been set for Thursday, Oct. 23, at 7 p.m. at Shoreham's Pall Memorial Library.

— John Flowers

democratic engagement, oversight and accountability."

At the same time, the MAUSD board resolution "strongly urges" that the current education reform effort:

- Develop strategies to achieve "exceptional educational outcomes at a cost taxpayers can afford."

- Encourage collaboration among neighboring supervisory districts, including Mt. Abraham, Addison Central, and Addison Northeast, and the Hannaford Career Center.

"This could include consolidated and therefore more cost-effective central office operations and expanded educational opportunities for students," the board stated in its resolution.

- Explore and adopt a governance structure that is "tailored to the needs and community values of our district, such as a hybrid supervisory union/school district structure, or unified school district, with elements of strong local control."

- Explore the impact and potential cost-savings of "public school intradistrict school choice, if this can be achieved in such a way that fully supports socioeconomic equity."

- Prioritize school governance approaches "that ensure policy and budgetary transparency."

- Establish "effective mechanisms for engaging education stakeholders in our communities in setting local policies and budgets."

The MAUSD board also resolved to "honor its commitment to the towns of Bristol, Monkton, New Haven, and Starksboro, not to close elementary schools absent an affirmative town vote."

It should be noted that MAUSD and Addison Northwest School District (ANWSD) voters in 2022 collectively rejected a merger of their two entities by a 4,282-1,886 margin.

## ADDISON NORTHWEST

Sheila Soule is superintendent

of the ANWSD, which serves preK-12 children in Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes and Waltham. She provided the *Independent* with the following statement summing up ANWSD's testimony to the Redistricting Task Force:

"We've been following the redistricting discussions closely. As a single unified district, we've seen real benefits in being able to align curriculum preK-12 and distribute resources more equitably. Because of our size, we know our students and staff well, and that close connection really supports communication and a strong sense of community."

"At the same time, we're feeling a lot of pressure financially," she added. "We're already among the highest-spending districts but have fewer programs and supports to offer compared to larger systems. There's not much left to cut without affecting student opportunities, so we believe the current funding structure isn't sustainable long-term."

"We've looked at consolidation as a possible way to share resources and expand options for students. We've worked closely with neighboring districts before, especially MAUSD, and there's definitely potential to do more," Soule said, in summation. "But it's also important to acknowledge concerns about losing local control. It will be important to see what next steps the Legislature takes when the session begins, especially as they consider the task force's recommendations. Ultimately, this is a moment when strong legislative leadership will be essential to creating a more sustainable and equitable system for all Vermont students — and one that our taxpayers can sustain."

Back on Sept. 4, the Lincoln

School District board sent the following statement to the Redistricting Task Force:

"If required to alter our current governance structure, we wish to remain a standalone district, operating within a multi-member Supervisory Union (SU).

Our goal is to preserve the district's community-driven vision, mission, and values, and maintain local democratic engagement, oversight, and accountability."

We have profound respect for the democratic processes that led to the recent formation of our independent school district. This respect

is grounded in the overwhelming support of voters to reject the merged, unified-union governance model and return to our prior status as a standalone district: we received majorities of over 75% in Lincoln as well as from our former partners in the Mount Abraham Unified School District.

To the extent that collaboration is practical, we will be speaking with other districts in nearby multi-member SUs."

In an email exchange with

the *Independent*, LSD board Chair Jeanne Albert said, "Since submitting the statement, the board has continued to follow the work of the task force. We are encouraged by their recent discussions highlighting Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and the potential benefits of regional collaboration."

Albert said Lincoln's pivot to an independent school district was successful and should demonstrate to state officials that smaller public education entities can be effective.

"In the short time since beginning independent operations, the Lincoln School Board is extremely proud of what we have achieved, not least that it is possible for a small — indeed, the smallest — supervisory district in the state to thrive and provide excellent and equitable opportunities for students," she said.

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

*"Consolidation could reduce, not expand, opportunities."*  
— ACSD school board



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# SPORTS

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VUHS JUNIOR MIDFIELDER Jude Bragg, left front, accepts congratulations from teammates, including No. 10 Tiegen Buskey, after scoring the Commodores' first goal in their 5-0 win in Tuesday's first-round D-III playoff game in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James



COMMODORE SENIOR AIDEN Fuller hurdles Oxbow goalie Landon Welch after Welch dives to make the save during Tuesday's first-round D-III playoff game in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James

## VUHS boys' soccer advances in style, cruising past Oxbow

By ANDY KIRKALDY

VERGENNES — The No. 3 seeded Vergennes Union High School boys' soccer team cruised past No. 14 seed Oxbow on Tuesday, 5-0, in a first-round Division III playoff game, erupting on offense after a relatively slow start.

Senior forward Tiegen Buskey had a big day to spark the VUHS attack with three goals and two assists. The VUHS defense allowed only four shots on junior goalie Colton Reed, all of which he handled easily. The only plays he made that weren't routine were when he ranged far off his line

to kick away a long ball headed toward his box, and he punched away a direct kick.

The Commodores improved to 11-4 with what was their fifth straight win, while the Olympians dropped to 4-11.

Next up for VUHS is a Friday quarterfinal at home vs. No. 6

Thetford, a 2-0 winner over No. 11 Paine Mountain on Tuesday. That game is tentatively scheduled for 3 p.m., but could be rescheduled. This story will be updated online to reflect any changes. The Commodores did not face Thetford this fall.

A win over Thetford would mean

a semifinal on Tuesday vs. either No. 10 Winooski (6-8-1) at home or No. 2 Stowe (11-4) on the road. Those teams are also tentatively set to square off on Friday.

Despite Tuesday's lopsided final, the Commodores were not operating smoothly against a spirited Olympian side early on.

Even though they were winning most 50-50 balls and earning more territory, they weren't threatening.

Buskey and Coach Kevin Hayes explained why afterward.

"At first it was just nerves. The first playoff games the last two years we haven't done so well, lost (See Commodores, Page 3B)

## Score BOARD

Football	
10/17 MUHS vs Burr & Burton	38-21
10/18 MAV vs Spaulding	14-7
Field Hockey	
10/15 Mt Abe vs Spaulding	2-0
10/17 Mt Abe vs North Country	3-2
10/17 Montpelier vs MUHS	6-1
D-III Playoffs	
10/22 #7 Stowe at #2 Mt Abe	Late
Boys' Soccer	
10/17 Mt Abe vs Milton	1-0
10/17 VUHS vs Richford	7-1
10/18 Rice vs MUHS	2-1
D-II Playoffs	
10/21 #6 Milton vs #11 MUHS	3-0
D-III Playoffs	
10/21 #3 VUHS vs #14 Oxbow	5-0
Girls' Soccer	
10/15 VUHS vs Missisquoi	7-0
10/15 Rice vs MUHS	6-0
10/18 St Albans vs MUHS	4-0
10/18 VUHS vs Blue Mt	9-2
10/18 Milton vs Mt Abe	2-0
D-II Playoffs	
10/21 #3 U-32 vs #14 MUHS	3-0
10/22 #11 Springfield at #6 Mt Abe	Late
10/22 #10 Montpelier at #7 OV	Late
D-III Playoffs	
10/22 #15 GMUHS at #3 VUHS	Late
Volleyball	
10/15 MUHS vs Lyndon	3-0
10/15 Montpelier vs Mt Abe	3-2
10/17 Mt Abe vs Missisquoi	3-1
D-II Playoffs	
10/21 #9 Vt Commons vs #8 Mt Abe	3-1
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men's Soccer	
10/18 Tufts vs Midd	2-0
10/21 Midd vs Vassar	4-2
Field Hockey	
10/18 Tufts vs Midd	2-1
Women's Soccer	
10/18 Tufts at Midd	0-0
Football	
10/18 Trinity vs Midd	28-26

## Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS	
Football	
10/24 MUHS at S Burlington/Burl	7 PM
10/25 MAV at Poutney	1 PM
10/31 & 11/1	Playoffs Open
Field Hockey	
D-II Playoffs	
10/24 #8 MUHS at #1 B. Falls	3 PM
10/24 #7 Brattleboro at #2 OV	3 PM

(See Schedule, Page 4B)

## Volleyball teams net home playoff dates

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — Middlebury Union High School volleyball was awarded the No. 1 seed for the Division II playoffs on Sunday after finishing the regular season with a 13-1 record that included an unbeaten slate against fellow D-II programs.

The Tigers will open their title quest on Saturday morning, when they will host No. 9 Vermont Commons (5-10) in a quarterfinal matchup. A win there would mean a home semifinal on Oct. 29, according to the Vermont Principals' Association, against either No.

4 Harwood or No. 5 Rice. Per the VPA, the final will be played on Sunday, Nov. 2, at a time and place not identified.

Meanwhile, the first-year Mount Abraham team earned the No. 8 seed with a 5-9 record and hosted Vermont Commons on Tuesday and came up on the short end of a 3-1 score (25-19, 15-25, 17-25, 24-26).

Senior Paige Guilbeault, a driving force in founding the program as well as a top player, led Mount Abe with 14 kills, six digs and six assists. Sophomore Meg Park contributed 11 aces, three kills and five digs, and junior Rhiannon Andrews

added five kills.

The setback concluded a largely successful season for the first-year program. Coach Megan LaRose's Eagles defeated Vermont Commons in the first varsity match in program history, won their second match, and then after a tough midseason stretch bounced back to win three of their four final matches and earn a home playoff date.

### REGULAR SEASON

On Oct. 13 the Tigers defeated visiting Lyndon 3-0 (25-18, 25-21, 25-14), and wrapped up their regular season at 13-1. The (See Volleyball, Page 3B)

## Tiger 11 nearing No.1 seed

### Convincing win boosts playoff positioning

By ANDY KIRKALDY

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School football team bounced back from an early Burr & Burton touchdown to dispatch the visiting Bulldogs in convincing fashion this past Friday night, 38-21.

In the process the Tigers improved to 6-1, and they all but clinched the top seed for the upcoming Division I playoffs. A victory this coming Friday in South Burlington vs. the winless joint Burlington/South Burlington team will lock down the No. 1 seed.

Burr & Burton dropped into fifth place at 4-3. Meanwhile, Rutland, which was the Tigers' only competitor for the top seed, lost on Friday to undefeated D-II Hartford and dropped into third place with a 5-2 record. St. Johnsbury (6-1) is in second in the points standings, and Essex (4-3) is in fourth the Tigers have defeated all those teams except St. J.; the Hilltoppers were not on their schedule this fall.

Friday's game against BBA did not start well for MUHS. The Bulldogs received the opening kickoff, and two plays, 70 yards and 1:21 later the visitors had a 7-0

lead. The second play was a 49-yard bomb down the left sideline from quarterback Sam Dowd to Jackson Johnston.

The Tigers answered by grinding out 57 yards on the ground to the BBA 8 yard line, mostly by running wide or off-tackle. There, a fumble on third-and-one cost six yards, and MUHS settled for a 33-yard Owen Butterfield field goal that made it 7-3 at 4:05 of the opening quarter.

Those turned out to be the first of 38 unanswered points.

The Bulldogs bobbled the following kickoff and started on their 17. Then they fumbled on the first play of their possession, and Tiger Cooke Riney recovered on the 19.

Enter Logan McNulty. His 11-yard run on second down gave the Tigers a first-and-goal on the BBA 9. A holding penalty pushed the Tigers back to the 15, but McNulty ran wide for 14 yards and then burst up the middle for the TD that made it 10-3 at 1:22 of the first quarter.

The Tigers now owned the trenches. Earlier they had limited success running up the middle. But running wide successfully opened (See Top seed, Page 4B)

*"We play better when we have a little swagger. We're a team that likes to dance around a little bit and have fun."*

— Coach Jed Malcolm

## MAV football nabs key win

### Comeback keeps No. 2 seed hopes alive

By ANDY KIRKALDY

BRISTOL — The Division III Mount Abraham-Vergennes cooperative football team rallied past visiting D-II Spaulding on Saturday, 14-7, to remain in the running for a No. 2 seed in the upcoming playoffs.

The 6-1 Eagles are currently sitting at No. 3 in the D-II standings and are set to visit winless Poutney on Saturday afternoon. Meanwhile, second-place Woodstock (6-1) will square off against undefeated first-place Bellows Falls this weekend.

A combination of an Eagle

win and a Woodstock loss could mean a No. 2 seed and two home playoff games for a program that has not hosted a football playoff game in more than a decade, according to Mount Abe Athletic Director Devin Wendel.

To have a shot at a No. 2 seed, the Eagles first had to defeat Spaulding, 3-4 in D-II. And the Tide took an early lead and still led by 7-0 at the half.

The Eagles tied the score on a 15-yard Cole Gagnon run at 8:40 of the third period and the first of two Lincoln Painter extra points.

The winning score came (See MAV, Page 4B)



TIGER SENIOR EMILY Johnson attacks down the right wing during the MUHS girls' soccer team's Saturday regular season finale vs. visiting St. Albans.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Girls' soccer playoffs open

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — The big news in high school girls' soccer this fall has been the Vergennes team, which finished 13-1 and earned the No. 2 seed in Division III. The Commodores were set to open the playoffs on Wednesday at home vs. No. 15 Green Mountain Union (2-2).

The likely win in that game, which was played after deadline, would mean VUHS will host either No. 7 Bellows Falls (11-3) or No. 10 Woodstock (6-9) on Saturday at a time to be announced. The semifinal round would also be in Vergennes on Oct. 25 at 3 p.m., with No. 3 Stowe a likely foe. The final is set for Nov. 1. Undefeated

No. 1 Windsor and No. 4 Fair Haven are on the other side of the bracket.

In D-II, Mount Abe (6-6-2) received a No. 6 nod. The Eagles were set to take on No. 10 Springfield (5-6-3) on Wednesday afternoon.

The winner of that game will on (See Girls' soccer, Page 2B)

# Field hockey playoff pairings set

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — Otter Valley (11-3) in Division II and Mount Abraham (10-4) in D-III each received No. 2 seeds entering the playoffs, while Middlebury (2-10-1) in D-II received a No. 8 seed on Sunday when the Vermont Principals' Association announced playoff pairings.

D-II games will start on Friday and will be played on the home field of the higher seeds. OV will host No. 7 Brattleboro, and MUHS will visit top seed Bellows Falls (11-2-1). Semifinal games will be played on Oct. 28 on neutral turf fields to be announced.

The D-III Eagles were set to host No. 7 Stowe (4-9-1) on

Wednesday after the deadline for this issue. Next up for the winner would be a semifinal at a neutral site on Monday, most likely against No. 3 Woodstock (10-4-1).

The finals in both D-II and D-III will be played at the University of Vermont. The D-III final is set for Friday, Oct. 31, at 3 p.m., and the D-II final on Saturday, Nov. 1, at 12:30 p.m.

## REGULAR SEASON

On Oct. 15 the Eagles prevailed, 2-0 at Spaulding to nail down the No. 2 seed in D-II. The Eagles got a goal in the first period from **Maris Laperle**, assisted by **Addison Wright**, and one in the second period from **Eleanor**

**Hurlburt** set up by **June Yates-Rusch**. Goalie **Jill Cousino** made five saves for Mount Abe.

On Friday the Eagles wrapped up their regular season with their sixth straight win, 3-0 over visiting North Country. Hurlburt led the way with a goal and an assist, and Wright and Yates-Rusch also each scored. Cousino made three saves, while Falcon goalie Lyla Harden made eight saves.

Also on Friday undefeated D-III top seed Montpelier defeated the visiting Tigers, 6-1, to complete its 14-0 season. Emily Tringe and Regan Walke each scored twice for the Solons. **Quinn Doria** notched the MUHS goal.

# High school boys' soccer playoffs begin

By ANDY KIRKALDY

ADDISON COUNTY — The Mount Abraham Union High School boys' soccer team earned the No. 1 seed in Division II and earned a bye into the quarterfinal round. The 12-1-1 Eagles on Saturday at 10 a.m. will host a quarterfinal game. Their opponent will be the winner of a first-round game between No. 8 Lamoille and No. 9 Springfield played on Wednesday after deadline for this issue.

Also in D-II, Middlebury earned the No. 11 seed and visited No. 6 Milton on Tuesday. The Tigers came up on the short end of a 3-0 score and finished 5-10. Killian Choquette scored twice and Chase Renaud once for the Yellowjackets; goalie Brody Allard made five saves. MUHS senior goalie Lyle

Carey capped a strong season in goal with three saves.

In D-III Vergennes earned the No. 3 seed and hosted No. 14 Oxbow, advancing with a 5-0 victory; see story on Page 1B. The Commodores will host No. 6 Thetford (9-6) on Friday at a time to be announced.

The *Independent* will update the Scoreboard/Schedule online as results and game times and dates are announced.

## REGULAR SEASON

On Oct. 17 the Eagles nailed down the top seed in D-II with a 1-0 win at Milton. **Jaran Griffin's** breakaway goal late in the first half proved to be the game-winner. He was sent in on goal by **Wayden Cherington**. Eagle goalie **Evan Audy** made seven saves, and Milton keeper Brody Allard made 10.

Also on Oct. 17 the Commodores wrapped up their 10-4 campaign with a 7-0 home win over Richford. **Garrett Wood** led the offense with three goals and an assist, and **Aiden Fuller** had a goal and an assist. **Tiegen Buskey**, **Joey Mancean** and **Liam Paquette** also found the net, and **Andrew Houghton** and **Evan White** added assists. **Colton Reed** made one save in the shutout, and Richford's Cyrus Gendron made 11.

On Saturday the Tigers gave host Rice a battle, but fell short, 2-1. Chais Lyford and Alex Aslakson scored for Rice, which improved to 9-4-1, and Ricky Carroll made saves.

**Judah Matovu** scored for MUHS, and Carey made six saves as the Tigers ended regular season play at 5-9.



LIA CALZINI HEADS the ball out of trouble Saturday during the MUHS girls' soccer team's regular season finale vs. visiting St. Albans.

Independent photo/Steve James

# Girls' soccer

(Continued from Page 1B) Saturday visit No. 3 U-32 (10-4-1), which defeated visiting No. 14 seed Middlebury on Tuesday, 3-0. The Raiders got goals from Morgan Towne, Sylvia Emmons and Grace Noyes in their victory. The Tigers, who finished a rebuilding season at 1-13-1, saw goalies **Ellie Orten** and **Marley Lambert** combine for four saves in the setback and put one shot on the Raider keeper.

If the Eagles prevailed on Wednesday, they will visit U-32 at a time to be announced on Saturday. Mount Abe lost at home early in the season to the Raiders, 1-0. The *Independent* will update our Scoreboard/Schedule online with times and dates of playoff games once they are scheduled.

Finally, Otter Valley (9-5) received the No. 7 seed in D-II and was set to host No. 10 Montpelier (5-8-1) on Wednesday. The winner of that game was almost certainly

taking a bus to visit No. 2 Harwood on Saturday.

## REGULAR SEASON

On Oct. 15 the Commodores eased past visiting Missisquoi, 7-0. **Ava Francis** scored three goals to lead the way. **Ayla Kittredge** scored a goal and assisted another, and **Libby Ringer**, **Sophia James** and **Amelia Giroux** added a goal apiece. **Lauren Husk** and **Ashtin Stearns** each chipped in an assist.

Also on Oct. 15 host Rice blanked the Tigers, 6-0. Reese Billings led the Green Knights with four goals, and Peyton Borick made one save. In the Tiger goal, Lambert (seven) and Orten (four) combined for 11 saves.

On Saturday visiting St. Albans shut out MUHS, 4-0. Izzy Montague scored twice to pace the Comets. Lambert (three saves) and Orten (five) combined for eight saves.

Visiting Milton blanked the

Eagles, 2-0, as Yellowjacket Savannah Monahan scored both Milton goals in the second half. The Eagles put more shots on target than their visitors, but Milton goalie **Lilly Daunais** made seven saves. Mount Abe keeper **Brooklyn Ryersbach** blocked two shots as the Eagles wrapped up a .500 regular season.

Finally, on Saturday the Commodores concluded their 13-1 regular season by easing past host Blue Mountain, 9-2. Francis poured in four goals and added two assists for VUHS. She now has 58 goals for her career and trails only **Abby Benton's** 75 goals on the VUHS girls' program scoring list. Also contributing to the offense on Saturday were Stearns (two goals), Kittredge and James (goal and assist each) and **Addie Smith**, who left the VUHS net after making three saves and scored a goal.

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by the Addison County Independent

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COMMODORE SOPHOMORE MIDFIELDER Joey Maneen bursts upfield after winning a ball from an Oxbow player during Tuesday's first-round D-III playoff game in Vergennes.

Independent photo/Steve James

## Commodores

(Continued from Page 1B)  
 them both," Buskey said. "So it just took us a little bit to get settled in."

Hayes had a similar take. "After a while) they settled in, played soccer, moved the ball, kept it on the ground, and got some linked play," Hayes said. "I knew first game of the playoffs, this whole group, I told them together there's going to be nerves early on."

Hayes said once they got past the early jitters, all went well.

"The playmakers made the plays," he said. "The back line, again, solid."

That back line on Tuesday was senior Ryker Mosehauer and junior Elliot Cosgrove in the middle and senior Peter Maneen and sophomore Rowan Neffinger on the flanks

Hayes also cited the work of sophomores Joey Maneen and Liam Paquette at holding midfield in front of the back line, both

defensively and in transition, and senior Aiden Fuller as the offensive central midfielder.

VUHS chances were nonexistent in the first 20 minutes, but cracks in the Oxbow armor began to show up. Oxbow goalie Landon Welch, who had a strong game with 11 saves, was well positioned to stop Buskey on a feed from Paquette, and after a corner kick, Welch snared a bullet from senior middle Garrett Wood.

Then junior Jude Bragg broke the ice in the 28th minute. From about 35 yards out, Buskey chipped the ball toward the penalty stripe, and Bragg won the battle for it in a crowd and right-footed the ball into the left side of the net.

Buskey said the score fired up the Commodores.

"It got everybody hyped up," he said. "We definitely calmed down, played soccer, played our game, passed the ball around on the ground and just worked it through."

Even before then, however, Buskey said there were positive signs.

"Definitely we had the effort on defense, just getting those 50-50 balls out of the back," he said. "Once we figured we could build it up through the middle and send it out to the sides, the goals just came after that."

With about four minutes left in the half, the Olympians managed their only shots before the break. Both came from just outside the box. Neffinger and Joey Maneen each blocked one of them

Then the ball went the other way and found Buskey near the top right of the Oxbow box. Buskey danced past two defenders and from near the penalty stripe deposited the ball low into the net's left side with 2:33 to go before halftime, and the lead was 2-0.

With 61 seconds gone in the second half it was 3-0, with Wood finishing. Buskey threaded a



COMMODORE JUNIOR KEEPER Colton Reed ranges far from his net to clear away an Oxbow threat during Tuesday's first-round D-III playoff win at home.

Independent photo/Steve James

through ball between two defenders that found Wood in full stride, and he buried the ball past the onrushing Welch inside the right post.

In the half's 16th minute Buskey made it 4-0. Joey Maneen hit a corner kick from the right side to the far corner of the Oxbow box, and Buskey absolutely nailed a one-timed half-volley back into the upper right corner of the net.

With five minutes left on the clock the same duo struck again.

Maneen sent Buskey alone in toward the left side of the Oxbow net. Welch met him and stopped Buskey's initial strike, and the ball bounced further to the left. Buskey hurdled the prone goalie, beat a defender to the ball and tapped it home with his left foot to complete his hat trick.

So, can the Commodores keep winning?

"I think we've got an opportunity ... We've got another home game.

I hope the guys will have great confidence after today," Hayes said. "I think we'll do all right."

Buskey was asked what has gone right for the team.

"I think the biggest thing, for me at least, and I know for a bunch of other guys, is mentality, and just keeping a positive outlook," he said. "We've just got to keep that positive attitude and keep going forward no matter what. I think we're pretty confident."

## Volleyball

(Continued from Page 1B)  
 decision nailed down the top seed in D-II for the Tigers, who went 10-0 against D-II competition in the regular season.

Also on Oct. 13 the Eagles dropped a tight five-set match to host Montpelier, 3-2. Mount Abe won the first two sets, 25-22 and 25-19. But Montpelier claimed

the next three sets, 25-20, 25-16 and 15-10 to rally past the Eagles. The Solons wrapped up their season at 5-9.

Guilbeault led Mount Abe with seven aces, four kills and two blocks. **Amelia Desilets** contributed four aces and three kills, **Gemma Lyles** added three aces and a kill, and **Charlotte**

**Desilets** finished with three kills and three blocks.

On this past Friday, the Eagles defeated host Missisquoi, 3-1 (26-24, 15-25, 25-9, 25-20). in the process clinching their home playoff match. Guilbeault (five kills, two aces) and Park (two kills, four aces) paced Mount Abe.

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# Top seed

(Continued from Page 1B)  
up Broadway.  
“You play a little bit of back and forth. You let them over-adjust to something, and then you burn them where they over-adjust,” Tiger Coach Jed Malcolm said. “So we knew we could run off-tackle from the beginning, and we did that. They were quick to adjust, and we countered it. It’s always fun to do, when you make a little coaching adjustment, and it works. It’s fun to see the guys capitalize on it.”

The Tigers ended up rushing for 251 yards on 47 carries, led by McNulty with 131 yards on 17 attempts.

The ground attack also paved the way for quarterback Brady Lloyd to complete four of eight passes for 85 yards and three touchdowns.

Basically, everything started clicking, Malcolm said.

“When you’re pounding a team (rushing), and they’re getting more and more guys into the box, you just sort of suck them in, and then you run play-action out of a power formation, and it’s wide open,” Malcolm said.

That’s just half the equation. The Tiger coaching staff changed the team’s defensive look after the opening drive, opting to bring extra rushers and play man defense in the secondary.

“That first drive we were trying to disguise (our defensive looks) too much, and that was not the right thing to do against the

formation they were in. That was something we could correct pretty easily,” Malcolm said. “After that, once we settled in we played more aggressive football, and we’re a tough team to stop. They obviously couldn’t run the ball against us, so once we know they’re not running, that puts the defense in much more of a good (position).”

After McNulty’s score the Bulldogs next possession ended quickly with sacks by Riney and Tucker Wright.

The Tigers then marched 66 yards to make it 17-7 on a 22-yard Lloyd TD pass to Riney.

The Bulldogs then moved the ball, but a Parker Carl sack ended their final possession of the half after they reached the Tiger 12.

Malcolm said the more assertive defensive mindset sparked the Tigers.

“We play better when we have a little swagger,” he said “We’re a team that likes to dance around a little bit and have fun. So we’ve got to let the guys be themselves, and sometimes that’s playing a little bit more of an aggressive style.”

For sure the Tigers came out firing in the second half, scoring touchdowns in their first three possessions before the MUHS coaches started subbing freely.

First after a short kickoff they moved 52 yards, a drive capped with a 7-yard swing pass from Lloyd to Ben DeBisschop. DeBisschop’s 4-yard run on 4th-and-3 from the 11 set up the score,

and McNulty broke loose for 23 yards earlier in the march.

BBA then went for it on fourth and one on their own 38, but lost a yard when the Tigers stuffed a Dowd keeper. On the next play Lloyd tossed a 33-yard pass to Marshall Eddy, and two plays later Jason Sperry ran wide left for the touchdown that made it 31-7 with 3:04 to go in the third quarter.

Early in the fourth quarter, Lloyd found Riney enjoying his own Zip Code in the back of the end zone for a 21-yard score, and it was 38-7.

Dowd helped make the score look more respectable by leading two drives in the late going. He capped a 56-yard march in which he completed three passes with a 3-yard keeper for a TD at 8:41, and at 5:20 tossed a 46-yard TD pass to Sam Nicholson. In all, he completed 12 of 19 passes for 265 yards, but got little help from the Bulldog running game, which accounted for 47 yards on 21 attempts.

If the Tigers do hold serve at South Burlington on Friday, they will line up two home playoff games and, if they win both of those they will earn a return trip to South Burlington, the site this year of the D-I final.

“I said to the guys before the game I only want to play on two more fields this year, and that’s South Burlington, Doc Collins,” Malcolm said. “So we’ve got to take care of business up there next weekend.”



## Shot blocked

MUHS GOALIE ELLIE Orten makes a second-half save during the MUHS girls’ soccer team’s Saturday regular season finale vs. visiting St. Albans.

Independent photo/Steve James

## MAV

(Continued from Page 1B)  
after two fourth quarter Eagle touchdowns were called back due to penalties. Quarterback Clark Cray faked a handoff to Gagnon and ran wide right to score on a 10-yard keeper with 7:12 to play. The MAV defense continued to shut down Spaulding, and soon

the Eagles were celebrating. Gagnon led the attack with 161 yards on 22 attempts, and Cray had 21 yards on 10 carries. Cray and fellow quarterback Rhett Lathrop each completed one pass in three attempts for short gains.

## Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

10/28	.....	Semifinals
11/1	.....	Final
D-III Playoffs		
10/27	.....	Semifinal
11/1	.....	Final
<b>Girls’ Soccer</b>		
D-II Playoffs		
10/25	.....	Quarterfinal
10/28	.....	Semifinal
10/31	.....	Final
D-III Playoffs		
10/25	.....	Quarterfinal
10/29	.....	Semifinal
11/1	.....	Final
<b>Boys’ Soccer</b>		
D-II Playoffs		
10/25 TBD at #1 Mt Abe	.....	10 AM
Oct. 28	.....	Semifinal
10/31	.....	Final
D-III Playoffs		
10/24 #6 Thetford at #3 VUHS	.....	3 PM
10/29	.....	Semifinal
11/1	.....	Final
<b>Volleyball</b>		
D-II Playoffs		
10/25 Vt Commons at #1 MUHS	.....	11 AM
10/29	.....	Semifinal
11/2	.....	Final
<b>Cross Country</b>		
10/25	.....	State Meet at Thetford
<b>COLLEGE SPORTS</b>		
<b>Men’s Soccer</b>		
10/25 Bates at Midd	.....	Noon
10/28 Midd at Williams	.....	3 PM
<b>Field Hockey</b>		
10/25 Bates at Midd	.....	11 AM
10/28 Midd at Williams	.....	7 PM
<b>Women’s Soccer</b>		
10/25 Bates at Midd	.....	11 AM
10/28 Midd at Williams	.....	1 PM
<b>Football</b>		
10/25 Bates at Midd	.....	1 PM
11/1 Midd at Hamilton	.....	12:30 PM
11/8 Tufts at Midd	.....	12:30 PM

# Halloween Coloring & Decorating Contest

Bring this spooky cute scene to life!

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By Mail or In Person:

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Deadline for Entries:

Friday, October 24th

Winners will be announced in the October 30th edition of the Addison Independent.

Two winners from each age group will win a prize from one of our sponsors that can be picked up at the Addy Indy office through November 26th.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian’s name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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# community calendar

## oct 23 THURSDAY

**Stories from the Heart memory altar in Middlebury.** Thursday, Oct. 23-Saturday, Nov. 8, Sheldon Museum front porch, 1 Park St. All are invited to add a meaningful item to this community memory altar honoring loved ones who have passed. Hosted by the Palliative Care Department at Porter Medical Center as part of the "Stories from the Heart" project.

**Middlebury College Biology Department public seminar in Middlebury.** Thursday, Oct. 23, 4:30 p.m., McCordell Bicentennial Hall, Room 220, Middlebury College, 276 Bicentennial Way. Vincent Lynch of the University of Buffalo discusses the quest for immortality and why organisms age. All are welcome. More info at [tinyurl.com/ImmortalityAging](http://tinyurl.com/ImmortalityAging).

## oct 24 FRIDAY

**RNESU Coffee Talk with Superintendent Sanchez in Whiting.** Friday, Oct. 24, 7:45-9:45 a.m., Whiting General Store, 3 S. Main St. Families and community members are invited to meet with Superintendent Rene Sanchez to ask questions, learn what's going on and share ideas about Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union schools. Free. More info at [mesu.org/events](http://mesu.org/events).

**5th Annual Med47 Haunted Forest in Bristol.** Friday, Oct. 24, 4-8 p.m., 3319 Route 116 South. Trick-or-treat in the woods, listen to witches' spooky stories around the fire pit, and prepare to get candy dropped on your head. Free; donations appreciated. No on-site parking; a shuttle from 485 Route 116 South runs every half hour. More info at [facebook.com/med47foundation](http://facebook.com/med47foundation) or [med47foundation@gmail.com](mailto:med47foundation@gmail.com).

**Community Discussion Regarding Responses to Domestic Violence & Supporting Survivors in Middlebury.** Friday, Oct. 24, 6:15-7:30 p.m., Congregational Church of Middlebury, 2 Main St. Community partners discuss how to collectively respond to survivors of domestic violence.

## oct 25 SATURDAY

**Craft Supply Sale in Vergennes.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 9 a.m.-noon, Vergennes Congregational Church, 30 S. Water St. Shop assorted craft supplies including fabric, yarn, embroidery, notions and unfinished projects. Soup-to-go \$10 a quart. Donations accepted Oct. 19-23; call or text 802-349-7754. Proceeds benefit the Vergennes Congregational Church.

**Middlebury Walk for Stroke Awareness in Middlebury.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 11 a.m., Triangle Park, Merchants Row and Main St. Community walk in honor of World Stroke Day. Share resources and connect with fellow survivors and caregivers. Free. More info at [strokeawarenessvermont.org](http://strokeawarenessvermont.org) or [strokeawarenessvermont@gmail.com](mailto:strokeawarenessvermont@gmail.com).

**Fiber Arts Circle in Vergennes.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 12-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Bixby's Fiber Arts Circle every other Saturday. Bring a work-in-progress or use yarn and knit/crochet kits from the Library of Things. All experience levels and ages welcome. More info at [bixbylibrary.org](http://bixbylibrary.org).

**5th Annual Med47 Haunted Forest in Bristol.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 4-8 p.m., 3319 Route 116 South. See Oct. 24 listing.

**Stories from the Heart in Middlebury.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 6:30-8 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. A Moth-style storytelling event on grief, loss and healing, featuring five community members. Doors at 6 p.m. Luminary walk to the Sheldon Museum follows. Sponsored by Palliative Support Services and the Palliative Care Department at Porter Medical Center. More info at [Ircher@portermedical.org](mailto:Ircher@portermedical.org).

**Frights & Flicks in Vergennes.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7-9 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. After-hours Halloween movie night featuring the cult classic whodunit "Clue." Costumes encouraged; popcorn provided. Free.

**Hot Neon Magic in Vergennes.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7-10 p.m., Vergennes American Legion Post #14, 100 Armory Lane. Hot Neon Magic plays pop and New Wave favorites from the early MTV era. Hosted by Vergennes American Legion Post #14. Admission by donation. Cash bar. Open to the public. More info at [facebook.com/share/17VEYNkikq](http://facebook.com/share/17VEYNkikq).

## oct 26 SUNDAY

**Bingo in Vergennes.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 1-3:30 p.m., Vergennes American Legion Post 14, 100 Armory Lane. Doors 12:30 p.m. \$15 packets; \$1 winner-take-all. Cash prizes. Food for sale. Sponsored by American Legion Auxiliary Unit 14. Open to the public. More info at [facebook.com/share/1DAEBRYA2U](http://facebook.com/share/1DAEBRYA2U).

**Why Vermont History Matters in Ferrisburgh.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 2 p.m., Ferrisburgh Community Center, 3279 Route 7. Historian Kevin Graffagnino discusses why Vermont history matters — from how local stories build identity and community ties to how historical knowledge can shape a better future for Vermonters.

**Pumpkins in the Park in Bristol.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 1-3 p.m., Bristol Town Green. Pumpkins available for the first 30 kids, plus treat bags courtesy of Waitsfield Telecom. Free. Rain location Holley Hall. More info at [bristolvtrec.com](http://bristolvtrec.com).

**Halloween Costume Barn in Middlebury.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 1-4 p.m., Eddy Farm, 1815 South St. Extension. Trick-or-treat from stall to stall with horses in costumes, concessions and raffle items. Please no dogs or horse treats. Closed-toe shoes required. \$10 per family.



## Remembering the dead

THE SHELDON MUSEUM'S front porch on Park Street in Middlebury will be transformed into a community memory altar from Oct. 23-Nov. 8. All are invited to add a meaningful item to the altar in memory of loved ones who have passed. The memory altar is part of the Palliative Care Department at Porter Medical Center's "Stories from the Heart" project.

**Trunk or Treat in Monkton.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 3-4:30 p.m., Monkton Town Hall parking lot, 92 Monkton Ridge Rd. Annual trunk-or-treat. Park in the church yard. Rain location: town hall community room. To sign up to hand out treats, contact Teri Fitz-Gerald at 802-453-4918.

**5th Annual Med47 Haunted Forest in Bristol.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 4-8 p.m., 3319 Route 116 South. See Oct. 24 listing.

**Trunk or Treat in Salisbury.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Salisbury Community School, 426 Kelly Cross Rd. Family trunk-or-treat at the school; costumes encouraged for all ages. Burgers, hot dogs and snacks available for purchase. Free to attend.

## oct 28 TUESDAY

**Throat Chakra drum Circle in Middlebury.** Tuesday, Oct. 28, 6:30 p.m., 54 Main St., Unit B. Brought to you by Breanna Elaine music and Love Play Grow Wellness. \$10 suggested donation.

## oct 29 WEDNESDAY

**Fun Reads Book Talk in Brandon.** Wednesday, Oct. 29, 6-7 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Monthly discussion of lighter reads. Stop in or call 802-247-8230 to reserve the book. Free.

## oct 30 THURSDAY

**Halloween Pet Costume Parade in Bristol.** Thursday, Oct. 30, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Bristol Town Green, intersection of West St. and North St. Parade at 5 p.m. Meet local pet-related organizations and cheer on the costumed pets. Pets must be leashed at all times. Fair-weather event. More info at [bristolvtrec.com](http://bristolvtrec.com).

## nov 1 SATURDAY

**Penny Fair in Vergennes.** Saturday, Nov. 1, doors open 10 a.m., drawings 6:30 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. Annual event with games, raffles and chances to win prizes for pennies a chance. Fun for all ages.

**Rhinestones & Rust Halloween Costume Party in Middlebury.** Saturday, Nov. 1, 7-9 p.m., Addison County VFW 7823, 530 Exchange St. Halloween party with live music by Nashville country duo Rhinestones & Rust. Costume contest, 50/50 raffle and door prize. Proceeds benefit veterans' programs. Tickets \$15 at [tinyurl.com/VFWrhinestones](http://tinyurl.com/VFWrhinestones).

## nov 2 SUNDAY

**Victor E. Reichert Annual Bible Talk in Ripton.** Sunday, Nov. 2, 3 p.m., Ripton Community Church, 1329 Route 125. Mitchell Pear, a lay leader of the Haurah of Addison County for over 20 years, delivers the annual Bible Talk. For more information contact Norm Tjossem at 802-388-0338 or [nkt.xcski@gmail.com](mailto:nkt.xcski@gmail.com).

## nov 4 TUESDAY

**Veterans Coffee and Conversation Hour in Vergennes.** Tuesday, Nov. 4, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Coffee, baked goods, and community in recognition of National Veterans and Military Families Month. Guest speaker Bob Stock from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will share information about eligibility for VA programs and services. Free.

**Pins and Needles Craft Club in Brandon.** Tuesday, Nov. 4 and weekly on Tuesdays, 5:30-7 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Bring your own supplies and

stitch or craft with the group. Free.

**Serious Reads Book Talk in Brandon.** Tuesday, Nov. 4, 6-7 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Monthly discussion of thought-provoking titles. Stop in or call 802-247-8230 to reserve the book. Free.

## nov 5 WEDNESDAY

**Brush Hour in Brandon.** Wednesday, Nov. 5, 6-7 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Relax with paint-by-numbers; materials provided. Free.

## nov 6 THURSDAY

**ASL Club in Brandon.** Thursday, Nov. 6 and weekly on Thursdays, 4-5 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Collaborative American Sign Language learning using video tutorials. Free.

## nov 7 FRIDAY

**Bridport Central School Spaghetti Dinner and Basket Raffle in Bridport.** Friday, Nov. 7, 5 p.m., Bridport Central School, 3442 Route 22A. Support students' yearlong STEM unit with a basket raffle and eat-in or take-out spaghetti dinner. Basket raffle drawing starts at 6:30 p.m.

## nov 8 SATURDAY

**Clean out the closet sale in Vergennes.** Saturday, Nov. 8, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. St. Peter's Resale Closet is clearing inventory with a take-what-you-want, pay-what-you-can sale. Gently used clothing, household goods, books and more. Proceeds support St. Peter's community charity partners.

**Live music in Middlebury.** Saturday, Nov. 8, 9 a.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Enjoy soulful originals and expressive acoustic covers from singer-songwriter Melissa D, plus local craft vendors and a raffle supporting the summer music program.

**November Crafters Market in Middlebury.** Saturday, Nov. 8, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., VFW, 530 Exchange St. Start your holiday shopping early and support local crafters, small businesses and farmers. Hosted by the Middlebury Farmers Market.

**Fiber Arts Circle in Vergennes.** Saturday, Nov. 8, 12-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Bixby's Fiber Arts Circle every other Saturday. Bring a work-in-progress or use yarn and knit/crochet kits from the Library of Things. All experience levels and ages welcome. More info at [bixbylibrary.org](http://bixbylibrary.org).

**Cuss and Cut Block Printing in Brandon.** Saturday, Nov. 8, 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. Learn linoleum block printing and let the profanities fly as you create. Ages 18 and up, no experience necessary. Spots are limited, please email [info@brandonpubliclibrary.org](mailto:info@brandonpubliclibrary.org) to register.

**Bingo at St. Peter's Church in Vergennes.** Saturday, Nov. 8, doors open 5 p.m., games 6 p.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. Family-friendly bingo with cash prizes, 50/50 raffle and refreshments. Sponsored by the St. Peter's Cemetery Committee to benefit cemetery improvements.

## Monkton Boy Scouts host haunted corn maze

MONKTON — Whoooooo is brave enough to go through the Haunted Corn Maze after dark? Are youuuuuuu? Monkton's Boy Scouts are hosting this spooky, fun-filled event at the Layn Farms corn maze on 3984 Bristol Road on Saturday, Oct. 25, from 7 to 9 p.m. It's open to all ages at \$5 per person. Bring your walking shoes, a flashlight and your bravery. Hope to see you therrrrr! If you have questions contact George at [pondbrook@gmavt.net](mailto:pondbrook@gmavt.net) or call 802-989-3993.

The Layn Farms regular corn maze will continue on Saturday, Oct. 25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with the Boy Scouts' Haunted Corn Maze that evening from 7 to 9 p.m.

Then get ready for the Layn Farms Fall Fest, located at 3984 Bristol Road on Sunday, Oct. 26, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Entry is free. There will be live music provided by Tracie and Paul Cassarino, face painting by Skies the Limit Childcare, kid's games, a petting zoo, tractor display, a free mini maze with play area for the kids, and more. The regular corn maze

## Monkton

Have a news tip? Contact Liz Pecor at [rascal0406@gmavt.net](mailto:rascal0406@gmavt.net)

### NEWS

will still cost \$10 for ages 12 and above; under age 12 will cost \$5. Are you up for the challenge for their biggest, most complicated corn maze yet? For more information, email [maylayn18@outlook.com](mailto:maylayn18@outlook.com).

Also on Sunday, Oct. 26, the Monkton Friends Methodist Church and Russell Memorial Library are co-sponsoring the beloved annual Monkton Trunk or Treat event from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Cars, trucks and/or tables will be set up in the Town Hall parking lot. In case of rain everything will be moved into the Community room of the Town Hall.

Trick-or-treaters and their families may park in the church yard and walk over to the town hall. For more information or to sign up to hand out treats please contact Teri Fitz-Gerald at 802-453-4918. All are welcome to join in on the fun!

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## HALLOWEEN COSTUME BARN

At The Eddy Farm  
**Sunday, October 26**  
1-4pm

**Trick or treat from stall to stall!**

Please no dogs or horse treats  
Closed-toe shoes required

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👤\$10 per family 🐾Horses in costumes 🎟Concessions 🎁Raffle items

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## Reader Comments

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

A subscriber from Middlebury writes:

**"I look forward to the Independent every week."**

Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.

**ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT**

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT OUR

## CALENDAR ONLINE

[addisonindependent.com](http://addisonindependent.com)



## Halloween event on tap at Lincoln's Burnham Hall

LINCOLN — Stop by Burnham Hall on Halloween night (Friday, Oct. 31) for some hocus pocus and lighthearted fun. The hall will be a space for folks to gather before, during, and after trick-or-treating with an ongoing playlist of music for dancing, hot apple cider at the ready, and some Halloween-themed storytelling (geared toward younger kids).

Do you have a Halloween prop or some fun decorations? Maybe you have a jack-o-lantern carved up and live in the middle of the woods where no one else is going to see it. Please bring it! Perhaps you would like to show off some magic tricks? This could also be a fun space for kids who are slightly older who no longer trick-or-treat but still enjoy the spirit of Halloween. There are folding tables available and plenty of space and capacity for your ideas.

Come dress up and meet up for some hooting and howling, quivering and quaking, shivering and shaking on a magical October night. Bring your toadstools, broomsticks, spells, and the sounds of the rustling leaves underfoot.

Burnham Presents welcomes multi-award-winning trio É.T.É. to the stage on Saturday, Nov. 1, at 7:30 p.m., at Burnham Hall. With influences from jazz, progressive rock, and classical music, violinist Élisabeth Moquin,

## Lincoln

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

NEWS

bouzouki player Thierry Clouette and cellist Élisabeth Giroux create their own trad universe with original compositions and unique arrangements of Québécois and Acadian repertoire.

Tickets are \$30 generous+ admission, \$25 generous, \$20 general, kids 12 and under are \$10 and youth on laps are free.

Homemade refreshments will be available.

### SAVE THE DATE

The third annual Toy Swap will be happening on Saturday, Nov. 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Burnham Hall. Find like-new toys and games for your child all for free! Donating items will help you de-clutter your space and keep things out of the landfill. Come down on the day of the event to socialize with members of our community. This is not a need-based event, and there is no requirement to bring anything to swap in order to take items.

Until next time ... We Rise By Lifting Others. Bravery Is Acknowledging Your Fear And Doing It Anyway.

# Wildlife Day draws visitors to Dead Creek

By FIONA MEDEIROS  
UVM Community News Service

ADDISON — It was one of those picturesque, sunny Saturdays. Aromas from a crackling fire pit and crockpots full of potluck treats blended with the sounds of people gathering, animals chattering and cars arriving for an annual celebration of nature.

Wildlife Day at the Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area Visitor Center took place this year on Oct. 4 in Addison. People from around the state came for demonstrations, family activities and presentations from wildlife advocates, biologists and natural resource managers.

The nearly 3,000-acre, state-owned wildlife area runs through Addison, Bridport and Panton along Lake Champlain. It is home to more than 200 species of birds and other animals and continues to write a rich history of land and wildlife management.

Wildlife Day is sponsored by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. For some visitors, the event provides “the opportunity to connect with nature in a way they haven’t before,” said Amy Alfieri, wildlife biologist and manager of Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

The annual event also provides a window into the field of conservation going back to the 1950s, when the state began conserving the many parcels that

now make up the area known for its water fowl, fish, game and mix of ecosystems, including swamp, creek, marsh and valley lands.

Dead Creek is “a really special place” and a “mosaic of habitats,” Alfieri said. It’s also easy to find and accessible for visitors, with trails and wildlife viewing stations, she added. Dead Creek WMA is situated at the intersection of Vermont 17 and Vermont 22A. Hillary and Dana Joyal came to Wildlife Day from Charlotte with their two children. Raising her kids to appreciate nature and involving them in hands-on, interactive activities is important, Hillary Joyal said.

There was plenty of opportunity to do both at Wildlife Day. Participants could carve soap, build bird houses and study the coats of fur-bearing animals.

The canine demonstrations spotlighted various dogs eager to show off their keen pointing, finding and retrieving abilities.

One in particular, Newt, grabbed the attention of his audience as he demonstrated his talent for locating the wood turtle, which is part of his full-time job. The 6-year-old fox red Labrador retriever, who formerly worked to find endangered toads on Cape Cod, is now trained to locate and protect one of Vermont’s at-risk turtle species.

A ceramic replica of a wood turtle was hidden in the tall grass by various eventgoers. Then, to the shock and delight of his onlookers,



LIZ THOMPSON



THEA JOYAL DANCES on a map of the Lake Champlain Basin at Wildlife Day at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area Visitor Center in Addison on Oct. 4.

Photos by Fiona Medeiros

Newt was able to find it and signal to his handler its location within seconds every time, demonstrating how animals and humans can collaborate on conservation goals.

Along with viewing Newt’s exploits, visitors had the chance to chat with Kathy Ferris, a volunteer at the Dead Creek Visitor Center. Her table featured models of local creatures’ skulls and stuffed animal renditions of local birds with accurate real-life weights.

She explained the importance of birds to the natural landscape and how Dead Creek is a hotspot for migrating geese to “stop in and hang out” during their long journeys south.

Ferris recommends her favorite spot, the viewing platform near Route 17, to visitors of the WMA. Snow goose migration has begun and will likely continue into November.

Wildlife Day also included a celebration of humans and their special attributes. The Sally

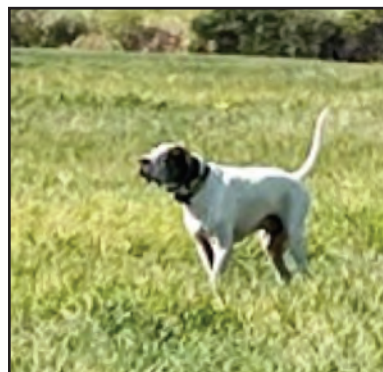
Laughlin Award is presented yearly at Dead Creek Wildlife Day to exemplify a leader in the conservation community.

This year’s recipient, conservation ecologist Liz Thompson, whose career has included work with the Vermont Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy, was honored for her many contributions to Vermont’s conservation community. Thompson expressed appreciation for the award and for the state’s leadership in conservation and prioritization of ecological health. “Vermont stands out,” Thompson said. “Other states look to Vermont.”

Fiona Medeiros reported this story on assignment from the Community News Service, a program in which University of Vermont students work with professional editors to provide content for local news outlets at no cost.



NEWT, LEFT, AND Hawk showcase their abilities during canine demonstrations at Dead Creek Wildlife Day in Addison early this month.



# STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

## Vergennes Union High School

Gina LeBeau

Vergennes Union High School is proud to recognize Gina LeBeau as its latest Student of the Week. Gina lives in Panton with her parents and their family dog, one of many pets she’s had over the years. She also has an older sister who’s currently in college. Gina says she enjoys life in Panton because it’s quiet and peaceful.

As a student, Gina has discovered a love for learning — especially when she can choose classes that match her interests. One of her favorites has been Wildlife Biology, which she describes as “super fun.” She also enjoys Chorus and often spends her free time playing guitar in Ms. O’Hara’s room. A lover of science, Gina appreciates being challenged by Mr. Francis, and she also fondly remembers the great discussions in Mr. Steen’s AP Language and Composition class.

Gina is deeply involved in the Music Department, where she participates in Commodore Singers and finds her creative home in school musicals. She began in the ensemble of “Newsies” as a ninth-grader, took on a larger role in “Mamma Mia!” her sophomore year, and last year played her first lead as Violet Newstead in “9 to 5.” “I felt like I shared personality traits with that character,” she said. “It felt more like I was being me on stage, which was so cool.”

In addition to music, Gina is a member of the Green Team, National Honor Society, and Spring Track & Field. She states that while she’s not the best on the team, she loves the supportive and fun community.

Outside of school, Gina volunteers with the Leo Club, where she enjoys giving back to the community. She also works at United Way of Addison County, helping with youth substance misuse prevention, a cause she sees as an important issue in our community.

When she’s not studying or volunteering, Gina loves to hike, run, play guitar, write her own music, read, craft, bake, and spend time with friends.

Reflecting on her high school experience, Gina says one of the most valuable lessons she’s learned is not to worry too much about what others think. “Other people don’t care as much about how you dress or look, or what you do for fun, as you may think,” she said. “Worrying too much about what other people think may actually prevent you from finding your people.”

Looking ahead, Gina plans to attend college and major in Environmental Science, with a focus on wildlife conservation. Congratulations, Gina! We wish you continued success in the years to come.



Gina LeBeau  
VUHS

## Middlebury Union High School

Austin Gero

Austin Gero, the son of Amber and Eric Gero, is Middlebury Union High School’s latest student of the week. Austin’s younger sister, Monica, is a tenth-grader at MUHS. He lives with his family and dog, Buddy, in Cornwall.

Many staff members at MUHS have glowing things to say about Austin’s membership in our community. His kindness was noted by many, and he is a strong advocate for himself and others. However, his work ethic stands out the most amongst his peers. One staff member, in a nomination, exclaimed, “I know few adults with such a work ethic [as his]!”

At MUHS, Austin notes that he especially enjoys his history class with Mr. Korndoerfer. He said that Mr. Korndoerfer does a great job at making history interesting by telling stories and engaging with his students, and that he is “an easy person to talk to.” When asked about other teachers who have made a difference in his time at MUHS, Austin identified Peggy Leary and Dave Richardson as two other teachers who have been big supporters of his throughout his high school career.

When Austin is not toiling on his schoolwork, he is working on the custodial staff at MUHS. Austin has been a member of the facilities crew at the school since his freshman year, and is now working 40 hours a week on top of his academics. Austin’s maturity and work ethic are clear — his grades do not suffer due to his long work hours and he is successfully able to juggle what are effectively two full-time jobs between his schoolwork and his role on the facilities crew. In what little spare time Austin has, he enjoys working on his cars and spending time with family and friends.

Over his time at MUHS, Austin has received a number of accolades, including being named as a 21st Century Award recipient by the mathematics department in both his sophomore and junior years. Austin was an honorable mention for the PE/Health departmental award as a junior and was also a recipient of the William Lawson and Catherine Dieman Principals’ award last year.

When asked about what advice he would give to students arriving at MUHS, Austin was unequivocal. “Stay focused — follow something that you want to do. It might be hard — things might hold you back — but you have to push through them. Don’t let other people get in your way.”

Austin is still determining what is next as he approaches graduation. He is interested in remaining in Vermont and entering the workforce, but would also like to find opportunities to travel. He is in the process of planning a trip to New York City and would like to explore other places as well.



Austin Gero  
MUHS

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### Public Meetings

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### Opportunities

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### Caring for children

FAMILIES, EDUCATORS, CHILDCARE providers and community leaders came to Middlebury's Town Hall Theater for the Addison County Early Childhood Summit on Friday, Oct. 17. As part of the one-day summit, themed "Strong Starts Begin with Smooth Transitions," participants visited high-quality childcare programs in Addison County, including Red Clover Children's Center, where these kids were playing and learning. Shown at the center in the Congregational Church of Middlebury are, clockwise from below, two-year-old Josie Huestis looking out the door; Jameson Zeno, 3, revving up a toy truck; Josie; two-year-old Lane Baldwin testing out his own truck; and Jameson.

Independent photos/Steve James



## Bristol police deal with animal complaints

BRISTOL — Bristol police have dealt with a couple of incidents involving animals in recent weeks.

On Oct. 7 police received a voice message about an animal complaint and left a message for the caller requesting a call back to gather information. An investigation is ongoing.

On Oct. 8 police received a report of a horse roaming around S 116 Road. Police located the owner, and the horse was returned home.

Between Oct. 5 and 11 Bristol police completed 26 foot patrols, conducted four traffic stops and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School seven times, at Bristol Elementary School seven times and at local businesses six times.

Police also processed 15 fingerprint requests and assisted Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School with a truancy concern 10 times.

In other recent activity, Bristol police:

- On Oct. 6 Bristol police and Bristol's community resource specialist assisted Bristol Elementary with a truancy concern.
- On Oct. 6 received a property watch request from a resident in the police district.
- On Oct. 7 assisted Vermont State Police on Route 116 South.
- On Oct. 7 responded to a report of a vehicle on Route 116 that was pulling an unlit trailer during inclement weather. Police located the vehicle and advised the operator of the issues.
- On Oct. 8 investigated a motor vehicle collision involving a deer that is believed to have occurred on East Street.
- On Oct. 8 responded to a possible trespass, but no one was present when police arrived.
- On Oct. 8 received a report of an incident on School Street. An investigation is ongoing.
- On Oct. 9 monitored traffic

### Bristol Police Log

during Bristol Elementary bus evacuation drills on Mountain Street.

- On Oct. 9 responded to West Street for a delivery truck backing into a building. Police said the incident resulted in minor damage.
- On Oct. 10 issued a ticket to someone under age 21 who was in possession of tobacco on Airport Drive.
- On Oct. 10 assisted the state police on Vermont Route 17

### TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing(s) at the Middlebury Municipal Offices, Large Conference Room, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT on Monday November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m. to consider the following application(s). The hearing will be available to participants via a Zoom video link. The Zoom link will be provided on the meeting agenda posted on the Town's website.

1. Application (file #2025-024028.000-DW) is a request by Gretchen Ayer for dimensional waiver from Section 705 II (A) to construct 3 parking spots in the rear of parcel at 163 Shannon Street. The applicant proposes to construct a driveway in a 22-foot corridor to access the rear of the property which requires a dimensional waiver. The property is identified as parcel #024028.000 in the Residential-8 Zoning district.

The applications will be heard in the order listed. Plans and additional information may be viewed at the Planning and Zoning Office in the Town Offices or by calling 388-8100, Ext 226. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal as an "interested person(s)". Interested persons wishing to participate in this hearing may do so by contacting J.R. Christ at 388-8100, Ext 226 or email to jrchrist@townofmiddlebury.org.

J.R. Christ  
DRB Coordinator, Interim Zoning Administrator

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

### Public Notices can be found in this ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 10B and 11B.

### TOWN OF MONKTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Monkton Development Review Board will hold the following hearing on Monday, November 10, 2025, beginning at 7:30 PM. The hearing will be held in person at the Town Office, located at 92 Monkton Ridge. The hearing will also be available via Zoom and login information is below.

Final Plat Application 2025-10-DRB of Layn Farm. 2-Lot Subdivision located at 485 Hardscrabble Road (Parcel ID # 08.103.059.000).

An electronic copy of the application can be obtained by emailing zoning@monktonvt.com. A hard copy of the application is available at Town Hall by appointment. Please call 802-453-3800 to make an appointment.

Remote Access: Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/> \* Meeting ID: 802 453 3800 \* Passcode: 1762  
Phone In: 1-646-558-8656 \* Meeting ID: 802 453 3800 \* Passcode: 1762

### VERMONT AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION 1 NATIONAL LIFE DRIVE MONTPELIER, VERMONT 05620-3522

#### Notice of Draft General Permit 3-9050 (2025)

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources ("Agency") is proposing to amend and reissue a general permit for operational regulated stormwater runoff. The draft permit is referred to as General Permit 3-9050 (2025) (General Permit 3-9050 or general permit). The general permit is required pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1264(g). General Permit 3-9050 (2025) will cover operational stormwater permitting for new development, redevelopment, expansion, impervious surfaces of three (3) or more acres, designated discharges from impervious surfaces, and renewal of previously issued individual operational stormwater permits or previously issued authorizations under an operational general permit. The general permit will cover stormwater discharges to all waters of the State, including stormwater-impaired waters, Lake Champlain, Lake Memphremagog, and waters that contribute to the impairment of Lake Champlain or Lake Memphremagog, irrespective of whether a Total Maximum Daily Load ("TMDL") or water quality remediation plan has been adopted. This draft general permit will supersede previously issued General Permit 3-9050 (December 1, 2020).

#### Process for Public Comments

Public comments on the draft general permit are invited and must be received by Friday, November 21, 2025 (11:59 PM), through the DEC Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB). Draft General Permit 3-9050 (2025) and the related Fact Sheet are posted to the ENB. To submit comments through the Environmental Notice Bulletin you must register and subscribe to receive notices related to "General Permit 3-9050 for Operational Stormwater Discharge" under the "Watershed Management Division Stormwater" heading on the "My Subscription" page.

See the ENB website (<https://dec.vermont.gov/permits/enb>) for information on registering for and commenting through the ENB. All comments received by the above date will be considered in formulation of the final General Permit 3-9050. Public comments may also be submitted in person or virtually at the scheduled public meeting as follows:

**November 10, 2025: 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM**

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
1 National Life Drive  
Dewey Building, Conference Room 206  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522

RSVP for in-person attendance requested: [terry.purcell@vermont.gov](mailto:terry.purcell@vermont.gov)

For additional information on the draft general permit, including virtual public meeting access information, please visit <https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/stormwater/9050> or contact Terry Purcell, VT DEC, Stormwater Program, Operational Section Supervisor, by email at [terry.purcell@vermont.gov](mailto:terry.purcell@vermont.gov).

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THANK YOU!	

### Pet of the week

Send us your pet!  
[news@addisonindependent.com](mailto:news@addisonindependent.com)

ADDISON COUNTY  
**INDEPENDENT**  
58 Maple St., Middlebury, VT 05753  
802-388-4944 ext 104

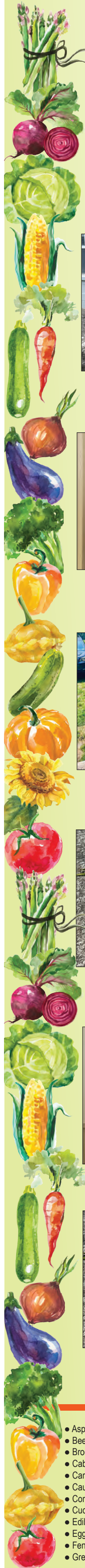


# Congratulations to the 2025 Garden Game Winners!

We received two final entries to round out this year's Garden Game. Sue Galipo brought in a lengthy 21" L x 14.25" W edible leafy green and the first rutabaga of the season, a 20" C giant. She takes the top spot in both categories! Despite the unpredictable growing season, we saw a great turn out for the 2025 Garden Game. Congratulations to all the winners of this year's competition!

Presents the:

# 2025 Garden Game



**Asparagus**  
Pat Martin



**Beet**  
Shirley Pomainville



**Broccoli**  
Barbara Pelton



**Cabbage**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Carrot**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Cauliflower**  
Barbara Pelton



**Corn**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Cucumber**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Edible Leafy Greens**  
Sue Galipo



**Eggplant**  
Barbara Brosnan



**Fennel**  
Susan Hanson



**Green Bean**  
Gary Miller



**Kohlrabi**  
Heather Zelonis



**Leek**  
Jane Spencer



**Melon**  
Donna Bezanson



**Onion**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Parsnip**  
Elka Przyperhart



**Pepper**  
Carol Krawczyk



**Potato**  
Mike Shannon



**Pumpkin**  
Ida & Massimo Parini



**Radish**  
Joan Derry



**Rhubarb**  
Martha Baldwin



**Rutabaga**  
Sue Galipo



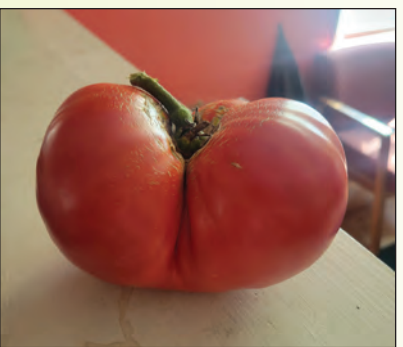
**Summer Squash**  
Elsie Lynn Parini



**Sunflower**  
Ellen Cronan



**Tomato**  
Carol Krawczyk & Peter Demong (tie)



**Turnip**  
Wayne Zeno



**Winter Squash**  
Elka Przyperhart



**Zucchini**  
Julie Lonergan

## WINNING VEGGIE STATS

- Asparagus (length x circumference) - Pat Martin, 36" x 2.25"
- Beet (circumference) - Shirley Pomainville, 16"
- Broccoli (diameter) - Barbara Pelton, 12"
- Cabbage (circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 39"
- Carrot (length x circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 12.5" x 9"
- Cauliflower (diameter) - Barbara Pelton, 12"
- Corn (length x circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 16" x 8"
- Cucumber (length x circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 22" x 10"
- Edible Leafy Greens (length x width - leaf only) - Sue Galipo, 21" x 14.25"
- Eggplant (circumference x circumference) - Barbara Brosnan, 21.5" x 25.5"
- Fennel (length x circumference) - Susan Hanson, 6.5" x 13"
- Green Bean (length) - Gary Miller, 40.25"

- Kohlrabi (circumference) - Heather Zelonis, 45"
- Leek (length x circumference) - Jane Spencer, 17" x 9"
- Melon (circumference) - Donna Bezanson, 26.25"
- Onion (circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 15.25"
- Parsnip (circumference) - Elka Przyperhart, 6.25"
- Pepper (circumference x circumference) - Carol Krawczyk, 13.5" x 11.5"
- Potato (length x circumference) - Mike Shannon, 21" x 15"
- Pumpkin (circumference x circumference) - Ida & Massimo Parini, 55" x 48"
- Radish (circumference) - Joan Derry, 8.25"
- Rhubarb (length) - Martha Baldwin, 42"
- Rutabaga (circumference) - Sue Galipo, 20"
- Summer Squash (length x circumference) - Elsie Lynn Parini, 7.75" x 20.25"

- Sunflower (diameter) - Ellen Cronan, 8.25"
- Tomato (circumference) - Carol Krawczyk & Peter Demong (tie), 16"
- Turnip (circumference) - Wayne Zeno, 29.5"
- Winter Squash (length x circumference) - Elka Przyperhart, 12" x 23.5"
- Zucchini (length x circumference) - Julie Lonergan, 24" x 19"
- Summer Squash (length x circumference) - Stan Bigelow, 20" x 17"
- Sunflower (diameter) - Ed Blechner, 11.25"
- Tomato (circumference) - David Quenneville, 19"
- Turnip (circumference) - Joel & Sawyer Schwartz, 17.5"
- Winter Squash (length x circumference) - Peter & Kathy Hubbard, 26" x 36.5"
- Zucchini (length x circumference) - Julie Lonergan, 27" x 17"

This contest is made possible thanks to our sponsor, Middlebury Agway. Prizes (limited to one per person) will be mailed to each winner. All winners will be contacted for their mailing address within the next week.

# ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

October 23, 2025



## TIME FOR SOULS TO SHINE

FREE CONCERT AND COSTUME BALL CELEBRATE THE HALLOWEEN SEASON

*Soulshine Revival will light up the Halloween Spirit with a free concert at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Friday, Oct. 31, from 7:30-9 p.m.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOULSHINE REVIVAL

**T**he spooky season is here, folks. All the power to ya if you dig the graveyard, skip with skeletons and goof around with ghosts... For those more interested in souls, there's a Halloween show coming up at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Oct. 31 that you won't want to miss.

BY **ELSIE**

**LYNN PARINI** Soulshine Revival — an acclaimed New England Allman Brothers tribute band — will faithfully recreate live performances and classic hits like "Statesboro Blues," "No One to Run With," "Midnight Rider," "Trouble No More," "Melissa," and "Come and Go Blues." There's no tricks here, just musical treats.

The six-piece band is comprised of music all-stars Phil Graziano (guitar, slide guitar, vocals) from Highgate; Ken Schofield (drums, vocals) from Colchester; Tim Comings (bass, vocals) from the Northeast Kingdom; John Wallace (drums) from Cornwall; Greg Kech (piano, organ, vocals) from Monkton; and Scott Adams (guitar) from Jericho.

"I've been an Allman Brothers fan since I was a kid," shared Schofield earlier this week. "To play this music and play it accurately with two

drummers... It's a dream come true."

That's right, two drummers.

Schofield is joined on the sets by Wallace — who plays drums for several other bands including The Horsetraders, The Almendros, and Eclipse; as well as owns Autumn Gold, the jewelry store on Main Street in Middlebury.

---

**"AT THIS SHOW YOU'LL HEAR REAL MUSIC PLAYED BY REAL PEOPLE; THERE'S NO DIGITAL ANYTHING. WE'RE WALKING WITHOUT A SAFETY NET."**

---

— Ken Schofield

Like Schofield, Wallace has been a lifelong fan of The Allman Brothers Band.

"To be able to perform their material with such other talented players is beyond fun," Wallace said. "Everyone in [Soulshine Revival] loves the Allman Brothers and we all try and honor their music with integrity. Most of us

play using vintage gear and we attempt to capture the nuances and tone of The Allman Brothers Band as best we can (including two drummers)."

The band came together in 2021 when Comings got a call to perform at the memorial of a fallen veteran — a huge Allman Brothers Band fan who passed after a long battle with cancer.

"A lot of us knew each other prior to this or had played together," Schofield said, adding that they started practicing in Middlebury shortly after. "Basically, it's the same six guys who have been playing together ever since."

And the public liked what they heard. Last year when they played the Cooler in the Mountains Concert Series at Killington Resort, Schofield reported that they "blew the roof off," drawing crowds that impressed everyone.

This kind of quick success "was odd," said Schofield. This isn't exactly a gritty start up band, doing what bandmates call "pajama gigs" where you're playing until 3 a.m. Nope, Soulshine Revival's scene is more of a silver-fox rebellion to the newer synthetic sound.

SEE REVIVAL ON PAGE 3

# Simple Sage: The history behind the house in Granville

**T**ravel the back roads of any small Vermont town and you're bound to find one: an old farmhouse whose very aspect seems to radiate with stories of long ago. In my adopted hometown of Granville, one such building has beckoned to me for years. On the corner of North Hollow and Butz Road, it's a beautifully restored charmer called Simple Sage.

BY **KATE YOUNGDAHL-STAUSS**

I first learned about the significance of the house from the late Kendall Landis, whose family has owned and cared for it for the better part of fifty years. Kendall's lively yarns about his mother and her friends in the 1930s, as well as a tantalizing fact from the 19th century, sent me on a years-long search through both local and national history. Eventually those tales became the basis of my new play, "Simple Sage," which debuts at The Theater located at the Valley Hub in Rochester, (formerly the high school auditorium) on Nov. 7 and 8.

At the end of the 18th century, William Lamb and his wife, Mary Pratt Lamb, migrated from coastal Massachusetts to a burgeoning Vermont logging town known as Kingston. The



Local playwright brings five women, two centuries, and one house together in new one-act that opens in Rochester Nov. 7.

royalist name wasn't changed to Granville until 1833, by which time the family seems to have been flourishing with large land holdings and several children, ending in three daughters: Demarius, Lucenia and Mellona.

Born six years apart in the early 19th century, the girls would have watched some of the greatest changes happening to the Green Mountains in modern times. As the need for timber boomed, enterprising eyes turned to Vermont, which was blanketed by old growth

trees. By the 1840s, the residents of Simple Sage would no longer have looked out on dense forest but instead on windswept hills, stone walls and Merino sheep.

Much of the wood was used to produce charcoal, an invaluable source of energy for industries, especially ironworking. Most every town had a forge. In Granville and neighboring Hancock, at least three of those forges were constructed by an ambitious young man by

SEE SAGE PLAY ON PAGE 15

# Middlebury play shines light on lives of the Radium Girls

**O**pening Oct. 30, the Middlebury College Department of Theatre will present "These Shining Lives" by Melanie Marnich, directed by Michole Biancosino, a play about the lives of the young women who worked at the Radium Dial factory in the 1920s-1930s. The willingness of these ordinary women to fight the company that made them sick, even as they approached the tragic, and debilitating end of their young lives, led to landmark worker protections. The production will shine a light on the dignity and beauty in the lives of working people.

"These Shining Lives" is based on the true story of four women who worked for the Radium Dial Company — a watch factory based in Ottawa, Ill. This poetic and beautiful little play is a story of survival in its most transcendent sense, and a reminiscence on love, family and time. The play focuses on the women who refused to allow the company that stole their health to kill their spirits — and highlights their work to protect the lives of the generations who came after them.



The Middlebury College Department of Theatre will present "These Shining Lives" by Melanie Marnich, directed by Michole Biancosino, from Oct. 30-Nov.1, with a talkback after Nov. 1 matinee.

## Performance Details

The performance of "These Shining Lives" will take place in the Seeler Studio Theater, located in the Mahaney Arts Center at 72 Porter Field Road in Middlebury. See the show Oct. 30-Nov. 1, at 8 p.m. each evening; and at a 3 p.m. matinee on Saturday, Nov. 1. There will be a post-show talkback with the artists after the Saturday matinee.

Ticket sales open two weeks before show opening and are \$15 for the general public; \$10 for Middlebury College faculty, staff, alumni, emeriti and other ID card holders; \$8 for youth (under 21); and \$5 for Middlebury College students. For tickets or information, call 802-443-6433 or go to [middlebury.edu/college/box-office](http://middlebury.edu/college/box-office). The box office is located in the Mahaney Arts Center at 72 Porter Field Road in Middlebury.

**REVIVAL**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"There's been a void in music for a few years," Schofield explained. "At this show you'll hear real music played by real people;

there's no digital anything. We're walking without a safety net."

Riffs, improv, rhythm and remembrance — that's the blues, baby.

"To be playing with friends is amazing," Schofield said. "This is our passion and this band is our dream."

Soulshine Revival just celebrated their fifth year together in July and will wrap up this year's concert schedule with the show at Town Hall Theater on the 31st. The crew takes the winter off and plans to be back out on the Vermont concert circuit next spring.

"We love that [The Allman Brothers Band] music appeals to such a broad base of folks. Our fans range from teenagers to octogenarians of all makes and models," Wallace said. "We really enjoy the diverse community of people who come to our shows... The best part of our upcoming Halloween show is that it's free! All you have to do is register in advance."

Yep, go ahead have another treat, this concert is free.

"This community event is thanks to a generous, anonymous grant for free arts programming," said Lisa Mitchell, executive and artistic director of Town Hall Theater. "The Soulshine Revival Halloween Ball is the finale of a dozen free live music and cultural events that THT has put on throughout 2025."

Over the past five years, this annual grant, combined with the Middlebury theater's matching in-kind support, has realized more than \$100,000 in free arts programming, Mitchell reported.

"We are optimistic that THT will continue to receive this support, which will be invested in a variety of arts and culture events, including free live music on the Maloney Plaza and in the theater," she said.

We hope so too!

Grab your tickets to this free Halloween



JOHN WALLACE



KEN SCHOFIELD



PHIL GRAZIANO



SCOTT ADAMS



TIM COMINGS



GREG KRECH

concert and costume ball (yes, definitely come dressed up — there will be prizes) by registering online at townhalltheater.org or by calling the box office at 802-382-9222. The Soulshine Revival show will take place on the Rothrock Mainstage on Friday, Oct. 31, from 7:30-9 p.m.

**"WE REALLY ENJOY THE DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO COME TO OUR SHOWS... THE BEST PART OF OUR UPCOMING HALLOWEEN SHOW IS THAT IT'S FREE!"**

— John Wallace



Check out our new website!

with online store



- ✿ toadhallvt.com
- ✿ 228 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT
- ✿ Down the Alley to Marble Works



**MIDDLEBURY PERFORMING ARTS SERIES**



**ROOMFUL OF TEETH & ALLISON LOGGINS-HULL WEDNESDAY, 11/5 • 7:30 PM**

\$30/20/10/5  
802-443-MIDD (6433)

See the full 2025-2026 season:  
[go.middlebury.edu/pas](http://go.middlebury.edu/pas)



# UPCOMING MUSIC

## St. Stephen's to host premiere of 'Darkness and Light'

NEW COMPOSITION BY PETER HAMLIN AND GABRIEL FAURÉ'S "REQUIEM" FEATURED AT UPCOMING CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY

Mark your calendars for Monday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m., when the choir of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, conducted by Robert Ludwig, will sing the world premiere of "Darkness and Light," a new composition by Middlebury College professor emeritus Peter Hamlin and Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem" in the context of a Requiem Eucharist offered in memory of All Faithful Departed. All are welcome to attend this special service to remember departed loved ones, including lighting a candle in front of the altar.

Fauré's "Requiem" will be sung in its liturgical context, as it was originally intended. The choir, soloists Wendy Taylor, soprano and Blair Jia, baritone, will be accompanied by Burlington's Skylark string ensemble and organ.

"Darkness and Light" is a setting of portions of Psalm 139 for choir, organ and strings, commissioned by Ludwig, the Director of Music at St. Stephens.

"I've set a number of psalms," said



Robert Ludwig, right, Director of Music at St. Stephen's will conduct a new composition by Middlebury Composer Peter Hamlin on Nov. 3, at 7 p.m. Open to all.

Hamlin. "The text doesn't change, but the words often manage to address some specific issue in my life or in the world. My setting of Psalms 39 and 90 became 'Before I Go My Way,' seeking comfort at the premature death of a close friend. In this setting of Psalm 139, I hear the words addressing this perilous moment in our nation and offering the light of divine wisdom to guide us through it.

"I love writing music for the sacred poetry of the psalms," Hamlin continued. "There is so much musicality already in the text and setting them to music is, in a sense, letting the psalms sing themselves. Composing to these texts

SEE PREMIERE ON PAGE 11

## MORE TUNES



The Maiden Vermont Chorus will perform in Brandon and Middlebury this weekend and next.

### Maiden Vermont singers show why 'Words Matter' in fall concert

The Maiden Vermont Chorus will perform "Words Matter," a fall show in Brandon and Middlebury. See the local a capella chorus of women singers on Saturday, Oct. 25, at 7 p.m., at the Brandon Town Hall, or the first weekend of November (Nov. 1 and 2) at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

Under the direction of Tim Guiles, the Maiden Vermont Chorus brings its "hearts on fire" music and barbershop harmonies to the stage. The chorus has prepared an exciting fall show with a range of music from past hits to contemporary pop chart songs chosen for their messages of love, support and inspiration.

SEE MAIDEN VT ON PAGE 11

MIXOLOGIST LAURA FENN AND DJ SERENA  
INVITE YOU TO  
**FANCY FRIDAY:  
HALLOWEEN EDITION**  
7 TO 10 P.M. ON OCT 31, 2025  
JESSICA'S AT SWIFT HOUSE INN  
25 STEWART LN. MIDDLEBURY  
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Take a short drive to charming Brandon!

**Fall plants are here!**

Bulbs from Holland - Half price Plant now for spring color!

Mums & Asters 3 for \$24  
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10-5 Saturdays  
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Virgil AND Constance

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Tim and Mary Shields, owners

# ART ON EXHIBIT

## ART ON MAIN

25 Main Street, Bristol

Call 802-453-4032, email [aom@gmavt.net](mailto:aom@gmavt.net) or visit [artonmainvt.com](http://artonmainvt.com) for more info.

**"Portals: Here and There"** features the work of Anne Majusiak and Kendra Schpok. Step beyond the threshold and discover what lies just out of reach. On view through October.

## BRANDON ARTISTS GUILD

7 Center St, Brandon. For more info visit

[brandonartistsguild.org](http://brandonartistsguild.org) or call 802-247-4956.

**"Artist of the Month: Jeannie Podolak."** North Chittenden printmaker Jeannie Podolak is this month's featured artist at Brandon Artists Guild. On view through October.

## 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).

**"Earthen Gestures"** is a duo exhibition featuring the abstract paintings of Sara Katz and the ceramic vessels of Nicholas Bernard. On view Sept. 12-Nov. 1.

## 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).

**"Reclaimed"** brings together photographer Jim Westphalen and mixed-media artist Duncan Johnson in a duo exhibition exploring the resonance of renewal. On view through Nov. 15.

## JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant Street, Middlebury

Visit [townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery](http://townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery) or call

802-382-9222 for more info.

**"Conjunctions,"** is an exhibit highlighting the textile art by Westport, N.Y., artist Cynthia Schira. Her aim is to produce abstract and "referential" designs that are integrated into the woven fabric in a dialog between art and structure. On view Sept. 19-Nov. 1.

## JOHNSON EXHIBITION GALLERY

78 Chateau Road, Middlebury

For hours and info visit [middlebury.edu/events](http://middlebury.edu/events)

**"Finding Hope Within"** features art that has emerged through the carceral system in Vermont. A recent addition to the exhibit is a series of broadsides created in collaboration between "inside" and "outside" artists, including one on paper made by hand from their discarded clothing and bedding and letterpress printed by the inmates at the Southern State Correctional Facility in Springfield, Vt. Regular open hours are daily from 1-7 p.m. On view through Nov. 14.

SEE EXHIBITS ON PAGE 9

# Cosmic Forecast

**ARIES:** March 21/April 20. Your passion is ignited this week, Aries. A fun hobby might capture your full attention. Don't be afraid to try something new or put your energy into something you really love.

**TAURUS:** April 21/May 21. This week is a great time to focus on the simple pleasures in life, Taurus. Enjoy a cozy night in or savor a delicious meal. Spending time in nature is another way to pass the time.

**GEMINI:** May 22/June 21. Gemini, you may find yourself drawn to new subjects and interesting people this week. It's an excellent time for reading a book outside of your typical genre or learning a new skill.

**CANCER:** June 22/July 22. Harmony and warmth are abundant in your home right now, Cancer. This is the ideal week to strengthen bonds with family and loved ones. Think about making a homecooked meal.

**LEO:** July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, your natural charisma is shining, making this the ideal week to express yourself or take on a leadership role. Your enthusiasm may lead others to be on your team.

**VIRGO:** Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, this is a week to tackle any organizational ideas that you have had on your mind. Even if you handle small projects around the house or elsewhere, you'll create calm and exercise control.

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Your diplomatic and charming nature will help you navigate social situations with ease this week, Libra. In fact, new relationships could be the highlight of your week.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24/Nov. 22. An opportunity for insightful self-reflection and personal growth comes your way, Scorpio. Get ready to let go of old habits and embrace a new, more confident version of yourself.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Sagittarius, adventure is calling your name this week, and you will feel a strong urge to explore. Perhaps planning a trip or trying a new activity can fill the urge?

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, this week a professional goal you have been working on will finally reach a breakthrough. Stay focused and disciplined, and you will find yourself achieving a great deal.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21/Feb. 18. A new idea that you share this week could gain traction and lead to an exciting collaboration, Aquarius. Your forward-thinking outlook is a valuable

gift that others will appreciate.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, your intuition is at an all-time high. Trust your gut, especially when it comes to creative or personal decisions. Nothing is out of reach for you right now.



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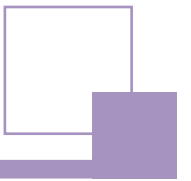
## FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

OCT. 25 — Anne Tyler, novelist (84)  
OCT. 26 — Natalie Merchant, singer (62)  
OCT. 27 — Joe Medicine Crow, Native

American writer (d)  
OCT. 28 — Anne Perry, author (87)  
OCT. 29 — Gabrielle Union, actor (53)  
OCT. 30 — Louis Malle, filmmaker (d)  
OCT. 31 — Katsushika Hokusai, artist (d)

# CALENDAR

OCT. 23–NOV. 5  
2025



## THURSDAY, OCT. 23

**"ALL ABOUT EVE" ON SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 23, 1 p.m., Marquis Theater, 65 Main St. An aspiring actress feigns humility and naiveté to connive her way under the wing of a veteran Broadway star. She manipulates those in the star's circle in hopes of cheating her way to the top. Based on the short story "The Wisdom of Eve" by Mary Orr. A Middlebury Classic Film Club offering. Free!

**MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SEMINAR IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 23, 4:30 p.m., McCardell Bicentennial Hall, Room 220, 276 Bicentennial Way. Vincent Lynch of the University of Buffalo discusses the quest for immortality and why organisms age. All are welcome. More info at [tinyurl.com/ImmortalityAging](http://tinyurl.com/ImmortalityAging).

**"TURNING STONES: DISCOVERING THE LIFE OF WATER" BOOK TALK IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 23, 6–7 p.m., Ilsley Library, Mini Meeting Room, 30 Main St. Aquatic ecologist Declan McCabe will discuss how climate change and increased flood risk are impacting Vermont's waterways and aquatic organisms. A Vermont Reads Program sponsored by

Vermont Humanities Council. Free.

**NEW ENGLAND REVIEW'S ULYSSES READING SERIES IN MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m., Humanities House, 115 Franklin St. Featuring NER contributor Grady Chambers, poet and educator Molly Johnsen, Middlebury student poet Daisy Kulina and novelist and Middlebury alumnus Tim Weed. Free. More info at [nereview@middlebury.edu](mailto:nereview@middlebury.edu), 802-443-5075, [nereview.com/an-evening-with-chambers-johnsen-kulina-weed](http://nereview.com/an-evening-with-chambers-johnsen-kulina-weed).

**MEMORY ALTAR IN MIDDLEBURY.** Oct. 23–Nov. 8, front porch, Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. As part of Porter Medical Center's "Stories from the Heart" project, the museum invites community members to contribute to a shared altar honoring loved ones who have passed. Free.

## FRIDAY, OCT. 24

**SPIRITS OF ROKEBY, "AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR" IN FERRISBURGH.** Friday, Oct. 24, 5–9:30 p.m., Rokeby Museum, 4334 Route 7, Ferrisburgh. This is a night of immersive theater inspired by Rokeby's Spiritualist history. Enjoy a drink and a talk on Victorian Spiritualism before entering the historic home for a participatory séance dramatization. An unexpected

guest may make an appearance! \$20 for Rokeby members, \$25 for non-members. Tickets at [rokeby.org/series/2025-spirits-of-rokeby-an-unexpected-visitor](http://rokeby.org/series/2025-spirits-of-rokeby-an-unexpected-visitor).

**PUB SING IN HANCOCK.** Friday, Oct. 24, 6–8 p.m., Heart of Hancock, at the corner of Routes 100 and 125. Andy Davis will lead songs at the opening event in this new monthly Friday Night Music series inspired by English and Irish traditions of gathering and singing in neighborhood pubs. Pub menu with music starting at 6:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Hancock Town Pride Committee and the White River Valley Players. Free will donations accepted.

**THE ALMENDROS: "DESTINATION UNKNOWN" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Oct. 24, 5:30–7 p.m., Anderson Studio at Town Hall Theater, 72–76 Merchants Row. The band's new album, "Destination Unknown," features 14 original songs in styles ranging from funk, blues and country-rock to reggae, ska and calypso. Tickets \$10–\$15. More info at [addisonarts.org/event/the-almendros-destination-unknown](http://addisonarts.org/event/the-almendros-destination-unknown).

**"BLITHE SPIRIT" IN WAITSFIELD.** Friday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. The Valley Players present

Noël Coward's classic comedy reimagined in black and white, styled after 1940s cinema. Tickets at [valleyplayers.com](http://valleyplayers.com).

**"ALONE IN THE WILDERNESS" SCREENING AND TALK IN BRISTOL.** Friday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m., Lawrence Memorial Library, 40 North St. Scott Kluever will discuss Lake Clark National Park, one of Alaska's lesser known parks, followed by a screening of "Alone in the Wilderness." More info at [scottk2.lml@gmail.com](mailto:scottk2.lml@gmail.com), 907-854-3192.

**"THE SPITFIRE GRILL" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Oct. 24, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater Main Stage, 72–76 Merchants Row. Middlebury Community Players stage a musical that tells the story of Percy Talbott, a young woman seeking a fresh start in the small town of Gilead, Wisc. Tickets \$15–\$40. More info at [addisonarts.org/event/the-spitfire-grill](http://addisonarts.org/event/the-spitfire-grill).

## SATURDAY, OCT. 25

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB TRAIL WORK ON THE LONG TRAIL IN HANCOCK.** Sat, Oct. 25. Join the trail crew to help maintain the Long Trail. We will be clearing structures and getting the trail ready for winter. Rain date Oct. 26. For more information contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE: TACONIC RAMBLE IN**

**HUBBARDTON.** Saturday, Oct. 25. This hike will span the two sides of the park on Mt. Zion major and minor for a moderate 5.5-mile hike with a few steep sections and a couple hundred feet of elevation change. Nice views to the southeast and to the west, plus a visit to the Japanese Zen garden in the park. Contact Ryan Grace at [rgracersox@gmail.com](mailto:rgracersox@gmail.com) to register. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](http://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**"LA SONNAMBULA" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 1 p.m., Anderson Studio at Town Hall Theater, 72–76 Merchants Row. Part of The MET: Live in HD series. Nadine Sierra stars as Amina in Bellini's poignant tale of love lost and found. Note: this is an encore screening, not live. More info at [addisonarts.org/event/the-met-live-in-hd-la-sonnambula](http://addisonarts.org/event/the-met-live-in-hd-la-sonnambula).

**SPIRITS OF ROKEBY, "AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR" IN FERRISBURGH.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 5–9:30 p.m., Rokeby Museum, 4334 Route 7, Ferrisburgh. See Oct. 24 listing.

**STORIES FROM THE HEART IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 6:30–8 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. A Moth-style storytelling event on grief, loss and healing, featuring five community members. Doors at 6 p.m.

*CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE*

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753		Please see the MCTV website, <a href="http://www.middleburycommunitytv.org">www.middleburycommunitytv.org</a> , for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 802-388-3062.	
<b>Channel 1071</b> Through the Night and in-between: Public Affairs, Bulletin Board <b>Friday, October 24</b> 5:30 a.m. Sharpe Takes 6:30 a.m. Democracy Now 7:30 a.m. Congregational Church Service 10 a.m. Selectboard 3 p.m. Democracy Now 7:30 p.m. Press Conference 10 p.m. Democracy Now <b>Saturday, October 25</b> 4:30 a.m. Democracy Now 5:30 a.m. Sharpe Takes 7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 10 a.m. Selectboard 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Sharpe Takes 8:35 p.m. Press Conferences <b>Sunday, October 26</b> 5:30 a.m. Sharpe Takes 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 9:30 a.m. Intentional Communities	3 p.m. Sharpe Takes 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Press Conferences 11 p.m. Democracy Now <b>Monday, October 27</b> 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. Energy Week 9 a.m. Sharpe Takes 10 a.m. Selectboard 3 p.m. Democracy Now 9 p.m. Sharpe Takes 10 p.m. Democracy Now 11 p.m. All Things LGBTQ <b>Tuesday, October 28</b> 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Democracy Now 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard 3 p.m. Democracy Now 4 p.m. Congregational Service 5:30 p.m. Sharpe Takes 7 p.m. Selectboard	<b>Wednesday, October 29</b> 5 a.m. Press Conference 6:30 a.m. Democracy Now 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Democracy Now 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Democracy Now <b>Thursday, October 30</b> 5 a.m. Democracy Now 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard 3 p.m. Democracy Now 4 p.m. VT Agency of School Redistricting 9:30 p.m. Eckankar <b>Channel 1091</b> <b>Friday, October 24</b> 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. School Redistricting 1 p.m. Book Talk 4 p.m. At the Ilsley	6 p.m. Local Sports 8 p.m. School Boards <b>Saturday, October 25</b> 4 a.m. Ilsley Book Talk 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga & Yoga for Kids 7:30 a.m. School Redistricting 3 p.m. Local Sports 8 p.m. School Boards <b>Sunday, October 26</b> 4:30 a.m. Tai Chi 5 a.m. Chair Yoga 6:30 a.m. Yoga for Kids 7 a.m. School Boards 12 p.m. School Redistricting 5 p.m. Local Sports <b>Monday, October 27</b> 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. ACSD Board Meeting 9 a.m. Chair Yoga 10:30 a.m. Hannaford Career Center Board 12 p.m. School Redistricting 5 p.m. Book Talk 6 p.m. Local Sports	<b>Tuesday, October 28</b> 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 4 p.m. Yoga for Kids & 4:30 p.m. Yoga for Everyone 5:30 p.m. ACSD Board Meeting 10 p.m. Book Talk <b>Wednesday, October 29</b> 5 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7:30 a.m. School Boards 4 p.m. Local Sports 8:30 p.m. At the Ilsley 10 p.m. Festival On the Green <b>Thursday, October 30</b> 6 a.m. Tai Chi 6:30 a.m. Yoga 8 a.m. School Boards 4 p.m. Local Sports	

Luminary walk to the Sheldon Museum follows. Sponsored by Palliative Support Services and the Palliative Care Department at Porter Medical Center. More info at [Iricher@portermedical.org](mailto:Iricher@portermedical.org).

**HOT NEON MAGIC IN**

**VERGENNES.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7-10 p.m., Vergennes American Legion Post #14, 100 Armory Lane. Hot Neon Magic plays pop and New Wave favorites from the early MTV era. Hosted by Vergennes American Legion Post #14. Admission by donation. Cash bar. Open to the public. More info at [facebook.com/share/17VEYNkikq/](https://facebook.com/share/17VEYNkikq/).

**"BLITHE SPIRIT" IN**

**WAITSFIELD.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. See Oct. 24 listing.

**DREAMERS' CIRCUS IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Robison Hall, 72 Porter Field Rd. Acclaimed Nordic acoustic trio blends folk, classical, jazz, and pop. Tickets \$30/20/10/5. Info: [middlebury.edu/events/event/dreamers-circus-1](https://middlebury.edu/events/event/dreamers-circus-1).

**"THE SPITFIRE GRILL" IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater Main Stage, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Oct. 24 listing.

**SUNDAY, OCT. 26**

**SUNDAY MORNING DANCE**

**IN BRISTOL.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 12:30-2 p.m., Open Sky Studio, 8 Main St. Monthly dance practice led by Meshi Chavez invites participants to explore movement, sweat, and connect through embodied presence. The 90-minute session begins gently, builds to active exploration with music, and ends with stillness and reflection. All bodies and experience levels welcome. Sliding scale \$20-\$25.

**"THE SPITFIRE GRILL" IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater Main Stage, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Oct. 24 listing.

**"BLITHE SPIRIT" IN**

**WAITSFIELD.** Sunday, Oct.

26, 2 p.m., Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main St. See Oct. 24 listing.

**HINESBURG ARTIST SERIES**

**FALL CONCERT IN**

**HINESBURG.** Sunday, Oct. 26, 4 p.m., Champlain Valley Union High School, 369 CVU Road. The Hinesburg Community Band and South County Chorus perform choral and band music. Free; donations accepted. More info at [hinesburgartistseries.org](https://hinesburgartistseries.org).

**TUESDAY, OCT. 28**

**TYLER ALEXANDER BOOK**

**TALK IN MIDDLEBURY.** Tuesday, Oct. 28, 6 p.m., Mini Ilsley Public Library Community Room, National Bank of Middlebury, 30 Main St. Champlain Valley Union High School teacher Tyler Alexander discusses his new book, "If I Can Get Home This Fall: A Story of Love, Loss, and a Cause in the Civil War." Copies available for purchase and signing.

**THURSDAY, OCT. 30**

**"THESE SHINING LIVES" IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 30, 8 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre, 72 Porter Field Rd. Play based on the true story of women dial painters at the Radium Dial Company, who fought for justice and survival. Tickets \$15/10/5. Info: [middlebury.edu/events/event/these-shining-lives-melanie-marnich](https://middlebury.edu/events/event/these-shining-lives-melanie-marnich).

**"THE ROCKY HORROR**

**PICTURE SHOW" 50TH**

**ANNIVERSARY IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Thursday, Oct. 30, 8 p.m., Town Hall Theater Main Stage, 72-76 Merchants Row. Celebrate five decades of the cult-classic film. Attendees are encouraged to dress as their favorite characters. Tickets are \$15-\$20 and include a participation kit (no outside props allowed). More info at [addisonarts.org/event/the-rocky-horror-picture-show-2](https://addisonarts.org/event/the-rocky-horror-picture-show-2).

**FRIDAY, OCT. 31**

**HALLOWEEN COSTUME BALL**

**FEATURING SOULSHINE**

**REVIVAL IN MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Oct. 31, 7:30-9 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. The evening includes dancing to live music, seating, prizes for

best costumes and food & beverages for purchase. Free with registration. More info at [addisonarts.org/event/halloween-costume-ball-featuring-soulshine-revival](https://addisonarts.org/event/halloween-costume-ball-featuring-soulshine-revival).

**"THESE SHINING LIVES" IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Friday, Oct. 31,

8 p.m. Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre, 72 Porter Field Rd. See Oct. 30 listing.

**SATURDAY, NOV. 1**

**"THESE SHINING LIVES" IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Nov.

1, Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre, 72 Porter Field Rd, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. See Oct. 30 listing.

**MAIDEN VERMONT CHORUS**

**PRESENTS "WORDS**

**MATTER" IN MIDDLEBURY.** Saturday, Nov. 1, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. Under the direction of Tim Guiles, the local women's a cappella chorus returns with barbershop harmonies and "hearts on fire" energy. Tickets \$10-\$20. More info at [addisonarts.org/event/maiden-vermonts-fall-2025-show-words-matter](https://addisonarts.org/event/maiden-vermonts-fall-2025-show-words-matter). Repeats Sunday.

**É.T.É. AT BURNHAM PRESENTS**

**IN LINCOLN.** Saturday, Nov.

1, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 East River Rd. Multi-award-winning Québécois trio blends trad with jazz, prog and classical influences. Doors 7 p.m. Homemade desserts. Sliding scale \$20/\$25+. Tickets and details at [burnhampresents.org](https://burnhampresents.org).

**SUNDAY, NOV. 2**

**MAIDEN VERMONT CHORUS**

**SINGS IN MIDDLEBURY.**

Sunday, Nov. 2, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Nov. 1 description.

**MONDAY, NOV. 3**

**AFRICAN DRUMMING**

**SESSIONS IN MIDDLEBURY.**

Monday, Nov. 3, and weekly on Mondays, 2-3 p.m., Counseling Service of Addison County, 17 Court St. Learn beginner-friendly West African rhythms with Shelly. Some drums available or bring your own. Park in back, use the door facing the convenience store. Free. Drop-in. More info at 802-388-3093.

**FAURÉ "REQUIEM" AND**

**"DARKNESS AND LIGHT"**

**IN MIDDLEBURY.** Monday,

Nov. 3, 7 p.m., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main St. The Choir of St. Stephen's presents Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem" alongside the world premiere of "Darkness and Light," a new composition by Middlebury College professor emeritus Peter Hamlin. All are welcome at this special service to remember departed loved ones. Free. Info: [ststephensmidd.org](https://ststephensmidd.org), 802-388-7200.

**"LE RÈGNE ANIMAL" (THE**

**ANIMAL KINGDOM)**

**SCREENING IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Monday,

Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m., McCardell Bicentennial Hall 216, Middlebury College, Bicentennial Way. Screening of Thomas Cailley's 2023 feature as part of Middlebury's Albertine Cinémathèque French Film Festival. Free. More info at [tinyurl.com/FilmsAtCollege](https://tinyurl.com/FilmsAtCollege).

**TUESDAY, NOV. 4**

**YARN AND OTHER CRAFTS IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Tuesday, Nov.

4, and weekly on Tuesdays, 2:30-4 p.m., Counseling Service of Addison County, 17 Court St. Bring your own projects; share skills with others. Hosted by Marie. More info at 802-388-3093.

**FOSSILS IN THE CHAMPLAIN**

**VALLEY IN MIDDLEBURY.**

Tuesday, Nov. 4, 6-7 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, Mini NBM meeting room, 30 Main St. Learn about fossils from the Champlain Valley and what they reveal about ancient environments. Free.

**WEDNESDAY, NOV. 5**

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB**

**HIKE: CAMEL'S HUMP IN**

**HUNTINGTON.** Wednesday,

Nov. 5. Ascend Camel's Hump via the Forest City and Long Trail and descend via the Burrow's Trail. Nice views on the way to the summit. Strenuous hike taken at a moderate pace. Elevation gain of about 2,500 feet over 5.8 miles. To register, contact Ken Corey at [kencorey53@gmail.com](mailto:kencorey53@gmail.com) or 802-349-3733 to register. More at [gmcbreadloaf.org](https://gmcbreadloaf.org).

**ART AND CREATIVE**

**WRITING IN MIDDLEBURY.**

Wednesday, Nov. 5, and weekly on Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m., Counseling Service of Addison County, 17 Court St. Work on your own projects or try prompts with Nate; supplies available or bring your own. Free. Drop-in. More info: 802-388-3093.

**ROOMFUL OF TEETH AND**

**ALLISON LOGGINS HULL IN**

**MIDDLEBURY.** Wednesday,

Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Robison Hall, 72 Porter Field Rd. Grammy-winning vocal ensemble joins composer/flutist Allison Loggins-Hull for the Vermont premiere of "Friction." Tickets \$30/20/10/5. Info: [tinyurl.com/TeethSing](https://tinyurl.com/TeethSing).

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**Taste Vermont.**

Tastings and bottle sales at the winery

**SATURDAYS**  
October 11 through November 29  
1:00-4:30 pm.

**HIGH ROWS**  
Vineyards  
[highrowsvineyards.com](https://highrowsvineyards.com)

@ Highrows on Instagram

388 Lincoln Rd., Ripton, VT 05766 | [www.highrowsvineyards.com](https://www.highrowsvineyards.com)

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# FILM SCREENING

## Town Hall Theater helps celebrate Dr. Frank-N-Furter's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

A CULT CLASSIC: "THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW" WILL SCREEN IN MIDDLEBURY ON OCT. 30

Celebrate five decades of cult classic greatness of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater on Thursday, Oct. 30, at 8 p.m. This special event features a screening of the original, unedited film, with interactive audience participation. Town Hall Theater invites Rocky-lovers to dress up as their favorite character and come watch/participate. The ticket price includes your own "participation kit," which also means you must leave all of your own props at home.

"Don't miss this campy cult classic and the joy of experiencing the film with a live audience," said Lisa Mitchell, THT Executive and Artistic

Director. "Whether you're a long-time 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' fan, or a newcomer, the 50th year is a great time to participate in a long-time audience tradition."

Part musical and part horror-comedy, "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" follows newly engaged couple Brad (Barry Bostwick) and Janet (Susan Sarandon), who seek refuge from a storm at a mysterious castle owned by the eccentric, transvestite scientist Dr. Frank-N-Furter (Tim Curry). They encounter a bizarre group of characters, including the hunchbacked handyman Riff Raff (Richard O'Brien), his sister Magenta (Patricia Quinn), and the groupie Columbia (Nell Campbell). The central conflict arises when Frank-N-Furter unveils his latest creation, the handsome but naive muscular man named



"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" will screen on the main stage at Town Hall Theater on Thursday, Oct. 30, at 8 p.m.

Rocky (Peter Hinwood), an event that disrupts the couple's perception of normalcy.

Tickets are \$20/adult and \$15/student at townhalltheater.org or purchase at the THT box office from Monday-Friday from 12-5 p.m., or by calling 802-382-9222.

## Sleepwalking-bride-to be stars in 'La Sonnambula' in upcoming Met Live in HD screening in Middlebury

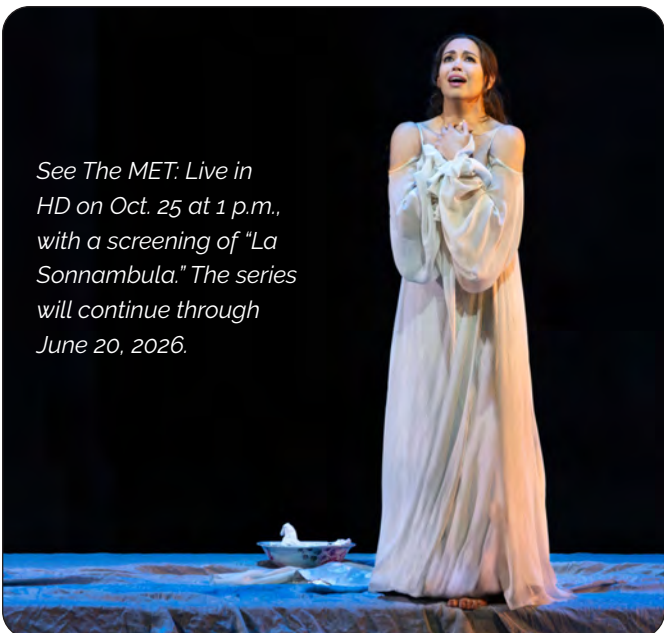
The Met's Opera's broadcast of "La Sonnambula" — Bellini's romantic tale about a sleepwalking bride-to-be, featuring acclaimed soprano Nadine Sierra will screen at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Oct. 25, at 1 p.m. The MET: Live in HD is a screening series presented by Opera Company of Middlebury and Town Hall Theater. *Note, this is an encore screening and will not be shown live.* Estimated

run time: 3 hours, 15 minutes, with one intermission.

Following triumphant Live in HD performances in Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette," Verdi's "La Traviata," and Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor," Sierra summits another peak of the soprano repertoire as Amina, who sleepwalks her way into audiences' hearts in Bellini's poignant tale of love lost and found.

In his new production, Rolando Villazón — the tenor who has embarked on a brilliant second career as a director — retains the opera's original setting in the Swiss Alps but uses its somnambulant plot to explore the emotional and psychological valleys of the mind. Tenor Xabier Anduaga co-stars as Amina's fiancé, Elvino, alongside soprano Sydney Mancasola as her rival, Lisa, and bass Alexander Vinogradov as Count Rodolfo. Riccardo Frizza takes the podium for one of opera's most ravishing works.

Tickets are \$24 for adults and \$10 for students, and are available at townhalltheater.org, by calling 802-388-9222 or emailing tickets@townhalltheater.org.



See The MET: Live in HD on Oct. 25 at 1 p.m., with a screening of "La Sonnambula." The series will continue through June 20, 2026.

## MORE MET

Don't Miss the Rest of the Met Live in HD Series:

**SATURDAY, NOV. 8, AT 1 P.M.**

"La Bohème" (Live)

**SATURDAY, NOV. 22, AT 1 P.M.**

"Arabella" (Live)

**SATURDAY, DEC. 13, AT 1 P.M.**

"Andrea Chénier" (Live)

**SATURDAY, JAN. 10, AT 1 P.M.**

"I Puritani" (Live)

**SATURDAY, MARCH 21, AT 12 P.M.**

"Tristan und Isolde" (Live)

**SATURDAY, MAY 30, AT 1 P.M.**

"El Último Sueño de Frida y Diego" (Live)

**SATURDAY, JUNE 20, AT 1 P.M.**

"Eugene Onegin" (Encore)

# Four-part class and movie experience focuses on ‘The Hollywood Musical’

**P**art history class, part film festival, Town Hall Theater’s Director in Residence Doug Anderson takes you through the glorious history of “The Hollywood Musical.” Each session will begin at 7 p.m., with Anderson lecturing about the studios, the directors and the stars who defined each era, followed by one of the key films of those years, shown the way they were meant to be seen, on the big screen in the THT Rothrock Mainstage.

The four-session fall course will explore the early years, when Hollywood searched for ways to transfer the success of Broadway musicals into film, only to realize that film — and especially the moving camera — opened up entirely new possibilities for the musical. This course will be followed by a spring series focused on Broadway in film.

## THE GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933 (1933)

**OCT. 27:** This early “backstage musical” features Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler and the astounding staging and camera work of Busby Berkeley, who reinvented the movie musical in the 1930s with six major films for Warner Brothers.

## TOP HAT (1935)

**NOV. 3:** The classic pairing of Fred Astair and Ginger Rodgers, who eventually made



Spend your Monday evenings learning about “The Hollywood Musical” with Doug Anderson. The first session kicks off Oct. 27.

9 films together for RKO. Music and lyrics by the incomparable Irving Berlin.

## SHOWBOAT (1936)

**NOV. 17:** One of the most successful transfers from Broadway to the big screen, starring Helen Morgan and Paul Robeson, with an unforgettable score by George and Ira Gershwin.

## SINGIN’ IN THE RAIN (1952)

**NOV. 24:** Perhaps the most thoroughly delightful film ever made, it frequently turns up on lists of “The 10 Greatest

American Movies” with Gene Kelly, Donald O’Connor and Debbie Reynolds.

## SPRING 2026: BROADWAY ON FILM (1945-1975)

**FEB. 9-MARCH 2, 2026:** Registration will open in the new year for Part Two of this series, which will feature films and stars from World War II to the present.

“The Hollywood Musical” four-part class costs \$120. Register for this class via townhalltheater.org, at the THT box office from Monday-Friday from 12-5 p.m., or by calling 802-382-9222.

## EXHIBITS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

### MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury

For more info visit

[middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions](http://middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions)

#### “Eighteenth-Century Room from Paris to Vermont.”

The exhibition follows the journey of “Le Petit Salon” from Paris to Middlebury via Manhattan, where for 50 years it formed part of the decor of the Bliss family’s Gilded Age mansion. At Middlebury, the Petit Salon became part of Le Château, the college’s French language dorm, itself a fanciful recreation of a 16th-century Norman manoir. The exhibition incorporates Pâris’s 1776 exquisite watercolor elevations of Aumont’s mansion, as well as studies from his long educational sojourn in Rome and Naples. Included in the exhibition are loans from Bowdoin College, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, and the Fine Arts Museum of Besançon. On view through Dec. 7.

### PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit

[photoplacegallery.com](http://photoplacegallery.com).

“Trees and Seasons,” a juried photography exhibition celebrating the enduring presence of trees as they mark time through seasonal change. Juror Lee Anne White has selected images that reflect the poetry and rhythm of the natural world. On view Oct. 1-31.

### SHELDON MUSEUM

1 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit

[henrysheldonmuseum.org](http://henrysheldonmuseum.org)

#### “Material Narratives: Ornament & Identity.”

Organized by students of Professor Erin Sassin’s course at Middlebury College, this mini exhibition is the result of meticulous research and thoughtful curation, showcasing many unique treasures in the Sheldon Museum’s collection. On view May 21-Oct. 31.

#### “Slow Seeing: A Close Observation

Room.” In this room, you’re invited to `sslllllllooooooowwww doooooowwwwnnnnnnnn` and really look.

This is a space for immersive attention, close looking, and paying attention to the details. Take a seat, use the magnifying tools at hand and take the time to look. You are invited to draw, to dream, to write, to read, to think. On view May 21-Oct. 31.

#### “Stitching Memories: Daughters, Samplers, and Family Records.”

The six samplers on display in the Judd Harris House were all made by girls whose father or grandfather fought in the Revolutionary War. This local exhibit was curated by Middlebury College student Julia Breckenridge. On view May 21-Jan. 3.

### SPARROW ART SUPPLY

44 Main St., Middlebury

For more info visit [sparrowartsupply.com](http://sparrowartsupply.com)

#### “Spotlight @ Sparrow: Beth Murphy.”

October’s exhibit will feature pressed botanicals by Beth Murphy. On view through October.

### HAVE AN EXHIBIT TO SHARE?

Email Elsie to have it listed in the Arts+Leisure section.

[elsie@addisonindependent.com](mailto:elsie@addisonindependent.com)

# PUZZLES

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**ACROSS**

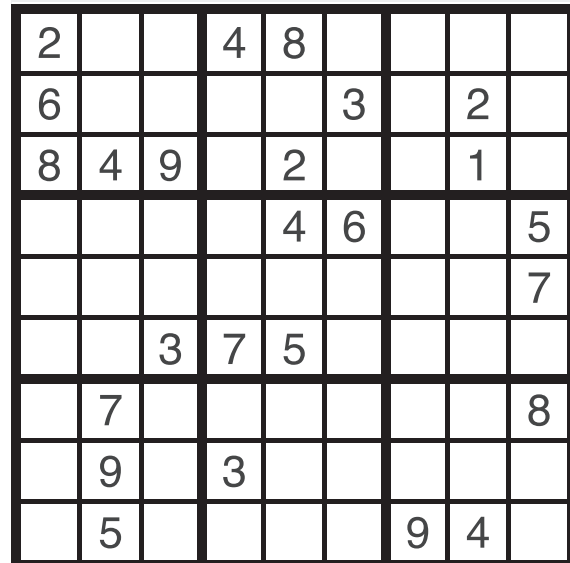
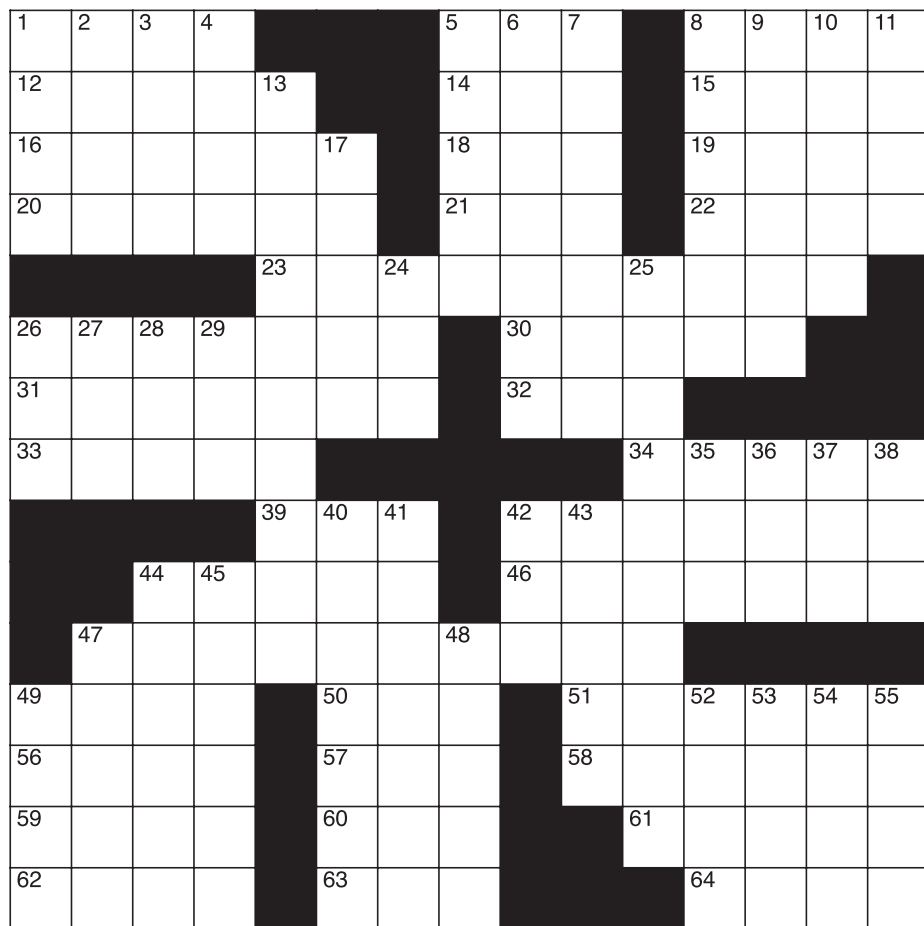
- 1. Remark
- 5. Upper body part
- 8. Expression of dismissiveness
- 12. Alternate name
- 14. Popular beverage
- 15. Swiss river
- 16. Step-shaped recess
- 18. Rocker Stewart
- 19. Bright shade of color
- 20. Popular "street"
- 21. Wrath
- 22. Heat units
- 23. Nocturnal omnivorous mammals
- 26. Fall back into

- 30. Remove from the record
- 31. Sound a splash made
- 32. Popular Dodge pickup model
- 33. Jamaican river
- 34. Notable event in Texas history
- 39. Cool!
- 42. Subset of Judaism
- 44. Newly entered cadet
- 46. Duct in urinary system
- 47. Exterminator
- 49. Snatch quickly
- 50. Have already done
- 51. Less healthy

- 56. Therefore
- 57. What couples say on the altar
- 58. Mysteriously
- 59. Look angry or sullen
- 60. Bird's beak
- 61. Taco ingredient
- 62. Square measures
- 63. Google certification (abbr.)
- 64. Singer Hansard

**DOWN**

- 1. Pubs
- 2. Wings
- 3. Popular BBQ dish
- 4. Small sponge cake
- 5. Open-roofed



## Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

**Level: Medium**

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 15.

- entrance halls
- 6. Organize anew
- 7. Type of wine
- 8. Forums
- 9. North Atlantic islands (alt. sp.)
- 10. Pond dwellers
- 11. Large integers
- 13. Signaled
- 17. Brief
- 24. Type of student
- 25. Tibetan monasteries
- 26. Revolutions per minute
- 27. NY Giants great Manning
- 28. Local area network
- 29. Residue from burning
- 35. Illuminated
- 36. Vasopressin
- 37. Notable space station
- 38. Wood sorrel
- 40. Adhering to laws
- 41. Chose
- 42. Hovel
- 43. Stood up
- 44. European city
- 45. Works ceaselessly
- 47. Mistake
- 48. Sun-dried brick
- 49. Sicilian city
- 52. A steep rugged rock or cliff
- 53. Murder
- 54. Other
- 55. "Deadpool" actor Reynolds



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## MAIDEN VT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The Brandon show is not ticketed, but there's a suggested donation of \$10 at the door. The Middlebury shows (Saturday, Nov. 1 at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Nov. 2, at 2 p.m.) are ticketed and can be purchased through the Town Hall Theater box office: \$10 youth ticket for age 17 and under, \$15 senior ticket for age 65 and older, \$20 adult ticket.

## PREMIERE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

is a process of trying to immerse myself in them and hear them more clearly. My hope is that for each listener the music will help connect the text to something of meaning in their own lives. I also love writing music for people I know — musician friends in the choir, friends and neighbors in the congregation, a gorgeous church that is walking distance from my home, and, especially, Robert, who lives just a few doors away in our Gorham Lane neighborhood. It's pretty wonderful that I just completed another musical project with artist Kate Gridley, another Gorham Lane neighbor. The sense of community and connection is alive and well in Middlebury and Vermont. A good example of that will be this performance."

For more information visit [ststephensmidd.org](http://ststephensmidd.org) or call 802-388-7200. There is no admission charge, but a freewill offering will be received at the service to support the music program at St. Stephen's.

## ABOUT MAIDEN VERMONT

Maiden Vermont Chorus was founded in 2004 by Lindi Bortney and has welcomed the voices of over 200 local women throughout its two-decade existence. The current chorus consists of over thirty singers under the

direction of Tim Guiles, who is well-known locally for his music and theater talents. Maiden Vermont welcomes new voices and rehearses on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:45 p.m. at Salisbury Community School. To learn more about Maiden Vermont Chorus, visit [maidenvermont.com](http://maidenvermont.com).

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# Pets In Need

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### Addison County's Humane Society

#### Harley



Hi! I'm **Harley!** I'm a 1-year-old, Walker Coonhound with a lot of puppy energy! I'm a happy, wiggly girl ready for a home to call my own. The outdoors is my favorite place to be, and I would prefer a yard to roam around in. I must say, I have pretty good recall! I'm not yet leash trained, but very food motivated and willing to learn. I've lived with dogs, cats and even a bird! I've been around older children, but young children make me nervous. I love to play with tennis balls!

#### Bahama



Meet **Bahama!** This little cutie arrived at the shelter with his siblings and mom and was able to grow up in a loving foster home. He is friendly and outgoing and would love to have other cat friends in his new home, or even better, be adopted with one of his siblings!

#### Carrie



Hi, I'm **Carrie!** I recently arrived at Homeward Bound hoping to find my forever home. I'm very friendly - I love getting pets and will even give a few kisses to say "thank you"! I'm also very curious about my environment, eager to explore around me. I also love to play (after I've thoroughly sniffed the toy first of course!).

#### Dino



If you're looking for an affectionate companion, **Dino** is your girl! She loves to be close to her person, nuzzling into your neck and trying to drape herself across shoulders. She has an incredibly sweet disposition and just wants to give and receive love!

#### Willow



**Willow** is a 2-year-old girl who is affectionate and independent. Her previous owner describes her as playful, food motivated, and sweet. She is indoor only and does not get along with other cats.



**Homeward Bound**  
Addison County's Humane Society



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**ADDISON NEW LISTING!**  
**249 GRANDEY ROAD**

MLS #5066229 | \$385,000  
3 BD | 2 BA | 1520 SF | 10.10 ACRES

Sweeping views of the Adirondack Mtns from this single level, move-in ready home. The two-car heated garage has extensive storage above and a "lean to" shed attached. Additional shed across level land.



**ROXBURY NEW LISTING!**  
**WARREN MOUNTAIN ROAD**

MLS #5062811 | \$99,750  
10.10 ACRES

Hillside property with driveway access and an approved 4 bedroom State Wastewater permit. Just minutes to Sugarbush and Mad River Glen as well as biking at Blueberry Lake. Burlington is just one hour north.



**MIDDLEBURY**  
**118 THREE MILE BRIDGE ROAD**

MLS #5053529 | \$389,000  
3 BD | 2 BA | 2232 SF | 1.10 ACRES

Classic 1820 Colonial offers an expansive and flexible living space with historic charm, an oversized attached garage and insulated workshop, with an additional large barn (once a thriving antique shop).



**CORNWALL NEW PRICE**  
**394 CIDER MILL ROAD**

MLS #5040200 | **NOW \$595,000**  
3 BD | 2 BA | 1944 SF | 2.70 AC

Green Mountain views from this well-maintained home just 3 miles from Middlebury. Hardwood floors, plenty of natural light, outbuildings with possibilities, and a location that can't be beat!



**MIDDLEBURY NEW PRICE**  
**427 EAST MAIN STREET**

MLS #5044041 | **NOW \$469,000**  
5 BD | 2 BA | 2963 SF | 0.53 ACRES

A ton to love about this East Middlebury home including the fantastic wrap-around front porch! Sizable c. 1800 farmhouse has had some meaningful upgrades. Two-car garage and heated workshop.

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**501 Quaker Street, Ferrisburgh**

This well maintained 3 Bedroom, 1 Bath single level home offers simplicity on a lovely country lot. Two car detached garage, with extra bay and 2 sheds offers plenty of space for vehicles and enclosed storage and the level 2-acre yard provides ample space for gardens, play and relaxation.

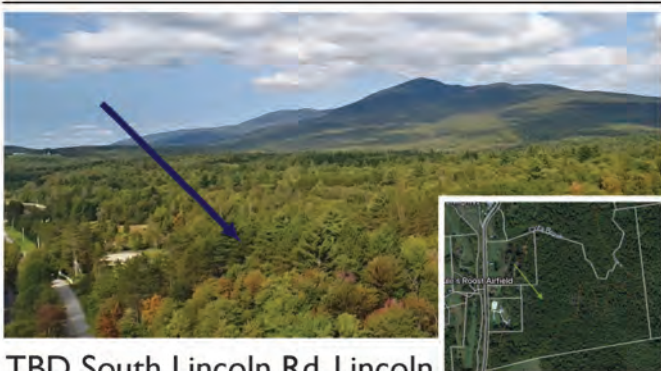
MLS No. 5065515 | \$ 420,000



**204 West River Road, Lincoln**

Tastefully restored, this 3 bedroom, 2 Bath Lincoln village cape has just undergone a full renovation, enhancing the homes historic character through the seamless integration of modern design elements including new kitchen, baths and limestone veneer plaster walls! Come see it in person.

MLS No. 5055620 | \$ 495,000



**TBD South Lincoln Rd, Lincoln**

62.3-acre wooded parcel with western view potential and Cota Brook along its northern edge, featuring waterfalls and swimming holes. Ideal for recreation or future development. Close to the New Haven River; hiking, skiing, and a vibrant community. This special land offers natural beauty with long-term potential.

MLS No. 4971457 | \$ 475,000

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT DOOR

## Hinesburg Artist Series to perform fall concert at CVU high school

The Hinesburg Artist Series will perform a mix of choral and band music at the Champlain Valley Union High School at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 26. The concert will feature the Hinesburg Community Band and the South County Chorus, under the direction of Rufus Patrick, Hinesburg Artist Series founder and Music Director.

"The band and chorus will perform a variety of music that will appeal to all ages, so we hope you will join us and enjoy some great music," Patrick said. "Late October is a great time for an afternoon concert, and to ensure that the whole community can enjoy it, there is no charge for admission."

The South County Chorus will present lively pieces such as "Clap Yo' Hands" by George and Ira Gershwin, "Jubilate" and "Sing Loud;" two spirituals, "Peace Like a River" and "Shall We Gather at the

River;" as well as the hauntingly beautiful "Sometimes" and "The Seal Lullaby," from a story by Rudyard Kipling and music by Eric Whitacre.

The Hinesburg Community Band will perform "Skyward Spirits," a stunning four movement micro-symphony by Jarod Hall. The band is excited to premiere a wonderful group of new music for concert band. These 2025 compositions include "Furious Granite," "Symphonic Stories," "A Hollingsworth Celebration," "The County Fair," and the breathtaking "Cathedral Mountain," by Rossano Galante. Everyone will certainly enjoy these hot-off-the-press compositions.

While the concert is free, donations are gratefully accepted. Visit [hinesburgartistseries.org](http://hinesburgartistseries.org) for additional information.

## Chaos comes to the Mad River Valley

The Valley Players will host "Chaos in the Valley" on Friday, Nov. 1, at 7 p.m., at the Valley Players Theater, 4254 Main Street (Rt. 100), in Waitsfield. It's the "Spooky Season" and that means extra trouble for our adventurers! While relaxing at Charlie's bar the gang learn of an ancient horror and a cult trying to awaken it once

again. They must venture into the depths under the city. Will they be able to stop it in time? This Dungeons & Dragons-themed show will feature four improv comedians/table-top role players and a Dungeon Master.

No reservations are required, seats will be available on a first come, first served basis starting at 6:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$5; and raffle tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. All proceeds benefit the Valley Players community theater. The audience may bring snacks and beverages to enjoy during the game. This show is "rated" PG-13 for some language and figurative violence and will last approximately two hours. Questions may be emailed to [valleyplayers@madriver.com](mailto:valleyplayers@madriver.com) or call 802-583-1674.



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**SAGE PLAY**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

the name of John Deere who came over the pass from Middlebury.

Yes, that John Deere: he of the plough that broke the plains.

Deere didn't have a lot of luck in Granville. For years he struggled to make a living, eventually leading him to abandon the state altogether and move to the Midwest. The rest, as they say, is history. But before that famous plough, before his departure from Vermont, there is an earlier event of local interest.

John Deere married Demarius Lamb at Simple Sage. And when Demarius died, the newly prosperous Deere made the nearly thousand-mile journey back to Granville to marry her sister Lucenia. Unlike her older and younger sisters, Lucenia had never wed. It was convention in that era that one girl should remain at home in order to take care of the parents, the lot that fell to the second youngest daughter.

In the play, I imagine the close-knit relationship of sisters, the pain of loss, and the fortitude of leaving the only place you've ever known in order to sustain your family. But that is only one piece of the Simple Sage puzzle.

By the 1930s the gamble on hill farms and sheep had gone bust. In Granville, the families who built these farms had mostly moved away, and the structures were in shambles. By Kendall Landis's reckoning, it was then that his mother and her friends learned of the properties while attending a New York City cocktail party. Anecdotally, the story goes that Mrs. Landis won a house in a poker game. It's more likely she just bought it dirt cheap, sight unseen, from another partygoer. She named her dwelling Pig-in-a-Poke. Her dearest friend purchased Simple Sage, eventually bequeathing it to Kendall's mother years later.

Even though his career took him around the world, Kendall always summered in Granville — a tradition carried on by his own sons and their families to this day. He once intimated to me that his mother had been unhappily married, and perhaps the true love of her life was her best friend.

It struck me that those two women carving out space for each other in rural Vermont had some common themes with the three Lamb sisters. All faced impediments to happiness simply because they were female; all found ways to break through social constraints to find love; and — strangely — all were witnesses to monumental environmental degradation with links to Simple Sage: first the ravaging of Vermont's forests and then the cataclysmic dust bowl of the 1930s which can be directly attributed to John Deere's plough. That's a lot of social and ecological transformation through the lens of a village whose population hovers around just 300 souls.

Watch how their stories intertwine — five women, two centuries, and one house — when The White River Valley Players mount the premier of "Simple Sage," at the Theater located at the Valley Hub in Rochester on Friday, Nov. 7 at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 8 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Doors open 15 minutes before showtime. A live music cafe featuring desserts begins the festivities. Tickets are by donation. For more information, visit wrvp.org.

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**MLS# 5062474** **\$299,900**



**44 Knox Hill Rd., Orwell**  
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# Stories from the Heart Weekend

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

### Community Memory Altar set up on the front porch of Sheldon Museum



*This altar is open to the public and will be up until Nov 9th*

A memory altar is a deeply personal and meaningful way to honor the memories of loved ones who have passed. Rooted in many cultures worldwide, these altars serve as spaces where people can connect with the past, celebrate the lives of those who came before, and offer gratitude and remembrance. At its core, a memory altar is about storytelling, reflection, and the universal human experience of love and loss. All community members are invited to add something of meaning to the altar on the porch at the Sheldon Museum.

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24

### 4-5:30pm | Death Café at Sheldon Museum



At a Death Café, we create a warm, welcoming space for open, honest conversations about death, dying, and what it means to truly live. Death is one of the few certainties in life, yet it's often the hardest thing to talk about. There's no agenda, no objectives, and no pressure – just relaxed, respectful conversation where you can share thoughts, listen, and reflect. Everything shared is confidential, and all perspectives are honored. **Attendees must pre-register at [tinyurl.com/death-cafe-addison-county](https://tinyurl.com/death-cafe-addison-county)**

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25

### 1-4pm | Luminary decorating at the Mini Ilsley Library, 32 Main Street



*Create a luminary to honor someone you have loved and lost*

These luminaries—simple paper lanterns—will serve as personal canvases for participants to create memories and honor the loved ones they have lost, whether it be a friend, a parent, or even a cherished pet. By contributing to this collective display, the community will help transform our town into a glowing tribute of remembrance, adding warmth and reflection to our community spaces, starting at St. Stephen's Church and along Main St to the Sheldon Museum. They will be lit on the evening of Saturday, October 25th.

### 6:30-8pm | Stories from the Heart at St Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Main Street



Join us for this Moth-style storytelling event, when five brave community members stand up to be witnessed, telling their unique story of grief and loss.

### 8-9pm | Luminary path walk from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and ending at the Sheldon Museum, 1 Park Street, where Matthew Von Behrens will be playing harp music.



THE  
**University of Vermont**  
HEALTH NETWORK  
Porter Medical Center

For any additional information, please reach out to Louella Richer at [Ircher@portermedical.org](mailto:Ircher@portermedical.org).

These events are sponsored by the Palliative Care Department at Porter Medical Center and hosted by the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Henry Sheldon Museum and Mini Ilsley Library. As well as supported by the Better Middlebury Partnership and numerous locations around Middlebury.



**UNITED WAY**  
Addison County

A special section of the Addison Independent • October 23, 2025

## Hands-on reviews lead to Community Impact Funding grants

United Way of Addison County (UWAC), dedicated to addressing the community's most pressing challenges, is proud to announce that its Board of Directors has approved \$132,000 in Community Impact Funding (CIF) for the 2025 grant cycle, with a focus on Health. Because of the generous support of mission-driven donors, UWAC is investing \$12,521 more in its funded partners across three priority areas than in 2024.

UWAC concentrates its efforts in three core areas: Health, Education and Financial Stability. Organizations

applying for CIF grants must align their mission and work with one of these priority areas. Each year, UWAC enters new three-year funding partnerships through this program, guided by a comprehensive review process led by a team of Addison County volunteers. These reviewers evaluate applications and make funding recommendations to UWAC's Board of Directors.

What sets UWAC apart is its trust-based philanthropy approach. Instead of requiring lengthy grant applications, nonprofits begin the process by submitting a simple Letter of Interest.

From there, UWAC's volunteer review team conducts research, examines community data, and schedules site visits to better understand each organization's mission, impact, and needs. This hands-on process ensures that funding decisions are well-informed and deeply rooted in the community's realities.

"UWAC's Community Impact Funding is a powerful investment of local philanthropic dollars that are intentionally flexible so our local nonprofits can use them where/how they are needed most," said Helena Van (See *Impact*, Page 10)

## Special program helps out when disasters strike

Addison County Responds was first launched in 2020 as a COVID-19 emergency relief campaign, allowing UWAC to deploy emergency grants to nonprofit partners and provide relief funds to individuals/families nearly immediately, while also providing continued funding for our partner agencies on the front lines.

In July 2024, a version of this campaign was re-launched: Addison County Responds: Flood Relief, supporting Addison County residents who experienced home and/or property damage from the summer rainfall and who needed financial assistance. This fund was made possible in part thanks to a contribution from the Vermont Flood Response & Recovery Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation.

A volunteer group of community members reviewed 26 applications and recommended award amounts to UWAC. Decisions were typically made within one week of receipt of the request. Priority was

(See *Relief*, Page 3)

## Let's use momentum from our successes

Dear Friends of UWAC,

As we close out our 2024-2025 fiscal year, I want to reflect on what has been a year of growth, resilience, and renewed purpose for United Way of Addison County. Thanks to the unwavering support of our community, partners,

(See *Momentum*, Page 2)



A TEAM OF Addison County volunteers reviewed United Way's Community Impact Funding grant applications. In 2024 the reviewers were, from left, (front row) Silvia Gonzalez and Linda Schiffer; (back row) Mike Greenwood, Bob Donaghey, Abi Sessions, Jon Crystal, Susan Sears, Linda Harmon, Amy Hoekstra, Nikki Dobрева, Meghan Williamson and Helena Van Voorst.

# Momentum

*(Continued from Page 1)*

board, and staff, we achieved several key milestones that moved us closer to our mission to improve lives and strengthen the community. Among the highlights:

- We were selected as a recipient of a \$625,000 federal grant from Drug-Free Communities to strengthen ongoing efforts to prevent youth substance use in our community.
- Increased our Community Impact Funding (CIF) by \$12,521 and gained three new Health partners.
- Broke our all-time campaign goal by raising \$909,215 (previous records were \$859,941 in 2023-24 and \$810,495 in 2007-08).
- For the second year in a row, Addison County Responds was launched to quickly aid residents affected by flood and water damage from the summer 2024 heavy rainfall.

While we celebrated many successes, this year also brought its share of

challenges. Shifts in the broader landscape have prompted important questions and uncertainties about the future. Through it all, the UWAC team remains committed and ready to adapt, and we continue to strengthen the network of local nonprofits and community partners who deliver critical support to individuals and families across the county. Our donors, funders, and partners play an essential role in sustaining our work, and we are deeply grateful.

***“Looking ahead, we are excited to build on this year’s momentum to continue to serve those who need us in Addison County.”***

***— Helena Van Voorst***

Looking ahead, we are excited to build on this year’s momentum to continue to serve those who need us in Addison County. Together, we can continue to make meaningful change and deepen our impact. Thank you for your continued belief in our mission and for walking alongside us on this journey. We could not do this without you.

With gratitude and optimism,

**Helena Van Voorst  
Executive Director  
United Way of Addison County**

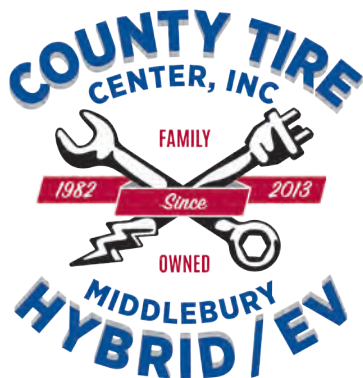


HELENA VAN VOORST

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DURING THE UNITED Way of Addison County's Days of Caring volunteer event this past month, six athletic teams at Middlebury College and several coaches offered their time and efforts, tallying 62 hours of service. Shown here is the Panther women's lacrosse team lending a hand in Starksboro.

## A little of your time can make a lot of difference to someone else

Thanks to your generosity, volunteers across Addison County are making a real difference every day. From packing backpacks for students, to weeding community gardens and painting fences, to mobilizing networks through board service, your support fuels the efforts that strengthen our community.

Each September, United Way amplifies this impact during Days of Caring. Over two days, hundreds of volunteers roll up their sleeves to support dozens of local nonprofits.

It's a powerful demonstration of what's possible when people come together, fueled by compassion, teamwork, and the resources that donors like you provide.

Your contributions don't just fund programs; they ignite action, inspire involvement, and connect people with purpose. Thank you for being the driving force behind this work. Together, we're building a more vibrant, resilient Addison County.



PETE ANTOS-KETCHAM

## Relief

*(Continued from Page 1)*

given to applicants who had significant documented home/property damage, and experienced financial hardship as a result of flooding damage.

In Starksboro, a town hit particularly hard in the 2024 floods, the rainfall caused a nearly 40 hour power outage across town. The town's Food Shelf and New Community Project (NCP) nearly lost several hundred pounds of food that was in storage in their shared space at the old Town Office. NCP determined that in order to protect their food supplies and allow both groups to serve food insecure residents during extreme weather events, a back-up power supply would be needed.

NCP reached out to United Way of Addison County who helped supply nearly two-thirds of the funds needed to purchase a Generac automatic back-up generator. With that support, NCP was able to secure the remaining funds needed to complete the purchase and installation of the generator in late spring of 2025.

"Thank you, UWAC for your support and belief in NCP's mission," said Pete Antos-Ketcham, program coordinator for New Community Project. "Having local partners like UWAC is essential as we work to promote justice and fairness to our neighbors in northeast Addison County during these challenging and uncertain times."



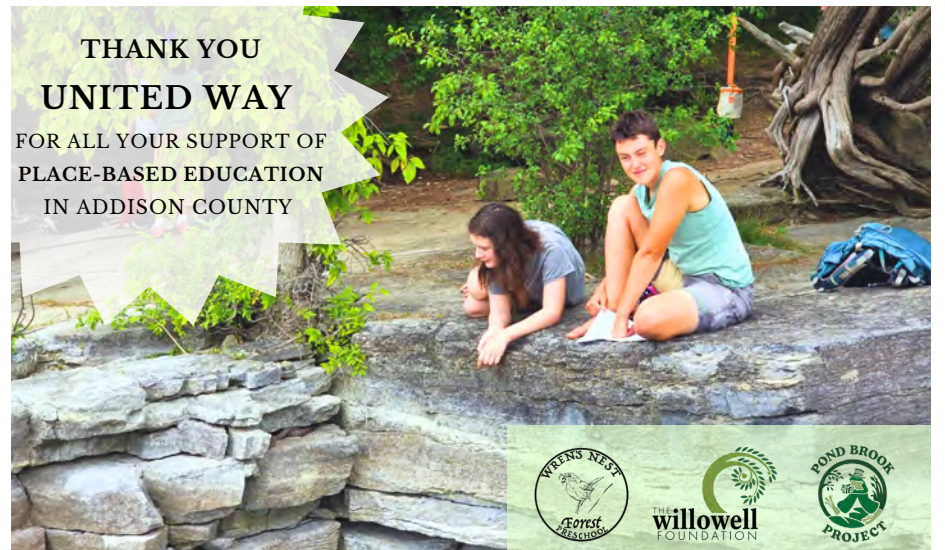
ACORN and the ACORN Food Hub thanks UWAC for its support of our Farmacy: Food is Medicine program.



Learn more at [www.acornvt.org](http://www.acornvt.org)



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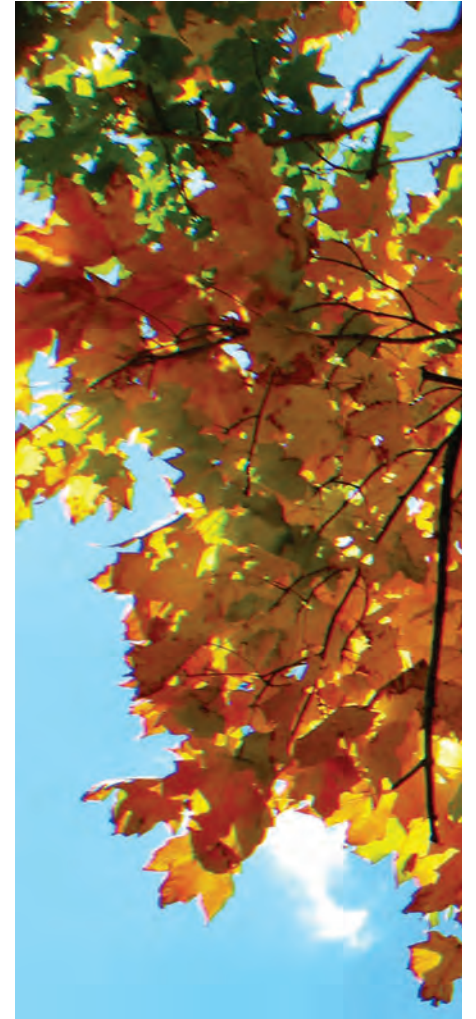


## Caring enough to make high school rights of passage safe



“Celebrate Safely” is an annual campaign geared toward local high school students and their families during prom and graduation season. This initiative serves as a reminder to prioritize safety and good decisions throughout these high-risk events. It’s important for parents and caregivers to have open and honest conversations about substance use, set clear expectations, and establish a supportive environment.

This year, UWAC teamed up with Vive18, a prevention platform that provides engaging education and programming to save students’ lives and create a safer environment to grow. Pictured above is Vive18 spokesperson Zion Givens with the Middlebury Union High School prom committee.



## We’re helping kids stop, or never start, using bad substances

At the core of the Addison County Substance Use and Prevention Coalition’s mission to combat youth substance use is the Addison County Youth Survey. This annual survey gathers vital data from students in grades 7-12, offering insights into trends, risk factors, and protective factors that impact our youth. With nearly 70% participation from students across our three school districts (ACSD, ANWSD & MAUSD), we gain a reliable snapshot of key issues in our community.

Collecting local data empowers us to tailor interventions specifically to the needs of Addison County students. For example, the data indicated a low perception of harm associated with cannabis and alcohol, so we launched a targeted campaign called “Celebrate Safely” to raise awareness about the

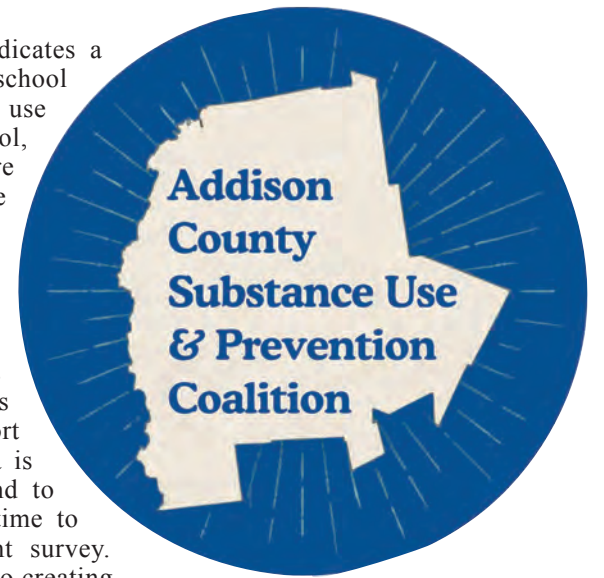
risks and enhance the community’s understanding. Other initiatives have included Community Parent/Caregiver Night, Project Sticker Shock, and more. We extrapolate real-time data and hone in on various subgroups, including LGBTQ+ youth and the BIPOC population, enabling us to identify disparities and advocate for necessary resources and support.

Sharing our findings fosters transparency and trust within the community, sparking essential conversations about substance use and mental health. The data collected in 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025 has consistently highlighted trends in substance use, perceptions of harm, mental health, and more. We are fortunate to continue this important data collection for another five years, thanks to our recently awarded Drug-

Free Communities grant from 2024 through 2029.

Excitingly, recent data indicates a significant decline in high school students’ reported substance use over the past 30 days for alcohol, cannabis and vaping. We are hopeful that this positive trend will continue as we provide ongoing prevention support through the Addison County Substance Use and Prevention Coalition.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our school partners for their unwavering support in ensuring this crucial data is collected year after year and to the students who take the time to participate in this important survey. Your contributions are vital to creating a healthier community for everyone.



**We’re so thankful for all that  
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does for our students!**



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# SOS helps Vermonters hurt by weather disasters

Starting Over Strong VT, known as SOS-VT, helps individuals and communities recover from natural and human-caused disasters through community outreach and access to mental health services. The program grants are awarded after a presidential major disaster declaration. SOS-VT is here to provide assistance and education to all Vermonters who live and work in the declared counties: Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Lamoille, Orleans and Washington.

When Addison County was among the counties that received a disaster declaration in 2024, UWAC was honored to be selected as a lead organization for SOS-VT. We got trained and then got to work in our communities, playing a key role in connecting local residents to the help they needed. Sometimes that looked like simply offering a compassionate ear, and other times it meant walking alongside

flood survivors to complete paperwork or access longer-term assistance.

Starting Over Strong VT follows key principles that make it different from other survivor support programs:

- Strengths-based: SOS-VT services promote resilience, empowerment and recovery.

- Anonymous: Outreach workers do not classify, label or diagnose people. No records or case files are kept.

- Outreach-oriented: Outreach workers deliver services in the communities rather than wait for survivors to seek their assistance.

- Conducted in nontraditional settings: Outreach workers make contact in homes and communities, not in clinical or office settings.

- Designed to strengthen existing community support systems: SOS-VT supplements, but does not end or replace, existing community systems.



## How do you age well?



For over 40 years, we have provided Vermonters 60+ with the necessary support to manage their daily living needs, with the goal of keeping them active, healthy, and independent.

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- Meals on Wheels & Community Meals
- Restaurant Ticket Program
- Tai Chi & Wellness Offerings
- Medicare Counseling & Training
- Care & Service Coordination
- Transportation
- Volunteer Opportunities



agewellvt.org | Helpline: 1-800-642-5119

## Addison County Youth Survey

The 2025 Addison County Youth Survey was conducted to provide data that can help inform and improve substance misuse prevention programs for Addison County youth and families. This data will also be used to support the evaluation of the United Way of Addison County's Drug Free Communities grant. Similar surveys were conducted in 2021, 2023 and 2024.

60.5% of Addison County High School Students

65.9% of Addison County Middle School Students

Think people have moderate or great risk of harming themselves if they smoke marijuana/cannabis once or twice a week.

59.7% of Addison County High School Students

61.2% of Addison County Middle School Students

Think people have moderate or great risk of harming themselves if they use prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them.

88.5% of Addison County High School Students

93.3% of Addison County Middle School Students

Believe parents think it is wrong or very wrong for them to use electronic vapor products.

Scan here for the full summary of results of the 2025 Addison County Youth Survey:



Explore volunteer opportunities at our online Volunteer Center. Search by project, organization, or interest!



## VUHS grad tapped for UWAC scholarship

Jing Williams of Waltham is the 2025 UWAC Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award recipient. Jing was introduced to volunteering at a young age, growing up in a service-oriented household and often attending community events. As a sophomore, Jing made a weekly commitment to volunteer at Homeward Bound: Addison County's Humane Society. That same year, Jing attended the first meeting of a new youth service group, the LEOS Club, under the Vergennes Lions, and she never looked back!

"It has been really nice to be part of a group of like-minded individuals who want to get involved in our greater community," said Jing. "Through the LEOS Club, I have been part of several volunteer efforts, including reading to elementary schoolers, making bird cages at the Otter Creek Wildlife Rescue, and administering eye tests to children. This past year, I had the opportunity to create my senior project with the Club at the Vergennes Community Food Shelf."

Jing's senior project with the Food Shelf has involved improving energy efficiency in the Food Shelf's space. Working closely with Director Paul Vachon, Jing helped coordinate the installation of heat pumps, improved

insulation, new windows, and painting the floor. In addition, Jing helped write grants and find money to support the project. As a result of her efforts, the Leos have established a long-term partnership with the Food Shelf, hoping to return every year for service projects.

Cookie Steponaitis, the Adult Mentor for the Vergennes LEOS Club, said Williams was deserving of the scholarship.

"What sets Jing apart from many her age is her willingness to jump in and learn from the ground up," Steponaitis said. "Before joining us, she was already a leader, but her work in LEOS kicked her skill set into high gear. She has been a part of every major project we have undertaken since 2022. We are honored to have been a part of her early years of community work. I know she will continue to lead as a Lion, community advocate, and teenager who already knows the power of many hands making light work."

After graduating from Vergennes Union High School, Jing plans to attend Lehigh University to major in Journalism and English. From the entire Board and Staff at United Way of Addison County, congratulations, Jing! Thank you for your service to Addison County!



JING WILLIAMS

Thank you to the donors, staff, and volunteers of United Way of Addison County.

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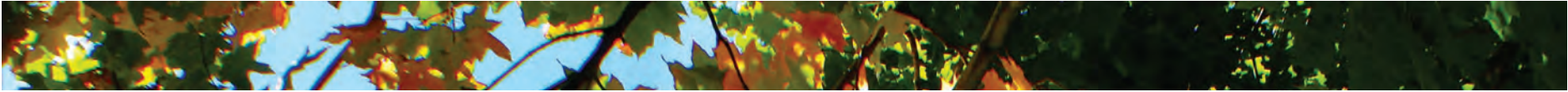


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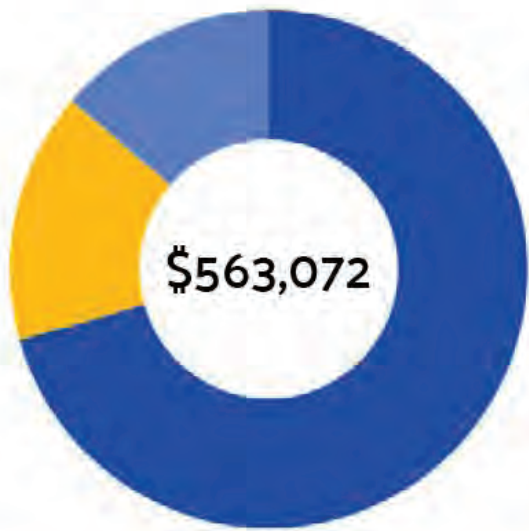
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# UWAC FY25 Community Investments



**Community Impact Funding Grants:**  
\$414,737

**Community Programs:**  
\$56,072

**Mission Investments:**  
\$92,263

## Community Programs

**Addison County Racial Equity Learning Community** facilitates conversations with local nonprofit leaders who support each other to dismantle systemic racism both within our organizations and within our communities

**Days of Caring** connects volunteers with nonprofits for two days of making a change in our community

**Learn United**, a collaboration with Hedgehog + Fox to bring free professional development opportunities to nonprofits

**Stuff the Bus**, an annual program that provides 500 backpacks and school supplies to Addison County students

**The Volunteer Center** connects volunteers with opportunities that match their interests, availability, and passion

**Vermont 2-1-1**, the helpline that connects callers to available human services including food, shelter and healthcare

**Youth Scholarship Award** recognizes an Addison County student for their volunteerism

## Mission Investments

**\$2,063** Warming kits for individuals experience homelessness in Addison County.

**\$15,000** **Addison County Housing Solutions Group:** to support individuals experiencing homelessness and the agencies providing services

**\$30,200** **Addison County Responds:** relief funding to support Addison County residents who have experienced hardship due to natural disasters or emergencies

**\$45,000** Donor-designated funds to five different **Addison County food shelves**



## UWAC Staff

The staff of the United Way of Addison County consists of, from left, Steve Williams (Director of Finance), Amy Hoekstra (Community Impact Manager), Helena Van Voorst (Executive Director), Erin Reed (Development & Marketing Director), and Celia Heath (Community Initiatives & Grants Manager). Also, Vergennes Union High School student Gina LeBeau, right, is our Youth Coordinator.



The Addison County 365 Business Circle provides busy entrepreneurs, business owners, and managers an opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of people in your community - with just one gift. Get involved at [UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org](https://UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org).

## Thank you to our 2024-2025 Members

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United Way



Addison County

*The campaign dollars raised in 2024-2025 will allow UWAC to invest in three impact areas with the following partners in the coming Community Impact Funding cycle:*

## Community Impact Funding FY26 Investment: \$414,737

### Health \$132,000

- Addison Allies Network: \$8,000
- Addison Children's Advocacy Center: \$8,000 \*
- Addison County Home Health & Hospice: \$12,500
- Addison County Relocalization Network: \$10,000
- Age Well: \$10,000
- Atria Collective: \$20,000
- Elderly Services: \$8,700
- Have-a-Heart Food Shelf: \$5,000 \*
- Lund: \$2,000
- Mountain Community Health: \$12,500 \*
- Open Door Clinic: \$22,500
- Turning Point Center: \$12,800

### Education \$127,737

- Addison County Parent Child Center: \$13,275
- Addison County Readers: \$2,500
- Bixby Memorial Free Library: \$2,500
- Bristol Family Center: \$12,000
- DREAM Program: \$1,500
- The HUB Teen Center & Skatepark: \$9,462
- Mary Johnson Children's Center: \$12,000
- MAUSD Mentoring: \$2,000
- Middlebury Area Land Trust: \$5,000
- Otter Creek Child Center: \$12,000
- Red Clover Children's Center: \$5,000
- Starksboro Cooperative Preschool: \$12,000
- The Teen Center: \$7,500
- Teen Makery After-School: \$10,000
- Vermont Adult Learning: \$11,000
- Willowell Foundation: \$10,000

### Financial Stability \$155,000

- Addison Housing Works: \$20,000
- CVOEO: \$5,000
- Charter House Coalition: \$22,500
- Counseling Service of Addison County: \$20,000
- HomeShare Vermont: \$10,000
- HOPE: \$22,500
- John Graham Housing & Services: \$22,500
- New Community Project: \$5,000
- Tri-Valley Transit: \$22,500
- Vergennes Community Food Shelf: \$5,000

\* Indicates new funded partner in FY26

# Impact

*(Continued from Page 1)*  
Voorst, executive director of UWAC. “The Board and Staff of UWAC are deeply committed to aligning all of our resources — financial, strategic, and relational — to support the success of the organizations we fund.”

Amy Hoekstra, UWAC’s Community

Impact Manager, led the CIF process from start to finish.

“We’re incredibly grateful for the thoughtful work of our team and community partners, and for the support of the UWAC Board of Directors,” Hoekstra said. “This outcome reflects our shared commitment to equity and impact.”



# Thank you!

## The Addy Indy is proud to support the United Way of Addison County

### ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT


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# UWAC Board of Directors

*The volunteers that make up United Way of Addison County’s Board of Directors represent the small business, higher education, health and human service, and financial service sectors, as well as the community at large.*


- Silvia Gonzalez, **President/Chair**
- Laura Mack, **Vice President/Vice Chair**
- Sarah Cowan, **Treasurer**
- Jon Crystal, **Secretary**
- Ryan Torres, **Member-at-Large**
- Fahimeh Bahrami
- Nikki Dobрева
- Janet Franklin
- Mike Greenwood
- Meghan Williamson






## THANK YOU UWAC!

**ADDISON COUNTY READERS IS PROUD TO BE A FUNDED PARTNER.**

Thanks to **United Way of Addison County** and **Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**, Addison County Readers is able to send free books to any child under 5 in Addison County. Scan the QR code or visit the link below to learn more and register your child today!



United Way  Register at [addisoncountyreaders.org](http://addisoncountyreaders.org)  

## Your Involvement Matters

Each of us can make a difference for a neighbor - but when we come together, we can make change for all.

### GIVE.

Monthly gifts, planned gifts, one-time donations, gifts of stock; your gifts of every size and type help change lives and make Addison County stronger.

### ADVOCATE.

Policy change can be big or small and you can play a role, regardless of age or circumstance. Advocating can mean anything from petitioning politicians to mobilizing friends and family to fight for a critical cause.

### VOLUNTEER.

Nothing makes us happier than connecting a volunteer to the needs in our community. Whether you're an individual who wants to offer your time and expertise or a nonprofit in need of assistance, we are here to help.

Visit [unitedwayaddisoncounty.org](https://unitedwayaddisoncounty.org) to learn more

We are proud to be a funded partner of UWAC.



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Substance Use  
& Prevention  
Coalition

Improving the health of all in Addison County by increasing protective factors, decreasing risk factors, and engaging partners across all sectors.

Learn more at [UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org](https://UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org)



### Pedal power

AMY HOEKSTRA, UWAC's Community Impact Manager, enjoys helping a smoothie bike rider at Porter Medical Center's centennial birthday party in June.





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for your work in our communities!*



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GRATEFULLY THANKS


## UNITED WAY OF ADDISON COUNTY

FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT  
OF OUR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND  
COMMUNITY!




SCP is a five-star program that has provided early education to children and families throughout Addison County for over 50 years.

**THANK YOU!**



United Way of Addison County



STARSBORO COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

contact: [starkscoop@gmail.com](mailto:starkscoop@gmail.com)



## Collaborating and Convening

In 2023, United Way of Addison County formally adopted a trust-based philanthropy approach to our grantmaking. But in truth, this philosophy has long guided how we engage with our nonprofit community: by learning,

collaborating, and sometimes even commiserating together. Trust-based philanthropy calls on us to uncover biases and create space for open dialogue, shared learning, transparency, and humility. We're proud

to work alongside organizations beyond our funded partners - whether through Learn United seminars (co-hosted with Hedgehog & Fox Collaborative), mobilizing volunteers for Days of Caring, or making meaningful connections at the

regular community meetings hosted at UWAC and throughout the county. If there's a way we can work together, please reach out to Helena at [helena@unitedwayaddisoncounty.org](mailto:helena@unitedwayaddisoncounty.org).



THANK YOU  
UNITED WAY

**Otter Creek Child Center Inc.**  
"Celebrating 40 years of helping children discover their love for learning"  
[ottercreekcc.org](http://ottercreekcc.org)



**Thank you for standing with us  
and for believing, as we do, that  
United is the Way.**

Please make your gift at [UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org](http://UnitedWayAddisonCounty.org)

By supporting UWAC, you're making a meaningful investment in your local community. Here are just a few ways your contributions have empowered some of our funded partners during 2024-2025



**324 people** received local fruit and vegetable shares from organic farms from **ACORN's Farmacy program**. The Farmacy program is free for patients who have been referred by their physicians. This "Prescription CSA" or "Food is Medicine" program addresses three major needs in Addison County: diet-related illness, food insecurity, and local farm viability.



**25 matches** were made in Addison County through **HomeShare Vermont's** programming. HomeShare Vermont provides a comprehensive screening and matching process and ongoing support to pair Vermonters with extra room in their homes and folks looking for an affordable place to live.



**1,279 patients** were served by **Open Door Clinic (ODC)**. ODC provides care for the uninsured and underinsured members of our community via direct care (chronic and acute, mental, and dental health), insurance navigation, and farmworker outreach.



**68 students** were served through **Vermont Adult Learning's** College and Career Readiness program. This program helps prepare students to enter the workforce, improve employment opportunities, and enter post-secondary job training or college.

## The United Way helps to support the Addison County Parent/Child Center's Learning Together Program.

**The Learning Together Program** is an intensive, twenty-eight hour per week training program which focuses on helping young people gain the job readiness and retention skills along with other skills that prepare participants to be successful in the work place, as parents, and in life.

The program consists of six basic components, while representing a general framework, are balanced through a schedule that is individualized for each participant. Participants spend the bulk of their hours in Learning Together at an on-the-job placement doing childcare, clerical work or food service at the Center. The focus is on learning how to get along with co-workers, how to take supervision, how to be reliable and dependable and able to avoid distractions while on the job.

**Parental Resilience:** We work with families in their homes, in community and in our Learning Together Program. Each family has an outreach worker who can support them in ways that the family is expressing as helpful. Learning Together provides support through classes, groups, peer connections and counseling opportunities. Outreach workers offer families help with housing, transportation, medical appointments and financial help.

**Social Connections:** Learning Together, which offers 28 hours per week of programming for parents and youth at risk of dropping out of school and/or becoming parents early. Participants

are able to get and give peer support and receive professional supports while their children are in a therapeutic childcare setting.

**Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** We teach parenting weekly, as well as give individual supports to parents who are with us in childcare or in their homes. Parents spend time in childcare and learn strategies in the room, with their child.

**Concrete Support in Times of Need:** we have a family assistance fund where families can access up to \$250 per year to help them through hard times, lessening stress in their lives. We also provide supports such as food, clothing and help to find housing.

**Social and Emotional Competence of Children:** The core of Learning Together is that one third of the time a parent is in our program; they are in childcare with professional caregivers and their children. We teach parenting through teaching child care job skills and focus on development and well-being for children. We focus on emotional regulation for children and other developmental and pro-social behaviors. We have key phrases to help parents and children. We focus on building the relationship between the parent and child. Our therapeutic program works on the social and emotional well-being of infants and toddlers.



**Addison County  
Parent/Child Center**

info@addisoncountypcc.org

addisoncountypcc.org

**388-3171**



# Thank you, UWAC!

## Together, We're making a Difference in our Community

Supporting recovery, hope, and connection across Addison County with:

**Peer Coaching Programs**

*Essential to recovery*

**AA meetings**

*5:30 pm, 7 days a week*

**Mobile Coaching Program**

*Provides coaching anywhere in Addison County*

**Public Safety Vending Machines**

*Located in Middlebury*

*All services free of charge*



For more information visit our website or give us a call!  
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**Turning Point Center**  
OF ADDISON COUNTY



United Way of Addison County is committed to:

- Leading in collaboration
- Raising awareness and support
- Being ever-evolving and forward-thinking

Our mission: To mobilize the compassion and generosity of individuals and organizations in Addison County to improve lives and strengthen the community.



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