



Worship

Find Holy Week services, church listings and more in our annual religious directory pull-out.



Lax lords

Mid men's lax team pulled off a win after trailing for a majority of the game. See Page 1B.



Think of home

Land stewardship, energy savings and envisioning renovations are all in Home Improvement.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Fun on stage

A GIRL with very long hair, a mermaid, a notorious fairy godmother, a couple princes, some dwarves, and princesses of all stripes appear on stage at the Mount Abraham Union High School rehearsal of "Once Upon a One More Time," which will open Thursday evening. Its fairy tale characters are familiar but it is truly an ensemble performance. See more photos on Page 13A.

Photo by Buzz Kuhns

Middlebury preps for ICE operations

Police offer advice on how to react

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police aren't obliged to help Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents if they sweep into the shire town to remove people suspected to be here illegally, but they also can't impede federal enforcement operations that have the requisite warrants.

Middlebury Police Chief Jason Covey shared those and other ICE-related thoughts with the town selectboard on Tuesday evening, as municipal officials throughout the state continue to process the fallout from a March 11 ICE operation

at a South Burlington home that saw several skirmishes between protestors and authorities.

The stark images — which included video of a South Burlington officer throwing a woman onto the pavement — has prompted Middlebury officials to seek clarity and vigilance for potential ICE operations in the shire town. Trump's Department of Homeland Security has conducted particularly aggressive operations in blue states — such as Maine and Minnesota (where ICE agents killed two people). Vermont has (See ICE concerns, Page 11A)

Some ag bills move ahead in Legislature

By MARIN HOWELL

VERMONT — Among the many bills lawmakers have spent recent months tackling in the Vermont State Legislature are several pieces of legislation related to farming.

Those bills include S.60, which seeks to establish a "Farm and Forestry Operations Security Special Fund" that would provide payments to operations experiencing losses due to bad weather. The bill was introduced by Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Middlebury, and co-sponsored by Sen. Steven Heffernan, R-Bristol.

According to the bill, the Farm

and Forestry Operations Security Special Fund would reimburse farm and forestry operations up to "50 percent of the unreimbursed, uninsured, or otherwise uncovered losses due to eligible weather conditions," which include drought, abnormal freeze conditions, flooding and high winds.

The bill has been passed by the Vermont House and Senate and was delivered to Gov. Phil Scott this past Friday.

"That's a very good bill, and the unfortunate thing is (whether) it will get the \$1 million appropriated (See Ag bills, Page 12A)

Middlebury shelter buying house next door

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — The waiting list for a bed at Middlebury's Charter House Coalition (CHC) Emergency Shelter at 27 North Pleasant St. can exceed 20 during the coldest winter months. Surging demand has prompted CHC officials on occasion to consider — but ultimately abandon, due to cost — an on-site addition to ramp

up services for the area's homeless population.

Turns out the solution was standing just next door at 29 North Pleasant St.

CHC is purchasing the duplex to convert it into transitional housing to accommodate eight guests right away, and eventually more, freeing up beds at the emergency shelter for new arrivals.

"This is a gift," CHC Executive Director Heidi Lacey said of the way she and her colleagues received the opportunity to make 29 North Pleasant St. part of a larger Charter House campus.

"When we heard that this house might become available, we jumped on the opportunity," Lacey added. "The fact that the building is right next door will allow us to

share services between the two facilities, including meals, social programs and maintenance."

The conveyance of 29 North Pleasant is gilded with a heartwarming backstory.

Its most recent owners were Randy Kritkauskys and Carolyn Schmidt, who acquired it several years ago after it had languished (See Shelter, Page 16A)



By the way

Looking for an eggs-citing time for the children this Easter? Middlebury's Eddy Farm School for Horse & Rider will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt and Open Barn on Sunday, April 5, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event, at the farm at 1815 South St. Extension, will include pony rides, raffles, egg painting, bake sale, and of course the egg hunt! The event will be held rain or shine, all ages welcome, and please bring your own basket, water, and appropriate footwear. The Eddy Farm School for Horse & Rider is a nonprofit organization; there will be no admission fee, but donations are welcome. There are other easter egg hunts in Addison County as well, including one hosted by the New Haven Congregational Church on Saturday, April 4, at 10 a.m.

The Vermont Barn Painting Project is returning for the 2026 season, offering support to farm families working to preserve their historic barns. With funding from (See By the way, Page 12A)

Three eye Vergennes council seat

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

VERGENNES — The Little City has fielded three applications from prospective city councilors as it looks to fill a seat left vacant after a member resigned shortly after Town Meeting Day.

Councilors must appoint a new member, which they learned they'd need to do after Carson Harder-Hyde stepped down on March 6, just as they'd begun considering elements of the FY27 budget, which gets set in June.

Former city mayor/councilor Susan Clark, Thomas "Tom" Blum and former city councilor James "Jamie" Dragon have all submitted their names for consideration.

Dragon, who was appointed to (See City Council, Page 12A)

Four county towns ready for school budget revotes

By JOHN FLOWERS

ORWELL — Voters in four southern Addison County communities will soon head to the polls to field trimmed-down versions of fiscal year 2027 public school budgets that failed on Town Meeting Day.

Orwell residents are up first when on Tuesday, March 31, they will vote on a revised FY27 Slate Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) budget.

Then, on April 7, residents of Leicester, Whiting and Goshen join others in the Otter Valley Unified Union School District (OVUUSD) (See School revotes, Page 15A)



High school drama

MAYA BRECKENRIDGE PLAYING "Rizzo" and Nathan Stefani playing "Keneckie" on Tuesday rehearse a scene in "Grease," the Middlebury Union High School Senior Play. The exciting performance will take place Thursday and Friday nights and Saturday afternoon. See more photos on Page 10A.

Photo by Jason Duquette-Hoffman

Vermont AG to prosecute more cases in county

Clark joins others in asking Vekos to resign

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — State officials can't oust embattled Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos without pursuing a legislative impeachment process that would likely eclipse her term's expiration date early next year.

But leaders of the Vermont Attorney General's Office (AGO) and the Vermont Professional Responsibility Board — who've expressed concerns about Vekos's professional acumen and the way she's treated victims in some of the cases she's prosecuted — took steps this month that will further marginalize the county's top prosecutor.

At the same time, state and local officials — including Attorney General Charity Clark, Gov. Phil Scott and the county's legislative delegation — have called for Vekos to resign.

(See Vekos, Page 12A)

Threats halt Beeman's Identity Week plans

By MARIN HOWELL

NEW HAVEN — The Mount Abraham Unified School District has announced that a series of learning experiences centered around understanding identity won't take place at Beeman Elementary School next month as planned.

School official said comments were made that threatened the safety of students and staff.

Stephanie Sumner, principal of the New Haven school, previously told the *Independent* that the Identity Week series was aimed at increasing "student understanding of what it means to be empathetic, inclusive, and accepting of others in their community."

Plans for the series included visiting performances from Mexican-American author Duncan Tonatiuh, anti-bullying storytelling, and a Drag Queen Story Hour.

(See Beeman, Page 15A)

Index

Obituaries.....6A-7A
Classifieds.....9B-10B
Service Directory.....7B-8B
Entertainment..... Arts + Leisure
Community Calendar.....5B
Arts Calendar..... Arts + Leisure
Sports.....1B-3B



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Economist weighs prospects for young people

Rodgers will discuss how weakening labor market may mean less jobs

MIDDLEBURY — With unpredictability a watchword in today's American economy, it is no wonder that soon-to-be-college-graduates and their parents are wondering what awaits them in terms of jobs, housing and standard of living.

A leading economic analyst from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis will address those questions in an April 22 talk sponsored by the Middlebury College Department of Economics.

William M. Rodgers III, vice president and director of Community Development Research at the St. Louis Fed, will address "How are Young Adults Fairing in Today's Labor Market?" in the David K. Smith '42 Lecture. The talk is on Wednesday, April 22, at 4:30 p.m. at Twilight Auditorium at 50 Franklin St. in Middlebury.

Middlebury Professor Phanindra V. Wunnava said people outside academia should

find this talk of interest.

"Early youth unemployment tends to lead to increased unemployment and lower earnings in the future, also known as 'scarring effect,'" said Wunnava, David K. Smith '42 Chair in Applied Economics. "Given the particular relevance of this issue with the backdrop of COVID-19 epidemic and the entry of high number of recent college graduates into the job market adversely impacted by AI, the insights from Dr. William Rodgers's lecture are very important in understanding the extent to which various economic factors contribute to youth unemployment, how different aspects of the scarring effect act for different subsets of the youth population, and how policymakers can address these issues to support youths."

A starting point for the lecture is knowing that the U.S. labor market has softened since its peak in April 2023. Has this

weakening eroded the labor market prospects of vulnerable workers? Vulnerable workers are those with weak connections to the labor force. Their job prospects are more sensitive to changes in their local area's economic conditions. Vulnerable workers include:

- Non-enrolled young adults
- New labor market entrants
- Adult women
- Adult Black and Latino men, and
- People with a disability

The recent evidence indicates that the weakening labor market is damaging the employment prospects of above listed groups. Those with the least education and experience have seen their employment fall more than the overall workforce. Surprisingly, the employment of new entrant college graduates (not classified as vulnerable) has worsened.

Increased difficulty obtaining a job as opposed to labor force departure explains the deterioration. However, if the overall economy continues to weaken, we could see a shift toward labor force departure. One option might be to continue schooling.

Rodgers talk explores the factors contributing to young adults' losses, such as:

- Decline in the general demand for workers
- Increased demand for artificial intelligence-related jobs
- Contraction in the manufacturing sector
- Decline in the foreign-born population
- Decline in women federal employees

Rodgers's lecture will conclude with a discussion on how communities could explore alleviating the problems associated with higher young adult unemployment.

"Given his vast experiences (for example, served in many public capacities, including on former President Barack Obama's Department of Labor transition team and as chief economist at the U.S. Department of Labor etc.), I am so glad that Dr. Rodgers will be delivering this timely public lecture," Wunnava said.



Ouch!

THIS RIME ICE on a pine in Lincoln on Monday looks painful to touch, but after a few hours of daytime spring temperatures the frozen water droplets returned to their liquid state.

Photo courtesy of Theresa Foran



WILIAM RODGERS

New Orwell ATV law challenged

By JOHN FLOWERS

ORWELL — The wheels keep on churning in the more than five-year debate about whether Orwell should regulate all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) on town roads.

Two months after the Orwell selectboard approved a first-ever municipal ATV/UTV ordinance, residents will be given a chance to throw out the new law at a special town meeting set for Saturday, April 18, 2026, at 10 a.m. at the Orwell Firehouse.

The special town meeting and ATV/UTV referendum is being triggered by a citizens' petition that garnered signatures from 72 registered Orwell voters. It seeks to undo a new municipal ordinance, OK'd by the selectboard on Jan. 27, that among other things calls for:

- ATVs traveling on town highways to be registered, with license plate, and with proof of liability insurance for the operator(s).
- Operators to observe all rules of the road and speed limits, "but

not faster than 40 mph on any Orwell Road."

- Operators, while riding in the dark, to display a white lighted headlight and a red taillight.
- Signs to be posted to delineate roads transitioning from those where ATV/UTVs aren't allowed, to those roads in Orwell where they are allowed.

No side-by-side riding or racing on town highways.

- Routes 73 and 22A (state roads) to continue to prohibit ATV/UTV use, as well as Sewer Plant Road and Pearl Road.
- No firearms to be discharged from ATVs.
- No ATV/UTV use on town roads from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Violations carry potential fines of \$200 on first offense, \$400 on the second and \$800 on the third and subsequent offenses. Orwell officials have spoken to the Addison County Sheriff's Department about

enforcement.

The issue of regulating ATV/UTV use on town roadways has generated friction between all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts and folks who are growing weary of the extra noise and traffic such machines can create.

Orwell selectboard Chair Andrea Treadway described a series of steps spanning almost five years that have led to the latest curve in the ATV ordinance trajectory:

- Aug. 9, 2021: Based on public feedback, the

selectboard agreed to hold a series of public meetings on ATV/UTV use on town roads in anticipation of a possible ordinance vote on Town Meeting Day 2022. The selectboard in September of 2021 devised a short survey to ask residents their opinions about ATV/UTV use.

The board in December 2021 received 99 of the 520 mailed (See ATV law, Page 3A)

Atria
COLLECTIVE

Atria Collective Is Seeking Board Members

If you have time and talent to spare, please consider applying to join Atria Collective's board. We are an organization that works to eliminate domestic and sexual violence in Addison County. We are committed to a shared leadership model and are looking for folks energized by community work.

If you're interested, please submit a letter of interest to Crystal at crystalj@middlebury.edu.

If you have a resume, you are welcome to submit it with your letter.

The deadline to submit is April 10th.

Scan here for more information



College's Davis art museum to be center of art quad

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury College is moving along with plans to construct a new art museum on campus, with a goal of

breaking ground in spring 2027, according to college spokesperson Jon Reidel.

The project calls for a 35,000-square-foot museum to be built on the north side of campus, near the current site of the original Battell Hall. Removal of the former residence hall is set to begin late this summer and be completed by November.

Reidel noted the total project cost of the museum will depend on the final design that gets approved and the construction company selected for the project. He said college officials have so far raised over \$60 million toward the effort. That total includes a \$20 million gift the college received from Marna O. and Charles A. Davis to put toward the building, which will be called the Marna O. Davis Museum. A story about the new museum on the college's website notes Charles hopes the

museum will become known as "the Marna."

The Davises are co-chairs of the Fibrolamellar Cancer Foundation, an organization committed to finding a cure for and supporting those impacted by the rare liver cancer, as well as co-founders of the Vermont-focused Chuck and Marna Davis Foundation, which supports local organizations and causes.

The pair received honorary degrees from Middlebury College during the May 2025 commencement ceremony. Charles Davis — who attended Middlebury before graduating from the University of Vermont — delivered the commencement address last year.

College officials have noted the new museum is expected to complete an arts quad consisting of that building, Wright Memorial Theatre, the Johnson Memorial

Building, the Sunderland Language Center and le Château. According to the story on the college's website, the building will host indoor and outdoor programming and house the college's 7,000-item art collection.

The college is working with architecture firm Allied Works to design the museum. Reed Hilderbrand is serving as landscape architect for the project, and Brandon's Naylor & Breen Builders is the preconstruction manager.

"The Marna O. Davis Museum and arts quad are currently in the design development phase," Reidel said. "Finalization of designs as well as construction approvals by the board of trustees will happen throughout 2026 leading to the start of construction in spring 2027."

The new museum is expected to open in 2029.

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\$9B state budget passes hurdle in Vt. House

By SHAUN ROBINSON

VTDigger.org

MONTPELIER — Vermont's House Appropriations Committee voted out a state budget proposal on Monday for the upcoming fiscal year. Its \$9.3 billion bill, which directs spending from July 2026 to June 2027, cleared the committee on a unanimous vote.

The full House will consider the proposal Thursday, with a final vote expected Friday.

Each year, House Appropriations is the first committee to take a stab at drafting a state budget. It bases its bill on recommendations from Gov. Phil Scott's administration, as well as requests from other legislators, lobbyists and the public.

If it clears the House, the budget bill, H.951, will head to the Senate for further consideration, after which it would need Scott's final sign-off.

Overall, the bill proposes very slightly less spending, by about \$1 million, than what Scott proposed at the start of the legislative session in January. The House's proposal totals \$9.334 billion, while the governor's spending plan totals \$9.335 billion.

The budget bill follows Scott's lead in proposing to take money out of the state's main operating fund, its General Fund, to "buy down" property tax rates. Both Scott's and the House's bill would set aside \$105 million for that purpose. Most of that money is excess revenue the state brought in above what its economists previously projected.

But whereas the governor's proposal is to use all of that money for the current budget cycle, the House — through a proposal in a different bill — wants to set aside half of the earmark, or about \$52 million, for tax relief in next year's budget cycle.

At the same time, to pay for other proposals, the House bill calls for tapping the state's General Fund for about \$17.5 million above what Scott proposed.

WHAT'S IN THE BUDGET



REP. ROBIN SCHEU, D-Middlebury, chair of the House Appropriations Committee, speaks during a committee meeting at the Statehouse in Montpelier earlier this winter.

VTDigger photo/Glenn Russell

H.951 proposes creating six new state government positions, and using a number of other existing but vacant state jobs for new functions. Scott did not propose creating any new state jobs, instead only recommending legislators draw on that pool of vacancies.

Among those new jobs would be a mediator position at the Vermont Labor Relations Board, who would provide free services when unions and their employers reach an impasse during contract negotiations. The position is important, said Rep. Robin Scheu, D-Middlebury, who chairs the appropriations panel, because the Trump administration has slashed similar staff who work for the National Labor Relations Board and who, in the past, have been called in to resolve disputes free of charge in Vermont.

The bill would also hire an attorney for the Vermont State Ethics Commission focused

on advising municipalities on alleged ethical violations at the local level — something the commission has said it's been unable to do. Meanwhile, the legislation would pull from the pool of state vacancies for a new job at the Vermont Human Rights Commission, which has said it needs an attorney to help investigate alleged discrimination cases.

Outside of state government, the budget also includes funding for a Vermont Legal Aid attorney focused on immigration case assistance.

H.951 also includes funding for a number of policy changes that weren't part of the governor's spending plan.

Among them is a \$2.7 million increase in rates that the state pays groups that provide mental health care and other human services, including those that people receive in their homes. That money comes with a further \$3.7 million federal match.

The budget bill also calls for \$2.3 million to expand access to college tuition grants for low-income students administered by the Vermont Student Assistance Corp.

The additional \$17.5 million

ATV law

(Continued from Page 2A)

surveys and discussed the results.

Based in part on the survey results, the board in March of 2022 elected not to pursue an ATV/UTV ordinance and tabled the issue.

Then, in April 2024, a citizen requested the selectboard resurrect talk of an ATV/UTV ordinance. The board on June 6 of that year held a special hearing for townspeople to again weigh in on an ordinance.

"After that meeting we talked about putting it on as an Australian ballot item for town meeting since it was such a volatile topic," Treadway said.

On June 24, 2024, the selectboard received a citizens' petition signed by 68 voters requesting an Australian ballot vote asking: "Shall the voters of the Town of Orwell vote to direct the selectboard to develop an ordinance for the recreational use of ATV/UTVs on town roads?"

Residents on March 4, 2025, voted in favor of the question by a

182 to 169 margin.

The board then turned its attention to crafting an ordinance that could appease residents. A subcommittee of three selectboard members — along with the town attorney and citizen feedback invited at several public meetings — drafted an ordinance the selectboard endorsed by a 4-0 tally this past Jan. 27.

"We've done everything by statute; we knew it might come up for a recall vote," Treadway said. "I'm pretty happy with the compromises that we made."

The new ATV/UTV ordinance was scheduled to take effect on March 28 — though it could crash just days after hitting the road, if citizens on April 18 vote to toss it. The referendum will be discussed and voted from the floor.

"I think it's going to be a close vote," said Treadway, who believes it's likely that someone at the meeting will call for a paper ballot.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

pay for upgrades to its information technology infrastructure. The other is about \$9.4 million in revenue the state expects to bring in after changing its tax code in response to new federal tax provisions in President Donald Trump's One Big, Beautiful Bill Act.

Those tax changes are laid out in H.933, which also makes a host of other changes to state tax policy. That bill is slated to be considered on the House floor this week.

Between the tax bill and the budget, House lawmakers also want to modify another Scott plan to wean the state's Education Fund entirely off revenue from a state tax on motor vehicle purchases. The governor proposed eventually directing all of that revenue to the Transportation Fund in an effort to reduce a projected funding shortfall for roads, bridges and

other projects.

Lawmakers would still direct more of the "purchase and use" tax revenue to the Transportation Fund than is sent now, but it would not entirely eliminate the use of those dollars for education. Some legislators have pushed back on the idea of cutting the Education Fund off from a revenue source at a time when lawmakers are weighing serious changes to how the state funds and governs its public schools.

At the same time, the outcome of legislators' work on education policy could impact the fate of the spending bill.

In January, Scott used his State of the State address to threaten lawmakers to advance the provisions of Act 73, the sweeping education law they passed last year at his administration's urging — or he might veto the budget, he said.

Pipeline story more technical than presented

CLARIFICATION — Vermont Gas Systems raised some valid concerns about the story about their gas pipeline that the Addison Independent ran this past Thursday. The story in the March 19 edition voiced concerns from several selectboards and local residents about the Addison Natural Gas Project pipeline, which was approved by regulators more than a decade ago and has been providing natural gas to county residents and businesses for most of the years since then.

The company said the story contains at least one clear factual error and omits technical evidence that is central to the dispute. The story incorrectly stated the role that the Vermont Supreme Court has played in dealing with complaints about the pipeline. While the regulator — the Public Utility Commission — identified five violations in April 2023, the court only weighed in on whether the PUC followed the correct procedure. We apologize for the error.

The company also took issue with the "experts" quoted in the story. Officials pointed out that the PUC's independent investigator William Byrd conducted an extensive review and concluded the pipeline was safely and competently built. And another expert, David Berger from the Department of Public Service, also came out on VGS's side in his review.

A technical explanation of the issue surrounding claims that the pipeline is rising was a bit beyond what a general interest newspaper might typically undertake; but VGS explained an experts' official testimony in PUC hearings which showed that zinc ribbon interference with electromagnetic measurement equipment caused equipment measuring the depth of the pipeline to give a false reading, but the company said actual excavation showed that the pipe hadn't risen.

Many of the claims by the complainants and the company are highly technical, and we will take

care to understand these issues when we report on the ANGP in the future.

— John S. McCright, news editor

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For more information go to
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Editorials

Planning ahead for ICE

As the Middlebury selectboard and town police huddle to consider in advance how it will respond to potential ICE-related arrests that could spark citizen protests, it's worth noting Middlebury was the first Vermont police department to adopt a "fair and impartial policing policy" that became the standard throughout Vermont.

Middlebury's astute policy prohibits racial profiling and forbids officers from stopping or arresting individuals solely to enforce federal civil immigration laws. The reason for the policy is to focus on people committing crimes that pose a danger to the community, not target immigrants who have assimilated into the community, have jobs and contribute to the county's betterment.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency under Donald Trump is the polar opposite. It has purposely set about to intimidate, provoke fear in the community, and impose a culture of submission to the superior fire power of heavily armed militants, clad in masks and without uniforms or identification badges. They have operated as a vigilante troops with too little to hold them accountable.

Their excesses were as predictable as the backlash to them.

Contrary to Trump's claims that ICE's deportation mission was to only arrest the "worst of the worst," the agency has used needlessly brutal tactics, while sweeping broad groups of immigrants into dragnet operations where the majority were innocent of any crimes.

Today, the facts are irrefutable. Careful analysis of data extracted from nearly 140,000 arrests forms used by ICE from January 2025 through mid-August 2025, found that the surge in arrests under Trump was largely due to the apprehension of people who have never been convicted of a crime. In fact, 77% of those arrested had no criminal convictions. The analysis, as reported in The Guardian, also revealed:

- Of those 27% who did have a criminal conviction, nearly half of those convictions were for non-violent traffic and immigration offenses.

- Traffic offenses alone made up nearly 30% of the convictions, the largest category by far.

- Some 9% of criminal convictions were for assault, while only 1% were for sexual assault and just 0.5% were for homicide.

"What is being conducted is dragnet enforcement with the goal of ensnaring as many people as possible in the detention and deportation process, despite all the public claims of the administration that they're going up for the worst," said Phil Neff, research coordinator with the University of Washington Center for Human Rights, as noted in The Guardian's report.

To put the numbers in context, approximately 77 to 100 million Americans (roughly one in three adults, or 30%) have a criminal record—an arrest or conviction—which includes misdemeanors and felonies. By race, 69.4% of all persons arrested are White, 26.6% are Black, and 4.0% are other races. It doesn't take a genius to grasp the white nationalist lie that underlies ICE's mission under Trump.

Suffice it to say that Middlebury's "fair and impartial policing policy" is heads above the ill-conceived directive Trump has given to ICE. Yet, until America citizens prevail with measures to hold ICE agents accountable for any use of excessive force, we all must deal with what the nation now considers a renegade militia that doesn't care about the harm it does to others.

That said, Middlebury Police Jason Covey's plea for "cooler heads to prevail," in the event of an ICE-related arrest locally, is spot on. Citizens have a right to gather and protest. They have a right to protect their neighbors by preventing any arrest without a valid judicial warrant. It would behoove the court system to ensure that warrants target only the individual sought, and not everyone in a household, but what makes common sense is not always legally possible. And it should be incumbent on the courts to hold ICE agents accountable for unlawful actions. Vermont legislators have passed laws to bolster such defense.

We applaud the town's efforts to plan ahead, to be in touch with citizen groups apt to protest, and to conduct any operation in the safest manner possible. We encourage area residents to plan their protests and actions in a similar spirit. Strength with numbers and nonviolent protest, knowing what works and what makes the situation worse.

One would hope our federal forces would be eager to work within a civil framework, but to date ICE has most often been the vengeful outlier. It's yet another dark stain on Trump's sullied legacy.

Angelo Lynn

Be there: No Kings 3, March 28

This Saturday, March 28, will be the third No Kings Day protest. Each one has grown, with the last protest on October 18, 2025, drawing an estimated 7.5 million people at 2,700 events across the nation. For this Saturday's event, organizers are forecasting the biggest, and most diverse, Anti-Trump crowd ever.

With good reason. Since October, Trump's ICE agents have wreaked havoc across the country, notably in Minneapolis and St. Paul, killing two Americans — Renee Good and Alex Pretti — in cold blood. Trump invaded Venezuela, aided Israel's pummeling of Gaza and now Lebanon, attacked Iran and now, four weeks into the war, is considering putting boots on the ground. Plus, he has abandoned Ukraine, undercut NATO, insulted our closest allies, while also supporting Russian President Vladimir Putin and backing down to China's Xi Jinping.

And that's the tip of the iceberg. The corruption within his administration is legion, and the personal enrichment of his family is abhorrent. Trump has shredded the nation's renewable energy industry just as his chosen war in Iran has sent oil prices soaring, he dropped oil sanctions on Russia and Iran (thus giving them billions of dollars to finance their wars against American interests), and he has the audacity to use \$1 billion of American taxpayer's dollars to pay the French company Total Energies for offshore wind leases it had previously paid. Such insanity makes Trump the least astute negotiator of all time, exceeded only by his total incompetence in waging his war of choice against Iran. Oh, and don't forget he's the guy who cut health insurance subsidies for millions of Americans.

If any of that raises your ire, express yourself at Saturday's No Kings 3 protest. Help make it the biggest ever. In Addison County, events will be held at: Middlebury's Town Green, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; in Bristol, a bus transports protesters to Montpelier departing at 9:30 a.m. from Bristol Works (pre-registration required); in Vergennes a rally will be held from 10 a.m. to noon at the Vergennes City Park, and in Brandon from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the town's Central Park.

Angelo Lynn

ADDISON COUNTY
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Key player

AT A MONDAY dress rehearsal, Mount Abraham senior Jack Anderson performs sound checks for the microphones on all the actors in the Bristol high school's production of "Once Upon a One More Time." The show opens Thursday; see more photos on Page 13A.

Photo by Buzz Kuhns

\$1B a day on war doesn't add up

A few weeks ago, I attended Bill Schubart's class "What Ethical Lodestar Determines the Direction of Our Democracy?" Sponsored by Elderly Services, the two-session class explored what does and could drive a democratic government. Some of the areas discussed were healthcare, the environment, criminal justice, food systems, housing, public education and transportation. Our homework was to write a paragraph expressing our view of a balanced democratic government. I wrote, in part:

"A balanced government would prioritize creating and supporting strong foundations for its people, including policies that encourage and support livable wages, affordable housing, good public education, universal healthcare, a fair and just criminal justice system, and enhanced mobility for all (public transportation, infrastructures for differently abled)."

I added that decreased funding for wars and a fair tax system would help pay for these.

During the same span of time, I was gathering documents to do my taxes. I realized how distressed I am that my tax dollars are going toward yet another war with specious goals that might last months, if not years. My taxes are paying for bombings that lead to deaths of our military personnel, Iranians, and others in the region. Weaponry releases emissions that worsen the Earth's climate crisis.

This is not an abstract concern. Depending upon whose statistics you follow, the war is costing \$1 billion a day. Last year essential services and

programs were cut because the administration wanted to streamline the nation's budget. These cuts have hampered local and regional economies, and led to unemployment and poor government services. What might \$1 billion a day purchase besides war?

At a hearing of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth, U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren questioned Phillip L. Swagel, director of the Congressional Budget Office on the financial implications of the Iran war. Sen. Warren asked Swagel to confirm these statistics, which he did: The estimated cost of extending the Affordable Care Act (ACA) subsidies for one year would be \$30 billion. The Trump administration estimates that the Iran war will cost \$50 billion. As Sen. Warren pointed out, ACA credits could have been funded and still have \$20 billion left. If the Iran war cost \$1 billion per day, it would exhaust the \$30 billion that could have been used to fund Americans' healthcare in one month.

According to the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee the estimated federal budget for fiscal year 2027 is projected to be 58% (\$3,500 billion) for military spending, and 32% (\$1,900 billion) for human resources.

As I pondered these numbers, I recalled:

1. Margaret Mead wrote in 1940 that war is not an inevitability, but an invention, one of many that humans have taken on, like trial by jury, cooking food instead of eating it raw or marriage.

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

Ways of Seeing

By Ruth Farmer



For those unfamiliar, Drag Queen Story Hour is a national program that began in 2015. In this case, it would have involved two Vermont-based performers, fully clothed and dressed in a style reminiscent of 1950s housewives, reading age-appropriate children's books. The goal is simple: to spark imagination and offer positive, inclusive role models while celebrating creativity and self-expression. Like a circus clown or a stage actor, a drag performer adopts a character for the purpose of storytelling and entertainment. Notably, a visiting clown scheduled the week prior drew no concern from the community about "appropriateness."

Some have argued that lessons about gender, acceptance, and self-love belong solely in the home. In an ideal world, perhaps they would. But the reality in our schools tells a different story. Children are still using racial slurs. They are still targeting classmates with "gay" as an insult. They are still making others feel small for how they look or who they are. These are not abstract concerns

— they are happening here, and they have real consequences. If all children were consistently learning empathy and respect at home, these behaviors would not be so prevalent. Schools, therefore, have a responsibility not only to teach math and literacy, but also to teach what it means to live peacefully in a diverse community — to coexist with people who may look, think, or live differently.

The intensity of the backlash to a single phrase — "drag queen" — revealed something deeper. It suggests discomfort not with the content of the program, but with who was delivering it: openly gay men modeling acceptance and self-confidence. It raises an important question: would the reaction have been the same if a straight woman dressed in costume as a man had been invited to read similar books?

At the same time, there is common ground we should not lose sight of. Nearly everyone in this conversation cares deeply about the well-being of children. Most would agree that no child should feel ashamed of who they

(See *Brown letter*, Page 5A)

Letters
to the EditorPeople suffer,
elites profit

Once again, leaders make war and the citizenry pays the price. The costs are high with injury, death and economic uncertainty.

The elite pay little of these costs. Few of their daughters or sons serve. With the production of munitions due to the depletion of weaponry, the military-industrial complex and the elite will prosper.

As Marine Corps Brigadier General Smedley Butler wrote in 1935, "War is a Racket."

David Rosen
Bristol

Fascism signs
explained

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.

- A fifth sign of fascism: "whitewashing" history.

- A sixth sign of fascism: complete and utter disdain for human rights.

- A seventh sign of fascism: adopting and perpetuating ideology over science and facts.

- An eighth sign of fascism: "Fixation with perceived national decline, humiliation, or victimhood."

The Great War drastically changed the world. Empires were toppled. Borders were changed. WWI laid the groundwork for the Great Depression and it fueled the feeling of nationalism. According to Webster's Dictionary, nationalism is "An ideology that elevates one nation or nationality above all others" and promotes "its culture, and interests as opposed to those of other groups and nationalities." These profound changes, in turn, prompted a "fixation with perceived national decline, humiliation, or victimhood."

In the 1930s, this fixation on being humiliated, being victimized and suffering from social and economic decline led to Hitler's rise to power. During WWI, Germany, along with others, was absolutely crushed at the hands of the Allied Powers, including France, the US, and Great Britain. This was a tremendous humiliation for a nation that long saw itself as superior. Germany was cast as the villain in this worldwide conflict, which gave it the opportunity to play the victim.

Today, looking at what is currently taking place in the United States, we see the following. The current regime claims it inherited:

- A failing economy along with out-of-control inflation.

- Energy regulations, especially fossil fuel regulations, that stymie growth.

- The "con job" of climate change.

- Crumbling infrastructure.

- Failed border security.

- Soaring crime rates.

- A country that is no longer #1 on the world stage.

According to the current regime, the US has been humiliated, vilified and victimized. It has also not received it due from NATO or other allies.

The above information hopefully explains why an increasing number of 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

Letters to the Editor

Neighbors protecting neighbors needed amid ICE

We read Angelo Lynn's editorial and were glad to see the criticism of ICE's brutal tactics in South Burlington. Mr. Lynn really lost us in the last section, however, where he says it is crucial to have local police and state troopers on the scene to "protect Vermonters' rights and safety." That is the opposite of what these police officers did. We recommend Mr. Lynn read The Rake Vermont's article "Local and State Police Were Essential to ICE's Raid in South Burlington" for an in-depth analysis of what actually happened on the ground.

Based on numerous accounts from witnesses on the scene, protectors were violently removed by Vermont local and state police (we deliberately use the word protector instead of protester.) Police then assisted federal agents in detaining three of our neighbors. Without the presence of the state and local police, it is unlikely any arrests would have occurred. There have been other recent scenarios in which ICE agents have shown up in Burlington, and thanks to the community response, the ICE agents left without detaining anyone. The arrival of the

local and state police directly escalated the events on March 11. Thankfully, the courts recognized that these arrests should not have occurred, and those three neighbors were released this week.

We are Jewish Vermonters whose ancestors immigrated to the U.S. to flee from violence and economic oppression, much like our immigrant neighbors today. Mr. Lynn's assertion that ICE agents should "stand aside giving local and state officers, with the help of protesters, an opportunity to encourage those inside to open the door and cooperate, while bearing witness that any arrests by ICE are done safely and humanely," frustrated and disappointed us.

We recognize that throughout history, there has consistently been a difference between what is legal and what is moral. The Indian Removal Act was legal in the founding of this country. Slavery was legal for nearly 250 years, and so was capturing people attempting to escape enslavement. Today mass incarceration is legal, although clearly it is a violation of human rights on a vast scale.

People accosted by ICE have been successfully "de-arrested" in

Minneapolis and other cities by their neighbors. This has saved countless people from unjust family separation, detention in inhumane conditions and deportation.

Neighbors protecting neighbors might seem chaotic, loud and messy. And it is necessary. We wish there had been more brave protectors during the Third Reich, when Jews, people with disabilities, and queer people were rounded up to be slaughtered.

We would urge Mr. Lynn and our whole community to not conflate legality with morality, and to not value order over safety for our immigrant neighbors. As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate... who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice."

Jewish Voices for Peace (NH/VT chapter) members:
Joanna Colwell, Ripton
Lindsey Berk, Brandon
Julie Conason, Salisbury
Margie Beckoff, Weybridge

Act 73 turns its back on Vermonters

These are not usual times for schools or students. Or for adults. Everyone is on edge. We're beset by AI, social media, technology, and world crises. Our children suffer from school closures during COVID. Fifty percent of Vermont households live under financial stress. Few of us expect to be better off than our parents. The anxiousness of adults infects and distracts young people, and they carry those feelings to school, where they disrupt classrooms. Act 73 turns its back on all of this!

Instead, it wants to

- Consolidate school districts from 119 to as few as 5.
- Abolish local school boards and local voting on school budgets.
- Make the governor and Legislature determine what schools can spend.
- Abolish income sensitivity

(school taxes based on ability to pay), and instead base school taxes on the value of your home.

- Merge and close schools.
- Outlaw classes which have too few pupils.

And the purpose of this agenda is to cut costs, which neither the governor nor the Legislature has estimated, and which was unsuccessfully tried by Act 46 of 2015, Act 173 of 2018, and Act 127 of 2022. Not an encouraging track record.

The risks for public schools, communities, and taxpayers are too high, because we'd have:

- Bigger schools and busing young children farther from home.
- New spending necessitated by refitting schools to accommodate more pupils.
- State re-allocation of each school district's existing debt.
- Higher school taxes for

low- and middle-income homeowners.

- All Addison County districts forced to cut spending without input from voters.

- All cuts to spending forced to come from educational services, because healthcare insurance, special education, and mental health costs (which schools cannot control) would continue to consume 33% of school budgets.

- State control rather than local control.

- A brand-new funding system, even more complex than the one we have now.

Better ways forward
 ONE: This year, confront the budgetary crisis facing lower- and middle-income Vermonters by directing tax relief to them, not all property owners.

TWO: (a) Have all residents pay their school taxes, based on ability to pay. This would reduce school taxes for most residents and be simpler, easier
 (See Friedin forum, Page 8A)

Community Forum

This week's writer is John Freidin of Middlebury.

Slate Valley tax estimates are stable or falling

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD) will hold a budget revote on March 31. The revised FY27 budget reflects a continued focus on fiscal responsibility while maintaining core programming and student supports.

The proposed budget represents a 0.86% increase in total education spending (budget less local revenue). The 2.7% per-pupil increase is driven by declining enrollment — not new spending. In response, the school board has reduced 14 positions for FY27 and 50 positions since unification.

While recent headlines highlight rising education taxes statewide, that trend does not reflect Slate Valley's local reality.

What to know:
 Estimated tax rates are expected to decrease in our two largest towns (Castleton and Fair Haven).

Some smaller towns may see modest increases.

An estimated 62% of taxpayers pay based on income, meaning many will pay less than these

estimates.

Final tax rates depend on the state yield, which is not yet finalized and may include an additional legislative buy-down.

Estimated Tax Rates (based on current yield):

Benson: \$1.55 per \$100 of assessed property value (+2.24%, +\$33.94 per \$100,000 of assessed home value)

Castleton: \$0.9259 (-3.44%, -\$32.97)

Fair Haven: \$1.2220 (-0.56%, -\$6.91)

Hubbardton: \$1.6212 (+0.42%, +\$6.70)

Orwell: \$0.9454 (+1.44%, +\$13.44)

West Haven: \$1.3711 (+6.48%, +\$83.43)

These estimates are based on the most recent equalized tax rate of \$1.2955, which is 5 cents lower than last year.

It is also important to note that:

- Much of the current discussion reflects statewide averages — not Slate Valley's reality.
- Taxes in Slate Valley have generally been decreasing, with

some taxpayers seeing reductions of up to 20% last year.

- The \$32.3 million budget supports all five schools and remains among one of the lowest per-pupil spending levels in Vermont.

"As a district, what we are seeing locally is very different from the statewide narrative," said School Board Chair Julie Finnegan. "In our largest towns, tax rates are decreasing for the second year in a row."

The School Board is committed to ensuring the community has clear, accurate information ahead of the vote.

For more detailed budget information, SVUUSD residents can visit www.slatevalleyunified.org. The budget informational meeting is March 30, 6:30 p.m. in the Fair Haven high school band room. The budget revote is Tuesday, March 31.

All are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and stay informed.

Brooke Olsen-Farrell
 Superintendent, SVUSD
 Fair Haven

Brown letter

(Continued from Page 4A)
 are. If we can begin there — focusing on shared values rather than entrenched positions — we may find a path forward.

But that requires a shift in how we communicate. Social media comment threads and one-line reactions are poor substitutes for real dialogue. Meaningful change comes from face-to-face conversations, from listening as much as speaking, from seeking to understand rather than to win. Civil discourse, once a cornerstone of community life, has too often been replaced by sound bites and personal attacks. We owe our children better.

History reminds us that social progress is often uncomfortable. There was a time when schools were segregated, when LGBTQ+ individuals were barred from teaching or holding public office. These realities are not distant — they are part of our recent past. Today, we broadly recognize that it is wrong to shame or exclude someone based on their identity, whether that be their race, religion, gender, sexuality, or ability. Progress does not require unanimous agreement, but it does

require courage.

Exposure to different perspectives does not harm children — it strengthens them. In my own family, which is not particularly religious, my children have attended church and Bible school with a close friend more than once. I do not fear that occasional exposure to beliefs different from my own will change who they are or what I have taught them as their parent. Rather, I see it as an opportunity for them to better understand the world and the people in it. Similarly, spending an hour listening to a story read by a drag performer will not change a child's identity. But for a child who may already feel different, it could provide a moment of recognition, comfort, or belonging, something that may help protect them from isolation, depression, or worse.

What is far more troubling than any proposed program is the response that ultimately shut it down: threats of violence against a school. This is unacceptable, full stop. Violence and intimidation have no place in disagreements — especially those involving children. Such actions model the very behavior we are trying

to prevent: bullying, fear and coercion. We must ask ourselves: what are we teaching our children when threats become a tool for getting one's way?

In a time of deep political division, it is worth remembering that we are more than our beliefs, our affiliations and who we vote for. We are neighbors, parents, and community members. We are all human beings trying to do our best. Disagreement is inevitable, but dehumanization is not.

I remain grateful for the conversations I have had with those who see this issue differently than I do. They have challenged me, and they have reminded me that empathy must extend in all directions — even toward those with whom we strongly disagree.

If we truly want to raise children who are kind, resilient, and capable of living in a diverse world, then we must model those values ourselves. That begins not with fear, but with courage. Not with threats, but with conversation. Not with division, but with a shared commitment to the well-being of every child in our community.

Jodi Brown
 New Haven

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

2. Former President Dwight David Eisenhower in his farewell speech warned against the military-industrial complex, noting that increased military spending by the federal government and partnering with the arms industry pose a threat to democratic processes.

3. According to Chekhov's rule if you introduce a gun in the first act, you must fire it by the third.

Recently, it seems that the first act when in dispute with another nation is to threaten violence. Having made the threat, the actual act is likely to follow.

As a result of conversations in Bill's class and writing about my

vision of a balanced government, I was motivated to look for others who want to direct more tax dollars toward helping people thrive. I found several groups. I also submitted a Peace Tax Return. These small actions reminded me that I have power as a taxpayer, one who wants a government that cares about people and this planet.

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.

Stores, restaurants and downtown businesses will keep doors open into the evening for extended shopping, dining and entertainment.

MIDD'S OPEN LATE ON THE FIRST FRIDAYS OF THE MONTH!

Join us downtown on April 3, 2026!

Experience MIDDLEBURY VERMONT

Scan for details and participating businesses

Elderly Services, Inc.

Spring 2026 Community Education Series

April 22:
Advanced Care Planning
 Find out more about how the Vermont Advance Directive process works, get free forms and informational brochures and ask your questions about how to get started with your advance directive including: Having advance care planning conversations with your loved ones and clinicians. Available tools to plan for your healthcare (advance directives, DNR/COLST, disease-specific addendums). How to use advance directives to make a plan for serious illness or end-of-life circumstances.
Presented by: Taylor Murray, Vermont Ethics Network Advance Care Planning Program Manager
Wednesday, April 22, 4:00-5:30 PM
 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

April 29:
Combating Fraud in the Digital Age
 Learn how to protect yourself from the growing threats of fraud targeting older adults. This session will cover current computer, telephone, and mail scams, including impersonation fraud, check fraud, phishing and more. Learn how to recognize common fraud tactics and discover practical steps to safeguard your personal information, bank accounts, and businesses. We'll provide easy to understand tips on protecting yourself from identity theft, securing your digital banking, and avoiding falling victim to fraudsters.
Presented by: Erin Small, M&T Bank
Wednesday, April 29, 4:00-5:30 PM
 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

May 6:
"You Are Not Alone"
 Caring for an aging loved one with memory loss: signs, symptoms and strategies
Presented by: Eileen Lawson, Geriatric Social Worker, Elderly Services, Center for Positive Aging
Wednesday, May 6, 4:00-5:30 PM
 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

May 13:
Alzheimer's and Dementia: Signs and Symptoms
 Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of Alzheimer's or other dementia. Alzheimer's is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. There are 10 warning signs and symptoms. Come to this program to learn more about how to identify and respond to these warning signs.
Presented by: Jordan Cotto, Vermont Chapter/ Alzheimer's Association
Wednesday, May 13, 4:00-5:30 PM
 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

May 20:
Driving and Aging - Challenges and Strategies
 What happens if you or a loved one can no longer drive? Join us for an informative session on the challenges older drivers face in Vermont. Learn about the Yellow Dot Program, a statewide initiative that gives first responders quick access to important medical information during a crash or emergency. Discover helpful tips on staying independent, safe, and mobile behind the wheel. We'll also cover how to approach the difficult conversation about driving retirement and start planning for the future.
Presented by: Julia Sarrasin and Emily Fredette, Vermont Department of Health
Wednesday, May 20, 4:00-5:30 PM
 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

ALL PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

Tara Lynn Mitchell, 36, Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Tara Lynn Mitchell passed away unexpectedly on March 3, 2026. Tara was born Feb. 19, 1990, in Middlebury to Izzy Mitchell and April Duclos. Tara grew up in Addison County where she attended MUHS and later took courses at CCV.

Tara had been dedicated 14 years to Ace hardware in Rutland, Vt. She was a hard worker and always up for the task at hand. Tara was an independent, fierce and an all-in mother to her two beloved boys. Tara enjoyed all the simple things in life. She always could bring the sunshine.

Tara was predeceased by her mother, April Duclos; grandfather

Thomas Duclos; grandfather Isadore Mitchell; stepbrother Kraton Chaloux; and stepsister Megan Amoroso.

Tara is survived by her boys, Logan Taylor (Middlebury), and Quinton Gero (Middlebury); father, Izzy Mitchell; stepmother, Jody Mitchell; grandmother Linda Mitchell; best friends (un-biological sisters), Samantha Lafountain (Trapper) of Middlebury, and Megan Whitney (Jeff) of Salisbury; along with many aunts, uncles, cousins and other friends and family.

A celebration of life will be held on April 9, at American Legion Post 27 in Middlebury, Vt., from 5-9 p.m. ◊



TARA LYNN MITCHELL

Michael John Ryan, 63, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Michael John Ryan, age 63, passed away March 16, 2026, at the University of Vermont Medical Center.

Michael was born in Middlebury March 9, 1963. He was the son of Robert and Edith (Lilly) Ryan. He grew up in Whiting, where he received his early education, and Otter Valley Union High School. Following his education, he joined the United States Army. After his Honorable Discharge he returned home to East Middlebury and worked with his father in the house-painting business. He later worked construction and became a finish and trim carpenter. He loved all sports, especially college football. He was a NASCAR fan and always rooted for the Miami Dolphins.

Surviving him are seven sisters, Joan Vicknair of Rogers, Ark., Marilyn Evans of Bellevue,



MICHAEL JOHN RYAN

Fla., Rebecca Ryan of Hinesburg, Deborah Sheldrick of Middlebury, Marjorie Laughlin of St. Albans, Patricia Shackleford (Vernon) of Ocala, Fla., and Barbara Kallen (Chris) of Rutland. One brother,

Patrick Ryan of Forest Dale, and many nieces, nephews and cousins also survive him. He was predeceased by his son, Christopher Ryan in 1980 and his partner in life, Pam Sands.

A private graveside committal service and burial with military honors will take place at a later date in the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph.

A gathering in celebration of his life will be held March 29, 2026, from noon to 3 p.m., at the Middlebury Veterans of Foreign Wars Post on Exchange Street, in Middlebury.

Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers may be made, in his memory to Middlebury Volunteer Ambulance Association, 55 Collins Drive, Middlebury, VT 05753.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon. ◊

Richard Owen Wright, 90, of Vergennes

VERGENNES — Richard Owen Wright, 90, passed peacefully away on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2026.

Born Feb. 13, 1936, to Owen and Laura Mae (Williams) Wright, Richard "Dick" Wright grew up in Syracuse, N.Y., a place he often recalled with fond memories of an idyllic childhood on Lincoln Avenue. He cherished the people, places, and homes that made that time in his life so special.

The family later moved to New Woodstock, N.Y., where many happy years were spent "up on the hill." After graduating, Dick married his high school sweetheart, Carol Miller, and together they welcomed two daughters, Lorrie and Julie. They resided in Cazenovia, N.Y., until moving to Rochester, N.Y., when Dick took a job with General Dynamics. He also entertained everyone with his wonderful singing voice at various nightclubs.

Dick was a man of deep conviction and quiet strength. He proudly served his country in the U. S. Air Force during the Korean War as a radar technician and helped establish a much-needed orphanage in Seoul — an experience that shaped his lifelong sense of duty and service. He carried that same dedication into his work in the Baptist ministry and his involvement in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

In the 1970s, Dick relocated to Vermont for work. Although the



RICHARD OWEN WRIGHT

distance from his roots and family was not always easy, he found his work at Simmonds Precision deeply rewarding and formed many lifelong friendships. It was also in Vermont that he met the love of his life, Mary McKinnon. When they married, he gained two additional daughters, Kelly and Macky, completing a blended family he held close to his heart.

Dick and Mary spent much of their time together at their Shadow Lake camp in Glover, Vt., where family and friends gathered to enjoy the peaceful lake and surrounding woods. During these years and beyond, Dick continued his commitment to service through active involvement in the Vergennes Rotary Club, where he found purpose in giving back to his community. His love

of children continued through his work volunteering and reading to our local youth at Vergennes Elementary School.

Dick leaves behind his beloved wife, Mary; his sisters, Bonnie Winfield and Patsy Harrington (Dan); his daughters, Lorrie Swartwout (Curt), Julie Wright-Procopio (Jim), Kelly McKinnon (Phil), and Macky Gaines (Scott); his grandchildren, Alexandria (Misha), Emily, Christopher, Brandon, Aaron, and Chelsea; and his great-grandchildren, Monica, Maliah, Nora, Troy, Micah, Malachi, and Luis.

He was predeceased by his parents, Owen and Laura Wright, his siblings, Roger, Douglas, Susan and George, and his beloved grandson, Richard.

A funeral Mass will be held April 6, at 1 p.m., at Saint Peter's Church in Vergennes. A reception and celebration of his life will follow at the American Legion Post 14 in Vergennes.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff at Middlebury Porter Hospital Palliative Care Unit, and in particular to his special nurse, Katrina, whose compassion and care for his dignity brought great comfort in his final days. In lieu of flowers, donations in Dick's name may be made to the UVM Health Porter Medical Center Palliative Medicine Care Unit (Estuary Room), Vergennes Rotary Club or St. Peter's Catholic Church. ◊

Charles Vincent Martin, 93, formerly of Middlebury

FAIRFAX — Charles V. "Chuck" Martin, 93, passed away peacefully Sunday, March 1, 2026, at the McClure Miller respite house in Colchester with his youngest sister lovingly by his side. His departure marked the close of a long, generous and selfless life, lived with devotion and strength.

Born in 1932, in Burlington, to Helen and Francis Martin, Chuck was the third of eight children. He graduated from Burlington High School, where he distinguished himself as three-sport athlete, excelling in baseball, football, and basketball. He was a natural competitor, with discipline and heart.

After High School, Chuck spent four years in the U.S. Air Force, climbing to the rank of Staff Sergeant, and following his active military duty, he also completed several years in the Air National Guard and in the Marine Corp Reserves. Chuck then continued both his education and his athletic legacy, receiving his Bachelor of Science from Johnson State College, where he played basketball and soccer, and a Master's degree from Syracuse University. He also attended both St. Michaels and Villanova for additional coursework.

Beginning in 1962, and for the next 25 years, Chuck poured his heart and soul into Middlebury Junior/Senior High School as a math and science teacher, seventh grade advisor, and coach, shaping generations of students with his steady presence. He had a gift for turning curiosity into confidence and for helping young people see the world a little more clearly. He believed, and taught others, that learning was a lifelong responsibility.

On the athletic front, Chuck served many years as Head



CHARLES VINCENT MARTIN

Coach of the baseball team, and Assistant Coach for the football and basketball programs. His players fondly remember him for his dedication, drive, direction, and his famously "not-so-quiet" encouragement. In 2019, he was inducted into the Middlebury High School Hall of Fame — a fitting tribute to a man who gave so much of himself to the MUHS Tigers.

Retirement from teaching did little to slow Chuck down. He soon found himself drawn back into the sports community at Middlebury College, dedicating many more years as an Equipment Manager. He loved being around the athletes — swapping stories, offering guidance, and chatting about statistics, he never forgot a name, a family, or a face, and he took immense pride in the work he did with the teams.

Chuck never married but lived a life rich in connection. In his younger years, when he wasn't teaching or coaching, he enjoyed retreating to his rustic cabin in the woods of Ripton, living very simply and contentedly. He loved keeping his property neat, chopping and stacking wood, and was especially fond of mowing

his several acres of grass. Without a phone, he relied on the Ripton Store to take messages for him when needed. He was always the last one to arrive at family functions, but swept in with a grin, carrying surprises for each of his twenty-one nieces and nephews.

In the later 1980's, Chuck found a true partner in Gail Jette, a fellow MUHS teacher and coach. Together they shared more than thirty years of companionship, laughter, and deep affection. One of the greatest joys of Chuck's life was becoming "Gump" to Gail's five grandchildren, Quinn, James, Willem, Zach and Sadie, who absolutely adored spending time with him.

Chuck is lovingly remembered by two of his siblings, Mary Usher of Middletown, Del., and Colleen Steen of Fairfax; Gail's children, Peter Jette and his wife Victoria of Middlebury, and Brooke Jette also of Middlebury; as well as their children, and many nieces and nephews who cherished his presence in their lives. He was predeceased by his beloved Gail in 2020, by his parents, and by his siblings, Francis "Pepper" Martin of Barton, Patricia Laskowski of Milton, John "Jake" Martin of Bakersfield, James Martin of Georgia, and Robert Martin of Enosburg.

Over 93 years, Chuck touched countless lives with his generosity, humor, and unwavering commitment to others, and leaves behind a legacy of service, love, and the kind of quiet heroism that endures in the memories of those fortunate enough to have known him.

By Chuck's request, there will be no memorial service, but his family warmly welcomes any memories or reflections shared in the guest book, knowing he would have treasured each one. ◊



LESLIE AND STANLEY SARGENT

Leslie and Stanley Sargent celebration of life

BRISTOL — We have all felt sadness and grief for Leslie and Stanley Sargent's passing, but now it's time for us to celebrate the remarkable life they lived! Please join us for the celebration of life

honoring Leslie Sargent Jr. and Stanley Sargent Saturday, April 18, at the Bristol American Legion, 56 Airport Drive, from noon-5 p.m. Private graveside burials will occur at a later date. ◊



TAMMY LYNN NEALLEY

Tammy Lynn Nealley, 62, of Chambersburg, Pa.

CHAMBERSBURG, Pa. — Tammy Lynn Nealley passed at 62 in Chambersburg, Pa. Her husband, Todd Nealley and her daughter, Courtney Mason were at her side.

A memorial service to celebrate her life will be held April 18 at the Middlebury VFW in Middlebury, Vt., starting at 3 p.m. Dinner will follow. All are welcome to attend.

A full obituary is posted at <https://tinyurl.com/Tammy-Nealley-Obituary>. ◊

OBITUARY Guidelines

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

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



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Obituaries

Gisele (Ouellette) Sabourin, 94, formerly of Vergennes

VERGENNES — Gisele (Ouellette) Sabourin, 94, formerly from Vergennes, went to the Lord March 19, 2026, at peace. Gisele lived a long life filled with love and was adored by her family and friends. She will be truly missed.

Gisele was born in Quebec, Canada, June 12, 1931, to Emilien Ouellette and Rose Marchand. As a youth, she moved to the states with her family, where they operated a dairy farm.

Married in 1950 to Wilfred Sabourin, they mostly lived in Addison County and raised eight children.

Gisele was a hard worker, a devout catholic and a fabulous cook. She enjoyed playing cards, doing crafts, decorating, and dressing to the latest trends. Her sense of style and infectious giggle



GISELE (OUELLETTE) SABOURIN

made her stand out.

She is survived by her children Roger Sabourin, Paul (Beverly)

Sabourin, Louie Sabourin, Carol (Clif) O'Brien, Lorraine (Dennis) Gendreau, Mark (Vikki) Sabourin, and Harmel (June) Sabourin; daughter-in-law Betty Sabourin; 22 grandchildren; several great grandchildren; sister FleurAnge Vanier; three brothers, Claude, Harmel and Gill Ouellette; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband, Wilfred; sons Gerald and Lionel; sister Fleurette; and brothers Donald, Gerald, Johnny, Clement and George Ouellette.

Services will be held June 15 in Vergennes at St Peter's Catholic Church at 11 a.m. A reception to follow at the American Legion

Donations can be made in her memory to St Peter's Catholic Church, 85 South Maple Street, Vergennes VT 05491. ♦

Lois (Fleming) Grace, 87, of Bristol

BRISTOL — Lois (Fleming) Grace, 87, of Bristol passed away March 21, 2026, at home after a long illness surrounded by family.

She was the daughter of Leonard and Rena Fleming. Lois was married to Donald Grace Sr. for 61 years.

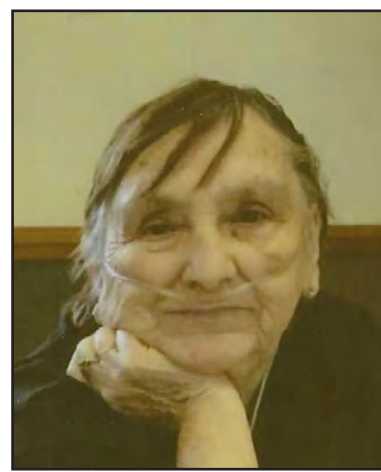
Lois worked as a caregiver most of her life and in many factories.

Lois is survived by her children, Norma and Michael Freegard, William and Alesia Grace, Donna Johnson and Donald Grace Jr., Lisa and Richard Tatro, and Angel and Wallace Thompson;

many grandchildren, nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters; special friends Roxi and Doug Rivers, and Randy Farnsworth.

Lois was predeceased by her husband, Donald Grace Sr.; her parents, Leonard and Rena Fleming; Jerry Tanner Sr.; her foster son, David Wedge; three grandchildren; several brothers and sister.

There will be a graveside service held at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 29, at Maple Cemetery in Lincoln with a gathering after. Contributions may go to the Rutland County Hospice. ♦



LOIS (FLEMING) GRACE

Harry Wesley Doner III, 38, of Bristol

BRISTOL — It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of our beloved son, brother, uncle at his home in Bristol, Vt., unexpectedly, due to health issues, March 17, 2026.

Harry was born Jan. 5, 1988, in Waterbury, Conn., to parents Sharon and Harry Doner Jr.

He enjoyed watching movies, and drama sitcoms as well as gaming on his PlayStation during the winter months. During the summer months he enjoyed fishing with his mom, attending car shows with his dad, and loved spending time by the river with his nieces and nephew.

We all know he had a tough exterior, but really he was a kind,

caring, loving teddy bear with a big heart.

He is survived by his parents, Sharon and Harry Doner Jr.; sisters, Elizabeth (Liz) Doner and April and husband Duane Peacock; nieces Isabelle Doner-Bilodeau and Autumn Peacock; nephew, Elliot Peacock; and many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

He was predeceased by paternal grandparents, Grace Moss and Harry Doner Sr.; and maternal grandparents, Barbara and Johnny Dean.

Your footsteps can never be missed nor your love ever be forgotten.

A celebration of Harry's life will be announced at a later date. ♦



HARRY WESLEY DONER III



Winter wonderland in late March

WHEN THE WATER droplets in a passing fog cloud touched the below-freezing surfaces along this road in Lincoln overnight on Monday, a beautiful, frozen landscape emerged. We hope drivers slowed down on the icy road to enjoy the spectacle.

Photo courtesy of Theresa Foran

Letters to the Editor

Show us how closing local schools saves money

Vermonters are a practical people. We make do or do without, favor frugality over excess, and prefer the straight truth vs. a party line. We're also not afraid to roll up our sleeves to solve tough problems; working elbow to elbow with our neighbors to do what needs to be done.

Which is why, Vermonters across the state are asking: where are the savings?

We've heard time and time again that we must close and consolidate our public schools to lower our property taxes, but this argument has a glaring and ironic omission — sound math.

Proponents of Act 73 say it will save money and make spending across districts more equitable. Yet many lawmakers are uncertain that larger districts will deliver the savings that Gov. Scott has promised. Why are we tolerating a tentative truth when the future of our state is at stake?

The decisions we make today surrounding school closure and consolidation will shape the future of Vermont's communities and economy. If you're going to ask Vermonters to add hours to their daily commute for work and school, endure greater traffic congestion in major thoroughfares; experience further hollowing out of our rural communities and the small businesses they support, ask students to cram into tight classrooms and declining buildings, and make Vermont even more of an impractical place for families to raise children (our future workers and taxpayers), then we need to see the accounting.

How exactly will the plan save money? How will it lower property taxes? How will it impact our economy now and in the future? Why does buying down property taxes with \$115 million in one-time spending make sense when it only solves the problem for one year? Show us the logic. Show us the math. Show us the savings.

A plan without clear and concrete data that bends the so-called "cost curve" is unacceptable.

Our small schools are as much a part of Vermont as our reverence for the land, hard work, tight-knit community, local democracy, and self-reliance. Our investments in public schools should be as rigorous as any other for our state.

And we don't have to start from scratch. We know what Vermonters want and we have a researched-backed, time-tested model for achieving the goals of improved student outcomes, increased cost savings, and maintaining schools as community connectors, not just buildings.

The Act 73 School Redistricting Task Force heard from more than 5,000 Vermonters through written comments, public hearings, and meetings; the greatest response to any single-issue public comment period in recent history. Their message was loud and clear, "keep our local schools and local boards." Equally important, the Task Force's research showed zero cost savings from consolidation. Substantiating the Task Force findings, Campaign for Vermont has consistently shown that larger school districts do not produce better outcomes or lower costs. Supervisory Union size matters far more.

Other states have already proven that a shared-services model of "Cooperative Education Service Areas" (such as New York's BOCES) delivers substantial savings in administration, special education, transportation, procurement, and professional development. Further, they retain community identity and strengthen the connection to Career and Technical Education centers, a priority for the State as outlined in Title 16, Chapter 37 (16 V.S.A. § 1521-1594).

A Campaign for Vermont analysis showed plausible annual savings in

the hundreds of millions by moving to a similar model, and Vermont's Rural School Community Alliance reports that a BOCES pilot in Vermont is already creating real savings. As Vermont native and Yale University researcher Grace Miller has proven, the forced mergers of Act 46 produced little to no savings and a lot of community resentment. Let's not repeat that mistake.

There are times when consolidation can be useful to solve problems of student outcomes and achievement, gaps in access to resources and services, and unsustainable infrastructure. However, the mountain of research and our own experiences in Addison County (including the recent closure of Ripton Elementary School) have clearly shown that net savings is not an outcome of consolidation.

Vermonters understand that education funding is complex. We get it that there are multiple issues that need to be addressed — from our contentious reliance on private schools in rural areas, to the woeful state of deferred maintenance, double-digit increases in health care costs year over year, and the dearth of workforce housing for families. We appreciate that these issues are complicated, relentless, deeply emotional, and yes, require sweeping change.

Families, schools, education leaders, taxpayers, and lawmakers agree that we need a dramatic revisioning of Vermont's public education funding system. We're willing to listen and roll up our sleeves with you. Show us the calculus and we'll show you our cooperation. This is a math problem we can only solve together.

Roxanne Vought Weybridge

Editor's note: Roxanne Vought is a working parent and daughter caring for a 9-year-old and 79-year-old in rural Addison County.

One night in the life of a Ukrainian mother

Once again, Olha Lychko-Parubocha from Lviv, Ukraine wants to reach out to you. Recently, Olha wrote an article for the Friends Peace Teams website. I share this with you, since I am a mother, a Quaker, and a human being working with this mantra: "Every breath is a prayer. Open mind. Open heart." I think it is very important to cultivate compassion, especially in these times.

Olha writes, "My children don't like going to the shelter. My son ignores the air raid sirens, and my daughter sometimes goes down to the shelter. But not that night... At around 2 a.m., drones began flying into the city, and I decided to go down to the shelter. But my daughter refused to go! She wanted to sleep, so she resisted, wrapped herself in a blanket and stubbornly replied: 'No, no! I'm not going anywhere!'"

There was nothing I could do about it. My despair and helplessness were boundless. I got dressed and... sat down next to her

on the bed.

We live on the top floor of the building. Everything will fall from the sky right on top of us! So every time the annoying hum of the drone was very close, I covered her with my body...

All night long, I heard the drones approaching and receding, changing their flight paths. I heard the air defense systems working.

By morning, I was so tired that the missiles approaching Lviv elicited no other reaction from me than this: I lay down next to my daughter, hugged her, and fell asleep. I was exhausted because I could physically feel the cortisol and adrenaline levels in my body rising under the influence of fear and stress. At one point, I felt sick—nauseous and weak.

I am not a heroine. And I am not writing this to be praised. I did all this because I couldn't do anything else. Does it make sense to save your own life if you can't save your children's?

There are many parents like me

in Ukraine. We all worry about the safety of our children and look to the future with hope. The work that (Peace Teams Friends Assistant Coordinator) Yulia and I do among the civilian population is work with psychological trauma, which will continue as long as the war continues."

Now that you have stepped in the shoes of a mother of teenagers, living in a war torn country, you, here in Addison County, might be so moved that you go to the friendspeaceteams.org and make a donation. After you enter the amount, you can specify a country you want to send it to. Write Ukraine. If you want to write a check, make it out to Friends Peace Teams with the memo Training in Ukraine. Mail it to Friends Peace Teams, 1001 Park Ave., Saint Louis, MO, 63104

Thank you for listening and practicing connecting with others. This work is sacred work.

Patricia Heather-Lea Bristol



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Letters to the Editor

Why did Sen. Heffernan oppose Proposition 4?

As an Addison County constituent, I was disappointed to see that Vermont Senator Steven Heffernan was absent for the Senate vote on Proposition 4 on March 11.

Proposition 4 is a proposed amendment to the Vermont Constitution that would establish an explicit equal protection clause, ensuring that the state cannot deny equal treatment under the law based on characteristics such as race, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. This was not a routine vote, but a significant constitutional question that has been under consideration by the Legislature for several years and will ultimately go before Vermont voters.

When I saw that the Senate passed the measure unanimously, 29 to 0, I had an immediate

sinking feeling, knowing there are 30 senators and suspecting who might be missing. A review of the roll call confirmed that it was Sen. Heffernan who was absent. Given his recent record, including no votes on SR 13 and SR 21, constituents can draw their own conclusions.

Sen. Heffernan has justified those votes by emphasizing due process and the importance of full deliberation. Using “due process” as a rationale for opposing SR 13 and SR 21 feels misplaced, given that these were non-binding resolutions meant to signal values, not render legal judgment. But even a full-throated post hoc expression of support for Proposition 4 would not put my mind at ease.

According to the public record, Sen. Heffernan was not present for the vote, yet he attended a Senate Education Committee meeting

later that same afternoon. If he was able to participate in committee work, it is reasonable to ask why he was not present for a vote of this significance. His absence at recent town meetings only adds to these concerns, as those are important opportunities to face constituents directly and discuss the issues that matter to the people he represents.

We elect our representatives to bring our voices to the Golden Dome and to stand behind their decisions. When a vote of this importance is missed, it raises real concerns about representation and accountability. Showing up for the vote is a fundamental part of that responsibility.

I hope Sen. Heffernan will offer an explanation and reaffirm his commitment to representing the people of Addison County.

**Keith Drinkwine
Starksboro**

Freidin forum

(Continued from Page 5A)

to understand, and fairer than the current system or Act 73. (b) Fund healthcare insurance, mental health services, and special education outside school budgets. (c) Make no other changes until these have been in place long enough to be accurately assessed.

THREE: Study the Report of the Act 73 Redistricting Task Force. Its suggestions are less destabilizing

and extreme than those in Act 73. The Report challenges claims that larger schools are more efficient and produce better outcomes than smaller ones. It opposes forced consolidation but recommends voluntary consolidation for some districts. It advocates collaboration among districts to save money and favors increasing community engagement, because it is critical to making change work.

Editor's note: John Freidin has served on the Beeman Elementary School Board in New Haven; been director of the Teacher Education Program at Middlebury College; founded and run a successful business, Vermont Bicycle Touring; and, as a state representative, played a major role in development and enactment of the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1997.

Letters to the Editor can be found on Pages 4A, 5A, 7A and 8A.

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Evidence shows you can't call ICE 'professional'

Local law enforcement and state government officials use the word “unprofessional” to frame their condemnation of a recent ICE operation in South Burlington. This begs the question: What would correctly describe a “professional” ICE operation under similar circumstances?

It's hard to imagine any scenario where numerous masked gunmen instigate a high-speed chase on public roads towards a house where a presumed fugitive is taking shelter and encounter hundreds of residents blocking the home's entry. What then?

In this case, numerous “professional” state and local law enforcement agents arrived to “protect the safety” of people. Then, in a completely “uncoordinated” effort with the masked gunmen, they somehow ended up participating in a forceful, if not brutal clearing of a pathway through the same group of residents they were sent to protect, who were themselves reportedly there to protect the safety of the house's inhabitants by engaging in a heroic human chain attempt to block the doomed front door.

What ensued should presumably have been a “professional” apprehension by law enforcement of the fugitive by judicial warrant; instead, it turned out to be more “unprofessional” behavior by the same masked gunmen, who battered down the front door and chased the terrified inhabitants throughout the house. This resulted in agents falling through the ceiling into the room below, causing the accidental discharge of a service weapon.

As it turns out, the individual named in the arrest warrant was nowhere to be found. “Never mind that!” we were told. The saga continued.

But first, let me remind the reader of the rhetorical question being asked: At what point would any of this behavior miraculously change from “unprofessional” to “professional”?

The inhabitants of the house

were “detained” (presumably arrested) for somehow being in their own home unlawfully after their terrified children were fortuitously spirited away by their neighbors and friends. But these neighbors and friends were then subjected to the same rough treatment by the unidentified masked gunmen, as well as by the local law enforcement agents sent to protect them.

Here's a short list of criminal infractions beyond “professional” misconduct, all constituting excessive use of force under what Gov. Scott called an “avoidable” circumstance:

Assault with a deadly weapon;
Accidental discharge of a firearm while destroying private property;
Battery;

Assault with chemical weapons;
Assault with ballistic firearms, including the use of ammunition containing chemical irritants;
Assault with explosive ordinance;

Unlawful detention and arrest, resulting in neck and head injuries, exposure to toxins with resulting damage to the central and peripheral nervous system, damage to eyes, nose and throat, traumatic injury including bodily injury and psychological trauma.

Here, the vocal and persistent critics of so-called “professional protestors” (or “agitators,” “rioters,” “terrorists,” “democrats,” “liberals,” “radicals”) begin reciting the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution in defense of the “professionals” and “unprofessionals” alike.

They claim the “protestors” weren't in the act of protecting the law-abiding, but somehow were themselves committing the felonious crime of “obstruction” — obstruction of legitimate law enforcement operations including the acts of enforcement of federal immigration laws then being carried out by “professional” law enforcement agents.

The same pretzel logic holds that somehow the local residents were at fault for “disturbing the peace,” “causing a riot,” or “destroying

property,” while committing acts of terrorism against the United States of America under the directives of a supremely fictitious leader named Ayatollah Djtump.

Much can be said about all of that, and probably will. But let's get back to the question at hand. The objective reality is that by applying the Equal Protection Under Law principle in the Constitution (that's right, The Law of the Land), based on provable facts and eyewitness accounts, federal agents appear to have committed multiple acts of unprovoked and unwarranted violence against innocent persons, all well within the jurisdiction of the State of Vermont — assisted, aided and abetted, if not uninterrupted, by multiple state and local law enforcement agents on the scene who have claimed they were neither coordinating with nor protecting the masked gunmen who precipitated the daylong event.

I ask, for the sake of reason, when any convicted criminal has ever been accused of being “unprofessional”?

So, which is worse, being “unprofessional” or simply being a “criminal”? If criminals are worse, and having committed criminal acts, are they now being protected by myriad “laws” obstructing the prosecution of the same, and for reasons of political expediency are simply being described as “unprofessional” as a lesser offense rather than being prosecuted as the criminals they are?

As it turns out, criminal conduct is generally considered no part of professionalism... Unless it turns out that the criminals are themselves professionals, and therefore accountable for their conduct. Confusing, isn't it? But that's just the point. This might be amusing, if not bewildering, if it weren't tragic and true.

For those citing the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution in defense of the indefensible, read and reread the 2nd and the 10th Amendments of the selfsame Constitution. And weep.

**Thomas Vanacore
Bridport**

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Rime of the ancient mountains

THE HIGHER ELEVATION in Lincoln on Monday welcomed a winter wonderland, as rime ice covered everything in sight.

Independent photo/Dale Cockrell

Champlain Farms store burglarized

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police were informed at 4:10 a.m. this past Sunday, March 22, of a burglary at the Champlain Farms store on Court Street. Police at this point are offering no details on the case, which remains under investigation.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Responded to a domestic disturbance in the East Main Street area on March 16.
- Investigated a “suspicious neighbor” complaint in the Ledgewood Court neighborhood on March 16.
- Investigated a March 16 allegation that a local juvenile had purchased nicotine vapes from a local business.

• Responded to two reports of “juvenile issues” at Middlebury Union High School on March 16.

• Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS with a drunken man on North Pleasant Street on March 17.

• Responded to a four-car crash, with no reported injuries, on East Main Street on March 17.

• Took into protective custody a man found drinking alcohol and sheltering in a Main Street building without the owner’s permission on March 18.

• Checked on the welfare of a drunken man found sleeping in his vehicle while it was parked in the Frog Hollow area on March 18.

• Investigated an unlawful mischief complaint in the Court Street area on March 18.

• Searched for a missing juvenile in the Creek Road area on March 18.

• Were asked to assist with a juvenile issue at MUHS on March 18.

• Provided a demonstration by Middlebury’s PD’s K-9 team at Whiting Elementary School on March 18.

• Checked on the welfare of a local woman who hadn’t been answering her phone on March 18.

• Checked on the welfare of person on Merchants Row on March 18.

Middlebury Police Log

• Helped an intoxicated person who was walking on Main Street on March 19.

• Responded to a report of someone exhibiting harassing behavior on North Pleasant Street on March 19.

• Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS on a medical call at the intersection of Academy and Franklin streets on March 20.

• Checked on vehicles that had veered off Case Street and Seminary Street Extension during slippery conditions on March 20.

• Assisted a South Village Green resident who had reported receiving threatening messages on March 20.

• Cited Brittany Aunchman, 31, of Salisbury for unlawful trespass following an incident at Shaw’s Supermarket on March 20.

• Assisted Vergennes police during an investigation at a Green Street home on March 20.

• Arrested Joshua H. Santos, 33, of Middlebury on an outstanding warrant, after investigating a report of an unwanted patron at an Exchange Street business on March 21.

• Responded to a trespassing complaint in the Water Street area on March 21.

• Cited Timothy Edwards, 39, of Ripton for driving under the influence and operating with a criminally suspended license, following a traffic stop on Route 7 South on March 22. Police said Edwards declined to submit to a breath test.

While on scene, police said they also arrested 29-year-old Sequoyah Parchment for being in violation of her conditions of release.

Police said they seized the vehicle pending a search warrant application.

Climate matters

Perspectives on Change

The solar panel is the new peace symbol

By BILL MCKIBBEN

That the war in Iran is a sad fiasco becomes more apparent each day: our president declared “total victory” in the first few hours but somehow our adversaries didn’t get the message, and now there are hundreds of dead schoolgirls and skyrocketing oil prices.

An 86-year-old Ayatollah Khamenei is dead, replaced by a 56-year-old Ayatollah Khamenei, who doubtless hates us for killing his father, his wife and his children. The White House has gone from dismissing the idea that we might need help from others to begging the nations we’ve been stinging with tariffs to come to our aid. And so on — what a pathetic story all around.

But all cataclysmic world events help us see the world more clearly, and in this case one of the things that’s come into focus is the future of energy. Either we remain dependent on an energy source — oil and gas — that’s only available in a few places, or we seize the chance to switch to power from the wind and sun, available everywhere and at a reasonable price.

It’s true that sunlight has to travel 93 million miles to reach the earth, but none of those miles are through the Strait of Hormuz; its price is the same today as it was yesterday and will be next week. Even our species, so good at fighting wars, will have a hard time figuring out how to fight one over sunshine. The solar panel is the new peace symbol — and also the new sign of good economic thinking.

Oh, and there’s a considerable bonus attached to the fact that it also doesn’t destroy the earth’s climate.

Moving to clean energy has never been easier. Sometime earlier this decade we crossed some invisible line where generating power from the sun and wind became cheaper than burning coal and gas and oil; with the steady steep decline in the price of batteries, even

nightfall doesn’t mean the sun is setting. (In California, batteries that spent the afternoon soaking up excess sunshine are now often the main source of supply to the nighttime grid.)

We’re seeing incredible success stories across the globe. In Pakistan we’ve watched as people, working off YouTube videos, have put up enough solar panels to duplicate half the country’s national electric grid; the country,

which once was heavily dependent on Qatari liquified natural gas, has started turning away cargoes of the stuff. Africa leads the world now in solar installations, benefiting from the cheap Chinese panels now so easy to find in most of the world.

Paradoxically, it’s harder to find traction for the clean energy revolution in some of the richer parts of the world.

In Vermont, with its proud green heritage, we’ve had a de facto moratorium on new wind development in the state for more than a decade, and we’ve turned down many solar farms pretty much solely on aesthetic grounds: we don’t want to look at them. Even with that opposition, though, we’re seeing good things happen. Middlebury has been blessed by the college’s courage in building new solar fields, and students are hoping that will continue into the future. And those of us at Third Act, which organizes elders across the country for action

on climate and democracy, are very hopeful that the legislature will soon join Utah and Virginia in permitting “plug-in solar” for our homes and passing laws that make permitting for rooftop panels much easier.

Most people, the polls show, are deeply upset by the war in Iran, as they were by our attack on Venezuela. That these countries hold the second- and third-largest reserves of crude oil in the world is almost certainly not a coincidence: our president has been talking about “energy dominance” since the moment he took office, and he has many favors to return to the oil interests that helped him get elected. Just last week he proposed taking a billion dollars of our tax money to buy out offshore wind leases along the Atlantic Seaboard and insure we stop building this cheap, clean, reliable energy.

Most of us — at the gas pump, when the propane bill comes — are hostage to this kind of bad decision-making. Addison County sends tens of millions of dollars to Texas or Saudi Arabia every year for our energy, money that could stay close to home building our own economies and our own self-reliance.

But each of us — in our decisions as voters, as consumers, and as citizens of our towns and our state — get to have a say too. Hopefully Americans, come the midterm elections, will decide that Washington needs to change.

In the meantime, we can help our towns and Montpelier break out of their ruts and join the new energy world. The climate of our world, and the peace of our world, both depend on it.

Bill McKibben is the Schumann Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury College, the founder of 350.org and Third Act, and the author most recently of “Here Comes the Sun.”



Vt. state college to host weather and climate science summer camp

LYNDON, VT. — Vermont State University’s Lyndon Campus will welcome high school students from across Vermont and the region for the Governor’s Institutes of Vermont’s 2026 Weather & Climate Science Institute, taking place Sunday, July 5 through Saturday, July 11.

This immersive summer program invites Vermont students in grades 9 through 11 to explore how weather is predicted, how climate systems function, and how a changing climate is affecting communities. Participants are guided by the expertise of VTSU Lyndon’s nationally recognized Atmospheric Sciences program.

Throughout the week, students will delve into the fundamentals of weather, climate, and environmental science through applied learning. They will work side by side with professional meteorologists, newsroom weather personalities, environmental stewards, and storm-chasing experts.

Using advanced tools such as weather balloons and data-driven

generative modeling software, participants will gather and interpret atmospheric data to understand how weather events are observed, analyzed, and communicated.

“One of the most exciting things we get to do at VTSU is introduce young people to the science behind the weather they experience every day,” said Andrew Westgate, Assistant Professor of Atmospheric Sciences at VTSU Lyndon. “The Institute gives students hands-on opportunities with real meteorological tools and data, just like our undergraduates use. They learn not only how weather is forecasted, but why it matters, how communities, safety, industries, and the future of our climate. It is inspiring to watch students discover that they can play a role in understanding and communicating this science.”

— Andrew Westgate, Assistant Professor of Atmospheric Sciences at VTSU Lyndon

it affects communities, safety, industries, and the future of our climate. It is inspiring to watch students discover that they can play a role in understanding and communicating this science.”

The Institute is offered in partnership with the Governor’s Institutes of Vermont (GIV), a longstanding Vermont nonprofit that provides college-level, experiential summer learning opportunities to high school

students. Each year, GIV convenes institutes across a range of disciplines on college campuses statewide, giving students access to advanced resources, professional mentorship, and a residential campus experience.

“GIV is committed to giving Vermont students learning experiences that spark curiosity, confidence, and possibility,” said Jennie Gartner, Director of

Programs at GIV. “Students leave this program with new skills, new friendships, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.”

College credit is available for the summer camp. Thanks to GIV’s sliding-scale, Vermont-area students can attend for as little as \$10. Applications are accepted until March 31, 2026 at <https://giv.org/apply>.

READER comments

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Leicester

NEWS

LEICESTER — Town Clerk Julie Delphia reminds dog owners to register dogs by April 1. To avoid possible fines and penalties, make sure you have your dog’s rabies certificate and get your pets registered.

The vote on the amended Otter Valley Unified Union School

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

District will be held on Tuesday, April 7. Polls in Leicester will be open from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

The Leicester Historical Society is sponsoring Prize Bingo on Saturday, April 11, at 1 p.m., at the Four Corners. Refreshments served; all are welcome.



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Grease

High School Edition



Grease is the word

MIDDLEBURY UNION HIGH School's senior play, "Grease," will be performed by a talented student cast of around 50 this Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 26-28. Sandy, Danny and all their friends take the stage in the school auditorium to present a great new take on a well-known story. Shown at a Tuesday dress rehearsal are, clockwise from top-left photo: Sawyer Witscher, as "Sandy," sings a number; five "Burger Boys" — Nick Carpenter, Emery Richards-Lindeke, Callan McDowell, Nathan Stefani and Sole Pareja — prepare for some hijinks; Witscher (again as Sandy) belts out the tune "Hopelessly Devoted to You" as Callan McDowell as Danny listens in the background; (L-R) Richards-Lindeke, Stefani, Pareja and Madelyn LaDuke (as Frenchie) share the stage; Pareja (standing on a crate) leads a rendition of "Those Magic Changes"; the "Pink Ladies" perform; white T-shirts are "in" among the boys; Madelyn LaDuke as Frenchie; and Kaden Hammond as Eugene wraps up the show.

Photos by Jason Duquette-Hoffman



ICE concerns

(Continued from Page 1A)
Democratic majorities in its House and Senate, and its Republican Gov. Phil Scott has consistently parted ways with Trump on recent ICE activities.

“Our effort... is to make sure our community is prepared, if and when situations occur with immigration issues,” Middlebury selectboard Vice Chair Dan Brown said on Tuesday during a meeting that included Covey, Town Clerk Karin Mott, and around 15 interested citizens.

Selectboard members had requested the ICE conversation in the wake of the recent clash between ICE agents, Vermont law enforcement and protestors at a Dorset Street residence on South Burlington. ICE agents went to the home to arrest Deyvi Daniel Corona-Sanchez, a 24-year-old Mexican national who had allegedly entered the country illegally.

South Burlington and Vermont State Police also converged on the scene at the request of ICE agents, who had asked for help after a growing group of protestors sought to block access to the front and rear doors of the home.

As tensions flared late that day, police began forcibly removing protestors blocking ICE access to the home, which by then had a judicial warrant for Corona-Sanchez, with video showing skirmishes that included a South Burlington officer throwing a woman to the pavement.

Per reporting by Vermont Public, federal officers in riot gear eventually used flash-bangs and tear gas to disperse the crowd at the Dorset Street home, which stands near two schools. South Burlington PD and state police have come under scrutiny for their response to the incident, which gave Vermonters a firsthand look at ICE operations that have drawn widespread criticism of the agency under the Trump administration.

While ICE hasn't yet mobilized

to Middlebury for a major operation, town officials want to remain vigilant. Trump, with partisan support from GOP majorities in the U.S. House and Senate, quadrupled ICE's budget to \$170 billion to immigration enforcement through 2025's so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill Act.”

Middlebury's was the first police department in the state to adopt a “fair and impartial policing policy,” a standard that is now the norm among law enforcement throughout Vermont. That policy, among other things, prohibits racial profiling, and forbids officers from stopping or arresting individuals solely to enforce federal civil immigrations laws.

Covey acknowledged his department recently arrested a foreign national on a DUI charge, and that individual was subsequently contacted by ICE. But Covey stressed his department didn't tip off ICE agents about the man; they had found out about him through their access to police records.

Covey said he's received many calls from Middlebury residents since the South Burlington incident. Some of the recurring questions have been, “What do we do when ICE shows up? Do we call the police? And what are the police going to do about it?”

Yes, if you see a suspected ICE operation in Middlebury, the MPD wants to hear from you.

“Let us verify this is what it purports to be, so we can ensure this isn't someone who is posing as an ICE agent conducting a kidnapping under the guise of it being an ICE operation,” Covey said.

He added that in addition to providing enforcement and protection, Middlebury police play a peacekeeping role.

“We cannot stop ICE. If ICE is acting lawfully, they have the authority to act; we can't intervene. That's a hard conversation to have

with folks. I understand the fear, how polarizing this issue is,” said Covey, who added that ICE is under no obligation to notify local police before they arrive for a local operation.

Are there any cases in which Middlebury police could take action against ICE agents?

“All Vermont law enforcement is required to intervene if they see excessive force used,” Covey said. “The interaction is where this goes awry. That's where it gets so dicey for Vermont law enforcement, because anything we do that is seen as helping the federal agents is going to be perceived as a violation of the fair and impartial policing policy. This is such a delicate balance. That separation is the key.”

He's intent on seeing that protest events don't rise to a boil.

“What I ask for is for cooler heads to prevail,” Covey said. “We have seen nationwide that escalation is disproportionate sometimes, and that really concerns me. That's why I want us to be there, and I really think that's our critical role.”

Crowd management can be difficult, according to Covey, but he said his department will always respect freedom of speech and assembly and encouraged protest leaders to identify themselves at an event.

If protestors are practicing civil disobedience (such as blocking an entryway or street) and are intent on being gently arrested to make their point, Covey said, “We will work with you to make that happen.”

Covey was asked if he minded protestors using whistles, which became a widespread practice (along with honking) when ICE were active in Minneapolis earlier this year.

“I have three kids,” Covey said with a smile, adding he had no objection.

The MPD isn't alone in readying for potential ICE visits. Porter Medical Center, Middlebury



Early spring in Vermont

THE RECENT SNOW didn't seem to perturb this robin spotted in Weybridge on Monday. It danced around the snowpack pecking for food, seemingly sure that warm weather will return to Addison County very soon.

Photo by Susan Humphrey

College — which is temporary home to hundreds of international students — and Middlebury's faith community have also drafted protocols should ICE visit.

In some cases, it involves checking carefully for warrants and copious filming of ICE agents.

“I believe, through our conversations, that they are prepared,” Covey said of the community's largest organizations.

He was asked if there's any case in which citizens might see MPD officials masked in the same manner as ICE agents. He said the only situations in which a Middlebury officer would conceal their face would be an undercover investigation or in frigid outdoor weather. All MPD officers wear name tags.

Mott said Middlebury hasn't seen ICE intervention at polling

places during her tenure as town clerk. She emphasized federal law prohibits the stationing of “troops or armed men” by military or federal officials at the polls; the use of congressional appropriations to interfere with, restrain, or coerce any person's exercise of their right to vote in any election; and voter intimidation.

She said her role is to ensure “free and fair elections” at Middlebury's polling places, and she's would alert the Vermont Secretary of State's office if she believes those guarantees are at risk of being infringed.

Covey said he's proud of the goodwill his department has built with Middlebury residents during the past 35-plus years and doesn't want to see that undone through an immigration enforcement incident gone wrong.

“We work really hard to build trust with our community,” Covey said. “If we get put into an impossible scenario, we stand to lose a lot of (public) trust. To undo so much hard work, that's not what we want.”

Farhad Khan, the selectboard's one member of color, praised Covey for his department's standards and conduct. But he said he remains concerned about federal authorities who don't enjoy as sterling a reputation.

“I'm very disheartened and disappointed that after all these conversations, I feel so helpless that no matter where we come from, we can't do anything,” he said. “ICE can just knock down the door and do whatever the heck they want; legally, we can't do anything about that.”

“It's very disheartening.”

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Vekos

(Continued from Page 1A)

Clark, during a phone interview with the Independent, on Monday confirmed meeting with Vekos earlier this month to discuss the AGO's longer prosecutorial reach in Addison County and her preference that Vekos move on.

"We had a very constructive conversation, and I let her know our plan for taking over the cases... During the course of the conversation, I did suggest it would be timely for her to step down and I also let her know I wouldn't be supporting her if she chose to run for reelection," Clark said.

She stressed the AGO has no authority to fire state's attorneys, who are elected to four-year terms in each county. But Clark noted state statutes give her office "preeminent jurisdiction in criminal and civil cases when the state's interests require it."

Domenica Padula, chief of the AGO's criminal division, announced on March 18 that the AGO will take over prosecution of some of the more serious categories of cases that are usually fielded by the state's attorney and/or their staff. Specifically, the AGO will:

- Join Addison County Unit for Special Investigations and the Addison Child Advocacy Center in handling sexual assaults and child abuse investigations and any resulting criminal prosecutions.

- Handle all death notifications/reviews that occur in Addison County.

- Handle all homicide investigations and any resulting prosecutions.

"Attorney General (Charity) Clark is committed to continuing to support this work by increasing and expanding the office's involvement in investigations and prosecutions that involve the most vulnerable of victims," Padula stated in her letter, sent to eight area public safety and human services leaders, including Vermont State Police Lt. Neil Carey, commander of New Haven Barracks; Addison County Sheriff Mike Elmore; all three of the county's municipal police chiefs; and Jena Santa Maria, associate director of the Atria Collective.

Padula noted the AGO's absorption of aforementioned ACSD's caseload only applies to investigations initiated on or after March 17 and isn't intended to be retroactive.

"As this plan gets underway, we look forward to continuing to collaborate with each of you to



ADDISON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY EVA VEKOS
Addison Independent file photo

ensure that victims are supported, defendants are treated fairly, and that the criminal justice system functions in a way that serves the broader interests of the community and Vermont," Padula's letter reads.

The AG's office has been taking on Addison County State's Attorney cases for several months now, in part because Vekos's office has gone through long stretches of being understaffed. The office has cycled through multiple deputy prosecutors since Vekos took office three years ago.

The AGO's growing role in Addison County criminal cases was reinforced on March 18, when the office announced it would be prosecuting Richard Memoli, 69, of Vergennes. Memoli on that Wednesday pleaded not guilty in Addison Superior court, criminal division, to two counts of felony human trafficking, three counts of felony aggravated sexual assault, and a host of other charges related to allegations that he'd pressured multiple women into sex acts in exchange for drugs (see related story, on Page 4B).

In another potential blow to Vekos's tenure as state's attorney, the Vermont Supreme Court on March 19 began weighing a request from the Vermont Professional Responsibility Board that Vekos's law license be suspended pending disciplinary proceedings regarding her drunken driving conviction late last year.

The Independent has detailed numerous complaints about Veko's conduct as state's attorney, particularly from victims in domestic and sexual assault cases.

Last month, the Vermont Department of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs released the results of an independent investigation

of Vekos that concluded she had "demonstrated significant failures in her ethical and legal obligations and in her professional and personal judgment" and has "failed to prevent injustice by her inaction or literal failure to be present and available as the leader of the SA's office" during her tenure as the county's chief prosecutor.

Vekos's post will be on the ballot this November. Clark said Vekos told her she's not inclined to resign and hasn't decided if she'll seek reelection.

Eva Vekos's post will be on the ballot this November. Charity Clark said Vekos told her she's not inclined to resign and hasn't decided if she'll seek reelection.

Leaders of Middlebury-based Atria Collective — a social service agency which among other things assists survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking — were pleased to hear of the AGO's greater presence in Addison Superior Court, criminal division.

"We are encouraged by the AGO's recent announcement of increased involvement in investigations and prosecutions in Addison County, particularly in cases involving homicide, sexual violence, and child abuse, and we encourage continued consideration of domestic violence cases within this approach," reads an Atria board statement provided to the Independent. "We are confident that these changes will lead to more consistent, timely, and trauma-informed responses that strengthen survivor safety, increase accountability, and build greater trust in the criminal justice system."

"At Atria Collective, we believe all survivors deserve to be heard, to be believed, and to have access to justice," the board added. "We remain committed to working alongside our partners to ensure systems respond with integrity, accountability, and respect."

Ag bills

(Continued from Page 1A)

to it," Heffernan, clerk of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, told *The Independent*. "We were hoping for (\$7 million), then we dropped it down to (\$5 million), and now we dropped it down to \$1 million to at least do something to relieve farmers if we get any weather condition that impacts, from the drought to the frost to the rain to wind."

The version of S.60 passed by the House and Senate notes that "The duty to implement Sec. 2 of this act (Farm and Forestry Operations Security Special Fund) is contingent upon an appropriation of funds in fiscal year 2027 or subsequent fiscal years from the General Fund to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets..."

Lawmakers have also been working on this year's Senate miscellaneous agriculture bill (S. S.323). The 40-plus-page

bill includes sections focused on transitioning hemp oversight under the Cannabis Control Board and outlining registration and license requirements for hemp producers, processors and products. The bill also includes a section amending the "threshold criteria for farming activity to be subject to the (Required Agriculture Practices) Rule, and therefore exempt from regulation by municipal bylaws."

As of this week, S.323 had received a favorable report with recommendation of amendment from the Senate Committees on Appropriations, Finance and Agriculture.

Over in the House, lawmakers have been considering a bill that would prohibit the sale and use of the herbicide paraquat in Vermont (H.739). The state is one of several around the country weighing a ban on paraquat, which is also banned in

more than 70 countries.

A legislative update put out by Rural Vermont last month noted that paraquat is rarely used in Vermont and around the country.

"Only 1% of all pesticide applications are paraquat; that's also true for all herbicide applications (1.5%). Paraquat is rarely used on major commodity crops like corn and soybeans; and four of the top 10 apple-producing countries, representing 77% of production, have banned paraquat (China, EU, Turkey and Brazil)," the update states.

Brian Kemp is co-chair of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition's Board of Directors. He underscored that paraquat isn't often used in Vermont and that the proposed ban is not sparking concern among area farmers.

The bill was read for a third time and passed by the House last week.

City Council

(Continued from Page 1A)

the council this past August, sought to stay on the governing body this Town Meeting Day but lost his bid for a two-year seat. In his email to Mayor Chris Bearor stating his desire to be considered, Dragon called his time on the council "an eye-opening experience."

"I ran for 're-election' because I wanted to continue the work we were all doing together," he said.

"I feel we are all pulling in the same direction and working together to make the city a better place, but I think there is more I/we can do. I hope you all appreciated our time on the council together and will consider re-appointing me; together, I believe we can keep moving the city forward."

Dragon was appointed to the council after former city councilor Sue Rakowski resigned.

Blum, a Vergennes resident of almost three years who was pulled here by his young grandson, said he's noticed some consistent themes as far as what Vergennes residents want for their city.

"Despite some distinct differences of opinion, its citizens want Vergennes to both endure and grow as a good place for everyone who lives here, the kind of place

where people want to live," he said. "They want a city where many different trades and livelihoods can afford to live, where you can come to, or come back to, find a home, and be welcomed."

Since moving to the Little City, the retiree has stepped into volunteer roles at Age Well and the Bixby Library. He also volunteered at the Congregational Church Food Pantry.

Blum, who worked as a user experience designer, said his career afforded him the opportunity to manage people, projects and budgets. However, he said the most important skill he learned was "looking and listening."

"So if you can use me to look, listen and help contribute to the life of the City of Vergennes with all its challenges, I'd be honored and pleased to serve as alderman."

Clark cited her prior 11 years of experience as a councilor and Vergennes mayor in her note of intent.

"I am an effective communicator, well organized and can work collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes for the citizens of Vergennes," she wrote.

"I would like to play a role in accomplishing the city's short- and long-term goals as we navigate

the city's future. Based upon my experience in public service and the private sector, I think I could be a positive addition to the Vergennes City Council."

During a March 24 council meeting, Bearor asked each city councilor — Dickie Austin, Jill Murray-Killon, Mark Koenig, Mike Daniels and Mel Hawley — to submit a couple of questions to pose to the three candidates at the next city council meeting on April 14.

Harder-Hyde was elected in 2025 to a two-year term that ends on Town Meeting Day 2027. Harder-Hyde decided to leave his post, Bearor explained to councilors during a meeting in early March, because his job had become more time-consuming due to more travel.

OTHER SEATS TO FILL

In addition to hashing out details for filling Harder-Hyde's seat, councilors recommended Nial Rele be appointed to the open Vergennes seat on the Addison Northwest School District board and appointed Peter Garon as an alternate to the Addison County Solid Waste Management District.

The city is still trying to fill two lister positions and a seat on the Vergennes-Panton Water District Board of Commissioners.

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)

the A. Pizzagalli Family Farm Fund, the program reimburses barn owners for painting and minor repairs that keep these iconic structures strong and visually vibrant. The 2026 application is open now through April 30. Ten barns will be selected for funding. Apply online at tinyurl.com/mr45m8d5, or email Scott. Waterman@vermont.gov.

Middlebury's Charter House Coalition (CHC) is conducting a strategic plan to help guide its work during the next several years, and community will be a critical component of that vision. To that end, the CHC — which operates an emergency shelter at 27 North Pleasant St. and has just acquired a new

property at 29 North Pleasant that will be used as transitional housing — has drafted a survey to get public input. The survey includes questions about your connection to Addison County, your awareness/perceptions of CHC, your perspectives on homelessness and housing. And your ideas and hopes for the future. The survey takes roughly 7-10 minutes to complete, and responses will be kept confidential and shared only in summary form. You can find the survey at form.typeform.com/to/MSYAioa2.

Anticipation is steadily building for completion of the \$17 million makeover of the Ilsley Public Library at 75 Main St. The

Middlebury selectboard on Tuesday unanimously approved hiring Connecticut-based Meyer Inc. to return and refile Ilsley's book collection, which is being stored at Middlebury's Duclous building and at a warehouse in Vergennes. Meyer is the same company that conducted the original move of the books to make way for the Ilsley renovation and expansion project. That project remains in progress. Ilsley Library Director Dana Hart is hoping to see the work completed by early August. Meyer will be paid \$51,347 for the book collection move, money that's already in the Ilsley project allowance. Meanwhile, ReArch workers are installing exterior siding, conducting drywall taping and finishing and finalizing the order for new library shelves and furniture. April will see priming and painting, flooring installation, along with paving of the parking lot behind the library building.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have risen 22.8 cents per gallon during the past week, averaging \$3.84 right now, according to GasBuddy's survey of 626 stations in Vermont. Prices in Vermont are 83.9 cents higher than a month ago and stand 74.6 cents higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 27 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$5.227 per gallon, the highest level since Nov. 24, 2022. According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Vermont was \$3.54 per gallon earlier this week, while the most expensive was \$4, a difference of 46 cents per gallon. Meanwhile, the national average price of gasoline has risen 24.3 cents during the past week, averaging \$3.92 right now. The national average is up 98.9 cents from a month ago and stands 84.1 cents higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

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Addison County Substance Use & Prevention Coalition

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Once Upon a One More Time



Fairy tale in Bristol

MOUNT ABRAHAM UNION High School thespians rehearse on Monday ahead of their first performance of "Once Upon a One More Time" on Thursday, March 26, at 7 p.m. in the high school auditorium. Additional performances are on Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m.

There are no stars in this idiosyncratic show, which features familiar characters in unfamiliar settings and weaves feminism throughout. Shown at rehearsal are, clockwise from top left: Lux Tierney and Louisa Guilmette; Henry Allred and Bailey Antos-Ketchum; Mazin Sweptston and Keller Obarski as two princes; Gemma Lyles, Ali Brown, Scarlett Tarmey, Lila Brightman in the front row of protest signs; Rhiannon Andrews as Rapunzel and Ada Fisher as Little Mermaid; Isolde Tierney and Lila Brightman as Cinderella; cast photo; Brightman surrounded by mice; and Scroll Club members Fisher, Andrews, Brightman, Thompson Davis and Maddie Diop.

Photos by Buzz Kuhns



Vermonters with Long COVID say the system is failing them

By ERIN PETENKO, VTDigger

Ali knew something was wrong with her body.

She'd always been an active Vermonter and a full-time nurse. But in 2024, she began experiencing shortness of breath, chest pain or sheer exhaustion after the slightest exertion.

So, she went to the emergency room — twice. Both times, the doctors performed a battery of tests: a chest CT scan, an echocardiogram, blood work. Nothing appeared.

"Why do I feel this horrible all the time?" she said she asked herself. "And like, why isn't anything being picked up if I feel like this horrendous?"

It took months for her to make the connection between these life-altering symptoms and the relatively mild case of COVID she'd contracted before they began. A neurologist made the final diagnosis: long COVID.

Nearly six years since COVID-19 first came to Vermont, there is still very little known about long COVID, an illness that can cause debilitating chronic fatigue, respiratory issues, brain fog and a host of other symptoms. Despite the fact that millions of Americans have reported living with the disease, there are no clear-cut diagnostic tests. Nor are there treatments with a clear-cut record of success.

Cut off from established pathways for managing a chronic illness, many Vermonters with long COVID have reported living in a sort of permanent limbo. They have faced stigma and disbelief from loved ones, colleagues and people in their community. They have struggled to access workplace accommodations and social services for people with disabilities.

Long COVID patients are uniquely vulnerable to the recently rising costs and reduced benefits of the health care system under the Trump administration. The status of health insurance subsidies for low-income Americans is still up in the air and annual premiums on the marketplace have more than doubled.

That's particularly tough for people who heavily rely on the health care system. In an email, Ali said that she'd recently learned that her insurer might no longer cover a medication she'd been taking for years. It would cost her \$80,000 annually out of pocket, she said.

"I was a lot more functional on the medication, I was considering working more hours while still on the med (in the study)," wrote Ali, who requested VTDigger use only her first name, citing ongoing disputes with her employer. "I can't work full time because I can't get this med," but "because I can't work full time it makes my insurance cost even more."



KRISTA COOMBS, PICTURED at home in Bennington in February 2022, has suffered from Long COVID after initially recovering from an infection in March of 2020.

Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

But interviews with disability rights advocates, clinicians and more than a dozen long COVID patients demonstrated that the systemic barriers for Vermonters with long COVID extend well beyond the Trump administration. They reach into deep-seated divides in health care, ableism and shame over chronic illness in Vermont.

Chawna Cota, a member of the Vermont Democratic Disability Caucus who has long COVID, said via email that long COVID sufferers need research, resources and therapies from informed providers.

"We are still not there yet," she wrote.

"The most positive takeaway I have had from all of this is reinforcement of my knowledge that I have the capability to self-educate and self-advocate within a system that seems to be working against providing care," Cota added. "Will that change in the future? I really don't know, and with the current administration's hostility toward medical research and our medical system in general, I don't think that will be improving any time soon."

There are many adjustments, both large and small, that Krista Coombs has made to keep working.

She often works out of her bed because even sitting up can trigger fatigue for long COVID patients. She wears headphones because of

what she calls her "dementia-type" brain fog that can make it easy to get distracted.

But she feels her work is too critical to step back from. She leads a support group for Vermonters with long COVID through the Vermont Center for Independent Living, where people living with the disease can vent, share tips on treatments and find ways of coping.

"I've been listening to what people need," Coombs said. "They're very clear, and giving people a space to actually identify their needs is really powerful."

The experience of long COVID varies widely. A 2025 patient survey found more than 40 different symptoms can be linked to the disease.

Another recent study classified long COVID into eight different trajectories of illness, from short-term to long-term, severe to mild, improving to worsening, persistent to intermittent. Even the mechanism by which COVID causes long COVID is unclear — a growing body of research suggests it may be an autoimmune condition, but some researchers believe it could be the result of organ damage caused by COVID.

That variety makes it additionally difficult to analyze the prevalence of long COVID in Vermont. Most surveys simply ask respondents if they experienced lingering symptoms after a bout of COVID. For example, a 2023 Vermont Department of Health report found 11% of adult Vermonters who had tested positive for COVID at any point experienced symptoms lasting three months or longer.

Despite those many different experiences of long COVID, Coombs noted one experience that seemed very common: a widespread lack of understanding of "what this actually is and what people are facing," she said.

"We're constantly torn down for just being sick, and continue to be sick from something no one wants to admit is a problem," she said.

LOOKING FOR RELIEF

Long COVID is recognized as an illness by official bodies such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization. Yet Coombs has encountered misinformation that the disease is actually caused by the COVID vaccine — or it simply does not exist at all.

The lack of recognition can even seep into personal relationships. Ali said that it took some time for the people in her life to understand just how debilitating chronic fatigue can be.

"My parents didn't totally believe me about how sick I was," she said. "I'm like, 'No, I actually can't go grocery shopping with you or help you with your stuff, because I feel so horrendous.'"

The negative messages can lead some long COVID patients to doubt their own experiences. Mary Kate Shanahan, a birth doula based in Winooski, said she felt

embarrassed and worried about others' judgment the first time she asked to use a wheelchair at the airport.

"Normal people don't fall asleep driving, and that was something that I was experiencing, so I had to not drive for a long time," she said. "Like it is a different level of what the typical person experiences, I would say. And that's a hard thing to really describe to anyone."

Coombs has worked for years to bring the voice of long COVID patients to people in power: the Vermont Department of Health, Gov. Phil Scott and Vermont's Congressional delegation. There was a moment of hope in 2024, when U.S. Sen.

Bernie Sanders, I-Vt, proposed a long COVID moonshot bill that would provide \$1 billion in funding to the National Institutes of Health to study treatment and care options.

That bill has languished in Congress ever since.

"All this just feels so like a joke now, but it was so much effort and so much work," Coombs said.

She said she was also frustrated that Long COVID Awareness Day, which takes place on March 15 each year, passed by in 2025

without acknowledgement from Vermont's public officials.

Many long COVID advocates have also said they feel betrayed by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., the Secretary of Health and Human Services under the Trump administration. Kennedy promised to fund long COVID research during his Senate confirmation in 2025, but shortly after he assumed his role, his department instead abolished the Office of Long COVID Research and Practice and terminated an advisory committee on long COVID.

Despite these setbacks, hundreds of clinical studies of long COVID have been performed around the world.

Vermonters with long COVID have described experimenting with an array of medications, diets, exercises and therapies to try to find something that works.

Gretchen Kitsos, a social worker who leads another long COVID support group, said that one of the biggest hurdles to treatment she hears is the disconnected and siloed nature of medical specialties. Each provider has an incentive to view long COVID through the lens of their own expertise rather than as a multi-system whole.

The University of Vermont's COVID Recovery Program is one attempt to address that gap. The program's leads, David Kaminsky and Katherine Menson, are pulmonary physicians



LONG COVID SUFFERER Mary Kate Shanahan is seen in South Burlington on Feb. 13.

Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger (woman in shadows)

— but after interviews with long COVID patients, they realized what was needed most was a pathway that could connect patients with multiple specialists.

Kaminsky emphasized the importance of continuing to research long COVID.

"If we lose research, then we lose the opportunity to learn about new things and what works, and what doesn't," he said.

Kitsos said the momentum for helping people with long COVID seems to have ebbed since the pandemic has largely receded from many people's minds.

She said people seem to think, "We survived that. Okay. Now let's move on, and let's not look in the rear view mirror and understand that that sucker is still with us."

LIFE WITH LONG COVID

After contracting COVID three times, Zoe Newmarco began experiencing crushing fatigue and suffered from migraines four to six times per week.

"It's been an adventure," they said jokingly. "I feel like I've learned all sorts of new things that my body can do."

Newmarco said they called the long COVID clinic at Dartmouth-Hitchcock multiple times, but never heard back. They struggled to even find a primary care provider.

"I was on every waiting list in the state, just called everywhere, and they were like, 'Yeah, we'll get back to you in six months,'" they said.

So they decided to jump ship and move from Royalton, Vermont, to Ithaca, New York, roughly six hours away.

"For the first time I have access to health care, which has been a huge change," they said.

Staffing shortages and rising health care costs have affected almost every corner of Vermont. But for Vermonters with chronic illnesses, including long COVID, those issues can be particularly pressing.

Coombs said for the past two months, she's been dealing with her insurance refusing to reauthorize an infusion she'd been taking every week because her insurance company is based outside of Vermont. She said she has also been waiting to get access

to an experimental treatment that has shown recent promise.

"It was only kind of on the West Coast, and it's now moving to the East coast, so I've been literally watching it across the map," she said. "I'll be the first person within my doctor's office who's able to figure out how to get it."

Her support group spent a great deal of time in 2025 trying to navigate news around benefit changes, health insurance subsidies and policies being discussed at the federal level, Coombs said.

"You look around Vermont, just so many struggles," she said. "And then we know with long COVID, it can be really hard to work. So that makes things harder. I'm just trying to help people stay grounded in, what are the things we know now? What can we work on now?"

Kitsos pointed out that stress from economic struggles can potentially worsen autoimmune conditions like long COVID.

Yet at the same time, long COVID patients are forced to seek help while navigating symptoms like brain fog that can make it actively harder to think, Coombs said.

"People are trying to figure out how you do this with a lot of cognitive difficulties," she said.

Ali, the nurse with long COVID, said that she had to submit and resubmit paperwork multiple times to receive her benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act. Meanwhile, she ran out of medical leave to use, even though she was still in the midst of her worst symptoms.

"I was just kind of calling out of work sometimes and hoping that I wouldn't get in trouble for that," she said. "And I'm like, 'Please don't fire me, because I need my benefits to pay for all of this, like, crazy amounts of testing and all the medications and everything.'"

Still, despite the difficulties of the condition, there are moments of joy and hope. Coombs said that her progress with recovery was unsteady and slow.

But it was happening. "With carrying in wood — the first year, I couldn't even lift a log, and I couldn't believe that," she said. This year, she's able to carry in wood and keep track of the fire without thinking about it.

For some patients, the most effective strategy for living with long COVID is not a specific treatment, but rethinking how they choose to expend energy to prevent later crashes, often called pacing. Shanahan said she began documenting all the ways she expended energy, both mentally and physically, to see how working too hard on Tuesday could cause fatigue on Thursday or Friday. Now, she's learned how better to slow down and prevent overdoing it.

Ali said her experience had given her added insight as a nurse because she could better understand her patients who were living with a disability or chronic illness.

"You don't really understand how difficult it is to live with a disability until you've experienced it yourself," she said.

Newmarco said they have learned new tools for self-advocacy and communication about their needs. They've also formed a small community of friends who are supportive of them — including their partner, who they met in a COVID-cautious online forum.

"It feels so complex," they said. "Of course I miss my body before long COVID. I miss being able to go for walks. I miss that, and also, it has totally changed my world. And I really love my life right now."

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On stands April 23rd!

Beeman

(Continued from Page 1A)

The story hour in particular received pushback from some community members, who raised concerns on Front Porch Forum and at a Mount Abraham Unified School District Board meeting. Though, several community members underscored the event was age-appropriate and that such programs help youth embrace differences and promote reading.

In a letter sent to the MAUSD community last week, Sumner and Superintendent Patrick Reen wrote they'd heard from many community members in response to the announcement of Identity Week.

"We are grateful that a significant number of these perspectives have been shared thoughtfully and respectfully, contributing to

meaningful dialogue and helping us move forward together," they wrote. "At the same time, it is important to be clear that some of the responses we have received have crossed a line. Comments and communications that threaten the safety of our students and staff are deeply concerning and unacceptable. We do not — and will never — compromise when it comes to the safety and well-being of the children and staff in our care."

"Because of these safety concerns, Identity Week will not take place at Beeman as originally planned," they continued.

The school officials said they wouldn't compromise on their "responsibility to create a sense of belonging for all students, especially those who feel most

marginalized."

"That work is fundamental to who we are as educators and as a school community. While the specific event known as Identity Week will not occur, the values and goals behind it remain essential," they wrote. "Our commitment to helping students learn to accept others, appreciate differences, and engage with the world with empathy and respect will continue."

Sumner and Reen stated work will remain student-centered and grounded in curriculum.

"We are committed to continuing this important effort in ways that uphold both our educational mission and our shared responsibility to ensure a secure and supportive environment for all," they wrote.

School budgets

(Continued from Page 1A)

to cast ballots on a revised FY27 spending plan.

Next Tuesday, people who live in Orwell will join Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardston and West Haven citizens in considering a revised FY27 SVUSD budget of \$32.3 million, which is around \$202,500 less than the original spending plan that voters defeated, 1,125 to 952, on March 3.

In a message to voters posted on the SVUUSD website, Slate Valley directors provide specifics on the proposed cuts. They include:

- Reducing one additional elementary teaching position in Orwell due to a smaller-than-anticipated kindergarten (\$72,500).
- Reducing tuition funds that had been allocated to support a Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (\$30,000).
- Scaling back planned spending on buildings and grounds (\$100,000).

The proposed revised budget represents a 2.16% spending increase compared to this year — a level that officials noted is less than the current inflation rate of 2.4%. SVUUSD's current education spending per pupil of \$11,565 is the 11th-lowest in the state and "substantially lower" (17%) than the statewide average of \$13,947 per pupil, according to information supplied by the district.

If approved, the budget would produce an estimated FY27 education property tax rate of 94.54 cents per \$100 in property value in Orwell — a 1.34-cent (1.44%) bump that would add roughly \$13.44 per \$100,000 in

property value.

"As Vermont continues to work to manage rising education costs, Slate Valley — one of 19 districts out of 114 (statewide) whose budgets did not pass on Town Meeting Day — remains under significant fiscal pressure," reads the SVUSD board's statement to the community. "These include rising healthcare and insurance costs, inflation, evolving student needs, and a growing number of unfunded state and federal mandates. Together, these factors make it increasingly challenging to balance educational priorities with affordability for taxpayers within the current state education funding formula."

The SVUSD will hold a budget information meeting on Monday, March 30, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fair Haven Union Middle/High School Band Room.

School budget voting in Orwell on March 31 will take place from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the town clerk's office.

Meanwhile, Leicester, Whiting, Goshen, Sudbury, Brandon and Pittsford residents on Tuesday, April 7, will consider a revised FY27 OVUUSD budget of \$28,663,285. The proposal is \$178,714 less than the spending plan that district voters rejected on March 3 by an 868-700 margin.

The failed budget plan represented an increase of \$818,286, or 2.92%.

The revised budget represents a 2.8% increase compared to this year and a new, per-pupil spending rate of \$14,168 — a 4.84% bump.

In the aftermath of the failed March 3 vote, the OV board had

targeted a 1% reduction in total spending. This would have shaved \$280,000 off the failed request. The board ultimately agreed on is \$178,714 in reductions, which, according to OV school board Chair Laurie Bertrand, reflect the reduction of an elementary World Language teacher the district has been unable to fill (\$110,000), and a savings of \$68,000 for a Facilitator of Teaching and Learning post that will now be covered by grants.

Check out more OVUUSD budget revote details at tinyurl.com/2ke56per.

OVUUSD will host an informational meeting on the revised FY27 budget on Monday, April 6, at 6:30 p.m., in the Otter Valley Union High School auditorium. Folks can attend virtually and will find the meeting link at mesu.org/events.

On Tuesday, April 7, the polls will be open in the Goshen Town Hall, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; the Leicester Town Office, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and the Whiting Town Hall, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Woman critically injured in crash

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — A Cornwall woman and Middlebury College coach suffered life-threatening injuries in a crash on a slippery road near the Cornwall village this past Friday afternoon.

On March 20 a few minutes before 4 p.m. Vermont State Police were called to a two-vehicle crash on Route 74 near the intersection with Route 30.

Police report that Emily C. McNamara, 41, was driving a 2022 Toyota 4Runner eastbound on Route 74 when her car went out of control on the snow-covered road, entered the westbound lane and collided with a westbound 2025 Kenworth construction truck pulling a trailer. The truck was driven by Chase T. Atkins, 30, of Addison.

McNamara's 4Runner came to rest facing west in the eastbound lane. Atkins and his truck ended up facing west on the eastbound shoulder. State police said that snow and slippery roadways are believed to be contributing factors in this crash.

A Middlebury Regional EMS ambulance took McNamara to UVM Medical Center to be treated for critical injuries.

No injuries were reported for Atkins.

McNamara is an assistant women's hockey coach at Middlebury College.

Troopers were assisted on scene by Middlebury police, Department of Motor Vehicles Law Enforcement, Cornwall Fire Department and Middstate Towing.

This investigation is in its early stages, and VSP asks that anyone with information that could assist investigators in this case call the New Haven Barracks at 802-388-4919 or submit an anonymous tip online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipsubmit.

State police also responded to a separate crash that Friday that they blamed on the snowy road. At around 3:30 p.m., troopers went a two-vehicle crash on Route 7 near South Middlebrook

Road in New Haven.

Police said that a 2017 Ford F-150 driven by 61-year-old Rolando Jimenez of San Antonio, Texas, was headed southbound being a 2014 Subaru Forester driven by Amanda Brinkman, 44, of Vergennes. When the Forester turned right off the road the pickup left the road and collided with Brinkman's Subaru. No injuries were reported.

Troopers were assisted on scene by the New Haven Fire Department and Bristol Rescue Squad.

These weren't the first traffic accidents that state police dealt with last week.

On March 18 at just after 3 p.m., troopers from the New Haven barracks went to a two-vehicle crash on Route 22A and Cross Road in Bridport.

Police said that a John Deere Loader 324L driven by Earl Audet, 61, of Bridport was entering 22A from the west to travel north out of a private road when Audet allegedly failed to yield to a 2016 VW Jetta that was travelling southbound on Route 22A. The Jetta, driven by William Kittredge, 28, of Vergennes, struck the left side of the John Deere.

Audet was not injured, but Kittredge sustained moderate injuries and was transported to Porter Medical Center.

Police issued Audet a ticket for Vehicle Entering From Private Road, which carries a fine of \$220 and 2 points on his license.

Troopers were assisted on scene by the Bridport Fire Department, Snow and Tow towing, and Middlebury Regional EMS.

Separately, state police went to Brandon on Tuesday, March 17, to help Brandon police with a report that in the area of 46 Park

St. a suspicious white pick-up truck was revving its engine. As the Brandon officer approached the truck, a nearby resident yelled to the officer that the person in the truck had a gun, and at that point the officer backed off and requested help from state police, according to Brandon Police Chief David Kachajian.

Park Street was immediately shut down to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic by troopers, and a safety perimeter was set up around the vehicle. Both officers from Brandon Police and Vermont State Police made a tactical approach to the vehicle and were able to determine that the male inside of the truck was deceased from what appeared to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

In other recent activity, state police

• On March 23, at approximately 7:19 p.m. responded to a report of a single motor vehicle crash occurring on Dewey Road in Salisbury. Police said Morgan Delorme, 29, of Salisbury crashed and fled the scene. Troopers located Delorme at a residence in the area, where they saw indicators of impairment. Police cited Delorme for driving under the influence, second offense, negligent driving and leaving the scene of an accident.

He was taken to the Vergennes Police Department for processing.

• On March 24 just before 11 a.m. responded to a suspicious call in Starksboro. Police investigated and say they found that Jorge Romo, 30, of Starksboro had assaulted a household member, prevented them from calling emergency services, and unlawfully restrained them. Police cited Romor for domestic assault, unlawful restraint, interference with access to emergency services, and committing offenses in the presence of a child.

He was lodged at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility with bail set at \$2,500.



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Shelter

(Continued from Page 1A)

on the market for four years. The couple recalled that the 12-year-old duplex was a fixer-upper that no one seemed to have the pluck or resources to take on.

But Kritkauský and Schmidt had just received an inheritance and had narrowed down its use to two possible scenarios: Invest it, or acquire a village property that could someday serve a greater purpose. They chose the latter.

After buying and renovating the abode, they rented out the two duplex units, plus a carriage house that sits behind the main building. Last year, the couple decided it was time to sell the property. They resolved to part with it for simply the amount they'd invested in it, and that it should go to a nonprofit.

So one day last November, Lacey took a phone call from longtime Realtor Nancy Foster that would signal a seismic shift in the welfare of the unhoused. Foster told Lacey that 29 North Pleasant was on the market, and that Kritkauský and Schmidt were giving CHC first dibs.

"There were tears," confessed Lacey, who saw the duplex as a potential godsend to CHC's mission of getting folks beyond emergency shelter services.

An inspection of the 125-year-old duplex revealed it to be in great shape, according to Lacey. Vermont Integrated Architecture is now designing modest improvements that will include knocking out a few walls (between the two units) and bathroom upgrades.

"If we had added this needed capacity in the traditional way by building a new apartment building or buying one that needed extensive renovations, the cost would run in the millions of dollars and take years," said Lacey. "We are seizing this opportunity because it comes at a fraction of that cost, and allows us to quickly increase our capacity by almost a third."

She estimated 29 North Pleasant should be hosting guests by July 1.



THE CHARTER HOUSE Coalition's top administrator, Heidi Lacey, visits the organization's new property, which is located next door to the CHC Emergency Shelter on North Pleasant Street in Middlebury.
Independent photo/John Flowers

There are six rooms within the home. One of them will be for an on-site CHC manager, and each of the other rooms will host two guests, according to Lacey.

Each resident of 29 North Pleasant, according to Lacey, will have earned their spot because of the self-improvement steps they've taken while at the emergency shelter. Homeless folks entering the shelter can stay 140 to 200 days if they're progressing in finding employment, healthcare benefits and housing. CHC and its fellow

nonprofit partners help guests with their wellness and independence efforts.

Once selected for 29 North Pleasant, folks will need to show even more progress and tenacity in becoming self-sufficient, on route to that final step into affordable housing. Lacey noted housing is hard to find right now but added CHC has partners like Addison Housing Works, John Graham Housing & Services, Pathways of Vermont and Stonecrop Meadows that can make it happen.



MIDDLEBURY'S CHARTER HOUSE Coalition has just acquired a duplex at 29 North Pleasant St., a property that will fortify the nonprofit's mission to help homeless individuals transition to self-sufficiency.
Photo courtesy of Charter House

"This model of temporary housing has been missing in our community, but it's a critical step toward successful permanent housing," Lacey said. "These guests are typically gainfully employed and highly motivated, but need some time to save money, navigate a complex housing system, and find the right place for the long term."

Lacey estimates an average stay of around 60 days per resident at 29 North Pleasant.

Middlebury selectboard Chair Andy Hooper praised CHC's expansion plan.

"Charter House has provided essential services to some of the most vulnerable and least established

"Transitional housing ... allows people who have fallen off the bottom of the ladder to regain their footing."

— Andy Hooper

residents of our town for 20 years and has done so while coordinating their services with the town and remaining mindful of being a good neighbor in their downtown location," he said. "The addition of 29 North Pleasant St. allows Charter House to expand their housing services from emergency and temporary shelter to also include the transitional housing that allows people who have fallen

off the bottom of the ladder to regain their footing." Charter House is working with National Bank of Middlebury to finance the project. CHC will soon launch a fundraising campaign to help draw down the \$595,000 acquisition costs.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Kritkauský and Schmidt, the angels in this situation, recalled a cherished benefactor of their own.

During a phone interview, the couple harkened back to a move they'd made 50 years ago from Philadelphia to Harford, Penn. The then-young couple had moved into a small, rented building in which they opened an antique store. Once day, a man who had seen them refinishing furniture in the storefront stopped by and encouraged them to check out a larger home in town. The couple toured it and loved what they saw but told the man, named Harry Butler, that it was beyond their means.

"I've got connections at the local bank, and I can help get you a mortgage," Butler reassured them.

Turns out Butler was a man of means, courtesy of a restaurant/truck stop he'd opened just outside of town, on Route 81. Butler co-signed Kritkauský and Schmidt's mortgage, eventually buying it from the bank and allowing the couple to pay back as they could.

"When we'd paid off the (loan) principle, we asked Harry about paying interest," Kritkauský said, his voice cracking with emotion. "He just said, 'Pass it on.'"

"It was a turning point in our lives," Schmidt said.

Turns out another kind soul had helped Butler get a mortgage so that he could build his truck stop. Butler paid that generosity forward to Kritkauský and Schmidt, who are now paying it forward to CHC — an organization well-versed in magnanimity.

"What Harry meant about 'passing it on' wasn't the economic benefit, it was passing on the trust and the community building," Kritkauský said. "We've had an obligation for our whole lives to do that. And we view this as helping people who are without a home as paying back Harry for what he did for us."

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE JUNIOR Nicky Cairo cradles the ball during Saturday's game against Bates at Alumni Stadium. He assisted one of the 13 goals that lifted the Panthers over the Bobcats by just one point.

Independent photo/John S. McCright



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE CO-CAPTAIN Logan White is harassed by a Bates defender during the March 21 game at Alumni Stadium. The senior's hat trick helped the Panthers overcome the Bobcats 13-12.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

Midd men's Lax defends rank with win over Bates

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY—Last Saturday afternoon, the No. 17 Panthers showed the No. 18 Bobcats why a month into the Division III men's lacrosse season those are the ranks.

Middlebury College beat Bates 13-12 in Alumni Stadium on March 21, though waited to deal any definitive blow until there were less than two minutes left in the game.

While the Panthers didn't take the lead until there were less than five left in the final quarter, they spent the game chipping away at the Bobcats all over the field, recovering a staggering 46 ground balls to the Bobcats' 29. Middlebury also dominated faceoffs, winning 17 to Bates' 12.

The Panthers allowed the Bobcats two goals in the first six minutes of the game before first year Will Leahy scored following the subsequent faceoff, won by first year Teddy Coyle.

Seconds after he recovered the ball, junior Will Ford got it to Leahy, who whipped a low shot past the Bates goalie from around the 25-yard-line to make it 2-1.

Bates scored again with 6:39 remaining, but only held that 3-1 lead for about 30 seconds.

Just like after Bates' second goal, the Panthers won the faceoff. This time, sophomore Ryan McGloin took off from his spot around the center circle to scoop up the loose ball.

Following that play, senior co-captain Logan White got his first of three goals that game and the Panthers came within one of the Bobcats with just over six minutes left in the first quarter. The score was 3-2.

But Bates managed to pull away again with two more goals before the end of the quarter.

The Panthers entered the second period in need of three goals to close the Bobcats' 5-2 lead.

About three minutes into the quarter, junior Nicky Cairo got a pass off to sophomore Nick Marvin, who from around the center of the 20-yard-line scored a third for the Panthers, bringing the score to 5-3.

About two minutes later, the

Bobcats erased that progress with a sixth goal, and took their largest lead of the game another two minutes after that with a seventh.

White got the Panthers within three of Bates after his shot, taken from around the 20-yard-line, bounced near the goal line and into the left of the net.

The Bobcats got an eighth goal in the Panther net with about six minutes left in the second.

But that was the last time Bates enjoyed the luxury of a four-goal cushion.

After that, the momentum shifted in favor of the Panthers — they went on their first of two three goal-scoring streaks.

Within three-and-a-half minutes,

White got his third of the game off an assist from junior John McCarthy.

Cooper DeMallie followed up with his first of three from close range after recovering a ground ball right in front of the Bates net, and the senior put a second away after finding his way through defenders

and to the front of the net again. Bates left the field for halftime with just a one-goal, 8-7, lead.

The Panthers stayed within two goals of the Bobcats for the rest of the game.

The Bobcats got one early on the third, that DeMallie responded to (See Lacrosse, Page 3B)



Season's last start

JESSIE DIGGINS, CENTER right with the yellow bib, stays tight with the leaders at the Stifel Lake Placid Finals held at Mt. Van Hoevenberg this past Friday through Sunday. The three-day event concluded the 2025-26 World Cup cross-country skiing season with Diggins winning a historic fourth World Cup title, capping her career as the most decorated U.S. cross-country skier ever. Mt. Van Hoevenberg became only the second U.S. venue since 2001 to stage an FIS Cross-Country World Cup event, drawing more than 12,000 spectators on day two, and over 14,000 for the final day, including thousands from Vermont. See more photos on Page 3B.

Photo by Sue Halpern

Addison County Nordic skiers do well nationally

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ADDISON COUNTY — Middlebury College first year Beth McIntosh, a 2025 Middlebury Union High School graduate, cleaned up at the junior national Nordic skiing competition in Wisconsin earlier this month.

She amassed four top 10 finishes, including third place in the U20 14.5K classic race, which she completed in 52:10.1. McIntosh also finished fifth in the U20 7.5K skate race (23:58.7), seventh in the U20 classic sprint (3:52.29) and skied the third leg in the winning U20 mixed relay for New England.

Though most Vermonters minds are on mud season, like McIntosh, several other local Nordic skiers were soaking up the last patches of snow anywhere they could in mid-March.

In addition to the top 10 finishers in Wisconsin, Addison County

sent a winner to the U16 Eastern Championships in Hanover, N.H., and competitors to the Eastern High School Championships at Gore Mountain in upstate New York.

At junior nationals, McIntosh was accompanied on the New England team by six other competitors with roots in Addison County, including three who also nabbed top 10 finishes at the junior national competition, held from March 9-14.

Fellow MUHS grad Ava Scheider, who just finished her first season on the Division I team at Dartmouth, placed fourth in the U20 classic spring (3:53.68). The mixed relay team she competed on came in sixth.

McIntosh's and Schneider's New England teammate and former high school teammate, MUHS senior, 2026 D-II high school freestyle champion and classic runner-up (See Nordic, Page 2B)

Local hockey players earn athletic, academic honors

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ESSEX — Four Middlebury Union High School senior hockey players took the Essex Skating Facility ice on Saturday during the annual Rotary All-Star Hockey Classic.

Two other athletes — seniors Lia Calzini and Logan McNulty — earned nods but were unable to suit up for the March 21 game.

MUHS girls' hockey coach PJ Lalonde and assistant Timm Hanley guided the team made up of their athletes (Kenyon Connors, and co-captains Ireland Hanley and Quinn Doria) plus players from BFA St. Albans, Burr and Burton, the Chittenden Charge, Rice, Spaulding and Harwood.

The Lalonde/Hanley squad won the game in a shootout, 7-6.

In the boys' game, Tiger goalie TJ Baron was one of six selected to fill the net for one of the two teams. He shared time with Ethan Fortin (Spaulding) and Dominic Palazza (Woodstock),

and had teammates from Burlington, Burr and Burton, Colchester, North Country, St. Johnsbury, Spaulding and Rice in front of him on the ice.

Baron's team fell 4-2.

In addition to earning spots on the senior all-star squads, some of the above athletes, plus junior Gabriel Quesnel, were also named to all-league teams by the Boys' and Girls' Hockey Coaches Associations.

Quesnel, McNulty and Baron were all tabbed D-II honorable mentions. Their coach, Jordan Stearns, was named the division's coach of the year.

Calzini earned a spot on the Lake A Division first team, Doria got second team and Hanley received honorable mentions.

Calzini, Connors, Doria, Hanley and senior Sawyer Witscher also received academic all-star honors, which recognizes seniors with a 3.5 GPA or higher.

Area hoopsters honored by VBCA

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ADDISON COUNTY — Eleven local high school basketball players, coaches and former coaches earned nods from the Vermont Basketball Coaches Association (VBCA) for their performances this year and over the course of their tenures. Eight seniors played in the VBCA All Star Game this past Saturday.

The list of those honored includes longtime Vergennes Union High School varsity basketball coach and social studies teacher Barry Aldinger, who was inducted to the VBCA Hall of Fame.

In the 21 seasons that Aldinger coached the top Commodore squad, he went 228-202, guided the team to four state championship games (1967, 1969, 1985 and 1986) and two state titles (1969 and 1985),



BARRY ALDINGER

among other successes. Though his varsity career spanned over two decades, he was

on the court shaping the games of Vergennes basketball players for a total of 33 years. He spent a decade coaching elementary school, middle school and junior varsity players.

In addition to Aldinger's recognition, eight seniors represented Addison County in the North vs South VBCA senior all-star games, which were played on Saturday at Windsor High School. The North teams won all four games.

Otter Valley student Breanna Bovey played in the girls' Division I-II game, and Charlie Germon (Mt. Abe), Cooke Riney (MUHS), Connor Denis (Otter Valley) and Brody Lathrop (Otter Valley) in the boys'.

In the D-III-VI games, three (See Hoopsters, Page 2B)

Score BOARD

COLLEGE SPORTS

Baseball

- (spring break, Winter Haven, Fla.)
- 3/22 Bethel vs Midd.....8-6
- 3/22 Augustana vs Midd.....9-2
- (spring break, Davenport Fla.)
- 3/23 St. Olaf vs Midd.....13-9
- 3/25 Midd vs SLU.....Late

Softball

- (spring break, Clermont Fla.)
- 3/22 Midd vs Westmnstr. (Mo.).....7-2
- 3/22 Midd vs Union.....11-3 (5 inn.)
- 3/23 Midd vs Kalamazoo.....4-1
- 3/23 DePauw vs Midd.....7-5
- 3/24 Midd vs Lawrence.....10-2 (5 inn.)
- 3/24 Midd vs N. Cntrl. (MN).....16-7 (6 inn.)

Women's Lacrosse

- 3/21 Midd vs Bates.....11-8
- 3/24 Midd at Univ. Chicago.....13-6

Men's Lacrosse

- 3/21 Midd vs Bates.....13-12
- (spring break, Saint Leo, Fla.)
- 3/24 Midd vs Union.....11-8

Women's Tennis

- 3/23 Midd vs Chapman.....7-0
- 3/23 Midd vs Concordia U. Irvine.....7-0
- 3/25 Midd vs Pomona-Pitzer.....Late

Men's Tennis

- 3/22 Midd vs Chapman.....7-0
- 3/22 Midd vs Linfield.....7-0
- 3/22 Midd vs Whittier.....7-0
- 3/25 Midd vs Pomona-Pitzer.....Late

Schedule

COLLEGE SPORTS

Baseball

- (spring break, Davenport, Fla.)
- 3/27 Midd vs Colby.....11 AM
- 3/27 Midd vs Colby.....2 PM
- 3/28 Midd vs Colby.....11 AM
- 3/31 Plattsburgh at Midd.....3:30 PM
- 4/1 VSU Lyndon at Midd.....3:30 PM
- 4/3 Amherst at Midd (DH).....4 PM
- 4/4 Amherst at Midd (DH).....12 PM
- 4/4 Amherst at Midd (DH).....2:30 PM

Softball

- (spring break, Clermont, Fla.)
- 3/26 Midd vs Augustana.....10 AM
- 3/26 Midd vs Carleton.....2:45 PM
- 3/27 Midd vs Luther College.....10 AM
- 3/27 Midd vs N. Cntrl. (MN).....2:30 PM
- 4/1 Keene State at Midd (DH).....3 PM
- 4/1 Keene State at Midd (DH).....5 PM
- 4/4 Trinity at Midd (DH).....12 PM
- 4/4 Trinity at Midd (DH).....2 PM
- 4/5 Hamilton at Midd (DH).....12 PM
- 4/5 Hamilton at Midd (DH).....2 PM
- (See Schedule, Page 2B)

Hiking by Iceland's fösar

We had been driving along the south coast of Iceland, making our way eastward from the capital city of Reykjavik toward Vatnajökull National Park (or simply Vatnajökulsþjóðgarður in Icelandic). Needing a break in a four-hour drive, we had our eyes open for the pull-off to Gjúfurbúi, a scenic area known for its beautiful "Hidden Falls." About two kilometers away from where we expected the pull-off, we saw in the distance a high brown bluff with what looked like a flow of water pouring off the lip and down toward the level of the road.



MATTHEW DICKERSON
Outdoor Columnist

I admit that my first response was disappointment. The falls were not hidden at all; we could see it from quite a distance away. Nor did it appear particularly beautiful from the highway. It looked like just a very tall wall of brown mud. I was tempted to drive right past.

And then we got closer. And closer. Thankfully, I didn't drive past.

When we drove down the access road and pulled into the parking lot, we realized that what from a distance had appeared as a wall of mud was actually a cliff face lined with tufts of grass (though still brown from the winter), and full of myriad nesting seabirds — mostly Norther Fulmar. The falls were spectacular, thundering down the full height of the bluff in a glittering mist lit by the low pale sun of a northern winter. We stood for some time enjoying the falls and watching the fulmar circling by the dozens around the mist, apparently feeding on insects. After a minute or so of flight, each would return to their nests

in the cliffs and give their mates a chance to feed.

There were rock pigeons, too, nesting not on the face of the cliff like the fulmar, but in deep crevices and caves into which they would disappear and then reemerge. And though the pigeons are common birds, found around much of the world including in U.S. cities, when viewed on a wild cliffside in Iceland rather than eating bread crumb handouts in a city park they seemed far more beautiful and exciting wearing their iridescent green and purple neck scarves.

All across Iceland are placenames ending in the suffix *foss*, which means waterfall. The plural of *foss* in Icelandic is *fösar*. And what we soon realized was that, in addition to the tall, thundering falls we had seen from a distance, there were three more *fösar* along a 1-kilometer hiking trail that followed the base of the bluff back to the west. And, yes, the last one was indeed hidden. Or mostly hidden. It certainly wasn't visible from the road, and had it not been for the trail signs I doubt we would have found it. Though it didn't boast the same volume of water, the falls plunged down through a hole into a near-cave, and emerged through a narrow crevice at the base of the cliff.

With the possibility of soaking my winter down coat and testing the waterproof properties of my hiking boots, I entered the dark crevice along the riverbed and edged along the side of the current about a third of the way to the actual falls, where I gazed up through the hole at the roof of the cave where the top of the falls still glowed in the afternoon sun. And



THE FALLS AT Gjúfurbúi appeared to our columnist as a high brown bluff with what looked like a flow of water pouring off the lip and down toward the level of the road.

Photo courtesy of Matthew Dickerson

then — because if I had gone any further I would have transitioned from a thick mist to a full shower in water not much warmer than melting snow — I decided I was wet enough and made a quick exit.

Months earlier, I had received an invitation to speak on J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth writings at a conference in Zurich, Switzerland, this March. That invitation led to an opportunity to stop for a layover in Reykjavik on my return flight to the U.S. in order to meet with Professor Ármann Jakobsson to discuss medieval Icelandic language and literature, including how J.R.R. Tolkien works drew heavily from Old Norse sources. A professor and scholar of Old Icelandic Literature at the University of Iceland and also the president of the 200-year-old Icelandic Literary Society, Professor Jakobsson came highly recommended to me by Tolkien scholars.

When I told my wife Deborah that I was going to stop in Iceland — a country that neither of us has ever been to — she booked a flight to meet me the day after I arrived, so that after my visit with Prof. Jakobsson we could do a short tour of the southern coast. Since I didn't know enough about Iceland to try to arrange the tour myself, I did something I'd never done before: I booked a self-driving tour through Nordic Visitor. Emily, my travel consultant at Nordic Visitor, made all the hotel arrangements as well as car rental and shuttle arrangements, and then (after a lot of information exchange including a long phone call) gave us a personalized itinerary with all the information we could possibly want — but lots of freedom to adjust and adapt as we went.

Departing Gjúfurbúi and the Hidden Falls, we continued eastward, driving along the flat coastal lowland between the Atlantic Ocean and snow-covered glacier-filled mountain ranges. Our destination was a hotel in the village of Kirkjubæjarklaustur, which was known for its wonderful bistro, and which would also put us within an

hour of the national park for our expedition the following day.

In particular, we were headed for the Magma Hotel. Iceland is a geologically very active country. It sits on the boundary of the North American continental plate and the Eurasian plate, which happen to be moving away from each other, growing a crack in the earth's crust between the two plates where lava breaks through. Not surprisingly, magma and lava are common themes in business names. The English word geyser comes from a proper noun for a particular spout of water in western Iceland that superheats and periodically erupts (like Yellowstone's famous Old Faithful). Since its name was borrowed from a common noun, the waterspout in Iceland is now referred to, somewhat redundantly, as Geysir geyser.

Not surprisingly, geothermal energy works very well in Iceland. One sign we read suggested that Iceland isn't so much full of volcanoes as that the entire country is a volcano.

The country is full of *fösar*, however. And when we drove by a sign for Skógafoss and saw an even more dramatic waterfall coming off a sheltered bluff on our left, Deborah told me to stop. Fortunately, our dinner reservations at the Magma Hotel weren't until 8 p.m. and so we had plenty of time to explore. Because once we made our way up the steep stairs to the top of the falls where a small crowd was gathered at the viewing platform, we continued past the crowds and on up a quiet two-mile hike on a trail along the edge of a beautiful canyon. The bottom of the canyon was lined with waterfalls and cascades, some named and some not. Snow-covered peaks dotted the horizon in front of us. And behind us, a broad horizon with the sun slowly sinking toward

the ocean. The wind, which had been strong all day, had died somewhat, making the conditions very pleasant. It proved to be our most enjoyable hike of the three-day adventure.

Dinner at the Magma was delicious. Like much of Iceland, seafood and lamb dominated the menu, with variations of Skyr (a type of firm yogurt unique to Iceland) and sauces made with northern berries (blueberries,

currants and crowberries) common for dessert. Since I'd had grilled salmon the night before, I went with Arctic char. Deborah continued to rotate through various ways of dining on lamb. All wonderfully prepared. Rooms

at the Magma turned out to be private cabins. But not the sort of cabin you might find at a rustic retreat; they were comfortable enough for a hobbit, and much more fitting of the luxuriousness of our meal. Ours had a large glass door on the back, opening to a quiet lake and rolling, grassy landscape with only a single house visible on a distant hill across the lake. We slept with the curtain open, hoping to wake to the Northern Lights.

Instead, we woke to a pink sky setting aglow a pair of whooper swans and a handful of ducks of at least two species cruising the lake. Since at that latitude, the sun circles the horizon in the winter rather than rising above you, the twilight and bruised sky of dawn lasted a full hour and a half — slowly changing through various shades of pink, orange and purple — before the sun finally peeked over the hills. And after a filling breakfast back at the hotel bistro we were off toward more *fösar* and several glaciers at the first of two national parks on our itinerary. Which you will have to wait until my next column to read about.

Nordic

(Continued from Page 1B)

Mary Harrington, took eighth in the U18 7.5K skate race. Her time was 24:02.7.

Like McIntosh and Schneider, she is bound for college-level skiing. Harrington plans to compete on the D-I team at the University of Vermont next winter.

Ripton-native and Green Mountain Valley School senior Matthew McIntosh placed tenth in the U18 classic sprint with a 3:34.60 time.

Also in attendance was MUHS sophomore, 2026 D-II high school classic and skate state champion Jorgen Pirrung, Green Mountain Valley School senior Matias Citarella and Lincoln native and Williams College student Stella Laird.

That same weekend, MUHS sophomore Gabriel Perchemlides won the U16 Eastern Championship skate sprint (2:18.97) and placed sixth in the 5K classic (14:55).

Sophomore Meredith Carr-Perlow and freshman Avery Thompson were also part of the second place-earning Vermont team at that competition.

On March 6 and 7 Perchemlides and Mt. Abe skier June Yates-Rusch raced for Vermont, which took first overall, in the Eastern High School Championships.

Hoopsters

(Continued from Page 1B)

Commodores played. For the boys, Ryker Mosehauer took the court, and for the girls, Ava Francis and Ashtin Stearns.

Stearns also got a nod for hitting 1,000 points this season — she finished with 1,208 — and her coach, Bill Waller, was named the D-III girls' coach of the year.

Additionally, junior Taylor Altemose (MUHS), and sophomores Lousia Orten (MUHS) and Tegan Boynton (Otter Valley) were tabbed outstanding underclassmen by the organization.

ALL-STAR GAME

In the Division III and IV girls' game, Stearns scored five points for the North team, which beat the South, 46-42.

In the D-III and IV boys' game, the South team was aided by Mosehauer's 10 points, but his squad fell to the North, 90-83.

As the North beat the South, 82-66, in the D-I and II boys' game, Riney contributed 8 points in the losing cause.

Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

Women's Lacrosse

3/28 Midd at Tufts..... 12 PM
3/29 Midd at Babson..... 1 PM
4/4 Wesleyan at Midd..... 12 PM

Men's Lacrosse

3/28 Tufts at Midd..... 2 PM
4/1 Midd at Hamilton 5 PM
4/4 Midd at Wesleyan..... 1 PM

Women's Tennis

3/27 Midd at Claremont..... 3:30 EST
4/4 Midd at Williams 1 PM

Men's Tennis

3/26 Midd at Univ. Redlands ... 7 PM EST
3/28 Midd at Claremont..... 2 PM EST
4/4 Williams at Midd 12 PM

Track & Field

3/27 Midd at Mangrum Inv 1 PM
4/4 Midd at Amherst Spring Flng... 10 AM



ON A DRIVING tour through Iceland, our columnist found Gjúfurbúi, a scenic area known for its beautiful "Hidden Falls."

Photo courtesy of Matthew Dickerson

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World class

AT THE STIFEL Lake Placid Finals held at Mt. Van Hoevenberg in Lake Placid, N.Y., this past weekend, Gus Schumacher, top photo, center right in his signature cow-print hat, skied to a 7th-place finish in the 10K classic leading the American men. Vermonter Ben Ogden finished 11th. Center photo is American Jessie Diggins tucking the downhill. After winning the men's 10K classic and 20K freestyle races over the weekend, Norway's Johannes Hosflot Klæbo (bottom photo), celebrates with the crowd. Klæbo dominated the Winter Olympics in Tesero, Italy.

Photos by Sue Halpern



LOGAN WHITE GETS ready to rip a shot during Middlebury College's game against Bates at Alumni Stadium on Saturday, March 21. The senior had a hat trick that helped the Panthers overcome the Bobcats 13-12.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

Lacrosse

(Continued from Page 1B) with his hat-trick-making point. The score was 9-8, Bates.

The Bobcats were done that quarter after a second goal at 11:08.

The score stayed 10-8 until Ford ran with the ball from the left to the center of the 20-yard-line and took a shot that flew past the Bates goalie. Ford was pushed to the ground as his shot went off, leading to a one minute Bates penalty that opened the door for senior Jackson Hanson to tie the game for the Panthers.

Junior Noah Filippelli took the faceoff, and Leahy recovered the loose ball.

About 40 seconds into the one-player advantage, DeMallie got Hanson the ball, who scored from near the right post.

With about 1:12 left in the quarter, Bates called a timeout.

Down to the last 15 seconds of the third, senior Drew Dummer stripped the ball from a Bates player as the Bobcats ran the last minute play they undoubtedly just discussed.

The quarter ended 10-10. Back to square one at the beginning of the final period, Bates got an early goal just over a minute in.

With just under 10 minutes left, Ford got the ball to senior Brendan Hickey, who tied it up at 11 with just under 10 minutes left.

Ford got the Panthers a lead with 4:08 left in the game.

With 1:48 left Marvin recovered a loose ball in front of the Bates net and popped it in.

The Panthers only enjoyed the 13-11 cushion for about 30 seconds. Bates gave themselves an opportunity to tie it up again with a 12th goal with 1:06 left.

The Bobcats won the final faceoff of the game.

Panther goalie, senior Hayden Kern, save two shots in the last 40 seconds of the game to secure the win for Middlebury.

The match brought Middlebury to 4-2 going into a Tuesday game in Florida. In that game, the Panthers beat Union 11-8 and brought their record to 5-8.

The Panthers, who went 9-9

last season, play their next game at home on Saturday against defending NCAA D-III champion Tufts. It will be a rematch of the Panthers' 2025 NESCAC semifinal against Tufts, who knocked them out of the tournament.

Middlebury progressed to the NCAA tournament that followed, but exited after a second round loss to St. Lawrence University.

OTHER PANTHER TEAMS

So far this spring, the women's lacrosse, baseball and softball teams

are also off to strong starts.

The defending NCAA champion women's lacrosse team remained undefeated heading into a Saturday away game against No. 3 Tufts.

The softball team only just stomach their first loss, which came at the hands of DePauw University on Monday. The Panthers are 11-1 after defeating Lawrence University 10-2 and North Central (Minn.) University 16-7 on March 24.

The baseball team is 7-4.



MIDDLEBURY'S BRENDAN HICKEY tosses the ball to a Panther teammate during Saturday's game against Bates. The senior scored one of the goals that helped the Panthers overcome the Bobcats 13-12.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

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Spotlight on Vergennes

Vergennes man jailed on human trafficking and drug charges

VERGENNES — A Vergennes man continues to be held without bail following his Wednesday, March 18, arraignment in Addison Superior Court, Criminal Division, on two counts of felony human trafficking and a host of other charges stemming from a lengthy Vergennes Police investigation into allegations that he'd pressured

multiple women into sex acts in exchange for drugs.

Richard Memoli, 69, pleaded not guilty to the human trafficking charges, as well as to these additional allegations proffered by the Vermont Attorney General's Office, which is prosecuting the case: three counts of felony aggravated sexual assault, one count of felony first-degree aggravated domestic assault, one count of felony cocaine possession, three counts of misdemeanor voyeurism, two counts of misdemeanor prostitution, and one count of misdemeanor simple assault.

The case against Memoli is detailed in a lengthy investigative affidavit filed by Vergennes Police Det. Jill Harter. It began with Memoli's arrest on Oct. 24, 2025, following an alleged assault that had occurred at his apartment at 10 Walker Ave., according to court records. During the search of Memoli's residence that day, Vergennes police reported finding digital scales, crack cocaine, a metal spoon with white residue, and two plastic bags containing white powder, which tested positive for cocaine, according to Harter's affidavit.

Vergennes police said they seized 37.73 grams of drugs from Memoli's home, and also confiscated an iPhone, for which they were granted a search warrant to probe. Their forensic sweep of the phone yielded more than 24,600 text messages, around 1,700 videos, more than 56,000 images and more than 21,400 instant messages, according to Harter's affidavit.

"A significant portion of this material appeared to be related to human trafficking, voyeurism and the sale and distribution of cocaine," Harter wrote.

Moreover, Harter alleged the videos and photographs found on Memoli's phone "were of Memoli and multiple different women engaged in trading (a sex act) for drugs over the course of the last couple of years. It appears most of the women were unaware that he was recording them, as he often hid his phone during the encounters," Harter stated in her affidavit.

Harter, a state-certified Drug Recognition Expert, said she observed signs of "drugs and/or alcohol" impairment among some women in the videos, based on their "speech, confused behavior and dilated pupils."

Moreover, Harter reported that "during these sexual encounters,

Memoli had aggressive behavior and language toward the women."

Information culled from Memoli's phone also led authorities to believe Memoli had been selling drugs. Harter alluded to videos and photos allegedly showing cocaine on a scale, along with "stacks of U.S. currency," according to court records.

During the ensuing five months leading up to Memoli's March 18 arraignment, Harter's investigation included interviews with nine alleged victims in the case. Identified in court records by their initials, most of the women's stories followed a common thread of substance use disorder and falling prey to sex for drugs.

He met some of the women through a car detailing business in Middlebury, according to court records.

One of the alleged victims told Harter she'd been in an 18-month relationship with Memoli (which ended in 2025), during which Memoli had done "unimaginable things to her" — things she was scared to report because "Memoli had a gun and that on one occasion during their relationship, he pointed it at her face following a sexual encounter at his residence in Vergennes," according to Harter's affidavit.

The woman, now sober, alleged "Memoli was controlling her with crack because he got her addicted. She said he scared her into doing what he wanted her to do," according to Harter's affidavit.

The woman alleged that Memoli, while driving to Burlington on one occasion, told her, "He wanted to buy her nice clothes and then put her in City Hall Park so she could 'whore out' for him," Harter wrote in her affidavit. "She told me she never actually went through with it and was unsure if he had done that with other women."

Another woman told Harter that she had met Memoli at a Burlington bar and alleged that he'd gotten her addicted to crack cocaine — which she said caused her to acquiesce to his alleged demands for sex, some of which were nonconsensual, according to court records.

The woman alleged Memoli had taken pictures of her while she was nude and had distributed them without her permission, according to court records.

A third woman, who also alleged that Memoli had traded drugs for sex acts, added Memoli had asked her to go on vacation with him, according to court records.

"When she asked him why, he told her he would buy her new clothes and all the cocaine she wanted. She said she asked if he

was trying to pimp her out, and he never answered her," Harter stated in her affidavit.

Harter interviewed Memoli on March 13 at the Vergennes Police Department. At one point, Harter said she saw Memoli looking at a photo or video on his phone that allegedly depicted a "naked female kneeling on a bed with a red glow in the room," according to court records.

Harter said she recognized this photo/video to be like numerous other videos" in the phone that had been seized from Memoli in October of 2025, according to court records.

Memoli, during the interview, placed his cash-laden wallet on the table, according to Harter. She asserted that possession of large amounts of cash to be consistent with drug sales, and noted she'd been surveilling Memoli since Feb. 26 and had "observed behavior consistent with drug sales and distribution. Memoli

makes frequent trips to the same locations, which are known for drug activity," Harter wrote in her affidavit.

Harter arrested Memoli on Tuesday, March 17.

Memoli could spend the rest of his life in jail if convicted of the 13 charges he's facing.

Each felony trafficking charge carries a potential penalty of up to life in jail and/or a \$500,000 fine.

Each felony aggravated sexual assault charge is punishable by 10 years to life in prison and/or a \$50,000 fine.

The Attorney General's Office on March 17 announced it would be prosecuting the Memoli case as well as taking over several other categories of serious crimes from Addison County State's Attorney Eva Vekos's office.

At least one of Memoli's alleged victims will cry no tears if Memoli is permanently incarcerated. That alleged victim chose not to sit for an interview with Harter. But during a brief phone conversation with Harter, the woman, according to court records, allegedly told the investigator, "(Memoli) is going to hell when he dies. Whatever he did I am telling you that this is one person that — when people die and they say, 'Oh my God, they went to heaven,' he's *not* going to heaven."

In arguing that the judge should not release Memoli on bail, Assistant Attorney General Nicholas R. Battey wrote in court paper that "the evidence of guilt is great if 'substantial, admissible evidence, taken in the light most favorable to the State and excluding modifying evidence, can fairly and reasonably show defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.'"

Protesters allegedly threatened

VERGENNES — A man allegedly accelerated, revved his car's engine and swerved toward two protesters during a weekly No Kings Protest on Main Street in Vergennes on Saturday, March 21, according to the local police department.

Nobody was injured in the incident, and Vergennes police officers told the people who reported it to contact law enforcement immediately if something similar happens again.

Based on the information police gathered, they say the man was older and driving a silver Subaru with Vermont license plates.

Last week Vergennes police also conducted eight traffic stops and six directed patrols, took fingerprints three times and completed a pre-employment background records request.

In other recent activity, the city police:

- On March 16 took a report of a woman who used an Armory Lane dumpster without having the authority to do so. She was issued an order not to trespass on the property.
- On March 17 issued a notice against trespass to a Vergennes resident at the request of the City of Vergennes for all city wastewater management pump station properties.
- On March 18 took a late reported

motor vehicle complaint.

- On March 18 responded to a false alarm in Vergennes.
- On March 18 issued a no trespass order to a Vergennes resident.
- On March 19 responded to a report of two women entering a Vergennes home. Officers spoke to the two women and they were permitted to be there.
- On March 19 responded to the report of a man rifling through dumpsters. Police located him and moved him along.
- On March 20 helped the Vergennes Fire Department assist a woman experiencing a mental health crisis. She was transported to Porter Medical Center.
- On March 21 took a report of a man and a woman arguing behind a convenience store. Officers met with them and defused the situation.
- On March 21 officers euthanized a suspected rabid raccoon at the Northlands Job Corps Center.
- On March 22 logged a report of a theft from Kinney Drugs. As of Monday, an investigation was not complete.

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OPINION?

Email it to: news@addisonindependent.com

community calendar

mar 26 THURSDAY

"America and the World: Trump 2.0 Foreign Policy" 2026 Great Decisions lecture series in Middlebury. Thursday, March 26, 3 p.m., EastView's Community Room, 100 Eastview Terrace. Featuring Middlebury College Professor Emeritus David Rosenberg. Call 802-989-7500 for Zoom link.

First "Herbs and..." workshop in Monkton. Thursday, March 26, 6:30-8 p.m., Monkton Community Room, Town Office. The first workshop is called "Herbs and... Grow your own Medicine." Herbalist Julie Mitchell will open the conversation focused on medicinal plants to invite into your own personal garden. The intention will be addressing how to support yourself, your family and/or your communities health needs. Growing locally and having what you need at hand will be considered. Bring seeds to swap, questions and stories to share. Free to all with donations gratefully accepted. To save your spot or for more information contact: eosbotanicals@gmail.com or Julie Mitchell at 802-349-2544.

MUHS Senior Play "Grease" in Middlebury. Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. Middlebury Union High School presents this well-known production in a highlight of the school's performing arts calendar, featuring students in the classic musical. Look for Sandy, Danny and all their friends on stage. Tickets \$13.60 adults/\$11 students at gofan.co/event/5850651?schoolid=VT15095. Repeats Friday and Saturday.

Mount Abraham Spring Musical "Once Upon a One More Time" in Bristol. Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. Powered by the chart-topping hits of Britney Spears, the undisputed Princess of Pop, "Once Upon a One More Time" turns our favorite fairy tales upside down with a clever twist! When a fairy godmother goes rogue and plops copies of "The Feminine Mystique" in the laps of classic heroines, the damsels embark on a quest to rewrite their stories and redefine "happily ever after." The show is described as "colorful PG13 hip hop fantasy" and "a big, modern, musical dance party, with Britney's beating heart at its core." Tickets: \$15 adult/\$12 seniors and children under 12. Purchase online at bit.ly/oncenc.



Monarchs be gone!

LIKE THE NO Kings Day rally in Middlebury this past June (shown here), organizers expect to match the energy at No Kings III this coming Saturday, March 23, 11 a.m. at the Town Green. Protests will also take place in Bristol, Charlotte, Montpelier, Burlington and more. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Blake

servicemen who lost their lives. Capt. Norman "Pat" Boyden and Lt. Joanne Kenney Reynolds will preside. Light refreshments will be served.

MUHS Senior Play "Grease" in Middlebury. Saturday, March 27, 2 p.m., high school auditorium. Middlebury Union High School presents the classic musical featuring Sandy, Danny and all their friends. Tickets \$13.60 adults/\$11 students at gofan.co/event/5850651?schoolid=VT15095.

Mount Abraham Spring Musical "Once Upon a One More Time" in Bristol. Saturday, March 28, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

the fire truck at 9 a.m. sharp. Stay for the local petting zoo.

Easter Eggstravaganza in Vergennes. Saturday, April 4, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m., Vergennes Congregational Church, 30 South Water St. Free event, all ages welcome. Bring a basket, interactive games and snacks provided.

Fiber Crafts Collective in East Middlebury. Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m., Sarah Partridge Library, 431 East Main St. A welcoming fiber crafts gathering focused on creativity, shared learning and community connection. Participants work on knitting, crochet, weaving, spinning, sewing, embroidery, felting, macrame and more. All skill levels welcome. Free. More info at artfulsoulventures@gmail.com.

Make a House for the Blue Birds in Salisbury. Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m., Salisbury Library in the basement of the Meeting House, 853 Maple St. Preston Turner will be back to teach his popular bird house workshop. Make a nesting house for bluebirds and hope that spring will soon arrive! All materials provided. Please register at the library.

Atlantic Crossing band in Vergennes. Saturday, April 4, 12:30-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Ring in spring with a free concert by beloved local band Atlantic Crossing. Their foot-stomping New England roots music blends folk melodies and local history, taking listeners on a journey across Vermont and New England. Made possible by the Vermont Community Foundation's Freda Fishman Stroh Memorial Fund.

Crafternoon in Brandon. Saturday, April 4, 1-3 p.m., Brandon Free Public Library, 4 Franklin St. A monthly crafting afternoon for all ages. Bring your own project or create something using library supplies. A different craft will be featured each month. Free.

mar 27 FRIDAY

Blood drive in Vergennes. Friday, March 27, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Vergennes Union High School, 50 Monkton Road. Community blood drive hosted by the American Red Cross. Appointments at RedCrossBlood.org or 1-800-RED CROSS.

Art presentation for elders in Bristol. Friday, March 27, 10:15-11:30 a.m., Howden Hall, 19 West St. The Bristol Elder Eagles sponsor "The Art of Ruth Asawa" presented by Linda Comany. This is a new over 50s club group organized by Bristol Rec. Department.

All you can eat Friday fish fry in Bristol. Friday, March 27, 5-7 p.m. St. Ambrose Parish Hall at the corner of School & West streets. Meal includes fried or baked haddock, french fries, coleslaw, fresh baked dinner roll, beverage & dessert. Adults-\$17, children 9 & under \$9, immediate family of five-\$50.

Kids Paint & Pizza in Ferrisburgh. Friday, March 27, 6 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall. \$30 per child. Includes pizza dinner, snacks, drinks and materials. Proceeds support Union Meeting Hall rehabilitation efforts. Parents are not expected to stay unless your child needs extra support. Registration required as space is limited. unionmeetinghall.org/programming-and-events.

Mount Abraham Spring Musical "Once Upon a One More Time" in Bristol. Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

Catamount Conversation in Monkton. Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., Russell Memorial Library. Join an evening exploring the past, present and possible future of catamounts in this region. The presentation traces their disappearance, the landscapes that could support their return, and stories of co-existence with mountain lions from across the country.

MUHS Senior Play "Grease" in Middlebury. Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. Middlebury Union High School presents the classic musical featuring Sandy, Danny and all their friends. Tickets \$13.60 adults/\$11 students at gofan.co/event/5850651?schoolid=VT15095.

mar 28 SATURDAY

No Kings Day 3 road trip in Bristol. Saturday, March 28, 9:30 a.m. Bristol Area Indivisible has chartered a bus to run round-trip from Bristol to Montpelier. Bus leaves 74 Munsill Ave. at 9:30 a.m. sharp. \$15 per person. To reserve a seat email luvskatr@yahoo.com, include the subject line: "Montpelier" and include your cell phone number.

No Kings Day 3 rally in Middlebury. Saturday, March 28, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., town green. Join Indivisible Middlebury and let your voice be heard. Our strength comes from community, from showing up for each other and standing together. Come remind strongmen and billionaires what real power looks like: our voices, our solidarity, and all of us standing together. Bring signs. Bring friends. Bring your energy. Optional RSVP at www.mobilize.us/nokings/event/903408.

No Kings Day 3 rally in Brandon. Saturday, March 28, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Central Park, 2 Franklin St. What began in 2025 as a single day of defiance has become a sustained national resistance to tyranny, spreading from small towns to city centers and across every community determined to defend democracy. Optional RSVP: mobilize.us/nokings/event/901905.

Winter Traveling Book Club in Vergennes. Saturday, March 28, 1-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Meet at the Bixby Memorial Library or join online to discuss "What You Are Looking for Is in the Library" by Michiko Aoyama. Part of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's Winter Traveling Book Club. Free with registration. More info at lcmm.org. **Honoring Vermont's Vietnam War veterans in Cornwall.** Saturday, March 28, 1 p.m., Samson Memorial in the village. In recognition of National Vietnam Veterans Day and Women's History Month, members of the Ethan and Mary Baker Allen DAR Chapter are holding a remembrance service to honor the 100 servicemen and eight

mar 29 SUNDAY

Rokeby Museum free admission day in Ferrisburgh. Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 4334 Route 7. The exhibits and grounds will be open for touring.

At 3 p.m., join Meg Mott for a program titled "A Dramatic Constitution," where she considers how the U.S. Constitution both forces and frames our disagreements and describes how, in the first two centuries of our country, citizens regularly debated public matters, drawing on the Constitution as a shared authority. More info at rokeby.org.

"A Dramatic Constitution" presentation in Ferrisburgh. Wednesday, March 29, 3 p.m., Rokeby Museum, Route 7. Meg Mott invites attendees to consider opposing arguments on the merits of the Constitution and encourages everyone to develop the habits of political engagement through deliberation and adjudication. Find out more: rokeby.org.

mar 31 TUESDAY

"Turning Stones: Discovering the Life of Water" lecture in Orwell. Tuesday, March 31, 7 p.m., Orwell Free Library. Aquatic ecologist Declan McCabe discusses and shares photographs of the fascinating organisms in Vermont's waterways. Learn strategies to minimize stormwater impacts and ways to live with the expectation of additional flooding. Find out more: orwellfreelibrary.org.

apr 1 WEDNESDAY

History lecture in Shoreham. Wednesday, April 1, 7 p.m., Platt Memorial Library, 279 Main St. The Shoreham Historical Society will present a lecture by J. Kevin Graffagnino titled, "Ira Allen and the Green Mountain Frontier." 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. A short business meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information contact dstevens802@gmail.com.

apr 2 THURSDAY

Isley Classic Film Club watches "The Wizard of Oz" in Middlebury. Thursday, April 2, 1 p.m., Marquis Theater, Main St. The club this spring watches four films with the theme "The 1930s in Color!" Join fellow community film lovers to see the films at the theater, followed by a short discussion of the film. Popcorn is on us.

apr 3 FRIDAY

Cards and boardgames with Steve and Lee in Middlebury. Friday, April 3, and weekly on Fridays, 3-4:45 p.m., 17 Court St. Enjoy some afternoon cards or games. Hosted by the Community Bridges Project and Counseling Service of Addison County. Drop-ins welcome. Parking in back; use the front door facing the TenneyBrook convenience store. For questions, call Zylpha at 802-388-309.

apr 4 SATURDAY

Orwell Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Saturday, April 4, 2026, 9 a.m., Orwell Town Green. Grab your Easter basket and meet up for the annual egg hunt. Free and welcome to all. The Easter Bunny will arrive on

apr 5 SUNDAY

Annual Eddy Farm Easter Egg Hunt and Open Barn in Middlebury. Sunday, April 5, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., South Street Extension. Be ready to hunt when the Egg Hunt gates open at 11:15 a.m. After that, pony rides, raffles, bake sales and egg painting. Rain or shine, all ages welcome. Please bring your own basket, water and appropriate footwear. Eddy Farm is a nonprofit organization, there is no admission fee but donations are welcome.

apr 6 MONDAY

African Drumming for Beginners with Shelly in Middlebury. Monday, April 6, and weekly on Mondays, 2-3 p.m., 17 Court St. Learn West African drum rhythms. Some drums available or bring your own. Leave feeling energized! Hosted by the Counseling Service of Addison County, free and open to anyone. Drop-ins are welcome. Parking in back; use the front door opposite the TenneyBrook convenience store. For questions, call Zylpha at 802-388-3093.

Community Soup & Bread Dinner in Vergennes. Monday, April 6, 5:30-7 p.m., Vergennes Congregational Church, 30 South Water St. Pay-what-you-can community dinner with guest cooks. Proceeds benefit Vergennes Congregational Church Missions, supporting neighbors in need. All are welcome. Cash or check preferred. More info at ariel.bolles@gmail.com or pvvt@yahoo.com.

Undercover Quilt Guild in Bristol. Monday, April 6, 6 p.m., Bristol American Legion, 56 Airport Dr. Undercover Quilters and Crafters meet on the first Monday of each month to share quilting, sewing, knitting and other fiber arts, along with friendship and community. All are welcome. Bring a show-and-tell item if you have one. More info at stacie.ayotte@yahoo.com, 802-363-4937.

apr 7 TUESDAY

Working with Yarn and Other Crafts with Marie in Middlebury. Tuesday, April 7, and weekly on Tuesdays, 3-4:30p.m., 17 Court St. Bring your own projects to work on in the company of others. Hosted by the Counseling Service of Addison County, free and open to anyone. Drop-ins are welcome. Parking in back; use the front door opposite the TenneyBrook convenience store. For questions, call Zylpha at 802-388-3093.

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A local physician describes a morning in Kibondo, Tanzania

By MORRIS EARLE

Every day I ask myself, what am I doing here?

Kibondo, Tanzania, is 10 miles through rolling Hills from the Nduta refugee camp. I am carried there in the mornings by a white Toyota Land Cruiser, the signature vehicle of NGOs in Africa. Kibondo is beautiful the way many rural African towns are. Tiny shops with tin roofs line muddy red streets, while people go by in every sort of dress, even women who are fully veiled, and motorcycles bounce in and out, carrying women with several children, stacks of lumber eight feet long, French doors and windows — you name it, it can be put on a motorcycle.

My favorite part is going to the Saturday market, where you will see perfect fruits and vegetables of every type you have seen and many types you probably haven't, laid out on tables or tarps on the ground. Live chickens squawk in cages made of sticks from the forest, ducks quack, as you gaze over baskets of tomatoes as far as you can see. The chicken vendors, who dispatch them on the spot, are men, but otherwise the vendors are women, often with a small child (*mito* in Swahili) tied to their back by a colorful cloth, called a *kanga*.

The babies peep out, and the mother will give a big grin if you greet the baby.

She will say "Jambo mzungu!" or "Hello white person."

People wave you in to see their fresh ginger, mushrooms, okra, mangoes, bananas, pineapples, passionfruit, breadfruit, carrots, sweet potatoes, cassava root, sugarcane, beans, onions, all set out in clumps. "Karibu!" or "Welcome!" is the usual greeting. You will squish and squeeze on muddy paths a foot wide, past shoppers in their flip-flops, women in colorful kitenges, navigating amongst the children, who are walking or being carried. Every

vendor is hopeful that you will stop and look at their ears of corn or potatoes, which are somehow different or better than the next ones over.

When I am at work it is another story. The hardest part of working in a refugee camp is that it is sad. The refugees don't have much, and here, even that is being taken away from them. Nduta Camp, on the border with Burundi, is being shut down and all the refugees are being sent back to Burundi. Their huts have been removed and they are sleeping outdoors. Each day the road is jammed with people walking, carrying their possessions in huge bundles on their heads or pushing loads the size of refrigerators on wobbly bicycles. It looks like the end of civilization and perhaps it is.

They are walking to the departure center where 9,000 people gather in a small enclosure daily, sleeping under tarps, waiting to leave in a fleet of buses, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, across the border to



THE SATURDAY MARKET in Kibondo, Tanzania, is a wonderful place where Dr. Earle would see perfect fruits and vegetables, poultry ready to dispatch and small children carried or wrapped in a colorful cloth, called a *kanga*. Photo by Angelina Perri



RETIRED MIDDLEBURY PHYSICIAN Morris Earle relaxes for a moment with nursing students from Kibondo district hospital in Tanzania. Photo courtesy of Morris Earle

Burundi. The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, which funds the camp, is running out of money, and Tanzania has run out of patience with these refugees who have been there for 10 years. So off they trudge in the rain.

Nduta MSF Hospital is run by Doctors Without Borders and just celebrated its 10th birthday. It's a wonderful place, but since the refugees are leaving, the hospital is closing too. Now I will go most days to work in the Kibondo district hospital where our remaining patients from Burundi are being sent.

Last week I saw a 14-year-old girl at the MSF hospital who was shaking in a strange way and being led around by her mother. Her malaria test was positive so we thought she had bad malaria.

I saw her again this week at the district hospital and her urine had turned brown. Brown urine. Oh! This was due to muscle breakdown. The shaking was tetanus.

A Burundi interpreter helped us to learn she had never been vaccinated and had stepped on a dirty nail 10 days before. I felt like a brilliant doctor and clinician for making this diagnosis. We arranged for treatment for the spasms and the tetanus. The team and I gave each other high-fives!

Sadly, however, the treatment



AT THE DISTRICT Hospital in Kibondo, Tanzania, Middlebury physician Morris Earle poses with his team of friends from Doctors Without Borders, almost all Tanzanian. Photo by MSF nurse Baracko

didn't work. The next day she passed away. Is there such a thing as a low five?

All my joy turned to sadness. If only it had gone differently.

I got up the following morning feeling like the worst failure and went for a walk on the hill behind our house. There was a beautiful sunrise with the hills rising above the mist. Behind were the mountains of Burundi to the west. To the East was the Moyowosi game reserve, where lions and leopards lived, along with hippos,

gazelles, crocodiles. No one had ever been there, but still...

There was promise in the morning. I could help with the newborn service at the District Hospital along with my team of friends from Doctors Without Borders, almost all Tanzanian.

Little African birds chirped in the Acacia trees to greet the rising sun. I had a task. I will leave the high-fives behind for the moment.

Editor's note: Dr. Morris Earle is a retired physician and lives in Middlebury.

Monkton

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

NEWS

MONKTON — It's time to register your dogs again. Register by Wednesday, April 1 to avoid a late fee. Last year, 189 dogs were licensed; let's make it an even higher number this year. Please be sure to bring a copy of your pet's most recent rabies vaccination papers with you.

If you register before April 1, spayed or neutered pets will cost \$14, and unneutered pets will cost \$17. After April 1, the price goes up by \$5.00 per pet. Contact the Town Clerk at (802) 453-3800 if you have questions.

Don't forget to join Julie Mitchell for her "Herbs and... Grow Your Own Medicine" class. It takes place on Thursday, March 26, from 6-8 p.m. in the Town Hall Community Room. Look out for information about her second class in this series on April 23. Contact Julie at (802) 349-2544 or email eosbotanicals@gmail.com.

The Community Room at Town Hall has become a wonderful asset for different groups in town. It is a great place to hold community events.

Keep an eye out for more details on upcoming events, such as Monkton Minibeats (April 11) and Poetry Club (April 18). Weekend beginner-friendly morning yoga with Laurel Kelly will also take place this month. Check with the Library for more information.

Weekly events continue with Toddler Storytime with Julie on Wednesdays from 10-10:30 a.m. Contact the library at (802) 453-4471 if you have questions. Join Eugenie Doyle on Sundays from 4:30 to 5:30 for her free relaxing yoga class. Contact her at edoyle@gmavt.net or call (802) 989-3378.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Vergennes Union High School

James Petersen

James Petersen is Vergennes Union High School's latest Student of the Week. He lives in Vergennes with his parents, his sister Grace, and their dog, Ivan. At school, James has made the most of his academic experience, especially enjoying his Humanities class with Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Coffey this semester. He appreciates the class for its unique content that goes beyond the typical curriculum. James has also taken German all four years and values both the subject and the opportunities VUHS provides through its wide range of clubs and activities.

James has been part of the German National Honor Society since 11th grade and was inducted into the National Honor Society this year. He's also an active member of both the Green Team and the Math Team.

Outside of school, James works at Park Squeeze in Vergennes, where he prepares food—a role he finds especially rewarding compared to his earlier dishwashing duties. In his free time, he boxes at Combat Fitness in Winooski, where he enjoys the welcoming environment. James has been playing piano since 9th grade and is preparing for a concert in May. He's also recently started playing the bass guitar. He also loves to ski.

His advice to younger students? "Don't judge others. It is important to get to know people for their character before you make assumptions about them."

After graduation, James plans to attend college and pursue a degree in engineering. While he hopes to return to Vermont someday, he's also looking forward to traveling and exploring new places before settling down.

We wish James all the best in his future endeavors!



James Petersen
VUHS

Middlebury Union High School

Gunnar Boe

Middlebury Union High School is proud to recognize senior Gunnar Boe as its Student of the Week. Gunnar is the son of Miranda and Vegar Boe and lives in Middlebury. He has an older sister who attends Champlain College and a younger brother in 9th grade. He also has two pets: Marty the dog and Jester the cat.

When asked what he enjoys most about school, Gunnar shared that he appreciates having something to do each day and values the social interactions. He has a strong interest in history, particularly enjoying courses like 20th Century History and World History to 1500. He noted that Mr. Korndoerfer, even though he is new to teaching, brings years of experience to the classroom. Gunnar identifies Mr. Colangeli as being very understanding, and says that Mr. Bartlett helped spark his interest in math. Gunnar has consistently earned honor roll recognition throughout high school and is especially passionate about World War I and World War II history.

During his junior year, Gunnar participated in the Culinary Arts program at the Technical Center. He is also one of the founders of the "NERD Club," which he describes as "a place for things like Dungeons & Dragons and Warhammer."

Outside of school, Gunnar works at Fire and Ice, where he prepares salads and helps close the kitchen. He values both his coworkers and the quality of the food. In his free time, he enjoys assembling and painting Warhammer miniatures, gaming, and playing Dungeons & Dragons weekly with his dad.

Reflecting on his high school experience, Gunnar emphasizes the importance of studying, being prepared, and avoiding procrastination. He encourages other students to build strong relationships with their teachers, noting that doing so fosters understanding and support.

After graduation, Gunnar plans to try living in Norway. He also sees himself continuing to work in the culinary field.

Middlebury Union High School congratulates Gunnar on his many accomplishments and wishes him continued success throughout his senior year and beyond.



Gunnar Boe
MUHS

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Congratulations, students!

To celebrate your achievements, Full Circle Building & Remodeling is providing each Student of the Week \$25 in local currency (Bristol Bucks, Middlebury Money, Vergennes Green, or Brandon Bucks). Just check in with your school's Student of the Week coordinator to claim your prize!

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

Congratulations, James and Gunnar!

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That's where Independent Digital Marketing, the digital services branch of the Addy Indy, comes in.



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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 on 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.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <http://aavt.org> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS is a 12 step program offering recovery from compulsive eating and food behaviors. For meeting times and general information please visit www.oavermont.org 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.

Public Meetings

VERGENNES FREE THINKERS Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting Vergennesfreethinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 9B and 10B.

Public Meetings

VERMONT SUPPORT LINE Are you struggling with a challenging situation? Do you have feelings of sadness, loneliness, isolation, anger, or depression? You don't have to face it alone. Talk with a caring person who understands what you're going through today by calling or texting the free and confidential Pathways Vermont Support Line available 24/7 at (833) VT-TALKS.

Services

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

Help Wanted

Services

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

SPRING GUTTER CLEANING: call or text Ian @802-349-7871

Free

DIGITAL ACCESS View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at addisonindependent.com. Don't miss out on events, garage sales, or opportunities- check out our free digital listings. Looking to read more? Become a subscriber!

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

PLUMBER Middlebury College. Full-time, \$28.14-\$35.19/hr. Install/maintain plumbing, heating, and electromechanical systems. Requires Master Plumber license, valid DL, and 4+ years exp. Excellent benefits: tuition reimbursement, dental, generous CTO, and retirement match. Background check & physical required. Please call 802-443-5472 or apply at: <https://apply.workable.com/middleburycollege/j94F974C6DF/>

Help Wanted

Turning Point Center OF ADDISON COUNTY

NOW HIRING: RECOVERY COACHES

The Turning Point Center of Addison County is seeking part-time and full-time Recovery Coaches to join our mission-driven team supporting individuals on their recovery journey.

Recovery Coaches provide peer-based, non-clinical support to individuals seeking or sustaining recovery from substance use and related challenges.

- Key Responsibilities**
- Provide one-on-one peer recovery support
 - Assist individuals in setting and achieving recovery-related goals
 - Connect participants to community resources and services
 - Maintain appropriate documentation and confidentiality
 - Uphold TPCAC values of respect, compassion, and inclusion

- Qualifications**
- Lived experience in recovery (or strong understanding of recovery principles)
 - Ability to build trusting, supportive relationships
 - Strong communication and listening skills
 - Reliability and professionalism
 - Recovery Coach Certification (or willingness to obtain; training may be supported)

Are you looking for meaningful, community-based work with a flexible schedule?

APPLY Today or Call 802-388-4249

Help Wanted

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 solutions. Liaise with

Help Wanted

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,

Help Wanted

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



SUMMER CAMP NURSE POSITION

Interested in working at a summer camp on beautiful Lake Dunmore in the Green Mountains of Vermont? Do you enjoy working with kids in a vibrant and warm summer camp community? Consider working as a nurse at Keewaydin Dunmore for Boys or Songadeewin of Keewaydin for Girls! Our summer season runs from June 19 to August 23. This is a great opportunity for experienced nurses or for those just starting a nursing career—especially for those considering a career in pediatric nursing! Three nurses run each Health Center and work with a consulting physician at a local medical practice.

Salary for RN is \$12,000 (tuition free for first child, 75% discount for second child). Room and board is included.

For more information, please contact Daria Carden at daria@keewaydin.org.

Visit our website at www.keewaydin.org.



Greenhouse/Nursery Sale Associate

20-30 hrs per week position (Seasonal)
Responsibilities include Care and Sales of Greenhouse and Nursery Plants, Seeds and Bulbs, plus a genuine interest in providing knowledgeable customer service. Extensive Plant knowledge preferred!
Any Cashier experience is a plus.
Qualified Candidate must have a dedicated work ethic and be able to perform physical lifting as required, and work hard in the spring and summer seasons.
Excellent Perks and a Flexible Schedule
Availability to work weekends is a MUST.

Cashier - Customer Service
Part-time and Full-time Positions
Must be able to work until 6pm
Availability to work weekends is a MUST.
Up to 40 hours per week.
Wage commensurate with experience.
All of our positions offer generous, twice a year bonuses and employee discount on all products.
Please stop in to pick up an application or send Resume to: Middlebury AGWAY Farm & Garden, Attn: Jennifer Jacobs 338 Exchange St. Middlebury, VT 05753 or by email to info@middleburyagway.com
Middlebury Agway 338 Exchange St. - Middlebury, VT.

ALWAYS HIRING?

Keep your business in front of local job seekers with a discounted year-round help wanted ad.

A 52-week display ad campaign starts at just \$50/week!

advertising@addisonindependent.com

Turning Point Center OF ADDISON COUNTY

We're hiring!

Turning Point Center of Addison County is looking for a Development & Community Relations Coordinator to strengthen fundraising, communications, and community partnerships. If you care about supporting recovery services and building a healthy Addison County, please consider applying—or sharing with someone who might be a great fit.

Turning Point Center of Addison County is a recovery community center for neighbors impacted by substance use, offering services like recovery coaching, peer support groups, and connections to local resources.

Scan for Job Info & Application

Opportunities

Opportunities

Atria Collective Volunteer Training

Atria Collective volunteer training begins April 4th! This training will prepare you to respond to hotline calls, support survivors through community outreach, and more.

Reach out to Davina at davina@atriavt.org to learn more.

Addison Independent **CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM**

ADDISON INDEPENDENT
58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-4944
addisonindependent.com • email: classifieds@addisonindependent.com

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

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Or, submit your classified ad on our website: addisonindependent.com

RATES

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

- 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
- 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

<input type="checkbox"/> Notices	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted	<input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers
<input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks	<input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles
<input type="checkbox"/> Personals	<input type="checkbox"/> For Sale	<input type="checkbox"/> Cars
<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings**	<input type="checkbox"/> Trucks
<input type="checkbox"/> Free**	<input type="checkbox"/> For Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> SUVs
<input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found**	<input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles
<input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat	<input type="checkbox"/> Boats
<input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate	<input type="checkbox"/> Wanted
<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted
<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption		<input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals

** no charge for these ads Spotlight with large ✓ \$1

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

Number of words: _____
Cost: \$ _____
of runs: _____
Spotlight Charge: \$ _____
Internet Listing: \$ _____
TOTAL: \$ _____

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

QUALITY MACHINERY FOR SALE Timberwolf TW6 log splitter, fully automatic. Originally \$10k. 16 ft Bri-Mar Trailer Dump. Originally \$10k from G Stone Commercial. John Deere Track Loader (for parts). Almost-new motor. Asking \$2500. '97 Dodge Ram (for parts). Excellent, working engine. Asking \$1500. Call 802-349-0727.

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

For Rent

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 424-3500.

For Rent

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE - 2000 sq ft to 7000 sq ft - Tall ceilings, loading docks, plenty of parking. Middlebury - 802-558-6092.

For Rent

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

Att. Farmers

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

Cars

2008 ACURA TL 153,958 miles. \$5,000. Silver exterior, black leather interior, both in very good condition. Includes four additional Acura rims for summer tires, and studded snows on currently. Acura floor mats, door guards, and mudflaps. Regularly maintained and kept in garage. Needs some under body rust repair. 802-238-4502

Help Wanted

Wood Heat

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

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Administrative Assistant

Middlebury, VT
Part-Time
\$20.00 per hour

We are seeking a highly organized and detail-oriented Administrative Assistant to provide essential support to our team. The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills, the ability to prioritize tasks, and a proactive approach to problem-solving. This role is crucial in ensuring smooth office operations and supporting our mission of excellence in customer service.

Please email your resume to:
sandersonf@comcast.net



SANDERSON FUNERAL HOME

Elderly Services, Inc.

Project Independence Adult Day Center

We are Growing!

Elderly Services seeking:


- Activity leader/caregivers
- Drivers

Full / part-time available
Starting wage \$18-20/hour

For job descriptions and to apply, visit:
elderlyservices.org/job-opportunities/



Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 9B and 10B.



Help Wanted

Delivering your paper takes a dedicated crew...

...and the **Addy Indy's** is one of the best!



We're hiring substitute drivers to help our team sort and deliver the weekly paper each Thursday.
\$15- \$20/hr, 3-9 hour shifts

Must be willing to wake up early, lift 50lbs and carry a valid drivers license.

Call or email Sean to apply:
frontdesk@addisonindependent.com
or 802-388-4944, ext 104.

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT
Serving Addison County, Vt., Since 1946

THE INNER GARDEN



Now Hiring - Garden Crew
Seeking motivated individuals for garden maintenance & installation, including perennial care and planting beds.
Opportunity for garden design.

Seasonal (Apr. 1 - Nov. 15)
40-50 hrs/week | 4-day work week
Competitive Compensation
Projects throughout Addison County

Experience preferred but will train. Valid driver's license required.

Please send resume to apply for this position.
Send inquiry to
joan@theinnergarden.com



Director of Development & Engagement

MALT is seeking a motivated and passionate individual to lead fundraising and community engagement efforts. This role develops and executes strategic fundraising initiatives, builds strong relationships with supporters and partners, and helps grow community connection to MALT's mission, programs, events and conserved lands.

MALT OFFERS A GREAT WORK ENVIRONMENT, flexible schedule, and opportunity to work toward a meaningful, passion-driven mission. Full time position, starting salary range \$50,000-\$60,000

For full job description and how to apply, visit
maltvt.org/director-of-development-engagement

The Addison County Parent/Child Center is looking for a NURSE to join our team

About the Role
We are looking for a nurse to provide services in homes, schools, community settings, and at our center, with a focus on reproductive, maternal, and infant health.

The Job

- Provide support and education to pregnant or postpartum individuals and groups
- Lead classes and groups on reproductive health, safe sex, consent and healthy relationships
- Partner with medical providers, social services and community organizations to address health disparities
- Communicate effectively, demonstrate cultural humility and work independently in diverse settings
- Work with the Addison County Doula Project


What We Offer

- Meaningful work in a supportive environment
- Competitive salary and generous paid time off
- Comprehensive medical insurance and benefits
- Eligibility for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

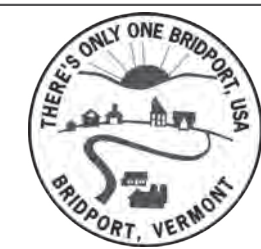
Requirements

- Active RN or Certified Nurse Midwife license
- Valid driver's license and reliable vehicle (mileage reimbursed)

Send cover letter, resume/CV, and three references to
dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org



Addison County Parent/Child Center



Town Treasurer

The Town of Bridport is seeking qualified applicants for Town Treasurer.

Successful candidate must be comfortable working in a busy environment while in direct contact with the public and town personnel. Successful candidate must have excellent communication and customer service skills, experience with Microsoft Office and Quickbooks and be attentive to detail. Ability to organize, prioritize and multi-task is essential.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: preparation and receipt of property taxes, weekly payroll, AP and AR, bank reconciliations, mail processing and serving as clerk of the Department of Public Works. Accounting degree and knowledge of local government finance preferred. Successful candidate may be expected to also become the Town Collector of Delinquent Taxes.

This is a part-time position with an average of 24 office hours per week. Benefits include Holiday pay, paid vacation time starting at one week per year and 30 hours per year paid sick/personal time. Pay dependent on qualifications and experience. Prefer someone who can begin soon after appointment. Any appointment requires Selectboard approval.

To apply, please submit your application with a resume and references by email to bridporttown@gmavt.net or by mail to Town of Bridport, PO Box 27, Bridport, VT 05734. Call 802-758-2483 for more information.




MILL WORKER PAINTER/FINISHER

Addison Residential is seeking to hire a full-time finisher for our busy paint shop. Finisher will be responsible for spraying a variety of projects - cabinetry, siding, trim, etc. along with using a variety of finish products. The ideal candidate will have previous experience with finishing. The job requires repetitive motion and ability to lift-up to 65lbs. The candidate should be able to work independently, as well as be part of a team, and have a keen eye for detail.

Benefits package available.
Pay is based on experience/skill level.
Apply by emailing resume to:
info@addisonresidential.com.

In print or online, find your dream job with help from the **Addy Indy.**



addisonindependent.com/help-wanted

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT

AUCTIONS



ATTENTION FARMERS!!! ANNUAL SPRING DAIRY/FEEDER CONSIGNMENT SALE

WHEN: WEDNESDAY APR. 8TH
AT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES BARN
RT. 125 EAST MIDDLEBURY VT.

TIAM SHARP
ACCEPTING QUALITY CONSIGNMENTS NOW!!!
****Something for everybody! Don't miss this opportunity****

*** DAIRY TO BE SOLD FIRST - FEEDERS TO FOLLOW ***

ALSO CONSIGNING BEEF FEEDERS ANGUS-HEREFORD & BF CROSSES ALL BF BREEDS WELCOME!!

DON'T MISS THIS ANNUAL SPRING SALE ALL QUALITY CONSIGNMENTS WELCOME
****CASH IN ON YOUR OVERSTOCK****

A MUST SALE TO ATTEND!!!
For More Info Call 802-388-2661 (ACCS)
Sale Manager: T.G. Wisnowski & Sons- 802-989-1507
Auctioneer - John Nop

**** Don't Miss our Annual Machinery Consignment Sale- Saturday May 9th- Accepting Quality Consignments!!****

MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT

Please check back next week!

	\$
BEEF	
Iroquois	8.80
Nop B	9.60
Blue S	1.50
J. Alle	2.50
Sunde	4.00
Vorse	4.00
P. Livin	2.00
CALV	\$
Barne	0.00
Elysia	0.50
White	4.00
J. Will	5.00
Sunde	7.60
Wilcoo	9.00

Total Beef - 155 Total Calves - 212

We value our faithful customers.
Sales at 3 pm - Mon. & Thurs.
call 1-802-388-2661

Public Notices Index

Public Notices for the following can be found in this **ADDISON INDEPENDENT** on Pages 10B, 11B and 12B.

- Addison (1)
- Bristol (1)
- Ferrisburgh (1)
- Middlebury (3)
- New Haven (1)
- Orwell (1)
- OVUUSD (1)
- SVUUSD (1)
- Tri-Town Water District (1)
- Vergennes (2)
- Vermont Rail System (1)

TOWN OF BRISTOL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Bristol Development Review Board will hold the following hearings on April 14, 2026, beginning at 7:00 P.M. The hearings will be held in person at the Town Office, located at 1 South Street. The hearings will also be available via Zoom and login information is below.

Permit #25-407: Bunny's Pond LLC of Monkton Road (Parcel #030168.3) is requesting Final Plat Review for a 2-lot subdivision subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, SECTION 931.

Permit #25-404: Randy Russell of North 116 Road (Parcel #070101) is requesting Final Plat Review for a 6-lot and 2-lot subdivision subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, SECTION 931 & 941.

Permit #26-300: Thomas Funk & Elizabeth Maher of Many Waters Road (Parcel #090186) are requesting Conditional Use Review for an accessory structure within the Flood Hazard Overlay district subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article VIII, SECTION 808.

Copies of the zoning permit applications and decisions are available for review at the Bristol Zoning Office during regular business hours.

Remote Access: via Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/85786761083> • Meeting ID: 857 8676 1083 • Passcode: 805823
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87551027651?pwd=mJnqMmRm2lufotvEE-BidXObjJLjI.1> Phone In: +1 646 931 3860

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Middlebury Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, April 13th, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room at the Town Offices, 77 Main Street, to consider the following application(s).

- Application (file #2026-007021.000/.002 - PUD Amendment/SD) is a request by Eastview at Middlebury for a final plan/plat approval for a PUD Amendment and 2-Lot subdivision of the 410.8+ acre parcel located 100 Eastview Terrace, pursuant to the Middlebury Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (MZR). The applicant proposes subdividing the property into two (2) parcels. The existing PUD is identified as parcel #007021.002 and the parent parcel is identified as #007021.000 in the Residential-20 (R 20) zoning district.
- Application (file #2026-008140.000 - SD) is a request by Keep Movin' LLC for a final plan/plat approval for a 2-Lot subdivision of the 5.8+ acre parcel located 2888 Route 7 South, pursuant to the Middlebury Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (MZR). The applicant proposes subdividing the property into two (2) parcels. The existing PUD is identified as parcel #008140.000 in the Agricultural Rural (AR) zoning district.
- Application (file #2026-027130.000-Demo) is a request by President and Fellows of Middlebury College for the demolition of Battell Hall and associated infrastructure. Battell Hall is located at 455 South Main Street and is identified by the State Historic Preservation Office as eligible for the State Register of Historic Places. The application will be reviewed pursuant to the Middlebury Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (MZR) Section 690 - Historic Sites. The property is identified as parcel #027130.000 in the Institutional (INS) zoning district.

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

J.R. Christ
Zoning Administrator

Police respond to animal complaints in Bristol

BRISTOL — Bristol police in recent weeks have dealt with a few incidents involving animals. Officers on March 11 received a report of a dog attack that took place in Bristol. Police also received two animal complaints — one on Vincent Drive on March 10 and the other on Stoney Hill Road on March 11.

• On March 8 helped someone on Mountain Street with a custodial dispute.
 • On March 8 responded to a motor vehicle complaint on West Street.
 • On March 9 responded to a motor vehicle complaint on South Street.
 • On March 10 assisted Bristol Elementary with a truancy concern.

Bristol Police Log

Between March 8 and 14, Bristol police completed 23 foot patrols, conducted three traffic stops and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School seven times, at Bristol Elementary School six times and at local businesses four times. Police also processed six fingerprint requests, conducted one welfare check and helped someone who was locked out of their vehicle. In other recent activity, Bristol police:

• On March 10 responded to a motor vehicle complaint on West Street.
 • On March 11 received a report of a missing person on Mountain Street. Police said the individual was located and safe.
 • On March 12 assisted Vermont State Police on West Street.
 • On March 13 assisted a community member on Mountain Terrace with questions about a court order.
 • On March 13 assisted Vermont State Police on Route 116 South.

WARNING
BUDGET INFORMATIONAL MEETING
SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
 (Towns of Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Orwell, West Haven)
 Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/bic-zkty-xmx>
 Or dial: (US) +1 240-812-1886 PIN: 193 973 799#

March 30, 2026

The legal voters of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District (SVUUSD) consisting of the towns of Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Orwell, and West Haven are hereby warned and notified to meet at Fair Haven Union Middle & High School Band Room on Monday, March 30, 2026 at 6:30 PM to conduct the following business from the floor:
Article 1: To hear the Board of School Directors of the SVUUSD present its estimate of expenses for the ensuing year.

March 31, 2026

The meeting shall then be recessed to **Tuesday, March 31, 2026** for the purpose of voting on the following articles at the usual polling places in the member districts by Australian ballot, said ballots being brought to Bomoseen Fellowship Bible Church following the closing of the polls in the member districts where they will be commingled and counted by the Board of Civil Authority of the constituent districts.

The Town polls will be opened as follows:

Town of Benson	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Benson Community Hall
Town of Castleton	8:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Castleton Fire Station
Town of Fair Haven	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	American Legion Post 49
Town of Hubbardton	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Hubbardton Town Hall
Town of Orwell	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Orwell Town Clerk's Office
Town of West Haven	10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	West Haven Town Hall

Article 2: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Thirty-Two Million Three Hundred Seven Thousand Two Hundred Sixty-Three Dollars \$32,307,263, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? **The Slate Valley Unified Union School District estimates that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in per pupil education spending of \$11,879.62, which is 2.72% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year.**

Informational Hearing:
 Said persons and voters are further notified and warned that the meeting on Monday, March 30, 2026 at 6:30 P.M. at the Fair Haven Union Middle & High School in Fair Haven, Vermont will also serve as an informational hearing to discuss Article 2, which will be voted on by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 31, 2026.

Dated at Fair Haven, Vermont
 March 16, 2026

Received and Recorded
 March 16, 2026

Julie Finnegan
 Julie Finnegan, Chair
 Slate Valley Unified Union School District

Elisabeth MacKay
 Elisabeth MacKay, Clerk
 Slate Valley Unified Union School District

VERMONT RAIL SYSTEM
Vermont Railway ♦ Green Mountain Railroad
Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad
Washington County Railroad & WACR Conn River Division
Weed Control Program Newspaper Advertisement

The Vermont Rail System has applied to the Secretary of Agriculture for a permit to apply herbicides to its tracks for control of weed growth in the ballast.

- ♦ Vermont Railway operates between Bennington and Burlington. (In the towns of Burlington, S. Burlington, Shelburne, Charlotte, Ferrisburgh, Vergennes, New Haven, Middlebury, Salisbury, Leicester, Brandon, Pittsford, Rutland Town, Rutland City, Clarendon, Wallingford, Danby, Mt. Tabor, Dorset, Manchester, Sunderland, Arlington, Shaftsbury, Bennington)
- ♦ Green Mountain Railroad operates between Bellows Falls and Rutland City. (In the towns of Rockingham/Bellows Falls, Chester, Cavendish, Ludlow, Mt. Holly, East Wallingford, Shrewsbury, Rutland Town, Rutland City)
- ♦ Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad operates between Rutland and Whitehall NY, and Pittsford Town. (In the towns of Pittsford, Rutland Town, West Rutland, Ira, Castleton, Fair Haven)
- ♦ Washington County Railroad operates between Montpelier and Barre. (In the towns of Montpelier, Barre City, Barre Town, S. Barre, Berlin)
- ♦ WACR Conn River Division operates between White River Junction to Newport Vermont. (In the towns of White River, Hartford, Wilder, Norwich, Theftord, Fairlee, Bradford, Newbury, Wells River, Newport, Coventry, Orleans, Barton, Sutton, West Burke, Lyndonville, St. Johnsbury, Passumpsic, Barnet, Ryegate.)

The tracks in these locations will be treated utilizing "hi-rail" equipped trucks with nozzles aimed downward from fixed booms or swivel booms to spray the roadbed beneath or adjacent to the tracks. Beginning on or near May 1st, 2026, our applicator will be using a mix of Aquaneat, or Roundup Pro Concentrate (Glyphosate), Esplanade 200 SC or Promenade SC (Indaziflam or Flumioxazin) Milestone or Whetstone or Polaris AC Complete (Aminopyralid or Aminopyralid or Imazapyr), Oust XP (Sulfometuron-Methyl), Novita 90, Novita Drift Control, for control of weeds and grass. Beginning on or about July 1st, 2026 Brush may be treated with Polaris AC Complete (Imazapyr), Escort XP or Patriot or MSM 60 (Metsulfuron Methyl) with Method 240 SL (Aminocyclopyrachlor) with Aquaneat or Roundup Pro Concentrate or Credit 41 Extra (Glyphosate), with Novita MSO, Novita Drift Control. Other areas close to streams and standing water which were not sprayed on the first application, may be spot treated with Aquaneat (Glyphosate), Novita 90 or Novita MSO. Residents abutting Vermont Rail System right-of-way should protect private water supplies or other sensitive areas. It is the responsibility of the resident to notify us of the existence of a private water supply located near our property.

- ♦ Notification from residents along the Vermont Railway, Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad, Green Mountain Railroad, Washington County Conn River Division and the Washington County Railroad Barre to Montpelier, should be made before April 24th, 2026 to: Rick T. Boucher, Chief Engineer M.O.W. ♦ Vermont Railway, Inc. ♦ 118 Post Street Rutland, VT 05701, or by telephone at (802) 775-4356, Monday through Friday between 7:30 am and 4:30 pm.
- ♦ Questions or comments should be addressed to: Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets Plant Industry 116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 828-1732, AGR.PlantIndustry@vermont.gov

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 10B, 11B and 12B.

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH
NOTICE OF HEARING

The Ferrisburgh Planning Commission will hold the following public hearings on **Wednesday, April 15, 2026**, at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall at 3279 US Route 7, beginning at **6PM**. 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 25-044: Internal boundary line adjustment for 2-lot mixed-use subdivision; Applicant: Mark Franceschetti / Barb, Jim, Mary & Reno LLC; 14 Old Hollow Road & 6866 US Route 7 (Peaceful Road Self Storage); Parcel ID number 18/20/71; Highway Mixed-Use District (HMU-2); Subdivision Amendment.

Application Number 26-020: Three-lot subdivision; Applicants: Fred & Donna Morrow; 1060 Four Winds Road; Parcel ID number 18/20/43; North Ferrisburgh Village District (NFVIL-2); Final Plat Review.

Application Number 26-021: Adjust property line to transfer 0.12 acres from Parcel 1 to Parcel 2; Parcel 1 Applicants: Fred & Diana Morrow; 1060 Four Winds Road; Parcel ID number 18/20/43; Parcel 2 Applicant: Jennifer Arbuckle; 3348 Fuller Mountain Road; Parcel ID number 18/20/44; North Ferrisburgh Village District (NFVIL-2); Boundary Adjustment.

Application Number 26-026: Two-lot subdivision; Applicant: Todd Huestis; 1721 Sand Road; Parcel ID number 13/01/03; Rural Residential District (RR-2) & Conservation District (CON-25); Sketch Plan 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.

TRI-TOWN WATER DISTRICT NO. 1
WARNING

The legal voters of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 are hereby notified and warned to meet at any of the Town Community Center in the Town of Addison, the Masonic Hall in the Town of Bridport or the Town Clerk's Office in the Town of Shoreham on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, between the hours of seven o'clock (7:00) in the forenoon (a.m.), at which time the polls will open, and seven o'clock (7:00) in the afternoon (p.m.), at which time the polls will close, to vote by Australian ballot upon the following Article of business:

ARTICLE I

Shall general obligation bonds of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 in an amount not to exceed Two Million One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,100,000), subject to reduction from the receipt of available state and federal grants in-aid, be issued for the purpose of replacement of water mains to improve hydraulics, improvements to the District's water treatment facility to add filters and rehabilitation improvements due to age and construction of a booster pump station to serve East Street/Mountain Road section of the District's water system?

The legal voters of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 are further notified that voter qualification, registration and absentee voting relative to said meeting shall be as provided in Chapters 43, 51 and 55 of Title 17, Vermont Statutes Annotated.

The legal voters of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 are further notified that an informational meeting will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026 at Masonic Hall in Bridport at six o'clock (6:00) in the evening (p.m.), for the purpose of explaining the proposed improvements and the financing thereof. Such meeting will be available by Zoom as well.

Adopted and approved at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 duly called, noticed and held on March 19, 2026. Received for record and recorded in the records of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1 on March 19, 2026.

ATTEST:

[Signatures]

All or a Majority of the Board of Commissioners
of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday, April 14, 2026
3:00PM - Site Visit
7:20PM - Public Hearing

The public is hereby warned that the Middlebury Selectboard will hold a site visit and public hearing on April 14, 2026 to consider the proposed relocation of a portion of Town Highway #20, also known as Middle Road South.

There will be an examination of the premises that are proposed for discontinuance beginning at 3:00PM on the above date. Thereafter, all parties interested may appear at 77 Main Street (Town Offices), Middlebury, Vermont, at 7:20PM for a hearing at which the Board will receive testimony as to whether the public good, necessity and convenience of the inhabitants of the Town of Middlebury require the relocation of a portion of the existing Town Highway.

This proceeding was initiated by the Selectboard on its own motion at its regular meeting on January 27, 2026. The proposal is as follows:

The following Class Four section of Town Highway #20 (hereinafter "Parcel A") is proposed to be discontinued. Parcel A consists of the portion of said highway located along the following described centerline:

Beginning at a point approximately 1500 feet westerly of the easterly terminus of Town Highway #20 at Town Highway #9, said point being depicted on a plan entitled "Existing & Proposed Middle Road ROW Location Sketch," prepared by Krebs & Lansing, dated 10/09/25, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Middlebury Town Manager (the "Plan"); said point being where the existing right-of-way of Town Highway #20 diverges from a strip of land depicted on the Plan as "Proposed Location Middle Road South ROW (49.5' wide); (the "Relocated Route"); then proceeding westerly and northerly through lands of MHG Holdings LLC, and terminating at a point where the Relocated Route rejoins the existing right-of-way of Town Highway #20, all as shown on the Plan.

A new Class Four section of Town Highway #20 (hereinafter "Parcel B") is proposed to be laid out. Parcel B is located easterly of and generally parallel to Parcel A. Parcel B shall be three rods (49.5 feet) wide and shall follow a centerline more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the above-referenced point where the existing right-of-way diverges from the Relocated Route; then proceeding along the Relocated Route northwesterly and westerly to the point where the Relocated Route rejoins the existing right-of-way, all as shown on the Plan.

Following the proposed relocation, the Class Four portion of Town Highway #20 will continue to form a continuous stretch of Town Highway, three rods in width, beginning at the southerly end of the Class Three portion of Town Highway #20, then proceeding in a generally southeasterly and southerly direction, then turning easterly and terminating at Halladay Road (Town Highway #9).

The approximate locations of Parcels A and B are depicted on the Plan, which is available for inspection at the Middlebury Town Offices during regular business hours. The Plan is for illustrative purposes only. If the laying out and discontinuance are approved at the final hearing on this proceeding, the final locations of Parcels A and B will be established by a survey conducted in accordance with 19 V.S.A. § 710.

This action is undertaken pursuant to the powers of the Selectboard granted to it in Title 19, Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 708, et seq.

Middlebury Selectboard

TOWN OF NEW HAVEN
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
CORRECTED
NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4464, a public hearing before the Development Review Board of the Town of New Haven will be held at the Town Offices, 78 North Street, New Haven, VT 05472 on **Monday, April 6, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.** to consider the following:

1. Application #2026-DRB-04-WV: A Waiver request submitted by the Town of New Haven, per Section 333 of the New Haven Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, to accommodate the proposed fire station on Parcel #254.203 located on Main Street/Route 17 (in front of VELCO substation) in the RA-5 zoning district.

Please note that participation in the local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal. The hearing will be held as a hybrid meeting, either in person at the Town Offices, or by remote:

<https://zoom.us/j/98142119190?pwd=U0pFdDQ2a1ZRZzVCRkN4ZGcyYUF3dz09>
 Meeting ID: 981 4211 9190
 Passcode: 4jYbTA

An electronic copy of the application may be obtained by emailing: newhavenzoning@gmavt.net; a hard copy is available at the Town Offices during normal business hours, and can also be found on the Town's website at: <https://www.newhavenvt.com/>

New Haven Zoning Administrator (802) 453-3516

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
BOARD AND COMMISSION VACANCIES

Each year at this time the Town of Middlebury Select Board makes its annual appointments to volunteer positions required by State Statute, and local and regional boards and commissions. If you are interested in any of the following positions, please submit an Application for Appointment available on the Town's website https://www.townofmiddlebury.org/government/boards_and_commissions/index.php, or by contacting Beth Dow at bdow@townofmiddlebury.org. Please submit Applications for Appointment to the Manager's Office, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, or e-mail to bdow@townofmiddlebury.org, by Wednesday, April 1, 2026. If you would like to find out more about any of these positions, please contact Beth Dow at 388-8100, Ext 202.

Four-Year Term
 Conservation Commission

Three-Year Term
 Planning Commission
 Design Advisory Committee
 Development Review Board
 Downtown Improvement District Committee (Must own or represent a business in the district.)
 Infrastructure Committee
 Energy Committee

Two-Year Term
 Sports Commission
 Town Health Officer

One-Year Term
 Addison County Regional Planning Commission Delegates
 Addison County Regional Planning Commission Alternate
 Addison County Regional Planning Commission Transportation Advisory Committee Delegate
 Addison County Regional Planning Commission Transportation Advisory Committee Alternate
 Fence Viewer
 Maple Broadband Communications District Delegate
 Maple Broadband Communications District Delegate Alternate
 Town Agent
 Town Grand Juror
 Town Service Officer
 Tree Warden

OTTER VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
April 6, 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 (virtual option available - Meeting link and dial in information can be found on the calendar on the RNESU website: <http://www.rnesu.org/events>) on **Monday, April 6, 2026, at 6:30 PM**, to conduct the following business:

Article 1: 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 4 to be voted upon by Australian Ballot.

Article 2: To transact any other business which may legally come before this meeting.

Article 3: To recess the meeting until 7:00 AM April 7, 2026, when voting by Australian ballot shall commence.

To be voted upon by Australian ballot on April 7, 2026:

Article 4: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend Twenty-Eight Million Six Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand, Two Hundred Eighty-Five Dollars (\$28,663,285) 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 \$14,168, which is 4.84% higher than per pupil education spending for the current year

For the purpose of voting by Australian ballot:

In person voting will be available at local polling places on April 7, 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 **April 1, 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 April 7, 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 Fire Station

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
 March 17, 2026

Laurie Bertrand
 Laurie Bertrand, Board Chair
 Otter Valley Unified Union School District No. U053

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT
 PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT
 DOCKET NO.: 26-PR-00501
 IN RE ESTATE OF: AUDREY KEYES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: **Audrey Keyes**, late of Bridport, Vermont. I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: 03/21/26

Elizabeth Ann Law
 319 Creek Farm Road,
 Colchester, VT 05446
 802-238-4899
 lawbetty33@gmail.com

Publication: Addison Independent
 Publication Date: 3/26/26

Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
 Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 10B, 11B and 12B.

**HEARING NOTICE
 TOWN OF ORWELL
 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**

The Orwell Development Review Board will meet in person on **Wednesday, April 15th, 2026 at 7:00pm** at the Orwell Town Clerk's Office located at 436 Main Street, Orwell, VT.

By Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88129886127>
 or phone 1-646-558-8656

use meeting ID: #881 2988 6127 to conduct the following business:

1. Permit #03-04-26: Hall & Breen Farm, LLC/Justin Hall 2 Lot Subdivision located at 94 Stage Road, Orwell, VT.

Information pertaining to this matter may be viewed M, T, Th & F 9:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:30 at the Orwell Town Clerk's Office located at 436 Main Street, Orwell, VT
 Daniel Redondo, Chair
 Orwell Development Review Board

**CITY OF VERGENNES
 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the Development Review Board will hold a Public Hearing on April 20, 2026, at 7 pm as the first order of new business, for the following purpose:

To consider Site Plan Review, Subdivision Review, Planned Unit Development Review and Local Act 250 Review for Application# 2026-06 by River's Edge Associates, LLC to create an additional twenty-four (24) lots on the Parcel located at 0 Commodore Drive. Reviews will consider Article VII, Article IX, Article X, Article XI, and Article XVI Section 1613. *This Parcel is Phase 4 of the Claybrook Subdivision, is currently undeveloped, and is subject to existing Permits which created 16 Lots on the Parcel.

Please note that the hearing will be held as a "hybrid meeting", with participation either in person, by ZOOM, or by phone. The in-person meeting will be held at Vergennes City Hall located at 120 Main Street Vergennes, Vermont.

**Meetings are accessible via Zoom;
 Meeting ID: 666 140 8733**

Join by phone: Dial 1 (929) 205-6099;

**For participants joining by phone:
 To raise your hand during the meeting, press *9.
 To mute/unmute during the meeting, press *6.**

If you experience any difficulty in accessing this meeting, contact the City of Vergennes Zoning Administrator at 802-989-6315.

Persons seeking eligibility to Appeal must establish status as an Interested Person as defined in Article VI Section 603 of the City of Vergennes Zoning and Subdivision Regulations AND participate in the Public Hearing either in person or in writing in order to take any subsequent Appeal. The City of Vergennes is an "on the record" Appeal municipality with regard to Appeals to the Environmental Court from Development Review Board Decisions. This means that the Environmental Court shall only consider Testimony and Evidence provided during Public Hearings on the Application. Interested Persons should therefore ensure that their participation in the Public Hearing is complete and represents the totality of their Testimony and Evidence.

A copy of the application is available for public review at City Hall or by contacting David Austin at zoning@vergenness.org.

March 23, 2026
 David Austin
 Zoning Administrator

**CITY OF VERGENNES
 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the City of Vergennes that pursuant to 24 V.S.A §4385 the City Council will hold the first of two required Public Hearings on April 14, 2026 at 6 P.M. and the second on April 28, 2026 at 6 P.M. for discussion of the final draft of the revised Municipal Development Plan.

The Public Hearing will be held as a hybrid meeting with participation remotely through Zoom or by phone, and in-person at the Vergennes Fire Station, 50 Green Street.

Join by Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/561577976>
 Join by Phone: Dial: 1 (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 561 577 976

Meeting Password: 1234 For participants joining by phone:

To raise your hand during the meeting, press *9

To mute/unmute during the meeting, press *6

If you experience any difficulty in accessing the Zoom meeting, contact David Austin at (802)989-6315.

Statement of Purpose: Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4384, the Planning Commission proposes to Amend the City of Vergennes Land Use and Zoning Map, specifically Amending the boundary of the Central Business District and the Historic Neighborhood District. The proposed Amendment is to change the location of the Parcel located at 37 Green Street from being within the Central Business District to being within the Historic Neighborhood District.

Geographic Area Affected
 Central Business District (CBD), Historic Neighborhood District (HN)

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

CHANGES ARE PROPOSED TO: The City of Vergennes Land Use and Zoning Map.

A copy of the full text of the final revised version of the Municipal Development Plan is available for public review by contacting David Austin at zoning@vergenness.org. A copy is also available for review at City Hall.

March 23, 2026
 Betsy Sullivan
 City Clerk
 City of Vergennes

**In memory of Cornwall's
 cemetery caretaker**

Cornwall's long term Evergreen Cemetery caretaker, Viet Nam vet, Richard Bruso, died this week.

In Memory of Our Sexton, Richard Bruso

Time for us to turn
 the earth for you,
 dig the muddy ground.

Plot a way around
 the tall and toppled
 stones. Let the wind

pay for the fenceline
 deed. As good a spot
 as any, to live

in this kind
 of dug eternity.
 Among the veteran

flags, stones placed
 on top of stones.
 Now your dates, engraved.

Words of where
 you served for us,
 survived a paddy's

cemetery. Returned,
 to lie with your buried
 family (Did you dig

their graves, too?),
 here with the best
 view of Cornwall's

spring-turned fields,
 our orchards, apple-
 blossoming.

**Gary Margolis
 Cornwall**

**TOWN OF ADDISON
 PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Addison Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing on **Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.** at the Addison Community Center to present and discuss the draft of the updated 2026 Addison Town Plan. Please note the change of time (6:00 p.m.) from the regular meeting time. Copies of the town plan draft will be available at the hearing, but can be requested in advance at the Addison Town Clerk's Office. The draft is also available on the town website by visiting <https://addisonvt.gov/planning-commission/>

Meeting Agenda

- Open the meeting
- Roll Call
- Presentation of the draft of the 2026 Addison Town Plan for viewing & discussion
- Public Comment
- Approve the meeting minutes for March 16, 2026 if time allows
- Discuss any remaining miscellaneous Planning Commission business or concerns

Michael Hollis, Chair
 Starr Phillips, Secretary
 Addison Planning Commission

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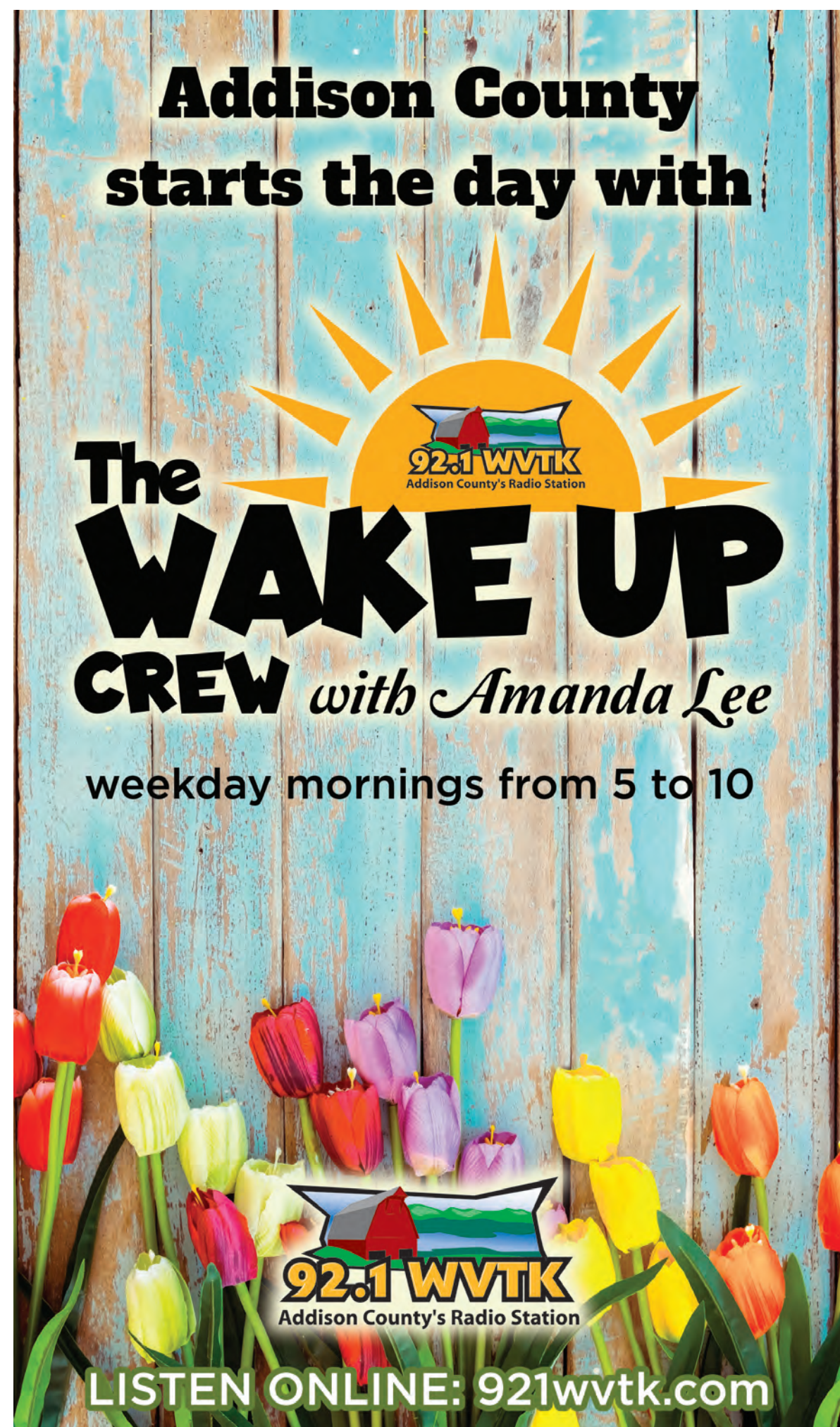
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INSIDE

- Volunteer coaches help homeowners save energy
- Learn how to build biodiversity
- Showing good stewardship of local lands
- Dos and Don'ts of bathroom renovations
- Tips for taking care of a wood floor



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KARNATZ WORKS WITH LANDOWNERS TO PROTECT FARMLAND

By MARIN HOWELL

ADDISON COUNTY — A big part of home ownership and stewardship is the land around your structure.

Asked to picture a place in Addison County, many of our minds wander to the familiar barns and pastures of farms in the region.

Al Karnatz has spent the past 32 years helping conserve such spaces and protect the state's farmland and the vision of Home we have here in Vermont. The New Haven resident is a project director with Vermont Land Trust (VLT) and has worked with Champlain Valley farmers to conserve 400 farms in the region.

VLT states on its website that through conservation, land is "permanently protected in exchange for the sale (or donation) of development rights and other environmental protections."

Karnatz helps farmers determine if conservation with VLT is the right fit for their properties.

"Really what inspires me are the farmers themselves," he said during a recent interview. "We have the funding, which is amazing, in Vermont ... and that's obviously very important, but if you don't have the farmer interest, if you don't have the landowners interested in protecting their land for the future, it's not going to happen either."

Karnatz's role focuses on farmland conservation work in the Champlain Valley — from the Canadian border down to Rutland County. He said farm conservation projects sometimes include forestland or sugar bushes but are primarily geared toward open, tillable farmland that's part of a farm operation.

Karnatz works with farmers throughout the conservation process. The VLT website states

its team helps farmers apply for funds, along with related work like determining the size and value of their conservation easement, "(managing) the legal process, and (writing) any management plans needed for funding."

Vermont Farm to Plate explains that farmland is conserved with a legal document known as a conservation easement, which is often held by a land trust like VLT. The easement "permanently limits development, restricts subdivision, and protects natural resources." This is also known as "sale of development rights," as landowners are usually compensated for the loss of the potential income from development (though some donate or partially donate this value)," Vermont Farm to Plate states.

Farms can receive funding and/or tax benefits for conserving their land, the VLT website notes. Part of Karnatz's role includes working with funding agencies like the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, the USDA and local municipalities.

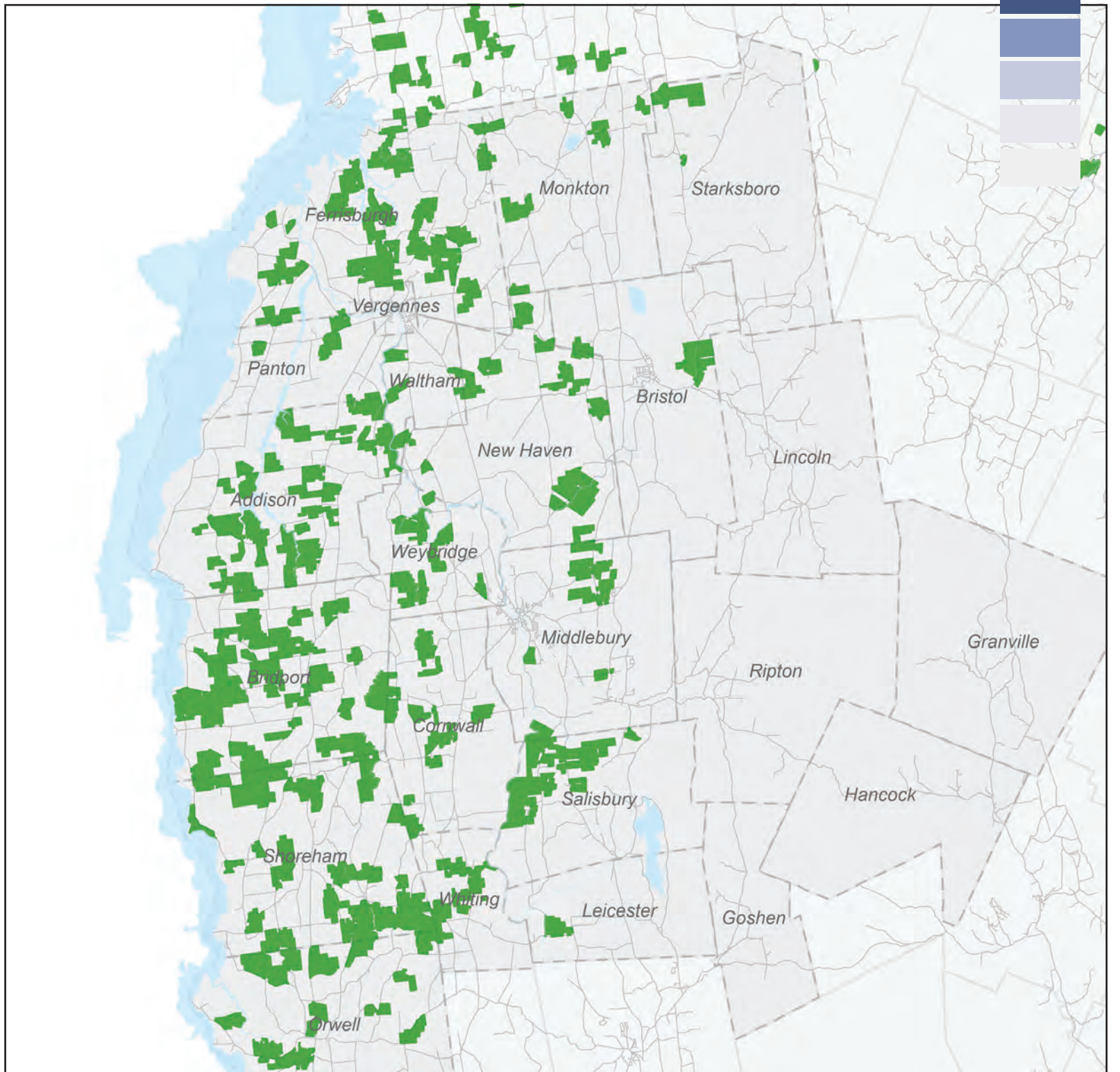
"My job is to bring all of those pieces together," he said.

The property also needs to be analyzed by an independent appraiser as part of the process, something the landowner pays for a portion of.

Karnatz explained that the main thing a landowner gives up through the process is the right to subdivide the property.

"We try to pay the landowner accordingly, we try to pay them what that value is based on the appraisal," Karnatz said.

He noted that funding, may only reflect a portion of the total value, "but it's great leverage for the whole project. So a landowner, maybe they get a few hundred thousand dollars for



NEW HAVEN RESIDENT Al Karnatz, a project director with Vermont Land Trust, was recently recognized for completing his 400th farm conservation project. This map highlights in green the Addison County parcels Karnatz has helped conserve over the years.

Map provided by Chris Moore of VLT

"That's probably the thing that's also changed over the years, is that we're doing more ecological protections on these properties than we had early on. We're becoming more sophisticated about setbacks from rivers, protecting wetlands."

— Al Karnatz

their restrictions."

Along with limits on development, those restrictions can also include setbacks from rivers to improve water quality, for example.

"That's probably the thing that's also changed over the years, is that we're doing more ecological protections on these properties than we had early on," he said. "We're becoming more

sophisticated about setbacks from rivers, protecting wetlands."

Karnatz said farm conservation projects often take at least two years.

"The process is long, but it's not

necessarily a bad thing because I don't think this is anything that a landowner should rush into," he said. "It's a big decision, so you want to think about it for a long time." (See Karnatz, Page 7C)



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NAVIGATORS HELP GET THE CARBON OUT OF YOUR HOME

ADDISON COUNTY — For going on two years, the Climate Economy Action Center, or CEAC, has run a free program aimed at helping Addison County residents decarbonize their homes. The program is known as Addison County Energy Navigators.

Through the program, homeowners receive free one-on-one support in identifying ways to reduce their homes' carbon footprint and utility bills.

CEAC recently introduced Addison County to two of its Volunteer Energy Coaches: Alice White and Don Monroe.

"Don and I were looking for a way to use our new-found knowledge about energy efficient building practices and technologies to help others in our community who have fewer resources. Volunteering with Energy Navigators is a perfect fit," White said.

White and Monroe are volunteers with Energy Navigators.

Their energy efficiency education

started a few years back, when they had their own home built after renovation proved impractical, and today they are sharing their knowledge with community members as energy coaches. We caught up with Alice and asked her a few questions about volunteering with Energy Navigators. Here is what she said:

Why did you volunteer for Energy Navigators?

Alice: My husband and I recently retired to Middlebury and had the opportunity to build an energy efficient home. We were lucky to have a knowledgeable architect (Elizabeth Hermann) and contractor (Smith & McClain) and were fascinated by the choices that went into the design and construction. Now that we have moved in, we agree that it is the most comfortable space we have ever lived in. More importantly, the combination of ground source heat pumps and solar panels (on the roof) mean that our monthly energy costs are very low. With the help of our contractor, we were able to take advantage of incentives

to offset the initial cost of the systems, but it could easily have become overwhelming. That's why we signed on to Energy Navigators, to help Vermonters struggling with heating costs to get onto a lower cost path. If that path includes a lower carbon footprint, then that makes progress on another front that is important to us—climate change mitigation.

What is your experience with Energy Navigators?

Alice: The first thing we did as Navigators-in-Training was to enroll in the online Rewiring America course, which was facilitated by the Energy Navigator team. This gave us a comprehensive technical background in relevant HVAC and building technologies as well as coaching advice for analyzing different situations and providing feedback. The Energy Navigator team has provided additional coaching, including shadowing opportunities, and a suite of templates, modeling software and links to important information. We find that we encounter many challenging situations, so we've convened a cohort of Navigators who meet once a month to share and discuss these cases. In this time of great uncertainty, it is very rewarding to be able to give a homeowner a set of concrete next steps to get them on the path to lowering their heating/cooling costs and, in the process, reducing their energy footprint.

Thank you to Alice, Don and our first Volunteer Energy Coaching cohort for helping others take steps toward reducing their energy burden, increasing their comfort, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. If you would like to volunteer with Energy Navigators, fill out the form online at tinyurl.com/EnergyNav. No previous experience is necessary.

If energy coaching is not appealing, CEAC has opportunities including outreach, administrative, and website curating roles for volunteers.

Editor's note: This story was provided by the Climate Economy Action Center.



Alice White and Don Monroe help homeowners reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.



Plan and execute

SALAMANDER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT manager Jesse Otis, above, reviews plans for an East Middlebury house his company is renovating for Addison County Home Health and Hospice. Then, right, he takes nail gun in hand and installs some door trim himself.

Independent photos/Steve James

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DUSTIN WHITCOMB OF Champlain Valley Plumbing and Heating uses an Allen wrench for the fiddly part of attaching a new shower tap in an East Middlebury home undergoing renovation.

Independent photo/Steve James

DO'S AND DON'TS OF BATHROOM RENOVATIONS

Bathroom renovations are significant undertakings that cost homeowners sizable amounts of money. According to *Remodeling* magazine's "2024 Cost vs. Value Report," the average cost of a mid-range bathroom remodel across the United States in 2024 was around \$25,000, and it is surely considerably more now. Homeowners who wanted an upscale remodel could expect to spend around \$80,000 in 2024.

Such a large financial commitment underscores the significance that homeowners get their bathroom remodels right. Mistakes will only increase the already substantial financial commitment homeowners must make, so it can help to keep these dos and don'ts in mind.

DO work with a certified, reliable contractor. YouTube tutorials can give a false impression of renovation

projects in relation to their degree of difficulty. Renovations as significant as bathroom remodeling projects require the skills and experience of professionals.

DON'T ignore return on investment (ROI). There's no denying certain projects provide a better return on investment than others. The upscale bathroom remodel with a nearly \$80,000 price tag noted above may prove awe-inspiring, but homeowners looking to get as much of their money back at resale should know that such a renovation recovers 45 percent of homeowners' initial investment. By contrast, the mid-range bathroom remodel yields a 74 percent return according to *Remodeling* magazine. Though ROI may not be the deciding factor for every homeowner, it definitely merits consideration when planning

a project.

DO pay attention to the details. Planning a bathroom renovation can be overwhelming, as homeowners have many decisions to make before the project even begins. For example, homeowners will have to choose a vanity, fixtures for the vanity, light fixtures, toilet, showerhead, and an assortment of additional features when planning the project. Contractors work with clients to show them all of their options, and some will offer advice on products or materials if asked. But homeowners are ultimately the ones who will have to live with the choices they make during the planning process, so these details

(See Do's, Page 9C)



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2026 REBATES HELP VERMONTERS ACHIEVE THEIR HOME ENERGY GOALS

WEATHERIZATION, HEATING SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCE REBATES CAN HELP HOUSEHOLDS SAVE MONEY

WINOOSKI — Vermonters can save energy with 2026 rebates and financial support from Efficiency Vermont and partners across the state— including weatherization incentives while funding lasts.

“Improving your home’s energy efficiency in 2026 is an investment that will pay off for years to come,” said Peter Walke, Efficiency Vermont’s managing director. “It’ll pay off — literally — with lower energy bills. With improved comfort. With lower emissions thanks to more deliberate energy use. And by lowering demand, it supports a more affordable electricity system for everyone connected to our shared grid.”

When is the perfect time to plan a home energy project?
Now.
Find a contractor in the Efficiency

Excellence Network near you to start your project or begin planning for spring.

Heat pump heating system rebates are available through a joint program offered by Efficiency Vermont and your electric utility. Efficiency Vermont’s website — efficiencyvermont.com — also has information on additional incentives that may be available from your utility.

Weatherization rebates offering up to 90% cash back are also available from Efficiency Vermont — with limited-time funding from the Vermont Department of Public Service supporting increased incentives for low- and moderate-income households. Free weatherization services for low-income households are also available through the state’s Weatherization Assistance Programs.

Incentives and solutions that can help Vermonters embrace energy savings in 2026 include:

• **Free resources to prioritize energy investments in the new year.**

Understand current offers or diagnose high bills by calling Efficiency Vermont’s Energy Advisors. You can also schedule a free Virtual Home Energy Visit with an Efficiency Vermont energy expert to get personalized advice and a list of next steps toward your goals.

• **Up to 90% cash back on weatherization projects.**

Air sealing and insulating your home lowers energy bills, makes a home more comfortable year-round, and improves indoor air quality. Weatherization also makes it easier to embrace clean technologies like heat pumps. *Increased weatherization incentives are only available through the end of 2026 — or while funding lasts.*

• **Rebates for heating**

systems that work for your household.

Save up to \$475 on a ductless “mini split” heat pump, or save up to \$2,200 on a ducted heat pump. Or opt for advanced wood heating with a wood or pellet stove (and a \$400 rebate), or get \$6,000 off central wood heating systems.

• **Save up to \$1,000 on water heaters that use heat pump technology.**

Get a \$600 discount when you upgrade to a heat pump water heater, bringing the efficiency and savings of a heat pump to the hot water needed in your kitchen, bathroom, and laundry room. Income-eligible households can get an additional \$400 back.

• **Create a healthy home with appliance rebates.**

Control your home’s temperature and save on energy bills with up to \$100 cash back on a smart thermostat. Or manage moisture in your home with up to \$90 off a

dehumidifier. You can also get up to \$400 off a heat pump clothes dryer or washer/heat pump dryer combo unit. If you’re already planning for summer, get up to \$150 off a window AC unit.

• **Businesses can save on energy investments, too.**

Businesses can get up to \$25,000 in additional funding for custom projects or take advantage of increased incentives for pre-approved LED lighting projects. *These incentives are only available for projects completed by November 2026.*

Low-income households may qualify for additional support, including a voucher for up to \$1,200 for replacing one eligible household appliance (like a refrigerator, freezer, or clothes washer). Additional offers include free weatherization through the state’s Weatherization Assistance Programs, and free efficient products like LED light bulbs and water-saving devices. Contact

Efficiency Vermont for details.

Vermont lenders can also help you achieve your New Year’s energy goals with financing that removes up-front costs for home energy projects. Low-interest Home Energy Loans offer up to \$25,000 for home energy upgrades, with 0% interest for income-qualified borrowers. Or you can pay off a project on your utility bill using the Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program. Contact Efficiency Vermont for qualifying information.

Additional rebates may also be available from your electric or gas utility. Contact Efficiency Vermont’s Energy Advisors to learn about all available offers at www.efficiencyvermont.com/contact.

Efficiency Vermont is the nation’s first Energy Efficiency Utility. It works with partners to help our state transition to more affordable, low-carbon energy use through education, incentives, and support for our clean energy workforce.



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TRAVIS SNYDER OF Cedar Ridge Sprinkler Corp. of Essex Junction drills into the ceiling of a house in East Middlebury undergoing renovation to install a sprinkler system.

Independent photo/Steve James

Year-Round Hazardous Waste Collection

The HazWaste Center at the District Transfer Station in Middlebury is open to residents from any of the District’s member towns.

Most items are accepted from residents free of charge.

Businesses must pay for disposal and must call 388-2333 for an appointment.

Common items include:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Acetone | Drainer opener/cleaner | Mercury thermometers | Primers or shellacs |
| Acids | Driveway sealer | Mercury thermostats | Rechargeable batteries |
| Adhesives | Dry cleaning solvents | Mineral spirits | Roach traps/poison |
| Algaecides | Flea & tick killer | Mothballs | Rug/upholstery cleaner |
| Aerosols | Fluorescent bulbs* | Motor oil | Solvent-based |
| Antifreeze | Fly killer | Mouse/rat poison | Glues |
| Ant killer | Formaldehyde | Nail polish | Stains |
| Ammonia | Fuel additives | Nail polish remover | Stump remover |
| Auto body filler | Fungicides | Naphtha | Tars or resins |
| Automotive fluids | Furniture polish | Oil-based paint | Transmission fluid |
| Chlorine bleach | Gasoline | Oily waste | Tub & tile cleaner |
| Brake fluid | Hair dyes | Oven cleaner | Varnish |
| Bug spray | Kerosene | Paint thinner/turpentine | Weed killer/fertilizer |
| Button cell batteries | Latex paint | Parts cleaner | Wood preservative |
| Contact cement | Lead paint chips | Pesticides/herbicides | |
| Deck sealer | Lead-acid batteries | Photographic chemicals | |
| Diesel fuel | Lime/rust remover | Pool chemicals | |



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Not accepted: laboratory chemicals, pharmaceuticals, fireworks, flares, explosives, smoke detectors, ammunition, and radioactive waste.

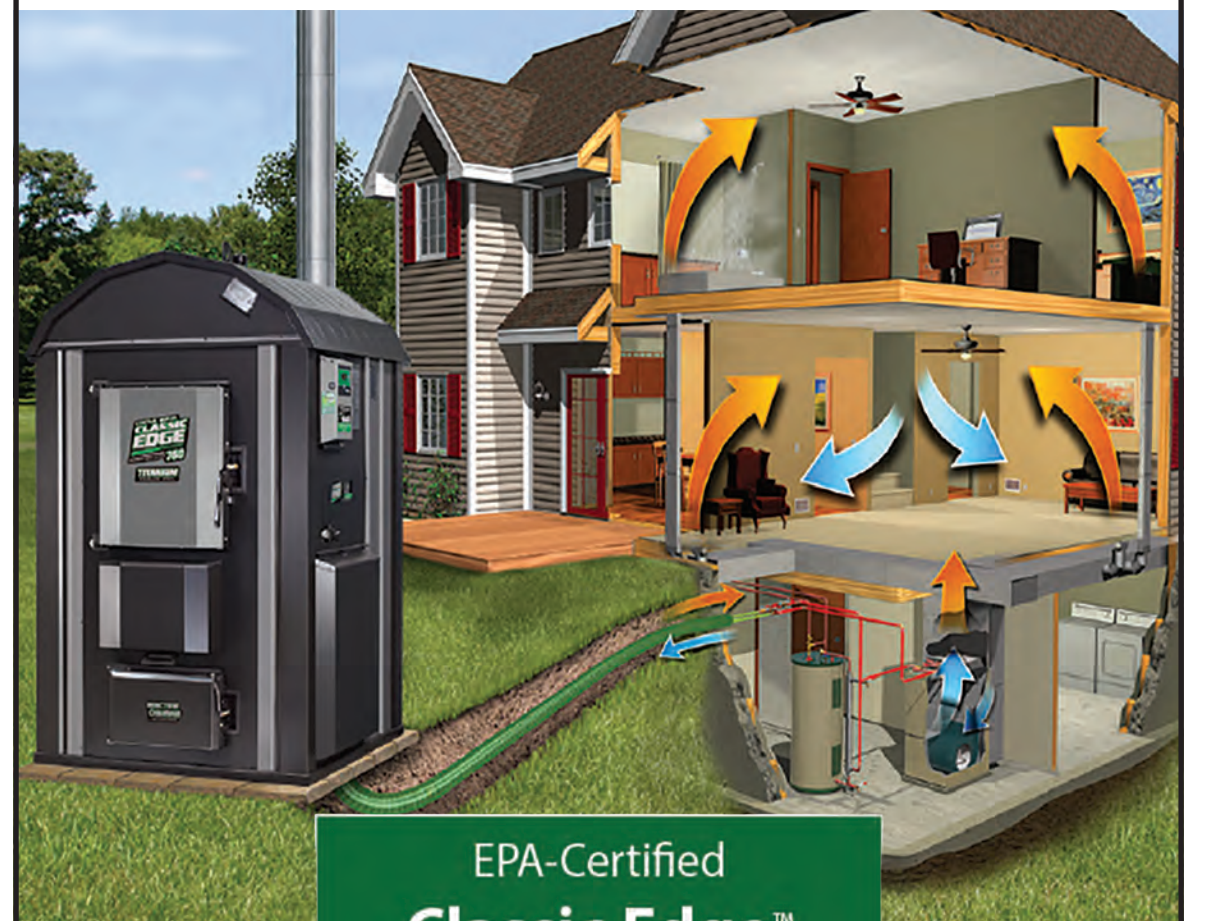
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Karnatz

(Continued from Page 3C)
time.”

He noted that the amount of interest in such projects has changed throughout the years, as awareness of Vermont Land Trust and its farmland conservation program has grown.

“Over the years, it hasn’t been me looking for properties to conserve; we’ve got more properties coming in that want to be conserved,” he explained. “There’s a long waiting list and has been for quite a while.”

IMPROVING SOIL HEALTH

Along with helping protect farmland, VLT also works to help farmers with things like improving water and soil health and buying farmland. Conservation can help make farmland more affordable, as Karnatz explained the sale of development rights can reduce the overall price tag for a property.

He pointed to examples of projects that have helped farmers buy farmland, such as a group of farmers that purchased and conserved land in Jericho to grow produce.

“Helping young farmers find land and locate pieces that we can conserve is one of our other priorities,” he said. “We call it farmland access, getting people access to farmland. It’s a big barrier because land is expensive.”

Many of the projects Karnatz has worked on over the years have involved farms in Addison County. In the town of Addison, dairy farmers Melanie and Pat Harrison of Harrison’s Homegrown have conserved over 400 acres with VLT.

The land trust also helped Abby and Trent Roleau get their



THROUGH HIS WORK as a project director at Vermont Land Trust, Al Karnatz has worked with Champlain Valley farmers to conserve 400 farms in the region over the past 32 years. Such projects can help farmers protect their farmland, purchase land, and improve soil and water health on their property.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

diversified farm started on over 300 conserved acres in Bristol and Jon Lucas purchase and conserve land for his dairy operation, Lucas Dairy Farm, in Orwell.

What has Karnatz enjoyed most about working with farmers on these projects over the

enjoyed the outcome of knowing that really some of the best farmland in Vermont and in New England will be protected for future generations.”

He added that the inspiration farmers give him has pushed him along in his work.

“It’s not easy to try to make a living running a farm,” he said. “It’s constantly changing, it will continue to change, but what won’t change...is this land will be available for farming.”

“It’s a big decision, so you want to think about it for a long time.”

— Al Karnatz



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VERGENNES — This spring, Bixby Library kicked off a hands-on series designed to demonstrate how to bring native plants into outdoor spaces and turn your lawn into a living habitat. Native plants boost biodiversity, support pollinators and birds, and reduce maintenance, fertilizer use, and runoff. Learn why native plants matter, how to assess and prepare your site, choose the

right plants, convert your lawn step-by-step, and maintain long-term success.

Participants need not take part in all three sessions in order to follow the growing season. Presenters are Lisa Sausville of the Vergennes organization Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife, and Ashley Robinson of the Vermont Landscape and Nursery Association for Biodiversity Builders.

The first session, called "Understanding Your Site," was held this past Saturday, March 21. The second session is scheduled for Saturday, June 27, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., "Creating and Implementing Your Plan." Then on Saturday, Sept. 26, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. is the third session, titled, "Taking Stock and Determining What's Next." All will be held at Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St., in downtown Vergennes.

For more information email to Ashley at arobinsonld@gmail.com Registration link: tinyurl.com/BuildyBioAtBixby.



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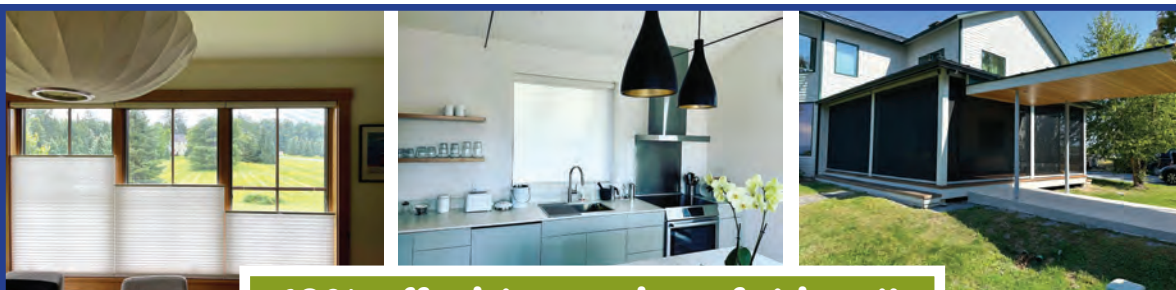
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Do's

(Continued from Page 5C)
 merit ample consideration and should not be treated as trivial.

DON'T emphasize cost over quality. Homeowners should do their best to establish a renovation budget and stay within that budget, but quality materials should take precedence over cost. Many budget-friendly furnishings and accessories are durable and aesthetically appealing, so homeowners need not enter a bathroom renovation thinking high-end products are their only options. But it's important that homeowners recognize the conventional wisdom that buyers get what they pay for when it comes to home renovations. If homeowners try to cut costs on materials, they may need to update or redo the bathroom much sooner than they would if they invest in quality furnishings and accessories the first time around.

Bathroom renovations can be costly. Remembering some simple dos and don'ts can give homeowners the peace of mind that their renovation investment will result in an impressive, durable space.

— Metro Creative

JOE DESABRAIS OF Desabrais Glass, top, in Middlebury, puts the finishing touches to a shower door he just installed. **Dustin Whitcomb** of Champlain Valley Plumbing and Heating, bottom, drills into the wall of a shower to install a new valve.

Independent photos/Steve James



Give 'em a hand

A WHOLE BUNCH of doorknobs sit ready for the various doors that come and go through a theater prop shop at Middlebury College's Wright Theater.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

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THE TWO PIPE wrenches on the right seem to dwarf the little crescent wrench on the left. The big, iron teeth on the pipe wrenches can get a grip on any round surface, and the adjustable crescent can fit snugly on smaller bolts or nuts.

Independent photo/Steve James

KITCHEN FLOORING OPTIONS CAN BOOST YOUR HOME VALUE

It's well-documented that kitchens are popular gathering spaces in homes. Perhaps that's one reason why homeowners looking to sell their homes direct so much attention to the kitchen before listing their properties. The real estate experts at Trulia note that emphasis is well worth it, as buyers inspect kitchens and primary bathrooms more than any other spaces in a home.

Cabinets and countertops garner considerable attention when pondering kitchen renovations, but it's equally important that homeowners pay attention to flooring when planning a remodel. The following are some notable flooring materials homeowners may want to consider as they plan to remodel their kitchens.

• **Ceramic tile:** Ceramic tile is a popular kitchen flooring material. The flooring experts at Avalon Flooring note that ceramic tile boasts an elegant and clean feel. Ceramic tile also is durable and easy to maintain. That simple maintenance includes ease of

cleaning, as ceramic tile can be quickly cleared of spills and dirt tracked into a kitchen from outside. Ceramic tile also comes in a wide variety of colors, a versatility that undoubtedly adds to its popularity.

• **Porcelain tile:** Porcelain tile is another versatile option that can add instant aesthetic appeal to a kitchen. Porcelain tile is waterproof, which appeals to many homeowners looking to renovate their kitchens. Porcelain also is easily cleaned and durable, as flooring experts estimate that porcelain tiles can last anywhere from 15 to 50 years. Porcelain tile also requires minimal maintenance, which appeals to busy homeowners.

• **Engineered hardwood:** Engineered hardwood is a popular choice that many homeowners appreciate due to its strength and aesthetic appeal. This flooring material is made with real wood that's reinforced to make it even more durable and water-resistant. The result is an easily maintained product that also can last as

long as solid wood flooring so long as it's well-maintained. Various shades, designs and textures are available, which makes this a versatile option.

• **Laminate flooring:** Laminate flooring is a budget-friendly option that's available in a wide range of styles, colors and patterns. The smooth surface of laminate flooring makes it easy to clean, and it's resistance to water is another characteristic that appeals to homeowners. But spills on laminate floors are best cleaned up quickly, and the material is vulnerable to warping and staining if exposed to moisture for extended periods of time.

These are some of the options homeowners can consider as they ponder which material to install on their kitchen floors as they remodel these popular rooms.

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- Geoff Conrad and Tim Hollander

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PUT SOME SPRING IN YOUR CLEANING STEP

Spring is the season of nature's rebirth. Trees and flowers begin to bloom anew each spring, and young animals can be seen frolicking with their parents. During a time when it seems like the entire planet gets a refresh, many homeowners turn their thoughts to refreshing their homes as well. As the days lengthen and the weather warms, spring cleaning takes center stage. Spring cleaning is more extensive than simply washing away grime, as cleaning a home often offers a psychological reset for the coming months. A clear strategy can make the task of spring cleaning feel less daunting, and these tips can help cut down on clutter and other interior annoyances that have arisen after months spent indoors.

Declutter before cleaning

The rule of thumb when starting on spring cleaning is to combat clutter before cleaning. Trying to clean around clutter is inefficient and may result in throwing in the towel prematurely. It is important to remove as much as possible from each room before you begin cleaning. As homeowners move through each room, they can assess whether they've used items in the last year or whether they serve any functional or aesthetic purposes. If not, they can be trashed or donated.

Move top to bottom
It's important to follow the rules of science when spring cleaning. That means that dust and debris will be affected by gravity. Engaging in a top-down approach will help make cleaning more efficient. Beginning at the ceiling and working down towards the floors will help people avoid having to clean the same surface twice.

Using a duster or a microfibre cloth, individuals can clear

cobwebs from corners and dust from crown molding. Fingerprints will accumulate near light switches and door handles, so those areas should be wiped down, too.

Homeowners can conduct a thorough cleaning of heating and cooling output and intake vents as they likely have gathered dust over the winter. A down of floor moldings can get to any area near the floor or under furniture that doesn't get frequent cleaning.

Do a kitchen reset
Focusing attention on the kitchen, which tends to be the busiest room in the house, is a wise idea for spring cleaning plans. This is the time for individuals to pull everything out of the refrigerator and pantry and check for expiration dates. Wiping down the shelves means cleaning away any accumulated food drips or spills. Additional areas to consider include behind the refrigerator, inside the dishwasher filter and inside the

microwave.

Focus on air quality

It's key to replace the HVAC system filters come springtime, as well as any air purifiers in the home. This will help reduce allergens and ensure that the cooling system will run efficiently when it's time to turn it on.

Spring cleaning takes place each year. Prioritizing decluttering and following a systematic path through the home helps people eliminate stress and mess at the same time.

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HOW TO MAKE A LAUNDRY ROOM A MORE FUNCTIONAL SPACE

Functionality is important when designing the interior spaces in a home. Homeowners who redesign their interior spaces can emphasize functionality to help reduce clutter and create a more efficient and even calming space.

Laundry rooms may not be the most glamorous rooms in a home, but they do get lots of usage, particularly in homes with children. Because laundry rooms tend to be well trafficked areas, it makes sense for homeowners to make them as functional and

user-friendly as possible. With that in mind, homeowners can consider these tips to make laundry rooms more functional spaces.

- Install a freestanding laundry sink. A laundry sink also adds function to a laundry room by enabling

homeowners to hand wash certain clothes and apply stain removal products in the same space where the rest of their clothes are being cleaned. Installing a laundry sink is a relatively inexpensive job, but the cost may go up if new plumbing, venting or electrical work is necessary.

- Add a countertop work space. If you already have ample storage and won't be placing the washer or dryer atop a laundry pedestal, then installing some countertop above the appliances can add function and aesthetic appeal. A countertop workspace above a dryer provides an accessible space to fold laundry the moment it dries, reducing the likelihood that clothes will become wrinkled and ensuring you won't put off folding.

- Install floating shelves. Floating shelves won't cost a lot of money, but they can be ideal in cramped laundry rooms. Shelves provide a space to store detergent and other items that may not fit inside laundry pedestals, including baskets.

- Add hanging storage. Some articles of clothing should not be dried in a dryer for fear of shrinking the fabric or destroying the item. In such instances, some readily accessible hanging storage capacity can make the laundry room more functional. Items can be hung on hangers or over a hanging rack suspended from the ceiling if space is minimal.

- Purchase laundry pedestals with storage capacity. Laundry pedestals make useful additions to a laundry room. Many homeowners place their washing machines and dryers on top of pedestals with storage drawers, which can be used to store everything from dryer sheets to clothes irons to stain removal kits. Pedestals can be particularly useful in cramped laundry rooms where the only means to adding storage is to go up and not out.

Laundry rooms are heavily used spaces in a home, so it makes sense to take steps to make these areas as functional as possible.

— Metro Creative





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REDEFINE A LIVING ROOM

Spring is widely cherished as a season of rejuvenation. As winter winds down, many people embrace the arrival of spring blooms and the regrowth

of grass on the ground and leaves on the trees, which can breathe new life into landscapes that might have grown a bit stale in previous months.

That same staleness can affect a home's interior as well. Home interiors can benefit from periodic updates in much the same way a landscape benefits when spring blooms return. As homeowners seek to refresh their living spaces, they can consider these features to redefine their living rooms.

• **Fireplace:** A wood-burning fireplace is undeniably a game changer when looking to redefine a living space. But such a project could be a significant undertaking in a home that does not already feature a wood-burning fireplace. Homeowners who want to add a wood-burning fireplace can

reinvest a living room, but they will likely need to adhere to building codes, secure permits and even consult with an engineer to ensure such an addition does not affect the structural integrity of the home. A gas-powered fireplace is a less demanding project, but will also require some extra work if homeowners need to connect a gas line where no such line currently exists. A plug-in electric fireplace can create a new ambiance and will not require as much time, effort and money as the alternatives.

• **Coffered ceiling:** A coffered ceiling can immediately redefine the impression people get of a living space. Coffered ceilings feature a series of rectangular, square or octagonal grids that are typically accentuated by molding. Coffered ceilings provide a luxurious and even historic aesthetic, making them an ideal addition for homeowners looking to redefine an existing space.

• **Windows:** New windows are another option when homeowners are hoping to redefine a living room. Modern windows are energy-efficient, so replacing

aging windows may help homeowners combat rising energy costs. If a yard is a notable feature of a home's exterior, new windows that accentuate the view from a living space can quickly redefine how residents and guests see the room. Permits may be necessary if you're expanding existing windows, but that can be worth it if you're able to design the space around the view. All that extra natural light also may reinvent the feeling people get upon entering the space.

• **Wallpaper:** Interior design specialists note that wallpaper is making a comeback. Wallpaper can be used to draw attention to a wall in much the same way bold colors are chosen for accent walls. Wallpaper on an accent wall can feature a bold pattern or a strong color to add a sense of personality to a room that might be lacking if the walls are currently painted in neutral colors.

Homeowners can consider any number of features when looking to give their living spaces a fresh look.

— Metro Creative



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TAKE CARE OF WOOD FLOORING

Natural wood flooring is a stunning feature of millions of homes. Wood floors are appreciated for their durability and aesthetic appeal, each of which is bolstered when floors are properly maintained.

A host of variables can affect how long wood flooring lasts and how its appearance holds up over time. Wood flooring in homes with pets that roam around the house, such as cats and dogs, may require more frequent maintenance than those without pets. The same goes for homes with children, who may routinely track dirt in from outside or spill food and drinks with greater frequency than adults. But even wood flooring in homes without pets and children requires consistent maintenance. Homeowners who want to protect their wood floors and ensure they maintain their aesthetic appeal for the long haul can consider the following maintenance tips, courtesy of the National Wood Flooring Association.

- Sweep, dust or mop each day. The NWFA recommends daily maintenance to remove dust and dirt that accumulates each day.

Such cleaning can prevent damage that can compromise the aesthetic appeal of the floors and potentially affect their longevity.

- Clean spills immediately. Spills are inevitable, especially in homes where young children live. Though spills might not be preventable, the damage they can cause can be avoided with a prompt response. Cleaning spills immediately with a dry or slightly damp cloth can ensure the floors do not soak up the spilled liquids. The NWFA notes that mopping wood floors with a wet mop or steam mop will damage the finish and the wood over long periods of time. If allowed to soak into the floor, spilled liquid can contribute to warping, swelling and staining. Each of those issues can be costly to address, but a quick and immediate cleanup can prevent all three from happening.

- Vacuum once per week on the bare floor setting. Using a vacuum is less taxing on wood floors than sweeping so long as the vacuum is on the bare floor setting. Sweeping is best avoided to prevent small particles from being dragged across the floor, which gradually wears down the finish and ultimately contributes to a dull look. Vacuuming vertically lifts the debris off the floor,

ensuring nothing is dragged along the surface of the floor. If you're using a manual vacuum instead of a robotic vacuum, vacuum with the grain to reduce the risk of damage.

- Apply wood flooring cleaner once per month. If your wood floors are newly installed, ask your installer to recommend a cleaner specifically designed for the finish on your floor. If your floors are not new, contact a flooring professional for a recommendation. Wood flooring cleaners specific to a given floor's finish are important because these products are specialized and formulated with both cleaning and protection of the floor itself in mind. The right wood floor cleaner won't lead to dull-looking floors nor damage the finish.

- Recoat floors if they start to look dull. The NWFA notes that recoating with wood floor finish every three to five years can renew the appearance of natural wood flooring that might be starting to look a little dull.

Well-maintained wood floors add much to a home's interiors. Some simple maintenance can ensure wood floors remain durable and aesthetically appealing for decades.

— Metro Creative

THREE-SEASON ROOMS EXTEND LIVING SPACE

The market research experts at Business Research Insights report that the three-season sunroom market size is projected to nearly double between 2025 and 2035. BRI reports that 65 percent of homeowners prefer cost-effective sunrooms when seeking to extend their living space.

The popularity of sunrooms can be traced to a number of variables, including year-round access to a home's surrounding landscape. That access might be hindered if the only spaces to experience nature is a patio, deck or another traditional type of outdoor living space. But sunrooms, particularly those equipped with heating and cooling, can bring homeowners in touch with nature during times of year when they might otherwise be compelled to steer clear of their outdoor living spaces due to less welcoming weather.

— Metro Creative



WATERFALL EDGE COUNTERTOPS COME INTO THEIR OWN

The waterfall edge style of countertops has evolved from a high-end niche trend into an increasingly popular staple of modern architectural design. Unlike traditional countertops that end at the edge of the cabinet, a waterfall edge makes a 90-degree turn and continues down to the floor, covering a kitchen peninsula or island.

According to Angi, waterfall edge countertops are known for their seamless and continuous appearances that really are show-stopping to see. They tend to make a bigger visual impact compared to traditional horizontal slabs. It's important to note that not every stone fabricator is willing or able to execute the waterfall effect. Installation requires a precise mitered edge, which risks chipping the fine-cut corner.

The added expense also is nothing to take lightly. Waterfall edges also can make cleaning more involved. There is no lip at the end of counters, so it's hard to get a dustpan flush to catch crumbs off the surface. Also, the side panels of stone mean there's extra surfaces to clean and seal.

The uniqueness of waterfall edge countertops merits careful consideration prior to installation.

— Metro Creative

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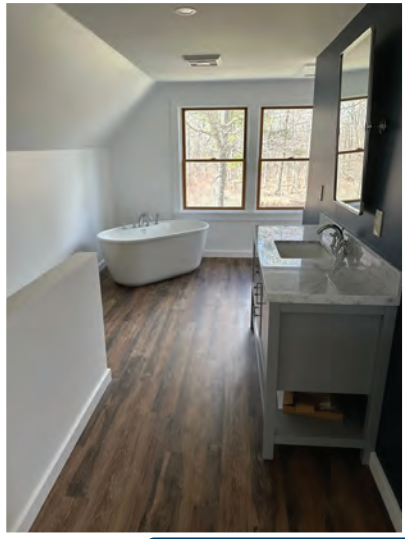
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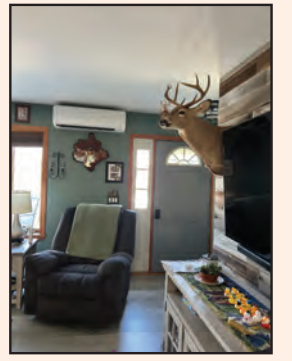
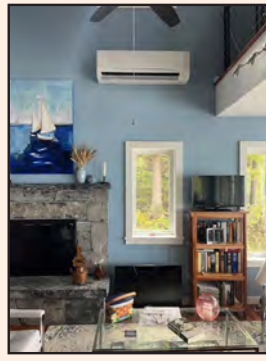
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Kristin Bolton
Executive Director, Elderly Services
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ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

March 26, 2026



PLUCKY AND POIGNANT POWERSUITS CONNECTS WITH COMEDY

Michole Biancosino and Lida Winfield are the creators and performers in "Powersuits," a sharp and joyful comic duet that will take the main stage at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Friday, April 3.

PHOTO / EVELYN RODRIGUEZ

Two women — sometimes wearing shiny purple bikinis — will take the mainstage at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Friday, April 3, for a vibrant, sharp comic duet that will have you screaming with laughter. Promise.

By **ELSIE
LYNN PARINI**

Middlebury College professors Michole Biancosino (theater) and Lida Winfield (dance) previewed a few of the vignettes from the show, "Powersuits," during an interview last week.

"We peel off layers," explained Biancosino, who was puffed-up in at least four, layered outfits standing at the front of the Mahaney Dance Theater stage. "Then we put them back on."

All of the outfits signal something — suits signal power, money, manliness; ties mean the office... Then there's a red dress, red

cheerleading outfits, maxi-pad filled elegant wings, and, yes, purple bikinis... There are a lot of outfit changes (on set).

"Our wrestling singlets are the base we return to," Winfield added.

That's right, wrestling singlets. They're blue.

As Winfield and Biancosino peel on and off these layers of different personas, the audience is invited to critique normative gender roles, laugh at stereotypes of authority and see beauty as absurd. The hour-long show brings belly laughs while the actors simultaneously embody the alienation that comes from capitalist grind culture.

It all started about a year and a half ago, when Winfield and Biancosino agreed to work on a piece together.

Winfield brought a scene of slow-motion cheering; Biancosino brought a script from an office scene she had written.

"The idea was that Lida had this positive cheering thing and then it morphed into anger," Biancosino remembered. "The movement evokes cheering at a kid's sports game... but also maybe protests or rallies?"

"The physicality (of cheering) is really similar if you take it out the context," Winfield said. "Am I cheering for you or speaking against you?"

"The line is really thin once you have fervor," Biancosino agreed.

The duo explores the huge picture of the lived experience through multiple different perspectives that start with a simple premise

See **POWERSUITS** on page 3

LOOK UP

ASTRONOMY LESSONS WITH KEN COREY

Ken Corey, Ph.D., is a retired professor and science teacher, and conducted research for NASA in the field of Astrobiology. He now resides in Vergennes. Look for his column on the last Thursday of the month in Arts+Leisure!

Have you ever wondered: Is there anybody out there?

The title of this month's column is also the title of a song by the progressive rock band Pink Floyd. It is a cut off the 1979 album "The Wall" and a live album "Is There Anybody Out There." "The Wall" is an allegory about a rock star (Pink) who chooses to live in isolation from society. Pink builds a psychological wall to be shielded from the traumas of society. The commentary is about isolation and mental illness.

With the world aflame, it is often tempting to build both physical and psychological walls. The title led me to think about the wall that human civilization has with the rest of the Universe and our aloneness as a species. While we may not choose to be isolated from the rest of the Universe, the fact is that we are alone, as far as we know it, in a Universe inconceivably vast. The wall between us and the rest of the Universe is not one of our own making; it is the speed of light.

EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE

In the movie "Contact" starring Jodie Foster, there was a dialogue between Jodie's character and her dad when she was a child. The essence of the conversation was that it does not seem reasonable that we are alone in a Universe so large. Why would all of this creation be here just for us?

Suppose, according to current estimates by astronomers, that there are about 2 trillion (2×10^{12}) galaxies in the Universe and an average of 2×10^{12} stars per galaxy. The result is 4×10^{24} stars that might have planets which could potentially support life. Even if life is rare, a small percentage of a huge number is still a large number of stars that may have planets where life began and evolved. Possibilities for extraterrestrial life forms abound. It seems arrogant to believe that we are alone. However, that does not make us less special as an "advanced species," despite not being advanced enough to not wage war with its own.

Advanced life forms may be exceedingly rare, even given the huge numbers of opportunities for life to have evolved. However,

a low probability event is still quite probable given enough time. In 1961, Frank Drake, who did pioneering work for SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and did the first radio search at the radio telescope in Green Bank, W. Va., proposed a probabilistic equation to estimate N, the number of advanced civilizations in the Milky Way. The equation states that N equals the product of the following 7 terms:

- R*, star formation **rate**
- f (p), fraction of those stars with **planets**
- n (e), planets per star where **environment** is habitable
- f (l), **life** emergence fraction
- f (i), **intelligence** development fraction
- f (c), **communicative** technology fraction
- L, civilization **lifespan**

Playing with the numbers have yielded calculations of a few to thousands of communicative, advanced civilizations in just the Milky Way. Some variables can be quantified with reasonable estimates (e.g. star formation rate and planetary systems fraction). Also, astronomers have now confirmed over 6,000 exoplanet discoveries with another few thousand awaiting confirmation. The number of habitable planets per star has been a subject of ongoing research with now a few dozen rocky planets having been discovered in the habitable zones, including the Trappist-1 system which has three planets in the



An artistic reconstruction of two tardigrade fossil specimens that were preserved in amber and analyzed in a recent study.

COURTESY PHOTO / "CRETACEOUS AMBER INCLUSIONS ILLUMINATE THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN OF TARDIGRADES."

habitable zone of a dwarf red star.

The habitable zone, aka "Goldilocks" zone, is a region around a star where temperatures are just right for liquid water to exist. The distance range of habitable zones depends upon stellar type. A planet in the habitable zone of a hot blue giant star would need to be much further than one around a red dwarf or yellow star such as our own Sun. Water, oxygen, methane, ammonia, nitrous oxide, methyl halides, phosphine, and dimethyl sulfide are all considered possible biosignatures in research on exoplanet atmospheres. Using instruments on JWST and other telescopes, astronomers conduct spectroscopic measurements to see where there are 'blips' in absorption curves at certain wavelengths characteristic of the compounds.

However the habitable zone is defined, it is clear that there are numerous examples of organisms tolerating extreme conditions on Earth (extremophiles). They serve as analogs for possible places where life may exist outside of Earth.

There are many examples of extremophiles found on Earth, including those tolerant of temperature extremes, high pressure, high acidity, and even the vacuum of space. Black smokers which occur at hydrothermal regions where magma reaches ocean waters (Mid-Atlantic Ridge, Galapagos Isl.), harbor complete ecosystems of extremophiles, including tube worms, giant clams, mussels, and specialized bacteria. Some organisms tolerate temperatures near the boiling point of water and others live at pressures of hundreds of atmospheres.

A microbiologist colleague, Penny Boston, used to go spelunking in caves in search of extremophile microorganisms. She dubbed one of them "snottite," descriptive of the snot-like drips of gelatinous biofilms hanging from cave walls. The mats are comprised of bacterial colonies that can metabolize sulfur-containing compounds and produce a highly acidic environment of sulfuric acid — not my top choice for a research project.

A true champion Earth-based extremophile is the tardigrade, translated as slow walker (see picture). Tardigrades, also known as "water bears" and "moss piglets," can live in all regions of the globe from Antarctica to the tropics and are capable of withstanding harsh extremes in temperature and pressure. They can also withstand air deprivation, dehydration, radiation, and starvation! Organisms like the water bears have unique mechanisms for their survival, suggesting that there may be many extraterrestrial environments to which alien life forms can adapt and perhaps thrive.

See LOOK UP on page 16

POWERSUITS*continued from page 1*

and then stretch into a territory of unanswerable questions.

"We take something that is pretty truthful and blow it up,"

Biancosino said raising her arms up and over her head with 10 fingers spread wide. "We enlarge it somehow, so you can see what's there, but without telling people what to think about it or what it is. There's a way that is fun and comedic, but also actually pretty serious in the message that people can get out of it."

Is this serious feminist art?

Yes, at one level. They are tackling some heavy topics.

No, at another level. Explosive laughter is more than welcome.

"This is a joyful duet," Biancosino said. "It's always appropriate to laugh!"

"Given how difficult so many things in the world are," Winfield acknowledged, "this isn't about laughing to avoid those difficult things, this is a different way to have commentary on the world that is a useful way to engage together so that we are building connections and community."

Come expand your mind and laugh. Laugh at these women attempting the lift-scene from "Dirty Dancing." Laugh at these women putting on lipstick. Laugh at their over-exuberance, their exaggerated movements, their Dorito-dance, and their salad show-down.

And perhaps your thoughts will expand or venture into experimental territory? Or not, that's welcome too.

That land of uncertainty is familiar to Biancosino and Winfield.

"We both teach this class here (at Middlebury College) called 'Creative Process,'" Biancosino said. "We encourage students to figure out what they're doing after they've done something... Like, take an idea, play with it, and then let go of the original idea. For me 'Powersuits' has really embodied that creative process practice."

The two have tried *a lot* and continue to let meaning arise from the process.

"We have an idea then do it. Have another idea, do it," Winfield shared. "Opposed to the process where we might brainstorm 15 ideas and pick the one we think will be the 'best one' — because that just doesn't exist."



Michole Biancosino monologues during a sketch in "Powersuits," while Lida Winfield dances around her. This show will kick off with an '80s-'90s dance party to get everyone loosened up before the show at Town Hall Theater in Middlebury on Friday, April 3.

PHOTOS / EVELYN RODRIGUEZ

Another rule that the team found early in the process, is that they don't compete.

"We decided pretty early on that everything we do is to help each other and support each other," Biancosino said. "That's a rule that we discovered — and we like it. We're not setting up this thing you see so often of women trying to outdo each other... Consider what it means that we're a team and we help each other. That's an undercurrent throughout the show. We're always working in tandem."

It wouldn't be out of the question to find the comparisons between the two; after all they come from what seem like very different trainings (Biancosino in theater and Winfield in dance).

"GIVEN HOW DIFFICULT SO MANY THINGS IN THE WORLD ARE... **THIS ISN'T ABOUT LAUGHING TO AVOID THOSE DIFFICULT THINGS, THIS IS A DIFFERENT WAY... TO ENGAGE TOGETHER SO THAT WE ARE BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY.**"

— Lida Winfield

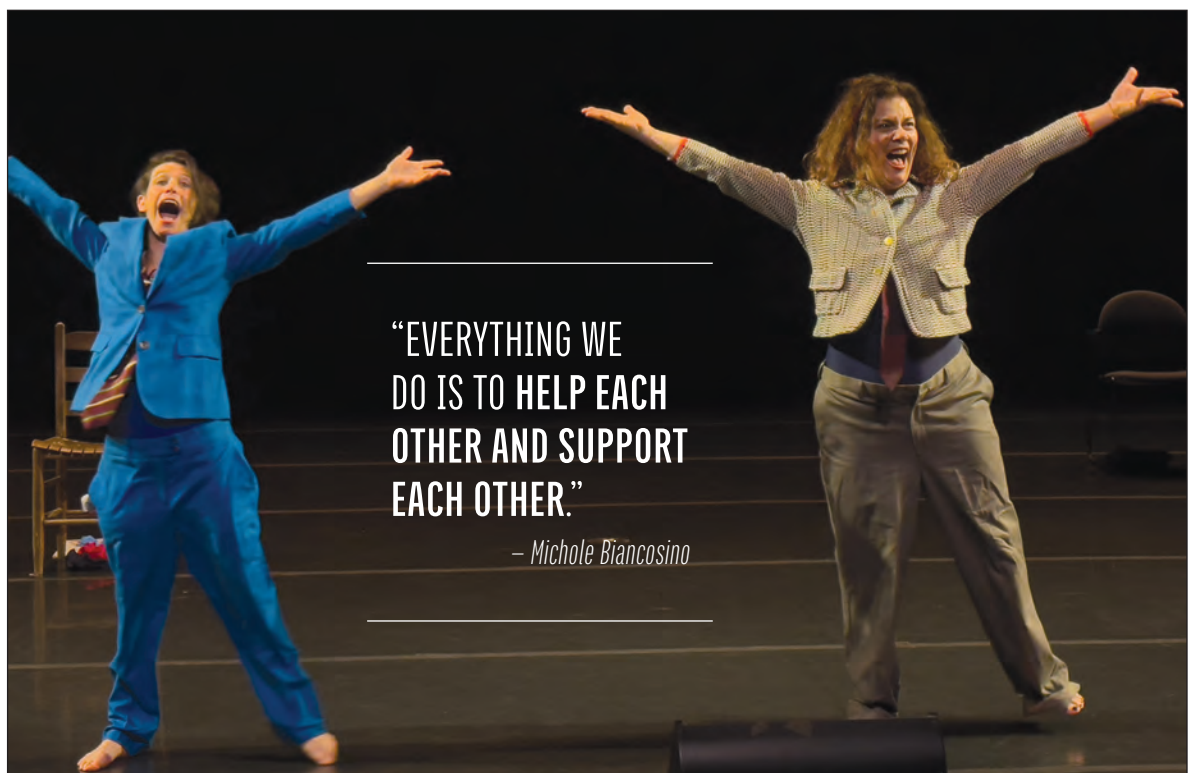
"But neither of us are that simple," Winfield said with a sparkling smile. "In that same spirit of supporting each other, we are taking our different skill sets and different strengths bringing them to our collaborations. That shows in each of the sections.

"Powersuits' feels like a middle," Winfield explained. "It's not really dance and it's not really theater — it's a combination of so many different things."

Including you.

The show will open with an '80s and '90s dance-mix cocktail hour starting at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 3. Winfield and Biancosino will take the stage at 7:30 p.m., and then host a talkback immediately following the show.

Winfield reiterated that she and Biancosino are just "exploring." And they invite everyone to come, connect and share space with others who care about "all the ways you can use art to explore life."



"EVERYTHING WE DO IS TO HELP EACH OTHER AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER."

— Michole Biancosino

ART ON EXHIBIT

Four Friends keep creating through it all

LEIGH HARDER, ANN JONES-WEINSTOCK, LINDA HAMPTON SMITH, AND SARAH STERZEN-FLINN EXHIBIT AT JACKSON GALLERY IN MIDDLEBURY

The Jackson Gallery presents an exhibit of paintings and mixed media by Leigh Harder, Sarah Sterzen-Flinn, Ann Jones-Weinstock, and Linda Hampton Smith — four good friends. Their paths crossed as neighbors, colleagues from the Weybridge School, and as members of local community groups. When it became apparent that the common thread was their love of creating art, it was only natural that regular gatherings began. These often include a shared meal amidst laughter and lively conversation. Afterwards, the table is cleared, and each artist presents their art pieces one by one. Discussions ensue. There is always praise and encouragement and, if asked for, suggestions. Their first exhibition as a group is varied and vibrant.

Leigh Harder

Leigh Harder works primarily in alcohol ink, collage and watercolor. She studied at Philadelphia College of Art and Geneva College, where she earned a B.A. in human creativity. She actively brought the arts and her love of painting into the classroom in her profession as an elementary educator. She recently taught Children and the Arts in the winter term at Middlebury College and has led classes locally in place-based collage, in poetry and alcohol ink genres and techniques. She states that

atmosphere and the physical environment play heavily in her choice of subject matter. Beauty in unexpected moments and places and a sense of our connectedness to all living things undergird her work.

Ann Jones-Weinstock

Ann Jones-Weinstock is a mixed-media artist based in Middlebury. Raised in Ohio, Jones-Weinstock was inspired by her father, a master woodworker and multigenerational Vermonter, and her mother, a visual artist. As a teenager, she studied art history at the Cleveland Museum of Art. She holds a liberal arts degree from Middlebury College and a master's degree in communications, including graphic paste-up and design, from Boston University. Jones-Weinstock's art explores the evolving life of ordinary things. Working primarily with paper, natural, and found materials, Ann assembles small sculptures that juxtapose shape and texture. Her cut-paper pieces draw on elements of the natural world and the Vermont landscape.

Linda Hampton Smith

Linda Hampton Smith is exploring the medium of gouache in her paintings, with an appreciation for its vibrant colors. She draws inspiration from children's book illustration, textile design, and embroidered embellishment. A Long Island



"Daffodil Delight" by Linda Hampton Smith.

native, she majored in Studio Art at Adelphi University and studied at Parsons School of Design in France and the Art Students League in NYC. After working at New York's Phyllis Lucas Gallery, where she hand-colored antique engravings, she moved to Vermont with her family and taught elementary school art in both the Rutland Northeast and Addison Central School Districts. She works with her husband, Randy, in the restoration of paintings for collectors and museums.

See FRIENDS on page 16



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 8:00 p.m. Complimentary nibbles included. Deep discounts on featured wines.

- 4/1 - Rhône Valley: Originals and Inspirations
- 4/8 - Island Time: Greece and Beyond
- 4/15 - The Mysterious Wines of Portugal
- 4/22 - Burgundy vs. Beaujolais
- 4/29 - The More the Merrier: Liter Bottles

25 STEWART LN. MIDDLEBURY, VT SWIFTHOUSEINN.COM @SWIFTHOUSEINN

Exhibit offers Art Club an interesting conversation on AI and art, March 31

Interested in coming together with community to discuss AI (Artificial Intelligence) and art? Sign up to join Art Club on Tuesday, March 31, at 2:30 p.m. The group will discuss the "Damian Stamer: Angels & Ghosts" exhibit at the Middlebury College Museum of Art.

The exhibit consists of a group of large-scale oil paintings that incorporate images of childhood memory generated by AI with guiding prompts from the artist. Interim Museum Director, Katy Smith Abbott will be there to share her thoughts, too.

"Angels & Ghosts" challenges viewers to reconsider the boundaries between human and machine creativity while exploring timeless themes of memory, mortality, and the search for meaning in

See AI ART on page 16

ART ON EXHIBIT

BRANDON ARTISTS GUILD

7 Center St, Brandon.

For more info visit brandonartistsguild.org or call 802-247-4956.

"Cabin Fever Creations" features the work BAG member artists have created during the months of cold and bluster. On view through April.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"From the Collection" highlights a group of artists, including Max Ginsberg, James Blair, TJ Cunningham, Liz Gribbin and Tracy Burtz, offering visitors an opportunity to view works by some of Edgewater's foundational artists who have helped shape the gallery over the years. On view March 21-May 16.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant Street, Middlebury

Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"MUHS Student Art," features final DP Art Exhibitions by Spencer Copeland and Sawyer Cash Witscher, alongside a diverse collection of student artwork.

See EXHIBITS on page 12



"Summers End" by TJ Cunningham.

Edgewater gallery showcases gallery-owned artwork

A new exhibit will open at Edgewater Gallery on the Green on Merchants Row in Middlebury on March 21. "From the Collection" highlights a diverse group of artists, including Max Ginsberg, James Blair, TJ Cunningham, Liz Gribbin and Tracy Burtz, offering visitors an opportunity to view works by some of Edgewater's foundational artists who have helped shape the gallery over the years. On view March 21-May 16. For more information about "From the Collection," call the gallery at 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

Cosmic Forecast



ARIES: March 21/April 20. Your confidence is at an all-time high, Aries. This is the week to pitch an idea or finally send that text you've been mulling over. The universe is backing your bold moves.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, this week you're entering a cycle of "treat yourself." You deserve it right now, so enjoy. Whether it's a brunch out with friends or a mental health day, lean into the experience.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Expect a random invitation to create a new connection, Gemini. Your wit is extra sharp this week, so use it to charm the room. Your social calendar is likely to fill up.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, the things you have been visualizing are about to materialize. You might feel an urge to organize your space or redecorate. Jump on that opportunity this week.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, you have been feeling underappreciated lately, but that ends soon. Expect a moment when your unique talents become the star of the show. It's a great week for travel.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, a puzzle that you have been trying to solve finally clicks into place. You are moving among different social circles and it can be tricky to balance it all. Trust your intuition over logic.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, harmony is an ideal to aspire to this week. If there has been any tension in your circle, you are able to help dissolve it quickly. This is prime time for a date night or friends' dinner.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, people are drawn to you this week, and you have that certain something that is impossible to ignore. Use this influence wisely.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. This week you're in the mood to see what happens and let fate take the lead. Letting go of control might put you in a very fun situation, Sagittarius. Agree to a spontaneous plan.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. This week you are ticking off your to-do list with amazing efficiency, Capricorn. The real magic happens when you sign off of work and head home to great news.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Aquarius, you are thinking light years ahead of everyone else right now. Share your ideas, however unusual they may be and see who is along for the ride.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. The universe is making you choose whether to enjoy financial riches or riches of the heart this week, Pisces. It can be a tough choice to make, so give it some time.

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MARCH 27 — Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, architect (d)

MARCH 28 — Mario Vargas Llosa, writer (d)

MARCH 29 — Eric Idle, comedian (83)

MARCH 30 — Norah Jones, Jazz musician (47)

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

MARCH 31 — Chloe Zhao, filmmaker (44)

APRIL 1 — Milan Kundera, writer (d)

APRIL 2 — Emmylou Harris, singer-songwriter (89)

CALENDAR

March 26-April 16 2026

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

MOUNT ABRAHAM SPRING MUSICAL "ONCE UPON A ONE MORE TIME" IN BRISTOL.

Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. Powered by the chart-topping hits of Britney Spears, the undisputed Princess of Pop, "Once Upon A One More Time" turns our favorite fairy tales upside down with a clever twist! When a fairy godmother goes rogue and plops copies of "The Feminine Mystique" in the laps of classic heroines, the damsels embark on a quest to rewrite their stories and redefine "happily ever after." The show is described as "colorful PG13 hip hop fantasy" and "a big, modern, musical dance party, with Britney's beating heart at its core." Tickets: \$15 adult/\$12 seniors and children under 12. Purchase online at bit.ly/oncenc.

MUHS SENIOR PLAY, "GREASE," IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. Middlebury Union High School presents this well-known production in a highlight of the school's performing arts calendar, featuring students in the classic musical. Look for Sandy, Danny and all their friends on stage. Tickets \$13.60 adults/\$11 students at gofan.co/event/

5850651?schoolId=VT15095. Repeats Friday and Saturday.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

LOCALS NIGHT AT LINCOLN PEAK VINEYARD IN NEW HAVEN.

Friday, March 27, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy a cozy, intimate show in the Lincoln Peak tasting room. Music by the Chrissie Romano Band. More info at lincolnpeakvineyard.com.

MOUNT ABRAHAM SPRING MUSICAL "ONCE UPON A ONE MORE TIME" IN BRISTOL.

Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

MUHS SENIOR PLAY, "GREASE," IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

VERMONT MANDOLIN TRIO IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater. Bluegrass, jazz and roots and more, played on three mandolins. Tickets \$25 standard/\$40 generous. More info at addisonarts.org.

"TREATY" PLAY IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, March 27, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72 Merchants Row. The production, subtitled "A Play About How Not to Blow Up the Planet," is a compelling and urgently timely work

of documentary theater by acclaimed British playwright Chris Thorpe. The play asks a disarmingly simple question: How do ordinary people begin to dismantle the most dangerous weapons on earth? It blends storytelling, journalism and live conversation to explore the human side of global nuclear negotiations. Ticket, whose prices range from \$39 (generous) to \$20 (student), can be purchased at townhalltheater.org or by calling the THT Box Office at 802-382-9222. Continues March 28 & 29.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

WINTER TRAVELING BOOK CLUB IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, March 28, 1-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Meet at the Bixby Library or join online to discuss "What You Are Looking For Is in the Library" by Michiko Aoyama. Part of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's Winter Traveling Book Club. Free with registration. More info at lcmm.org.

MUHS SENIOR PLAY, "GREASE," IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 27, 2 p.m., high school auditorium. March 26 listing.

MOUNT ABRAHAM SPRING MUSICAL "ONCE UPON A ONE MORE TIME" IN BRISTOL.

Saturday, March 28, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

28, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., high school auditorium. See March 26 listing.

"TREATY" PLAY IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 28, 2 and 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72 Merchants Row. See March 27 listing.

CHAMPLAIN PHILHARMONIC SPRING CONCERT IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, March 28, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. The diverse selection of works includes "Fanfare" by Vermont composer Erik Nielsen, Gwyneth Walker's "Let America Be America Again," select movements from Lee Johnson's symphonic tribute to the Grateful Dead and Antonin Dvořák's beloved Symphony No. 9. Tickets \$5-\$15. Info: app. arts-people.com/index.php?show=317027.

GINA COLEMAN & THE MISTY BLUES BAND'S ROADHOUSE REVIVAL GOSPEL BLUES REVIEW IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, March 28, 2026, 7 p.m., Vergennes Opera House. Celebrate the reopening of the little city's theater with a rousing, non-secular celebration of tent revival classics. The Helen Hummel Trio opens. Tickets: \$20. More info: vergennesoperahouse.org/events.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

ROKEBY MUSEUM FREE ADMISSION DAY IN FERRISBURGH.

Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 4334 Route 7. The exhibits and grounds will be open for touring. At 3 p.m., join Meg Mott for a program titled "A Dramatic Constitution," where she considers how the U.S. Constitution both forces and frames our disagreements and describes how, in the first two centuries of our country, citizens regularly debated public matters, drawing on the Constitution as a shared authority. More info at rokeby.org.

"TREATY" PLAY IN MIDDLEBURY.

Sunday, March 29, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 72 Merchants Row. See March 27 listing.

WINE TASTING WITH WILL: "EXPLORING FRENCH SPARKLING WINE" IN BRISTOL.

Sunday, March 29, 3-5 p.m., The Tillerman Inn & Restaurant, Route 116 North. A private wine tasting and conversation hosted by maitre d' Will. Tickets: \$90 thetillermanvt.com.

MONDAY, MARCH 30

MARCH ECSTATIC DANCE IN ADDISON.

Monday, March 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m.,

Continued on next page.

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753	
<p>Through the Night: Bulletin Board, VT Media Exchange Channel 1071 Thursday, March 26 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Public Affairs 8 a.m. Congregational Service 9:30 p.m. Addison County Democrats 12 p.m. Selectboard 9 p.m. Democracy Now 10 p.m. Eckankar Friday, March 27 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Energy Week 7:30 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Addison County Democrats 10 p.m. Democracy Now Saturday, March 28 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Public Affairs 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ</p>		<p>5 a.m. Press Conferences 9:30 a.m. Eckankar 10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Congregational Service 5:30 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 7 p.m. Selectboard 11 p.m. Democracy Now Wednesday, April 1 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 7 p.m. Selectboard 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 11 p.m. Democracy Now Channel 1091 Thursday, March 26 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Yoga for Kids 7:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s</p>	
<p>10 a.m. Selectboard 4 p.m. Memorial Baptist Service 5:30 p.m. Eckankar 6 p.m. Energy Week 7 p.m. Catholic Mass Sunday, March 29 9 a.m. Catholic Mass 9:30 a.m. Public Affairs 11 a.m. Memorial Baptist Service 4 p.m. Congregational Service 6:30 p.m. Eckankar 7 p.m. Catholic Mass 11 p.m. Democracy Now Monday, March 30 4:30 a.m. Democracy Now 5:30 a.m. Eckankar 6 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 7 a.m. Press Conferences 10 a.m. Selectboard 5 p.m. All Things LGBTQ 11 p.m. Democracy Now Tuesday, March 31 4 a.m. Democracy Now</p>		<p>4 p.m. Music from around VT Friday, March 27 4 a.m. Gardens & Nature 6 a.m. Tai Chi 6:30 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 2 p.m. Authors and Poets 4 p.m. Gardens & Nature Saturday, March 28 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga & Yoga 7 a.m. All Brains Belong VT 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 3 p.m. Gardens & Nature 8 p.m. Authors and Poets Sunday, March 29 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7:30 a.m. All Brains Belong VT 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 6 p.m. Authors and Poets Monday, March 30 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi</p>	
<p>6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. School Board Meeting 5 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 6 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 11 p.m. Brattleboro Literary Festival Tuesday, March 31 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 7 p.m. Festival On The Green 9 p.m. Music from around VT Wednesday, April 1 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Authors and Poets 9 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 8 p.m. All Brains Belong VT 9 p.m. Music from around the State</p>			

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.

Addison Community Center. Ecstatic dance is a freeform, movement practice guided by a music wave that is open to anybody. No steps to learn, no experience required. Warm-up starts at 6:30, opening circle at 7 and the Ecstatic Wave at 7:15. Donation based: \$5-\$10.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

MIDDLEBURY UNION MIDDLE SCHOOL TALENT SHOW IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, April 1, 2026, 6 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. Help MUMS 8th-graders fundraise for their class trip to Boston while enjoying a night of singing, dancing, comedy acts and even magic! Tickets: \$5-\$25. app.arts-people.com/index.php?actions=4&p=10.

MUSIC IN THE PARLOR: THUNDER LIZARD IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, April 1, 6:30-8 p.m., the Tillerman Inn & Restaurant, Ruter 116 North. Thunder Lizard delivers a diverse mix of soulful originals and fresh picks. Serving cocktails and snacks in the parlor, but reservation required for dining room or bar.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB SNOWSHOE IN RIPTON. Thursday, April 2, time TBD. Snowshoe five to six miles on the Long Trail with difficult climbs of approximately 1,000 feet in search of good snow. Destination dependent on snow totals. For more information, contact Ellen Cronan at 908-595-2926 or visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

ILSLEY CLASSIC FILM CLUB WATCHES "THE WIZARD OF OZ" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 2, 1 p.m., Marquis Theatre, Main St. The club this spring watches four films with the theme "The 1930s in Color!" Join fellow community film lovers to see the films at the theater, followed by a short discussion of the film. Popcorn is on us.

"MATT & BEN" PLAY AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. Thursday, April 2, 7:30-9 p.m., Hepburn Zoo. In a play written by Mindy Kaling and Brenda Withers, young Matt Damon and Ben Affleck realize they're being tested by a higher power when the screenplay for "Good Will Hunting" drops mysteriously

from the heavens. Tickets: \$5 go.middlebury.edu/tickets.

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

ANALOG — MADE BY HAND: A FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION OPENING RECEPTION IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 3, 4-7 p.m., PhotoPlace Gallery, 3 Park St. Experience the material beauty and craft of photography in this exhibition featuring work rooted in film-based capture and hands-on printing processes, where time, chemistry and touch shape the final image. April 3-25.

"POWERSUITS" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 3, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater. "Powersuits" is a bold, laugh-out-loud performance created and performed by Middlebury College professors Michole Biancosino and Lida Winfield. This sharply comic duet uses exaggerated costumes, movements and gestures to critique normative gender roles, depicting stereotypes of authority and beauty as absurd. Part dance, part theatre, and a lot of fun — expect belly laughs alongside pointed commentary on capitalist grind culture. The evening begins at 6:30 with an '80s and '90s dance-mix cocktail hour and cash bar, with the performance starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$15-\$25-\$40. Info: addisonarts.org/event/powersuits.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

ATLANTIC CROSSING BAND IN VERGENNES. Saturday, April 4, 12:30-2 p.m., Bixby Memorial Library, 258 Main St. Ring in spring with a free concert by beloved local band Atlantic Crossing. Their foot-stomping New England roots music blends folk melodies and local history, taking listeners on a journey across Vermont and New England. Made possible by the Vermont Community Foundation's Freda Fishman Stroh Memorial Fund.

HILDALAND PERFORMS AT BURNHAM PRESENTS IN LINCOLN. Saturday, April 4, 7:30 p.m., Burnham Hall, on River in the village. Hildaland is two award-winning artists, Ethan Setiawan on mandolin and Louise Bichan on fiddle. They play a contemporary blend of Scottish and American music from jazz and bluegrass to traditional

roots. Traditional Vermont musicians Eli Glasser and Henry Kervick will play an opening set. Doors open at 7 p.m.; two sets of music begin at 7:30 p.m. Admission on a sliding scale \$20/\$25/\$30. Homemade desserts. Tickets at burnhampresents.org. Information at 802-349-3364.

MONDAY, APRIL 6

UNDERCOVER QUILTERS & CRAFTERS MONTHLY GUILD MEETING IN BRISTOL. Monday, April 6, 6-8 p.m., American Legion, Airport Drive. Do you sew, knit, crochet, or enjoy fiber arts? We meet to enjoy friendship and community. All are welcome! Meet 1st Monday of the month.

TUESDAY, APRIL 7

IRISH MUSIC NIGHT WITH RAMBLETREE IN MIDDLEBURY. Tuesday, Apr. 7, 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.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

FREE LECTURE, "REBUILDING NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL: GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE IN ACTION" IN WAITSFIELD. Wednesday, April 8, 6:30 p.m., at Yestermorrow Design/Build School, 7865 Main St. Will Wallace-Gusakov discusses his work rebuilding the nave roof frame of the Notre Dame de Paris. Find out more: yestermorrow.org.

MUSIC IN THE PARLOR: JEFF WILSON IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, April 8, 6:30 - 8 p.m., the Tillerman Inn & Restaurant, Route 116 North. Come hear local singer-songwriter Jeff Wilson. Cocktails and snacks in the parlor, reservation required dining room or bar.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

"THE MAIDS" PLAY AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. Thursday, April 9, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Theater. In Jean Genet's play, two maids indulge in a delicious game of role-play as they plot the murder of their capricious mistress. A timely parable of the destructive desire to become those we idolize. Tickets: \$5 - \$15 go.middlebury.edu/tickets.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11

LOREE GRIFFIN BURNS AUTHOR TALK IN VERGENNES. Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library. Join us for a special presentation and Q&A. Burns will discuss her latest children's nonfiction book, "Extreme Birdwatching." Learn about finches on a remote island in the Galapagos and the family of scientists who visited them for four decades.

HOUSE OF JAZZ: LOS SONGOROS IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. Enjoy the vibrant rhythms of Cuba and Brazil as Los Songoros performs music rooted in both tradition and contemporary expression. You can even get up and dance if you feel compelled! Tickets: \$15 - \$50.

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

ZIG ZAG LIT MAG ISSUE 20 RELEASE PARTY IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, April 12, 4 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. Celebrate Addison County writers and artists with an afternoon of art, poetry, prose, cocktails, & laughter. Suggested

donation: \$5 - \$20.

WEDNESDAY, APR. 15

"MARLEE MATLIN: NOT ALONE ANYMORE" FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, Apr. 15, 7 p.m., Marquis Theatre & Cafe, 65 Main St. A vital and affecting story about the career of deaf actor Marlee Matlin, who won an Academy Award for her 1986 feature "Children of a Lesser God." A post-screening Q&A to be announced. Middlebury New Filmmaker Festival Selects series. Advanced tickets \$14 and will go on sale Apr. 6. More info at middfilmfest.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

"MEAN GIRLS: THE MUSICAL" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 16, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. Packed with high-energy dance numbers, sharp humor, and heartfelt moments, "Mean Girls" explores friendship, identity and courage. Presented by Middlebury College Musical Theatre. Tickets: \$5-\$10.

READ MORE Online!
ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM



Ilsley 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



April 2
@ 1:00 PM
THE WIZARD OF OZ

FREE ADMISSION courtesy of Ilsley Public Library.
Marquis is open for lunch beginning at 11:30am.



UPCOMING MUSIC



Louise Bichan and Ethan Setiawan come to the Burnham Presents stage to present *Hildaland* in Lincoln on Saturday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fiddle and mandolin music fill Lincoln, April 4

Burnham Presents is coming to its last couple shows of the season, so mark your calendars if you haven't been able to get to one of these Lincoln sessions yet.

First up, is Saturday, April 4, when Louise Bichan and Ethan Setiawan will perform as *Hildaland* at 7:30 p.m.

Orkney (Scotland) born fiddler Louise Bichan and Indiana (USA) mandolinist Ethan Setiawan present a collaboration and meeting of their musical worlds in *Hildaland*.

A path steeped in the fiddle traditions of their respective sides of the Atlantic, the journey taken wends through Scottish and American soil, celebrating their foundations while intertwining with contemporary composition.

Bichan's fiddle is a melodic foil to Setiawan's counterpoint and harmonic depth, and the two weave in and out seamlessly.

Setiawan has won such accolades as the 2014 National Mandolin Championship, the 2017 RockyGrass Mandolin Championship and has shared the stage with the likes of Julian Lage, Darrell Scott, Bryan Sutton, Mike Marshall, Tony Trischka, Darol Anger, Casey Driessen, the Steel Wheels, Don Stiernberg, Matt

Flinner, and Jacob Jolliff.

Bichan has won awards for her compositions and playing, and has travelled far and wide to perform in various line ups since a young age. She has appeared at the likes of the BBC TV's Hogmanay Live show, Edinburgh Castle, Reading Festival, Cambridge Folk Festival, Lorient Interceltique Festival, Milwaukee Irish Festival and Sligo Live festival. In 2016 she released her first solo album, "Out of My Own Light," to great acclaim.

Opening the concert will be Eli Glasser and Henry Kervick.

Glasser is pianist, fiddler and member of the VT Youth Orchestra. Kervick plays fiddle and has a special passion for Scandinavian music. They are both part of the ensemble Sugar in the Pan, which brought its wide repertoire of traditional music to Washington, D.C., for Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Both Sugar in the Pan and the Touring Group are young people in Vermont involved with traditional music.

Doors for this Saturday show open at 7 p.m. Music starts at 7:30 p.m. with two sets and a short intermission. Homemade refreshments will be available.

More Tunes

Champlain Philharmonic brings spring concert to main stage in Middlebury

The Champlain Philharmonic will bring its Spring Concert, conducted by Music Director Matt LaRocca, to the Town Hall Theater's Rothrock mainstage in Middlebury on Saturday, March 28, at 7:30 p.m.

The concert will feature a diverse selection of works, beginning with "Fanfare" by Vermont composer Erik Nielsen, a piece originally commissioned by the Vermont Symphony Orchestra in celebration of their 80th anniversary.

They will also perform Gwyneth Walker's "Let America Be America Again," a powerful musical setting of the Langston Hughes poem featuring narrator Al Wakefield.

This will be followed by select movements from Lee Johnson's "Dead Symphony No. 6." This work offers a brilliant, fantasy-like tribute to the music of the Grateful Dead, including nods to "St. Stephen," "Sugar Magnolia" and "China Doll."

Concluding the performance will be Antonín Dvořák's beloved "Symphony No. 9 (From the New World)."

Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for seniors (60+), and \$5 for students. Tickets are available for purchase in advance or at the door for both performances. For more information or to purchase tickets in advance visit townhalltheater.org.

CPO will perform this concert at Grace Congregational Church in Rutland on Sunday, March 29, at 4 p.m., too. For more info visit champlainphilharmonic.org.

Sliding scale admission \$20 general, \$25 generous, \$30 generous+. Kids 12 and under \$12 —pay at door. Youth on laps are free. For tickets and more info visit burnhampresents.org/event-details/hildaland.

If the admission fee is a challenge, contact burnhampresents@gmail.com or 802-349-3364. Everyone is welcome.

Next up, the final concert of this year's Burnham Presents series, will be The Tenderbellies playing on Saturday, May 2. See ya there!

PUZZLES

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ACROSS

- 1. "Bird of Paradise" constellation
- 5. Red Sox WS winner Bronson
- 11. Whirl
- 12. The State Dept. has a notable one
- 16. Energy, style and enthusiasm
- 17. Part of the mind
- 18. Mountainous country
- 19. Type of beverage
- 24. Atomic #109
- 25. Opposite of falsities
- 26. Female sheep
- 27. Rocky peak
- 28. Sensitive information sharing environment
- 29. Ethnic group of Thailand

- 30. Patron saint of Rome Philip
- 31. Psychedelics
- 33. Japanese pine
- 34. Have an impact on
- 38. Violent disorder
- 39. A French river
- 40. Early Mesoamerican civilization
- 43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
- 44. Musician Clapton
- 45. Ancient Greek sophist
- 49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 50. Valley
- 51. A way to unwind
- 53. Atomic #93
- 54. Recommending
- 56. Indigo bush
- 58. Larry and Curly's pal

- 59. Off-Broadway theater award
- 60. Fencers
- 63. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
- 64. Relating to songbirds
- 65. A way to assign

DOWN

- 1. Some are "secret"
- 2. Intestinal openings
- 3. Distant planet
- 4. Assembly possessing high legislative powers
- 5. Genus of typical owls
- 6. One with distinctively colored hair
- 7. Red cross
- 8. An alternative
- 9. Abominable snowmen

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10				
11						12					13	14	15	
16						17			18					
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49				50					51	52				
53			54						55					
56		57					58				59			
60						61	62					63		
				64								65		

- 10. About ear
- 13. The opening letters
- 14. Feeling of regret
- 15. Atomic #39
- 20. Luteinizing hormone
- 21. Atomic #55
- 22. Carries a debt
- 23. Albanian monetary unit
- 27. Semitic abjad letter
- 29. Yes
- 30. Negative
- 31. Earn a perfect score
- 32. Connecticut
- 33. Partner to cheese
- 34. Snack nuts
- 35. Quadruped's body part
- 36. Locate
- 37. Pitching statistic
- 38. "___, myself and I"
- 40. Utah city northwest of Provo
- 41. Football players in the trenches
- 42. One who runs the show
- 44. Wood
- 45. Performing artists
- 46. Slang for a cut
- 47. More breathable
- 48. Most crafty
- 50. Provokes into action
- 51. University of Dayton
- 52. Sodium
- 54. Large fish of the mackerel family
- 55. Not one
- 57. ___ and behold
- 61. Sports highlight show
- 62. "The Great Lakes State"

							6	
	1	9	6		7			5
						1		3
				8	5	3		6
2				3	6	7	1	
			8	6				9
	7	8						2
	9			1	2			

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 14.



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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

GROW NEW GARDENS WITH SHEET MULCHING



Amy Simone is a UVM Extension Master Gardener volunteer from South Burlington.

The easiest and most efficient way to accomplish this is to use the sheet mulching method.

Sheet mulching does not use any chemicals, employs sustainable materials, naturally reduces weeds and maintains moisture, all while improving soil quality. The process involves smothering the undesired sections of grass with cardboard and

mulch, which break down over about four to six months, after which time you can plant directly into it.

The following lay out steps to help you convert lawn area to garden.

STEP 1: SHAPE IT.

Give the bed the desired shape and prepare it for mulching. For a curvy shape, a garden hose or thick rope work well to lay out and reshape until you are happy with the design. Linear beds can be marked using stakes and a tape measure.

dig out the edges, spread the removed turf on top of the remaining grass inside the new bed area. Once finished, water the turf.

STEP 3: MULCH IT.

Use corrugated cardboard, taking care to remove any tape or staples. Cut the cardboard pieces to fit the shape of the bed. You can also use 10 sheets of regular (not glossy) newspaper (ahem, like The Addy Indy!) Be sure to overlap the cardboard or newspaper by 8-10 inches and not leave any gaps of open turf. Tuck the edges of the paper material into the edge channel.

By **AMY SIMONE**

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Once you have established your shape, use landscape paint (available at the hardware store) to set your design. Cut the grass with a mower as short as possible inside the demarcated area.

STEP 2: DIG IT.

Create an edge around your new garden bed. Using an edging tool or flat garden spade, dig the edges 4 to 6 inches deep at a 45-degree angle from both the inside and outside of the perimeter. This will create a V-shaped "channel" with a 90-degree angle at the bottom. As you

Wet down the paper material periodically to keep it in place and to start the decomposition process. Add a layer of natural mulch on top of the paper material, watering as you go. Good mulch choices include pine needles, dead leaves, grass clippings, bark mulch, and wood chips. Remember that you are building a base for planting into, so do not mulch with any materials that contain herbicides, pesticides, or dyes.

The ideal depth of the mulch is 4 to 6 inches

See GARDEN on page 11



Arts+Leisure editor Elsie Lynn Parini loves to use recycled copies of The Addy Indy to start new perennial beds at her home in Weybridge.

SUBMITTED PHOTO BY ELSIE LYNN PARINI

Pet of the Week



Meet Milo!

Milo is a happy Haflinger who enjoys being ridden on the trails and hanging out with his best buddy, Rupert. He is very fond of his hay too!

Submitted by Mary Lord of Brandon.

Pet of the WEEK Send us a picture of your pet!
elsie@addisonindependent.com

Psst... It's free!

GARDEN

continued from page 10

with deeper beds for planting annuals and vegetables. Use any

When it is time to plant into your new bed, scrape away the mulch where you wish to plant and ensure that you are planting into the soil. You can also add bulk soil if you would like a thicker, more raised bed look.

combination of mulch materials as desired to arrive at the desired thickness. Adding a final layer of bark mulch on top can be especially useful in suppressing weeds (and makes the bed a bit more attractive) while you wait for your new bed to be ready for planting.

Whether you would like a band of wildflowers between your yard and the road, a rock garden between two trees, or a bed of pollinator-attracting native perennials to draw wildlife in, once you become comfortable with sheet mulching, the possibilities for converting turf to gardens will be endless.

Pets In Need

HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Campbell

Campbell arrived with his sister Ramen after their loving family had to move to a place that didn't allow pets. They're both amazing cats who are used to being well-adjusted indoor kitties. They are siblings and take a lot of comfort in each other's presence, so we are requiring them to be adopted together. Campbell is a little shyer than his sister, but still very affectionate and loving. He has the most adorable bobtail; he will easily steal your heart!



Ramen

Ramen is a very sweet girl who arrived with her brother Campbell after their lovely family had to move into housing that didn't accept pets. Since they are siblings and take a lot of comfort in each other, we require them to be adopted together. Ramen is more confident than her brother, but both are playful and loving.



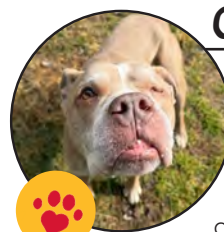
Rosie

Rosie is a big girl with big feelings. She is an incredibly beautiful cat with a very low tolerance for commotion. She desires a laid-back, quiet sort of environment. When her surroundings get too loud or rowdy, she will express her unhappiness with a lively smack. When she is in calm surroundings, she is incredibly loving, nudging and very enchanting! Could you offer her the life of quiet and simple pleasures she desires?



Orla

Orla is a wiggly girl with a heart of gold! She loves being near people and will happily sit on your lap for snuggle time. Orla has lived with dogs previously but tends to guard toys from other dogs so we're looking for a home where she can be the only pet. We're unsure of her previous exposure to cats and children. Orla can't see out of her left eye and can easily get startled by movements on that side of her body. Overall, she's coping well and doesn't seem bothered by the eye. Orla enjoys walks, playtime, and chew toys.



Sailor

Sailor is a handsome boy, looking for a home to call his own. He's a big couch potato and won't say no to a nice snooze with his people. But don't be fooled! This senior man still has a lot of energy and loves playtime and food puzzles. Sailor's favorite activity is going for car rides. He needs to be the only pet in the home, but can live with older children.



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New fine art photography exhibit features works ‘made by hand’ on view in Middlebury

Experience the material beauty and craft of fine art photography at Middlebury’s PhotoPlace Gallery, April 3-25. “Analog — Made by Hand” features work rooted in film-based capture and hands-on printing processes, where time, chemistry and touch shape the final image. Highlighting photography as a physical and intentional practice, the exhibition brings together artists who embrace the tactile nature of the medium.

An opening reception will be held on Friday, April 3, from 4-7 p.m. Part of First Fridays Middlebury with mead tastings by Golden Rule Mead

For more info visit photoplacegallery.com/online-juried-shows/analog-made-by-hand/detail.



“The Most Beautiful Anthropocene No. 3” by Andreas Scholz.

Rokeby hosts discussions about ‘our rights’

Rokeby Museum in Ferrisburgh isn’t open for the season yet, but there are a couple special events that may catch your eye...

Rokeby Museum Virtual Winter Book Discussion Group

Rokeby will host a virtual book discussion on Tuesday, April 7, from 6-7 p.m. Come together to talk about “Flee North: A Forgotten Hero and the Fight for Freedom in Slavery’s Borderland” by Scott Shane. This book follows Thomas Smallwood, who bought his own freedom, and led many others out of slavery.

Register at rokeby.org/event/2026-virtual-winter-book-discussion-group. Participation, as always, is free.

Conversations in History

Guest speaker, Meg Mott, invites attendees to consider opposing arguments on the merits of the Constitution and encourages everyone to develop the habits of political engagement through deliberation and adjudication.

After 20 years of teaching political



Join Meg Mott on March 29 at Rokeby Museum in Ferrisburgh to debate our rights on the first 10 amendments.

theory and constitutional law to Marlboro College undergraduates, Mott has taken her love of argument to the general public. Her award-winning series “Debating Our Rights” on the first 10 amendments brings civil discussions on contentious issues to public libraries and colleges.

On Sunday, March 29, Mott will bring this discussion to the Rokeby Museum from 3-4:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

This is also free museum day. Rokeby will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

EXHIBITS

continued from page 5

Through a range of media and approaches, the works on view highlight the dedication, critical thinking, and creativity of Middlebury Union High School students. The community is invited to celebrate these emerging

artists and experience the powerful ideas and personal narratives expressed through their art with a reception on Friday, March 20, from 5-6:30 p.m. On view March 18-27.

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 representations of Africa in the museum. On view Jan. 20-April 19.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

“Cut. Paste. Transform.,” a dynamic exhibition exploring the art of photo-based collage. Juror Francine Weiss, Ph.D has selected works that reflect over a century of photographic reinvention through cutting, layering and reassembling images — spanning analog, digital and hybrid approaches. The exhibition will be on view March 6-28.

“Analog — Made by Hand.” From the moment light meets film to the physical act of printing, analog processes emphasize craft, patience and presence. “Analog — Made by Hand” celebrates photographs shaped by material engagement — where time, chemistry, and handwork are essential to the photographic experience. Juror Christina Z. Anderson has selected up to 35 images for exhibition in the Middlebury gallery and another 40 images for the online gallery. An opening reception will be held on Friday, April 3, from 4-7 p.m. Free mead tastings provided by Golden Rule Mead of Middlebury. The exhibition will be on view April 3-25.

SPARROW ART SUPPLY

44 Main St., Middlebury

For more info visit sparrowartsupply.com

“Spotlight on Chris Nathan.” This exhibit features mixed media by Chris Nathan. Plein air ink reflections on home, place and moments easily missed. On view through the month of March.



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Keep on the sunny side

"Sun Like a Pearl" by Leigh Harder will be on exhibit April 3-May 9 at Jackson Gallery in Middlebury with three other friends. See story on page 4.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY
HOMESERVICES

VERMONT REALTY
GROUP



3513 Sand Road, Ferrisburgh

Escape to this charming log cabin set on 2.4 private acres with deeded access to Otter Creek via Rock Landing. Surrounded by nature and abutting 123± acres of state land, this property offers the perfect blend of rustic charm and everyday comfort. Inside, a spacious living room features a stunning stone fireplace, while the open kitchen and dining area are filled with natural light and serene woodland views. Upstairs includes two cozy bedrooms for family or guests. A large detached garage provides ample space for storage, hobbies, or vehicles. Just minutes to Vergennes and Route 7, this peaceful retreat offers both seclusion and convenience.

MLS# 5079612

\$425,000



Listing Broker: Nancy Larrow ~ 802-989-9653 ~ Call for more information

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ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT **A**
ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM



Charming and full of character is an easy description! This house has a bit of local history and each owner I've known over the last 14 years has given it their own special touch. It's been fun to see improvements that enhance the aesthetic and elevate the functionality of the house. It's very much ready for the next owner to take the lead and enjoy this sweet home!

~ Amey Ryan, Owner/Broker

WEYBRIDGE | 399 Pulp Mill Bridge Rd | MLS #5079522
3 BD | 2 BA | 2068 SF | 0.40 ACRES | \$599,000

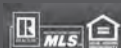
This inviting property offers gleaming hardwood floors and antique and functional fixtures alongside modern amenities like heat pumps and power for an electric car charging hookup. Also highly functional, you'll enjoy a dedicated storage room, welcoming mudroom, laundry room, and cozy den. When it's time to play, the front porch, extensive patio, in-ground pool, gardens and level lawn will encourage hours of outdoor time—perfect for the coming months!



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FRIENDS

continued from page 4

Sarah Sterzen-Flinn

Sarah Sterzen-Flinn explores the intersection of memory, environment, and the beauty of structure, shape, color and pattern through nostalgic

themes. Using a process of intuitive layering and deconstruction, she seeks to translate internal memories into tangible forms, inviting the viewer to consider the fluid and often contradictory nature of personal experience. Sterzen-Flinn attended Millersville University in Pennsylvania and has been an elementary art educator in Addison Central School District for nearly two decades. Major influences on her work are time in Arizona on the Diné Reservation and growing up in Northeastern Pennsylvania, observing structure and shapes created by nature and human innovation.

The four friends continue to meet together and share life's myriad challenges and celebrations. Their exploration of a shared passion always ends with this positive message, "Through it all, keep creating."

The exhibit will run in the lower level of Town Hall Theater in Middlebury at the Jackson Gallery from April 3-May 9. All are invited to a reception for the artists on Friday, April 3, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and when performances are taking place. Daytime entrance is through the new wing at 72 Merchants Row.



"Winter Shadows" by Ann Jones-Weinstock.

AI ART

continued from page 4

an increasingly complex technological landscape.

The exhibition offers a unique meditation on how we might navigate our relationship with AI as collaborative partners in the ongoing human story of

creation and discovery.

There should be an opportunity for interesting discussion on how AI fits into the art world as well as our overall lives. RSVP to Don Burns at ddbstdx1@gmail.com by Saturday, March 28.

LOOK UP

continued from page 2

The Europa "Clipper" probe will arrive at Jupiter's moon Europa by 2030 and will make about 50 close flybys

to investigate if the subsurface or slushy pockets may be capable of supporting life. Saturn's moon Titan is another strong candidate for discovering evidence of past or present life forms elsewhere in the solar system.

How long did it take for an advanced species like ours to evolve? Fossil evidence for the species *Homo habilis*, who lived during the Pleistocene epoch, dates back to 2.5 million years ago, a mere drop in the bucket of deep geologic time. Orbiting around a yellow, middle-age star for 4 and a half billion years, the Earth has had lots of time for communicative, sentient beings to have evolved. Whether one believes the creator created us de novo and all at once or just rolled the dice to see what would happen on its own is the creator's call.

Recently during an interview, former President Barack Obama was questioned about his beliefs in aliens and he proceeded to come out with Spock-like reason, citing numbers like the ones mentioned. He also debunked conspiracy theories about Area 51 in southern Nevada, an area used by the U.S. Air Force to test various aircrafts and not one that was visited by or that harbored alien life forms.

It is highly likely that we will discover many places with simple forms of life. However, what are the odds of finding life with enough time for an evolutionary path that led to advanced civilizations? In this Universe so vast, anything is possible. Will alien lifeforms exhibit really interesting features like ones on episodes of Star Trek or in Star Wars and other science fiction movies? Check out the iconic and amusing seedy bar scene in "Star Wars: The New Hope" released in 1977 ([youtube.com/watch?v=IK_iw5Yps2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK_iw5Yps2M)).

Extraterrestrial visitations to our planet or Earthlings to another planet around a distant star will likely require generations of beings in starships just to get to the nearest exoplanets that may harbor or sustain life. Laser driven light sails may be able to launch gram-scale probes at 15 to 20% of light speed, taking 20-30 years to reach the closest star system, Alpha

SKY WATCH EVENTS FOR APRIL

APRIL 1 – Full Moon, the Pink Moon, is the color of early spring blooms of the creeping phlox species and often the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Also variously known as Sprouting Grass Moon, Egg Moon and Fish Moon.

APRIL 2 – Watch the Moon and Spica, the brightest star in the constellation Virgo and 15th brightest in the northern hemisphere skies rise close together in the east-southeastern horizon at dusk.

APRIL 17 – New Moon

APRIL 18 – Check out the one-day old crescent moon next to the dazzling Venus in the west-northwestern horizon at dusk.

APRIL 22-23 – The Lyrid meteor shower is at a peak. Expect peak rates of 15 to 20 per hour. The almost first quarter moon will not interfere.

APRIL 23 – Venus and the Pleiades are 3.5 degrees apart in the west-northwest after dusk.

APRIL 25 – Occultation of Leo's brightest star Regulus by the first quarter moon.

Centauri. Such speeds for transporting humans may be centuries away.

The speed of light is a "wall" that prevents us from venturing far from home. Light can travel at a speed that covers a distance of about seven and a half revolutions of the Earth in one second, yet it takes minutes for light to reach us from the Sun, hours to the Jovian planets, a few years to dozens of years to the nearest stars, one to two hundred thousand years to traverse the Milky Way, and millions to billions of years to distant galaxies.

The warp speed of the Star Trek Enterprise is still fiction and may always be fiction unless new physics that enables superluminal velocity and transport is discovered. Wormholes are often depicted as portal passages from one location in the Universe to another, though such portals have not been documented. Humans may be relegated to searching for and sending signals with the hope of making contact with advanced beings. Such an epic event would break the light speed wall and let us know that we are not alone.



2026
**WORSHIP
DIRECTORY**

A Special Publication of The Addison Independent
Thursday, March 26, 2026



We commit ourselves to knowing God and making God known. We will follow Jesus by loving God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

97 South Pleasant St. Middlebury, VT

The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Allen, Pastor

- 802-388-7472 ■ membaptistvt@gmail.com
- www.memorialbaptistvt.org
- YouTube Channel and Sermon Podcast



Sundays

Worship Service at 10am

Sunday Classes at 8:30 & 9am
Kindergarten thru Adult

Childcare for 0-4 yr olds 8:30-11:15am

Holy Week Schedule March 30 - April 5

Palm Sunday Service 10:00am

Morning Devotions
7am-7:30am Mon-Fri

Maundy-Thursday Service 7pm

Easter Sunrise Service
6:45am, 1126 Halpin Rd, Middlebury

Easter Sunday Service 10am
Come celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

For info, links, and updates:
Call or visit our website
www.memorialbaptistvt.org

We are a Church

Rooted in Jesus Christ

Grounded in the Word of God

Committed to One Another

Engaged in Mercy Missions

Sending Out to Serve

Find More Info on the Website About:

- Worship and Sermon Notes
- Bible Study and Small Groups
- Community Groups
- Creative Arts Collective
- Book Group
- Women's Retreat
- Missions



Starting Soon

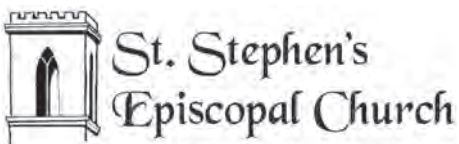
Play Group for Children and Parent
Mondays, 9am-11am, Beginning in June
More info: memorialbaptistvt.org/playgroup

INDEX

Memorial Baptist Church Page 2
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church..... Page 3
 Area Worship Directory Page 4
 Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society Page 5
 Weybridge Congregational Church..... Page 5
 Congregational Church of Middlebury Page 6
 St. Mary's - St. Bernadette - St. Genevieve..... Page 7
 Holy Week Page 8
 Vergennes/West Addison United Methodist Church ... Page 9
 Middlebury United Methodist Church..... Page 10
 North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church Page 10
 St. Peter and St. Ambrose..... Page 10
 New Haven Congregational..... Page 12
 Bristol Federated Church..... Page 12

The Addison Independent prints free directory listings on a space-available basis throughout the year. Send new and updated information, including schedules, staff, phone numbers, email and website, to advertising@addisonindependent.com, or by mail or in person to our office. This religious service listing is also online at addisonindependent.com.

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



**St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church**



Our Purpose

To grow in God's love and serve Christ in all people.

Our Mission

To be an inclusive community, awake to God in worship, learning, and service.

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

3 Main St. on the Green • Middlebury, VT
802.388.7200

Visit ststephensmidd.org for Zoom login information and to learn about our Programs for Children and Youth, Christian Formation, and other offerings.

All are welcome!

Holy Week Services 2026

Palm Sunday, March 29

8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Eucharist*

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 1

12:15 p.m. Holy Eucharist
7:00 p.m. Tenebrae: A Service of Shadows

Maundy Thursday, April 2

7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Eucharist w/Foot-washing

Good Friday, April 3

12:00 p.m. Ecumenical Good Friday Liturgy
7:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy*

Holy Saturday, April 4

9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
8:00 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter

Easter Day, April 5

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:15 a.m. Trumpet Prelude*
10:30 a.m. Festive Holy Eucharist with Choir*

*These in-person services are also available on Zoom

AREA WORSHIP DIRECTORY



BRANDON

BRANDON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, U.C.C. 1 Carver Street, Route 7, PO Box 97. 802-247-6121. The Rev. Sara Rossigg, Pastor. brandoncongregationalchurch@gmail.com. Sunday worship, 10 a.m., year-round.

BRANDON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 2 Union Street. 802-247-6524. Vicki Disorda, Spiritual Leader, 802-345-4125, vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com. George Matthew, Organist. Sunday Morning Worship, 11:15 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

SAINT THOMAS & GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH. Route 7, corner of Prospect Street, 802-247-6759. Email: standg1820@gmail.com. www.standg.org. The Rev. Nancy Ludwig, Priest-in-Charge. Sunday worship at 10 a.m. Other worship opportunities and activities are announced through our weekly email newsletter (sign up through the website).

BRIDPORT

SAINT BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH. 9 Crown Point Road. Part of the combined mission of St. Mary's in Middlebury. Fr. Brandon Schneider, Parish Administrator. Mass, Saturday, 7 p.m. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org, abvmary@vermontcatholic.org.

BRISTOL

BRISTOL FEDERATED CHURCH. 37 North Street, corner of North and Church. Pastor Lisa Bessette. bristolfederated@bristolfederated.com. 802-453-2321. Methodist and Congregational/UCC traditions. "All Are Welcome Here". Sunday worship weekly, 10:15 a.m. Children's Sunday - third Sunday each month starting at 8:30 a.m. Complimentary breakfast followed by kid friendly worship at 9 a.m.

SAINT AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH. 11 School Street. www.stambrosestpeter.vermontcatholic.org. Masses: Tuesday, 8 a.m.; Wednesday, 9 a.m.; Saturday, 6:30 p.m.; Sunday, 8:30 a.m. Confessions: Sunday, 7:30-8:15 a.m.; Tuesday, 7-8 a.m.; or by appointment.

CHARLOTTE

CHARLOTTE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 403 Church Hill Road. charlotteucc@gmavt.net, www.charlotteucc.org. Services in-person or via Zoom. Sundays, 10 a.m., Worship service and Sunday school.

LINCOLN

UNITED CHURCH OF LINCOLN. 23 Quaker Street. 802-453-4280, email: ucol@gmavt.net. Sunday Worship, 9:45 a.m. Also online at unitedchurchoflincoln.org and on Facebook. Sunday school, 10:15 a.m.; Adult Second Hour, 11:15 a.m.-12 p.m. Rev. Co'Relous C. Bryant, Pastor.

MIDDLEBURY

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (SAINT MARY'S). 326 College Street. Fr. Brandon Schneider, Parish Administrator. Masses: Saturday, 5:15 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. Weekday Masses: Tuesday, 5:15 p.m.; Wednesday-Friday, 8 a.m. Adoration: Monday, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Confessions: Tuesday, 5:45-6:15 p.m.; Saturday, 4:30-5 p.m. 802-388-2943, www.stmary.vermontcatholic.org, abvmary@vermontcatholic.org.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY. Corner of Duane Court and Charles Ave near MUHS. Rev. Patricia Hart and Rev. Christina Sillari, interim ministers. 802-388-8080. cvuus.org. Sunday service onsite and online, 10 a.m., followed by social hour. Welcomes everyone—people of all backgrounds, many religious and spiritual inclinations, and every age. Programs for children explore social justice, a study of other faith traditions, human sexuality, and more. Small Group Ministry and a variety of affinity groups offer other options.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MIDDLEBURY, UCC. 2 Main Street. The Rev. Dr. Andrew Nagy-Benson, Senior Pastor; The Rev. Elizabeth Gleich, Associate Pastor. 802-388-7634. www.midducc.org. Services at 10 a.m., in person and livestreamed on youtube.com/@midducc/streams. Our mission is to live as Jesus taught, loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves. We are an open and affirming church of The United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are

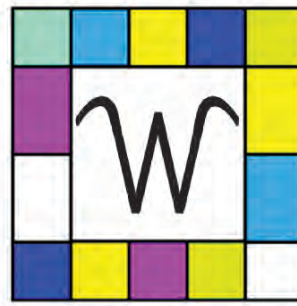
on life's journey, you are welcome here.

HAVURAH OF ADDISON COUNTY. 56 N. Pleasant Street. Shabbat services and Torah study. Weekly Hebrew School. Holiday celebrations and Community events. We are a lay-led, non-denominational and inclusive Jewish community. Contact hheddirector@gmail.com or visit www.havurahaddisoncounty.org. On Facebook at HavurahofAddisonCounty.

MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH (AMERICAN BAPTIST) "Always looking to Jesus." 97 S. Pleasant Street. Sunday services at 10 a.m. (in-person and livestream on youtube.com/memorialbaptistchurch5157); Sunday Classes for K-Adult at 9 a.m.; childcare (9-11:15 a.m.) for ages 0-4; Wonder Kids (ages 3-6) during sermon time. Small group studies during the week. Beginning in June: Parent/Child Playgroup on Mondays, 9-11 a.m. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Allen, pastor. www.memorialbaptistvt.org, 802-388-7472, membaptistvt@gmail.com.

MIDDLEBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Corner of Route 7 and Seminary Street. Pastor Rev. John "Chico" Martin. middumc@gmail.com. 802-388-2510. Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors. A Reconciling Congregation. Worship, Sundays, 11 a.m. www.umcmiddlebury.org.

(See Worship Directory, Page 6)



**Weybridge
Congregational
Church**
United Church of Christ

We celebrate our rich history as we actively respond to the challenges in today's world. Our current brick-and-stone house of worship was built in 1847 and this congregation has been worshipping on Weybridge Hill since 1794.

We are known for our commitment to social and environmental justice, inspiring worship for all, and mission and outreach to serve others in the community, both locally and globally. *Consider paying us a visit!*



Rev. Caryne A. Eskridge

VISIT THE CHURCH WEBSITE

weybridgechurch.org

or email weybridgechurch@gmail.com to receive our worship (including a Zoom option), newsletter and fellowship offerings.

We invite you to come — and celebrate God's presence, seek God's word for your life, offer your gifts, and share in a caring and inclusive community of God's people.

Weybridge Hill on Weybridge Road, or Rte 23, 3 miles north of Middlebury and 4 miles south of Rte 17

Pastor: Rev. Caryne A. Eskridge

Church Office: 802-545-2579

Email: weybridgechurch@gmail.com

Address: 2790 Weybridge Road, Weybridge, VT 05753



Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalists



Our vision is to be a truly Beloved Community - welcoming people of all backgrounds, all religious and spiritual inclinations, and every age. Bring yourself, your family, and all your questions. Join us for a joyful, music-filled celebration of life and hope!

NURTURE your spirit.
Help HEAL our world.

Sunday worship at 10 am onsite and online.

Stay for Social Hour in Fellowship Hall.

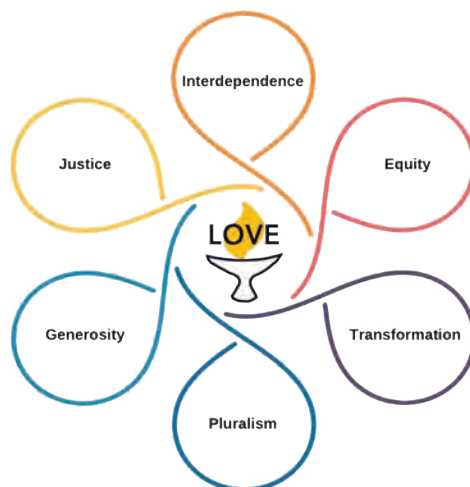
See cvuus.org for pathways to connect, more on our award-winning religious exploration programs for children and to reserve space.



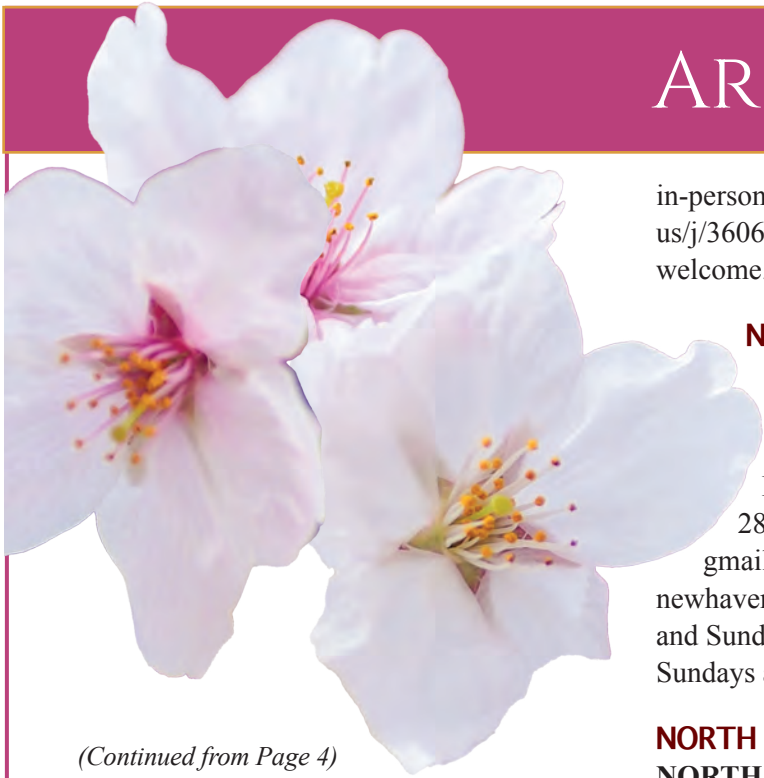
Scan this code to view our video.



Rev. Tricia and Rev. Christina



AREA WORSHIP DIRECTORY



(Continued from Page 4)

SAINT STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH. On the green in Middlebury at 3 Main Street. The Rev. Paul V. Olsson, Rector. www.ststephensmidd.org and ststephensmiddlebury@gmail.com. Sunday Services: 8 a.m., in-person only; 10:30 a.m.,

in-person and via Zoom. Link at <https://zoom.us/j/360635588>, password StStephen. All are welcome.

NEW HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 91 Town Hill Road. Pastor Abigail Diehl-Noble. 802-282-6944. pastornewhavenchurchvt@gmail.com and www.newhavencongregationalchurch.com.

Worship and Sunday School in our Children's Church, Sundays at 10 a.m.

NORTH FERRISBURGH NORTH FERRISBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 227 Old Hollow Road. Rev. Jill Colley Robinson, pastor. 802-425-2770. nfumc@gmavt.net. www.umcnf.net. NFUMC on Facebook. Weekly worship and K-6 Sunday school at 10 a.m. on Sundays, in person/YouTube.

ORWELL FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 464 Main Steet. The Rev. David Anderson, pastor. 802-948-2900. firstcongregationalchurchorwell.com; orwellcongregationalchurch@gmail.com. In-person Sunday worship service, 10 a.m.

SALISBURY SALISBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST). 853 Maple Street. The Rev. George Valley, pastor. Sundays at 10 a.m.

SHOREHAM SHOREHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. Intersection of Main Street and School Road. 802-897-2687. Marion Paquette, pastor. Sunday service, 10 a.m., downstairs in Fellowship Hall during winter months.

(See Worship Directory, Page 7)

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MIDDLEBURY, UCC



No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

802-388-7634 www.midducc.org @midducc



PALM SUNDAY SERVICE
Sunday, March 29
at 10 AM in the Sanctuary



HOLY WEEK TAIZÉ SERVICE
Wednesday, April 1
at 7 PM in Unity Hall



MAUNDY THURSDAY
Thursday, April 2
• Soup & Bread at 6 PM in Fellowship Hall
• Service at 7 PM in Fellowship Hall



GOOD FRIDAY ECUMENICAL SERVICE
Friday, April 3
at 12 PM at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



EASTER SUNDAY
Sunday, April 5
• Sunrise Service at 6 AM at Alumni Stadium at Middlebury College
• Easter Service at 10 AM in the Sanctuary
• Family Easter Egg Hunt at 11:45 AM meet on the Town Green

AREA WORSHIP DIRECTORY



(Continued from Page 6)

VERGENNES

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

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH. On the town green, corner of Main and Park Streets. The Rev. Anne Hartley. anneh@saintpaulsvergennessucc.org. www.saintpaulsvergennessucc.org. Worship services in person and via Zoom, Sundays at 9:30 a.m. All are welcome!

SAINT PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. 85 South Maple Street. Fr. Steven R. Marchand, pastor. 802-877-236. Masses: Monday, 9 a.m.; Friday, 12:05 p.m.; Saturday, 4:30 p.m.; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Confession:

Friday, 12:30–1:30 p.m.; Saturday, 3:30–4:15 p.m.; or by appointment.

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

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH. 862 Route 7. Lead Pastor Brad Salee; Associate Pastor John Kaufman. 802-877-3393. victoryvt.org. Sunday services: Bible hour, 9:30 a.m.; Worship services, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Prayer and Bible study for adults. Deaf interpretation available.

WEST ADDISON

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

WEYBRIDGE

WEYBRIDGE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

2790 Weybridge Road. Rev. Caryne Eskridge, pastor. 802-545-2579. weybridgechurch@gmail.com. Email to get the Zoom link for Sunday morning worship. www.weybridgechurch.org. Worship Sundays, 10 a.m.

WHITING

WHITING COMMUNITY CHURCH.

7 N. Main Street. Brett Cody, pastor. In-person services. Service Times: Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Sunday Morning, 10:30 a.m.; Wednesday Night Kids & Teens, 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Night Bible Study, 7 p.m. No masks required.



Assumption of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

ST. MARY'S - ST. BERNADETTE - ST. GENEVIEVE

St. Mary's Church - 326 College Street, Middlebury, VT
 St. Bernadette Church - 9 Crown Point Road, Bridport, VT (Mission)
stmary.vermontcatholic.org | Parish Office: 802-388-2943

Celebrate Holy Week

Palm Sunday – March 28/29
 Regular Mass Schedule

Tuesday of Holy Week – March 31
 Chrism Mass – St. Joseph Cathedral – 11:00 am

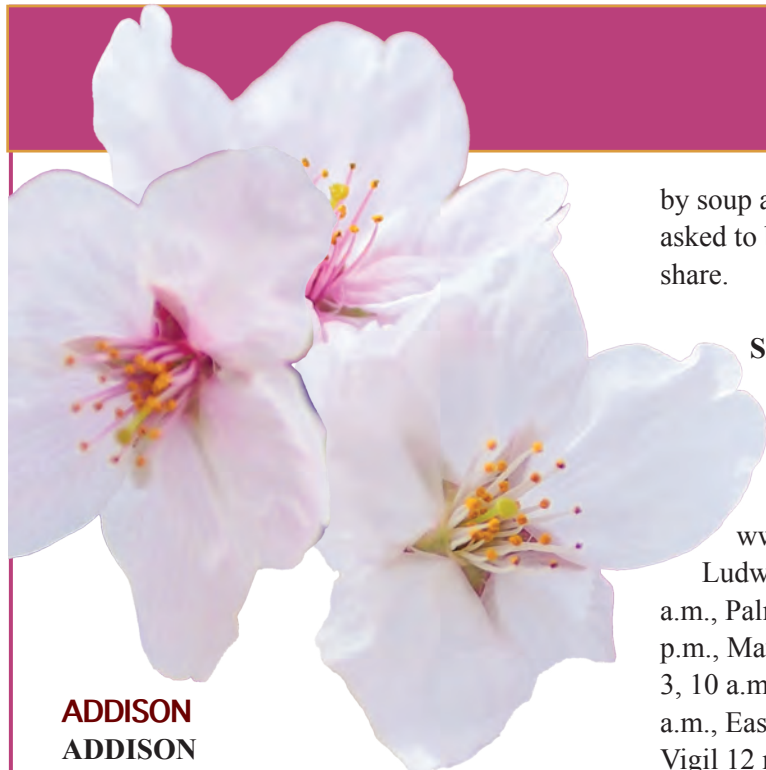
Holy Thursday – April 2
 Mass of the Lord's Supper – St. Mary's – 7:00 pm
 Adoration – 8:15 – 9:00 pm

Good Friday – April 3
 Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – St. Mary's – 3:00 pm
 Stations of the Cross – St. Mary's – 7:00 pm

Holy Saturday – April 4
 Easter Vigil – St. Mary's – 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday – April 5
 St. Mary's – 9:00 am
 St. Bernadette – 11:15 am

HOLY WEEK



by soup and fellowship. Each congregation is asked to bring a package of hot cross buns to share.

SAINT THOMAS & GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH. Route 7, Brandon village, corner of Prospect Street, 802-247-6759. Email: standg1820@gmail.com. Web: www.standg.org. The Rev'd Nancy Ludwig, Priest-in-Charge. March 29, 10 a.m., Palm Sunday Holy Eucharist; April 2, 6 p.m., Maundy Thursday Holy Eucharist; April 3, 10 a.m., Good Friday Liturgy; April 5, 10 a.m., Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist, Silent Vigil 12 noon.

BRIDPORT SAINT BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH. 9 Crown Point Road. Palm Sunday Mass, Saturday, March 28, 7 p.m.; Easter Mass, Sunday, April 5, 11:15 a.m.

BRISTOL BRISTOL FEDERATED CHURCH. 37 North Street, corner of North and Church. March 29, 10:15 a.m., Palm Sunday worship with palms; April 2, 6 p.m., Maundy Thursday, soup supper followed by worship in the education wing; April 5, 9 a.m. Easter Sunday Breakfast (free or donations accepted), 10:15 a.m. Easter Worship Service.

SAINT AMBROSE CATHOLIC CHURCH. 11 School Street. April 3, 3 p.m., Good Friday Liturgy; April 4, Easter Vigil; April 5, 8:30 a.m., Easter Sunday.

CHARLOTTE CHARLOTTE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 403 Church Hill Road. Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m. (livestreamed), A dramatic reading of the Passion of Jesus Christ. No fellowship time after service. Stations of the Cross, April 2, 7 p.m. to April 3, 8 p.m.; Maundy Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m., Service of Tenebrae (Shadows) in the vestry including music, candlelight readings, and a reenactment of the Last Supper; Easter Vigil, April 2 to April 3, 8 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Holy Saturday, April 4, noon, Easter Egg Hunt for families in the community; Easter Sunday, April 5, Sunrise service, 5:30 a.m., hike to the top of the hill behind church, Worship services in the sanctuary, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., 9 a.m. will be livestreamed.

NORTH FERRISBURGH NORTH FERRISBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 227 Old Hollow Road. Palm Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m., Easter Egg Hunt/Lunch; Easter, April 5, 6:15 a.m., Sunrise Service, 6:45 a.m., Full breakfast, 10 a.m., Easter Worship.

LINCOLN THE UNITED CHURCH OF LINCOLN. 23 Quaker Street. Palm Sunday Service, March 29, 9:45 a.m.; Maundy Thursday: A Service of Communion and Tenebrae, April 2, 7 p.m.; Good Friday Washing of Feet, April 3, 7 p.m.; Easter Sunrise Service on Gove Hill, Sunday, April 17, 6 a.m. (call United Church of Lincoln (453-4280) for details); Easter Sunrise Breakfast at Burnham Hall, 7 a.m.; Easter Service, Sunday, April 17, 9:45 a.m.

MIDDLEBURY SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH (CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION). 326 College Street. Palm Sunday: Saturday, March 28, 5:15 p.m. and Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m.; Holy Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper, Adoration 8:15-9 p.m.; Good Friday, April 3, 3 p.m., Liturgy of the Lord's Passion, Stations of the Cross 7 p.m.; Holy Saturday, April 4, 7:30 p.m., Easter Vigil; Easter Sunday, April 5, 9 a.m.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY. 2 Duane Court. Easter Sunday, April 5, 10 a.m., onsite and online. Join us in a celebration of Easter, echoing ancient and modern understandings of Jesus, joy, and resurrection. CVUUS welcomes everyone — people of all backgrounds, many religious and spiritual inclinations, and every age. Come to this joyful, music-filled celebration of new life led by Rev. Christina Sillari.

MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH (AMERICAN BAPTIST) "Always looking to Jesus." 97 S. Pleasant Street. Holy Week Schedule: Mon-Fri, 7-7:30 a.m., Devotions; Maundy Thursday Service at 7 p.m.; Easter Sunrise Service at 6:45 a.m., Grice Farm, Halpin Road; Easter Worship at 10 a.m. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Allen, pastor. www.memorialbaptistvt.org, 802-388-7472, membaptistvt@gmail.com.

ADDISON ADDISON COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH. Addison Four Corners, Routes 22A and 17. Easter morning breakfast 9:30-10:30. Easter worship 10:30 with Dr. Reverend Mellen Kennedy.

WEST ADDISON WEST ADDISON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Palm Sunday service, March 29, 9 a.m.; Easter service, Sunday, April 5, 9 a.m. More info at vergenneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com.

BRANDON BRANDON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 1 Carver Street. www.brandoncongregationalucc.org. March 29, 10 a.m., Palm Sunday Service in the sanctuary; April 2, 7 p.m., Joint round table Maundy Thursday Service in Fellowship Hall; April 5, Easter Celebration Service in the sanctuary.

BRANDON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 1 Franklin Street. Palm and Easter Sunday services at regularly scheduled time, 11:15 a.m.

OUR LADY OF GOOD HELP. 38 Carver Street. Holy Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m.; Good Friday, April 3, 7 p.m.; Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 4, 8 p.m.

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH. Ecumenical Cross Walk, Good Friday, April 3. Gather in front of Brandon United Methodist Church at noon for a silent walk down Carver Street to St. Mary's in honor of the crucifixion of Christ. Every person is offered the opportunity to carry the cross. There will be a short ceremony in the cathedral, followed

(See Holy Week, Page 9)

HOLY WEEK

(Continued from Page 8)

MIDDLEBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. 43 North Pleasant Street. Palm Sunday, March 29, 11 a.m.; Easter Sunday, April 5, 11 a.m.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MIDDLEBURY, UCC. 2 Main Street. In-person worship Palm Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.; Holy Week Taizé Service, April 1, 7 p.m.; Maundy Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m.; Good Friday Ecumenical Service (St. Stephen's Episcopal Church), April 3, 12 p.m.; Easter Sunday, April

5, 6 a.m., Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service (Alumni Stadium, Middlebury College), 10 a.m., Easter Sunday Worship Service. Our Palm Sunday and Easter services will also be live-streamed on Facebook and YouTube. More info at 802-388-7634 or www.midducc.org.

SAINT STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH. 3 Main Street. Palm Sunday, March 29, 8 a.m., Liturgy of the Palms and Eucharist; 10:30 a.m., Godly Play; 10:30 a.m., Liturgy of the Palms and Eucharist*. Holy Wednesday, April 1, 12:15 p.m., Simple Said Eucharist in the nave; 7 p.m., Tenebrae: A

Service of Shadows; Maundy Thursday, April 2, 7 p.m., Holy Eucharist with Foot-Washing and Stripping of the Altar; Good Friday, April 3, noon, Ecumenical Good Friday Liturgy; 7 p.m., Good Friday Liturgy*; Holy Saturday, April 4, 9 a.m., Morning Prayer in the Chapel; 8 p.m., The Great Vigil of Easter; Easter Sunday, April 5, 8 a.m., Holy Eucharist; 10:15 a.m., Trumpet Prelude; 10:30 a.m., Godly Play; 10:30 a.m., Festive Holy Eucharist with choir*. *These in-person services are also available on Zoom. Please see website, ststephensmidd.org, for Zoom links.

(See Holy Week, Page 11)



VERGENNES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Palm Sunday, March 29, 10:30 a.m./ Easter Service, April 5, 10:30 a.m. All are welcome. For Zoom access link contact vergenneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com.



Come join our warm, caring fellowship.

Activities: Hybrid Worship, Music, Missions, Women's Fellowship, Outreach Projects, Community Events

Pastors:

Michael Doran
Paul Hoffman

802-877-3376

www.westaddisonumc.org



WEST ADDISON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Palm Sunday, Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m./ Easter Service, Sunday, April 5, 9 a.m. More info at vergenneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com.

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Fr. Steven R. Marchand,
Pastor



St. Peter's, 85 S. Maple Street, Vergennes: (802) 877-2367

St. Ambrose, 11 School Street, Bristol: (802) 453-2488

Lord's Day Masses

Saturday: 4:30pm
Sunday: 10:30am
 Monday: 9:00am
 Friday: 12:05pm with adoration 3:00pm

Lord's Day Masses

Saturday: 6:30pm
Sunday: 8:30am
 Tuesday: 8:00am with adoration an hour prior
 Wednesday: 9:00am

stambrosetpeter.vermontcatholic.org

NORTH FERRISBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Celebrate Spring!

*Sharing Christ's warm, transforming love with
our community, our state,
our nation, and our world.*

Now is the moment to come back or visit for the first time!

All are welcome!

Rev. Jill Colley Robinson, Pastor
 PO Box 7 N. Ferrisburgh VT 05473
 802-425-2770 | nfumc@gmavt.net
 Website: www.umcnf.net | Like NFUMC on Facebook

Photo by Bruce Werner

Holy Week Guide

Palm Sunday, March 29

Worship at 10 a.m.

Easter egg hunt and lunch at 11 a.m.

All families are welcome!

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Worship with communion at 4:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3

Worship at Vergennes United Methodist at 6 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 5

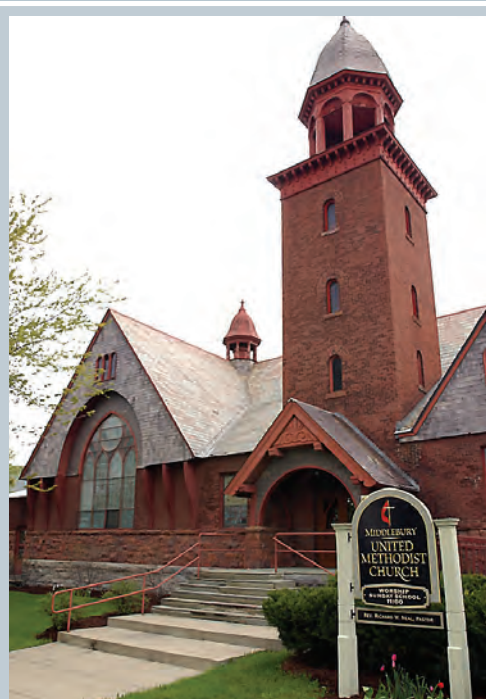
Sunrise service at outdoor pavilion at 6:15 a.m.

Full breakfast at 6:45 a.m.

Worship at 10 a.m.



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INCLUSIVE
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WELCOMING
SAFE SPACE
FOR EVERYONE**



OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS

Together with our neighbors we work for social and personal transformation, justice, healing, and peace. As a reconciling congregation, our intention is to love our neighbor in the spirit of God's reconciling love.



Holy Week Services:

Palm Sunday -
Worship Service at
11:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday -
Worship Service
at 11:00 a.m.



WORSHIP SERVICE:

SUNDAY AT 11:00 A.M.

Worship with us in-person

MIDDLEBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

43 North Pleasant Street,
(corner of Seminary Street) Middlebury

Pastor: Rev. John "Chico" Martin | Minister of Music: Dr. Kevin Parizo

HOLY WEEK



(Continued from Page 9)

NEW HAVEN

NEW HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 91 Town Hill Road. Maundy Thursday Supper and Service, April 2, 6 p.m.; Easter Sunrise Service, April 5, 6:15 a.m. on the Green in New Haven; Easter Service, April 5, 10 a.m. in the Church.

PITTSFORD

SAINT ALPHONSUS CATHOLIC CHURCH. 2918 US-7. Holy Thursday, April 2, 4 p.m.; Good Friday, April 3, 4 p.m.; Easter Sunday, April 5, 9 a.m.

SHOREHAM

SHOREHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. 28 School Road. Palm Sunday worship will be at 10 a.m. on Sunday, March 29 in the Church Sanctuary; Easter Sunday worship will be at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 5 in the Church Sanctuary. All are invited to join us for both services.

ORWELL

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ORWELL. 464 Main Street. Saturday, March 28, 10 a.m.–12 p.m., Easter egg decorating and Easter story walk; Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m., Palm Sunday worship service; Thursday, April 2, 6:30 p.m., Soup and bread dinner, 7 p.m., Maundy Thursday service in the fellowship hall; Friday, April 3, 7:30 p.m., Good Friday Tenebrae

service; Sunday, April 5, 10 a.m., Easter Sunday worship service.

VERGENNES

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERGENNES (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST). Holy Saturday, April 4, Easter Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt, 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m., all ages welcome, bring your own basket; Easter Sunday, April 4, 9:30 a.m., Easter Service.

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

6 Park St. Palm Sunday, March 29, 9:30 a.m., Service of Holy Eucharist with Blessing of the Palms; Interdenominational Good Friday Service at Vergennes United Methodist Church, April 3, 6 p.m.; Easter Sunday, April 5, 9:30 a.m., Service of Holy Eucharist with Easter coffee hour to follow. All are welcome, both in person and via Zoom. Zoom link at www.saintpaulsvergennes.org.

SAINT PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH.

85 S. Maple Street. April 2, 7 p.m., Holy Thursday Mass; April 3, Good Friday Stations of the Cross; April 5, 10:30 a.m., Easter Sunday Mass.

VERGENNES UNITED METHODIST

CHURCH. Palm Sunday, March 29, 10:30 a.m.; Interdenominational Good Friday Service, April 3, 6 p.m.; Easter Service, April 5, 10:30 a.m. All are welcome. For Zoom access link, contact vergenneswestaddisonumc@gmail.com.

VICTORY

BAPTIST

CHURCH.

862 Route 7. Palm Sunday, March 29, 10:30 a.m., free palm crosses; Easter egg hunt, Saturday, April 4, 10–11 a.m., come join us for our egg hunt that will include hundreds of eggs, a craft, games, snacks, and a Bible story; Easter services, Sunday, April 5, 7:30 a.m., early service, 10:30 a.m., Easter morning worship hour.

WEYBRIDGE

WEYBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL

CHURCH. 2790 Weybridge Road. Palm Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m.; Maundy Thursday Soup Dinner and Worship, April 2, 5:30 p.m.; Easter Pancake Breakfast, April 5, 6:45–8:30 a.m.; Easter Sunday, April 5, 9 a.m. All are welcome!

WHITING

WHITING COMMUNITY CHURCH.

7 North Main Street. Palm Sunday Service, 10:30 a.m.; Resurrection Sunday Service, 9:30 a.m., followed by a brunch and egg hunt.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Visit addisonindependent.com/calendar for more local, spring events!





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An Open and Affirming Church
with a Heart for our New Haven Community

MISSIONS

Pollinator Gardens + Classes • Nature-Based Worship
Pet Ministry + Pet-Friendly • Community Food Pantry

New Haven Town Spring Fest and Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4

10 am-noon

New Haven Green and Church

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday Supper and Service

April 2, 6:00 pm

Easter Sunrise Service, 6:15 am
on the Green in New Haven

Easter Service, 10 am in the Church



United Church of Christ

91 Town Hill Road, On the Green in New Haven • 802-282-6944

pastornewhavenchurchvt@gmail.com

www.newhavencongregationalchurch.org

Regular Worship Services:

Sunday at 10 am

+ Pop-up "Wild Church"
services around Addison
County



BRISTOL FEDERATED CHURCH

37 North Street (corner of North & Church), Bristol, VT 05443

A congregation rooted in Methodist and Congregational/UCC traditions

All Are Welcome Here

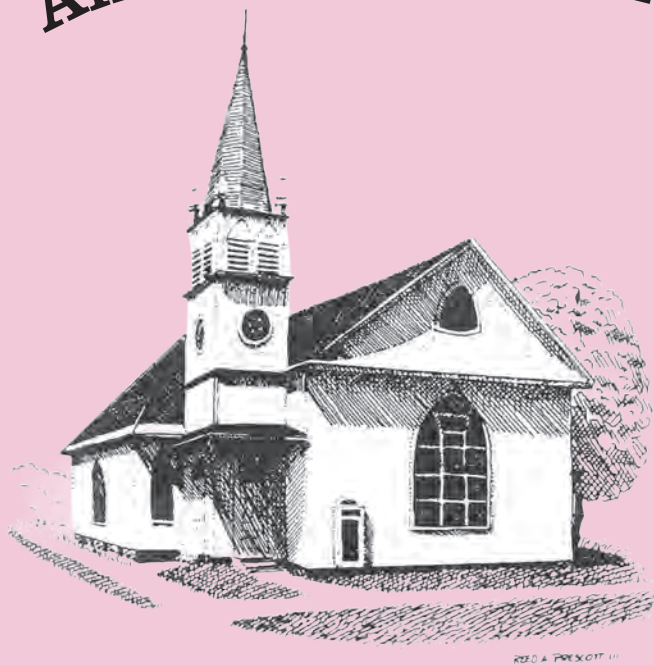
Holy Week & Easter Services

Palm Sunday Worship with Palms | March 29, 10:15 a.m.

Maundy Thursday | April 2, 6:00 p.m. Soup supper
followed by worship in the education wing

Easter Breakfast | April 5, 9:00 a.m.,
free (donations accepted)

Easter Worship Service | April 5, 10:15 a.m.



Sunday Worship | Weekly at 10:15 a.m.
Children's Sunday | Third Sunday of each
month. Complimentary breakfast at 8:30 a.m.
followed by kid-friendly worship at 9:00 a.m.

Pastor Lisa Bessette • 802-453-2321
bristolfederated@bristolfederated.com

