



Jazz cool

The MUMS band teacher leads by example; he just released his fourth album. See Arts + Leisure.



OT victory

VUHS boys' hoopsters defeat playoff rivals in an overtime nailbiter. See Page 1B.

School map

Rep. Conlon's school redistricting map starts a big conversation in Montpelier. See Page 2A.



ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Vol. 80 No. 7

Middlebury, Vermont ♦ Thursday, February 12, 2026 ♦ 44 Pages

\$2.00

Pair seek election to ACSD board; no takers for two seats

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Two of the four looming vacancies on the Addison Central School District board have failed to draw candidates, which means they'll have to either be filled by successful write-in campaigns on March 3, or through appointments made by the ACSD board after Town Meeting Day.

As the *Independent* reported last week, only two candidates (incumbent Jason Chance of Middlebury and new candidate Robyn Stattel of Bridport) have emerged for a total of four vacancies that will be on the March 3 ballot. This will leave blank a Middlebury seat currently held by Tricia Allen of Middlebury and a Salisbury seat held by Ellie Romp.

(See ACSD, Page 10A)

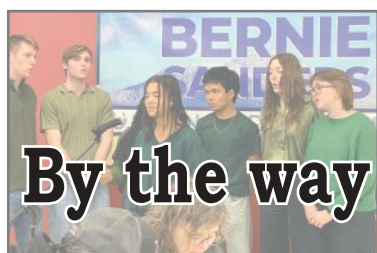
Starksboro gets \$1.2M for water upgrades

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — Efforts to upgrade aging water and wastewater infrastructure at Starksboro's Hillside Manor affordable housing community recently got a \$1.2 million boost.

The initiative was among 69 Congressionally Directed Spending projects around Vermont to receive more than \$100 million in federal dollars. Funding for the projects was secured by the Vermont Congressional Delegation and will come through appropriations packages for fiscal year 2026 that have been signed into law over the past few months.

(See Starksboro, Page 10A)



By the way

Help shape Middlebury's future by taking a community-wide survey. Middlebury is updating its town plan, and local planners want to hear from you. The online survey — available at surveymonkey.com/r/BM55X8T — gives residents, businesses, employees, and community members a chance to help shape the town of Middlebury's vision.

(See By the way, Page 16A)

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Casting call for patriots

MIDDLEBURY MARQUIS THEATER was transported back 250 years on Sunday as Revolutionary War reenactors filled the movie house in an effort to attract new members for Col. Seth Warner's Regiment. Dressed for the role are Skyler Bailey, left, Todd Kuntz and Ben Wells guarding the lobby. See more on Page 11A.

Independent photo/Steve James

Conservation nonprofit offers tips for improving water quality

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — Should you need a reminder of our close ties to the surrounding environment, look no further than your local watershed. Watersheds are vital parts of the natural landscape, and their health is directly affected by actions on land, from development to stormwater runoff.

Community members in Bristol got a chance last week to learn more about the waterways in their area and how things like land use and increased flood activity are impacting local water quality. That was the focus of the Feb. 5

presentation "Water Quality in Local Watersheds with the Lewis Creek Association," which was held at Holley Hall as part of the Bristol Conservation Commission Lecture Series.

In addition to highlighting water quality sampling results and sources of water pollution, the presentation suggested steps residents could take to protect water quality.

"We all play a part in the phosphorus loading to the lake, whether that's your driveway washing into the creek below you or it's a building too close to

a stream," Kate Kelly, program manager for the Lewis Creek Association (LCA), told the *Independent*. "We can all work together on these things to make little improvements."

LCA is a nonprofit conservation organization that advances sustainability and conservation work in towns of the middle Lake Champlain Valley. The organization works largely within the watershed boundaries of Lewis Creek, the LaPlatte River, Thorp Brook, Kimball Brook, Holmes Brook and McCabe's

(See Water quality, Page 3A)

Starksboro native again takes silver at Olympics

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Three was lucky for Ryan-Cochran Siegle on Wednesday.

The Starksboro native was only the third competitor in the Super-G ski race at the Olympic, which meant the course in the Italian Alps was less chewed up than it would be after more racers had cut their trails in it. But it also meant he'd have to hang tight and see how a bunch of other top international skiers performed before he'd know his finishing place.

"I still had to wait for the best 10 (See Olympics, Page 10A)



MONDAY'S DEBUT ADDISON County legislative breakfast drew a handful of lawmakers to address around 30 people on a frigid Monday morning at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Vergennes. Rep. Rob North (left), R-Ferrisburgh, conferring with Sen. Steve Heffernan, R-Bristol, were among the legislators present.

Independent photo/Steve James

Leicester farmer launches bid for state Senate seat

Sessions shares campaign priorities

By JOHN FLOWERS

LEICESTER — Hannah Sessions is immensely grateful for having been able to start a family and build a business in Addison County — a location she refers to as "the greatest place on Earth."

Now the Leicester Democrat and farmer wants to secure a spot in the state Senate to help pass legislation aimed at making homeownership and entrepreneurship easier for future generations of Vermonters.

Sessions, 49, formally announced on Thursday she'll

be seeking one of the two Senate seats representing Addison County, Huntington, Buel's Gore and Rochester. She joins a field that thus far also includes incumbent state Sens. Ruth Hardy, D-East Middlebury, and Steve Heffernan, R-Bristol, as well as Leicester Republican Lesley J. Bienvenue.

"I am running because my life experience has taught me not only to work hard but also to ask questions and listen — three skills that will help me represent you in Montpelier," Sessions (See Sessions, Page 9A)



HANNAH SESSIONS, CO-OWNER of Leicester's Blue Ledge Farm, has launched a campaign for one of the two state Senate seats representing Addison County, Huntington, Rochester and Buel's Gore.

Independent photo/John Flowers

Eddy Farm trots out list of capital improvements

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The recent, unexpected death of Margaret Bojanowski — the longtime manager of Middlebury's Eddy Farm School for Horse and Rider — threw the county's equestrian community into a tailspin.

When she passed away from natural causes on Dec. 14, it left

many Eddy Farm riders, board members and alumni in mourning while wondering whether the nonprofit riding school at 1815 South St. Ext. could continue its 70-year gallop without its leader in the saddle.

"The Eddy Farm has had different phases of life; the first (See Eddy Farm, Page 15A)

Lawmakers discuss land use, education

Healthcare also headlines city forum

By JOHN FLOWERS

VERGENNES — Healthcare reform, new land-use protocols and an ongoing revamp of Vermont's public education system were among the dominant topics at this year's first legislative breakfast, held Monday at the St. Peter's Catholic Parish Hall in Vergennes.

Around 30 attendees listened to, and questioned, a handful of Addison County lawmakers who braved frigid conditions to get to the forum, sponsored by the Addison County Farm Bureau and Bridport Grange.

Among the speakers was Rep.

Rob North, R-Ferrisburgh, a member of the House Committee on Environment. He voiced frustration with what he said has been a lack of activity on his panel.

"We have done wonders in wasting your tax dollar time" discussing issues of minor import, according to North.

Meanwhile, more weighty environmental bills — including some related to Act 250, the state's land use law — remain "stuck to the wall" (meaning inactive) in the Environment Committee's meeting room, according to North.

(See Lawmakers, Page 16A)

Conlon unveils first Vt. school district map

By COREY McDONALD
VTDigger.org

Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, the House Education Committee chair, this past Thursday, Feb. 5, introduced the first concrete proposal presented this legislative session to consolidate Vermont's dozens of school districts.

The proposal would merge the state's 119 districts — and the 52 entities that govern them — into 27 supervisory districts, each with student populations between 2,000 and 4,000, Conlon said.

The proposal would end non-operating districts, discard supervisory unions in favor of supervisory districts and introduce an updated statutory framework around Vermont's school choice system.

The map, by Conlon's own admission, is "faulty" and "fraught with political decisions." But he told fellow committee members the proposal was "not meant to be the end-all-be-all."

"It's not perfect, and it's meant as a starting point, not an ending point," he said. "But even more so, the point is really to give us something to say, 'Oh I can get behind this concept.'"

Conlon's proposal signals a ramping up of lawmakers' efforts to garner some consensus around school consolidation, set in motion last year by the state's sweeping education reform law, Act 73.

Those efforts hit a speed bump in the fall, when the school redistricting task force — directed by lawmakers to draw up maps last

summer — flouted that redirecive and instead issued a proposal emphasizing voluntary mergers with school construction aid incentives.

Gov. Phil Scott, Vermont Agency of Education officials and some top lawmakers say consolidation is critical to achieving more equity across Vermont's public school system, and is a crucial prerequisite to establishing a new education finance formula. The Legislature needs to agree on a map of consolidated school districts this year, proponents say, or risk delaying Act 73's reforms significantly.

Lawmakers have plenty of work ahead of them, and already concerns have emerged around the feasibility of travel times for

students in more rural areas under Conlon's proposed districts. Not to mention, the map's districts fall below the 4,000 to 8,000 students per district that Act 73 suggests.

Rep. Leanne Harple, D-Glover, questioned whether small schools in her Northeast Kingdom district would still be viable under the proposal — a sentiment echoed by various school district officials and rural schools advocates over the past several months.

"There's a huge difference between clicking on towns and actually driving across counties," Harple said Thursday. "When we think about getting up to 2,000 (students), that's a farther distance for the people living there than you realize."

Conlon noted those concerns on Thursday. "This is what could be, using the testimony that we have heard," Conlon said. "But it is not meant to say, 'This is what should be.'"

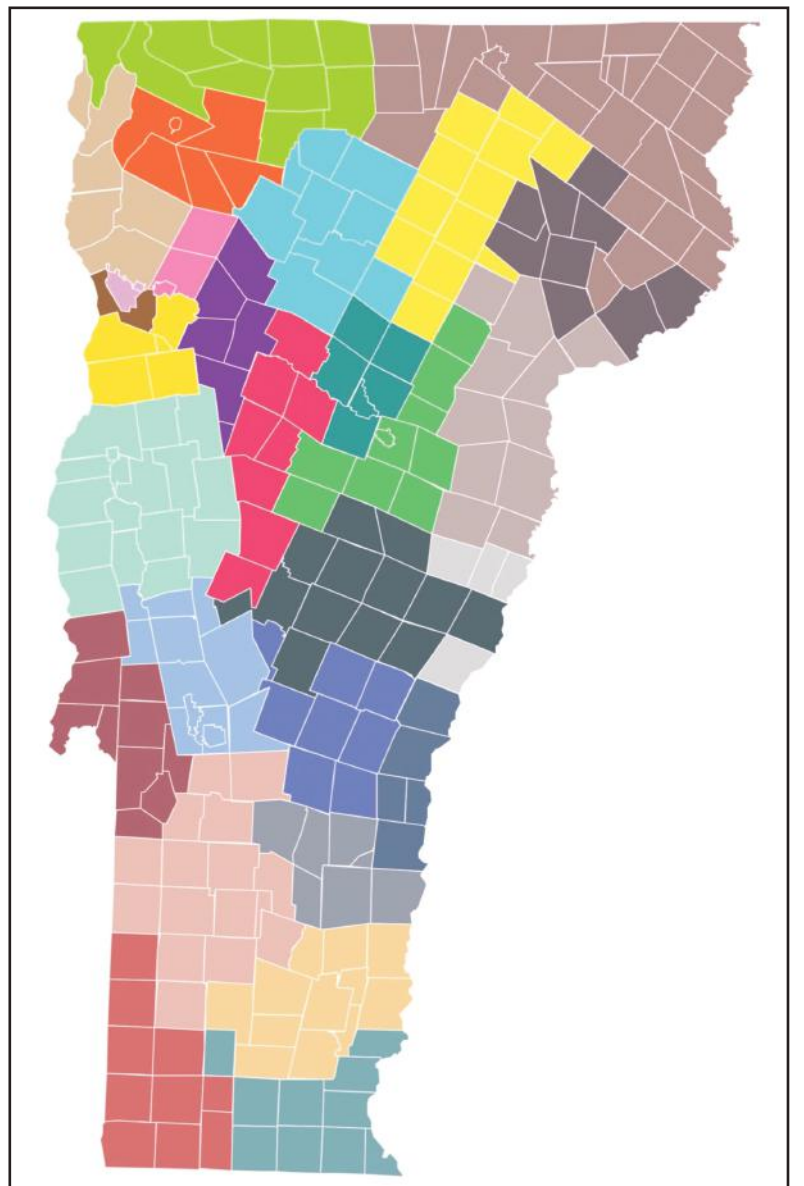
Notably, Conlon's proposal introduces tweaks to state statute around Vermont's school choice system.

The proposal keeps some of the current language, but introduces new parameters. Under the changes, school districts would assign a designated public or private school for each grade if there is no "reasonably accessible public school" operated by the district.

School districts would have to enter into a contract with receiving schools, be they public or private schools (called independent schools under state law).

Those schools would have to adhere to a host of requirements. Schools would be required to send progress and attendance reports to the primary district, for example.

Schools under contract would also be prohibited from conducting mandatory interviews and academic



Rep. Peter Conlon's draft district map divides the state into 27 school districts as a starting place for discussion.

Courtesy of the Vermont Legislature



Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, chair of the House Education Committee, speaks during a press conference at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Feb. 5.

Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

entrance exams, or charging students application or academic fees during the admissions process.

The policy changes, Conlon said, are an effort to respect "the fact that we need our historic academies" while also "pulling the state out of this complicated choice situation."

Policy changes would also open the door for districts to use cooperative service agreements,

regional entities endorsed by the school redistricting task force that allow districts to share services like special education, transportation, business and administrative services and curriculum development.

The committee will continue to take testimony from experts and from public education officials, Conlon said Thursday.

Locals cited in ICE protest

WILLISTON — Four Addison County residents were among 11 peaceful protestors arrested for criminal trespass on Monday after refusing to leave the Department of Homeland Security office building in Williston.

The protestors were staging a sit-in at the building in protest of federal agencies, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), that are among government and private tenants of the building. ICE has come under fire for its enforcements operations in general, but particularly in Minnesota, where agents last month shot and killed two U.S. citizens who were protesting their actions.

Those arrested included Revell Allen, 75, of Middlebury; Dorothy Mammen, 70, of Middlebury; Timothy Price, 71, of Ripton; and Jennifer Wasiura, 46, of Weybridge.

Others arrested included Karen Bixler, 83, of Bethel; Lexington Kennedy, 21, of New York, N.Y.; Donald Kollisch, 74, of Hanover, N.H.; Henry Prenskey, 79, of Burlington; Douglas Smith, 85, of Sharon; Roan Wade, 22, of Red Hook, N.Y.; and Sherri Wormser, 57, of Colchester.

In addition, Peter Booth, 57, of

Jericho, and Laura Simon, 72, of White River Junction, were issued citations on a charge of criminal trespass at the scene and released.

Vermont State Police said the building owner informed police the individuals were trespassing and wouldn't leave, and asked for them to be removed.

State police, working in conjunction with Williston police, responded and spoke with protest leaders. VSP let the protesters know there was space available outside the building where they were welcome to continue their demonstration. The protesters declined to relocate and told state police their goal was to be arrested, according to a VSP press release announcing the action.

State police said they've been coordinating with Williston police and the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office to prepare for an "appropriate response" when protected First Amendment activities cross into criminal trespassing.

"Law enforcement including VSP ensure protesters are aware of their legal right to hold demonstrations in public spaces outside the office building, and also that they would be subject to arrest if they trespassed onto the property," reads the press release.

Two vie for Starksboro selectboard seat

By MARIN HOWELL

STARKSBORO — Voters in Starksboro on Town Meeting Day will weigh in on a two-person race for a two-year term on the town's selectboard.

David Rousseau and current selectboard chair Koran Cousino are running for the spot on the board.

The *Independent* reached out to both candidates to learn more about their candidacy, thoughts on key issues and ideas for serving the town of Starksboro. Their responses are printed below.

Please provide a brief bio.

Cousino: My name is Koran Cousino, and I live in Starksboro village with my husband and three teenaged children. We co-own a machine shop that was founded in Starksboro and moved to Bristol in 2019. Additionally, I am in my fourth year coaching the varsity girls' basketball team at Mt. Abraham UHS. I have served on the Starksboro selectboard for eight years, seven years as chairperson.

Rousseau: I recently retired from the U.S. Army as a lieutenant colonel and helicopter pilot after 20 years of service including several combat deployments. I began my military career in the AH-64D Apache helicopter and transitioned to the MH-60L Blackhawk while flying for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. Throughout

my career, I commanded and led several large units, as well as planned several large-scale training and combat operations. I attained my undergraduate degree in political science from the University of California Davis, and my graduate degree in leadership and management from Webster University in St. Louis. After my military retirement, I briefly worked as a pilot, human resources assistant, and FAA compliance coordinator for a small charter jet company until I was hired to fly for American Airlines. After more than a year of house hunting, my family and I moved to Starksboro in August 2024. Having lived all over the country and parts of Europe, we fell in love with the people and state of Vermont when we were stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y., so the natural choice was for us to settle down in the Green Mountain State and finally have a permanent home.

Why are you seeking a seat/another term on the selectboard, and why should residents vote for you?

Rousseau: Several months ago, I was approached by our local town clerk and informed there was an opening for our Starksboro selectboard, and she asked if I was interested in filling the position. I have always wanted to give more to my community. Unfortunately, for the last 20 years, my family

and I were required to move every six months to three years because of the military, so my ability to volunteer and serve in office was very limited. Now that we have settled down, I am looking forward to serving our local community. My family and I are relatively new to the area, but I consider this a positive rather than a negative. As I was gathering signatures, many of our townfolk emphasized they wanted fresh blood on the board. My goal is to provide a different perspective and use my decades of experience in leadership and problem solving to support our residents, their best interests, and the community as a whole. I'm not trying to change Starksboro, I want to preserve the way of life and minimize impacts of changes from higher levels of government.

Cousino: During my time serving on the Starksboro selectboard, the town has faced many challenges and accomplished many things. I am running for an additional term on the selectboard because I care deeply about our community and its vibrancy. Currently, Starksboro has several projects that are in progress such as the renovation of the historic Jerusalem Schoolhouse and new construction of Fire Station No. 2, with construction slated to begin in March. We have two major FEMA-funded road repair projects in their early stages from

damage sustained in the July 2024 flooding event. Also, our town staff and board are working hard to help some residents who were heavily impacted by the recent flooding, navigate the FEMA buyout process. We are also continuing to work on our Town Hall/Library accessibility project with help from dedicated volunteers and our library trustees.

What do you think are the most pressing issues Starksboro is currently facing? If elected, how would you help the town navigate those issues?

Cousino: In my opinion there are two issues that I see as the most pressing for Starksboro right now. The first one is how to support and promote responsible growth in housing stock and population that will help sustain our community and help us keep Robinson School open. To this end, our planning commission and zoning administrator have been working diligently on zoning by-law revisions that can help us attain this goal.

The second issue is keeping our property taxes affordable. While I do feel that the bulk of the property

(See Race, Page 3A)



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Water quality

(Continued from Page 1A)

Brook. This encompasses several watershed towns — including Bristol, Monkton, Starksboro and Ferrisburgh.

The organization's work includes conducting water quality sampling in local streams and rivers. Kelly noted sampling is done in the Lewis Creek and LaPlatte River watersheds, as well as the direct-to-lake drainages in between the mouths of Lewis Creek and the LaPlatte River.

SOURCE OF POLLUTION

Last week's presentation included general water quality sampling results from the area, with a focus on phosphorus as a nutrient of concern. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources states that phosphorus is among the nutrient pollutants found in runoff and is "arguably the greatest threat to clean water in Lake Champlain."

"In general, all of our streams are high in phosphorus, unless you're really high up in like a forested headwater area," Kelly said.

She noted there are a couple areas in particular that contribute quite a bit of phosphorus to the Lewis Creek watershed, which spans parts of Bristol, Monkton, Starksboro, Ferrisburgh, Charlotte and Hinesburg.

"The brook that drains out of Bristol Pond called Pond Brook is pretty much our biggest loader of phosphorus into Lewis Creek as far as the tributaries go," she said. "Generally, that picks up more phosphorus as you move downstream. So, there's less closer to Bristol Pond and then more as you go further north."

The presentation includes data related to "Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Loads for Vermont Segments of Lake Champlain," a document that details phosphorus load limits for segments of Lake Champlain established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2016.

Those targets call for reducing Vermont's total phosphorus load to Lake Champlain from 631 metric tons a year to 418 metric tons per year. The plan identified several sources contributing to phosphorus loading in Lake Champlain, including agricultural lands, developed lands, forest lands and wastewater.

Kelly also pointed to the impacts of past river management — such

as river straightening, which she said has made rivers flow faster and led to the erosion of streambanks. She noted 19% of assessed sites in the Lewis Creek watershed have been straightened, and around 23% were straightened in the Little Otter Creek watershed.

"That's just one of the ways that in the past we've really impacted our river systems that are still playing out today," Kelly said.

She added flooding carries the most phosphorus into the lake during big storms, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change.

"Sort of a combination of things," Kelly said of water pollution sources. "We've got the past management practices, we've got more development and these impervious surfaces that don't allow water to soak into the ground the way it would have naturally...It's not one thing, it's a lot of different things."

She noted that in addition to phosphorus, salt can also affect local waterways.

"Salt is not something that plants use or (that) gets taken up in the environment, so once it's there it's pretty much going to end up in our waterways somehow or it's going to kill plants in the process," Kelly said. "It can impact our drinking water, our wells, all those sorts of things."

TAKING ACTION

Kelly recommended several opportunities for community members to help improve and protect water quality, including at the town level. That might include a local planning commission concluding that "we have really poor water quality in this particular stream, so let's make sure that if we do further development there that there's a wider buffer on that particular stream," Kelly said.

She explained town roads must comply with the Municipal Roads General Permit, aimed at reducing stormwater erosion and damage to municipal roads. Kelly said while private roads and driveways aren't bound by the permit, municipalities could require that new roads meet or exceed those permit principles.

"Knowing that we are getting these bigger storms, maybe the ditches along the side of the road need to be even larger or the culverts need to be even larger to be able to carry a larger volume of water without erosion," she said.

Kelly highlighted some of the steps residents can take on their own properties, such as crowning driveways to prevent gully erosion, installing a rain garden to help capture and filter runoff, and planting and maintaining trees.

While Vermont is still in the heart of winter, community members can get a head start on such projects.

"I like to think of this time of year as people are starting to think about their gardens or whatever they're going to do around their house in the spring, so this might be a good time to think about, 'Do I want to put a rain barrel on my gutter, do I want to plant a rain garden?'" Kelly said. "There are certainly things you can still plan for this time of year."

The LCA has a "How to Manage Stormwater to Promote Healthier Watersheds" manual that offers advice for managing stormwater on properties and highlights available resources. The guide is available on LCA's website and at local libraries. An LCA program called Ahead of the Storm is also aimed at demonstrating different ways to manage water that help improve water quality and address impacts like flooding over time, according to Kelly.

"The management principles behind that are: Slow the water down, Spread it out, and Sink it in," she said. "And, ideally if we can, design for climate change as well."

Those wanting to learn more can find recordings of LCA's past water quality presentations on the organization's YouTube page. Kelly noted another way to get involved is through volunteer water sampling with the LCA. She said more information is available on the organization's website and noted fellow local nonprofit Addison County River Watch Collaborative also works with water sampling volunteers.

"I like to think of this time of year as people are starting to think about their gardens ... so this might be a good time to think about, 'Do I want to put a rain barrel on my gutter, do I want to plant a rain garden?'"

— Kate Kelly

Man shot dead in Hancock on Sunday

HANCOCK — Vermont State Police are investigating a killing of a Rochester man in Hancock over the weekend.

Troopers were called to an altercation on Bettis Road — south of the village on the east side of the White River — around 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 8. First responders located a man shot to death in a vehicle near the scene; he was identified at 45-year-old Howard Doyle.

The medical examiner called the

death by multiple gunshot wounds a "homicide."

State police on Monday said their initial investigation indicates this incident arose from a dispute involving individuals who knew one another. Everyone associated with this matter was accounted for on Monday, and there is no identified danger to the public.

The state police's investigation is active and ongoing; it involves members of the Vermont State Police Major Crime Unit, Bureau

of Criminal Investigations, Crime Scene Search Team, Field Force Division and Victim Services Unit. State police said they also are working closely with the Vermont Attorney General's Office on the investigation.

VSP asks that anyone with information that could assist investigators call the Royalton Barracks at 802-234-9933 or submit an anonymous tip online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

Local forum hosts Democrat Lt. gov. hopefuls

MIDDLEBURY — The Addison County Democratic Committee will hold its February monthly meeting Wednesday, Feb. 18, beginning at 6 p.m., featuring a Meet the Candidates forum spotlighting three Democratic candidates for lieutenant governor.

Participating candidates include three people who have announced they are running for the state's second-highest post: Esther Charlestin, Molly Gray and Ryan McLaren.

Each candidate will be allotted 15 minutes total on the agenda,

inclusive of prepared remarks and participation in a moderated audience question and answer session. The forum is structured to ensure equal time and a balanced opportunity for voters to hear directly from each candidate.

The meeting will be held in person at The Residence at Otter Creek (350 Lodge Road in Middlebury) and via Zoom. Community members who wish to attend virtually are asked to register in advance using the Zoom registration link, which is online at tinyurl.com/lt-gov-forum.

The forum is open to the public and free to attend.

The Meet the Candidates event is intended to provide Addison County residents with an opportunity to meet candidates running for state and local office and learn more about their candidacy. This forum is part of an ongoing Meet the Candidate series that the Addison County Democratic Committee will host throughout the year, spotlighting Democratic primary and general election candidates leading up to the Nov. 3 elections.

Race

(Continued from Page 2B)

tax burden comes from education taxes and the issues surrounding our statewide education funding system, we must do all that we can locally to responsibly manage our town finances as well. The selectboard has worked hard over the last few years to balance the need for continued updating of aging infrastructure with keeping our expenses in line with what our taxpayers can afford.

Rousseau: As the state of Vermont fluctuates with its population due to affordability, I see some of those issues affecting the Starksboro area. Starksboro is uniquely situated between Hinesburg and Bristol, which helps lower housing and land prices for those looking for a cheaper option than living closer to Burlington. However, property taxes and what they are funding are a major concern for most, especially those on a fixed incomes.

With our elected officials in Montpelier constantly raising taxes to fund their pet projects, my objective is to minimize those effects for our residents and make hard decisions on what our local tax revenue supports. I will also communicate regularly with our state representatives to ensure they answer the questions you have and clarify what our hard-earned money is funding. As a small state and a small village, our tax revenue is precious and cannot be wasted on things that do not benefit us as Vermont and Starksboro residents.

Addressing a dearth of affordable housing and a high cost of living, are there specific experiences or ideas you feel you bring to the table in helping the

town navigate such issues?

Rousseau: Starksboro can be a place for those who choose to escape the crowded city and live the quiet, small-town Vermont life without breaking the bank to build or purchase a home.

I've lived in many towns and villages that grew too fast and outpaced the local infrastructure, which caused headaches for everyone. I believe growth of our small village is necessary for its survival, but that growth needs to be

carefully monitored and managed so as not to overwhelm our current infrastructure. We have a base amount of tax revenue required to support Starksboro, bringing in new residents is a great way to share the load of that tax burden and also support bringing back new small businesses.

Note: As Cousino identified housing and affordability as the most pressing issues facing Starksboro, her answer to the previous question is also in response to this one.

Postal cuts may delay mail by a full day

ADDISON COUNTY — Recent changes to the U.S. Postal Service will be delaying delivery for most mail by up to a full day, according to information conveyed to the *Addison Independent* this week by local postal officials, who said the U.S. Postal Service had reduced the number of delivery times from two a day to just one: at 7 a.m.

According to a VTDigger story on Jan. 26, "Vermont is the latest region to join Regional Transportation Optimization, a new strategy that ends evening (or afternoon) collection of mail that's more than 50 miles away from regional mail centers."

Regional Transportation Optimization is one part of a years-long strategy of service cuts and other changes that began in 2021 under former Postmaster Louis DeJoy, who was appointed by President Trump during his first term and has been making substantial cuts to the agency ever since. After much criticism, DeJoy left the post last year and has been replaced by the newly appointed Postmaster General David Steiner.

"The postal service has said the plan is essential for making its operations efficient and financially self-sustaining," read the VTDigger story, adding that "critics of the program say there's been a lack of transparency in how the plan could affect the speed and quality of service throughout the country."

VTDigger quoted Steve Hutkins, an advocate who runs

the Save the Post Office website, saying there had been "no signs at post offices or other notices to customers letting them know that their mail will be sitting at the back of the post office overnight.... 'The Postal Service doesn't want the public to pay any attention to this change in its transportation policies and the slower service standards (delivery times) that the change is causing,' Hutkins said via email."

The change for first-class mail means that the USPS has shifted many parts of Vermont from a two-day service standard to a three-day service standard, and it can take up to five days to reach other parts of the country.

There are some exceptions, Hutkins said. Local mail in places close to Vermont's two Local Processing Centers, located in Burlington and White River Junction, could still go to those facilities and be processed more quickly than mail going to Springfield, Mass.

To keep delivering its weekly print edition to all county subscribers each Friday (the same day it currently arrives) the *Addison Independent* staff will deliver the newspaper in walk-sorted sequence to as many local post offices within Addison County as possible, in cooperation with local post offices.

"It will definitely cost us more money to make those deliveries," said *Addison Independent* publisher Angelo Lynn, "but in light of more cuts to the

Post Office, and knowing how important it is for subscribers to get the news by that Friday, we'll do what we can to make that possible."

Lynn added that because the newspaper had no warning of the changes, the newspaper hopes its delivery to local post offices will be well received, but noted it was not able to contact every county post office by phone or email as of this Wednesday.

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Editorial

A thread tying Bad Bunny, Trump, the Nobel, Munich, FEMA and the Olympics

Superbowl Sunday was four days ago, as I write this, but so much happens so quickly it seems a month ago.

Starting with The Game, let's recap:
 • In a game aptly described as "boring," the Seattle Seahawk's defense obliterated the Patriots, even as the Patriots' defense kept the game close for a while. Most agree the best part of the game was the half-time show by Puerto Rico rapper Bad Bunny, which fittingly, drew higher viewership than the game with 135 million.

Conservative groups, spurred on by Trump, created their own alternative show with lip-syncing Kid Rock, which was widely panned as a dour dud garnering 5-6 million viewers.

While Trump had claimed Bad Bunny was a "terrible choice" for the half time show, and said the program would "sow hatred," the exact opposite was true.

Delivered mostly in Spanish, the theme of the rapper's program was "to be yourself," describing his own journey from being a grocery store clerk 10 years ago to global rock star today. The other musical numbers depicted Puerto Rico and the Latin American culture embracing all of the Americas. The final message on the giant screen, in English, stated: "The only thing stronger than hate is love."

Bad Bunny's message referenced his Grammy Awards acceptance speech from the week before, in which he said: "We're not savages, we're not animals, we're not aliens. We are humans and we are Americans. The hate gets more powerful with more hate. The only thing that is more powerful than hate is love."

That Trump and his MAGA allies went to such effort to spread hatred and disrespect is itself a message telegraphed to all Americans.

• That same Sunday, organizers of the 2026 Munich Security Conference, Europe's main forum on defense, wrote in unusually blunt terms that President Trump was destroying the postwar international order "in an era of wrecking ball politics."

"Ironically," the Security Report wrote, "the president of the United States — the country that did more than any other to shape the post-1945 international order — is now the most prominent of the demolition men. As a result... the postwar international order is now under destruction. Under Donald Trump, the United States has largely abandoned the role of the 'leader of the free world.'"

(Note to Donald: Not sure the Nobel Peace Prize Committee will be impressed with that on your resumé.)

• Speaking of the Nobel Prize, "the city of Minneapolis and its people" were nominated by The Nation magazine just ahead of the Jan. 31 deadline. The nomination cites the residents' "extraordinary nonviolent resistance" and "courage and solidarity", often in sub-zero weather, in response to a federal operation involving thousands of heavily armed agents. If awarded, it would be the first time in history a municipality and its citizens have received the prize.

Here's the key paragraph from *The Nation's* nomination: "The people of Minneapolis and their elected leaders have demonstrated an extraordinary and sustained commitment to human dignity and to the protection of vulnerable communities. They have exemplified the desire for democracy and equality and the celebration of difference. The moral leadership of the people and city of Minneapolis has set an example for those struggling against fascism everywhere on the face of a troubled planet." (It's worth a few minutes to read *The Nation's* nomination letter.)

• Closer to home, 11 Vermonters, including several from Addison County, were peacefully arrested during a protest at the Williston facility ICE uses to track citizen's speech on social media. A police report is published in today's *Independent*. What's not said in the police report, but stated in a *VtDigger* story, is that part of the intent of the protestors was to demonstrate that Vermont State Police and local officers could peacefully handle the protest and remove the protestors from the location without incident. No combat-ready, masked agents with AK-47s, pepper spray and gas masks were needed.

• Also in Vermont, the towns of Sutton, Burke, Sheffield and Wheelock — all in the Northeast Kingdom — learned this week that FEMA's new policies under Trump mean the federal government won't allow them to recoup any federal disaster aid caused by flooding in July 2025. Gov. Phil Scott had personally requested the \$1.85 million in aid, writing in an appeal letter the flooding had brought the towns "to the brink of financial disaster." Still, FEMA said no.

Those towns will now have to consider how to pay for the significant costs to their communities, including by raising taxes.

Eric Forand, director of Vermont Emergency Management told *VtDigger* the state was "trying to work with FEMA to get some clarification on what that might mean... But it's a little bit opaque right now. We don't have a lot of information coming from the federal government... We're just trying to figure out what the new norm is."

• On the national scene, Congress comes to loggerheads this Friday over the funding of the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees funding for ICE and CBP. Democrats are refusing to fund the agency unless Republicans join with them to pass restrictions on ICE and CBP tactics, such as requiring federal agents to no longer wear mask; wearing body cameras nationwide; using judicial warrants (not administration warrants), among others. While Friday is the deadline, Republicans are stalling for more time. One caveat: when Congress passed Trump's big bad bill, it included \$170 billion border enforcement provision... meaning ICE and CBP can continue operations regardless of whether funding for DHS is approved.

• 2026 Olympics: OMG, Ben Ogden. After 50 years, Ogden is the second American male (Bill Koch medaled in 1976) to win an Olympic medal in a Nordic event. That the two families are friends, hail from the same part of the state, and the Ogden family is legendary in the state's Nordic scene make it an idyllic Olympic story. Ditto Ryan Cochran-Siegle with his silver medal in the super giant slalom, continuing the Cochran family legacy.

Thrilling also to see other American athletes, whose names aren't as well-known, rise to stardom. Breezy Johnson and her amazing gold medal in the downhill, and Jacqueline Wiles and Vermont's Paula Moltzan, placing third in the Women's Combined (downhill and slalom.) The US Women's hockey team has been amazing to watch as has the US Ice Skating Team. There are so many amazing athletes to honor, and to admire, the games truly are a spectacle that has the potential to unite, not divide.

Angelo Lynn

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

Published every Thursday by the Addison Press, Inc. Member Vermont Press Association; New England Press Association; National Newspaper Association.
 SUBSCRIPTION RATES: All print subscriptions include digital access. 1 Month \$10.00, 1 Year \$120.00. Discounted rate for Senior Citizens and students call for details. 802-388-4944.
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Two more
THRIVING UNDER PRESSURE in an overtime game this past Friday, Commodore junior Cohen Howell rises above the Spartans from Winooski to score two of his 14 points — most of which he got in the fourth quarter and OT. VUHS won the contest, 61-58. Read the full story on Page 1B.
 Independent photo/Steve James

Even adults need snow days

Last week, I was gifted a snow day. My car said it was -15 degrees Fahrenheit and my employer closed our building. I chased the clouds forming from my lips back inside, wondering if I would even make it the way I was breathing. A similar sensation to when I was in a sauna a few months ago: the fear of doing it at all. Every time I exhaled, I felt little icicles form in my nose. On my inhaled I worried one would find itself inside my brain.

I was relieved to wake up the next morning with my full wits. I was less so when I found our kitchen sink pipe took the hit for me. It seemed the icicles decided to reside there instead. My dad instructed me to keep the faucet open and he picked up a space heater from the neighbor. We stuck the black machine right under the sink and I watched a hotbox effect take place, imagining little clouds like the morning before running up against the pipe. Water trying to break free from its solid form.

It was my second day working from home, and along with the pipe situation, the day arrived with over a foot of snow. My white car was practically indiscernible from the snow-plowed mounds, but by midday my phone displayed a number without a negative sign. It was time to be a Vermonter.

I zipped myself in my black snowpants and jacket, my Skida hat and neckwarmer, my fleece gloves, and my Bogs (beneath a pair of Darn Tough's). I stepped outside expecting to ration my air like the morning before, but was pleasantly surprised to feel a little heat on my cheeks. The definition of sun-kissed. I

began to go on a walk, the same route I take almost every day — driveway, turn left, turn right up the hill, pass the red mailbox at the top, turn around — but I suddenly felt compelled to move differently. To make a u-turn on my roundabout driveway and see what exit to take.

I decided to get off at the second stop, which happened to be the deer tracks leading toward the shed. I repeated a snap and sink routine whereas my feet cracked through thin ice, dipped into the fluffy powder, and landed on condensed snow. With each step my shoe branded the ground and wiped away my predecessor's tracks; after a dozen steps or so, it started to feel unharmonious with my wandering spirit. I took a sharp right and stopped at the garden beyond the house, a patch of land hibernating under the blanket of winter.

I fell back and felt the air in my body lift up, releasing through a soft sigh, as I — poof — disappeared into the membrane of the earth. Out of the corner of my eyes I saw white, I felt white, that cold tickle of nothingness and fullness, and then I took in the real clouds above me. Rocket ships and farm animals and faces I just couldn't place my finger on. Everyone and everything greeting me on the edge of white.

I felt like a baby being held for the first time. The touch of something warm and inviting and accepting. Reminding me to pause, to let go. I was safe. I felt a strange sense of sympathy for the ice in the pipe. Perhaps it had the same needs as me. In my urgency
 (See *Ways of Seeing*, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Jnana Breck-Arndt



feel unharmonious with my wandering spirit. I took a sharp right and stopped at the garden beyond the house, a patch of land hibernating under the blanket of winter.

Valentine's Day food allergy tips

I LOVE Valentine's Day. Sure, some people say it's just a holiday dreamed up by greeting card companies to sell more stuff, but honestly? I am happily buying in. The candy. The heart-shaped everything. A whole day dedicated to celebrating love. Sign. Me. Up.

Valentine's Day always takes me straight back to elementary school. Decorating shoebox mailboxes. Carefully choosing the perfect Valentine for every classmate. The thrill of passing them out and seeing what you got in return. Trying to decode any hidden meaning in a box of candy hearts. Pure, rose-colored magic.

Now, as a parent to a child with a food allergy, Valentine's Day, much like Halloween, comes with a little extra anxiety. Along with making sure the Valentines are cute, I'm also reading ingredient labels, double-checking for allergens and emailing or calling companies when labels aren't clear. It can feel like a lot when you're focused on keeping your own child safe, let alone when

Clippings

By Jenna Hunsinger



you want to be mindful of an entire classroom's dietary needs.

But inclusion matters. Everyone deserves to feel celebrated, safe and included on Valentine's Day. That's why I've put together some simple ideas for allergen-free and food-free Valentine treats that everyone can enjoy.

Because we all deserve a day to, well, love love.

Allergy Friendly Valentine's Day Ideas

Here are some Sweet Treats that are allegedly allergy friendly:
 Vermont Nut Free
 Free2b (Top 9 Free)
 That's It (Top 12 Free)
 EnjoyLife (Top 14 Free)
 YumEarth (Top 9 Free)
 Rule Breaker (Top 11 Free)

MadeGood (Top 9 Free)
 Partake (Top 9 Free)

And then there are Non-Food Goodies:
 Stickers
 Friendship bracelets
 Tattoos (temporary!)
 Stamps
 Play Dough
 Fidget Toys
 MiniBooks/Coloring pages

The top 9 allergens in the U.S. are
 Peanuts
 Tree nuts
 Eggs
 Dairy
 Soy
 Wheat
 Sesame
 Fish
 Shellfish

See the Allergy Friendly guide in full-color (shades of pink) online at tinyurl.com/JennaOnAllergies.
 Thank you for taking the time to look at this guide to help create
 (See *Clippings*, Page 4A)

Letters to the Editor

Senator fails to 'meet moment'

Addison County State Sen. Steve Heffernan once again has demonstrated a failure to meet the moment. His vote against S.R.21, which is the Senate response to the ongoing assault on citizens by the federal government, shows a shocking naivete and refusal to acknowledge the very real threats to everyone's existence.

This is now the second time he has relied on technicalities and process to bury his head in the sand and deny what we all have seen and know, which is the federal government is kidnapping and murdering its citizens and residents, violating everyone's rights, including the Second Amendment.

We all know right and wrong and what is happening is wrong and has me wondering how bad must things get before Sen. Heffernan will act.

Al Harder-Hyde Vergennes

Addison needs some new ideas

The current Addison selectboard has a combined tenure of around 50 years. In these days where there are few people who volunteer to help lead their town this is highly commendable.

That being said, this also means that not much has changed in the thinking or actions of the board in more than a decade.

In the past few years we have seen several new people interested in representing and working for the townspeople in a variety of roles. This year's election offers two seats on the selectboard. With all due respect for the dedicated existing board members, it is time for some new ideas and thinkers in the leadership. It is time to bring Addison into the 21st century.

Please consider carefully who you will vote for on election day. Whoever that may be for you please remember to vote on March 3.

Alden Harwood Addison

Senator should share thoughts

On page 3B of the Jan. 29 edition of the *Indy*, State Sen. Steve Heffernan is featured paying homage to Tom Brady.

It's fine to take a trip to honor football heroes and the Pats making it to the Super Bowl is a big deal.

But the job of State Senator is also a big deal, and we hear next to nothing about that these days from Steve Heffernan. Why is there no news to report about Mr. Heffernan taking any kind of interest in public leadership during an unprecedented time of erosion of our democracy and our civil liberties?

Or about his thoughts about education reform in the county? Mr. Heffernan couldn't be bothered to reply to multiple email invitations from the ANWSD district to discuss school funding. Why even serve on the Education Committee when you can't take the time to dialog with your district about the major changes headed our way?

Fine for Tom Brady to get some love. Go Pats! But what about your constituents, Steve?

Erik Andrus Ferrisburgh

Signs of fascism have meaning

Over the past few weeks you may have driven by individuals holding "Signs of Fascism" on the Cross Street Bridge, at Triangle Park or along Main Street. This is why.

One sign of fascism - control of the media.

A second sign of fascism - using a shared grievance to exert power and control over the masses.

A third sign of fascism - the normalization of corruption.

A fourth sign of fascism - seeking to expand territory through armed conflict.
 (See *Wiger-Grohs* letter, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Let's send a health care message to legislators

On Town Meeting Day, many towns in Addison County will have a chance to weigh in on our health care crisis. Resolutions showing support for universal primary care as proposed in H.433 are on the ballots or will be voted on at the in-person meetings in Middlebury, Bristol, Salisbury, Weybridge, Cornwall and Brandon.

These resolutions deserve your support. The urgency is greater than ever. In just the first two weeks of this year, Vermonters have already dropped their health care plans at five times last year's rate of disenrollment. This is due to the end of federal subsidies to purchase insurance on the Exchange combined with the rapidly increasing premium costs

that have plagued us for so many years.

In addition, our last official survey shows that over 187,000 Vermonters are underinsured. These people often avoid care because deductibles and co-payments make them reluctant or unable to use the insurance for which they have already paid. What does this mean? It means that their health worsens without treatment and they end up in the Emergency Room where the cost of treatment is ten times more expensive. Indeed, the 2024 Oliver Wyman report commissioned for the Green Mountain Care Board predicted \$300 million in hospital savings from expanded primary care.

Healthcare costs are also a major

factor behind our rising education costs and the corresponding increases in property taxes.

Universal primary care would be a major step in addressing this problem. Making primary care a public good will also reduce our premiums (since insurers cannot charge for services they no longer pay out for). Countries which have an accessible and universal primary care network have better health outcomes at much lower costs.

Primary care should be a public good. This will save money and save lives. Let's support these resolutions on Town Meeting day and send a message to our legislators.

Ellen Oxfeld
Middlebury

Our lawmakers should focus on issues in Vermont

I would like to respond to the letter written on Jan. 15 by Marv Greenberg stating an ethics investigation into the five Vermont legislators who traveled to Israel as unwarranted.

He states it was a "much-needed fact finding mission." What facts were they gathering when only one side of the issues in Palestine/Israel were explored? And how does this pertain to our issues here in Vergennes?

The Jewish Voice for Peace and Vermont Coalition for Palestinian Liberation are not anti-Israeli, or

antisemitic (Semites are people who speak a Semitic language including Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopian, Phoenician, Assyrian and Aramaic, not just Jews who speak Hebrew).

They do oppose the colonization of what's left of Palestine and seek Palestinians' right to self-determination. Since the October 7 tragedy, Israel has continued to systematically level the homes of Palestinians in the West Bank to allow Israeli settlers to build homes and communities. In addition, Israel has leveled Gaza

looking for Hamas, killing civilian citizens, children, journalists and health care workers, ignoring any cease fire agreements.

I believe our state legislators need to focus on our issues here in Vermont. I am not convinced that a trip paid for by the Israeli government was how we want our legislators to spend their time.

No group, including Jewish people, should be targeted. If we want both sides heard, then let both sides speak.

Maggi Shadroui
Vergennes

Citizen 'thanks' Trump for sparking activism

Dear President Trump, I never dreamed I would be writing you a thank you note. Let me help you understand. I am almost 76 and I have lived my life small — complacent and compliant: afraid to make mistakes; afraid of not knowing enough; afraid of conflict and emotional pain; embarrassed by and ashamed of my white privilege.

As a result of your policies and tactics, I am becoming someone

who speaks out and stands up for justice, challenging my assumptions and biases; someone who learns about our history and how our government works; a person who is dismantling the walls I've built to protect myself, opening my heart to strangers, deepening my friendships, and building trust.

I am inspired by the strength and courage of people all over our nation who are risking their lives

to protect and care for each other and am working to live up to their example.

So, while I abhor what you and your followers stand for, I am grateful for the opportunity to become a stronger person and to be able to use my privilege for the good of others and for our democracy. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Revell Allen
Middlebury

Clippings

(Continued from Page 4A)
a safe, inclusive holiday for all. This was created by a food-allergy parent. It is not a substitute for medical advice or endorsed by the listed brands. Manufacturing

processes may change. Please don't forget to check the label for everything you buy to make sure it's still allergen-free (and saving it to show to any curious parents is always helpful). Happy

Valentine's Day!
Editor's note: Jenna Hunsinger is co-director of sales and digital manager at the Addison Independent.

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)
to evict it from my space, I had forgotten it was never mine to begin with.

I fell asleep that night imagining the flakes of snow drifting down from a forest tree, blurring out my cloud friends, and realized it was all magical. The fresh water and

clean snowflakes and frozen solid pipes, all birthed from the same mother. I woke in the night to a soft sound, one of tiny drum beats and a marching band. A siren call from one drop of nature to the next: it is safe to come home.

Jnana Breck-Arndt graduated

from Syracuse University in 2024 with a B.A. in English and Psychology. She works as a Health Coach at a mental health agency and has her own practice, Crescent Moon Coaching. She runs the Substack Everything Bittersweet.

Wiger-Grohs letter

(Continued from Page 4A)
Yet another sign of fascism is "whitewashing" history.

What does it mean to "whitewash" history? According to the Oxford English Dictionary, "whitewashing history" is "to distort (history, literature, a narrative) to exclude non-white people; to eschew or erase the representation or depiction of non-white people in (history); to represent (a non-white person) as white.

The Nazis were masters at whitewashing history. The Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda was headed by Joseph Goebbels. As such, he masterminded the systematic destruction of contributions made by Einstein, Freud, Helen Keller, Heinrich Mann, Karl Marx and Erich Maria Remarque, author of "All Quiet on the Western Front." He charged his subordinates to organize massive book burnings in an effort to purify society and eliminate morally "corrupt" ideas.

Goebbels and those in his charge forced the removal of educators, college professors and university lecturers whose ideas were at odds with Nazi doctrine. Curricula and textbooks were developed to provide students with a biased view of history and science. A view that glorified the Aryan race and Germanic superiority. All else was

erased.

Today, looking at what is currently taking place in the United States, we see the following.

Exhibitions at the world-renowned Smithsonian are being changed or dismantled especially those dealing with slavery and Black history.

Information about Indigenous peoples and Blacks are being removed from National Parks.

No longer will there be free entry to the National Parks on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Juneteenth. You will, however, get in for free on Trump's birthday, June 14.

Textbooks that include information on slavery, gender identity, LGBTQ+ issues, negative facts about climate change and the fossil fuel industry are being rewritten or banned.

Information on the Holocaust and the role of the US (or lack thereof) during WWII is being scrutinized.

The National Historical Park in Lowell, Mass. can no longer show films of the horrific conditions women and immigrants worked under during the early 19th century. A clear whitewashing of conditions at the mills.

Stephen Miller serves as the current deputy chief of staff for policy and homeland security. He is a far right, white nationalist,

anti-immigration hardliner whose job it is to spread that propaganda.

And the list goes on, and on and on...

The above information hopefully explains why some individuals have chosen to stand up and gather weekly in Middlebury with "Signs of Fascism."

We're sharing widely recognized warning signs scholars and historians use when studying authoritarian systems because democracies don't disappear overnight. They erode through patterns, compliance and silence.

Judy Wiger-Grohs
Middlebury

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Senator explains SR21 vote

Many have asked why I voted no on Resolution SR21 (Senate resolution relating to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Operation Metro Surge). My decision was not rooted in a lack of compassion for victims, nor in a belief that loss of life should ever be minimized. It was grounded in a core principle: judgment must follow facts, and facts require due process.



Legislative Review
by Rep. Steven Heffernan R-Bristol

I believe a legislator's role is to craft sound policy — not to pass judgment on events occurring in other states without full and deliberate fact-finding. In this case, the Senate Committee did not conduct a complete due-process review through comprehensive investigation and witness testimony. Due process is not a technicality; it is a cornerstone of our state and our nation. When we abandon it, even with good intentions, we weaken the very foundation of our system of government.

We often say that two wrongs

do not make a right. I believe that applies here. Responding to tragedy by sidestepping our constitutional responsibilities in order to make a political statement does not serve justice, victims, or the public.

Compassion should be universal. Every loss of life is tragic and deserves acknowledgment. Yet compassion in today's discourse is often selective. Media coverage and public outrage tend to focus intensely on certain cases while others — sometimes equally or more heinous — receive

little attention.

Most people can immediately name cases such as Adam Pretti, and Renee Goode, and many believe law enforcement failed in those situations. That concern deserves discussion; I also ask: where is the same sustained outrage and compassion for Jocelyn Nungaray, a 12-year-old from Texas; Rachel Morin, a mother of five; and Laken Riley, age 22 — all killed by individuals who entered this country illegally?

Why are these stories not given the same coverage? Where is the national conversation? Where is the compassion for their families? Justice, accountability, and empathy should not depend on which narrative dominates the news cycle. If we truly care about victims, then we must care about all of them, and we must pursue truth and policy solutions with fairness, consistency, and respect for due process.

The current situation is the result of years of inaction by past administrations — both Republican and Democratic — and, more importantly, by Congress. This is a federal responsibility that states are now struggling to manage in the absence of meaningful national action.

In the present day, there is no valid reason individuals cannot be properly documented. At a minimum, documentation should include background checks and basic health screenings. Those who entered the United States legally in past generations — and those who continue to do so today — are required to meet far more rigorous standards. Fairness demands that our system be consistent, lawful, and enforced.

Judicial appointment hurts court's credibility

Gov. Phil Scott in praising the Senate for confirming Michael Drescher's appointment to the Vermont Supreme Court, said that Vermonters expect their leaders to "not allow outside politics to interfere with the confirmation process of a well-qualified candidate." These apparently high-minded words hide a serious blind spot in the Governor's sensibilities about the Court and his responsibility in nominating potential justices.

Mr. Drescher may be exceptionally well qualified, and a man of substantial integrity — he spoke well in his confirmation hearings — but he had placed himself near the center of one of the most volatile legal controversies of this nation's current political moment — the rights of free speech, civil protection, and due process for non-citizen legal residents. Outside groups did not bring politics into this nomination process; Mr. Scott did — by appointing a nominee who quite recently defended the Trump administration's aggressive and nominally unconstitutional treatment of legally protected residents. The choice to name this particular candidate at this particular time showed very poor judgment on the part of Mr. Scott.

A Supreme Court nomination does not take place in a vacuum where the political circumstances of the moment do not apply. Senators cannot and should not ignore the political realities surrounding a potentially controversial candidate, and confirm them to a lifetime appointment based solely on their legal qualifications. Mr. Drescher was given ample opportunity in a lengthy and very fair Judiciary Committee hearing to allay expressed concerns about his defense of ICE's actions against two legal residents on behalf of the Trump administration. That he failed to do so, and was not recommended for confirmation by the committee, does nothing to lessen the concern and the controversy surrounding his appointment. These now become a liability for the Court. The less than robust confirmation vote Mr. Drescher received in the full Senate, also becomes a liability for the Court. Controversy is not good for the Vermont Supreme Court!

Vermont's governor and legislators need to remind themselves that, when weighing a potential candidate for the Supreme Court, their primary responsibility is not to the candidate, no matter how superb their qualifications, but to the

integrity of the Court — and to its public trust. It is the court that needs to be protected from the politics of the moment — not the candidate.

There are dozens of well-qualified candidates who would not have brought with them the potentially compromised history and judgment that Mr. Drescher now brings to the Court.

At a time when our national politics is as volatile and divided as it has ever been, our Supreme Court must be impeccable with respect to the public's trust. With Mr. Drescher's appointment, that trust is substantially diminished.

In this difficult time, it is important to recognize the many vulnerable people in Vermont — hundreds, possibly thousands of green card holders, students, asylum-seekers, and refugees, all here legally, and trying to live their lives peacefully — who may need the Court's vigorous protection and who need to be able to trust in the fundamental protections of the rule of law in this state. It is disturbing to think that, for many of these people, that trust has likely now been lost.

It has become the Court's unfortunate burden — and Mr. Drescher's — to restore it.

Tom Perry
Starksboro

Letters to the editor

The Addison Independent encourages readers to write letters to the editor. We believe a newspaper should be a community forum for people to debate issues of the day.

Because we believe that accountability makes for responsible debate, we will print signed letters only. Be sure to include an address and telephone number, too, so we can call to clear up any questions.

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

Elderly Services Inc. ESI College



Is the U.S. a Christian Nation? Religion and Politics in American History and Today

Wednesdays February 18 & 25, 10:00-11:30 AM
Congregational Church of Middlebury

Is the United States a Christian nation? In this course, we will consider different ways to answer that question. We will look at the early history of the American republic, exploring various responses the founders had regarding the relationship between "church and state." We will review the range of answers the U.S. Supreme Court has given to that question in the last hundred years. And we will examine demographic changes and debates in our time, especially as they feature the resurgence of Christian Nationalism as a political force.

James Calvin Davis has taught religion and ethics at Middlebury College for 25 years. He is the author of the forthcoming book, *The Character of a Nation: John Witherspoon and the Moral Foundation of the United States*.

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Obituaries

Priscilla Rodabaugh Baker, 79, of Middlebury

Living life intentionally, building networks and connections

“Obituaries are not about the dead, but about the living and giving a person a second life.” Obit. 2016 documentary about the NYTimes Obituary Dept.)

MIDDLEBURY — At Priscilla Baker’s pre-school in Ferrisburgh, Otter Creek School, in the 1980s, a girl, maybe four years old, brings a Monarch butterfly chrysalis about to emerge as a butterfly. Everything stops as the simple beauty unfolds and the preschoolers feel the wonder of it all. The Priscilla would have described it as the “facilitation of learning.” And oh, so much more.

Hanging over the sink in Priscilla’s bathroom is a framed quotation by George Bernard Shaw: “I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, . . . I rejoice in life for its own sake.” Another framed quotation states the wisdom of Tao Te Ching: “If you realize that you have enough, you are truly rich.”

Priscilla lived these credos as her North Star, the organizing principle of her life. To be of service and embrace simplicity.

Priscilla Rodabaugh Baker grew up primarily in Lancaster, Ohio, the daughter of Frances Jean Ruple Rodabaugh and Galon Spacht Rodabaugh, the youngest of four children. She is predeceased by her parents and brother, Steven Rodabaugh. She is survived by sister Carol Rodabaugh Bininger, brother Ronald Rodabaugh, two sisters-in-law and several nieces and nephews.

From an early age Priscilla demonstrated a creative intelligence, always seeking a variety of learning opportunities. A flutist and singer, she had the good fortune to attend the Interlochen Music Camp for three summers.

After high school Priscilla attended Earlham College (’68), a Quaker school in Richmond, Ind., where she was introduced not only to a liberal arts education but also Quaker values, progressive social justice issues, and the power of community action. She participated in several off-campus study opportunities which stimulated her curiosity and interest in diverse cultures.

While living and studying in southern California, after college, Priscilla found a calling in early education, as well as meeting and



PRISCILLA RODABAUGH BAKER

marrying J. Stannard Baker in 1971. They decided to head East looking for a more rural permanent home and found it in Vermont. Immediately, and forever after, Priscilla embraced Vermont as her home and geographic anchor. In 1973 Priscilla and Stan established the Otter Creek School, first in Vergennes, and then Ferrisburgh, Vt. At the same time, she returned to her love of classical music, taught music lessons, and performed flute and cello recitals with her husband Stan and other musicians.

After they divorced in 1994 Priscilla moved to Middlebury and pursued other professional experiences but always wove into these some form of teaching which she defined as the “facilitation of learning,” the nurturing of innate potential abilities. She sought to create environments that invited learning — to pivot to what presents itself. When a child brought in a chrysalis about to emerge as a butterfly, what was planned for the day would be paused so that the immediate opportunity could inform the day’s activities. This was “organic curriculum” or experiential learning that she and Stan honed. She considered teaching to be “the noblest profession” and the most meaningful work she did.

In her long career working with children, Priscilla was an early childhood educator, an Expressive Arts and Play Therapist (MA, Lesley College ’88), a community mental health counselor, and a consultant. For several years Priscilla was a Standardized Patient at the UVM College of Medicine, teaching medical students the art of history taking and physical examination and, most importantly, how to be an empathic physician — how to listen intently and compassionately.

In 2005 Priscilla became the Assistant Program Director and Volunteer Coordinator for

Hospice Volunteer Services and a few years later Program Director. Priscilla helped to guide the founding of the Wellspring Singers who sing at the bedside of the dying, and for their families, as well as regular social sings with residents in local care homes. She led Wellspring with intelligence and passion. Twenty-two years later, Wellspring continues to share its gift of vocal music with those at the end of life and others in our community.

In addition to teaching over a dozen community hospice volunteer classes, she taught six J-term classes at Middlebury College about hospice and end-of-life care. Her classes were always oversubscribed. By the time of her retirement in 2018, Priscilla had trained many community members as hospice volunteers and caregivers.

Throughout her adult years, and guided by Quaker values, Priscilla engaged in promoting peace and social justice. She helped organize and participated in various projects and actions, including her role as Vermont co-coordinator for the International Ribbon Project which culminated in 1985 with 30,000 fabric panels tied together encircling the Pentagon and weaving 15 miles through the Capital.

After retirement Priscilla pursued her passion for teaching by becoming a volunteer tour guide at the Rokeby Museum, in Ferrisburgh, Vt. A lifelong learner, she sought to absorb all she could about the Robinson family and the Underground Railroad. As a tour guide she practiced her dual passions as facilitator of learning and storytelling.

Priscilla finally succumbed to a slow growing cancer that she lived with for more than 25 years. She learned to accommodate death and grief, which turned her toward end-of-life issues. Just as she sought to live her life with intention, she approached her time of dying with this same intentionality and curiosity, aided by the compassionate and skillful support of Bayada, a home health care and hospice organization. She died peacefully, surrounded by close friends, thanks to the exquisite care from the Palliative and Nursing staff at Porter Hospital.

Her last teaching engagement is yet to come when she will serve at the UVM College of Medicine as a cadaver for medical students learning the anatomy and amazing landscape of the human body.

Ever the teacher, Priscilla taught us how to live; she taught us how to die. And now, like the monarch chrysalis, her shell has broken open and her wings have unfurled.

Priscilla would be honored by any donations made to support local organizations that provide essential services such as food, housing, and health care (e.g. HOPE, Charter House Coalition, CVOEO, Open Door Clinic), as well as donations to the American Service Committee. There will be celebration of her life in the spring. ♦

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Carol Gibson Warnock, 74, of Lincoln

“I want to go soon and live away by the pond where I shall hear only the wind whispering among the reeds. It will be success if I shall have left myself behind.”

— Henry David Thoreau

LINCOLN — Early in the morning of January 8, in the loving presence of her husband and two children, Carol succeeded and went to live away by the pond. Having traveled on a difficult and lengthy journey through dementia, Carol was finally free. . .

Born to John B. Gibson and Bette June Sweet Gibson in Rochester, N.Y., Carol grew up in nearby Webster, N.Y., the oldest of three children. She is survived by her brother John Gibson (wife Carolyn Gibson) of Franklin, N.C., and was predeceased by her sister Brehm Lee Neel (husband Tony Neel) in 2021, also of Franklin, N.C.

Carol gave birth to a beautiful boy, Todd, in July 1970 while living and working in Rochester, and less than a year later, met the love of her life, Jimmy Warnock, who was visiting Rochester with his Brown University roommate, Jon Merritt, during spring break 1971. One evening, Jon and Jimmy slid into the back seat of a friend’s car enroute to a concert with Boz Scaggs and It’s a Beautiful Day (think “White Bird”). Carol, in the front seat, turned to introduce herself to Jon’s friend in the leather fringe jacket (think Roger Daltrey, the jacket that is), and well, that was that . . . Jimmy was as taken by the dark-haired beauty as she was by him. He was twenty-one, and she was nineteen.

Carol subsequently moved to California, and she and Jimmy were faithful pen pals (think pre-digital days) while he finished school, traveled out west with Jon and good friend Bobby Stetzenmeyer, and then settled in Vermont. They reunited at a friend’s wedding in December 1972 in Rochester, and Carol and Todd returned to Vermont with Jimmy to begin their life together there. In August of 1975, they were joined by their daughter Erin, who was born at home in Shoreham, Vt. Two years later, they moved to the beautiful mountain town of Lincoln, nestled on the west side of the Green Mountains, and began salvaging building materials for a home of their own design.

By 1981, Carol and Jimmy finished building their home with the able assistance of dear buddies John McClain and Danny DiNolo, with numerous other friends contributing their talents and energy as well. The early years in Lincoln saw the growth of a lifelong community of friends and families with countless potluck gatherings, volleyball games, pond swimming, and an ever-growing number of children. For Todd and Erin growing up in a community of hippies in the 70s and 80s created a tightly knit group of friends and families.

Todd: Having Carol for a mother created an opportunity for me to have a level of freedom and adventure in the woods, with animals, and in streams that would shape me as a man. I did not know until later in life that Mom always knew where I was, even when I believed I was alone in the woods, half a mile from the house. Add to that the experiences of living in a cave in Arizona, on a commune in Bridport, Vt., surrounded by people I still see and know today, 50 years later, as important people in my life. . . all because of mom, who carried me across the country and back as a passenger on her adventures. She was a fierce advocate for my sister Erin and me, always protecting us at any cost.

Erin: She mothered with absolute



CAROL GIBSON WARNOCK

love while instilling confidence and patience. She encouraged us to be brave, and taught me to say “nobody is the boss of me,” which perhaps she regretted in my teen years. She would smile at strangers as she passed them on the street, in a small but effective way that signaled in her presence everyone felt seen. Our childhoods were magical and free. The path through the woods that connected our house and our dear friends, the Danforth’s, was well travelled by all. To say that she will be missed is a massive understatement, but she is now everywhere.

Erin’s home birth in 1975 had both inspired Carol and sensitized her to the lack of midwives available to support families wishing for a home birth. Carol began training shortly after Erin’s birth with Dr. Thurmond Knight, who had helped to create Vermont’s first “birthing room” at Gifford Memorial Hospital in Randolph. In 1976 Carol partnered with Melissa Deas who had also trained with Thurmond and together they formed Birthrites Midwifery in Bristol, a partnership that lasted for twenty-three years. Carol continued to practice as Mount Ellen Midwifery until her retirement in 2015 and while we don’t have an exact count, we estimate that Carol assisted in roughly two thousand births.

Her skilled and caring work had a positive impact on her clients that resulted in many strong and lasting friendships. Until 2001 there was no licensing for lay midwives in Vermont, so Carol did a three-month internship in May, 1987, at a birthing clinic (Casa di Nacimiento) in El Paso, Texas, in order to earn a lay midwife license there. A number of years later, in the late nineties, she worked on a state-wide committee that eventually led to the Vermont General Assembly passing legislation (1999, No. 133) in 2000, effective Jan. 1, 2001, to create a licensing structure for midwives. This law defined the “Licensed Midwife” (LM) as someone meeting the requirements of the North American Registry of Midwives (NARM).

In 1993 Carol was selected to participate in the Russian Birth Project, which placed her in a hospital in St. Petersburg, Russia, for three months to support Russian doctors and nurses in learning more progressive and natural approaches to childbirth. The experience was a challenge that Carol’s adventurous side fully embraced, and she formed close friendships with several Russians that she worked with.

Through all of these work-related travels, committee work and ongoing responsibilities as a practicing midwife Carol’s humility, calm demeanor and reassuring smile won over all who had the good fortune to work with her.

In the early eighties, as Carol and Melissa were partnering at Birthrites, Carol was also serving as an early director of the Addison County Battered Women’s Project,

which was later to become Addison County Women in Crisis. The project was organized for the purpose of “promoting the social welfare of Addison County by reducing the incidence of domestic violence, and primarily, the incidence of abuse against women.” Carol’s courage and fierce advocacy for abused women were put to the test many times when she appeared in court in support of domestic violence victims seeking restraining orders.

When Carol wasn’t busy “catching” babies (“I don’t deliver babies”, Carol often said, “the mother does”) and later during retirement, she could be found in the garden, swimming in the pond, walking in the woods looking for abandoned birds’ nests and perhaps at day’s end, on the porch with a gin and tonic. She especially enjoyed being with her children and their partners, Todd (partner Julie Almeter) and grandchildren Kosmo and Namid (and their mother Ainaka Luna), and Erin (husband Garrett Heyns) and grandchildren Scout and Jude. With a smile framed by her bangs and signature braids, she was always a patient presence in their lives, curious and endlessly interested in what they were up to.

Carol’s curiosity also extended to her passion for world travel and over the years she and Jimmy made it to every continent except Antarctica. She delighted in exploring and learning about different cultures and always saw the basic humanity and beauty in each country she visited.

But none of the above information even begins to tell the real story of who Carol was, with her at times goofy sense of humor and penchant for collecting all manner of unusual objects. She was wildly inventive in decorating our home with vibrant colors to counter the long, monochromatic winters and in displaying unusual artifacts gathered from her many world travels. Who else would pack the skull and horns of a Kob (African antelope) in their checked bag returning from Africa and then calmly clear customs at Kennedy in New York City with a friendly smile and kind word with which to greet the customs officer who smiled back and promptly waved her through.

Intrepid and compassionate, it was impossible for Carol to walk city streets without stopping to check in with homeless souls, engage them in conversation, and leave them with some money to lighten their load just a bit. An annual Christmas Eve party held at our home with our family and dearest friends included a lively and often competitive game of Yankee swap, where early on it was discovered that Carol on occasion spirited away a desirable gift in the hope it might elude scrutiny — her local infamy forever to live on in various stories.

A special shout out with deep gratitude to the remarkable staff of Eastview at Middlebury and Garden Song. When it was no longer possible to care for Carol at home, she spent the last eleven months of her life in a loving and compassionate community that never lost sight of Carol’s essential personhood.

All who knew and loved Carol can take comfort in knowing that in her own inimitable way she truly did make this world a better place for so many others.

A celebration of Carol’s life will be held on Saturday, June 27, at Kingsland Bay State Park on beautiful Lake Champlain. Further information and opportunities to post remembrances, stories and photos can be found at www.loveforCarol.com.

Jennifer Shawn Hathorn, 49, formerly of Middlebury

CHATEAUGAY, N.Y. — Jennifer Shawn Hathorn, 49, a current resident of Chateaugay, N.Y., passed away tragically Jan. 27, 2026. Jennifer was born Jan. 17, 1977, in Hanover, N.H. She grew up in Hartford, Vt., spent many years in Middlebury, Vt., and later became a cherished member of the Chateaugay, N.Y., community.

Jennifer was preceded in death by her grandmother, Barbara Hathorn; her father, Dana Hathorn; her cousin, Zachary Ordway; and her grandson, Isaac Churchill.

She is survived by her daughters, Brittany Byrd, Ashlee Hathorn, and Allison Raymond; and her beloved grandchildren, Gavin Reali, Maddison West, Josephine Kerr, Grayson Churchill, and



JENNIFER SHAWN HATHORN

Lincoln Lawrence. She is also survived by her brothers, Corey Hathorn, Joshua Hathorn, and Greg Valley; her mother, Linda

Porter; her stepfather, Benjamin Porter; and her aunt and uncle, Tenley and Brian Ordway.

Jennifer was the light in every room she entered. She never met a stranger and had a rare gift for making people feel instantly welcome. Known for her bright smile and outgoing energy, she was always ready to celebrate life with those she loved. To know Jennifer was to love her, and she will be missed beyond what words can express.

Services will be held at a later date. Jennifer would have wanted warm weather and a celebration of life filled with love, laughter, and togetherness.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Jennifer’s memory to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. ♦



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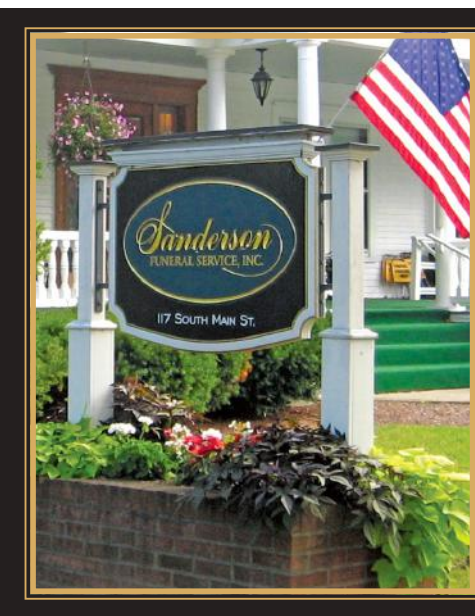
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Loretta Robarge Hawkins, 86, of Ferrisburgh

FERRISBURGH — Loretta Robarge Hawkins, 86, of Ferrisburgh, Vt., was born on just another day (as she'd always say) in October of 1939, and passed away peacefully Jan. 29, 2026, with her husband by her side.

Born in Morrisville, Loretta graduated from Vergennes Union High School. She ran the Vergennes video store for many years, delighting in meeting people, sharing stories, and making everyone feel welcome. Feisty and full of life, she had a love for Coca-Cola, bird watching, long drives, fast cars, pink lipstick, Dr. Mario on Nintendo, and sticks of bubblegum. Some of her happiest times were spent with Ruth Ann at the Vergennes Falls fishing and surrounded by the beauty of nature she so cherished.

She was predeceased by her first husband, Albert Robarge; their sons, Jeffrey and Michael; and their



LORETTA ROBARGE HAWKINS

granddaughter, Heather. Loretta is survived by her husband, Pete, with whom she shared 28 joyful years; her granddaughters, Sara, Thomye, and Mikayla, whom she adored and often called herself the "luckiest idiot" to have in her life;

her eight great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; nieces, nephews; and a circle of very dear friends whose lives she brightened with her warmth and humor.

The days spent with Loretta at the end were a gift. They were unhurried, full of love, and deeply meaningful. In still moments, in shared memories, and in the beauty of something as simple as the birds chirping, her family felt her presence in ways that will never fade. Her life was rich with heart, humor, and connection, and her spirit continues on in all who loved her.

Loretta had a deep love for all animals, and in her memory, the family invites those who wish to honor her life to consider making a donation in her name to a local animal shelter or rescue organization. In keeping with her wishes, a private burial will be held in the spring. ♦

Barbara Mary DeGray, 89, of Bridport

BRIDPORT — Barbara Mary DeGray, age 89, passed peacefully Feb. 7, 2026.

Barb was born in Bridport Oct. 13, 1936. She was the daughter of John and Mary (Pidgeon) Giard. She grew up in Bridport, where she received her early education and graduated from Middlebury High School, class of 1954.

Barb worked at the Middlebury A&P Grocery Store for a total of 44 years. She started in the produce department and through the years, she worked in all other departments as well. She retired as the bookkeeper in 2000. She was a member of Middlebury American Legion Unit 27 Ladies Auxiliary, where she had served in many capacities, including president. She



BARBARA MARY DEGRAY

loved to knit and crochet.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph DeGray; whom she married

in Bridport Nov. 26, 1955; a son, Dean DeGray and his wife Marcy, one daughter, Karen Deering and her husband Clarence, all of Bridport. Four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren also survive her. She was predeceased by her parents and her sister, Shirley Lilly.

All are invited to a gathering in celebration of her life, which will take place on Sunday, Feb. 15, at Middlebury American Legion Post 27, beginning at 1 p.m.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in her memory to; Middlebury American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Unit #27, 10 Boardman St. Middlebury, VT 05753.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon. ♦

Richard 'Dick' Guy Treadway, 77, of Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Richard "Dick" Guy Treadway of Shoreham, died at UVMMC surrounded by his family Feb. 3, 2026. Dick was born on Aug. 23, 1948, in Rutland, Vt., the son of Donald and Irene (Quenneville) Treadway.

Dick grew up on the family dairy farm in Shoreham and graduated from Shoreham High School in 1966. After attending a year at VTC he returned home to the farm. Dick worked the farm with his wife and children until 1999, when his sons Jeff and Brian took over the family farm. After retiring from farming, he worked for various construction companies in the area, pressing apples at Douglas Orchard, and was always available to help around the farm during harvesting seasons.

Dick married the love of his life Joan Anne Pelletier on Dec 7, 1968. Together they built their home, where they raised their family. During this time, they were on the cover of Vermont Life May/June 1990 and, their life as a farm family was the focus of the book *Cutting Hill: A Chronical of a Family Farm* by Alann Pistorious. He also sugared for many years with his father, wife and children.

Dick joined Shoreham Fire Department in 1964, where over



RICHARD 'DICK' GUY TREADWAY

the years he served as Chief and Assistant Chief. He joined Shoreham First Response in 1985, serving as President during that time, then stepping back from that role in 2019. He also was a member of MVAA from 1988 to 2007. Overall, he ended up serving the community as an EMT for 34 years.

Dick had a deep sense of service to his community and spent endless hours responding to calls, only being forced to stop because of the progression of Parkinson's disease. Dick's most notable awards for his commitment to the community were Line Officer of the Year in 1984 by Addison

County Fire Fighters Association and Vermont EMS Lifetime Award in May of 2020.

Dick is survived by his wife of 57 years Joan; sons, Jeff (Andrea), Kevin (Anita), and Brian (Michelle); and daughter, Becky (Josh). He was also a loving Grandpa to Kendra (Connor), Kelsey (Jadan), Nate (Sierra), Josh, Emily, Owen, Scarlett, and Adelyn. He also received the gift of twin great-grandchildren, Harper and Carson in 2024. He is also survived by his sister, Donna (Peter) Fournier and twin, Diane.

Calling hours will be held at Sanderson Funeral Home Friday Feb. 20, from 2-4 p.m. and 5-8 p.m. A firefighter's funeral service will be held Saturday, Feb. 21, at 11 a.m., starting at Shoreham Congregational Church and ending at the Shoreham Fire House. A burial will be held in the spring at the East Shoreham Cemetery.

The family would like to extend a special thanks to the MICU staff at UVMMC for their care and compassion lent to Dick and his family during his short time there. Also, to the first responders who supported him in his final years.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Shoreham Fire Department or Shoreham First Response. ♦

Yvette Wright, 67, of Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Yvette Wright, 67, of Shoreham, Vt., passed away Feb. 5, 2026, after a courageous battle with cancer. She was born Nov. 3, 1958, to Bernard and Yvonne Gingras of Weybridge.

Yvette was crowned Miss Addison County Field Days. She worked at IGA during high school, worked at Brandon Training School, then Ames Department store in Middlebury for 24 years, working her way to management.

She worked at Midway Duncan and then Addison Country Sheriff Department for more than 10 years. Yvette was employed at Hannaford's To Go, in Middlebury until recently.

She was predeceased by her parents and her brother Norman. She is survived by her husband, Jerry, who was the love of her life, whom she married in 1999. She is also survived by brothers Paul, Gary and Mark; and sisters Maryann, Jane and their spouses.

She had a special relationship with Samantha Payne and Mai Doane, who she considered her



YVETTE WRIGHT

daughter and granddaughter.

Although she had no children, she was mother to many, affectionately known as Nannie Vette.

Visiting Hours will be at Sanderson Funeral Home, Friday, Feb. 13, from 4-6 p.m. The family will be accepting friends at the Masonic Hall in Bridport after the visitation. ♦

Jim Peden, 87, of Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Jim Peden, 87, passed unexpectedly at home in Shoreham Jan. 30, 2026. A private celebration of his life will be held in the summer. Donations in his honor may be made to Shoreham Rescue, Middlebury Regional Ambulance, or Age Well (Champlain Valley Agency on Aging).

Robert John Naylor II, 73, of Salisbury

SALISBURY — Robert John Naylor II, age 73, passed peacefully Feb. 8, 2026, at Porter Hospital in Middlebury. A complete obituary will appear in a later edition.

Funeral arrangements are pending a Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.

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ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

Robert Clark Sterling, 81, of Brandon

BRANDON — Robert Clark Sterling passed away peacefully Feb. 7, 2026, at the age of 81. He died at the Pines in Rutland, which was oddly appropriate. He was the Administrator there back when it was Eden Park and many of his staff are still there. Everyone there took loving care of both of us and I thank them very much for that.



ROBERT CLARK STERLING

Bob was born in Woodstock, Vt., Aug. 25, 1944, to Richard and Mary Abbott Sterling. He was a 1963 graduate of Woodstock Union High School, but the class of '62 always considered him theirs because for all but one year he was. Following graduation, he enlisted in the Navy, where he served as a Corpsman for four years. He then went on to Castleton State College, where he earned an associate's degree in nursing in 1969 and a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1973.

staff at every facility in his charge and they all knew it.

He retired in 2012 but went on to Addison County Home Health & Hospice for seven more years as a wound care nurse. He was very proud of being an RN for 57 years and an administrator for almost 40 years.

He worked as an RN at Rutland Hospital, the VA hospital in White River Junction and Gifford Memorial Hospital in Randolph before finding his true vocation in being a Nursing Home Administrator. The homes lucky enough to have him were Tranquility Nursing Home in Randolph, Vt., Springfield Convalescent Center, Green Mountain Nursing Home in Colchester, Vt., and Eden Park in Rutland. Bob loved taking care of his residents, their families, and his

Bob is survived by his wife, Mary Frances (Muffie), whom he married Dec. 28, 1968; his daughter, Peggy and her husband, Jim Zopelis and their daughters Claire, Grace, and Lily; his son, Rob and his wife Audrey and their daughter, Harriet; and his daughter from a previous relationship, Bethany and her husband Jerry Harrington and their daughter Christen and her husband,

Paul LaFountain and their children, Bella and Hudson. He is also survived by his sister, Marianne Seymour; his brother, Jon and his wife Tamara; his sister and brother-in-law, Terry and Bob Douglas; and his brother-in-law, Bill Dupre. His nieces and nephews who also survive him remember him especially for making them laugh.

Bob was predeceased by his parents; his in-laws, Bill and Belle Dupre; his sister Sherry Heinrichs; brothers-in-law Tom Dupre and Jerry Brisson; and sisters-in-law, Connie (Dupre) Chapman and Lee Dupre.

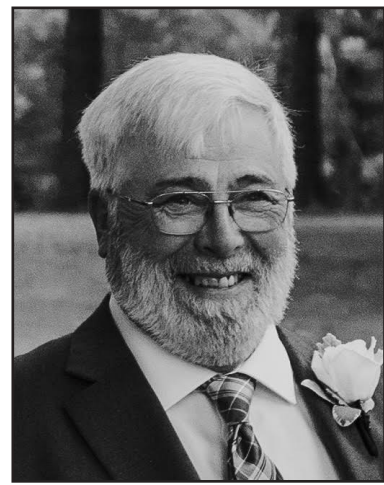
A Memorial Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated Feb. 16, 2026, at 11 a.m., at Our Lady of Good Help (St. Mary's) Catholic Church in Brandon. Rev. Maurice Moreau, pastor and friend, will be the celebrant.

Following the ceremony there will be a celebration of Bob's life at the Brandon American Legion, from noon-2 p.m. A private graveside committal service and burial, with military honors, will take place in the Spring in the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in his memory to the Brandon Food Shelf and the Brandon Area Rescue Squad. Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon. ◊

Edward Charles Devino Jr., 66, Addison

ADDISON — Edward Charles Devino Jr., a husband, father, Poppy, and fixer of all things, passed away on Feb. 4, 2026, surrounded by family after a brief battle with cancer.



EDWARD CHARLES DEVINO JR.

Ed was born on June 7, 1959, in Middlebury, Vt., to Edward Devino Sr. and C. Jean (McEvilla) Devino. He graduated from Vergennes Union High School and went on to work for Tri-Town Water, where he dedicated 37 years of service.

In October 1984, Ed married the love of his life, Linda Farley Devino. Together, they built their family's home — both literally and figuratively — creating a place filled with love, laughter, and countless life lessons — none of which were without some colorful language and an occasional crude joke. Their home is where they raised four children and openly welcomed many friends, neighbors, and countless animals over the

years. Known affectionately as "Big Ed," he was a staple in the local hunting community. You could find him in his garage, processing game for fellow hunters, all season long. Ed loved a challenge and

had a remarkable ability to turn someone else's trash into his own treasure. He was the first person that people would call when their car wouldn't start, a house needed repair, or something — anything — was broken. Ed was happiest while working on one of his countless projects, tinkering in his shop, or sharing a meal and stories with the people he loved most.

Ed is survived by his wife, mother, and three children — Brittany (Colin) Fitzsimmons, Cassandra (Dustin) Dattilio, and Edward C Devino III — and his three grandchildren, whom he would do absolutely anything for, Aiden, Alaina and Camden. He is now eternally reunited with his father, brother Mark, and daughter Adrienne.

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, Feb. 12, from 5-8 p.m., at Brown-McClay Funeral Home in Vergennes. ◊

Legislators are taking some control of your land

"...This land is my land." Woody Guthrie's prophetic words from his 1944 song may become realized in the new Act 181 (think Act 250 2.0) that was enacted over Gov. Scott's veto by the Democratic supermajority in 2024. The land that you think is "your land" might well become "my land" in the state's eyes. The time is now for you to find out how Act 181 may impact your use of your own land.

The Land Use Review Board (LURB), created by Act 181, is working through the rulemaking process now to divide up all land in Vermont into designated Tier 1A/1B, Tier 2, and Tier 3 areas. The intent is to encourage development in concentrated downtown areas (Tiers 1A and 1B) and discourage development in areas that should be environmentally protected (Tier 2 and especially Tier 3). The question at stake is how to achieve a proper balance of human thriving and experience, affordability, equity, property rights, and environmental stewardship. No trivial task!

Act 181 implementation uncertainty is creating fear on all ends of the spectrum. Some fear that an over emphasis on environmental protection will violate existing property owners' rights and push all people into "concentrated animal feeding operations" (CAFO), a term usually reserved for large agricultural operations. On the other end of the spectrum, environmentalists fear suburban sprawl and the loss of Vermont's special ecosystems and species. The LURB is trying to find a happy medium. This affects you!

The bottom line is that any designation of land as "Tier 3" or "wetlands" or other potential regulatory designations such as "Road Construction Jurisdiction" (the feared "Road Rule") or "VCD Connectivity Blocks" will all add layers of regulation and permitting on land that is owned by Vermonters, thus making it much more difficult and expensive to build on. Simple economics of supply and demand tells us that with the finite supply of Vermont land, the more of it we regulate to restrict development, the more expensive will become the remaining developable land.

This isn't all bad. We do want

to conserve the natural beauty of Vermont. But we also need to respect the rights of property owners and consider the equity of the imposed restrictions. Regulations don't absolutely prevent development, they just make it much more expensive, enabling only the wealthy to afford to build in the more rural areas that many would consider to be the most picturesque, most conducive to healthy wellbeing, and where many current landowners tend to be less wealthy.

As part of the rule-making process, the LURB has constructed draft Future Land Use (FLU) maps. These maps are taking what originated from the Vermont Conservation Design (VCD), that was never intended to be used for regulatory purposes, and transitioning them into regulatory use.

The rule-making process requires public engagement and that engagement period is now. If you are concerned about your land (and/or your neighbor's, your family's, your friend's lands) and how it is being proposed to be designated by the state, now is the time to view these maps and see what is planned. Current law does not require the rule-making process to pro-actively notify landowners about the designation of their land! You must figure it out yourself and actively engage in the comment process now.

I highly recommend you access the proposed Tier 3 Future Land Use map online at experience/6ec0a9c1daa84f2893859d94403b0a1b.

Read the disclaimer and agree to it to view the map. Zoom in to your area. In the Map Layers pane on the right, click on the "Legend" icons to show the meaning of each of the color shaded areas. If you feel really brave, check the box to enable "Reference Areas" and especially the "Road Construction Jurisdiction" and "VCD Connectivity Blocks" to see just how much of Vermont is really being affected by this new law.

Very eye-opening! You can submit questions and comments via email to the LURB at act250.rulemaking@vermont.gov. You can also reach out directly to the LURB Board Member in charge of the Tier 3 Project, Alex Weinhagen, at this number: 802-480-1885.

To access the Tier 3 rule making report, head online to act250.vermont.gov/tier-3-rulemaking-and-report. For general information about Act 181: Modernizing Land Use Review go online to act250.vermont.gov/new-land-use-review-framework-act-181.

There is legislation in play this year that could either reduce or further increase the land use impacts already imposed by Act 181. Bills that propose to reduce the impacts on Vermont landowners are listed below. Contact your representatives and senators to support these bills.

- H.70 — Use existing "current use" laws to meet conservation goals and prevent skyrocketing land cost.
- H.602 — Repeal the "Road Rule" permit requirement and extend Act 250 relief.
- H.730 - Require notification & property tax reduction for Act 250/181 designation impacts.
- H.805 - Streamline Act 250 permitting & provide property tax relief for restrictive land use designations.
- H.749 - Remove requirements to permanently preserve 30% and ultimately 50% of Vermont land from Act 59.

Bills that would add to restrictions on land use include, among others, the H.276 Wildlands bill, which would remove all state-owned lands from their current active management plans by the Department of Forest Parks and Recreation and significantly restrict access to them.

I recognize this is very complex. I'm happy to answer any questions and concerns you may have to the best of my ability. Contact me at my website www.NorthForVTHouse.com.



Legislative Review by Rep. Rob North, R-Ferrisburgh

Margaret Smith, 82, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Margaret Smith, 82, a longtime resident of Middlebury, passed away at The University of Vermont Medical Center after a brief illness.

Born in Pine Plains, N.Y., to Larry and Grace Smith, Margaret was the youngest of six children with her siblings (Robert, Fred, Virginia, James, and Mary) predeceasing her.

Margaret is survived by her life mate, John Danyow, and several nieces and nephews.

Until her retirement, Margaret

held several positions in the Danforth Pewter Company.

While in Middlebury, she was often a part of John's racing team at local stock car circuits. Also, family gatherings on Lake Dunmore with her siblings were a large part of her life. After retiring, she and John enjoyed summers in Middlebury and winters in Florida.

It was Margaret's desire to have no calling hours or services but rather you remember her in your own personal way. ◊



MARGARET SMITH

Lloyd C. Cantin, 65, of Bristol

BRISTOL — It is with the heaviest of hearts that we share the passing of our dearest Lloyd. A fierce and loyal friend, brother, son and uncle, Lloyd will forever be remembered for his devotion to those he loved and how he met each day with acceptance and gratitude. Lloyd was a lover of nature and loved to fish. He knew the deep pools of Addison County's rivers better than anyone. Lloyd loved Bristol, the town he called home, the beauty of which he never took for granted. A gentle and caring soul, Lloyd touched the lives of so many and will be missed, always.



LLOYD C. CANTIN

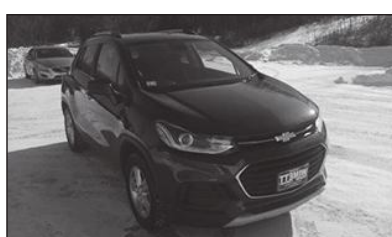
Burlington; his nieces Christy Cantin Grugnale and Candy Cantin Patch of Maine; his nephews Christopher Cantin (Brooke) and Phillip Cantin (Quinn) of Bristol; and his sisters-in-law Arlene Cantin of Maine and Taunia Cantin of Bristol. Lloyd leaves behind many dear friends, including James Ashenfelter, Jessica Lindert, and Lauren Ringey, whose worlds were brightened by Lloyd's presence.

Family and friends want to thank Helen Porter Nursing Home and Addison County Home Health and Hospice for their dedicated and loving care of Lloyd.

Calling hours and burial are deferred until spring, and information regarding services will be available at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Cancer Society. ◊

Huestis. Lloyd is survived by his sister Corrine Cantin and her husband Jim Chaloux of Bristol; his brother Charles Cantin of

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Sessions

(Continued from Page 1A)
said in announcing her candidacy. “I believe that the government needs to work for the common good of all.”

Sessions and her spouse, Greg Bernhardt, own and operate Blue Ledge Farm goat dairy and cheese-making operation. The farm has a herd of 175 goats and takes in cow’s milk from the nearby Hogan Farm to produce roughly 60,000 pounds of award-winning cheese each year.

Sessions, born and raised in Vermont, believes her business acumen, history of service on a variety of nonprofit boards and her dedication to questioning people in authority make her well suited to represent the county in the state’s highest chamber.

“Whenever I get onto a board, I ask myself, ‘who isn’t being represented here, and why not?’” she said during an interview this week at her Leicester farmhouse. A handful of adorable goats brave enough to exit their barn on a sub-zero day bleated inquisitively from inside an adjacent enclosure.

“Democracy works best when everyone is at the table,” she added. It was a lesson learned from former Gov. Madeleine Kunin, on whose campaign Sessions toiled 40 years ago. Kunin famously said, “If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.”

Sessions has remembered that Kunin gem during an extensive run of public service that’s included stints on local and district school boards, the Atria Collective (formerly WomenSafe), the Addison County Community Trust (now Addison Housing Works), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Vermont Land Trust.

She’s long been involved with Democratic Party politics — first as a member of Leicester town Democratic Committee, then as an Addison County Democratic Committee delegate.

You might know or recognize one or both of Sessions’s parents. Her mom, Abi Sessions (now retired), was a longtime educator and former principal of the Cornwall and Salisbury elementary schools. Hannah’s dad, William K. Sessions III, is a U.S. District Court judge for the District of Vermont.

Hannah Sessions has long considered a run for the state Legislature, but the timing was never right. Raising two children and co-running a farm have taken the bulk of Hannah’s and Greg’s collective attention. But their children are now in their early 20s, and they now have eight full- and part-time helpers at Blue Ledge Farm. This — coupled with the fact that the winter legislative session coincides with a slower work schedule at Blue Ledge — prompted Sessions to decide this was the right time to start campaigning for a Senate seat.

“I believe in a life lived in service and have grown up witnessing that in my family and across Addison County,” she said.

TOP ISSUES

So what issues are compelling



HANNAH SESSIONS

Sessions to run for office?

She described her campaign “north stars” as:

• **Affordability.** “As a first-generation farmer and business owner, I know it’s hard to get ahead today. With the high cost of land, real estate, medical insurance and health care, the cost of groceries and an unwieldy tax burden, Vermonters are concerned, and I am as well,” she said.

Sessions said both her children would like to resettle in Vermont but are concerned they won’t be able to afford it. She’s certain other young adults are in the same position.

To lower the tax burden for incoming young families, Sessions said she’d support a strategy that would include “fiscal responsibility at the state level, while also increasing revenue via Vermont joining most of our neighbors in raising taxes on our highest (1%) earners and our second homeowners.”

• **Education.** Sessions attended Cornwall’s Bingham Memorial School, as well as Middlebury Union middle and high schools. Her children attended Leicester Central and then Otter Valley Union middle and high schools. Along with serving on local and district school boards, Sessions served on Otter Valley’s Act 46 Committee, through which that district became one of the first in the state to consolidate its governance structure in 2016.

She’s not sold on Vermont’s Act 73 (of 2025), which contemplates a major transformation of the state’s public education system, including reducing the number of districts from 119 to a much smaller number that lawmakers are still trying to sort out. Act 73’s architects also envisioned school consolidations, larger class sizes, and a new foundation formula for funding schools.

“I am a fan of consolidation only as far as it creates more opportunities for students,” Sessions said. “I do think we need to remember that in some cases, schools are the biggest employer in town and are the cultural identity

of the town, so we can’t make these decisions lightly.

“I think it’s a good idea to explore consolidation of supervisory unions,” she added, “but we need to remember that the elephant in the room is the cost of health care. We can consolidate and consolidate, but until we fix that (health care) problem, we’re going to be back in the same situation.”

• **Healthcare.** Sessions said she favors “supportive, wrap-around programs” that lessen Vermonters’ reliance on emergency care.

“We need to approach this problem (and I’m) determined to think in new ways and ask questions in order to provide quality and accessible health care to every Vermonter regardless of where they live, their income, age or employment status,” she said.

Doing nothing isn’t an option, according to Sessions, who noted the average Vermonter pays 20% of their income for health insurance.

“It’s not sustainable,” she said, adding, “I hope we look back on this time as cruel and archaic.”

She harkened back 24 years ago, to when she and her husband were weighing the option of starting a family or launching their business. Then they learned of Vermont’s Dr. Dynasaur program, created under former Gov. Howard Dean, which guarantees health insurance to Vermont children through age 18.

That program allowed them to pursue both priorities.

“Knowing our kids could get (health coverage) through Dr.

Dynasaur is what helped us start our business,” Sessions said. “Having that assurance they would have health insurance until they were 18 was a deal maker for us.”

Voters in several Addison County communities will field a non-binding resolution on Town Meeting Day asking if they’d like to direct the Legislature to take up bill H.433, which seeks to create a universal primary care program for all Vermont residents.

Sessions is intrigued by the proposal.

“I appreciate that the universal primary care movement is a groundswell from citizens, and I’m all ears for listening to what they have to say,” she said.

Health care affordability, she acknowledged, is a national crisis that might take more than 640,000 Vermonters to solve.

“I’m excited to think regionally with New York, Massachusetts and Maine,” she said. “We don’t have to reinvent the wheel; let’s look at what some of our neighbors are

doing that works for them.”

• **Housing.** She supports current efforts to advance housing starts by reforming Act 250, the state’s land-use law. In 2024, the state adopted Act 181, which, among other things, called for a more local and streamlined process for reviewing and approving development in or near town/village centers.

“It will condense development in downtown areas, where there are stores and public transportation,” Sessions said of Act 181, “and it will also relax some pressure on outside of the downtowns, where we should be growing food.”

Sessions added she believes Vermont has “been a leader in responsible development and zoning... which has helped create the Vermont that we love. But (Act 250) needs to be tweaked; it needs to be modernized so it can be flexible and reflect our current needs.”

• **Agriculture & the Environment.** Vermont’s Act 59

(of 2023) sets a goal of conserving 30% of the state’s total land area by 2030, and 50% by 2050. Sessions has served on Vermont’s 30 by 30 Technical Advisory Committee as it navigates the consequences of Act 59 on today’s and future generations.

“Farmers need to be recognized and compensated for implementing practices that clean water and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Working lands are a huge part of Vermont’s identity and we need farmers in Montpelier as these conversations happen,” Sessions said. “There is currently only one active farmer serving as a legislator. My experience as a first-generation dairy farmer and cheesemaker will bring an honest and real-world perspective to these discussions.”

• **Civil Rights & Democracy.**

“I am running to defend the Constitution and the civil rights of all living in our great state,” she said. “That includes reproductive and health care rights for all. Democracy works best with involvement, so I will make every effort to get testimony and input from constituents on issues.”

Additional information about Sessions’s campaign can be found at hannahsessionsforvt.com.

“Farmers need to be recognized and compensated for implementing practices that clean water and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Working lands are a huge part of Vermont’s identity.”

—Hannah Sessions

Monkton

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

NEWS

MONKTON — Join in the fun for Monkton Minibeats on Saturday, Feb. 14, at the Monkton Town Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. This musical event will allow 0 to 5 year olds, along with their families, to experience instrument making and rhythmic exercises with a local elementary school educator while enjoying live interactive kids’ music. Snacks, coffee and tea will be provided. A donation for the musicians will be greatly appreciated. For more information contact Larkin at larkinbrown13@gmail.com.

On Monday, Feb. 16, starting at 7 p.m., the Monkton Museum and Historical Society will host esteemed author and Vermont historian Kevin Graffagnino to speak about his new book, “Ira Allen: A Biography.” This event will take place in the Community Room of the Town Hall and will also be available via Zoom. MMHS members will be sent a

link. All others may request a link at monktonmhs@gmail.com. All are welcome! “Land speculator, revolutionary, pamphleteer, politician, and empire-builder, Ira Allen was a key figure on the late eighteenth-century Green Mountain frontier. Based on his new book, Graffagnino’s lively talk evaluates Allen’s checkered career and makes the case for including him in our picture of Vermont’s formative decades.”

Another weekly event is Toddler Storytime every Wednesday at the Russell Memorial Library with Julie from 10-10:30 a.m. There will be reading, singing, dancing and silliness for the little ones to enjoy. Contact the library if you have questions.

Also mark your calendar for the monthly Poetry Club happening on Feb. 28 from 10:30-11:45 a.m. in the Town Hall Community Room. Contact Melanie at cotem@ymail.com with questions.

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Olympics

(Continued from Page 1A)

skiers in the world to go,” he said in a USA Ski and Snowboard audio recording sent to the *Independent*. “Obviously it was looking better and better just how slow the track got. But I’m surprised that I ended up second.”

Yes — *second!* At the Olympics!

The 33-year-old, three-time Olympian took silver in the super-G to match the medal he won during the 2022 Beijing Games.

“It’s great being able to share it with some of my family here, and then also just the team that we have,” Cochran-Siegle said after the race.

“I’ve been able to draw inspiration from other Team USA athletes so far, especially our women’s team, seeing just how hard they’ve been skiing.”

The race was the Mount Abraham Union High School and Mount Mansfield Academy alum’s second event in the Games. He competed in the downhill on Saturday, when he placed 18th with a 1:53.63 time, about two seconds off the first place winner, Franjo von Allmen of Switzerland.

Cochran-Siegle did what he said in an interview three weeks ago he set out to do — get back on the podium.

Though RCS hit that mark, it didn’t come in the event he was expecting.

Before the Olympics, Cochran-Siegle had been finding his most success in downhill, and considered that his most competitive chance to be atop the podium after a race. He is ranked eighth in the FIS World Cup Standings for downhill.

“It wasn’t my best day,” he said, noting he was physically ill on Saturday. “It’s tough when you wake up feeling nauseous. I was really trying to focus on the race, but I was definitely dealing with a little bit of a stomach issue.”

“I threw up in the gondola and then I threw up again in the bathroom, like, two hours before the start. But, I mean, it’s the Olympic downhill. No day is gonna be perfect, and you



RYAN COCHRAN-SIEGLE, shown before his trip to Italy, earned his second Olympic silver medal in the Super-G ski race on Wednesday. His first came in the same event at the Beijing Olympics in 2022.

Contributed/US Ski and Snowboard

have to go out of the start.

“I tried to ski my hardest, definitely didn’t have it in my legs. And I think it was hard, obviously, knowing that I felt in a way alone in that process. I wasn’t dying, you know, it’s just a little sickness really throws you off. And I think that was disappointing, all the work that goes into it.”

He’s convinced though that the failure played a role in his super-G success.

“Because I really did want to go out and perform, and allowed me to kind of recognize what’s really important. And that just was getting back to the skiing and doing whatever I can control and everything else is out of my hands.”

Cochran-Siegle was fighting the stomach bug until a day before the Super-G. “The next day, I started feeling better,” he said. “I skied one day after that, and was getting better. And then I actually feel like I went through a little lull, and (Tuesday) I was still probably 90% and just focus on resting, like focusing on hydrating and trying to do whatever I can.”

“I woke up feeling a lot better this morning,” he said on Wednesday. “And then skiing, just having energy in my legs too, I think, was giving me confidence.”

Four days after the stumble, Cochran-Siegle conquered the super-G and reminded the world of the mental and physical strength it

takes to be a world class athlete.

He only lost to Von Allmen, who sped down the slopes in 1:25.32.

Cochran-Siegle’s 1:25.45 beat out Swiss skier Marco Odermatt’s bronze-medal-earning 1:25.60

Ahead of the Olympics, Cochran-Siegle said he was looking forward to competing against all the best skiers, and pointed to Odermatt as an example. The 28-year-old is currently ranked first in Super G, downhill, giant slalom and overall in the FIS World Cup standings.

“Marco Odermatt is definitely the number one skier right now in the world, and his ability skiing, you know, competitively, winning in all in three disciplines right now has been really fun to see,” Cochran-Siegle told the *Independent* in January.

But before learning he had defeated the highly-decorated skier, there was a long wait to the last competitor — Cochran-Siegle went ahead of both Allmen and Odermatt.

“I absolutely wanted to run early today, knowing it is, I think, favorable, favorable conditions. That’s just the way the snow was. But you also want the race to be fair, and you want the opportunity to be given to every single individual here. I do think it got more, I mean, chewed up and slowed down, especially with the heat. All that’s out of your control,” he said.

“But three was a good number today.”

Starksboro

(Continued from Page 1A)

“These funds will support projects that will make a huge difference in every corner of our state — from building more affordable housing to expanding access to vital health care services, and implementing important public safety and infrastructure upgrades,” U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., said in a Feb. 6 release announcing the earmarks.

The Starksboro project is one of several aimed at addressing water systems infrastructure across the state. The 29-household Hillside Manor community, which is called a mobile home park by the state, is one of nine permanently affordable manufactured housing communities around the county that are owned and operated by Addison Housing Works, or AHW.

AHW Executive Director Elise Shanbaker said the water infrastructure at Hillside Manor was last upgraded in the 1990s, though “water distribution and some of the septic systems are

even older.”

“That has led to a number of water system leaks in recent years, as well as more frequent pump outs and septic maintenance that is only likely to get worse,” she explained. “The project will help ensure we stay ahead of system failures.”

Shanbaker said the project will upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure that’s past the end of its useful life.

“This includes a new water distribution system to improve the reliability and resilience of the water supply, and a new community wastewater system that will replace aging distributed systems,” she said, adding that the project will also tackle stormwater management. “As its name suggests, the park is located on a steep hillside making the road and some of the home sites prone to washout and erosion during our more frequent heavy storms.”

The project is estimated to cost \$3 million-\$4 million in total, Shanbaker said. She noted that

AHW has applied to Vermont’s Priority List for the Drinking Water Revolving Fund for low-interest loans and grants to support the project and plans to apply to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for additional grant funding.

“Unlike a municipality, which can bond for infrastructure improvements and spread the cost over hundreds or thousands of users, (manufactured home communities) have a small number of users who tend to be lower income, making debt financing cost prohibitive in most cases,” she said. “AHW is committed to pursuing grants to minimize impact to residents’ monthly lot rent.”

Looking ahead, Shanbaker noted efforts to gather the rest of funding, determine any necessary Act 250 review and navigate the environmental review process could take the remainder of this year.

“We hope we can be ready for the 2027 construction season,” she said of the project.

ACSD

(Continued from Page 1A)

Incumbents Romp, Allen, and Suzanne Buck (of Bridport) have all decided to take a pass on reelection.

The ACSD board governs PreK-12 public education for students in Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge. Board members are elected to three-year terms.

Sensing an impending exodus from the board, district officials early last month used local media, social media and school principals’ newsletters to try and generate interest from prospective candidates. But when the Jan. 26 filing deadline arrived, Chance (Middlebury) and Stattel (Bridport) were the only candidates to toss their hats into the ring.

Middlebury holds seven seats on the 13-member ACSD board, while each of the six other, smaller district towns hold one each.

All candidates run at-large, meaning residents of all seven towns vote for each board member.

One or more candidates for the vacant Salisbury or Middlebury seats can jump into the March 3 race belatedly through a write-in campaign. Such candidates would have to receive at least 30 write-in votes to become viable, with the highest vote-getter winning the spot.

Barring a successful write-in campaign, the ACSD board — with input from Salisbury and/or Middlebury — will appoint people to fill the vacancies. The appointee(s) would serve until Town Meeting Day 2027, at which time they could run for the remaining two years on the three-year term.

Why the dearth of candidates this year?

Well, it’s a challenging volunteer job — particularly around budget time.

Declining enrollment has forced the ACSD board to make difficult decisions, including shuttering Ripton Elementary School (last June), and merging Bridport’s and Shoreham’s K-5 populations at Bridport Central School, beginning this fall.

Then there’s legislative debate in Montpelier that could result in a substantial revamp of Vermont’s public education through Act 73. So district stakeholders aren’t even sure ACSD will exist, as we know it today, three years from now.

But Jason Chance is game for another term. In an email exchange, he described some of his priorities for his next term.

“As the chair of the ACSD Facilities Committee, I would like to see our work on our capital improvement plan move into the next phase so that we can address some of the pressing needs of our facilities,” he said. “These are needs that directly impact teaching and learning. But it is difficult to plan in the current political climate in our state.”

He explained the Vermont Legislature suspended state aid for school construction in 2007.

“Since then, school districts have been left to fend for themselves to maintain and upgrade facilities,” he said. “Our students and staff deserve to learn and work in high-quality facilities. But our state has many buildings that were

built in the ’50s and haven’t seen significant upgrades since the ’80s,” he noted.

Chance said he wants to help the ACSD navigate the potential changes in educational redistricting and financing “that may or may not come to fruition. I would also like to see improvement in student outcomes and the closing of the wide gap in achievement that exists in our district.”

What has Chance enjoyed most during his time representing Middlebury on the board?

“I get to... see our students and staff in action. The annual personal project presentations that our 10th-graders do is always fantastic. It showcases student passions and their self-directed learning in an inspiring way,” he said, praising educators and students throughout the district.

Robin Stattel of Bridport is a member of the Middlebury Union High School class of 1997. Her youngest child graduated from Bridport Central last year and oldest child is a sophomore at MUHS.

Stattel holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Vermont and earned a Master of Business Administration at Champlain College. She currently works in the economic services division of the Vermont Agency of Human Services. One of her main tasks is making technological updates to the agency’s program eligibility systems.

She’s been a member of the Bridport Central School Parent-Teacher Organization. Stattel was also a member of the “Bridport Comes Together” working group that last year convened to brainstorm community enrichment programs with help from the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

Her longstanding interest in bettering public education, and the availability of the Bridport ACSD board seat, prompted Stattel to get on the March 3 ballot.

“I think it’s so important (to run),” she said. “I’ve got to put my money where my mouth is.”

The potential future implementation of Act 73 was a big reason for Stattel’s candidacy for the ACSD board.

“It’s going to be a pretty impactful few years coming up, so I want to make sure I can support (the district) as best I can,” she said. “I think I’m pretty pragmatic in my approach, so I’m hoping that will be a benefit to the board and she district. We all want things, but we need to live in the reality of what we can actually do and where we can effect change.”

She also cited “spending and outcomes” as an important measuring stick for the board to use.

“The property tax impact is something I know is incredibly important. Health care costs are a huge burden for the district,” Stattel said. “I’d like to really dig into that and see where we can effect change, making sure we’re getting everything we can for our kiddos, while also serving the whole district.”

DEPARTING MEMBERS

The *Independent* also reached out to the three departing ACSD

board members to get their thoughts as they prepared to step down.

Suzanne Buck has been keenly involved in Middlebury-area schools for many years.

Her service began on the Bridport School Board, approximately five years prior to the 2016 consolidation of ACSD governance under the one district board that exists today. In fact, Buck co-chaired (with current state Sen. Ruth Hardy) the district’s governance unification panel.

Buck won election to the newly created ACSD board, while also serving for seven years (six as chair) of the Patricia A. Hannaford Career Center Board.

It’s been a very fulfilling experience, but Buck and her husband are anxious now to spend more time with their grown children and grandchildren, who reside in different states.

“The board doesn’t stop meeting and I’ve wanted to get away, but I always felt a responsibility to be present at those meetings,” Buck said.

She told Bridport folks three years ago this would be her last term. She’s pleased Stattel has stepped up.

“I feel I will have given all I can and it’s time for someone else to step in and get an understanding of all the politics and various pieces that go into making education work in this particular district,” she said.

Tricia Allen, through an email exchange, said she learned more during her three years on the board than she ever thought she would.

“One of my biggest take-aways... is that everyone in the school system — aides, teachers, custodians, guidance counselors, principals, right up to the superintendent — do so much more than I ever imagined,” she said. “The job of an educator is not just getting knowledge into a roomful of young minds. Educators keep up with research, do an incredible amount of tedious paperwork, align their work to state laws and standards, understand and implement the specific needs of individual children, communicate with family, support the emotional needs of children and co-workers... the list goes on and on.”

Allen said she leaves the board with “a deeper understanding and appreciation for the work everyone in ACSD does.” Like Buck, Allen underscored the rewarding and challenging work the ACSD board must do. “You are steering the education of children who are currently in school as well as those who will be a part of ACSD in the future. It is my hope that the work I have done for ACSD has improved the lives of the children in our schools,” she said.

Why is Allen leaving?

“Ultimately, I have found it challenging to simultaneously wear my parent, town librarian, and school board hats. I am glad that I have served our community and look forward to continuing to serve through my work as a librarian (at Middlebury’s Ilsley Library).”

Efforts to get comments from outgoing board member Ellie Romp of Salisbury were unsuccessful.

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Looking for a few good men—and women

The Marquis Theatre in Middlebury was transported back 250 years on Sunday as Revolutionary War reenactors filled the movie house in a drive to recruit members for Col. Seth Warner's Regiment. The lobby bristled with muskets brandished by soldiers in tricorn hats and britches, attended by camp followers in bonnets, buckles and shawls.

"People are attracted to reenacting for various reasons," explained Skyler Bailey of South Burlington, who portrayed a captain in the Vermont unit of George Washington's Continental Army. "Some are attracted by the history, some by the weapons and others by the 18th century crafts like cooking or carpentry. Others just like the theatricality of it."

Marquis owner Ben Wells himself appeared in 18th century garb. He said he got into reenacting the Revolutionary War when his son was nine, and they have enjoyed it ever since.

Bailey said members often make their own uniforms and acquire their weapons, which they fire in some dozen battle reenactments every year all over Vermont and the region, from Plattsburgh and Fort Ticonderoga in New York, to Mt. Independence in Orwell and Hubbardton in Vermont.

One of this year's Oscar-nominated movies is "One Battle after Another," but these modern-day historical warriors fight the battles over and over again.

For details on how to join the regiment, go to the group's website: www.warnersregiment.org.

— Steve James

MIDDLEBURY'S MARQUIS THEATER hosted Revolutionary War reenactors this past Sunday in a drive to recruit members for Col. Seth Warner's Regiment of Vermont. Pictured here, clockwise from top-left photo, are Marquis owner Ben Wells (L) and Hunter Myers of New Haven — both members of the Col. Seth Warner Regiment; a group of reenactors stands vigil outside the theater, from left (back row) Hunter Myers, Skyler Bailey and Todd Kuntz; and (front row) Raelynn Peliel and Heather Kenyon; and Ben Wells strikes a 250-year-old pose.

Independent photos/Steve James



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Bristol Beat

Bristol rally to support great presidents

BRISTOL — On President's Day, this coming Monday, Feb. 16, Bristol Area Indivisible will be hosting a rally on the Bristol green to express admiration for the presidents honored on this day — George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Participants will carry signs and wave at passersby between 2:45 and 4 p.m.

George Washington led the forces to overthrow a certifiably insane King George III, who had no respect for the people on this continent, imposed religious persecution, stationed militant forces among the populace to arrest

and jail them at will, and imposed taxes and tariffs for the sole purpose of enriching himself. Out of this revolution came the famous and centuries-strong democracy, the American experiment.

Abraham Lincoln oversaw a war that ultimately kept the country united, freed the slaves, and famously said, "We are a country where people of all backgrounds, all nations of origin, all languages, all religions, all races, can make a home. America was built by immigrants."

The public is asked to bring signs that honor these two great

presidents. If you don't have signs, come to the green and Bristol Area Indivisible will have extras. If you are interested in the work of Indivisible, whose mission is to defend and strengthen democracy and promote justice through education, non-violent action, and mutual support, information will be available explaining how you might become involved. Come to show your support for the country shaped by these two great leaders.

Dress warmly!
Editor's note: This story was provided by Bristol Area Indivisible.

Library courts Lincoln teens, fruit tree pruners

LINCOLN — Area teens ages 12–18 are invited to the library on Tuesday, Feb. 17, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. for the first meeting of the Teen Advisory Group (TAG). This new group offers local youth a chance to share ideas for new activities, books and events.

Enjoy a nacho bar and cupcakes while learning about the TAG program. Get a library card if you don't have one yet, meet other teens, create themed bookmarks, participate in "Blind Date with a Book" and help start the first teen book club. Parents are welcome

Lincoln

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

NEWS

to attend. For questions, please contact Board Member and TAG Liaison Rebecca at oteyrebecca@yahoo.com.

The Lincoln Library will host a two-part workshop led by Joe Sperlak, founder of Lincoln ecology-based landscape company

Growing Wise LLC designed to help residents master the art of backyard fruit tree pruning.

Day one includes a slide presentation and Q&A session held on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the library. The second session will be held on Sunday, Feb. 22, from 12 noon to 2 p.m. Participants will meet at the library before walking to a nearby orchard for hands-on practice. Topics covered during this workshop include goals of pruning, recommended tools, types of cuts, fruit thinning, managing size, limb training, dealing with debris, timing and step-by-step approaches for trees of different ages and conditions.

The workshop is limited to 20 participants so please contact the library at 802-453-2665 to reserve your seat.

As a reminder, this year brings changes to Lincoln's traditional Town Meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 28, at 10 a.m. at Burnham Hall
(See Lincoln, Page 13A)

True stories told through novels

Bryant fictionalizes lives of real people

By MARIN HOWELL
 LINCOLN — Though she's penned several historical fiction novels over the years, Lincoln author Louella Bryant acknowledges she hasn't always been fascinated by history.

"The thing for me about writing historical fiction is that when I was in high school and elementary school, I didn't like history because it just was names and dates and places, and then I discovered historical fiction and realized those people were real and kind of just like me," she recalled. "I saw myself in different historical settings and then became really interested in history through fiction."



LINCOLN AUTHOR LOUELLA Bryant often tells the stories of real people from history through her novels, including in her most recent book, "Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood."

Sharing the stories of people from history through fiction has been at the heart of many of Bryant's books, including her latest novel, "Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood," which was published on Feb. 12 by Black Rose Writing. The novel is a

sequel to Bryant's 2023 book, "Sheltering Angel," a fictionalized account of upper-class New Yorker Florence Cumings and working-class ship's steward Andrew Cunningham, who connect through their experiences on the Titanic.



"Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood" picks up decades later and follows Cumings after losing her husband in the Titanic disaster, as well as her second husband and two sons who served in World War I later on. As a second world war rages, Cumings and her granddaughter help each other heal and navigate life's hardships.

Like "Sheltering Angel," Bryant's latest book is based on a true story, and it draws from letters her husband's grandfather sent his mother while

serving as an Army lieutenant in France in 1918.

"This book particularly is really dear to my heart," Bryant said.

"Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood" is Bryant's 12th book. She noted most of her books fall into the historical fiction genre.

"I tend to take real events and real people and fictionalize them," she said.

In her writing process, Bryant starts by finding a central idea for a time period to center the book around and then dives into research. For example, when working on "Sheltering Angel," Bryant explored aspects of life in 1912 and combed through newspapers from the time period.

"Every era becomes incredibly interesting when you look at it from a point of view of real people and what they were going through."

Both "Sheltering Angel" and "Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood" are based on the lives of real people, namely relatives of Bryant's husband, Harrison Reynolds. "Sheltering Angel" is based on Reynolds's great-grandparents, who were first-class passengers on the Titanic, like Florence and Bradley Cumings are in the novel.

"Somebody said, 'Well what happened to Florence Cumings after the Titanic?'" Bryant said. "Her husband died with the ship, and what happened to her?"

The Lincoln author began asking that question herself, learning more about the real life Florence Cumings from her husband's mother, who lived with Cumings for a time.

"I started asking her questions; where did (Cumings) live and what was she like?" Bryant
(See Bryant, Page 13A)

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Bryant

(Continued from Page 12A)
 recalled. "She became sort of full formed for me."

IN THE NEW NOVEL

"Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood" sees Cumings living in New York City after the loss of her husbands and sons — Wells having died in the World War I battle of Belleau Wood and her eldest son, Jack, succumbing to the effects of injuries sustained in the war.

Cumings's granddaughter Eva comes to stay with her and finds letters from Wells and Jack's time serving in France, which illuminate their experiences in the war and bring up ghosts from the past.

Some of those letters draw from the ones Bryant's husband's grandfather sent his mother while serving in France. In the book, the letters offer Eva an opportunity to learn more about her father, Jack.

"He's dead, and she's bringing him back to life through his letters," Bryant said. While Bryant didn't have any letters from Wells, she created some for the novel. The fictionalized letters are based on Bryant's research on World War I, as well as archives from the Library of Congress on the boarding school Wells attended.

"You get to see an 18-year-old fighting in the trenches in the mud and being shot at, and then the older brother, who's a lieutenant, who's helping the generals and the majors and staying in really

nice hotels in Paris," she said. "So, you get the two sides of the two brothers."

Along with learning about the experiences of Jack and Wells, readers also get to see Eva come of age in the midst of a world war and help her grandmother move through grief and loss.

"I think the appeal is the intergenerational aspect of it, in that you've got a grandmother who's in her 60s and a (granddaughter) who's a teenager," Bryant said. "The grandmother is grieving all these losses and the granddaughter is growing up. So, they sort of help each other through the story."

Though the book is set during World War II, Bryant pointed to several aspects of the novel that modern readers might relate to. She noted younger readers might resonate with Eva, who falls in love with a marine during the Second World War.

"They get married when she's 19 because they feel like they don't have time. The world is changing, there could be a third world war," Bryant said. "It seems now ... like time is moving so fast and things are changing so quickly, and if you fall in love you have to hold on for your life. So, I think younger people will relate to that."

Older readers might see parts of themselves in Cumings.

"You see her aging ... even though she's been through so much, she's aging with grace

and dignity and helping younger people," Bryant said. "That sense of dignity with age I think will relate to people my age because I'm in my 70s now, and I just relate to her so well."

Bryant noted the book also explores various questions about war, such as why wars are fought and how both world wars brought the nation together.

"That to me I think is the most important message in this book, is that why can't we come together now?" Bryant said.

BRYANT AT LIBRARY

Community members will have a chance to hear more about the book during a book launch party at the Lincoln Library this Friday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m., which Bryant said will feature "a chocolate extravaganza."

"I discovered in my research that chocolate was really important to the soldiers during World War II because it gave them energy and it also increased their calorie count," she explained.

Looking ahead, Bryant has already begun working on a third book in the Sheltering Angel series, this one focused on Cumings's youngest son, Thayer, who lived into his 80s. The book follows Thayer as he tells his great nephews the story of their ancestor John Comyn.

"I'm just starting chapter eight, so I'm making some progress with it," she said.

Bryant expressed her thanks to the Reynolds family, who have allowed their relatives' stories to be told through the Sheltering Angel books.

"I just really appreciate when I get that kind of support for a book of historical fiction, especially when it deals with real people," she said.

Superintendent Cole to step down

LINCOLN — The Lincoln School District will soon begin searching for a new top administrator, as current Superintendent Amy Cole has said she'll step down from her role at the end of the school year.

It was in 2024 that Cole joined the district, which serves preK-12 students in the mountain town of Lincoln.

Lincoln School Board Chair Jeanne Albert shared news of the leadership transition in a recent message to community members, noting that Cole plans to take on a new role as a professor at Merrimack College in Massachusetts.

"Amy has been an outstanding leader. She has guided our district with a combination of extensive knowledge and experience, deep empathy and compassion, flexibility, intelligence, wit, and crucially, strong advocacy for children and their learning," Albert wrote. "While we're sad that she will be leaving, we also are profoundly grateful for the many ways Amy has helped make



LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT Superintendent Amy Cole has announced she'll step down from her post at the end of this school year to take on a new job as a professor at Merrimack College, in Massachusetts.

LSD a more effective, creative, and resilient learning community — now and going forward. We

wish her well in this new and stimulating endeavor."

The message included Cole's letter to Lincoln School Board members notifying them of her plans to step down.

"It has been a true honor to serve as the Superintendent of the Lincoln School District," Cole told the board. "This is a genuinely special place, and I feel privileged to have held a leadership role in such a remarkable district and community. Working with this Board and our dedicated staff has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and I will always cherish the relationships and experiences I've gained here."

Albert noted in the message that school board members have begun taking steps toward recruiting and hiring a new superintendent, and that the process will include opportunities for community members to get involved and share input.

"We expect to have a timeline and further details available within the next two weeks," Albert wrote.

Midd acupuncturist faces court date

MIDDLEBURY — A jury trial has tentatively been slated for mid-March in the case of a Middlebury acupuncturist facing a felony lewd & lascivious conduct charge stemming from alleged untoward behavior during a 2024 session with a 19-year-old client.

David Fleischer, 43, was arraigned on the charge in Addison Superior Court, criminal division, on Aug. 30, 2024, following an investigation conducted by Middlebury Police Detective Ruth Whitney of the Addison County Unit for Special Investigations.

Fleischer has agreed to a suspension of his license to practice pending the adjudication of his case, according to an Aug. 23, 2024, document on file with the Vermont Secretary of State's Office of Professional regulation.

The alleged victim in the case is a young woman who previously worked for the Fleischer household and who had sought out acupuncture therapy with David Fleischer to help alleviate chronic pain, according to Whitney's court affidavit.

The victim told Whitney she was completely naked for an acupuncture appointment on June

10, 2024, during which she alleged that Fleischer "was supposed to be working on her back and lower legs but was working everywhere on her body," according to the court affidavit.

She also told Whitney that Fleischer "touched her butt on more than one occasion," according to Whitney's affidavit. Moreover, the woman alleged Fleischer asserted, during their acupuncture appointments, the "connection between the pectoral and neck muscles" and would then allegedly expose and touch her breasts, according to court records.

The woman told Whitney that Fleischer allegedly "grazed" her private area with his fingers during that appointment, according to court records. During that same session, the woman alleged that Fleischer told her, "The way your body looks makes it so hard to behave right now," according to Whitney's affidavit.

Whitney said the victim "didn't know what to say" in response

to Fleischer's alleged comment, according to court records. After that alleged incident and during the same appointment, the victim alleged that Fleischer put acupuncture needles in her body and said he'd "be back," according to court records.

"(The victim) said she had a panic attack. Because of the needles, she couldn't turn her body to see if (Fleischer) was still in the room. She said she was terrified," reads Whitney's affidavit.

"(The victim) feels like she had a sexual assault appointment instead of an acupuncture appointment for the past several months," Whitney stated in her affidavit.

Whitney said she reached out to Fleischer to request an interview, but he declined based on advice from his attorney, according to court records.

Conviction on a felony lewd & lascivious charge carries a potential sentence of up to five years in prison and/or a \$300 fine.

Lincoln

(Continued from Page 12A)
 and residents will use electronic clickers to cast their votes. Please arrive early to register and receive your voting device. Childcare will be provided on-site.

The election of town and school district officers will remain on Tuesday, March 3. Polls at

Burnham Hall will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For those unable to vote in person, early voting is now open. Request your absentee ballot now at vote.vermont.gov. Due to recent mail delays, consider hand-delivering your completed ballot to the secure drop box outside of the town office rather than using

the mail. If you have to mail them, please do so as soon as possible as all ballots must be received by 7 p.m. on March 3 to be counted. Until next time...Make Each Day Your Masterpiece. Success Is The Sum Of Small Efforts Repeated Day In And Day Out.

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Entries will be accepted through Thursday, February 12th.
Winners will be randomly selected and announced on Friday, February 13th.

Vergennes Police Log

VERGENNES — Officers with the Vergennes Police Department dealt with three mental-health related situations on Feb. 3, 4 and 8.

During the first, officers assisted the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad in helping a woman who was in the midst of a mental health crisis. She accepted being taken to the University of Vermont Medical Center.

A day later a person police know to struggle with mental health issues called the department multiple times. The police offered them assistance, but they refused it. The person's case worker planned to do a home visit on Feb. 5.

On Feb. 8, police assisted a resident experiencing a mental health crisis.

Last week, Vergennes police also conducted 21 traffic stops, 13 directed patrols, a Vehicle Identification Number verification, took fingerprints twice, dealt with a parking problem and a noise disturbance.

In other recent activity, the city police:

- On Feb. 2 located a vehicle parked at Falls Park after hours and spoke to those inside. The vehicle was moved.

- On Feb. 2 responded to the report of a suspicious vehicle in an apartment parking lot. The vehicle had left the area. Police planned to conduct directed patrols in the area.

- On Feb. 3 took a report of a car hit in the Shaw's parking lot and provided a case number.

- On Feb. 3 took a report of a motor vehicle crash in the Shaw's parking lot. The case number was provided to both parties for insurance purposes.

- On Feb. 3 issued a car owner a ticket for having a fraudulent inspection sticker.

- On Feb. 4 received a report of a suspicious vehicle parked in front of a residence for an extended period of time during the early morning. Officers responded and spoke with the occupant, who identified himself as a private investigator conducting surveillance related to an active worker's compensation claim.

- On Feb. 4 received a report of a child custody dispute. Police found it occurred in Ferrisburgh, and passed it to state police.

- On Feb. 4 took a report of a man, who is believed to be homeless, inside the warming hut at the Vergennes skating rink after hours. No one was there when police arrived.

- On Feb. 4 took a report of a possible violation of conditions of release. It is under investigation.

- On Feb. 4 took a report of a violation of conditions of release. It was still under investigation as of Monday.

- On Feb. 5 responded to a two-car crash at Main Street and MacDonough Drive. One vehicle was towed and the other driven from the scene. Nobody was injured.

- On Feb. 5 stopped Muhtasim Mahboob, 31, of Burlington after the vehicle he was driving was observed traveling 61 mph in a 30 mph speed zone on West Main Street, and cited him for speeding.

- On Feb. 6 noticed two suspicious vehicles at Falls Park. After speaking with the individuals there, officers determined that everything was fine.

- On Feb. 7 dealt with a situation involving a juvenile student from Northlands Job Corps who had left Porter Medical Center while being treated for a shoulder injury. The juvenile left the Middlebury hospital with unknown individuals in a vehicle with New York plates. The juvenile's parent was told, and it was believed the juvenile may have been attempting to return to their home in New York. Police later learned the juvenile had been involved in a motor vehicle crash after leaving the hospital and had returned to Porter for care. Hospital staff confirmed the juvenile was back at the facility, and Northlands was notified.

- On Feb. 7 helped parents get services for a child experiencing behavior issues.

- On Feb. 7 took a report from a resident who said he was being videoed by his neighbor.

- On Feb. 8 separated the parties involved in a citizen dispute, which was between the occupants of the home.

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Eddy Farm

(Continued from Page 1A)
 was when Doris (Eddy) was here. Then when Doris died, there was a big period of change," said Eddy Farm Treasurer and board member Kathleen Gill. "We found Margaret and reached the second 'golden age' of the Eddy Farm, where lessons, boarding and training were thriving. Then when Margaret died, it felt like everything went topsy-turvy."

But there's no quit among the farm's small staff and brain trust. The Eddy Farm is now galloping into what its leaders hope is a third "golden age," with a new manager and a commitment to some big capital improvements that include a "Margaret Bojanowski classroom building" and a new outdoor riding ring.

The upgrades would be a fitting tribute to Bojanowski, who, along with Doris Eddy, shaped many young lives while teaching the finer points of horse riding.

Gill is among those who felt a childhood pull to the Eddy Farm that hasn't lost its grip.

"I grew up riding here," Gill said during a Feb. 5 interview in the farm's modest indoor ring — the epicenter of a series of popular classes through which novices learn general horse care, grooming/tacking, herd dynamics and how to effectively communicate with the horse on the ground as well as under saddle through centered riding techniques.

It's a teaching method first introduced by Doris Eddy, who established her eventual namesake farm school in 1955. For Eddy, it was never just about a person simply climbing onto a saddle and saying, "Giddyap." It was — and still is — about cultivating harmony between horse and rider, building an equine-human relationship based on understanding, respect and communication.

Gill, 36, remains fascinated with the Eddy Farm, its horses and its ethos. For her, it became more than recreation; the farm became a wayfinding compass that would guide her into adult life.

"I was a 'barn rat' here for years. It inspired me to become a veterinarian," said Gill, who specializes in equine field medicine — including at the Eddy Farm. "It's shaped a huge part of who I am and what I do. And I'm just one of many who's had their life shaped by the farm. It has inspired and molded a lot of people — especially young girls and women. There are many of us who've had the trajectory of our lives changed by the Eddy Farm."

And now the 115-acre, conserved Eddy Farm needs to make some hay to fuel its trajectory so that future generations of riders can enjoy the same transformational experiences as Gill and others. To that end,

The 115-acre, conserved Eddy Farm needs to make some hay to fuel its trajectory so that future generations of riders can enjoy the same transformational experiences as Gill and others.

the Eddy Farm board has launched an effort to raise around \$130,000 to fund the new "Margaret's classroom" and gathering space, a new outdoor riding ring, and the purchase of around four new, younger horses — which would allow some of the facility's older working horses to retire.

These projects and purchases are key in the Eddy Farm board's strategy to make the school more financially sustainable. Both the Bojanowski classroom and the proposed 120-foot-by-60-foot outdoor riding ring projects would better position the farm to earn income from on-site events and by delivering more lessons. The farm hosts up to 15 per week right now.

"We have a waiting list for lessons," Gill said. "We don't have the horses right now to add more lessons and (staff) don't have the time to teach more lessons."

"Staff" at the farm is essentially limited to Alicia Odell, who was able to quickly take on



KATHLEEN GILL, VETERINARIAN and member of the Eddy Farm School for Horse and Rider board, catches up with her pal Partner on Feb. 5 near the farm's indoor riding ring at 1815 South St. Ext. in Middlebury. The Eddy Farm is beginning a new chapter with a new manager and some big capital improvement projects.

Independent photo/Steve James

Bojanowski's role after having served as her assistant for 15 years. Odell, like Gill, found fun, solace and a purpose at the Eddy Farm while in her mid-teens.

"There was no one better suited for the job," Gill said of Odell. "Margaret had taken her under her wing and saw potential. (Margaret) and Alicia were like two peas in a pod."

Odell continues to mourn her mentor as she dutifully keeps the Eddy Farm classes and boarding operations on pace. The farm is now searching for a new assistant manager. In the meantime, Eddy Farm leaders and volunteers, as well as folks whose horses are boarding at the farm, are lending a hand with chores. And there are no shortage of chores; the farm is home to 35 lesson horses and boarder horses.

"We have a really big community and people have been keen to

come and help (Odell)," Gill said. "It feels like there's been no interruption in the horse care or how the farm is run."

A SECOND RING

Having a second riding ring would justify the expense of hiring another trainer so that lessons could be offered (during good weather) on both rings simultaneously, Gill explained.

"We have always wanted to build a second ring," Gill said. "We have the space, but it can't be just grass."

She explained a lot goes into the creation of an outdoor ring. The ground needs to be leveled, properly drained, equipped with a base of stone, then topped with a special kind of sand that can absorb the horse's hooves without impeding them. The ring would be encircled

by a fence.

Estimated cost of the outdoor ring: \$30,000 to \$40,000, according to Gill, who'd love to see the amenity installed later this year.

"We could host a lot more events, have two lessons going at once, have a place for borders to ride when the indoor ring is full," she said. "We could have a much more robust riding program."

Meanwhile, the classroom space — estimated at around \$70,000 — would give the farm something it's been sorely lacking during the buggy and colder months: a heated indoor spot for gatherings, office work, seminars and more storage.

Eddy Farm directors saw the classroom building as so pivotal that they've dipped into the farm's limited savings to get the structure

built by this Easter. They hope to replenish those savings with donated funds, according to Gill.

The farm currently operates on a very thin margin, with approximately \$200,000 in expenses per year. Revenues don't allow room for the Eddy Farm to easily absorb financial gut punches, such as a recent summer flood that decimated the farm's hayfield. That forced the farm to buy \$40,000 in hay feed from out of state.

"There are always updates (to the property)," Gill said. "This is an old farm. We've been chipping away at all the projects," which have included necessary repairs to multiple stables.

Anyone able to contribute to the Eddy Farm fund drive, or who might be interested in the assistant manager position, should check out eddyfarmschool.org.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

Happy Valentine's Day!

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Lawmakers

(Continued from Page 1A)

Rep. Amy Sheldon, D-Middlebury, who chairs the panel, was not present at Monday's breakfast to respond.

North was asked to weigh in on a major new development in the state's land use rules: Act 181. The new law, according to the Vermont Natural Resources Council:

- Updates regional future land use maps to guide development and align with state permitting and incentive programs.

- Creates new regional and municipal housing targets.

- Updates Act 250 "by implementing more context sensitive location-based jurisdiction" — recognizing places (such as village centers) that are "planned and primed for growth, and those that require greater protection from harmful development."

North explained Act 181 also divides all Vermont's land into four "tiers" differentiated by different

characteristics that make it either logical for development or more suited to agriculture or passive use.

"The whole idea behind dividing up the land use into these four categories is to encourage all development to be done in the concentrated downtown, or village center areas, and to try to discourage or prevent development in more ecologically sensitive areas," North said.

"The problem is, as we look at that, the maps that are being developed, people already own a lot of this land that is now being (classified in the tiers)," he said, acknowledging concerns about property rights.

As previously reported by the Independent, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission has been working on a major update of the county's regional plan. That draft has now been completed — after months of prep work and public input — and is now ready for state review. Check



MONDAY'S LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST in Vergennes drew around 30 people, including Rep. Matt Birong, D-Vergennes, and Middlebury resident Lois Farnham.



Independent photos/Steve James

out the plan at acrpc.org/regional-plan-2026.

Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Middlebury, serves on the Senate Natural Resources and Finance Committees. She said Senate

Natural Resources is working on some potential "tweaks" to Act 181, in addition to other bills dealing with such issues as land posting and a measure that would give Vermonters access to compact, plug-in solar panels. These devices — which she said are common in Germany — would place at least a modicum of solar power within the financial reach of folks who can't afford larger arrays.

Hardy said the Finance Committee hasn't passed legislation at this point; the panel is responsible, among other things, for devising ways of funding initiatives.

It remains to be seen how many initiatives the state will be able to afford, Hardy noted.

"It's a very tough year financially, with all the reductions in federal funding and the changing economy," she said.

HEALTH CARE BILL
Lawmakers on Monday were also queried on the status of H.433, a bill that would launch "Green Mountain Care," a publicly financed health care program for all Vermont residents that would initially offer universal access to primary care.

"It's my understanding that (H.433) will come off the wall this year for discussion," said Rep. Karen Lueders, D-Lincoln, who serves on the House Health Care Committee.

Respondents in several Addison County communities will be fielding nonbinding resolutions on March 3 asking lawmakers to support and act on H.433.

"It's been proven to save the system a lot of money," Lueders said of access to primary care, through which physicians can flag and treat maladies before

they become acute and require expensive treatment.

She conceded that major questions remain on how Green Mountain Care could be funded. Vermont, population 640,000, is one of the oldest states in the union. Many its citizens rely on Medicaid and/or Medicare. Those remaining are absorbing annual, double-digit increases in their health insurance premiums.

Lueders said she's eager to work on H.433 and health care issues in general.

"It's great to be on a committee where you can make a positive difference," she said.

Sen. Steve Heffernan, R-Bristol, is a member of the Senate Agriculture and Education Committees.

Senate Education has been heavily involved with a pending revamp of the state's public education system. As part of that process, lawmakers are scrutinizing Act 73, signed into law last year, which sets out a process for paring Vermont's school districts from the current 119, devising a "weighted" student funding formula, and setting a statewide education tax rate. The law also calls for statewide graduation requirements and a statewide calendar, class size minimums, state aid for school construction, and revised criteria for independent schools to receive public money.

Heffernan said he plans to soon introduce a bill proposing a single school supervisory district.

"We're working to find the best answer," he said.

"Where we'll be two weeks from now, I have no idea; it's been very frustrating."

ICE RESOLUTION

Heffernan was questioned on

his decision to oppose, on Feb. 6, Senate Resolution 21, which urged the Trump Administration to immediately suspend its "Operation Metro Surge" ICE activities in states like Minnesota, which culminated in the recent fatal shootings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti. The resolution, which passed 25-4, also urged the state's Congressional delegation to oppose further ICE funding, barring "demonstrable, enforceable reform" in its activities.

Heffernan said while he believes "that loss of life should ever be minimized," he opposed SR21 in part because he didn't believe a senator's role was to "pass judgment on events occurring in other states without full and deliberate fact-finding."

"Due process is not a technicality; it is a cornerstone of our state and our nation," he added. "When we abandon it, even with good intentions, we weaken the very foundation of our system of government."

Heffernan wrote an op ed on his SR21 vote that appears on Page 5B.

His Senate colleague, Hardy, took issue with his response.

"Resolutions are statements of our values, values as senators and as Vermonters. They are not a statement of a court of law. They are sentiments we want to make sure that Vermonters voices are heard. We are devastated by what's happened in Minneapolis ... That resolution was an act of solidarity with the people of Minnesota at the tragic extrajudicial killings of two Americans who were exercising their constitutional rights."

Editor's note: John Flowers is a brother-in-law to Sen. Heffernan.

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By the way

(Continued from Page 1A) goals, and priorities that will guide development decisions during the next eight years. Paper copies of the survey can be found at the Ilsley Mini Library, the Sarah Partridge Community Library, the Middlebury Recreation Center, or at the Middlebury town offices. The survey will be open until Feb. 20.

Speaking of surveys, the Addison Central School District is beefing up its PreK offerings and wants to hear from Middlebury-area families with children age 5 and younger. As previously reported by the Independent, ACSD is creating a new PreK

program that will be housed in Shoreham Elementary School. That building will become available because Shoreham's K-5 students will transfer to Bridport Central School beginning this fall. That PreK will be open to young children of households in the ACSD-member towns of Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge. The ACSD PreK survey is open until Feb. 20 and can be found at tinyurl.com/52avjfv.

As many Bristol residents may have noticed, the Holley Hall clock tower has been behaving unpredictably — chiming at incorrect times or not functioning at all. Well, town officials have identified a specialized clock repair contractor and are actively working toward completing the necessary repairs. Officials are grateful for residents' patience and promise that the clock will be keeping accurate time very soon.

Congratulations to Starksboro's Ellen Yount, recently named the new executive director of the Vermont Afghan Alliance, or VAA. She succeeds Molly Gray, who will step down early next month to run for Vermont lieutenant governor. Yount's background includes managing complex, federally funded global programs; organizing and leading fundraising initiatives; and supervising diverse, multicultural teams in the United States and overseas. Her resume includes stints as a congressional press secretary, and as director of the U.S. Agency for International Development's press office in the immediate aftermath of the

attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Most recently, Yount served for more than a decade as vice president of MSI/Tetra Tech, which facilitates funding for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other international donors. The non-profit VAA helps Afghan refugees prosper, connect, and empower themselves in their new Vermont environment.

Vermont Attorney General Charity Clark wants to hear young Vermonters' thoughts on the environment. With that in mind, her office is holding an Earth Day Essay Challenge. The challenge is open to any fourth-, fifth-, or sixth-grade students in Vermont, including home-schooled students. Ideas for topics include things like: What do you love about Vermont's environment? How do you enjoy Vermont's environment? What are your concerns about the future of the state's environment? And what do you think we should do to help protect the environment? The challenge runs until April 17. Students can submit other types of writing instead of an essay if they'd like — for example, a story, poem, or biographical piece about someone. All submissions will be posted on the AG Office's website for Earth Day (April 22). Posted essays will include a participant's first name and school. Please indicate with your submission if you'd prefer that your essay not be posted. For more information on the Attorney General's Earth Day Essay Challenge, including how to submit your essay, please see the Earth Day Essay Challenge webpage.



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MUHS girls' hockey splits

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI
MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Union High School girls' hockey team found their stride again after a three-game losing streak by doubling up Rice, before falling to Spaulding three days later.

The Tigers beat Rice, 4-2, on Wednesday, Feb. 4, in South Burlington.

The game was scoreless going into the second period, but the Green Knights changed that shortly after it began.

After Middlebury's opponent scored about a minute and a half in, sophomore Maggie Collins got the equalizer at 9:16, after getting the puck from senior co-captain Ireland Hanley.

With about five minutes left in the game, freshman Reese Muzzy got MUHS the lead off an assist from junior Julia Morrissey.

Senior co-captain Lia Calzini extended it to 3-1 with a goal at 11:24. She got the puck from senior co-captain Quinn Doria, who got it from Morrissey.

About 30 seconds later Rice whittled the Tigers' lead back down to one at 12:00, but Morrissey had the final say with the fourth MUHS goal just six seconds later. She was assisted by Doria.

(See Split, Page 3B)

Score BOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Basketball	
2/4 MUHS vs Mt Abe	42-30
2/7 MUHS vs Colchester	45-31
2/7 Missisquoi vs Mt Abe	36-29
2/7 VUHS vs Winooski	76-42
2/9 VUHS at Mt Abe	62-30
2/9 MUHS vs BFA St. Albans	45-33
2/11 MUHS at Enosburg	Late
2/11 VUHS at Richford	Late
Boys' Basketball	
2/6 VUHS vs Winooski	61-58
2/6 Mt Abe vs Missisquoi	73-40
2/9 Mt Abe vs Harwood	77-40
2/10 VUHS at Milton	Postponed
2/11 MUHS at Missisquoi	Late
2/11 Mt Abe at Winooski	Late
Boys' Hockey	
2/4 MUHS vs Brattleboro	7-1
2/7 Stowe vs MUHS	3-2
Girls' Hockey	
2/4 MUHS vs Rice	4-2
2/7 Spaulding vs MUHS	4-1
2/11 MUHS at Hartford	Late
COLLEGE SPORTS	
Men's Hockey	
2/6 Trinity vs Midd	5-5 (Trinity Wins Shootout, 1-0)
2/7 Midd vs Wesleyan	5-2
Women's Hockey	
2/6 Midd vs Trinity	6-2
2/7 Midd vs Trinity	4-1
Women's Basketball	
2/6 Bowdoin vs Midd	75-47
2/7 Midd vs Colby	57-53
Men's Basketball	
2/6 Bowdoin vs Midd	77-76
2/7 Colby vs Midd	83-71

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Girls' Basketball	
2/13 Colchester at Mt Abe	7 PM
2/14 Enosburg at Mt Abe	12:30 PM
2/16 Mt Abe at OV	7 PM
2/18 Mt Abe at Enosburg	7 PM
2/18 Fairfax at VUHS	7 PM
2/18 MUHS at Winooski	7 PM
2/20 Milton at MUHS	7 PM
2/20 Twinfield at VUHS	7 PM
2/21 Mt Abe at Winooski	2:30 PM
Boys' Basketball	
2/17 Missisquoi at VUHS	7 PM
2/17 Mt Abe at MUHS	7 PM
2/19 MUHS at Milton	7 PM
2/19 Enosburg at Mt Abe	7 PM
2/21 VUHS at MUHS	12:30 PM
Boys' Hockey	
2/14 MUHS at Hartford	2 PM
2/18 Missisquoi at MUHS	7 PM
2/21 St. J at MUHS	7 PM
Girls' Hockey	
2/14 MUHS at Essex	3 PM
2/21 Sealakers at MUHS	5 PM

(See Schedule, Page 4B)



COMMODORE RYKER MOSEHAUER starts to drive toward the hoop during Friday's game in Vergennes against Winooski. He scored 14 points in his team's 61-58 win against the Spartans.

Independent photo/Steve James

VUHS boys' hoop defeats Winooski

Defeat playoff rival a second time this season

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI
VERGENNES — Kicking off the weekend with a Friday night win feels good. But a victory against the team that's knocked you out of the playoffs three years in a row is even better.

The Vergennes Union High School boys' basketball team did just that on Feb. 6, defeating Winooski, 61-58, in overtime.

Though the Commodores also overcame the Spartans in a game earlier this season, 50-40, VUHS lost to Winooski in the post-season quarterfinals in 2024 and 2025, and in the semis in 2023.

"So this feels good," Coach Eric LeBeau said. "It's like a barometer,

like they're a good basketball team, well-coached basketball team, and anytime you can sneak a win out ... we feel good about it."

LeBeau gave credit to his players.

"The guys have been playing hard," he said. "It's a grind. This time of the season is long, and so to sneak something out like this is fun."

On Friday night, Ryker Mosehauer took charge of the offense, organizing his team from the top of the three point line

lost to Winooski in the post-season quarterfinals in 2024 and 2025, and in the semis in 2023. he played, the senior had 14 points, four assists and nine rebounds.

Six of those rebounds were defensive, where Mosehauer also

shined. He took two charges in the first half, and had five blocks during the game. Where other players might have committed fouls, he stood tall, playing solid up-and-down defense under the hoop.

Senior Ryan Wright was a powerhouse on offense, pumping in 19 points for the game. He also totaled six rebounds and four assists in the 26 minutes he played.

For his part, junior Cohen Howell thrived under the pressure of the final quarter and overtime. During that 12 minutes he scored 10 of his 14 points. He also had five rebounds and three assists in the 24 minutes he got.

Before those final minutes, VUHS and Winooski traded leads each quarter. The Commodores beat the Spartans in scoring in the (See *VUHS boys*, Page 4B)

VUHS girls' hoops tops Mt. Abe, 62-30

Commodores' winning record stretches to seven game streak

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI
BRISTOL — The Commodores girls' basketball team have been tearing through teams the last couple of weeks, defeating opponents by upwards of 30 points in their last four games.

Vergennes Union High School continued the spree with a fifth blowout, this time against Mount Abraham Union High School on the Eagles' home court Monday night. VUHS dealt Mt. Abe a 62-30 loss on Feb. 9.

Those points were punctuated with scrappy fights for the ball from both teams, whether scrambling on the ground for a loose ball, shaking the offensive team's momentum with a tip on the ball, or fighting through defense under the basket to get the ball up for a basket.

Eagle Olivia Sawyer even dove to intercept a pass heading for a VUHS player on the fast break. The sophomore's steal, just two minutes before halftime, successfully gave her team another turn on offense.

Amidst this fray Commodore freshman Ayla Kittredge found her game, scoring 22 points.

"Ayla is tough," Coach Bill Waller said after the game. "If she has a chance to get the ball anywhere in this foul line area, she can go to basket."

Ava Francis was also key to the Commodores success. The senior led the team through the first quarter, and scored 11 points by the end of the game.

After junior Georgia Krause got VUHS on the board with a basket right under the hoop about

40 seconds into the game off a pass from Francis, Francis got an inbound pass in the same spot and scored her first points. That close-range basket gave the Commodores a 4-0 lead.

Two minutes into the game, Eagle senior Genevieve Forand got her team on the board with a jump-shot off an inbounds play. The co-captain's points, which were the first of 11 during the game, brought the score to 4-2.

Francis found herself under the hoop again 15 seconds later after she received a bounce pass while cutting. She was fouled as she went up for a layup, and made one of her two free-throws, making it 5-3.

After Francis made that basket, Mt. Abe wasn't able to break the (See *Streak*, Page 3B)



COMMODORE AYLA KITTREDGE dribbles the ball away from three Eagle defenders and two VUHS teammates during a game at Mt. Abe on Monday. Kittredge was the game's high scorer with 22 points. VUHS beat the Eagles, 62-30.

Independent photo/Steve James

Tiger Boys' hockey tops Brattleboro, falls to Hartford

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI
The Middlebury Union High School boys' hockey team had a win and a loss this past week, bringing their record to 8-6-1.

The win came first, against Brattleboro on Feb. 4. The Tigers won at home, 7-1.

Though the Bears started the game with a goal about six minutes into the first period, MUHS owned the ice for the remaining 39 minutes. The Tigers didn't allow a single other shot to slip by them, and scored seven goals of their own.

Junior Otto Siegfried got his team out of the one-goal deficit and on the scoreboard with about 2 minutes left in the first period. He was assisted by senior Ethan Mulcahy.

The Tigers put two more in the back of the net less than a minute apart early in the second period. At 4:18 senior Adrien Malhotra got MUHS a 2-1 lead after getting the puck from junior Gabriel Quesnel, who got it from junior Case Pitner. Mulcahy scored a second time at

5:08. Then with 50 seconds left in the second, Quesnel got the puck to freshman Watson Malcom, who got it to junior Tyler Munson for a fourth Tigers goal.

MUHS fluffed their cushion in the third period with three more goals. Senior Jaxson Heffernan from Mulcahy at 4:33, sophomore Evan Northrup from senior Sutton Rubright at 10:39 and sophomore Jude Grant finished the game with a goal at 12:37.

MUHS outshot Brattleboro 28-11. Senior goalie TJ Baron had 10 saves.

Then on Saturday the Tigers fell 3-2 to Stowe during an away game. Junior Jase Kozak and Quesnel both scored. Asa Root Pratt and Munson both had assists. Baron saved the puck 19 times.

The Tigers head to Hartford for a game on Valentine's Day, this Saturday. MUHS handed the Hurricanes a 2-1 heartbreaker in December, and hope to deliver again on Hartford's home ice come Saturday.



COMMODORE PAYTON LAVOIE stands atop the podium during a meet in Plymouth, N.H., on Saturday. He took the title for the 175 pound weight class that day.

Photo submitted by Travis J. Scribner

Local wrestlers triumph

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ADDISON COUNTY — Weekend wins were plentiful for local high school wrestlers. Commodores, Eagles and Tigers all cleaned up during three tournaments in three different states on Saturday.

Vergennes Union High School's Payton Lavoie, the team's sole senior, took first place in the pool of athletes competing in the 175-pound weight class at the Plymouth Invitational in New Hampshire.

Of the 26 teams competing, the 102.5 points the Commodores gathered were good for fourth place. The Commodores were bested by Spaulding by about three points. The team from

Souhegan, N.H. won with 128 points; Colchester took second with 124.

The rest of the VUHS squad finished as follows:

- VUHS sophomore Addie Smith placed second (113).
- VUHS junior Stephen Kittredge placed second (132).
- VUHS sophomore Jackson Scribner placed third (144).
- VUHS freshman Adrien Provencher placed third (126).
- VUHS junior Izaak Wolniewicz placed fourth (285).
- VUHS freshman Maddox Davis went 1-2 (157).

About three and a half hours away in Keeseville, N.Y., Mount Abraham Union High School (See *Wrestlers*, Page 3B)

Tiger gymnasts lose to St. J

Williams and Murphy score highest for MUHS

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Union High School senior Alexis Williams and freshman Ruby Murphy were the top Tiger gymnasts during a home meet against St. Johnsbury on Saturday.

MUHS scored 108.2 points, but fell to the Hilltoppers, who scored 132.55.

"Overall, a wonderful meet," Tiger Coach Natalia Little said. "We really enjoy hosting St. J as they are a positive and encouraging team."

Williams placed fourth in all around (30.2 points), and tied for fourth in bars with a St. Johnsbury gymnast (5.9 points). She garnered

fifth in floor (7.8 points) and sixth in vault (8.1 points).

Murphy placed sixth in bars (5.7 points) and all-around (26.5).

MUHS senior Emily Johnson PR'ed in vault (6.5 points).

Isabella Audy, a Vergennes Union High School junior who trains and attends competitions with MUHS, is normally right with Williams in the standings. However, she was preoccupied with club competition, so hasn't been present for the past two school meets.

The Tigers have one more meet on Saturday at Burr and Burton ahead of the state competition on Feb. 16.

(See *Gymnasts*, Page 4B)

Let's Nordic ski in the Eastern Townships, Part 1

We arrived at almost the same time a little before 1 p.m. at *Parc national du Mont-Orford* (Mount Orford National Park) just north of Lake Memphremagog and the Quebec town of Magog. My wife, Deborah, and I had driven up from Vermont, crossing into Quebec at a tiny and very snowy border crossing in the proverbial middle of nowhere along the north fork of the Missisquoi River. There were no other cars within sight, in either direction. We weren't 20 seconds past the crossing when we saw a pair of surprised whitetail deer standing in bright midday sunlight right in the middle of the road. They trotted up a hill in deep snow, looking annoyed at our appearance. My brother Ted and sister-in-law Susie had come from the Maine coast, our paths slowly converging as we drew closer.

It was closer to 2 p.m. before we had all eaten lunch and changed into our Nordic ski boots and attire

at the park visitor center by the *Étang aux Cerises* (Cherry Trees Pond). And then we were off on the long trail northward from *Étang aux Cerises* to *Lac Fraser*.

The ski conditions were perfect, with a deep snowpack of powder groomed with two parallel sets of tracks for classic stride. When, for the next two days, I constantly saw a line of clouds stacked up along the ridgeline spreading out from the 2,789-foot peak of Mount Orford even when the skies were blue, I got a hint why the snow there was deep enough to consume half my ski pole when I accidentally stuck it into the unpacked snow beside the trail.

For the first few kilometers, the level trail wound around a ridge through a forest of mostly hardwoods with some scattered

eastern hemlock and firs, and past a couple smaller ponds. The ski trail was crisscrossed by myriad deer highways, wandering all through the woods about us, disappearing only beneath the fresh machine grooming.

Four kilometers in, we turned off the beginner loop onto an intermediate trail that headed north between the larger *Étang de la Cuvette* and some beaver meadows, and eventually up onto a ridgeline with a more of a roller coaster feel and high enough vantage points to offer beautiful views in all directions including back toward the park's namesake mountain.

Not wanting to ski right until dusk — or until the four of us reached complete exhaustion — we eventually turned around without doing the entire up-and-back of roughly 30 kilometers. My outdoor tracker showed we had gone from a low elevation about 860 feet up to 1,125 feet atop the ridge, and back. If we had wanted to, we could have skied for two full days, and still found enough new trails both to thoroughly tire us and to keep us busy exploring new trails. *Parc national du Mont-Orford* boasts 50 km for classic skiing and 26 km for skate skiing over a range of beginner, intermediate and advanced terrains. The trails for classic stride were typically a little narrower, and groomed with two sets of tracks allowing folks to ski side-by-side when nobody was coming from the other direction, but a few folks were skating even on the narrower trails and didn't lack room.

I'm often reminded of how fortunate Vermonters are, and Addison County residents in particular, to have the Green Mountain National Forest in our back yard, as well as a great system of state parks. These offer phenomenal opportunities for a variety of outdoor activities, including simply enjoying the

beauty, peace, and quiet of nature. What we don't have, however, are national parks. Though Vermont does have one small national historic park, the nearest national park is Acadia, which is a seven-hour drive away.

So I've recently become even more aware of how fortunate Vermonters are to have Quebec as our international neighbor. For readers who aren't aware, in 2006 the Canadian House of Commons officially recognized Quebec as a nation within a united Canada, acknowledging not only its own constitutional rights and privileges, but also its own unique Québécois culture. When one realizes that Quebec is roughly three times the size of France, it is not surprising that the Quebec Nation has 24 national parks managed by *Sépaq* (www.sepaq.com/parcs-nationaux) as well as three that are federally managed. Four of these *Sépaq*-managed parks — Mount Orford, Yamaska, Frontenac and Mount Mégantic — are in the Eastern Townships along Quebec's border with Vermont, New Hampshire and northwest Maine, only a modest distance from Addison County residents, with Orford and Yamaska both within a three-hour drive.

At over 14,000 acres of mostly woods, mountains and lakes, Mount Orford National Park is more than 10 times the area of Vermont's largest state park: Coolidge State Park in Plymouth. It is open year-round with miles of multiuse trails for snowshoeing and skiing in the winter, and hiking and biking in the summer. (In addition to the Nordic skiing, the park also has its own downhill ski resort on the edge of the park.) The fees are very modest. A package including both the entry fee to the park and the one-day ski pass is only \$24.57 Canadian dollars for adults, and free for children.

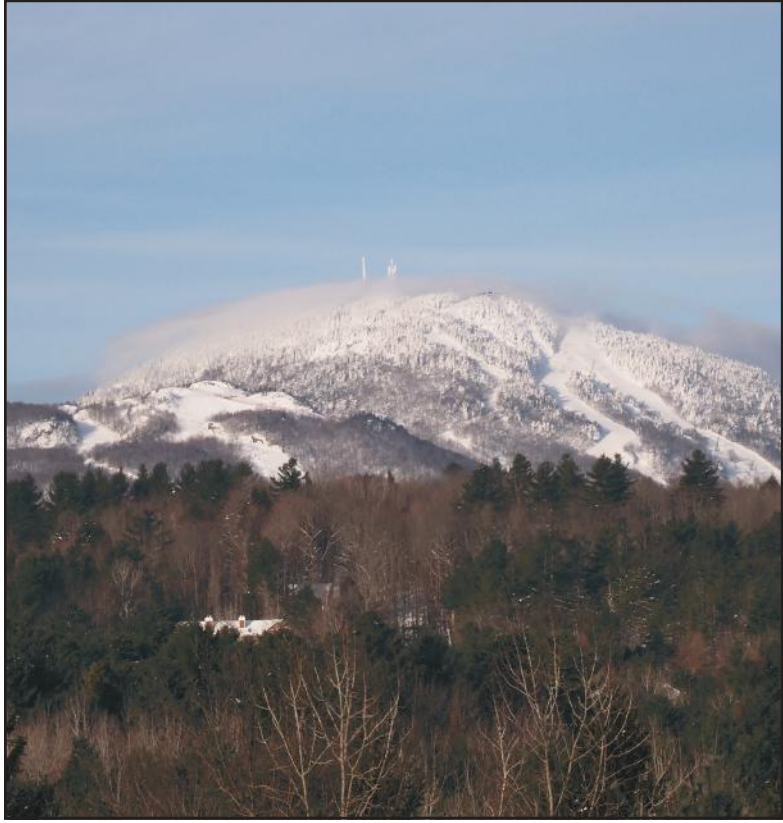
As to the Québécois culture, it is worth the trip just for that. On our first night, we experienced it primarily through the cuisine, dining at the Tomahawk Grill at the



THE COLUMNIST'S WIFE, brother and sister-in-law enjoy a downhill portion of one of the 50 km of classic Nordic skiing trails in the nearby *Parc national du Mont-Orford* in Quebec.

Estrimont Hotel where we stayed — just five minutes from the ski trails. Ted went right for it with his main entrée, getting (of course) poutine. (Their local version featured braised beef and beer sauce.) Deborah and Susie split *Brie Fondant*, a local Quebec Brie with caramelized pecans, served flaming (flambé) in orange liqueur *avec crostinis*. I chose to taste the local cuisine through a sample flight of local Quebec beers, and a desert that is another regional favorite: *Pouding chômeur*, which translates literally to “unemployed pudding,” but more colloquially to “poor man's pudding.” Two bites into it, Deborah was so enchanted that she was searching for a recipe to make it herself.

I feel spoiled to enjoy such a wealth of good cross-country skiing within an easy drive. We get a Rikert season's pass every year and make use of the reciprocal agreement to use it at other Vermont areas. Between improved grooming, the higher elevations of many of ski centers, and increasing capacity for snowmaking, we often find good local conditions. And the local trail networks and variety of terrains is fantastic. But for those like me who love to explore, it's a real treat to make an easy drive north and be able to enjoy both international culture and cuisine and also beautiful terrain with excellent snow and grooming — even when snow just doesn't seem to be falling on Vermont.



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MUHS, VUHS girls' hoop prevail

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

Girls' basketball teams from Middlebury and Vergennes union high schools continued winning streaks this past week.

The team from Mount Abraham fell short three times.

MIDDLEBURY

MUHS beat Mt. Abe for a second time this season on Feb. 4.

Sophomore co-captain **Louisa Orten** scored 20 of the Tigers' 42 points in Bristol against Mt. Abe. Junior co-captain **Isabel Quinn** put up 9 of the points that helped her team top the Eagles' 30 points.

Eagle sophomores **Samantha Guilbeault** and **Edda Twyman** were Mt. Abe's high scorers with 10 and 9 points, respectively.

On Saturday, the Tigers beat Colchester, who they defeated earlier in the season, in Middlebury by roughly the same margin. The final score was 45-31.

Orten again put up the most points for her team (17), and freshman **Ava Wood** the second most (10).

That score was a comfortable enough spot for the Tigers that they repeated it for a third time. MUHS beat BFA St. Albans 45-33 in Middlebury on Feb. 9. Orten carried the team once more (12 points), sophomore **Willow Heywood** had 9, Wood had 7 and junior **Alice Livesay** had 6.

The Tigers headed to Enosburg

for second chance at the Hornets on Wednesday night after deadline. MUHS previously lost to the team, 32-30. That January game was one of only four losses this season for the Tigers.

Up next they hit the road to take on Winooski on Feb. 18 at 7 p.m., who they previously beat 52-28.

COMMODORES

VUHS defeated Winooski 76-42 on Feb. 7. It was a slaughter from the outset — the score after the first quarter was 31-6.

Freshman **Ayla Kittredge** had 19 points and 5 steals, senior **Ava Francis** has 10 points and 6 assists, junior **Georgia Krause** had 8 points and 9 rebounds, senior **Ashtin Stearns** had 13 points and senior **Amelia Giroux** had 11 points.

The Commodores defeated Mt. Abe, 62-30, on Monday (see story on page 1B). They faced Richford on Wednesday after deadline.

Next week VUHS plays Twinfield in Vergennes on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. The Commodores previously beat that team 80-32.

MOUNT ABRAHAM

Mt. Abe fell to Missisquoi by seven points on Feb. 7, 36-29.

Guilbeault was prolific in the first half, putting up 9 points and snagging 11 rebounds. Though after that, the game was over for her as she exited the court with a season-ending knee injury. Sophomore **Olivia Sawyer** had 7 points.

Streak

(Continued from Page 1B)

VUHS press and ran out of time to get the ball over the halfcourt line. At 4:28, Francis was dribbling down toward the Eagles basket, and found Kittredge under the hoop with a bounce pass. She scored her first points to bring the Commodores total to seven points.

At 3:21, Forand found a lane down the middle and made a layup, flattening the Commodores' cushion to three points.

Kittredge hit another layup at 2:41 to get those points back though, bringing the score to 9-4.

About 10 seconds later, with the Eagles in the Commodores defensive half, Kittredge intercepted a Mt. Abe pass at the top of the key and got the ball over half before Mt. Abe got it back, and brought it back down for an offensive attempt.

With 1:38 left in the quarter, the Commodores made a fifth team foul, sending Forand to the line for shots. She missed both free throws.

Francis continued to drive the Commodore offensive effort 20 seconds later, hitting the team's 10th and 11th points with another layup.

The remaining minute of the quarter was packed with plays. Eagle co-captain **Brooklyn Ryersbach**, a senior, intercepted the ball on defense.

Thirty seconds later senior Commodore **Faith McAllister** made two free throws, bringing the score to 13-4.

With 15 seconds left, Ryersbach hit a layup while posted up. She had five more points before the end of the game.

With four seconds left, Commodore senior **Libby Ringer** hit a close-range shot, making it 15-6, which ended scoring for the quarter. She had four points total during the game.

The second quarter was essentially even in points, with the Eagles holding the Commodores to just 10 points, the least of any quarter. Kittredge had half of those.

The Eagles put up 8 of their own, with Ryersbach scoring half of



EAGLE OLIVIA SAWYER looks to take the basketball inside during a game against VUHS in Bristol on Monday. She had two points that game, though Mt. Abe fell 62-30 to the Commodores.

Independent photo/Steve James

those for the Eagles.

Going into half, the score was 40-25.

"I thought Mt. Abe did a good job of keeping us under control in the first half," Waller said.

"The second half, we were able to run up and down the floor, and that's when we're at our best, is when we're getting up in transition. The transition was really good."

The Commodores pulled away in the third period, scoring their game high 23 points. Kittredge scored 9 of her 22 points during that 8-minute span, and senior co-captain **Ashtin Stearns** had 6 from two three-pointers. By the end of the game, she had 9 points, the remaining three of which were from another three-pointer in the second quarter.

Kittredge had another four points in the final quarter.

"I thought Ava, (senior **Amelia Giroux**) and **Ashtin** did a good job of getting the ball before and then **Ayla** gets ahead," Waller said of the second half.

"I thought the energy on the

bench was really good. You know, (sophomore **Sidi Miguel**, senior co-captain **Summer Gosliga**) and **Libby** and (senior **Faith McAllister**) have really been helping us move forward. I feel like we're deeper than a lot of teams. We use nine girls and everybody gives us something."

After the game, Mt. Abe Coach **Koran Cousino** said her team, which is amid a losing season, had been dealing with illness and injury recently. In a Saturday game they had lost **Samantha Guilbeault** to a season-ending injury.

"Obviously it's not the outcome that we had hoped for. I'm not one who usually likes to make excuses, necessarily, but I think we're coming off some really tough things that have happened for our team," she said.

"At the end of the day we're young, and all of this is how we learn, grow and gain experience. This has certainly been a character-building season for us and experience building, and I think we're learning some tough lessons,

and I think it's all going to benefit us down the road. The hard part is just getting everybody to just still feel good about how things are going and get there technically."

After the game, the Commodores were 13-3 going into a game at Richford on Wednesday after deadline for this edition. Other than MUHS, Richford is the only other team VUHS has lost to this season. The score of that mid-January game was 44-35.

"All we're worried about right now is we play Richford Wednesday," Waller said on Monday. "We gotta be ready."

Here's who else scored from VUHS on Monday:

- McAllister scored 4 points.
- Gosliga scored 6 points.
- Giroux scored 4 points.
- Here's who else scored from Mt. Abe on Monday:
 - Sophomore **Mattea O'Bryan** scored 2 points.
 - Sophomore **Sophie Underwood** scored 6 points.
 - Sophomore **Edda Twyman** scored 2 points.

Wrestlers

(Continued from Page 1B)

juniors **Baxter Montgomery** at 138 and **Mason Atkins** at 157 topped all the wrestlers they encountered during the Travis Capen Memorial Duals at AuSable Valley High School. Both went 4-0 in the duals.

Other highlights for the Eagles were:

- Mt. Abe sophomore **Bradley LeVangie** went 3-1 (132).
- Mt. Abe junior **Hailey Isham** went 3-1 (144/150).
- Mt. Abe junior **Isayah Isham** went 3-1 (144/150).
- Mt. Abe freshman **Forest Turner** went 2-2 (118).

The Eagles defeated two of the four New York teams in attendance. Against **Salmon River** the score was 36-6, and against **Saranac** 36-30. Mt. Abe lost 63-18 to **Peru** and 42-21 to the host team.

Back in the **Green Mountain State**, four Tigers took first at the **Jason Lowell Tournament** at **Mount Mansfield**. Middlebury Union

High School sophomore **Miles Goetz** (120), junior **Colton Murray** (150), junior **Tucker Wright** (215), and the team's only senior, **Steven Lackard** (285), were all at the front of the pack for their weight classes.

For **Goetz**, the title marked his second in the 120-pound weight class in two weeks. It was the first time **Murray** and **Lackard** ever won a tournament.

In the team rankings MUHS beat out 15 other teams to take third with 113 points. **Essex** placed first (121.5 points), and **South Burlington** placed second (116.5 points).

Tiger wrestlers competing also included:

- MUHS junior **Parker Carl** placed second (175).
- MUHS sophomore **JJ Bougor** went 1-2 (165).
- MUHS junior **Sawyer Malzac** went 3-2 (144).
- MUHS freshman **Walter Farnsworth** went 0-2 (126).

Split

(Continued from Page 1B)

Rice outshot MUHS 32-27. Tiger junior **Heaven Ross** had 30 saves.

However, on Feb. 7 the Tigers' fell, 4-1, on home ice to **Spaulding**. The **Crimson Tide** took a one-goal lead in the first period at 7:15, and then made it 2-0 about four minutes into the second. **Spaulding** got a third at 13:12.

Junior **Kate Kozak** made an effort to get the Tigers out of the 3-0 deficit, and got her team on the board just 10 seconds before the end of the second period. She got the puck from **Calzini**, who got it from **Hanley**.

The **Crimson Tide** didn't let up, though. The **Tide** got a fourth goal past the Tigers at 6:02.

Spaulding outshot **Middlebury** 27-23. **Ross** had 23 saves.

The MUHS record was 8-7 going into an away game against **Hartford** on Wednesday, played after deadline.

After that, the Tigers have three games left before the playoffs. They next play at **Essex** at 3 p.m. on **Valentine's Day** (Saturday).




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Tuesday, February 17:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating
3:00 - 4:45 PM Stick & Puck

Friday, February 20:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Monday February 23:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Tuesday, February 24:
9:00 - 11:00 AM Public Skating

Thursday, February 26:
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FINE FURNITURE

Local boys' hoopsters win three in last week

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

Two local high school boys' basketball teams improved on their records with big wins this past week.

Mount Abraham Union High School between Feb. 4 and 10 won two games by more than 30 points, and hit an eight-game winning streak, bringing their record to 9-6. And Vergennes came out on top in a rivalry game, hit a five-game winning streak and earned a 9-5 record.

Middlebury was off during this period.

MOUNT ABE

The Eagles won a Feb. 6 home game against Missisquoi, 73-40. During that game Mt. Abe was well on its way to a huge cushion by the end of the first quarter — they scored 28 points, and only allowed the Thunderbirds 6.

Brothers Charlie and Noah Germon scored the most points for the Eagles. The senior and sophomore put up 16 and 14 points, respectively.

Junior Jaran Griffin and senior JaeQuin Tomasi also hit double digits, scoring 12 and 11 points each.

Three days later the Eagles headed to Harwood, where they defeated the Highlanders by an even larger margin. The Feb. 9

game ended 77-40 in favor of Mt. Abe.

With 29 points, Charlie Germon was the game's high scorer. Sophomore co-captain Waydon Cherington netted 27.

At half, it looked like the game would be close until the end — the score was 32-23.

But Charlie Germon and Cherington came out of the break with something else in mind. They scored the bulk of their points (Germon had 26 and Cherington had 19) in the second half.

"Mt. Abraham's defense did the rest," Coach Martin Clark said.

The Eagles played on Wednesday night in Winooski, who they previously beat in January at home, 51-49. The game was after our deadline.

VERGENNES

The Commodores defeated Winooski in a nailbiter on Feb. 6, 61-58. See full story on page on Page 1B.

Next they take on the Thunderbirds at home on Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. The two teams played in Missisquoi, where VUHS won 83-51.

MIDDLEBURY

The Tigers had about a week-long break ahead of a game in Missisquoi on Wednesday played after deadline. MUHS previously

beat the Thunderbirds, 77-53, at home in mid-January, and were 6-8 ahead of the mid-week rematch.

Middlebury's hoopsters will host the Eagles on Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. for a second chance at Mt. Abe, who the Tigers previously fell to 59-51 in January.

Gymnasts

(Continued from Page 1B)

"I am feeling good going into this week and our last meet on Saturday," Little said.

"Everyone has been really focused on their skills and execution and I feel like our scores have been continuing to increase (this) season, which is all I ask of the kids."

Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

2/28 St Albans at MUHS.....7 PM

Wrestling

2/14.....State Dual Tournament

2/27&28.....State Meet at CVU

Gymnastics

2/14 MUHS at Burr & Burton.....4:30 PM

2/16 states @ St. Johnsbury

Dance

2/14 MUHS at S Burlington.....1 PM

2/21 State Comp. at VUHS.....5:30 PM

Nordic Skiing

2/19 States.....Rikert Outdoor Center

2/24 States.....Craftsbury Outdoor Center

COLLEGE SPORTS

Men's Hockey

2/14 Williams at Midd.....2 PM

2/20 Midd at Amherst.....7 PM

2/21 Midd at Hamilton.....3 PM

Women's Hockey

2/13 Midd at Williams.....7 PM

2/14 Williams at Midd.....7 PM

2/20 Colby at Midd.....7 PM

2/21 Colby at Midd.....3 PM

Women's Basketball

2/13 Midd at Amherst.....7 PM

2/14 Midd at Hamilton.....3 PM

Men's Basketball

2/13 Amherst at Midd.....7 PM

2/14 Hamilton at Midd.....3 PM



COMMODORE QUINN LEBEAU looks for an open teammate during a Friday home game against Winooski. The junior scored 3 points to help his team to defeat the Spartans in overtime, 61-58.

Independent photo/Steve James

VUHS boys

(Continued from Page 1B)

first and third quarters (16-11 and 17-15), but their victors topped them in points in the second and fourth (10-6 and 17-14). At the end of the first, second and third, VUHS led by small margins. At the end of three quarters, the score was 39-36 Commodores.

Heading into the fourth quarter, Winooski quickly washed away that three-point deficit with a six-point scoring run to kick off the final 8 minutes of regulation time. Before it was up, the Spartans added 11 more to that tally, making for their highest scoring quarter.

The Spartans hit three layups before Howell got the Commodores going with one about three and a half minutes into the quarter, bringing the score to 42-41 in favor of Winooski.

About 20 seconds later, Wright did the same to get the Commodores a 43-42 lead.

With four-and-a-half minutes left, Winooski had a chance to get back ahead by a small margin, but missed two foul shots.

Howell seized the opportunity during the Commodores' next time down the court. He hit a 3-point shot to give the team a 46-42 lead.

About 15 seconds later, Winooski seized the opportunity. Another set of foul shots presented, getting the scoreboard to tick their points up to 44. The Spartans then trapped Mosehauer on the right sideline near halfcourt, stole the ball and tied it, 46-46, on a layup.

The Spartans then tied it, 46-46, on a layup off a steal after trapping Mosehauer on the right sideline near halfcourt and stealing the ball.

Mosehauer clapped right back with his own layup about 25 seconds later, to make it 48-46.

With three minutes left, Winooski hit two for the tie.

On their next trip down the court, Howell drove for a layup, but couldn't get a shot off. He hit Wright with a pass behind the arc, who threw up a 3-point shot to give the Commodores a 51-48 lead.

Winooski hit a jumper with two and half minutes left. The next 40 seconds were scoreless until Winooski tied up the game with a free throw.

About 20 seconds later on a Commodore offensive play, Howell crashed the net to snag a rebound

and threw in a layup, giving VUHS a two-point lead with a minute and a half left.

The final minute of play was punctuated with timeouts, as Winooski schemed up ways to hold onto the game, and VUHS plans to end it there.

With 25 seconds left, the Spartans solved the Commodores' defense, tying it up with a layup.

VUHS got one more turn down the court, but couldn't get a shot off.

The Commodores didn't look like they'd just played four hard-fought quarters as they took the court with energy for an extra four minutes.

After Wright kicked off scoring by snagging an offensive rebound and putting up a layup a minute 15 seconds in, the Commodores never let Winooski take the lead.

Fifteen seconds later, VUHS junior Jude Bragg took a charge, and with two minutes left, Howell hit another 3 pointer, making it 58-53.

Winooski shrank the Commodores lead to four points with a made free throw with 90 seconds left.

About 15 seconds later, Wright found a path to the hoop right up the middle after being pushed back to half, and scored to give VUHS a 60-54 lead.

With 46 seconds left, Wright then

hit one of two free throws to make it 61-54.

Winooski kept fighting, and threw up a three pointer to make it 61-57 with 35 seconds left.

The Spartans then got an opportunity to make it a one point game, but made one of two free throws to bring the score to 61-58.

The visitors called a timeout with 4.7 seconds left in a last-ditch effort to catch the Commodores one more time, but were kept at bay.

"(In) overtime, they really found themselves and played hard, played within themselves," LeBeau said.

"One of the things when you talk about pressure is play within yourself, do what you're good at, and then there's really no pressure," he added.

Come playoff time, that mindset will help get to the top, which LeBeau said is the goal.

The Commodores were 9-5 after the nailbiter.

"I really upped the schedule," LeBeau said. "We started out with Colchester and CVU, two D-I teams. Played Hardwood who was a D-II finalist.

"I think anytime you can play a tough team, you learn more than you do against somebody else."



COMMODORE SENIOR RYAN Wright, shown driving to the hoop during Friday's game against Winooski, led VUHS scoring with 19 points.

Independent photo/Steve James

ADDISON COUNTY

School News

John Badger of Vergennes was named to the Champlain College Online dean's list for the Fall 2025 semester.

Students on the dean's list have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher during the semester. Badger is currently majoring in Business Management.

Making the dean's list is a tremendous achievement. Many of the high achievers balance their career-focused classes with jobs, internships, clubs, and volunteering. Champlain College congratulates them on this great accomplishment and honor.

Matthew Troiano of Lincoln was named to the Champlain College Online Trustees' List for the Fall 2025 semester.

Students on the Trustees' List have achieved a 4.0 grade point average for two or more consecutive semesters. Troiano is majoring in Computer Science.

Making the Trustees' List is a tremendous achievement. Many of the high achievers balance their career-focused classes with jobs, internships, clubs, and volunteering. Champlain College congratulates them on this great accomplishment and honor.

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feb 12 THURSDAY

Love letter and Valentine making in Middlebury. Thursday, Feb. 12, 10 a.m.-noon, outside the National Bank of Middlebury, 32 Main St. Join the Yellow House, an adult residential community in Middlebury, to create love letters and valentines for Yellow House community partners and the special people in your life. Free, everyone is welcome.

Lake Champlain virtual archaeology conference. Thursday, Feb. 12, 1-4 p.m., online. Lake Champlain Maritime Museum hosts its fifth annual virtual archaeology conference, bringing together archaeologists, researchers, historians and museum staff to share new discoveries related to Lake Champlain. Free. Register at lcm.org.

"Vermont's Timber Rattlesnakes." Thursday, Feb. 12, 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St. Luke Groff of Vermont Fish & Wildlife discusses the endangered timber rattlesnake — Vermont's only venomous snake. Part of the Salisbury Conservation Commission winter series. Free.

"Flood Tales: A Climate Reporter's Notebook" in Lincoln. Thursday, Feb. 12, 7-8:30 p.m., Lincoln Library, 222 West River Rd. Journalist and Lincoln resident Jonathan Mingle shares insights from 20 years of climate reporting and discusses how floods can fragment and strengthen community bonds. Part of a five-month speaker series on climate change and emergency preparedness presented with the Lincoln Conservation Commission. Free.



Celebrate love

IT'S VALENTINE'S DAY on Saturday, and this week offers lots of opportunities to celebrate love in all its forms. On Thursday morning, join the Yellow House outside the National Bank of Middlebury to write love letters and make Valentines. On Friday evening, head to the Lincoln Library for a book launch and Valentine's Day chocolate extravaganza. On Saturday there are at least four options: join neighbors at the Shoreham Congregational Church for a lasagna dinner, enjoy a family-friendly open mic night at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society in Middlebury or dance the night away at the Willowell Foundation's Boogie Benefit in Bristol or the American Legion Post 27 in Middlebury.

Independent file photo/Steve James

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Participants are invited to carry signs and wave to passersby; extra signs will be available. Organizers will discuss how to get involved in Indivisible's work.

"Russia's invasion, Ukraine's resistance, and prospects for peace" lecture in Middlebury. Monday, Feb. 16, 4:30 p.m., Robert A. Jones House Seminar Room, Middlebury College, 148 Hillcrest Rd. Tufts University political scientist Oxana Shevel will explain how Ukraine's democratic nation-building and European orientation collided with Russia's return to authoritarian and imperial ambitions, shaping both the outbreak of the war and prospects for its resolution.

Monday Night Bingo in Middlebury. Monday, Feb. 16, doors open at 4:30 p.m., Addison County VFW Post 7823, 530 Exchange St. Quickies at 6 p.m., regular bingo at 7 p.m. The kitchen is open 'til 6:30 p.m. Open to the public.

Kevin Graffagnino lecture on Ira Allen in Monkton. Monday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m., Monkton Town Hall, 92 Monkton Ridge. Historian J. Kevin Graffagnino presents a talk based on his new book "Ira Allen: A Biography." Graffagnino will examine the life and legacy of Ira Allen as a land speculator, revolutionary, politician and empire-builder. Part of the Monkton Museum and Historical Society's celebration of America's 250th birthday. Attend in person or by Zoom. More info at monktonmhs@gmail.com.

Conservation Commission winter series. Free.

feb 13 FRIDAY

MALT Meet & Mingle: "Geology of the TAM: so many questions" in East Middlebury. Friday, Feb. 13, 5:30-7 p.m., Waybury Inn, 457 East Main St. Geologist Will Amidon discusses notable geologic features along the Trail Around Middlebury and answers questions from participants. Free. Food and drinks available for purchase. More info at maltvt.org.

"Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood" book launch and Valentine's celebration in Lincoln. Friday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m., Lincoln Library, 222 West River Rd. Author Louella "Ellie" Bryant launches her novel "Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood," the second in the Sheltering Angel series. Copies available for purchase. Stay after the reading for a Valentine's Day chocolate extravaganza. Free.

feb 14 SATURDAY

Monthly wildlife walk in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 14, 8-10 a.m., Otter View Park, intersection of Weybridge Street and Pulp Mill Bridge Road. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust lead a community wildlife survey of birds and other animals at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Meet at the Otter View Park parking area. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. More info at 802-388-6019.

Valentine's Day lasagna dinner in Shoreham. Saturday, Feb. 14, 5-7 p.m., Shoreham Congregational Church Fellowship Hall, 28 School St. Community Valentine's Day dinner featuring meat or vegetarian lasagna, tossed salad, garlic bread, beverages and dessert. \$12 adults, \$6 children. Please bring a non-perishable item for the food shelf.

Willowell Boogie Benefit in Bristol. Saturday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m., Holley Hall, 1 South St. Dance the night away at Willowell Foundation's annual Boogie Benefit fundraiser. Family-friendly event features live music by the Almondros, silent auction, food and cash bar. Proceeds support Willowell's scholarship fund, helping children access to nature-based programming and education. \$10 at the door, free for children 12 and under. More info at willowell.org.

Valentine dinner, dance and silent auction in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 14, 6 p.m., Middlebury American Legion Post 27, 49 Wilson Road. Celebrate Valentine's Day with dinner catered by Keith's Corner, live music by Magnetic Horse, dancing and a silent auction. Proceeds from the silent auction support the American Legion Scholarship Fund, which helps Addison County teens pursue higher education and career training. Tickets \$44; available at the Post 27 Club Bar or online at eventbrite.com.

King Pede card party in Ferrisburgh. Saturday, Feb. 14, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center, 3279 Route 7. The Ferrisburgh Grange hosts a King Pede card party and sandwich supper. King Pede is a longstanding Ferrisburgh tradition that requires tactics and strategic thinking.

Valentine's Day open mic in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 14, 7-9 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. A free, family-friendly open mic with music, skits, stories, poetry and comedy from performers of all ages. Five-minute limit per performer. If you're interested in performing, contact charden@utk.edu by Feb. 11.

feb 15 SUNDAY

Jam in Middlebury. Sunday, Feb. 15, 12 p.m.-4 p.m., Brandon American Legion Post 55, 550 Franklin St. Have a fiddle? Play another instrument? Like to sing? Join the Champlain Valley Fiddler's Club for an afternoon of music, plus a 50/50 raffle and door prize. Refreshments available. \$3 cover charge.

feb 16 MONDAY

African drumming for beginners in Middlebury. Monday, Feb. 16, and weekly on Mondays, 2-3 p.m., 17 Court St. Weekly African drumming class with Shelly introducing West African rhythms. Some drums available or bring your own. Hosted by the Counseling Service of Addison County. Free and open to all. Drop-ins welcome. Parking in back; use the front door opposite the TenneyBrook convenience store. More info at 802-388-3093.

Presidents Day rally in Bristol. Monday, Feb. 16, 2:45-4 p.m., Bristol Green, intersection of West and North streets. Community rally organized by Bristol Area Indivisible, honoring Presidents

feb 17 TUESDAY

Yarn and other crafts in Middlebury. Tuesday, Feb. 17, and weekly on Tuesdays, 3-4:30 p.m., 17 Court St.

Weekly craft group with Marie focused on yarn projects and other handcrafts. Bring your own projects to work on in the company of others; skill sharing encouraged. Hosted by the Counseling Service of Addison County. Free and open to all. Drop-ins welcome. Parking in back; use the front door opposite the TenneyBrook convenience store. More info at 802-388-3093.

Community Mardi Gras Festival in New Haven. Tuesday, Feb. 17, 5 p.m., New Haven Congregational Church, 91 Town Hill Road. Free, family-friendly Mardi Gras celebration featuring a pancake supper, mask making, photo booth, Mardi Gras bingo and trivia and crowning of Mardi Gras royalty. Free, all ages welcome. More info at pastornewhavenchurchvt@gmail.com or 802-282-6944.

Rokey Museum virtual book group. Tuesday, Feb. 17, 6-7 p.m., online on Zoom. Discussion of "The Message" by Ta-Nehisi Coates, exploring the urgent need to untangle ourselves from destructive myths and embrace the liberating power of difficult truths. Free. More info at rokeymuseum.org.

feb 18 WEDNESDAY

Art and creative writing in Middlebury. Wednesday, Feb. 18, and weekly on Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m., 17 Court St. Weekly art and creative writing group. Participants may work on their own creative projects or use prompts and ideas provided. Supplies available, or bring your own. Hosted by the Counseling Service of Addison County. Free and open to all. Drop-ins welcome. Parking in back; use the front door opposite the TenneyBrook convenience store. More info at 802-388-3093.

Stretch and neuromuscular therapy with Bean Camara in Brandon. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 5:30-6 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. See Feb. 4 listing.

"Tick tock, it's time to find out what makes ticks tick" in New Haven. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7-8 p.m., New Haven Town Office, 78 North St. Middlebury College professor Dave Allen presents research on the ecology of ticks and tick-borne diseases as part of the New Haven Conservation Commission's Armchair Naturalist Speaker Series. Free. More info at 802-363-4789.

feb 19 THURSDAY

"Mapping Wildlife Connectivity" in Salisbury. Thursday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m., Salisbury Meeting House, 853 Maple St. Jed Murdoch of the University of Vermont will discuss efforts to create safe passage for wildlife. Part of the Salisbury

feb 20 FRIDAY

VFW fish fry in Middlebury. Friday, Feb. 20, 5-7 p.m., Addison County VFW Post 7823, 530 Exchange St. Haddock or butterfly shrimp served with baked potato or French fries, coleslaw and dessert. Open to the public. Eat in or take out; takeout starting at 5 p.m. Proceeds benefit veterans programs. \$16 per person. More info at 802-388-9468.

Weybridge Fire Department spaghetti supper in Weybridge. Friday, Feb. 20, 5-7 p.m., Weybridge Elementary School, 210 Quaker Village Rd. Community spaghetti supper to benefit the Weybridge Volunteer Fire Department. \$15 adults, \$5 children ages 5-12.

Interfaith Vigil for Peace, Justice, Compassion in Middlebury. Friday, Feb. 20, 5:30-6 p.m., Town Hall Theater Plaza, 72-76 Merchants Row. A half-hour interfaith peace vigil with readings, periods of silence for reflection, prayer or meditation and a closing song. Open to people of all wisdom traditions. Organized by members of Middlebury Indivisible in response to national and global crises. Event will be canceled and rescheduled in case of heavy snow or icy conditions. Please dress warmly. Free.

feb 21 SATURDAY

Legislative breakfast in Bristol. Saturday, Feb. 21, 8:30-9:45 a.m., Bristol American Legion, 56 Airport Dr. Community legislative breakfast sponsored by Bridport Grange and Addison County Farm Bureau, moderated by Charlie Roy. All are welcome to attend and ask questions of local legislators and senators. Breakfast available by donation 30 minutes before the discussion. RSVP to Bill at 802-881-8836 or wjcottjr@comcast.net.

Puzzle Race in New Haven. Saturday, Feb. 21, 10 a.m., New Haven Community Library, Town Office side of the building. Team-based puzzle competition: the first team to finish the 500-piece puzzle wins. Teams of up to four people; individuals may register to be placed on a team. Intended for amateur puzzlers; no special aids allowed. Register at nhcl.org. More info at 802-355-4676, librarian@nhcl.org.

Fiber Crafts Collective in East Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 21, 10 a.m., Sarah Partridge Library, 431 East Main St. Participants work on knitting, crochet, weaving, spinning, sewing, embroidery, felting, macrame and more. All skill levels welcome. Free.

Black Patriots in the American Revolution in Cornwall. Saturday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m., Cornwall DAR Chapter House, 2706 Route 30. Caroline Tasse, genealogist and registrar for the Green Mountain Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, discusses primary source documentation and historical recovery of Black Revolutionary War veterans, focusing on four individuals who settled in Vermont after the war. Co-sponsored by the Cornwall Free Library and the Ethan and Mary Baker Allen Chapter of the DAR.

Winter Carnival Ice Show: MidNight Magic in Middlebury. Saturday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., Kenyon Arena, Middlebury College, 219 S. Main St. Annual Winter Carnival ice show featuring skaters from Middlebury College, the town of Middlebury, UVM and more. Free admission for children under three, all others \$6. Tickets available at the Mahaney Arts Center Box Office and online at middlebury.edu.

feb 22 SUNDAY

Winter Carnival Ice Show: MidNight Magic in Middlebury. Sunday, Feb. 22, 1:30 p.m., Kenyon Arena, Middlebury College, 219 S. Main St. Annual Winter Carnival ice show featuring skaters from Middlebury College, the town of Middlebury, UVM and more. Free admission for children under three, all others \$6. Tickets available at the Mahaney Arts Center Box Office and online at middlebury.edu.

Addison County Home Health and Hospice awarded community grant

MIDDLEBURY — Addison County Home Health and Hospice received a combined gift of \$7,500 from Co-operative Insurance Companies and their director Marie Jewett in January.

The gift, awarded to ACHHH as part of Co-op's Community Grants program, will be used for renovation and improvements for a single-family home in East Middlebury which ACHHH has purchased. After thoughtful renovations intended to make the home compliant with state regulations, this will become a level-three care home where up to eight residents will receive room and board, medication management, nursing oversight and assistance with activities of daily living. The home will be operated by ACHHH.

"We think ACHHH does important work in our community and is continually looking for ways to expand their services," said Jewett, a member of Co-op's board of directors. "We're proud to support their efforts."

"We are thrilled that Co-operative Insurance Companies and Marie Jewett are supporting this project which is near and dear to our hearts," said Deborah Wesley, RN, chief executive officer of ACHHH. "For quite a while we have been

considering how we could assist with the housing crisis our county is experiencing and feel privileged to be preparing to provide this care for our community members. We will be able to provide a home-like setting for medically frail community members who need a safe home at a time when few options exist. This is why this gift is important to us."

Co-operative Insurance Companies' Community Grants Program was established in 2004 to assist with community projects across Vermont and New Hampshire. Through this program, Co-op partners with its agents and directors to provide funds for capital campaigns and operational support throughout the two states.

"Groups like (ACHHH) are meeting needs in the same communities that Co-op serves," said Mark Roberts, Co-op's vice president of marketing, underwriting and member services. "We think it's important to do our part as neighbors to help them out, and this grant program is one more way we can do that."

Addison County Home Health and Hospice was one of six organizations to receive a Community Grant from Co-operative Insurance Companies in 2026.

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Quotes are taken from reader comments submitted with subscription renewals.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Around TOWN

How to help children with emotions

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury branch of AAUW (American Association of University Women) and Itsley Public Library will host a presentation by child psychotherapist and author Jennifer Weaver Tuesday evening, Feb. 17, at 7 p.m., in the Middlebury Union Middle School.



JENNIFER WEAVER

Weaver will address how to support children/grandchildren/students through big emotions while teaching them that difficult feelings are a normal part of life, not problems to be fixed. She will offer practical strategies for developing emotional resilience and learning to sit with uncomfortable feelings rather than avoiding them. She will also offer tools that help children

build emotional tolerance — a foundation for thriving through life's inevitable ups and downs. Weaver is a Washington, D.C.-

based child psychotherapist and founder of Weaver and Associates, a group practice of child, parent, and family psychotherapists. She works with the Anna Freud Centre in London, the Yale Child Study Center in New Haven, and McLean Hospital, part of Harvard University in Boston. She is also co-author of "Raising a Kid Who Can."

Upcoming AAUW events include: Owen Foster on the state of health care in Vermont (March 17) and Tom Hanley on scams and prevention (April 21).

For more information about AAUW, visit aauw.org. With questions about local AAUW activities or membership, contact Dinah Bain (802-758-2218) or Liane Barrera (802-353-6543).

Shoreham church hosts Valentine's Day dinner

SHOREHAM — Celebrate Valentine's Day by coming to a lasagna dinner at the Shoreham Congregational Church. This event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 14,

from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the church. Enjoy good times with your friends as you feast on lasagna (either meat or vegetarian), tossed salad, garlic

bread, beverages, and dessert. The cost is only \$12 for adults, and \$6 for children. It will be a good chance to get out and socialize after the recent snow and cold.

Leicester

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

NEWS

LEICESTER — Town Clerk Julie Delphia reminds residents that dogs are required to be registered by April 1. A valid rabies vaccine certificate is needed. To facilitate the process, a rabies clinic will be held on Tuesday, March 17, at the Town Office. 5:30-6:30 p.m. is reserved for dogs and 6:30 to 7 p.m. is for cats. To avoid possible penalties or fines, get your animal registered.

On Monday, Feb 16, at the Town Office, at 6:45 p.m., members of the Otter Valley Unified Union School

District board will be guests of the Leicester selectboard, to answer questions about education costs and future district plans. Residents should plan on joining the group to get answers to your questions.

If you are unable to make the selectboard meeting, Superintendent Sanchez will be at the Recycling/Trash pickup at the Four Corners, to chat with folks, on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 10:30 a.m.-12 noon.

The OVUUSD Board meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 17, begins at

6 p.m. in the library. The annual OVUUSD meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 6:30 p.m., in the auditorium at OV. Of particular interest to taxpayers will be the discussion, under Other Business, as to whether taxpayers will authorize the school board to explore a middle school model/expansion, with a multi-million-dollar price tag.

Given that 85% of one's tax bill is for education costs, residents should plan to attend to learn more and voice opinions about the proposal.



PARENTS IN THE migrant community are among those who will be helped by the recent \$12,000 grant to Early Care and Learning Partnership made by 100+ Women Who Care, Addison County. Submitted photos

Female philanthropists fill a childcare need

ADDISON COUNTY — At its first-quarter meeting of 2026 via Zoom last month, the organization 100+ Women Who Care, Addison County distributed \$17,800 to local non-profits.

The three finalists for this quarter were Early Care and Learning Partnership (to hire young interns as multilingual staff and support outreach to families for preschool access, especially multilingual schooling), Opera Company of Middlebury (for education and outreach initiatives for youth programs) and Migrant Justice (to assist with emergency work and deportation defense for migrant workers).

Early Care and Learning Partnership was the top vote recipient receiving 70% of the funds. The runners-up both received 15% of the available funds.

100+ Women Who Care, Addison County is a charitable giving circle gathering quarterly to choose three non-profits to receive their collective donations. Since 2023, the



EARLY CARE AND Learning Partnership recently got a grant from 100+ Women Who Care, Addison County. Here are some Partnership members and some of the young people they support as interns and researchers.

local 100+ Women chapter has given close to \$270,000 to Addison County charities (this figure includes matches from the Richard M. Schulze Foundation to whom the local philanthropists extend much gratitude).

The Addison County chapter welcomes new members; women are invited to come learn about the nonprofits in Addison County

and enjoy a cocktail together. They are grateful for the women who share this commitment to supporting each other and our community. The next meeting will be in April 2026 at a local establishment with cocktails and appetizers.

Find out more at www.100wacvt.org.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Vergennes Union High School

Carter McGuire

Carter McGuire is Vergennes Union School's latest Student of the Week. He lives in downtown Vergennes with his immediate family and three roommates. They also have a black Lab, Thunder.

Carter enjoys the element of choice that is embedded in high school, noting that the high school experience can be whatever you want it to be; he's chosen to focus mostly on the Arts and Sciences.

He states, "Carlie Guinane's art classroom has been a supportive space for me. I took sculpture, painting, and all media for creating art. She has been an incredible support, and I appreciate her as a teacher."

In Carter's junior year, he became a four-sport athlete, participating in cross country, indoor track, outdoor track, and baseball, and even got to play with two of his brothers, which he says was an incredible experience. Beyond sports, he has a leading role in this year's musical, is a member of the National Honor Society and German National Honor Society, is a member of the VUHS Green Team and is a participant in the VUHS Unified Basketball Team, supporting students with learning and developmental disabilities to access team sports.

Outside of school, Carter volunteers through Scouting America, where he is approaching Eagle rank, participating in wildlife conservation service projects, working with the Lions Club, and supporting others' Eagle projects. In the summer, he is also a lifeguard at the community pool, where he loves summer camp week, engaging with the community, and working with fellow students.

This year, his focus has been on college applications. When he does have spare time, he focuses on art, making videos for YouTube and Instagram to document his artistic process. He also loves spending time with his friends and siblings.

When asked what advice he has for younger students, he says, "I heard from someone here a few years ago, they told me that you spend your whole life inside your head, so make sure it is a nice place to be. I thought it was profound, so I have held onto it. Reach out when you are struggling, and help others. Mental health matters, and we don't talk about it enough."

Carter would like to attend college, majoring in art, so long as he can keep his work separate from his hobbies and interests. He's unsure of where he'll end up as of right now, but is feeling excited (and nervous) about the prospect. Congratulations, Carter!



Carter McGuire VUHS

Middlebury Union High School

Avery Hohenschau

Middlebury Union High School is proud to recognize senior Avery Hohenschau as its Student of the Week. Avery lives in Middlebury with her parents, David and Claire, and her younger brother, who is in eighth grade. She has a cat named Comet, a dog named Lupin, and six chickens.

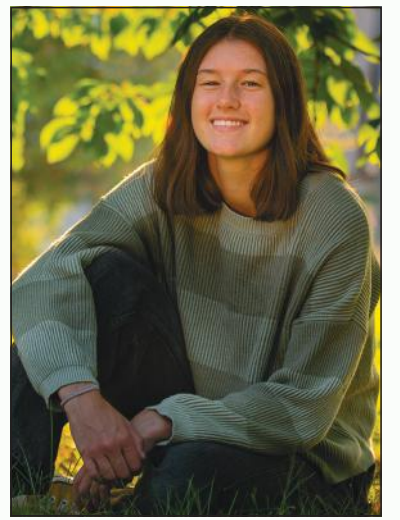
When asked about her experience at MUHS, Avery shared, "I love that there are so many opportunities to try intensive classes like DP that I would not get at another school." She added that these opportunities allow students to take deeper dives into projects and subjects. Avery has especially enjoyed Global Politics, finding it fascinating to study the world, and credits Tara Martin as an inspiring instructor. She also highlighted Ms. LeBeau as a meaningful mentor who helped Avery find her place at the school. Avery has earned Honor Roll recognition throughout her time at Middlebury.

Avery is highly involved in school activities. She has served as stage manager for the past three theater productions. In the fall, she plays soccer, and in the spring, plays Ultimate Frisbee and is the team captain. In addition, outside of school, Avery figure skates. During her sophomore year, Avery was enrolled in Addison Repertory Theater at the Hannaford Career Center, and she continues to stay closely connected with the program. She is also a member of the Built Environment Arts Group, in which students help bring art to the walls of Middlebury. Over the past two summers, Avery has worked at Junebug in Middlebury.

In her free time, Avery enjoys spending time with friends, reading and working on small creative projects.

One important skill Avery has developed is self-advocacy. She shared, "As a stage manager, I had to advocate for the cast with adults. Learning how to do that has been a huge growth opportunity." Her advice to younger students is, "Don't hesitate to reach out to people. I've made so many new connections by being willing to step outside my comfort zone."

Following graduation, Avery plans to attend Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., where she will study Film Production. Middlebury Union High School congratulates Avery on her many accomplishments and wishes her continued success throughout her senior year and beyond.



Avery Hohenschau MUHS

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Congratulations, Carter and Avery!

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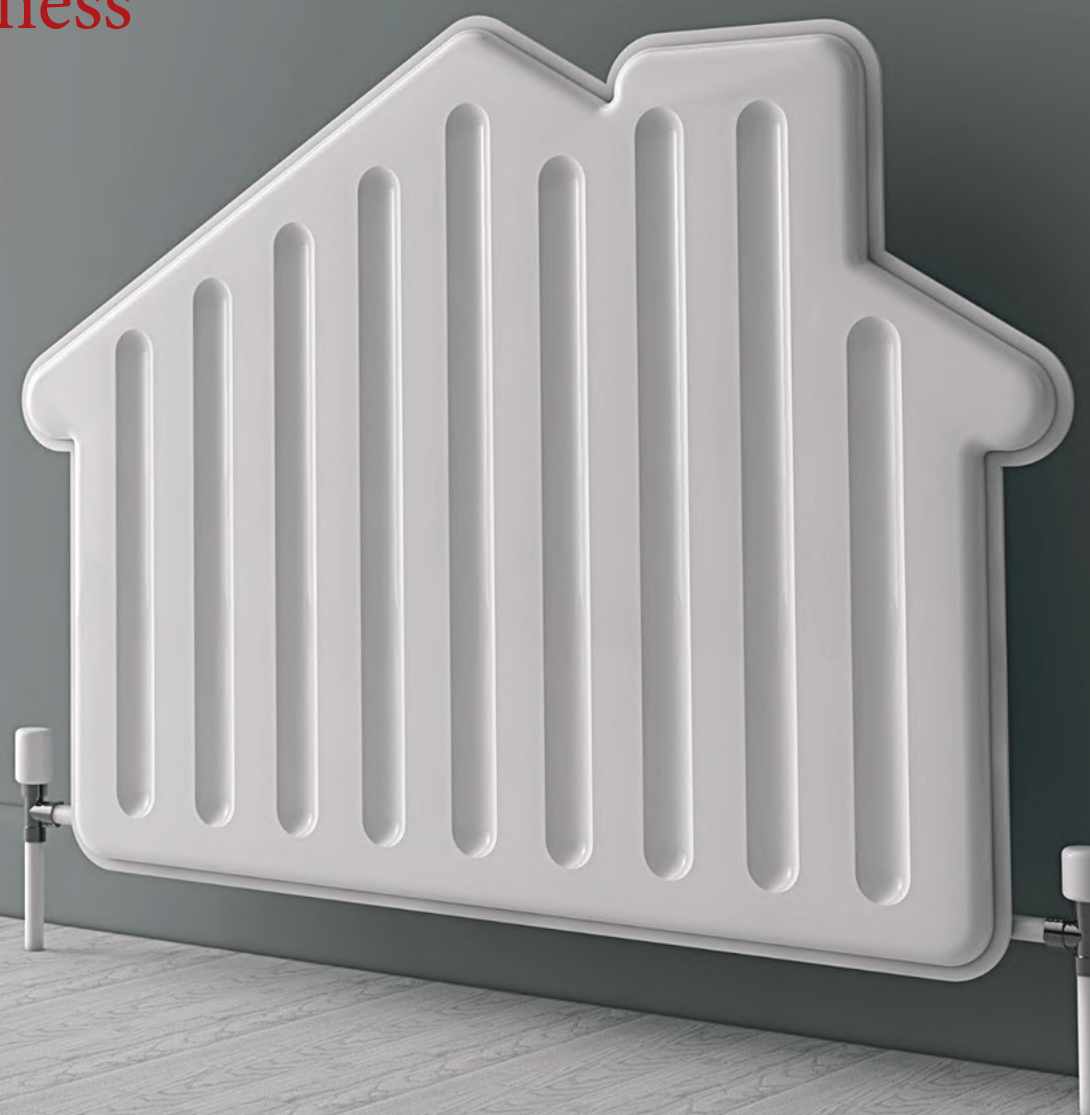
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CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

AL-ANON OFFERS HELP and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit vermontalananonlateen.org for links and list of other meetings in the region. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

VERGENNES FREE THINKERS Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting Vergennesfreethinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aaavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

Public Meetings

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS is a 12 step program offering recovery from compulsive eating and food behaviors. For meeting times and general information please visit www.oavermont.org or call (802)863.2655.

THE TURNING POINT CENTER of Addison County is open for in-person services, Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm, 79 Court St, Middlebury. We are available by phone 24/7 at 802-388-4249.

VERMONT SUPPORT LINE Are you struggling with a challenging situation? Do you have feelings of sadness, loneliness, isolation, anger, or depression? You don't have to face it alone. Talk with a caring person who understands what you're going through today by calling or texting the free and confidential Pathways Vermont Support Line available 24/7 at (833) VT - TALKS.

Services

CLEANING SERVICE Tired of keeping up with house cleaning? I offer flexible home cleaning services tailored to your need: *Monthly Cleaning: Perfect for maintaining a tidy home with minimal hassle. *Twice-A-Month Cleaning: Ideal for busy households needing more frequent attention. With good references ensuring peace of mind, don't wait - make your life easier and home cleaner today! Contact Me, Laura Ingram, Today (802)989-9496

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

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

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DIGITAL ACCESS View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at addisonindependent.com. Don't miss out on events, garage sales, or opportunities- check out our free digital listings. Looking to read more? Become a subscriber!

TWO BED FRAMES Two twin size bed frames with mattresses, good and clean. Come pick them up. Ray at 802-453-7850 in Leicester

Help Wanted

DRIVERS Part-time summer drivers needed to work at Keewaydin's girls and boys summer camps on Lake Dunmore in Salisbury, Vt. Job involves driving 15-passenger vans with canoe trailers, taking groups of kids to beautiful areas throughout northern New England and southern Quebec for their canoeing and backpacking trips. Bonus given to drivers with CDL/school bus endorsement. Please contact as soon as possible: Daria Carden at 802-352-4770 or daria@keewaydin.org.

Help Wanted

EVENING FRONT DESK/CONCIERGE. Swift House Inn - Middlebury, Vermont. We're hiring a front desk professional to anchor our evening shift. This position plays a pivotal role: greeting arriving guests, fielding questions, supporting restaurant reservations, and ensuring the property is secure and guest-ready for the next day. If you thrive on creating memorable experiences and want to grow in the hospitality industry, this is for you. Swift House Inn has 20 guest rooms across three historic buildings, and is home to Jessica's at Swift House Inn, one of Vermont's most celebrated fine dining restaurants. Responsibilities: Welcome and check in arriving guests with warmth and professionalism. Answer phones, manage room and restaurant reservations. Provide local recommendations and concierge-style service. Troubleshoot guest concerns and offer proactive

Help Wanted

solutions. Liaise with Jessica's restaurant team for smooth communication. Keep common areas tidy, cozy, and well-presented. Follow nightly checklists and procedures. Lock up buildings and hand off to the overnight security team. You Are... Deeply interested in the hotel and lodging industry, A natural host who loves creating great guest experiences in Addison County, Communicative, warm, and gracious under pressure, Obsessed with details and good systems, Reliable, punctual, and self-directed. Shift & Compensation. Hours: 3:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Schedule: Part-time, includes some weekends and holidays. Pay: \$20-\$22 Hourly, commensurate with experience, bonuses and tips. Apply Today. Email your resume and a short note to owner@swifthouseinn.com. Learn more about us at swifthouseinn.com

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 9B and 10B.

Help Wanted

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Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Village Health
Medical Assistant or Nurse (LPN/RN)
Village Health is seeking a compassionate, team-oriented Medical Assistant, LPN, or RN to join our busy primary care practice in Middlebury. This blended clinical role includes patient care, triage, and care coordination in a supportive, community-focused environment. Responsibilities include assisting providers with patient care, rooming patients, performing clinical tasks such as blood draws and vaccines, supporting patient communication, and helping ensure smooth daily office flow. LPNs and RNs will also provide phone and in-person triage. **Medical Assistant certification preferred. Active Vermont LPN or RN license required for nursing candidates.** **Prior experience in a medical office or primary care setting preferred. Strong computer, communication, and organizational skills required.**
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MA: \$22-\$25
LPN: \$25-\$35
RN: \$36-\$48
To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to: info@villagehealthvt.com

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The Addy Indy is looking to hire an enthusiastic and motivated ASSISTANT EDITOR.

Work will include copy editing, proofreading, managing our events calendar, posting news content on our website, formatting newsletters and managing our social media platforms.

Experience with WordPress and MailChimp preferred, along with a strong commitment to learn new systems and improve our platforms to reach and engage our readers.

If you are a local news enthusiast, have a strong work ethic and are excited to be "in the know" within the local community, this position could be perfect for you!

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Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

OPEN DOOR CLINIC VOLUNTEERS

Open Door Clinic is welcoming volunteers with diverse skill sets and interests to help with medical office tasks, Tuesday clinic front desk roles, website and patient education and outreach materials development. Spanish language skills are welcome but not required. Consider applying and volunteering with a friend! Visit www.opendoormidd.org/volunteer to learn more or reach out to odc@opendoormidd.org

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ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Or, submit your classified ad on our website: addisonindependent.com

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

RATES
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• 50¢ internet listing per issue • minimum 2 insertions

• Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted

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- Personals
- Services
- Free**
- Lost 'N Found**
- Garage Sales
- Lawn & Garden
- Opportunities
- Adoption
- Work Wanted
- Help Wanted
- For Sale
- Public Meetings**
- For Rent
- Want to Rent
- Wood Heat
- Real Estate
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The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

PART-TIME DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR Part-Time Development Director (20 hrs/week | Hybrid preferred) | \$25,000-30,000/yr) Opera Company of Middlebury seeks a Development Director to lead fundraising, including annual giving, grants, major gifts, and sponsorships. Ideal candidates have 3+ years of experience (arts preferred) and strong communication skills. Apply: sarah@ocmvermont.org Info: ocmvermont.org/opportunities.

RESPIRE CARE BRANDON Seeking an individual who would be willing to provide respite support/care in your home. This is a per diem flexible position for an elderly lady. Flexible employer and excellent pay. For more information 802-398-5657 or respite2022@yahoo.com

For Rent

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

For Rent

BRANDON ESTATE 5 Bedrooms 3 bath \$4800 Furnished See Craigslist at <https://vermont.craigslist.org/apa/d/forest-dale-bedroom-updated-stone-home/7889936398.htm> or call 802 377 9394

BRIDPORT: Share beautiful views of Lake Champlain with senior man interested in farming and rural life. Help with few meals/week and upkeep of the home in exchange for reduced rent of \$200/month. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

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MIDDLEBURY ONE BEDROOM Small, ground floor. Very nice, very convenient in-town location, perfect for person who does not drive. \$795 plus heat and electric. Non-smoker, no pets. 802-388-5474.

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

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

TWO BEDROOM Two bedroom trailer at 9 Rosister St, \$1200 a month. 802-417-4057

For Rent

MIDDLEBURY: Senior woman who enjoys exercise, gardening, choir singing, seeking housemate to share conversation. \$600/month, all included. Private bath. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

NEW HAVEN: Senior woman who enjoys TV, Christmas music, and mysteries, seeking housemate to provide overnight presence, light help around the house. The rent is negotiable. Familiarity with memory loss is a plus but not a must. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO

ROOM FOR RENT Room for rent, just call 802-417-4057.

VERGENNES VALLEY VIEW APARTMENTS is currently taking wait list applications. Occupants must be 62+ years of age. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply - Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

Wood Heat

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

Att. Farmers

1ST CUT, DRY ROUND bales, 4x5, \$55.00 each. Round bales for bedding \$35.00. Quantity discounts available. 802-989-0187.

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



MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

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Sales for 2/5/26 & 2/9/26

BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
Nop Bros	1655	1.73	\$2863.15
Gosliga	1795	1.72	\$3087.40
Ethan Allen	2130	1.70	\$3621.00
Rowell Farm	1920	1.70	\$3264.00
Goodrich	1710	1.70	\$2907.00
Westminster	1720	1.65	\$2838.00
Vorsteveld	2100	1.65	\$3465.00

CALVES	\$
R. Forbes	\$1706.60
Barnes Bros	\$1658.30
Deer Valley	\$1610.00
B. Dykema	\$1601.60
C. Pease	\$1593.00
Sunderland	\$1575.20

Total Beef - 143 Total Calves - 174
We value our faithful customers.
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call 1-802-388-2661

Bridport men face sexual assault charges

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police this week cited two Bridport men into court to answer charges that they each had sexually assaulted a juvenile in Orwell.

Christian Leggett, 25, was cited for sexual assault, and 27-year-old Therran Leggett as cited for aggravated sexual assault of a child.

Police report that detectives with the Vermont State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigations, assigned to the New Haven Barracks, this past Oct. 18 began an investigation into a reported sexual assault. Officers determined that Christian Leggett had unlawful sexual contact with a juvenile during the summer of 2023, and that Therran Leggett had unlawful sexual contact with the same juvenile from June to August 2025.

On Feb. 10, police issued both Leggetts citations to appear before the Addison County Superior Court, Criminal Division, on Feb. 17 to enter pleas.

In another major action this week, state police responded to an incident in Hancock on Sunday morning and found a man had been shot to death in a vehicle near the scene of a reported incident off Bettis Road. See the full story on Page 3A.

Separately, state police are

Vt. State Police Log

looking for a Monkton man whom they said cheated an out-of-stater when selling him a used truck.

On Feb. 2 were told that Brian Russin, 53, of Monkton had sold a blue 2007 Toyota Tundra bearing Vermont registration 474A256 to a 41-year-old man from West Haven, Conn., under false pretenses. Police allege that Russin also lied to law enforcement in an attempt to deflect the investigation.

Troopers' later attempts to locate Russin have been unsuccessful, and they requested an arrest warrant. Anyone with information about the whereabouts of Russin or the vehicle is asked to call the New Haven barracks at 802-388-4919 or leave an anonymous tip online at cityprotect.com/forms/state.vt.us/anonymous.

Also, troopers in other recent activity:

- On Feb. 3 at approximately a quarter to 8 p.m. responded to a citizen dispute in Addison and said they determined that Matilde Fuentes Camacho, 52, of Addison had knowingly caused bodily injury to a 27-year-old man. Police cited Camacho for simple assault.

- On Feb. 5 at 10 minutes after midnight looked into the report of a vehicle off the roadway near the intersection of Morgan Horse Farm Road and Hamilton Road in Weybridge. Police cited Anna C. Wright, 27, of Middlebury for driving under the influence, or

DUI. Troopers were assisted by Middlebury police.

- On Feb. 7, shortly after 7:30 a.m. were dispatched to a single vehicle crash on Route 22A in Orwell. State police report that a juvenile was driving a 2013 Jeep Grand Cherokee northbound on 22A when it left the northbound lane, crossed the southbound lane, and struck a tree. Inclement weather and snow-covered road conditions were contributing factors in this crash, police said.

The young driver and juvenile passengers were transported to area hospitals for minor injuries. All occupants were subsequently released.

State police was assisted on scene by Middlebury Regional EMS, Fair Haven EMS, and the Orwell Fire Department.

- On Feb. 7 a little after 1:30 p.m. responded to a property crash in Bridport near Basin Harbor Road and Middle Road. Police said that driver Daron Gendron, 24, of Rochester had an outstanding citation and release warrant. They cited Gendron for negligent driving.

- On Feb. 7 at around 4:30 p.m. went to a single-vehicle crash on Plank Road near Route 7 in Waltham. Troopers said that Wendy Frazier, 56, of Bristol was driving a 2022 Honda CR-V eastbound when the car left the road, overturned, and came to an upside-down position of uncontrolled rest. No injuries were reported. Police cited Frazier for DUI and issued her a ticket for bad driving on roadways laned for traffic.

Troopers were assisted by Vergennes police, Vergennes firefighters and the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad.

SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT PUBLIC NOTICE POLICY WARNING

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District Board will conduct a public hearing at their meeting on March 9, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. and take action on the following policy:

To Adopt: B9 Student Use of Cell Phones
Copies of the policy are available on the district website at slatevalleyunified.org.
Brooke Olsen-Farrell
Superintendent of Schools

TOWN OF LINCOLN PUBLIC NOTICE

Wednesday, March 4, 2026, beginning at 6:30 pm at the Town Office 62 Quaker Street, Lincoln, Vermont and virtually using Zoom

The Lincoln Development Review Board will hold public hearings for:

- Subdivision Application #26-006 as requested by Matt Atkins for his property located at 3287 Downingsville Road in Lincoln, Vermont. Parcel ID# 03-01-01-02.001. Description: Subdividing a 10.5 Acre parcel into a 5-acre and 5.5-acre parcel.
- Conditional Use Application #26-007 as requested by Stojak Construction LLC for Katie and Kyle Clark for their property at 432 Orchard Road in Lincoln, Vermont. Parcel ID#17-07-01-63.100. Description: Building a new structure (24'x36') with an in-ground pool.

Participation in local proceedings is a prerequisite to the right to take part in any subsequent appeals. Please call the Zoning Administrator at (802) 453-2980 to arrange a time to view complete applications

The Zoom link will be included in the agenda which can be found on the Town's website the week prior to the hearing: <https://lincolnvermont.org>

ADDISON COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT SOLID WASTE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Addison County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD) will hold a public hearing on a minor revision to its 2025 Solid Waste Implementation Plan (SWIP) at the Board of Supervisors meeting on **Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 7:15 PM** via Zoom and in-person at the ACSWMD office conference room, 1223 Route 7 South, Middlebury, VT. Contact Shelly Edson, Administrative Assistant, at admin@acswmd.org or (802) 388-2333 for details on how to attend the meeting. The purpose of the hearing will be to update and receive public comments on the 2025 SWIP as adopted on October 16, 2025. The 2025 SWIP addresses all aspects of sustainable materials management within the 21 member towns of the ACSWMD. The purpose of the SWIP is to: (1) demonstrate that the solid waste management system is in conformance with the mandates of the new State Solid Waste Plan; (2) incorporate the District's mission statement into its policies and plans; (3) analyze activities and costs, incorporate programs and procedures currently in effect, and identify solid waste facilities that are approved in the SWIP; and (4) outline goals for the future. The 2025 SWIP with the proposed amendment is available upon request by contacting the ACSWMD at (802) 388-2333 or by email at acswmd@acswmd.org. The adopted 2025 SWIP is also available on the ACSWMD website at www.AddisonCountyRecycles.org

REACH THE COUNTY, PLACE YOUR AD HERE. CALL 388-4944

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH NOTICE OF HEARING

The Ferrisburgh Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold the following public hearings on **Wednesday, March 4, 2026**, at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall at 3279 US Route 7, beginning at 7PM. The hearings will also be available to participants remotely via Zoom; the link will be included in the agenda posted on the Town's website (ferrisburghvt.org) at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Application Number 26-007: New 2-story accessory-use barn for residential storage and work/studio space plus new driveway; Applicants: Brian Dunkiel & Leslie Halperin for A Sunny Day, LLC; 843 Kimball Dock Road; Parcel ID number 19/20/44; Shoreland District (SD-2) & Rural Agricultural District (RA-5); Conditional Use Review.

Application Number 26-009: Remove existing gas station & convenience store at 6973 US Route 7 and seed for grass, construct a new gas/diesel station & convenience store with associated site work at 6990 US Route 7, construct new mound system at 6973 US Route 7 to serve the new store, and waiver requested for front setback from Old Hollow Road to gas canopy; Applicant: Charles Marshall for Stewarts Shops Corp.; 6973 & 6990 US Route 7; Parcel ID numbers 18/20/02 & 18/20/03; Highway Mixed-Use District (HMU-2); Conditional Use Review and Waiver.

Application Number 26-011: Replace existing single-family residence with new year-round single-family residence on different footprint; Applicant: Krysta Hill; 70 Diamond Island Road; Parcel ID number 03/01/07&05; Shoreland District (SD-2); Conditional Use Review.

The files for the above applications are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office. Persons wishing to appear and be heard may do so in person or be represented by an agent or an attorney. Communications about the above hearings may also be filed in writing with the Board or the Zoning Administrator at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall or by email to zoning@ferrisburghvt.org.

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4464(a)(1)(C) and 4471(a), participation in this local proceeding is prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this **ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on **Pages 10B and 11B**.

Addison Central School District (1)	Middlebury Cemetery Association (1)
Addison County Solid Waste Management District (1)	North Ferrisburgh Cemetery Association (1)
Addison Northwest School District (1)	Otter Valley Unified Union School District (1)
Ferrisburgh (1)	Slate Valley Unified School District (1)
Lincoln (1)	Waltham (1)
Middlebury (1)	

TOWN of MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT WARNING

Annual Town Meeting March 2 and March 3, 2026

The legal voters of the Town of Middlebury, in the County of Addison, the State of Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Middlebury Union High School Auditorium at 73 Charles Avenue in Middlebury on Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7:00PM to act on Articles 1 through 5, and to discuss Articles 6 through 8, and on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 from 7:00AM through 7:00PM at the Recreation Center, 154 Creek Road in Middlebury, to vote by Australian ballot on Articles 6 through 8 as provided by the Middlebury Town Charter.

With respect to Article 6 & 7, the legal voters of the Town of Middlebury are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Monday, March 2, 2026 at 7:30pm at the Middlebury Union High School Auditorium for the purpose of reviewing the proposals for issuing bonds for: 1) Foote Street waterline replacement.

Article 1 To act upon the reports of the Town Officers.

Article 2 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to adopt the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027) in the amount of \$15,998,046 with a portion thereof in the amount of \$10,136,266 to be raised by property taxes.

Article 3 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote, pursuant to 24 VSA §2804(a), to authorize the Selectboard to apply up to \$350,000 from the Cross Street Bridge Reserve Fund for the purpose of funding the Ilsley Library Project.

Article 4 Shall the voters of the Town of Middlebury vote to collect taxes on real property for fiscal year 2026/2027 in TWO equal installments due in the Treasurer's Office on the 16th day of November 2026 and the 15th day of March 2027? (\$1,500,000)

Article 5 To transact other business proper to be done.

[For voting by Australian Ballot on Tuesday, March 3 2025, polls open from 7:00AM to 7:00PM]

Article 6 Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Middlebury in an amount not to exceed One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000), subject to reduction from available alternate sources of funding, be issued for the purpose of the replacement of the existing six-inch cast iron water main adjacent to Foote St. between US Route 7 and Lower Foote Street with a new 12-inch polyethylene-wrapped ductile iron main., the estimated cost of such improvements being One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000)

Article 7 Shall the voters of Middlebury call upon the General Assembly to discuss, take testimony, and vote on H.433 during the 2026 session? H.433 is an Act Relating to Incremental Implementation of Green Mountain Care that would establish publicly financed universal primary care, mental health services, and substance use treatment as a first step in phasing in universal health care for all Vermont residents.

Article 8 To elect officers as required by the Middlebury Town Charter.

The legal voters of the Town of Middlebury are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting shall be as provided in Chapters 43 and 51 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

Dated at Middlebury, Vermont this 27th day of January 2026.

Brian R. Carpenter, Chair	Isabel Gogarty
Andy Hooper, Vice Chair	Megan James
Dan Brown	Farhad Khan
Fred Dunnington	

MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD

REQUEST FOR BIDS

The North Ferrisburgh Cemetery Association is now accepting bids for the 2026 mowing season. Approximately 5 1/2 acres and 300 stones. Please respond to Pam Cousino at gncousino-vt@hotmail.com or Sid Claffin at Sciaffin@gmavt.net.

TOWN OF WALTHAM NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING WALTHAM SELECTBOARD

A second public informational meeting open to Town of Waltham Residents will be held at the Town Clerk's Office on Thursday, February 19, 2026 @ 6:30 pm to discuss the following information:

The Waltham Selectboard, Road Contractor and staff will present information concerning the present state of Waltham's roads, short-term and long-term plans for repair and upkeep, and how this impacts the 2027 and beyond town budget. The meeting is public and residents are encouraged to attend in person or via Zoom.

Topic: Open Meeting About Waltham Roads & 2027 Budget
Time: Feb 19, 2026 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82100766940?pwd=utaNJDZy49UKiTAkdS1k8bUcjTv.1>

PLEASE NOTE: This is an informational meeting to provide data and to engage the community concerning current road status and to gain input impacting highway work and plans moving ahead.

ADDISON NORTHWEST SCHOOL DISTRICT NOTICE TO ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 8-11 PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL CHOICE

Vergennes Union Middle and High School, along with all other Vermont public high schools, participates in a statewide system of public high school choice. Under this system, students from VUHS may apply to transfer to any other public high school in the state. For the 2026-2027 school year, the maximum number of students eligible to transfer is set by the ANWSD School Board each January. The actual number will depend on the number of students selected in prior years to continue their enrollment at other area high schools.

To apply to participate in the program for the 2026-2027 school year (grades 9-12):

- Complete an application available from the VUMHS School Counseling Office;
- All applications must be signed by a parent or guardian;
- File the application with the School Counseling Office on or before **February 28, 2026**. Applications received after February 28th will not be accepted.

Notification of decisions to all students who have applied to participate will be provided no later than **April 1, 2026**.

Additional school choice information, including a timeline, is available from the School Counseling Office.

A student's enrollment application may be denied by another receiving school if the student has been expelled or received an extended suspension for violation of Vergennes Union High School's alcohol, substance abuse, or weapons-in-schools policies during the year prior to enrollment in that regional partnership school. Upon enrollment in the receiving school, students are subject to the disciplinary policies and procedures of the receiving school. If selected to attend another high school in the regional partnership, students shall be guaranteed enrollment in that receiving school until graduation as long as they remain residents of the Addison Northwest School District and are not subject to expulsion as a result of the receiving school's policy and federal and state law.

Man cited for possession of drugs, stolen car

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police cited Drew T. Raymond, 19, of East Middlebury for possession of a stolen vehicle and for possession of a regulated drug, following an investigation in the Perkins Lane area on Feb. 2. Police said they also arrested Raymond earlier that same day for having an active warrant out for his arrest.

Middlebury Police Log

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Responded to a domestic disturbance at a Court Street residence on Feb. 2.
- Responded to a disorderly behavior complaint at a Route 7 South location on Feb. 2.
- Loaned the department's K-9 team to Vermont State Police on Feb. 3 to determine whether a vehicle stopped on Route 7 contained illegal drugs.
- Investigated a reported "juvenile problem" on Court Street during the evening of Feb. 3.
- Checked on the welfare of a man who had been found sleeping at the rail platform off Maple Street on Feb. 4.
- Assisted at a family dispute at a Court Street home on Feb. 4.
- Responded to a reported "juvenile issue" at Middlebury Union High School on Feb. 4.
- Responded to a report of a juvenile in possession of drugs at

MUHS on Feb. 4.

- Responded to a property-related dispute between two siblings in the Jackson Lane neighborhood on Feb. 4.
- Investigated a retail theft complaint at a Court Street business on Feb. 5.
- Responded to a report of someone lying on Cross Street at 6:45 a.m. on Feb. 6 but found no one.
- Located a runaway juvenile at a Court Street home on Feb. 6.
- Helped a homeless woman find a place to stay for the evening of Feb. 6 after she had been turned away by the local shelter and after she had tried unsuccessfully to find a placement through Vermont 211.
- Checked on the welfare of a dog in the Washington Street area on Feb. 6.
- Interviewed Counseling Service of Addison County officials about a threatening incident on Feb. 6.
- Cited Ricardo H. Wright, 33, who is homeless, for violating his conditions of release, in the John Graham Court area on Feb. 6.

- Assisted MUHS officials with a runaway juvenile case on Feb. 6.
- Checked on the welfare of a man at Middlebury College who has sent suicidal messages to a friend on Feb. 6.
- Cited Hannah M. Alexander, 18, of Hancock for simple assault following investigation of a complaint on the Porter Medical Center campus on Feb. 7.
- Assisted some Court Street parents with an unruly child on Feb. 7.
- Located, in the Court Street area on Feb. 8, a juvenile who had run away from the Colchester area. Police worked with Colchester police to return the youth to their guardian.
- Spoke with a local woman on Feb. 8 who was concerned that her child was being bullied.
- Helped a Cottage Lane resident who reported receiving harassing phone calls on Feb. 8.
- Enforced Middlebury's overnight winter parking ban downtown on Feb. 8.
- Assisted Vergennes police in responding to an attempted suicide at a West Main Street location of the Little City on Feb. 9.
- Responded to a trespassing complaint in the South Main Street area on Feb. 9.

Sheriff's Log

ADDISON COUNTY — Deputies with the Addison County Sheriff's Department responded to a call to check on a cow that appeared to be in distress on Arnold Bay Road in Panton on Feb. 6.

- On Feb. 2 took to the courthouse a person who was arrested by Middlebury police on a warrant. Following arraignment, a deputy took the person to jail.

- On Feb. 2 followed up on a reported crash on Snake Mountain Road in Weybridge then passed on relevant information to state police (See Sheriff's log, Page 12B)

REQUEST FOR BIDS

Stewart Construction, located in Essex Junction, Vermont, is seeking bids from qualified subcontractors for a fast-paced, multi-family construction project off Seminary Street Extension in the town of Middlebury, Vermont. The scopes of work available for bids include but are not limited to: Sitework, Concrete, Wood Framing, Mechanical/Plumbing, Electrical, and Finishes – both interior and exterior. Minority, Women, Small Owned, & Section 3 Businesses are encouraged to respond. Interested subcontractors must not be debarred from receiving State or Federal funding and must be capable of processing certified payroll with Davis Bacon wages. Please reach out to info@scivt.com for access to the Duplexes 5-8 (Lot 10) bid documents; bids will be accepted for the work until February 18, 2026.

STATE OF VERMONT

SUPERIOR COURT ADDISON UNIT

PRIMELENDING, A PLAINSCAPITAL COMPANY
PLAINTIFF

VS.

KATHERINE W. HOPE, FIDUCIARY FOR THE ESTATE OF ELLWYN LEO POQUETTE, JR. AND OCCUPANTS RESIDING AT 72 VIRGIN AVENUE, HANCOCK, VT 05748
DEFENDANT(S)

NOTICE OF SALE

In accordance with the Judgment and Decree of Foreclosure by Judicial Sale filed on October 27, 2025, in the above captioned action brought to foreclose that certain mortgage given by Ellwyn Leo Poquette, Jr. and Judith A. Poquette to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for PrimeLending, a PlainsCapital Company, dated August 31, 2018, and recorded in Book 36, at Page 434, of the Town of Hancock Land Records, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by Assignment of Mortgage recorded in Book 39, at Page 382, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on **March 11, 2026 at 11:00 AM at 72 Virgin Avenue, Hancock, VT 05748** all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

To Wit:

Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed to Ellwyn Leo Poquette, Jr. and Judith A. Poquette by Trustee's Deed of Perry Family Revocable Living Trust u/a dated December 10, 1997, dated August 31, 2018 and recorded September 4, 2018 in Book 36, at Page 432 of the Town of Hancock Land Records and further described therein.

Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed to Stanley M. Perry and Lesleigh J. Perry, Trustees of the Perry Family Revocable Living Trust, by Quit Claim Deed of Stanley M. Perry and Lesleigh J. Perry, husband and wife, dated December 10, 1997 and recorded July 6, 1998 in Book 22 at Page 483 of the Town of Hancock Land Records and more particularly described as follows:

Parcel One

Being all and the same lands and premises conveyed to Stanley M. Perry and Lesleigh J. Perry, husband and wife by Warranty Deed of Blair-Vermont Plywood Company, a Vermont corporation with its principal place of business at Troy, in the County of Orleans and State of Vermont, dated September 17, 1952 and recorded on September 20, 1952 in Book 15, Page 194 of the Hancock Land Records and more particularly described as follows:

Being a portion of the lands and premises conveyed to Blair Veneer Company by deed of Vermont Plywood, Inc. dated July 1, 1950 and recorded in Hancock Land Records in Book 15 at Page 165 bounded and described as follows:

Being Lots 11, 11A and 13 as shown on a plan of lots entitled "Blair-Vermont Plywood Subdivision Hancock, Vermont, showing redivision of lots as of August 12, 1952 by R.S. Welch," a copy of which said plan is on file in the office of the Town Clerk of Hancock. Reference is hereby had to said plan for a more particular description of said lands and premises.

Together with an undivided one-tenth interest in common with others in and to the sewer system which now serves the houses now located on said "Blair-Vermont Plywood Subdivision" provided, however, that no representation concerning the fitness of said sewer is made by Grantor and, provided further, that this conveyance shall create no responsibility or obligation on the part of Blair-Vermont Plywood Company or its successors to maintain or repair said sewer. The sewers and sewer system on the premises are reserved and excepted from this conveyance except for the portions thereof hereby conveyed.

Reference is hereby made to the above mentioned deeds and their records and to all former deeds and their records for a more complete description of the property conveyed herein.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

The public sale may be adjourned one or more times for a total time not exceeding 30 days, without further court order, and without publication or service of a new notice of sale, by announcement of the new sale date to those present at each adjournment or by posting notice of the adjournment in a conspicuous place at the location of the sale.

Terms of Sale: \$10,000.00 to be paid in cash or by certified check by the purchaser at the time of sale, with the balance due at closing. The sale is subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

The Mortgagor is entitled to redeem the premises at any time prior to the sale by paying the full amount due under the mortgage, including the costs and expenses of the sale.

Other terms to be announced at sale.

PrimeLending, a PlainsCapital Company
Bozena Wysocki, Esq.
BROCK & SCOTT, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
VT_Noticesofhearing@brockandscott.com

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT
on Pages 11B and 12B.

MIDDLEBURY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC NOTICE

The annual meeting of the Middlebury Cemetery Association will be held at the offices of Langrock, Sperry & Wool, 111 S. Pleasant St., Middlebury, VT on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 5pm.

ADDISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT WARNING

PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING

Member Towns are Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge

FEBRUARY 24, 2026

The legal voters of the Addison Central School District are hereby notified of the Public Information Hearing on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 7:00 PM at the Middlebury Union High School to discuss Australian Ballot Articles warned for vote on Tuesday, March 3, 2026.

Virtual connection details may be found on the ACSD Website: www.acsdvt.org

Mary Gill, Clerk
Addison Central School District

Barbara Wilson, Chair
Addison Central School District

The Addison Central School District Annual Report and FY27 Budget Book will be available in the following manner:
www.acsdvt.org/district-link/budget-development
or call 802-382-1274 to request a copy.

OTTER VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

February 25, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

The legal voters of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District, consisting of the Towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury and Whiting are hereby notified and warned to meet in person at the Otter Valley Union High School Auditorium on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 6:30 PM, to consider and act upon the following articles (Articles 1-10) and for a public informational hearing to discuss the articles to be voted upon by Australian ballot (Article 11-12). Legal voters who attend via Zoom may not act upon Articles from the floor but may participate for informational purposes only. The legal voters are further notified and warned that voting on Articles shall take place by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at the times and places listed for the official polling places of the respective Towns comprising the district below.

Virtual Option for Observing Annual District Meeting
Remote attendees may not act upon Articles from the floor but may participate for informational purposes only. Meeting link and dial in information can be found on the calendar on the RNESU website: <http://www.mesu.org/events>.

To be acted upon on Wednesday, February 25, 2026.

- Article 1: To elect a Moderator who shall assume office immediately and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 2: To elect a Clerk who shall assume office on July 1, 2026 and serve a one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 3: To elect a Treasurer who shall assume office on July 1, 2026 and serve one-year term or until the election and qualification of a successor.
- Article 4: To establish the salaries for the elected officers of the District.
 - A. School Directors - \$1,500 per member per year, with an additional \$750 per year for the member serving as School Board Chair. This compensation represents the full and complete payment for School Directors for the period beginning with their first meeting in March and ending at the annual meeting the following February. No additional compensation shall be provided for committee membership or participation. School Directors who serve for less than twelve (12) months during this period shall have their salary prorated at a rate of \$125 per month.
 - B. Moderator - \$150 per meeting
 - C. Clerk - \$150 per meeting
 - D. Treasurer - \$6,000 per year
- Article 5: To approve all minutes from the last Unified Union District annual meeting to date.
- Article 6: Shall the legal voters authorize the School Board to borrow money by issuance of notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the fiscal year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027?
- Article 7: To hear and discuss the Board of School Directors of the Unified Union School District's presentation of its estimate of expenses for the ensuing year as stated in Article 11 to be voted upon by Australian Ballot.
- Article 8: Shall the voters approve changing the date of the 2027 Annual District Meeting to Wednesday, February 17, 2027 to avoid scheduling during school vacation.
- Article 9: To transact any other business which may legally come before this meeting.
- Article 10: To recess the meeting until 7:00 AM March 3, 2026, when voting by Australian ballot shall commence.

To be voted upon by Australian ballot on March 3, 2026:

- Article 11: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Twenty-Eight Million Eight Hundred Forty-One Thousand, Two Hundred Eight-Five Dollars (\$28,841,285) which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Otter Valley Unified Union School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$14,257, which is 5.5% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.
- Article 12: To elect the following officers to serve from their election and qualification until March following the election and qualification of their successors:
 - School Director, Brandon for a term of three (3) years
 - School Director, Leicester for a term of three (3) years
 - School Director, Pittsford for a term of one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term
 - School Director, Whiting for a term of one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term
 - School Director, At-Large for a term of three (3) years
 - School Director, At-Large for a term of three (3) years
 - School Director, At-Large for a term of one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term

For the purpose of voting by Australian ballot: In person voting will be available at local polling places on March 3, 2026. To request to have an OVUUSD absentee ballot mailed to you, please contact your Town Clerk, or use the "My Voter Page" online resource from the Secretary of State which can be found here: <https://mvp.vermont.gov/>. Please make your request for mailed ballots to your Town clerk no later than February 24, 2026. Absentee ballots must be returned before the close of the Town Clerk's office on the day before the election, or to the polling place before 7:00 PM on the day of the election, to be counted.

The Town polls will be opened for voting March 3, 2026 as follows:

Town of Brandon	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Brandon American Legion Post #55
Town of Goshen	9:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Goshen Town Hall
Town of Leicester	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Leicester Town Office
Town of Pittsford	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Pittsford Town Office
Town of Sudbury	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Sudbury Town Hall
Town of Whiting	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Whiting Town Hall

Upon closing of the polls in Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury and Whiting, the ballot boxes will be sealed, transported to, and re-opened at Brandon American Legion Post #55 in the Town of Brandon, where the ballots will be counted and commingled by a tabulator under observation of representatives of the Boards of Civil Authority of the Towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Sudbury, and Whiting under the supervision of the Clerk of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District.

The legal voters of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District are further notified that voter qualification and registration relative to said meeting shall be as provided in Section 706(u) of Title 16, and Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

On behalf of the Otter Valley Union Unified School District Board of Directors:

Dated at Brandon, Vermont
January 13, 2026

Laurie Bertrand
Laurie Bertrand, Board Chair
Otter Valley Unified Union School District No. U053

OFFICIAL BALLOT
OTTER VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BRANDON, GOSHEN, LEICESTER, PITTSFORD,
SUDBURY AND WHITING, VERMONT
MARCH 3, 2026

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- Use BLACK Pen to fill in the oval. DO NOT USE PENCIL.
- To vote for a person whose name is printed on the ballot, fill in the oval to the right of the name of that person.
- To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the person's name in the blank space provided and fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line. Please use block letters and stay within the box provided for write-ins.
- Do not vote for more candidates than the "VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN #" for an office.
- If you make a mistake, tear, or deface the ballot, return it to an election official and obtain another ballot. DO NOT ERASE.

ARTICLES

Article 11: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Twenty-Eight Million Eight Hundred Forty-One Thousand, Two Hundred Eight-Five Dollars (\$28,841,285) which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? The Otter Valley Unified Union School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$14,257, which is 5.5% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.

YES
NO

Article 12: To elect the following officers to serve from their election and qualification until March following the election and qualification of their successors:

<p>BRANDON SCHOOL DIRECTOR three (3) years Vote for not more than ONE KEVIN THORNTON <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>	<p>PITTSFORD SCHOOL DIRECTOR one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term Vote for not more than ONE KEVIN WHITE <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>	<p>AT-LARGE SCHOOL DIRECTOR three (3) years Vote for not more than TWO GABRIEL B. MCGUIGAN <input type="radio"/> JESSICA FJELD <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>
<p>LEICESTER SCHOOL DIRECTOR three (3) years Vote for not more than ONE LESLEY BIENVENUE <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>	<p>WHITING SCHOOL DIRECTOR one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term Vote for not more than ONE RHANNON BANKS-MORGAN <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>	<p>AT-LARGE SCHOOL DIRECTOR one (1) year remaining of a three (3) year term Vote for not more than ONE <input type="radio"/> (Write-in) <input type="text"/></p>

Addison County starts the day with

The WAKE UP CREW with Amanda Lee

weekday mornings from 5 to 10

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Bristol, Panton, Granville get aid for planning

MONTPELIER — Gov. Phil Scott and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) today announced that \$1,000,203 in Municipal Planning Grants have been awarded to 47 municipalities, including one multi-town project.

These grants will help communities throughout Vermont write and update town plans and bylaws, plan for public improvements, explore opportunities for new homes, and develop plans to make communities more resilient as they face more extreme weather.

“For decades, this funding has helped communities plan for their future,” said Gov. Phil Scott. “By giving them the support needed to plan for housing, infrastructure, and resiliency needs, these local investments will improve towns and municipalities for years to come.”

“As our state faces a growing need for housing and resilient infrastructure, these grants give municipalities the support to plan strategically and involve community members in the process,” said DHCD Commissioner Alex Farrell. “By funding thoughtful planning, we help towns make informed decisions and build a stronger, more sustainable future.”

Awarded annually and administered by DHCD, the Municipal Planning Grant program supports local community revitalization and planning initiatives. The program supports vital aspects of municipal

management and rural capacity-building by offering municipalities the funding they need to engage residents in decision-making and to establish a solid vision for their future.

Since 1998, the program has provided over \$17 million to 243 cities and towns. The full list of FY26 Municipal Planning Grant Projects and more information can be found on the Municipal Planning Grant Program webpage.

FY26 Municipal Planning Grant Projects

Municipal Planning Grants support local planning and community revitalization initiatives that ready projects for implementation, build strong communities and improve Vermont’s quality of life. Grants are awarded annually and administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The winning FY26 projects are described below.

Bristol will conduct an inclusive public process for updating the town plan to address flood resiliency, natural resource and

“As our state faces a growing need for housing and resilient infrastructure, these grants give municipalities the support to plan strategically and involve community members in the process. By funding thoughtful planning, we help towns make informed decisions and build a stronger, more sustainable future.”

— DHCD Commissioner Alex Farrell

renewable energy opportunities, meet current statutory mandates, and update maps and statistical information. For more information, contact Freeda Powers at grantadmin@bristolvt.org. Total Project Cost: \$21,400. Grant Funds Awarded: \$19,260.

Granville will revise its Town Plan to comply with statutory requirements, and to explore ways to ensure a thriving future for a very small rural town. For more information, contact Cheryl Sargeant at granvilletown@gmavt.net. Total Project Cost: \$14,880. Grant Funds Awarded: \$13,392.

Panton will update its Municipal Plan, and in doing so refine the community’s housing goals, identify and preserve scenic and natural resources, improve recreational assets, and work to coalesce our shared vision for the future. For more information, contact Kyle Rowe at clerktreasurer@pantonvt.us. Total Project Cost: \$19,037. Grant Funds Awarded: \$17,133.

Sheriff’s log

(Continued from Page 11B) for an ongoing case.

- On Feb. 2 Sheriff Elmore met with the Addison Central School District superintendent in Middlebury to discuss truancy procedures.
- On Feb. 2 Sheriff Elmore met with the Lions Club in Middlebury to update club members on what the sheriff’s department has been doing.
- On Feb. 3 provided two deputies for a standby while belongings were removed from a

- Middlebury home after an eviction.
- On Feb. 4 assisted a landlord with an eviction in Starksboro.
- On Feb. 4 sent extra deputies to the courthouse in Middlebury for a jury draw.
- On Feb. 4 investigated a crash on Ireland Road in Starksboro.
- On Feb. 5 checked on an Orwell property that is currently vacant at the request of the owner.
- On Feb. 5 received a report of an injured deer near the road on Route 73 in Orwell. Deputies checked the area and were unable

- to locate the animal.
- On Feb. 5 Sheriff Elmore met with the other county police chiefs in Bristol.
- On Feb. 5 followed up on a truancy issue from the high school in Vergennes.
- On Feb. 5 assisted Middlebury police on an alarm call.
- On Feb. 6 transported two people at the request of Middlebury police.
- On Feb. 7 assisted Vermont State Police with a crash on Route 17 in Addison.

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ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

February 12, 2026

FROM JAZZ GEEK TO GREAT

*Connor Young releases fourth
album 'From Me To You Vol. 2'*

See STORY on page 3

Connor Young released his fourth album "From Me To You Vol. 2" at the beginning of the year. Young is the Middlebury Union Middle School band teacher and leads by example with his own music.

PHOTO / MACAULAY LERMAN

Side-splitting farce, 'Moon Over Buffalo' comes to Middlebury

Get ready for an evening of non-stop laughter and classic screwball comedy as The Middlebury Community Players present Ken Ludwig's hilarious play, "Moon Over Buffalo." This fast-paced homage to theater will run from Feb. 19-22, at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

Set in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1953, the play centers on George and Charlotte Hay, two fading stars of the 1950s stage who are performing *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Private Lives* in repertory theater to a dwindling audience. On the brink of a disastrous split, they receive word that Hollywood director Frank Capra is coming to their matinee that very day, offering one last shot at stardom.

What follows is a perfect storm of theatrical chaos: a paternity announcement, a visit from their daughter's weatherman-fiancé, a deaf mother-in-law's confusion over Irish coffee, and a series of mistaken identities, dropped lines and rapid-fire costume changes that run wildly off the rails. Ken Ludwig stuffs his play with comic invention and running gags. The audience is in for an

evening of pure farcical delight, complete with slamming doors, a sword fight and bravura performances from the talented cast.

The production stars Carl Engvall as the over-the-top George Hay, Suzanna Miller as his fiery wife Charlotte, Lilia Cohen as Eileen, Bettina Matthias as Ethel, Raphael Desautels as Howard, Leigh Guptill as Richard, and Olivia Olson as Rosalind. Called "Broadway's funniest, most enjoyable lighthearted play" by *Entertainment Weekly*, "Moon Over Buffalo" promises an unforgettable night of entertainment with plenty of laughs.

Performances are Feb. 19, 20 and 21, at 7:30 p.m., as well as a matinee on Sunday, Feb. 22, at 2 p.m., at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater. Ticket prices: Friday-Saturday-Sunday: \$20, \$25, \$35; Thursday (opening night): \$15, \$25, \$35. Prices include all fees. For tickets, visit TownHallTheater.org or call the THT box office at 802-382-9222. More information about the show, including photos of the cast in rehearsal, can be found at MiddleburyCommunityPlayers.org or Facebook.



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The Middlebury Community Players will present the screwball comedy "Moon Over Buffalo" Feb. 19-22, at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



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New album 'From Me To You Vol. 2' blurs jazz and folk

M

By **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

iddle school band teacher. Cool or not cool?

Whoa, we better say "cool" because Connor Young, the Middlebury Union Middle School band teacher is definitely reading this... But let's be honest, he *is* actually pretty cool.

Young's the first to admit that as a sixth-grader growing up in South Burlington, he didn't want to join band.

"I give credit to my mom," he said during an interview after school last week. "She told me to 'just choose an instrument.'"

The alternative to joining band was study hall — yawn.

"I chose trumpet," Young said. "I don't really know why."

Young joined a jazz summer camp at the University of Vermont in 2008, when he was a seventh-grader, led by UVM music faculty member Ray Vega... and Young's music trajectory was pretty much set.

High school brought guitar and some piano, and college at McGill Conservatory of Music in Montreal ended with a degree in jazz performance.

"My mom's side is from up there," Young said, speaking of our neighbors north of the border. "Both my mom and grandmother's first language is French, but not mine."

Young brings a strong background in jazz with him wherever he goes — like in his newest album, "From Me to You Vol. 2," which was released at the beginning of 2026.

This is Young's fourth album in four years, and it bridges genres of jazz, indie and folk. "From Me to You Vol. 2" is a fully immersive experience — listeners waded into the waters with Young, first shallow with jazz standards, then deeper as the tracks meld into honest folk, and at some point, we find ourselves underwater — listening with abandon. Young's melodies cradle us in the comforts of jazz, while challenging us to listen authentically to a moment in time.

"It's fully encompassing," he said, explaining

that he does everything from start to finish, including writing the lyrics and recording all the instruments himself. "It almost feels like in this album, I'm a guy at the end of his life, reflecting on what I want."

The writing process for Young is "very cathartic." He starts with his journaling habit and gets a stream of conscious going — or sometimes it starts with "some sort of phrase attached to a melody," he said. Then he'll use those journals as a kind of "cheat sheet" to write a song.

"A lot of times the right things are the first things," Young said.

Spoken like a true jazz-er. Right? I mean those folks that can get up and play through improv bars — *those people* know how to be in a moment. And, yeah, sometimes that first instinct is exactly where you wanna be simply because it's where you are.

This is the authenticity factor Young brings to his music.

Young has about 50 sixth-graders and 60-something seventh- and eighth-graders in the band program; plus, his jazz band kids, who show up at 7:30 a.m. (before school) to practice three days a week.

Music can be hard, and some kids are only their because their moms made them... Young gets it.

"After I play a gig," which Young does regularly in Burlington where he lives, "people come up to me and tell me about all about the instrument they used to play, and then I ask, 'Do you still play?' And they say no.

"So many people wish that they had kept playing," Young said. "I want to show my students that music is a skill — a way of bringing people together... And that getting past all the hurdles of doing something hard, is an important lesson for all of us."

Young shared a few memories from trips he

See **YOUNG** on page 7

"MIDDLE SCHOOL HAS GOT TO BE THE COOLEST AGE ... IT'S A TIME WHEN KIDS ARE FIGURING OUT HOW THEY WANT TO PRESENT TO THEIR PEERS. THEY'RE LEARNING THE THINGS THAT THEY LIKE, AND DON'T LIKE ... THERE'S SO MUCH CHANGE IN SUCH A SHORT TIME."

— Connor Young

And to the classroom.

Young went through the Teacher Apprentice Program through Champlain College and began teaching PreK through fifth grade in 2021 at Bridport and Shoreham elementary schools. A year later he landed the gig at the middle school.

"Middle school has got to be the coolest age," Young said.

No really, he seriously said that... Please explain.

"It's a time when kids are figuring out how they want to present to their peers. They're learning the things that they like, and don't like... there's so much change in such a short time."



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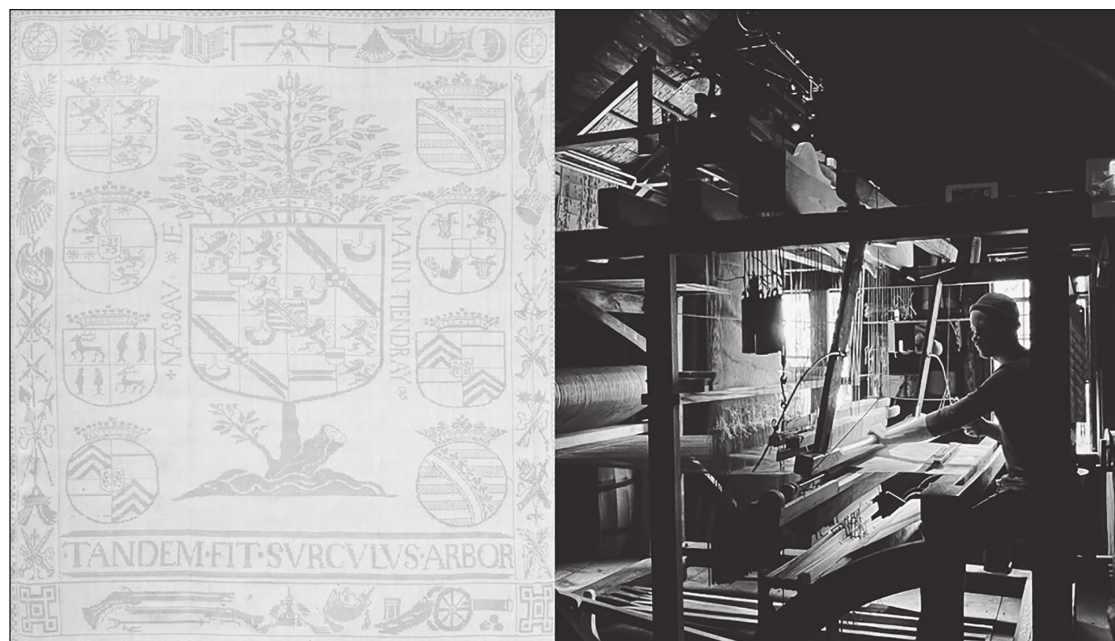
Looms, linen, luxury and lunch

There's a new piece of textile art at the Middlebury College Museum of Art that will be the topic of an upcoming Lecture + Lunch series on Friday, Feb. 20, beginning at 12:30 p.m. in the lower lobby and museum of the Mahaney Arts Center.

Carrie Anderson (professor of History of Art & Architectural Studies) will discuss the museum's latest textile acquisition: a 17th-century damask linen. Anderson will be joined by Justin

Squizzero, Director of the Newbury School of Weaving, who will explain the complexities of weaving damask. Summer Jack (Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre) will be available to talk informally about linen items in the Middlebury College Antique Clothing Collection. Afterward, stay for conversation over a light lunch in the MAC lower lobby.

This event is free and open to all, but \$5 donations are welcome.



This 17th-century damask linen is the latest acquisition for the Middlebury College Museum of Art. Come learn more during a Lecture + Lunch series on Friday, Feb. 20.

COURTESY PHOTO



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AT
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WINE WEDNESDAYS AT JESSICA'S

Join Sommelier Ella Donnelly-Wright for themed wine tastings every Wednesday through May. Drop by between 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Complimentary nibbles included. Deep discounts on featured wines.

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February 18: Farrell Takeover - Kermit Lynch Classics
February 25: California Dreaming

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Call for Applications: Creation Grants

The Vermont Arts Council is now accepting applications for its annual Creation Grant, which supports individual artists or artist groups in creating new work.

Changes this year include grant awards that are a flat amount of \$5,000 and a new option of \$10,000 awards for performing arts groups.

Grant funds may be used to compensate artists for time spent creating new work, to purchase materials, or to rent equipment or space for the process. Examples of fundable projects are:

- A multimedia artist creating a new video series
- A writer completing the first draft of a novel
- A dance ensemble developing choreography for a new piece
- A visual artist creating art for exhibition that explores new subjects and techniques
- A musician composing music for a new album

This highly competitive program is reviewed by an independent panel of practicing artists and arts professionals. Both established and emerging artists are encouraged to apply.

Application Deadline: April 5, 2026.

For more information visit [contact info@vermontartscouncil.org](mailto:contact@vermontartscouncil.org) or call 802-828-3291. Apply online at vermontartscouncil.org/grants.

Feb. 21 free workshop teaches how you can get artist residencies

On Saturday, Feb. 21, Middlebury College Professor, nature photographer, and non-fiction writer Matthew Dickerson will lead a how-to workshop on securing artist residencies. This workshop, from 1-4 p.m., is free with registration, thanks to generous sponsorship from The Vermont Creative Network. The workshop will be held in the Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio in Middlebury.

The workshop will cover:

- An overview of artist residencies, including how to find them and why somebody might or might not find one valuable.
- Tips on applying (based on examples of several

See *DICKERSON* on page 15



ART ON EXHIBIT

ART ON MAIN

25 Main Street, Bristol

Call 802-453-4032, email aom@gmavt.net or visit artonmainvt.com for more info.

Katie Roberts presents a collection of landscape and wildlife paintings created with water-soluble oils. Her work highlights the beauty and vulnerability of the natural world, emphasizing themes of conservation, preservation, and our connection to the land and the animals that inhabit it. On view through February.

BRANDON ARTISTS GUILD

7 Center St, Brandon. For more info visit

brandonartistsguild.org or call 802-247-4956.

"Student Art Show" features young artists chosen by art educators from Lothrop, Otter Creek Academy, Barstow, Neshobe and Otter Valley Middle and High School. On view Feb. 3-28.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant Street, Middlebury

Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery

or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"Wild Encounters." McKenna Dickerson and Matthew Dickerson (daughter-in-law and father-in-law) will share images of encounters with the natural world, especially in the wilder places of our public lands: national parks, national forests, and state parks. Free and open to all. On view Feb. 3-March 14

JOHNSON EXHIBITION GALLERY

78 Chateau Road, Middlebury

For hours and info visit middlebury.edu/events

"Cultural Fabrics; The Kimono Through Literary, Cross-Cultural, and Practical Lenses." This multidisciplinary exhibit explores the kimono in dialogue with Japanese literature, Western aesthetics, fashion, and fiber crafts. On view Feb. 9-March 19. Free and open to all.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury

For more info visit middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions

"Angels & Ghosts" features evocative oil paintings from artist Damian Stamer's acclaimed "Collaboration Series," that emerge from an artistic partnership between human creativity and artificial intelligence. This exhibit was curated by Dexter Wimberly, and offers a unique meditation on how we might navigate our relationship with AI. On view Jan. 20-April 19.

"Beyond Boundaries: Rethinking African Art at Middlebury" highlights how unequal, and at times violent, encounters among Africa, Europe and the United States have long configured Art History's understandings of African art, and how our interests and epistemologies infuse, shape and distort our

See EXHIBITS on page 13

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. You have the cosmic green light to start that major project you've been planning or to take a leap in your career, Aries. Trust your intuition — it's sharper than ever.

TAURUS: April 21/ May 21. Abundance is knocking, Taurus. Your hard work is translating into tangible rewards, and you may receive unexpected good news regarding finances or resources.

GEMINI: May 22/ June 21. Your mind is sparkling, Gemini, making you the most magnetic person in the room. Use this vibrant energy to connect, share ideas and lead discussions.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, a feeling of emotional security empowers you to tackle any professional challenge with grace and confidence. You are totally centered right now, so go for it.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, you are radiating charisma this week and attracting positive attention wherever you go. Use this incredible visibility to network or showcase your talents.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. You'll find great satisfaction in clean, organized work that earns sincere praise this week, Virgo. Your dedication is about to unlock a significant reward. Surprises are in store.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Relationships are the key to your happiness this week, Libra. Expect delightful interactions, smooth negotiations and the forging of beneficial alliances.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/ Nov. 22. This week is all about your own transformation, Scorpio. You feel a surge of internal power and clarity that allows you to confidently pursue deep, personal goals.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/ Dec. 21. Your sense of optimism and love for exploration is fully charged, Sagittarius. Even if you can't take a trip, your mind is open to exciting new philosophies or ideas.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Your professional reputation is soaring, Capricorn. Key figures at your job are recognizing your dedication and leadership. Expect exciting opportunities for advancement.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/ Feb. 18. Your network is buzzing with opportunities, Aquarius. Collaborative efforts are highly favored, and you'll find incredible support for your most innovative ideas.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, your intuition is a superpower that guides you toward fulfillment and emotional satisfaction this week. Embrace your artistic side and allow your imagination to lead the way.



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FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEB.13 — Peter Gabriel, musician (76)

FEB.14 — Renée Fleming, opera singer (67)

FEB.15 — Miranda July, writer and actor (52)

FEB.16 — James Ingram, singer (74)

FEB.17 — Billy Joe Armstrong, musician (44)

FEB.18 — Toni Morrison, novelist, Nobel Laureate (d)

FEB.19 — Any Tan, novelist (74)

CALENDAR

Feb. 12-24

2026

THURSDAY, FEB. 12

NEW NOVEL ON MARIE CURIE RELEASE PARTY IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 12, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72-76 Merchants Row. Join Vermont Book Shop for an evening with Weybridge author and psychologist Devon Jersild to celebrate the launch of her debut novel, "Luminous Bodies." A reception with light fare and a cash bar will follow the event. Books will be available for purchase and signing. Free with registration.

FRIDAY, FEB. 13

"ANGELS & GHOSTS" ARTIST TALK IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 13, 12:45-2 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center, 72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury College. Lecture and lunch with guest artist Damian Stamer, who will discuss his "Angels & Ghosts" series and his distinctive process combining traditional oil painting with AI-generated imagery. Free and open to the public.

"SHELTERING ANGEL OF BELLEAU WOOD" BOOK LAUNCH AND VALENTINE'S CELEBRATION IN LINCOLN. Friday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m., Lincoln Library, 222 West River Rd. Lincoln author Ellie Bryant launches her novel "Sheltering Angel of Belleau Wood," the second

in the Sheltering Angel series. Copies available for purchase. Stay after the reading for a Valentine's Day chocolate extravaganza. Free.

ISIDORE STRING QUARTET IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center, Olin C. Robison Concert Hall, Middlebury College, 72 Porter Field Road. The award-winning Isidore String Quartet returns to Middlebury with the world premiere of Billy Childs' "Quartet No. 4," written for the ensemble, alongside arrangements of Bach and Brahms. \$30 general admission, \$20 Middlebury ID holders/PASS members, \$10 youth under 21, \$5 Middlebury students. Open to the public. Tickets at go.middlebury.edu/tickets.

SATURDAY, FEB. 14

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE/SNOWSHOE BEANE, BIRCH GLEN ADVENTURE IN HUNTINGTON. Saturday, Feb. 14. Difficult snowshoe and bushwhack, roughly 6 miles and 1,000 feet elevation gain. Wander through the Huntington Wilderness Management Area to the Long Trail and Birch Glen Camp. Snowshoes required. Contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 for more information. More info at gmcbreadloaf.org.

LOVE SONGS WITH BILL

WALSH AND DAN LEVINE IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Feb. 14, 2 p.m., Vergennes Grand Senior Living, 34 North St. Former Broadway musicians Bill Walsh and Dan Levine perform favorite love songs and show tunes for Valentine's Day. Part of the Vergennes Opera House's "Off Stage" series. Free. More info at vergennesoperahouse.org.

DAMN TALL BUILDINGS CONCERT IN LINCOLN. Saturday, Feb. 14, 7:30-10 p.m., Burnham Hall, 52 East River Rd. Bluegrass/Americana band Damn Tall Buildings performs as part of the Burnham Presents Concert Series, blending traditional bluegrass with roots rock and original songwriting. Two sets. Homemade desserts available. Sliding scale \$20/\$25/\$30. Tickets at burnhampresents.org. More info at 802-349-3364.

"GRUNGE UNPLUGGED VALENTINE'S DAY CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. Clint Bierman and Vermont all-star musicians present an acoustic concert recreating classic MTV Unplugged-style performances from grunge-era artists including Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Alice in Chains, Soundgarden, Stone Temple

Pilots and more. Candlelit cabaret table seating available. Tickets \$25-\$50 at addisonarts.org.

SUNDAY, FEB. 15

"SIMPLE SAGE" STAGED READING IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 15, 4 p.m., Anderson Studio at Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. Middlebury Acting Company presents a staged reading of the play "Simple Sage," a new work by Vermont playwright Kate Youngdahl-Stauss that tells the story of an 18th-century Granville house and the women who shaped its history. Refreshments and a discussion with Youngdahl-Stauss will follow the reading. \$15. Tickets at addisonarts.org.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB TAYLOR SERIES TALK WITH TED SCHEU IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 15, 6:30 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. Ted Scheu will show pictures and share his experience completing the Tour de Mont Blanc this past fall. More info at gmcbreadloaf.org.

TUESDAY, FEB. 17

"THE ARTIST'S WAY" READING AND PRACTICE GROUP IN VERGENNES. Tuesday, Feb. 17, 6 p.m., 3 Squares Cafe, 141 Main St. Weekly study and discussion

group working through Julia Cameron's "The Artist's Way," a 12-week method of creative unblocking and self-discovery. Open to first-time readers and returning participants in a supportive, non-hierarchical setting. Coffee, tea, and pastries available for purchase. Free.

IRISH MUSIC NIGHT WITH RAMBLETREE IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Feb. 17, 7-9 p.m., Two Brothers Tavern, 86 Main St. A high-energy mix of classic Irish tunes, sea shanties, world music, rock, funk, reggae and original material. Free.

ROKEBY MUSEUM VIRTUAL BOOK GROUP. Tuesday, Feb. 17, 6-7 p.m., online on Zoom. Discussion of "The Message" by Ta-Nehisi Coates, exploring the urgent need to untangle ourselves from destructive myths and embrace the liberating power of difficult truths. Free. More info at rokebymuseum.org.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18

DOUG ANDERSON'S "THE HOLLYWOOD MUSICAL" PART 2 COURSE IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72-76 Merchants Row. Town Hall Theater founder and resident director Doug Anderson leads a lecture and screening

See *CALENDAR* on page 14

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753		Please see the MCTV website, www.middleburycommunitytv.org , for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 802-388-3062.	
Channel 1071 Through the Night: VT Media Exchange, Community Bulletin Board Thursday, February 12 4 a.m. Democracy Now 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard 2:30 p.m. VT State House 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 10 p.m. Democracy Now Friday, February 13 4 a.m. Democracy Now 6:15 a.m. Press Conferences 7:30 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard 3 p.m. Energy Week 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 10 p.m. Democracy Now Saturday, February 14 4 a.m. Democracy Now 7 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 8 a.m. Energy Week 10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar	7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. VT State House Sunday, February 15 5 a.m. Public Affairs 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 9:30 a.m. Press Conferences 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 1 p.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 7:30 p.m. Energy Week 11 p.m. Democracy Now Monday, February 16 4:30 a.m. Democracy Now 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. Press Conferences 10 a.m. Selectboard 12:30 p.m. State House 10 p.m. Democracy Now 11 p.m. All Things LGBTQ Tuesday, February 17 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 6 a.m. Press Conferences	9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Congregational Service 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Democracy Now 11 p.m. Energy Week Wednesday, February 18 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Press Conferences 7:30 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass 10 a.m. Selectboard 12:30 p.m. Public Affairs 7 p.m. Selectboard 10 p.m. Democracy Now Channel 1091 Thursday, February 12 6 a.m. Tai Chi 6:30 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. Gardens, Science and Nature 10 a.m. Authors & Poets 12 p.m. ACSD Board Meeting 4 p.m. High School Sports 8 p.m. All Brains Belong	9 p.m. Music from around VT Friday, February 13 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Yoga for Kids 7:30 a.m. Gardens, Science and Nature 9 a.m. ACSD Board Meeting 3 p.m. All Brains Belong 4 p.m. High School Sports Saturday, February 14 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga & Yoga 8 a.m. All Brains Belong 9 a.m. Gardens, Science and Nature 12 p.m. ACSD Board Meeting 4 p.m. High School Sports 8 p.m. Coyotes ABA Basketball Sunday, February 15 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. ACSD Board Meeting 11 a.m. Gardens, Science and Nature 1 p.m. All Brains Belong 2 p.m. High School Sports 7 p.m. Music from around VT	Monday, February 16 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 8 a.m. Brattleboro Literary Festival 4 p.m. High School Sports 6:30 p.m. ACSD Board 10:30 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead Tuesday, February 17 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 7 a.m. Music from around VT 2:45 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead 4 p.m. High School Sports 8 p.m. School Board Meeting/s Wednesday, February 18 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Gardens, Science and Nature 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 4 p.m. High School Sports 8 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead	



Connor Young is the Middlebury Union Middle School band teacher and has just released his fourth album "From Me To You Vol. 2."

PHOTO / MACAULAY LERMAN / @MACAULAYLERMAN / MACAULAYLERMAN.COM

YOUNG

continued from page 3

has taken as a solo musician to Ireland and New Orleans:

"In Dublin, I thought I had made a huge mistake," he said, explaining that no one was accepting his invitation to play together. "Then I got on a bus and went to Galway, wandered around and asked two random guys in a pub if they wanted to play... I stayed there for two weeks, and we busked together every day and then got a gig in Dublin.

"In New Orleans, trumpet is king, so when I walked down the street someone saw my case and was like, 'Is that a trumpet? Come play!' That happened everywhere I went."

This is what Young means when he calls music a skill.

"Music is a universal language, and it opens doors to do all these cool things," he said. "The power of music is that I can create something out of nothing."

In the classroom Young is not shy about sharing these stories or his own music with

"MUSIC IS A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE, AND IT OPENS DOORS TO DO ALL THESE COOL THINGS."

— Connor Young

his students (when there's enough time).

"I show them my connection to music, and hope it resonates," Young said, adding that this connection was important to him in "From Me To You Vol. 2." "I wanted it to be authentic. I wanted to make a representation of me at a point in time."

"From Me To You Vol. 2" sure takes the listener in, and Young has plans to carry us "a little further down the river" with a third volume he's working on already.

Editor's Note: Find Connor Young's album "From Me To You Vol. 2" on all streaming platforms or visit connoryoungmusic.com. See Young play every Wednesday evening (ahem, night owls) from 9-11 p.m. at the 126 club on College Street in Burlington.

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Ilseley Library's Classic Film Club Winter/Spring 2026 Session At the Marquis Theatre!

Join fellow community film lovers to watch this session's films at the Marquis Theatre, followed by a short discussion of the film. What a great opportunity to treat yourself to a delicious southwestern lunch before or even during the film. As always, the popcorn is on us!

This session our theme is "The 1930's in Color." Will run February - April.

All movies will begin at 1:00 pm



February 19
@ 1:00 PM
NOTHING SACRED



March 5
@ 1:00 PM
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS



March 19
@ 1:00 PM
THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD



April 2
@ 1:00 PM
THE WIZARD OF OZ

FREE ADMISSION courtesy of Ilseley Public Library.
Marquis is open for lunch beginning at 11:30am.



UPCOMING

MUSIC

Duo warms up the stage with genuine connection

Town Hall Theater and Valley Stage Productions are delighted to present the Heather Pierson Duo as part of the P.M. Sundays Concert Series, Sunday, Feb. 22, at 4 p.m., in the THT's Anderson Studio in Middlebury.

Celebrated for her joyful and genre-spanning performances, Pierson is a New Hampshire-based pianist, singer/songwriter, and song leader whose music defies easy categorization while remaining deeply heartfelt and accessible. With roots in New Orleans jazz, blues, folk, and Americana, Pierson's work reflects decades of artistic exploration and a profound commitment to connecting with her audience.

A veteran performer with a rich catalog of releases on her own independent label, Vessel Recordings, Pierson has released 16 albums of original music that blend sophisticated piano work with expressive bell-tone vocals. Her

most recent project, "Back To The Light" (2024), was recorded live and showcases her trio's dynamic interplay with Shawn Nadeau on bass and Craig Bryan on drums, flowing effortlessly between New Orleans groove, Appalachian beauty, jazz-tinged blues, and spiritually resonant songs.

Audiences and presenters alike praise Pierson's live shows for their warmth, virtuosity and genuine connection. Her performances are described as infused with joy, honest self-reflection, and a deep desire to share music from the heart. Whether solo, in duo format, or with her trio, listeners can expect a concert experience that is both uplifting and deeply musical.

At P.M. Sundays, Pierson will perform with her long-time musical partner Nadeau on bass, presenting a selection of originals and inspired interpretations that highlight her pianistic fluency, expressive vocals, and eclectic style.



Heather Pierson and Shawn Nadeau will perform on Sunday, Feb. 22, at 4 p.m., in the Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio in Middlebury. Part of the Valley Stage Productions P.M. Sundays concert series.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Tickets cost \$15/students, \$25 advance, \$28 door, and are available at townhalltheater.org, by calling 802-382-9222 or during box office hours Monday-Friday 12-5 p.m.

Winter into Spring Musical Library Tour brings The Town Hollers to Starksboro

The third annual Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour keeps going this month with The Town Hollers at the Starksboro Library, on Feb. 19, at 7:30 p.m. The series is presented by the 5 Town friends of the Arts along with the 5 Town libraries.

Ukulele Clare and Rebecca Padula will play in March, Sara Grey and Kieron Means will perform in April and Helen Hummel will play in May. The venues will be libraries in each of the five towns (Lincoln, Starksboro, Monkton, New Haven and Bristol). All shows start at 7:30 p.m. and are free with donations welcome.

The Town Hollers at Starksboro Library: Feb. 19

Hailing from the western foot of Camel's Hump, the Town Hollers are a fiddle-tune-sawing acoustic jam band that pushes the genre into unexpected grooves. With the typical old-timey and grassy instrumentation of mandolin, guitar, fiddle, upright bass and banjo, the Town Hollers play a swath of fiddle tunes from down south and then



The Town Hollers will play at the Starksboro Library on Feb. 19, at 7:30 p.m. Part of the annual Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour. Free and open to all.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

add the reedy accordion and harmonica to blend in Quebecois traditions as well as an inventive bunch of originals that draw

on Appalachian, Cajun, French and other traditions, with an occasional pinch of dawg.

FILM SCREENINGS

Haiku: New song reflects on ethics and emotions

Not sure what to make of the state of affairs these days? Maybe this single and hand-painted animated film will help...

On Feb. 20 — that also happens to be UN World Day of Social Justice — Grammy-nominated composer, singer and arranger Moira Smiley will release "Haiku." The release is accompanied by a visually arresting animated video by filmmaker and visual artist Christine Banna. Additional compositing and animation by Katelyn Park.

Haiku sets to music a poem by the Edo-period Japanese poet Kobayashi Issa, whose words form the ethical and emotional center of the work:

***"In this world,
we walk on the roof of hell
gazing at flowers."***

Smiley appears as composer, arranger, and lead vocalist, joined by the distinct and expressive voices of Craig Hella Johnson (Conspirare) and Shara Nova (My Brightest Diamond), themselves titans of choral, indie-

pop and classical music. Voices and a string quartet create arcs of fragility and force above a deep, sparkling hum — holding tension, grief and wonder all at once.

Banna's hand-painted, tremulous animations frame Issa's wry world of contradiction within the vastness of the greater cosmos. Her ever-widening lens distills the cognitive dissonance and existential alarm of living in this human moment.

Flowers and other symbols reference violence against peoples — past and present — to benefit the powerful few.

"Haiku lives inside contradiction," said Smiley, a resident of New Haven. "The compound lenses of Issa's haiku, Christine's images and the voices of my friends reminds me that art can hold ethical (humane) attention amid devastation."

"Haiku" will be available on all major streaming platforms (except Spotify) on Feb. 20.



New Haven musician Moira Smiley preps to release her new single "Haiku" that features Craig Hella Johnson and Shara Nova, and is complemented by a hand-painted animated film by Christine Banna. Look for it on Feb. 20.



Hirschfield International Film Series screens 'Timestamp'

The Hirschfield International Film Series brings "Timestamp" to Dana Auditorium (356 College Street) in Middlebury on Thursday, Feb. 19, 7-9:30 p.m. This is a free monthly screening open to all.

"A PROFOUND MEDITATION ON THE RESILIENCE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT WITHIN A FRACTURED REALITY...A HAUNTING, LUMINOUS RECORD OF A GENERATION BEING FORGED IN THE DARK."

— *Gazettely*

In this 2025 Ukrainian documentary directed by Kateryna Gornostai, it has been three years since Russia's invasion. Despite the war, school life continues in Ukraine, with students and teachers striving to continue learning even under constant threat.

Arrive early at 6:30 p.m., for free pizza, popcorn and snacks!



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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

FIGHT THE WINTER BLUES WITH PLANTS



Deborah Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener who volunteers as a garden columnist and participates in Bennington County Extension Master Gardener Chapter activities.

Have the winter blues come to call? Take heart. Adding a bit of greenery to your surroundings just might help chase those blues away.

Each year, shorter daylight hours and colder temperatures send many of us retreating indoors. Less exposure to sunlight brings with it reduced levels of Vitamin D and a potential imbalance in our bodies of

serotonin and melatonin, hormones important in controlling stress and regulating sleep.

For millions of people, dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), also popularly known as the winter blues, is no joke. It might manifest itself as a lack of energy and motivation, poor sleep quality, trouble getting out of bed in the morning, even general grumpiness. You might suffer from mental fatigue or find yourself unable to concentrate.

Meyer lemon (*Citrus x limon* 'Meyer') provides a visually pleasing focal point in a room, while caring for it becomes a relaxing routine. Potted herbs under a grow light in the kitchen are both fragrant and satisfying to use when cooking.

Caring for houseplants provides a quiet time to relax and unwind. They reconnect us to nature during months when lush, green gardens and parks are sleeping beneath a blanket of snow. The simple, mindful routine of watering houseplants, cleaning dust from their foliage, pruning, or rotating pots can help focus our thoughts and reduce stress. Sharing our space with plants provides more than a visual link with nature. Caring for them can help reduce anxiety, ease mental fatigue, and increase attention and cognitive performance.

Even potting soil has benefits. Research has shown that *Mycobacterium vaccae*, a bacterium in soil, may prompt the release of serotonin in the body to reduce anxiety and stress and acts as an antidepressant.

Houseplants can help relieve stress by reducing the amount of cortisol (a stress hormone) in the body. Caring for houseplants stimulates the senses of sight, smell, touch — and taste if you're growing edibles such

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According to the theory of biophilia, humans are drawn to connect with nature. Depriving ourselves of such interaction can harm our wellbeing. Adding plants to the rooms you frequent at home or work is one way to help cope with SAD — and it's a natural choice for gardeners.

Houseplants beautify our indoor spaces and lift our spirits year-round. During the winter months, houseplants can serve therapeutic roles as well. Just as going for a walk in the woods or tending the garden can help boost our mood, so can caring for houseplants.

If you have an interest in a particular plant such as African violets (*Saintpaulia*), consider adding a pot or two near a sunny window. A larger plant such as a

See GARDEN on page 11



Houseplants are a great way to beat the winter blues.

Pet of the Week



Hi, I'm Freddie Fahrenheit!

My parents say I am the sweetest, happiest, goofiest little dude. My favorite things are my parents, more toys than we can count anymore, and giggle times. I also love throwing myself on my back, flopping around, making silly corgi noises that sound like a child's laugh.

Winter is my favorite season. I love to stuff my face up to my eyebrows in snow to follow a smell, or I also bound like a bunny through the snow until I almost disappear in it. I was named after a legendary rock icon, and bring just as much joy and weirdness as my namesake.

Submitted by **Nakeeya Murray of Bristol.**

Pet of the WEEK Send us a picture of your pet!
news@addisonindependent.com

Psst... It's free!

Pets In Need

HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Ambrosia

Ambrosia arrived to us as a nursing mom with 7 kittens! She was a very caring momma and after devoting herself to them and making sure they got the best start possible, it's now her turn to be pampered by a new family. She loved her foster family and was great with the kids in the home, very affectionate, and loved being picked up and held.

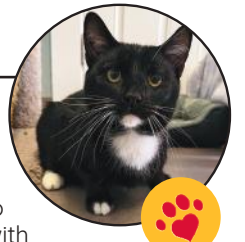


Angel



Angel is a sweet, older dog with a lot of spunk left. She loves to be near people and to snuggle up in comfy blankets. She has tried living with animals in the past but has come to the decision that she wants to be an only pet. She recently had her right eye surgically removed and is looking for a calm home where she can learn to navigate with one eye. She's housetrained and good with children!

Bandit



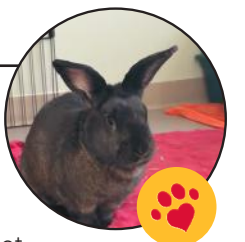
Bandit is a sweet boy who arrived to us with some of his cat friends from a previous home. He's a little more shy than his buddies, but it just makes you feel more special when he comes over to say hi! He would do well to be adopted with one of his friends or would also make someone an excellent solo companion kitty!

Honey



Honey has been living an outdoor life at least since last summer, thankfully she had people looking out for her and feeding her. She was quite friendly with them and they decided to help give her a chance at finding a cushy indoor life with a loving family. Her adopters will need to be understanding and loving while she settles into her new home.

Ralphie



I'm what you call a "loaf rabbit". I'm **Ralphie** and I enjoy lounging, observing, and being near the people I trust. I show my affection in quiet ways: coming out to check on you, sharing space, accepting gentle petting when I choose. These moments mean a lot to me. I do best in a calm environment, with lots of space to lounge about.

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 Addison County's Humane Society



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GARDEN

continued from page 10

polyanthum) can make a room smell like springtime.

Including plants in your home décor may also help improve air quality. During photosynthesis, plants take in carbon

as a tray of salad greens. The fragrance of flowering plants like jasmine (*Jasminum*

dioxide and release oxygen into the air. In addition, a 1989 NASA Clean Air Study suggests that some common houseplants such as the peace lily (*Spathiphyllum*) can help reduce the amount of contaminants in the air.

If the winter blues have got you down, don't grumble or threaten to hibernate until April. Bring your garden indoors to while away the winter hours. Spend some quality time tending to your houseplants, then bundle up and step outside into the sunshine. It won't be long before spring is in the air.

PUZZLES

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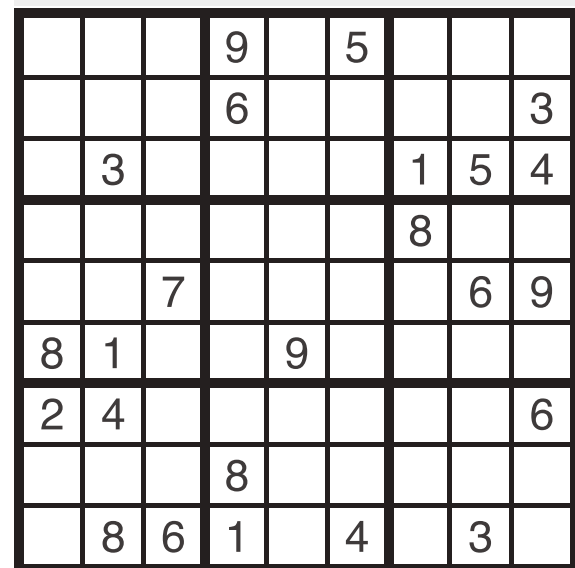
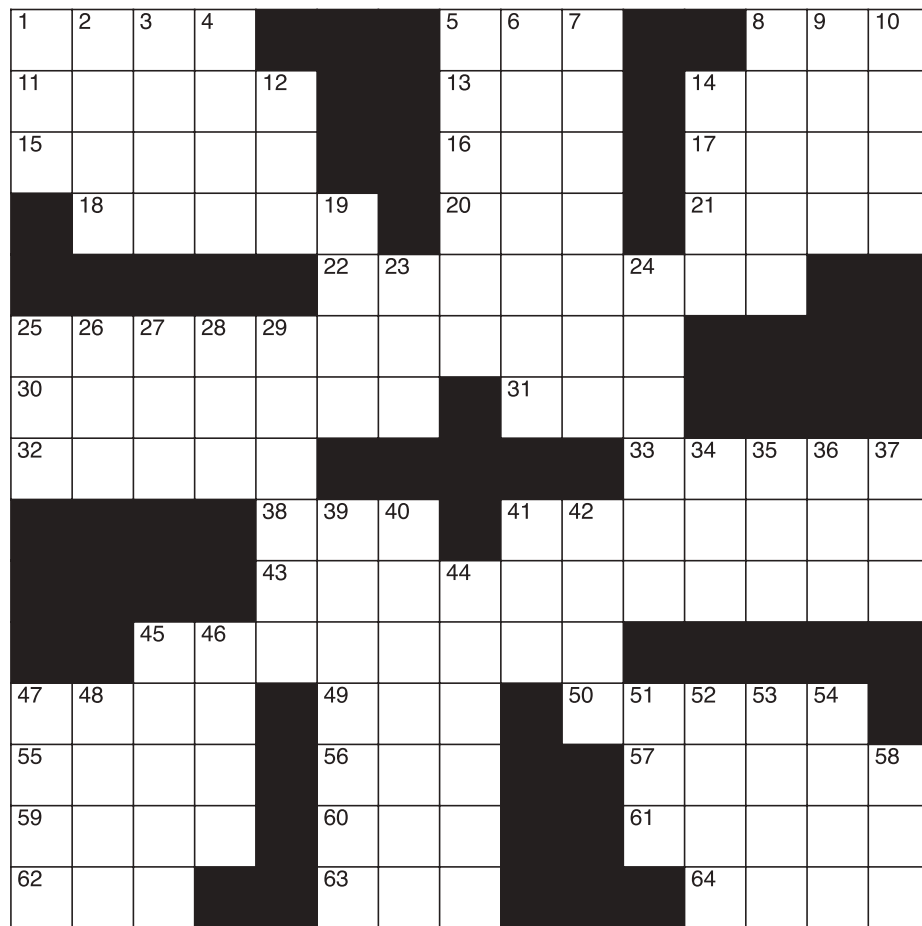
- 1. Breezed through
- 5. Consumer protection agency
- 8. Criminal syndicate
- 11. Moves back from
- 13. Satisfaction
- 14. Feel concern or interest
- 15. Monetary units
- 16. Congressman (abbr.)
- 17. Israeli city
- 18. Restaurants
- 20. 2,000 lbs.
- 21. Grandmother
- 22. North, South and Central
- 25. In an early way
- 30. Foes
- 31. Social networking platform

- 32. Early term for basketball player
- 33. Another name for sesame plant
- 38. Disallow
- 41. Provide greater detail
- 43. Inaccessible
- 45. Evoke emotions
- 47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 49. Celtic punk rockers
- 50. A fencing sword
- 55. Actor Idris
- 56. Affirmative (slang)
- 57. Afflicted in mind or body
- 59. One point north of northeast
- 60. Born of

- 61. Social media hand gesture
- 62. Hong Kong food stall __ pai dong
- 63. Opposite of beginning
- 64. Email function

DOWN

- 1. Sign language
- 2. Fashionable
- 3. Borough in Helsinki
- 4. Inability to hear
- 5. More quickly
- 6. An idea accepted as a demonstrable truth
- 7. Shrewdly
- 8. Rooney and Kate are two
- 9. Mediterranean port



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.

- 10. Benedictine monk
- 12. Midway between south and southeast
- 14. Town in Galilee
- 19. Satisfy
- 23. Mice genus
- 24. Brass instrument
- 25. Chest muscle (slang)
- 26. Transmits genetic information from DNA
- 27. Records electric currents generated by the brain
- 28. Woman (French)
- 29. Short route aircraft
- 34. Pitching statistic
- 35. Pointed end of a pen
- 36. Popular sports league
- 37. Body part
- 39. Inoffensive
- 40. Yellowish cotton cloth
- 41. Feline
- 42. Does not tell the truth
- 44. Seduced
- 45. Spiritual leader
- 46. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 47. Repair
- 48. Olive genus
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. C. European river
- 54. Keep under control
- 58. Father



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EXHIBITS

continued from page 5

representations of Africa in the museum. On view Jan. 20-April 19.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

"On the Street." Celebrate the opening of "On the Street," a fine art photography exhibition exploring the unscripted rhythm of everyday life through powerful street photography. Featuring work by photographers from around the world. Exhibition on view Feb. 6-28. Free.

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"Spotlight on Jill Brooks." Jill is a self-taught artist and illustrator based in Brandon. Working in gouache, watercolor and colored pencil, her paintings celebrate the quiet poetry of everyday life. This collection centers on familiar household objects and small rituals, exploring how ordinary spaces hold memory, comfort, and meaning. Jill invites viewers to find awe in the ordinary and reflect on what it means to feel safe, supported, and at home. On view through the month of February.



SUDBURY | 364 Burr Pond Rd | MLS #5075905
3 BR | 3 BA | 1836 SF | 10.00 ACRES | \$549,000

Meticulously maintained log home just 10 minutes outside of Brandon is move-in ready. Fantastic deck and covered porch. Water recreation awaits with Lake Bomoseen and Burr Pond close by.

CORNWALL | 394 Cider Mill Rd | MLS #5040200
3 BD | 2 BA | 1944 SF | 2.70 ACRES | \$575,000

Well-maintained home with hardwood floors and plenty of natural light. Enjoy beautiful Green Mountain views and privacy while being only three miles from downtown Middlebury!

MIDDLEBURY | 376 South Ridge Dr | MLS #5068284
0.60 ACRES | \$199,000

This lot is served by town water and sewer, has a roughed in driveway, and is ready to build! Great amenities surround, including the 7.5 acre Star Pointe Park. Join the South Ridge community!



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CALENDAR

continued from page 6

exploring the evolution of Hollywood musicals, followed by a showing of "Funny Girl" starring Barbra Streisand. Part of a four-session spring course on the movie musical. \$30 single class; course passes available. More info at addisonarts.org.

WHAT ABOUT WEDNESDAYS? Lily Talmers and Sam Weber house concert in Weybridge. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m., 3345 Quaker Village Road. House concert featuring singer-songwriters Lily Talmers and Sam Weber, each performing a one-hour set. Intimate listening-room performance with limited



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seating; doors open at 7 p.m. Second-floor venue with stairs only. \$25 suggested donation. Refreshments provided, BYOB and a pair of indoor shoes. Reservations required: contact Don at 802-557-7589 or don@valleystage.net.

THURSDAY, FEB. 19

SHIBORI & INDIGO DYE DEMONSTRATION IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 19, 2:30 p.m., Makerspace, Johnson Memorial Building, Middlebury College, 78 Chateau Road. A hands-on demonstration exploring traditional shibori resist-dye techniques using indigo. Learn about shibori and make your own dyed piece. Part of "Cultural Fabrics: The Kimono Through Literary, Cross-Cultural, and Practical Lenses," an exhibit on view at Middlebury College's Johnson Gallery.

FIGURE DRAWING IN BRANDON. Thursday, Feb. 19, 7-9 p.m., Aleshire Gallery, 29 Union St. Monthly facilitated figure drawing session featuring an experienced live art model and a range of short and long poses. Open to artists of all experience levels as a focused, non-instructional working session. Artists should bring their own materials. No photography permitted. Attendance limited to 10 participants. \$20 per participant. More info at qbird8@gmail.com or 802-222-5673.

"MOON OVER BUFFALO" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants

Row. The Middlebury Community Players present "Moon Over Buffalo," a fast-paced farce that follows two fading stage stars whose lives unravel when a Hollywood director arrives to see their matinee. Opening night pricing \$15/\$25/\$35. tickets at addisonarts.org.

FRIDAY, FEB. 20

"LOOMS, LINEN, AND LUXURY: THE ART OF WEAVING DAMASK" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 20, 12:30-2 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center 125, 72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury College. Lunchtime talk on the history and craft of damask weaving. Learn about the Middlebury College Museum of Art's recent acquisition of a 17th-century damask linen napkin. Free and open to the public.

"MOON OVER BUFFALO" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Feb. 19 listing. Tickets \$20/\$25/\$35 at addisonarts.org.

SATURDAY, FEB. 21

ARTIST RESIDENCY WORKSHOP IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. Learn how to secure artist residencies in this free workshop led by Middlebury College professor and six-time residency recipient Matthew Dickerson. Participants will discuss tips for the residency application process and work on crafting a purpose statement. More information

at addisonarts.org.

BLACK PATRIOTS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN CORNWALL. Saturday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m., Cornwall DAR Chapter House, 2706 Route 30. Caroline Tasse, genealogist and registrar for the Green Mountain Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, discusses primary source documentation and historical recovery of Black Revolutionary War veterans, focusing on four individuals who settled in Vermont after the war. Co-sponsored by the Cornwall Free Library and the Ethan and Mary Baker Allen Chapter of the DAR.

WINTER CARNIVAL ICE SHOW: MIDNIGHT MAGIC IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., Kenyon Arena, Middlebury College, 219 S. Main St. Annual Winter Carnival ice show featuring skaters from Middlebury College, the town of Middlebury, UVM and beyond. Open to the public. Free admission for children under three, all others require a \$6 ticket. Tickets available at the Mahaney Arts Center Box Office and online at middlebury.edu.

"MOON OVER BUFFALO" IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Feb. 19 listing. Tickets \$20/\$25/\$35 at addisonarts.org.

SUNDAY, FEB. 22
WINTER CARNIVAL ICE SHOW: MIDNIGHT MAGIC

IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 22, 1:30 p.m., Kenyon Arena, Middlebury College, 219 S. Main St. Annual Winter Carnival ice show featuring skaters from Middlebury College, the town of Middlebury, UVM and more. Free admission for children under three, all others \$6. Tickets available at the Mahaney Arts Center Box Office and online at middlebury.edu.

"MOON OVER BUFFALO" IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 72-76 Merchants Row. See Feb. 19 listing. Tickets \$20/\$25/\$35 at addisonarts.org.

HEATHER PIERSON DUO IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Feb. 22, 4 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72-76 Merchants Row. Pianist and singer-songwriter Heather Pierson and bassist Shawn Nadeau perform joy-infused New Orleans jazz, blues and folk. Part of the PM Sunday Folk Series curated by Valley Stage Productions. \$25 advance/\$28 day of show; \$15 students. More info at addisonarts.org.

TUESDAY, FEB. 24

"THE ARTIST'S WAY" READING AND PRACTICE GROUP IN VERGENNES. Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6 p.m., 3 Squares Cafe, 141 Main St. See Feb. 17 listing.

See more

CALENDAR LISTINGS
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DICKERSON

continued from page 4

successful applications and conversations with those in charge of how choices are made). This part will be hands on, and participants will begin crafting a

purpose statement.

- How to use the time during the actual residency if selected.
- What to do after the residency ends to get maximum benefit.

Dickerson has served as artist-in-residence at Glacier National Park, Acadia National Park, and Wood Tikchik State Park (Alaska), as well as holding the collaborative environmental writing residency for the Spring Creek Project (Oregon State University) and twice serving with McKenna Dickerson as collaborative artists-in-residence for Alaska State Parks. Six of his published books grew out of these various residencies including "The Voices of Rivers" (set in Glacier National Park, Acadia National Park and Alaska), "The Salvelinus, the Sockeye and the Egg-Sucking Leech" (set in Wood-Tikchik State Park and national parks in the Bristol Bay drainage), "A Fine-Spotted Trout on Corral Creek" (Glacier National Park), and most recently "Birds in the Sky, Fish in the Sea: Attending to Creation with Delight and Wonder."

In addition to his numerous books and over a quarter of a century of outdoor and travel columns in *The Addison Independent*,



Be part of a free workshop with author and artist Matthew Dickerson, Feb. 21.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dickerson's nature essays, poems, and/or photographs have also appeared in a variety of magazines and journals including *Backcountry Journal*, *The Drake*, *American Fly Fishing*, *Written River*, *Mountain Troubador*, *Deep Wild*, and *Books and Culture*.

Workshop attendees will also have the

opportunity to mingle with other participants, and to take in an exhibit in Town Hall Theater's Jackson Gallery highlighting Matthew Dickerson's photography and writing, which also profiles his daughter-in-law McKenna Dickerson's nature painting. Snacks and beverages will be provided. Space is limited and registration is required at townhalltheater.org.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Feb. 12, 2026

A	C	E	D		F	T	C		M	O	B				
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1	2	4	9	3	5	6	7	8
5	7	8	6	4	1	2	9	3
6	3	9	7	8	2	1	5	4
9	6	2	5	7	3	8	4	1
4	5	7	2	1	8	3	6	9
8	1	3	4	9	6	5	2	7
2	4	1	3	5	9	7	8	6
3	9	5	8	6	7	4	1	2
7	8	6	1	2	4	9	3	5

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