



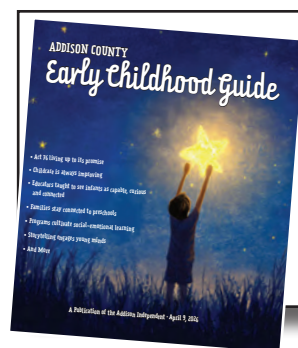
Trad music

Talented touring teens to stop in Middlebury before heading to Sweden. See Arts + Leisure.



Last second

Mid women's lac wins tough game with Hail Mary goal, is still undefeated. See Page 1B.



Early Childhood

Learn about how the county cares for our youngest kids in a special 40-page pull-out.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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BURLINGTON RESIDENT AMANDA Janoo was the first Democrat to announce a bid for this year's race for governor of Vermont. Her platform includes moving toward universal primary care, creating an economy that works for people not against them, tackling affordable housing and preserving schools in Vermont's smaller communities where its viable.

Independent photo/Angelo Lynn

Janoo aims to boost Vermont's wellbeing

Democrat seeks fairer Vt. as governor

By **MARIN HOWELL**

MIDDLEBURY — From the heart of Vienna to the hills of Vermont, Amanda Janoo has spent her career helping people answer the question — how do we build an economy that works for us?

The Burlington resident is now looking to help the Green Mountain State answer that and other

important questions through a role she hopes to secure in November — being the governor of Vermont.

Janoo was the first Democrat to announce a bid for the state's highest executive position. Former Let's Grow Kids CEO Aly Richards, also a Democrat, joined the race for governor on Monday. Gov. Phil

(See Janoo, Page 13A)

Ferrisburgh's Bolles enters Add-3 race

Housing, health care among focuses

By **JOHN FLOWERS**

FERRISBURGH — Like millions of other Americans, Ariel Bolles has felt the emotional and/or financial weight of a seemingly endless barrage of worrisome headlines about the U.S. war with Iran, the conduct of ICE

agents in Minnesota, reductions in Affordable Care Act subsidies, and the dearth of affordable housing.

"At the local level, I see a lot of my friends and family and neighbors struggling in ways I haven't seen before," she said

(See Bolles, Page 16A)



By the way

The Addison County Farm Bureau and Bridport Grange will hold the last of their 2026 legislative forums this Saturday, April 11, at 10:30 a.m. at the American Legion hall in Middlebury. Addison County's lawmakers have been

(See By the way, Page 12A)

Index

Obituaries.....6A-7A
Classifieds.....10B-11B
Service Directory.....8B-9B
Entertainment..... Arts + Leisure
Community Calendar.....6B
Arts Calendar..... Arts + Leisure
Sports.....1B-3B



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Education bill touts regional service districts

Mandatory school closures off table for now

By **JOHN FLOWERS**
and **JOHN S. MCCRIGHT**

MONTPELIER — Faced with widespread public opposition to the concept of forced school mergers, Vermont's House Education Committee is now proposing an alternative way to control rising costs. It's one that's built on grouping schools into regional districts to find bigger economies of scale in the delivery of education services.

At issue is bill H.955, which the House Education Committee passed on April 2 by a 7-4 vote (along party lines).

The bill, were it to become law in its present form, would create seven mandatory Cooperative Education Services Areas, or CESAs. Each CESA would provide services "more economically and efficiently at a larger scale" than is provided within each of the state's current 119 school districts, according to Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, who chairs the House Education panel.

Addison County schools would be included in a "Champlain Valley South CESA." In total, it would include the Addison Central, Addison Northwest, Champlain

Valley, Mount Abraham, Lincoln and Mount Mansfield school districts.

All seven CESAs are depicted surrounded by thick borders in the map accompanying this story. So what kind of services could be shared among the schools in a CESA?

They could include services for students with special needs, office administration, payroll, human resources, coordinated transportation, and professional development, among

"It's a voluntary process, one that respects local voice and local vote at the end."

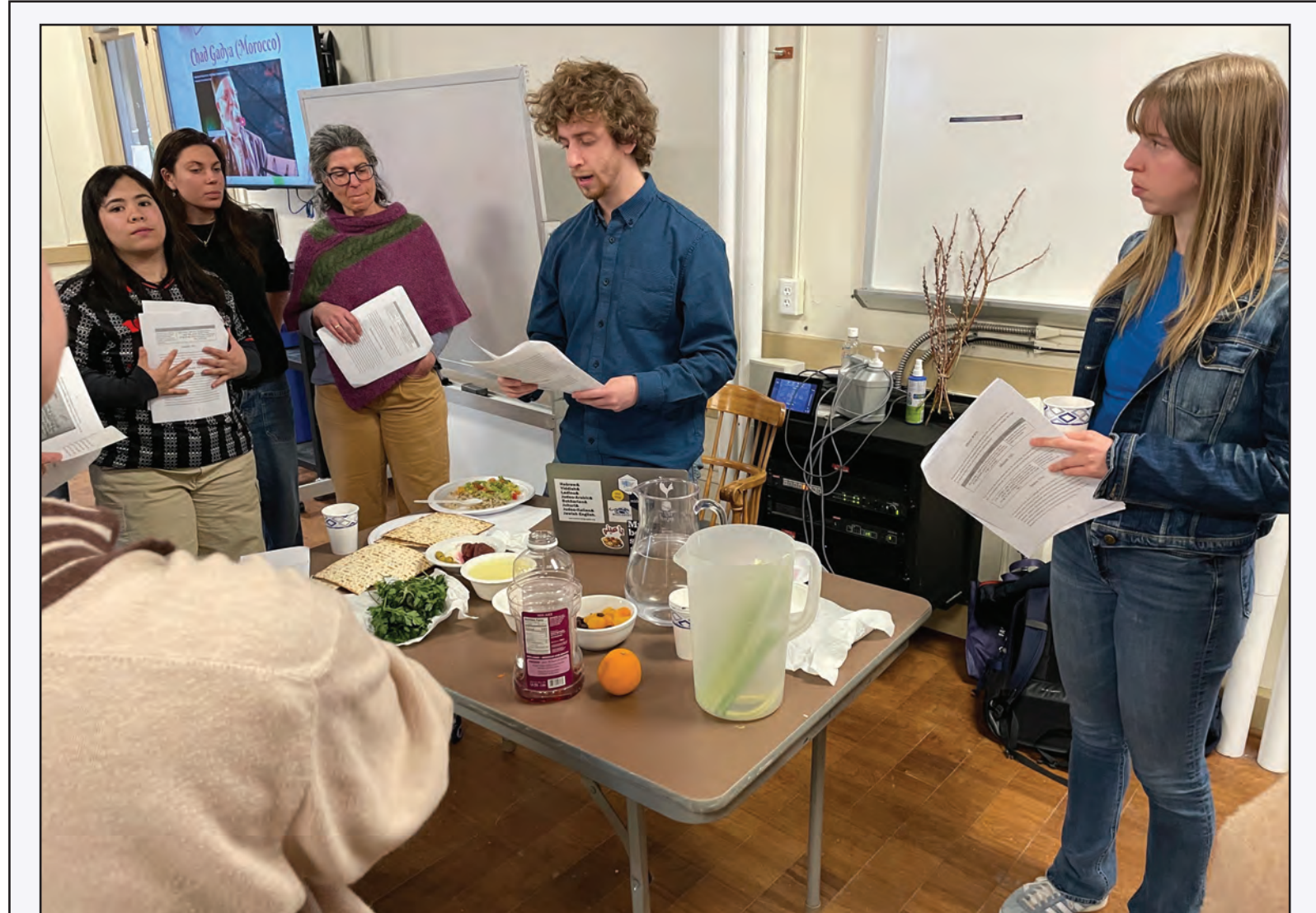
— Peter Conlon

other things. Currently, the vast majority of Vermont school districts provide — or contract for — those

kinds of services on their own without the advantages of scale, Conlon noted.

"CESAs were a strong recommendation of the Vermont School District Redistricting Task Force as a proven way to provide services more economically, and get to savings quicker," Conlon said. "Most other states have them, and Vermont actually

(See Education bill, Page 15A)



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE STUDENT Zev Gold leads an Arab-Jewish Seder hosted by the college's Arabic Department this past Monday. The event was aimed at highlighting the traditions of Jews from across the Arab world.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

Seder spotlights Arab-Jewish customs

By **MARIN HOWELL**

MIDDLEBURY — A steady trickle of people filed into the Adirondack Coltrane Lounge at Middlebury College on Monday evening.

Many were students. Others were college faculty, staff or members of the broader community, but all were gathered for the second annual Arab-Jewish Seder hosted by the college's Arabic Department.

The evening was structured around the Passover Seder — a Jewish commemoration filled with rituals, prayers and praise that recounts the Israelites' Exodus from slavery in Egypt. It also aimed to highlight the diverse traditions of Jews from across the Arab world.

"In order to honor the Jewish community that has lived in the Arab world for centuries, I came up with the idea of ensuring that Arab Jewishness is something that is acknowledged

and honored through our programming in the Arabic Department," explained Dima Ayoub, associate professor of Arabic and chair of the Arabic Department at the college.

Ayoub noted the department has historically celebrated Ramadan, a holy month in the Islamic calendar observed by Muslims. Last year, the department also hosted an Eastern Christian Easter celebration and its first Arab-

(See Seder, Page 8A)

Chef brings taste of Lebanon to college & town

By **SOPHIA KESHMIRI**

MIDDLEBURY — If you crack open a cookbook of savory recipes, odds are good that any recipe you flip to will call for an onion in some shape, size or form.

Last week at Middlebury College, the hundreds of onions that were chopped, diced and sliced by students and staff at the direction of Chef Dima Adra found their way into a plethora

of her Lebanese dishes.

"Lebanese food is so heavy with a lot of onions and garlic," the Montreal resident said.

Adra recently spent last week on campus cooking for and with students, staff and the broader Middlebury community through a series of four events put on

by the Arabic Department. During the last



days of March and first days of April, those included a dining hall meal, two workshops and a dinner in collaboration with the student-run restaurant Dolci.

The "Mama Ghannouj" cookbook author's Middlebury visit started coming together last November when Arabic Department Chair Dima Ayoub approached her.

"I think when you build opportunities for students to sit, to be in community, they reinvest in the community, right. They kind of like renew their membership, so to

(See Cooking, Page 3A)

After a slow start, sugarmakers aim for average season

By **MARIN HOWELL**

ADDISON COUNTY — With warm days and above-freezing nights in the forecast, local sugarmakers are in the final stretch of this year's maple season.

Sugarmakers in Addison County reported a slow start to the season and some challenges working with

deep snow in the woods. Still, they're hoping to see their syrup production come out around what they've ended up with in recent years.

"One day was (an) overwhelming amount of volume and then three or four days of cold, and then another day of overwhelming volume, three

or four days of cold, pretty much the whole season," Don Gale of Lincoln's Twin Maple SugarWorks said. "When we got inundated with sap, it was like two or three days of boiling, and then nothing."

The sugaring season relies on a freeze-thaw cycle to get sap flowing — which happens when

temperatures dip below freezing at night and rise into the 40s during the day. Traditionally, those conditions have occurred in March, a month that's synonymous with sugaring in the Green Mountain State.

Earlier this year, Gov. Phil Scott signed a proclamation declaring March as "Maple Month" in

Vermont, pointing to the key role the maple industry plays in the state and that Vermont produces in U.S. maple production. According to Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the state is the nation's leading producer of maple syrup and produced around

(See Maple season, Page 14A)

Writer Kim Stanley Robinson will deliver Middlebury's 2026 commencement address

MIDDLEBURY — Kim Stanley Robinson, an acclaimed American writer, will deliver the 2026 Commencement address at Middlebury College on May 24. The author of the international best-selling Mars trilogy often focuses on ecological, cultural, and political themes featuring scientists as heroes.

KIM STANLEY ROBINSON

A prolific author of more than 20 books, Robinson has won both the Hugo and Nebula Awards — the premier literary prizes for excellence in science fiction and fantasy. *The New Yorker* has called him “one of the greatest living science-fiction writers and one of the most important political writers working in America today.” His 2020 book “The Ministry for the Future” centers on a fictional U.N. body established to protect future generations from the negative impacts of climate change.

Because Robinson's writing is considered as realistic as it is fantastical, he has been asked to speak at science and climate conferences including the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, the U.N.'s Summit of the Future in 2024, and the 2025 U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil. In 1995 and 2016, he received National Science Foundation grants to travel to Antarctica, where he researched the continent's environmental, scientific, and political landscape,

resulting in his novel *Antarctica*.

Robinson earned a B.A. in literature from the University of California, San Diego, in 1974 and an M.A. in English from Boston University in 1975. In 1982, he earned a Ph.D. in English from University of California, San Diego. His work has been translated into 30 languages. In 2016, asteroid 72432 was named “Kimrobinson.” Robinson will receive a doctor of humane letters at Commencement.

Middlebury will also present honorary degrees to the following individuals at Commencement:

SHABANA BASIJ-RASIKH

Shabana Basij-Rasikh '11 is cofounder and president of the School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA) — the first and only boarding school for Afghan girls, which operated in Kabul from 2016 to 2021, until the Taliban returned to power. In August 2021, she led the evacuation of her school community from Afghanistan to Rwanda, where SOLA reestablished its operations and continues to grow, receiving more than 5,300 applications in 2025. She expanded SOLA's digital offerings with the launch of SOLAx, a WhatsApp-based online academy that now serves more than 33,000 learners.

In 2018, she was awarded the Malalai Medal, one of Afghanistan's highest national honors, for her work promoting girls' access to education. In

2023, she received the Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year Award from the National Geographic Society. Basij-Rasikh graduated magna cum laude from Middlebury. While a student she spent a summer in Afghanistan building wells as part of her Project for Peace proposal, “Giving Afghan People Access to Clean Water.” She holds a master's degree in public policy from the University of Oxford and will receive an honorary Doctor of Humanities at Commencement.

ANDREA GREEN

Andrea Green, director of the Pediatric New American program and professor at the Robert Larner, M.D., College of Medicine at the University of Vermont, has spent her career providing high-quality medical care and advocating for policies and resources that support the health of children and their families. Her work emphasizes caring for children within the context of their family and culture, a commitment reflected in her leadership of the immigrant clinic at the University of Vermont Medical Center, where she addresses the needs of refugee and immigrant children and families.

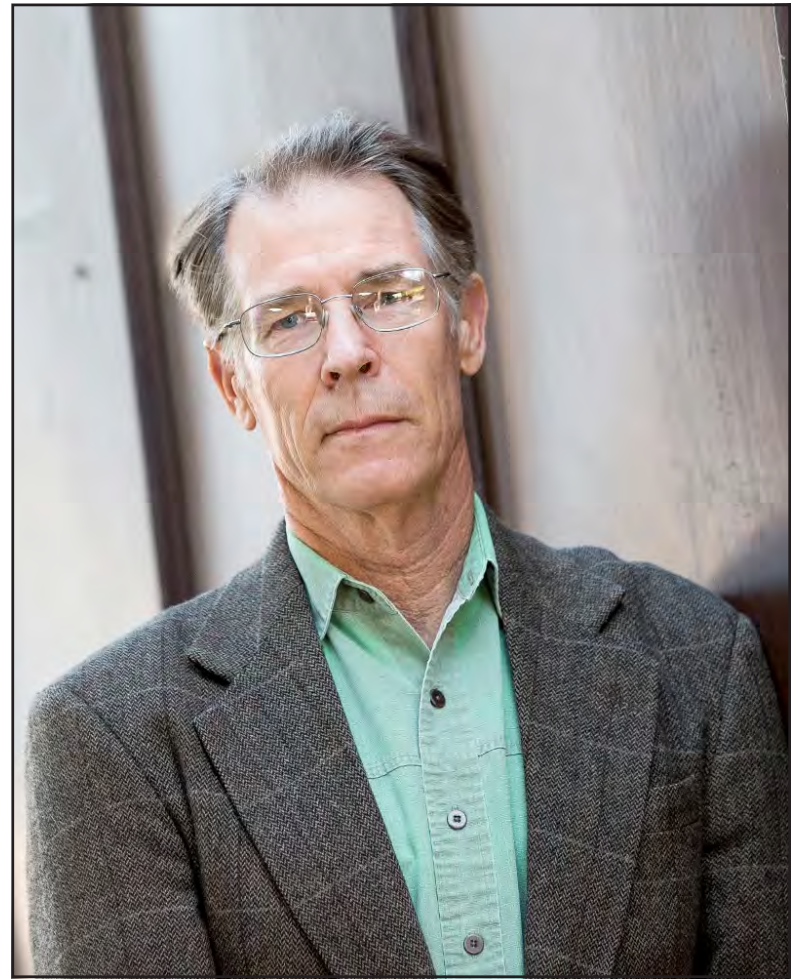
In partnership with the Janet S. Munt Family Room, she and her team founded the Building Strong Families Clinic, which offers preventive health care, education about child-rearing in a new country, and developmental monitoring for children ages one

month to five years in immigrant families receiving care at the UVM Medical Center Children's Primary Care Practice. Green holds a B.A. in neurobiology and behavioral sciences from Cornell University and an M.D., C.M. from McGill University's Faculty of Medicine. She will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at Commencement

ANGELO LYNN

Angelo Lynn, owner, editor, and publisher of the *Addison Independent*, has been a leader in the newspaper industry for more than 40 years. Under his leadership, the *Independent* has won eight General Excellence awards from the New England Newspaper & Press Association, including in 2024 and 2026. Lynn was inducted into the association's Hall of Fame in 2019 and has received the Yankee Quill Award — New England's highest journalism honor. He has also earned numerous awards for his editorial writing and political columns.

Lynn began his career by turning a small weekly newspaper in Kansas into a profitable, award-winning publication, later selling it and using the proceeds as a down payment to purchase the *Independent* in 1984. Addison Press, the parent company, has received several honors, including the Vermont Family Business of the Year Award from the UVM Grossman School of Business, Business of the Year from the



KIM STANLEY ROBINSON

Addison County Chamber of Commerce, and the Outstanding Business Award from United Way of Addison County. He also received the Bonnie and John McCardell Citizen's Award in

2022. Lynn graduated from the William Allen White School of Journalism at the University of Kansas in 1976. He will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at Commencement.



Little note that others adopt

POET EMILY DICKINSON used the phoebe as a metaphor for the modest and nondescript; “the little note that others dropt.” But this phoebe aspires to more by singing to the morning in its stylish waistcoat of brown feathers.

Photo by Dale Cockrell

North Branch School theater ascends peaks

RIPTON — Every year, an annual theater production poses a great challenge for the students at the North Branch School in Ripton. This year's student-authored play, “Journey to the Top,” is no exception.

“It's a hugely demanding task for them,” said Tal Birdsey, head teacher at the school and director of the play. “Twenty-five middle school students writing a play together requires flexibility, teamwork, and a big collective vision.”

This year's play began with a couple of simple ideas: Christopher Columbus could make a return to the present. A group of skiers might want to turn a sacred mountain into a luxury ski resort. A group of yetis could be living in a cave on said mountain, trying to escape from the base depravity of the human world.

“It's especially difficult in the beginning,” said Birdsey. “No map, no plan. It's a little scary at first. They are making it out of themselves, their year, and their learning. They're putting themselves on the line, creating something that has never been seen or said before.”

From the first disjointed ideas, the play was written over two months. A plot was developed, altered, and enhanced. Every student contributed ideas, narrative elements, comic gags, and meaningful lines. They authored their own characters: Zumba instructors, two “Karens” and their rebellious daughters; a group of townfolk studying black and women's history; two public officials, one bent on domination, the other determined to maintain democracy; a rascal named

Bad Guy Bob and his demented co-worker; Amelia Earhart; a grouchy old man; a mountain climber; two Earth First-ers; a kindly man from Paris, Texas; and a local dairy farmer and her prized cow, Bessie Lou.

Together, these characters somehow make a trek up to the top of a great mountain, a place no one has ever been.

“It's all about giving them license and freedom, and then pushing them to outdo what they think they can do,” said Birdsey. “They have to be brave.”

“We have to come together and focus. It's hard concentrating on acting and learning lines,” said Ber Sneed, a seventh grader from Ripton. He continued with a smile. “We have to be more just wild, rampant middle schoolers.”

The plot incorporates environmental activism, current politics, African American women's history, and the poetry of Wislawa Szymborska, author of “Notes on a Nonexistent Himalayan Expedition,” which is recited in the play.

“Essentially, it's about what it takes to climb a mountain — do we go together, or apart?” said Rosemary McVay. “It's their own original myth, describing their experience in these times. It describes the process of the school year as well.”

“The school year always feels like climbing a mountain,” said Birdsey. “There's a great feeling of completing the climb as a group, making something together that expresses their collective creativity and aspiration.”

This year's play ends somewhat differently than it has in years past. “We wanted to have a different

kind of ending than what we usually do,” said Georgia Gong, a ninth grader from Charlotte. “The world isn't all happiness and rainbows. Sometimes conflicts can't be resolved. In these times, especially. There is some hope, but it's far from being fixed.”

The play also has a deeper emotional undercurrent. A former classmate from seventh grade, Makalu Bagnulo, died last summer. The mountain in the play is in honor of his name, which was taken from Mount Makalu, the fifth-tallest mountain in the world.

“Because Mak isn't able to be here with us, and because of how much he loved our school plays, we wanted to put him in it,” said Rupert Suhr, a ninth grader from Shoreham. “To recognize and include him in the play as part of our class.”

In addition, the students perform music between every act in the play, all of which is organized by the students themselves. At intermission, the whole school will sing together — this year, a song that was a favorite of their good friend, Mak.

The play will be presented on Friday and Saturday night, April 10 and 11, at 7:30 p.m., in the Ripton Community House, the production is open to the public, and suitable for ages seven to ninety-seven. Admission is \$10, with three dollars of each ticket going to support the victims' support non-profit Atria Collective. There will be baked goods, coffee, tea, and other refreshments available at intermission. For more information, call the school at (802) 388-3269.



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Cooking

(Continued from Page 3A)

speak, automatically to this idea of being in community,” Ayoub said when asked if there was a goal in mind in bringing this experience to Middlebury.

Adra has been on Ayoub’s radar for at least four years — Ayoub knew Adra put on workshops and pop-ups in Montreal, and a copy of her cookbook has a spot in Ayoub’s kitchen.

“When I became chair of the Arabic Department two years ago, this was one of the events that I really wanted to put together,” Ayoub said.

“We try our best to do immersive events for students, because we want them to engage with the guests, and, you know, have a relationship with them.”

In addition to wanting to present multiple opportunities with Adra, Ayoub wanted to reach further than the Arabic Department’s corner of campus.

“One of my other philosophies is, I want to collaborate with as many stakeholders, college stakeholders, as possible. That also feels important, because ... the Arabic department doesn’t exist in a silo,” she said.

“It’s part of this larger community.”

Adra and Ayoub managed to share the experience even beyond the campus, inviting community

members to the debut event — a dining hall dinner.

Adra and the Proctor dining hall staff closed out March filling the stainless steel serving trays many times over with homemade hummus, arnabit (roasted cauliflower), batata harra (fried potatoes) and adass bi hamod (lemon lentil stew).

“I was very well supported with the Proctor team,” Adra said. “They were all ready to learn the recipes.”

“That’s exactly my mission. It’s ... showing love through food.”

— Chef Dima Adra

Also on the menu were rezz’a djaj (rice pilaf with chicken), salatet shmandar (beet salad) and kofta with batata, a dish Adra compared to meatballs and potatoes.

“It was a huge undertaking, but it was so nice to see cultural food being good and served to the students, and seeing them enjoy it,” Adra said.

“Many students came up to me to say, ‘I tasted like home, or ‘I feel like I’m back home.’ So that was exactly what I wanted to have come out of this. Even if they weren’t Arab students, many came up to say ‘It was so delicious’ ... and that’s exactly my mission. It’s ... showing love through food.”

MAKING AN IMPACT

Adra first found herself investing in the craft she describes today as her passion during what was a bit of a crossroads for her.

“I was in

advertising, and then I realized that’s not going to be it for me, because I wanted to do something that had impact, that I could look back at and be proud,” she said.

That coincided with her idea for her cookbook, a collection of recipes from Lebanese moms.

Also around that time, Adra, who grew up in Saudi Arabia and attended college at American University of Beirut in Lebanon, was settling into a new stage of life in Montreal.

“When I moved to Montreal, when I had met my now husband, then boyfriend, I realized, ‘OK, so I think I’m gonna live here for a long time and stay here.’ He’s Lebanese as well, and we’re going to probably have a family here, and it’s like everything started coming together,” she recalled.

For her, the change also brought to the forefront of her thoughts, “I’m gonna be far from my family. I don’t know how to cook Lebanese food,” she said.

“And it just all came to me that, OK, actually, this is important. And there was almost a feeling of emergency, like, I need to know how to cook my own culture’s food.”

Part of that was having a piece of their heritage for her future kids (she now has two young sons), to take part in.

“If my kids grew up thinking that Lebanese food is falafel and shawarma, I’ll die, because that’s not how I grew up. I grew up in Saudi Arabia, and I always felt connected to Lebanon through food, because I would come home to Lebanese food every day,” she said.

“And when I would go back to Lebanon, I never felt

alienated, or, you know, the odd one out, because I didn’t grow up in Lebanon. I felt like I belonged because I had access to that food.”

This led her to start ringing her mom for the steps. But at that point, she hit a roadblock.

Adra found that it wasn’t so easy for her mother to relay the recipes, which she knew so well it could be difficult to explain.

“It’s an instinct,” she said of her mother’s cooking. “I got actually very frustrated that she wasn’t giving me recipes, and I knew that I wasn’t going to be the only one who felt like that.”

“So I was like, OK, we need to know. There needs to be a cookbook out there about Lebanese cooking and food that’s by moms to us.”

The book, which Adra self-published in 2021, features more than a list of steps and quantities.

“I measured everything with (the contributors), everything I asked, all my questions, I took down every step, insights,” she said.

“There were things that they didn’t even know were the things that were making the food good, because they’re so used to it, and what I was noticing, and I put these tips in the book.”

In between developing her idea for the cookbook and self-publishing it in 2021, Adra started a culinary intensive program at Boston University in 2018. She completed stages in Middle Eastern fine dining and cooked at Oleana, a Middle Eastern restaurant in Boston.

Flash forward to 2026, and Adra is the one doing the teaching. She eventually transitioned away from restaurant life to running the workshops and pop-up dinners she holds today.

Some of her recent students include Middlebury College pupils. **HOW TO CUT AN ONION**

On April 1 and 2, she found herself in a tucked away kitchen on the Middlebury College campus leading groups of 16 and 19 students in two workshops.

Before they got to the mixing,



CHEF DIMA ADRA speaks last week to a crowd at Middlebury College, where she spent a week cooking with students and staff.

Independent photos/Sophia Keshmiri

whipping, baking and tossing, Adra ensured they were properly informed on one of the basics — how to cut an onion.

“You follow the lines on the onion, it tells you which way to go,” Adra said.

There was plenty of that throughout the week. In addition to the other events, Adra and the student restaurant staff were in the final stretch of preparing for her finale — a four-course Lebanese dinner, which students were selected to attend by raffle.

“I don’t know if they’ve ever cut that many onions,” Adra said of the student cooks. She estimates at least two hundred went into that final meal.

The vegetable showed up in more ways than one but was especially apparent in the Palestinian msakhan

— roasted sumac chicken with pine nuts and surrounded by sauteed onions. It all sat on Markouk bread.

Well before the passable dish came out, attendees feasted on hummus, hindbeh (cooked dandelion) and more.

Then came the chickpea fattah, which is made with spiced chickpeas, pita and yogurt. It was also sprinkled with pine nuts.

After the Palestinian msakhan came freekeh, which is roasted green wheat with braised lamb shanks and moukassarat garnish (pine nuts, almonds and pistachios).

Dessert was mhallabiyeh — rose water orange blossom milk pudding — plus mint tea, and a Lebanese turmeric anise cake.

“I felt very grateful to Dima to have thought of me for this,” Adra said. “Because it’s exactly what I love to do.”



PALESTINIAN MSAKHAN

Elderly Services Inc. ESI College

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Climate change is real, and burning fossil fuels is the dominant cause. What can you do about it? Here in Vermont, where electricity has minimal fossil input, you can electrify. One way is to heat your home with heat pumps. Another is to make your own electricity, using free solar energy. This course consists of two independent sessions, neither a prerequisite for the other.

The Magic of Heat Pumps

Tuesday, April 21, 10:00 - 11:30 AM
The Congregational Church of Middlebury

This course introduces the science behind this remarkable technology, shows why heat pumps are especially valuable for combating climate change, gives some practical tips on using heat pumps, and dispels common myths that might discourage people from adopting heat pumps, or wind up using them ineffectively.

The Solar Revolution

Tuesday, April 28, 10:00 - 11:30 AM
The Congregational Church of Middlebury

“The Solar Revolution” focuses on solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. We’ll learn why PV makes sense even in cloudy Vermont, then explore the global growth that makes PV among the least expensive ways to generate electricity today. You’ll get a quick overview of how PV systems work, hear projections for a PV-powered future.

Rich Wolfson is Professor of Physics & Environmental Studies, Emeritus, at Middlebury College. He taught climate courses at Middlebury through the early 2020s. He has created video courses on energy and climate for the Teaching Company’s Great Courses series, and is the author of Energy, Environment and Climate, now in its fourth edition.



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Editorials

H.995 vs another Scott veto?

Moments after the newest education-reform bill, H.955, emerged from a 7-4 party-line vote in the House Education Committee, Gov. Phil Scott said it was dead-on-arrival. He prefers his original proposal, which was to consolidate the state's 119 school districts into five. What he forgets is that almost no one, outside of his administration, agreed with him. Nor did he bother to take his proposal, district-to-district, to rally community support.

There's a reason he didn't: he would have gotten an earful, and he didn't want to face the rancor. Yet, this week, he says the proposal that was thoroughly vetted in all four corners of the state in dozens of meetings with over 5,000 Vermonters participating isn't what the state needs. He maintains that the carefully selected task force, with some members chosen by the governor and who spent four months researching the issue, was out-of-touch with reality.

Unfortunately, it's the opposite. Everyone agrees the cost of education in Vermont is high, but Vermonters have made it known that drastic consolidation and forced school mergers isn't the answer. The House and Senate Education committees listened, battled over different paths to take, and crafted a compromise proposal that makes significant progress, while avoiding public animosity and resistance that could cause lasting harm to the state's academic outcomes.

That's smart leadership.

Under H.955, the state would form seven CESAs. The process requires each district to consider the pros and cons of school consolidation and explain their decision in writing. Consolidation would be a decision reached by each district, rather than mandated, and remains an ongoing option. The CESA model is a compromise that has achieved significant cost savings in the several states who have adopted it.

Is it the most effective way to cut costs to the bone? No. If Scott were king, he could cram all 119 districts into five, slash teachers and administrators, bus children for hours, break the bond between school and community and pretend that maximizing dollars saved is preferable to a school system rooted in community with parental support and involvement.

That he chooses to draw that line in the sand and threaten his veto, may suggest why the state has witnessed such decline this past decade.

As Rep. Peter Conlon says in today's front-page story, if the governor wants to force consolidation, he's got to lead the charge. "He's the only one who can do that." He hasn't done it because he's more comfortable chanting his affordability mantra from his office, rather than try to make something more realistic work in each school district.

Angelo Lynn

A lose-lose for Trump

Trump supporters must get a grip on reality. They must stop rationalizing his outrageous conduct as a wily negotiating tactic. They must understand how Trump's moral depravity undermines America's integrity and how destructive it has been to the nation's global leadership these past 16 months. If they don't, the damage done to the nation may be irreversible.

It is inconceivable, for example, that any Republican can see Trump's embrace of a two-week ceasefire in Iran as anything other than defeat. Iran has had a 10-point plan on the table for days, which Trump previously called inadequate, yet he agreed Tuesday because he was desperate for an off-ramp to avoid backing down from his profane doomsday scenario to destroy Iran's civilization.

The result, so far, is a modified reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, but giving Iran control over the flow of shipping they didn't have before, perhaps an added source of revenue, and a new provision, the Iranians claim, to help finance reconstruction. That's a significant victory for Iran, and a major defeat for Trump. No spin can possibly make it otherwise.

Moreover, Trump's war on Iran did not achieve regime change, or reduce the threat of Iran attaining a nuclear bomb. On the contrary, those in power are more hardened against the West (particularly America), and the popular uprising by Iranians against the regime has now almost entirely been replaced by its anger toward the U.S. That's another huge win for theocracy and the Revolutionary Guard.

Also, Iran's inferior military not only withstood a pounding from U.S. and Israeli forces, but have come out with more control over their affairs and increased dominance in the region (morally, politically and militarily), while America's global credibility and moral leadership has been obliterated.

And despite the high number of targets hit, which Defense Sec. Pete Hegseth loves to cite, the bottom line is that Iran has emerged stronger, while the U.S. military hasn't achieved its goals and has spent untold billions of dollars in high-value munitions — depleting essential stockpiles, while strengthening Russia, China and Iran. Here's a summation of the military campaign from a Trump-supporting Republican who for a year embraced Trump's policies, until he no longer could take the idiocy. "There is no military solution to the conflict right now," said Joe Kent, Trump's counterterrorism adviser who resigned last month in protest of the war. "Every action that we've taken militarily has only strengthened the regime, and it's done a lot to destabilize the entire region."

But as long as MAGA Republicans believe Trump's nonsense and can't see through his bravado and lies, he will have a slim hold on power and will continue the nation's unprecedented descent into moral ruin and economic decline. The nation needs MAGA voters to understand the stakes and send that message to party leaders.

Angelo Lynn



Change of season

THE EARLY APRIL snow on Monday does not seem to discourage these yellow anemones in a Weybridge garden. Who remembers the snowfall a few days before the April 8 solar eclipse two years ago? Four days later we were all outside, no coats, staring up at the moon dancing across the face of the sun.

Photo by Susan Humphrey

The over-reach of 'the border'

Recently, ICE has raided and invaded Vermont. Last month, for example, agents chased someone into a home on Dorset Street, then, after waiting for a warrant, ultimately broke down the door to apprehend those inside. After the chase, people gathered to protest. Vermont law enforcement officers arrived on the scene to help manage the growing crowd. Many Vermonters have said that the officers, in aiding in the raid, used excessive force. In the end, both citizens and non-citizens were left angry, traumatized and bewildered.

When most people in the United States think of controlling "the border", they think of the US-Mexico border and stopping undocumented crossings there. The events in Vermont, which targeted people of Latin American descent, happened just 50 miles south of the Canadian border.

Incidents like the ones we witnessed in our home state have, in fact, been happening across the United States. In Kansas, not too far from the geographic center of the lower 48 states, for example, in pursuit of an undocumented person, ICE detained a 19-year-old U.S. citizen after pinning him to the ground and using excessive force. In other words, these events are happening near to and far from our borders.

We are now living in a world where the tentacles of the massive border control apparatus along the southern border are reaching far beyond anything that many of us could have ever imagined and crossing many other boundaries. They are bursting into private homes as people are ripped from their

families. They are squeezing and fracturing the bounds of citizenship as US citizens continue to be harassed, detained and even shot by ICE and border patrol agents, and as the war on migrants threatens to upend birthright citizenship itself.

Birthright citizenship in the United States has guaranteed citizenship to any person born on U.S. soil since the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868. Since then, it has been an important pathway to citizenship for people from all over the world. From

the mid-1800s and into the early twentieth century, for instance, large waves of Irish, Italian, and Jewish immigrants came from Southern and Eastern Europe. Their children, who at the time were not easily accepted into the American fabric, became American by birthright—just as many others did. In many ways, the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment strengthened and secured our path to being what, a century later, JFK would refer to as a "nation of immigrants."

Because of our current president's relentless war on certain immigrants, this now hangs in the balance as he and many in his base claim that allowing birthright citizenship would only encourage an "invasion" of unwanted immigrants. These immigrants, they claim, would stain the fabric of America and drain our economy. This week, the Supreme Court heard arguments that would upend this long tradition, leaving future infants born here stateless and unincorporated into American society.

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

Ways of Seeing

By Mary E. Mendoza



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

To Gov. Scott: On restoring trust

Dear Governor Scott, By now I'm sure you've heard about the two and half hours of testimony given at the Statehouse last Tuesday night. How Vermonters packed the House Chamber to convey their concerns about the March 11ICE raid in South Burlington.

How Jess Shapiro, who works on Dorset Street, recounted being choked by a Vermont State Police officer to the point of unconsciousness.

How Pearl Benjamin, a farm worker from Burlington, recalled being thrown down the house's front steps by another trooper.

How Cora Honigford, a certified EMT, volunteered as a medic to help injured protesters after police left the scene. Or how countless witnesses described the brutality used by Vermont's law enforcement and the astonishing dearth of de-escalation tools.

"If the only thing that you have is a hammer," testified Cynthia Cook, a professional mediator who was at the protest, "everything looks like a nail... the troopers arrived with lots of hammers."

The stakes of the botched federal raid are abundantly clear. As Burlington resident Lee Morgan put it, "When the government gets it wrong like this — when they kick in the wrong door and they take the wrong people — it sends a message to every immigrant and

every person of color in Vermont that you are not safe, that your rights are conditional, that your humanity is negotiable."

But there's another misstep that has compounded the damage from this disturbing event: the State's public safety leadership has discounted the experiences of protestors and witnesses, while privileging the accounts given by law enforcement.

As a lifelong Vermonter, I gave testimony on Tuesday night, too. Not as a witness to the raid — I wasn't on Dorset Street that day — but as a witness to the failure of our leaders to respond with care and probity in the aftermath.

I appreciate your clear assertion that ICE is to blame for this event. As you stated in your press release on March 12: "The actions of federal law enforcement, from outside the state yesterday, further demonstrates a lack of training, coordination, leadership, and outdated tactics which put both peaceful protesters and Vermont law enforcement in a difficult situation."

But you then drew a hasty conclusion — less than 24 hours after the raid — about the cause of the chaos. "I want to be clear," you wrote, "how the events concluded, and the tactics deployed by federal officials, as well as actions of those there to agitate, (See *Cochran to Gov. Scott*, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Drag: Much ado about nothing

As a toddler and boy in the 1960s, I watched Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Milton Berle in drag. I turned out OK.

As a teen in the 1970s, I watched Flip Wilson in drag. Some readers may remember his character Geraldine Jones. I turned out OK.

As a young adult in the 1980s, my brother took me to a drag show at Oil Can Harry's in Los Angeles. I laughed until my sides ached. I turned out OK.

As an adult later on, I watched Ru Paul in drag on TV. I watched Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon in drag in Billy Wilder's Oscar-winning movie "Some Like It Hot." And I saw Barry Humphries live on stage in drag as Dame Edna Everage. I turned out OK.

The recent on-going culture war opposition to drag characters in drag shows is, dare I say, much ado about nothing.

Garland Gates
Bristol

Trump is spilling real blood now

It's not just the ketchup on the wall now; it's the blood on the ground and on the hands of this administration.

Christy Alger
Orwell

No advanced degree needed

It does not take an advanced degree or high school diploma to reach this conclusion. Anyone can be judged as right or wrong ... morally, ethically, logically, strategically. If integrity is an important part of who we are, the Supreme Leader was a poor choice. His words, written or spoken, reflect diminished capacity, reveal a mental fog, or delusional state, dwelling entirely within himself and his Middle East bank accounts.

As a good, stable country, the U.S. has been officially decertified, while the 25th Amendment sits idly on the shelf.

Alec Lyall
Middlebury

Vote against Orwell ATV law

Your consistently excellent (and amazingly versatile) reporter, John Flowers, really dropped the ball in the March 26 issue with a confusing report entitled "New Orwell ATV Ordinance challenged." This challenge, which will take the form of a vote at a special town meeting on Saturday, April 18, at 10 a.m. at the Orwell Fire Department, will affect the future of our community.

A YES vote will DISAPPROVE this deeply flawed ordinance. Otherwise, and as noted in a recent post on Front Porch Forum, Orwell will become a recreational ATV thoroughfare for anyone 16 years old on up, from anywhere and everywhere, on practically every town road, paved and unpaved, 365 days a year from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. All this will be disruptive and/or dangerous to everyone — ATV operators, motor vehicle drivers, walkers, joggers, cyclists, horseback riders, carriage drivers, children playing, elders crossing roads, pets and wild animals — and the quality of life in Orwell will suffer irreparably.

Among its many flaws, the ordinance fails to reflect the numerous concerns that town residents have repeatedly expressed to the selectboard, including their desire for protection from reckless, dangerous and extremely loud recreational ATV riding in our town.

That there is no law enforcement plan or budget to go with the ordinance makes the "regulations" set forth in the ordinance absolutely meaningless. And town taxpayers will have to (See *Beamish letter*, Page 5A)

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Cochran to Gov. Scott

(Continued from Page 4A) further escalated a situation that was avoidable from the start.”
...those there to agitate...
 Neither of us was there that day, Governor. But from the footage I watched — showing law enforcement charging through protestors to reach the house and firing tear gas and flash-bang grenades to clear a path for vehicles — it was impossible to tell who had agitated whom. And in my mind, it was imprudent to say otherwise. That’s what investigations are for.

WORDS MATTER

What’s more, the choice of the word “agitate” implies far more than disorderly conduct. Since the Civil Rights Movement, the term has been used to disempower protestors, sow division, and misrepresent the actions of countless Americans practicing nonviolent protest and civil disobedience. As Aldon Morris, professor emeritus of sociology at Northwestern University, explains, throughout U.S. history the label “agitator” has been wielded “by the powerful to delegitimize real grievances of the marginalized and oppressed seeking change.”

In the days following the Dorset Street raid, your use of this trope — which could have been rationalized as an innocent mistake — sharpened into clear bias.

At your March 18 press conference and the March 19 Statehouse hearing, you and Public Safety Commissioner Jen Morrison thanked local and state law enforcement for their restraint and professionalism. In response to questions regarding accountability, you both urged patience, telling reporters and lawmakers that it would be premature to remark on the conduct of police, that internal reviews were underway, and that once body camera footage was evaluated, an After Action Review would provide a clear picture.

“We tend to operate from a place

of fact,” Commissioner Morrison explained, “not feelings, and not pre-assumptions about peoples’ motives.” It was too soon to say more.

But evidently it was *not* too soon to malign protestors as agitators, and to jump straight to poorly supported conclusions.

“We’ll see when the body camera footage comes back, if there were agitators, as we expect there were,” you said at the press conference.

And at the March 19 hearing, the Commissioner referred to a “small cross-section” of “rioters or agitators,” while police chiefs referred to “rioters,” “violent protesters,” and “the violent agitators who cloak themselves as activists.” Chief Burke went so far as to say that “the peaceful activists were joined by agitators — a Trojan horse, of sorts, leading the way to an escalation instigated by the crowd.”

“To zoom out beyond Dorset Street, beyond South Burlington, beyond these Green Mountains, is to realize that portraying protestors as agitators has national consequences.”

UNDERMINING PUBLIC TRUST

I acknowledge the difficult position law enforcement is in. But this partiality does little to help restore public trust.

Instead, it further divides us at a time when future confrontations between citizens and federal agents and local police are likely, and a time when the stakes of this mishandling go beyond state borders.

To zoom out beyond Dorset Street, beyond South Burlington, beyond these Green Mountains, is to realize that portraying protestors as agitators has national consequences.

Trump used this very term after Renee Good’s murder in Minnesota, calling anti-ICE protestors “professional agitators.” He accused Good and her wife, Becca, of being a part of a “mob of agitators” — all grounds, he suggested, for invoking the Insurrection Act, and its license to deploy active soldiers on American soil.

The onus is on you, Governor Scott, and the state’s public safety

leadership, to take into account the historical context of the term “agitator,” as well as the future stakes of its misuse. And until unbiased, public analysis of March 11 is complete, it is our collective duty to refrain from making, in the Commissioner’s words, “pre-assumptions about peoples’ motives.”

Imagine for a moment, Governor, that the crowd’s outrage was not part of a premeditated agenda to “agitate,” but simply what happens in the human body, the human heart — *our bodies and hearts* — when we witness violence before us. When we witness the deep injustice of a small girl under a blanket, taken from her mother, or women choked and thrown to the ground, it is natural — deeply human, even — to become *agitated*.

I assume you felt the same horror I did at seeing a family unjustly torn apart. But you haven’t expressed as much to the hundreds of Vermonters who are coming forward with concern about our State’s response.

In his testimony to lawmakers on March 19, Chief Burke cited the critical importance of restoring trust. “Vermonters deserve strong leadership at every level,” he said.

I agree. We all deserve something stronger than what was on display the day after Tuesday’s hearing, when a reporter asked for your response to the testimony, and you said: “I look forward to some of the body camera footage ... and to the After Action Review,” and then you passed the mic to Commissioner Morrison.

That’s not leadership.

As Vermont’s legislators consider a resolution for an independent investigation (Vermonters, you can encourage your Senators to support this effort at the website tinyurl.com/InvestigateICEinVT!), I hope you, Governor, will also support this resolution — a step toward repairing our trust.

Thank you.
 Liza Cochran.
Editor’s note: In addition to her other roles, Liza Cochran is a community organizer with Indivisible, and she co-authors the Substack Brave Little Voices, where a version of this letter appears.

Letters to the Editor

Bill would provide lifeline to Vermont detainees

A few weeks ago in S. Burlington, federal immigration agents entered a home looking for one person but detained three others who were not named on the warrant. These individuals were released following a judge’s order, but many people detained in Vermont and across the country are not as fortunate. Legal and advocacy organizations continue to document cases where individuals are held with questionable cause, unsure if or when they will be released.

Vermont’s role in immigration detention is not insignificant. Individuals detained by ICE are

often held in facilities like the Northwest State Correctional Facility and the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility. Yet those facing immigration proceedings are not guaranteed legal representation, despite the serious consequences at stake. Immigration law is complex, and without an attorney, people are often left to navigate it alone while detained.

H.742 would help address this by providing access to legal representation for people held in Vermont. While it would not fix every harm in the system, it would ensure that individuals are not forced to face life-altering

proceedings without support. As Vermont grapples with how to respond to federal policy, we can make sure no one detained in Vermont needs to face immigration proceedings alone.

This bill has not yet received a hearing, but allowing it to stall would be a choice. Legislators still have opportunities to move it forward, and the need has not gone away. If we want our policies to reflect the care Vermonters show for one another, supporting this bill is a clear and practical step.

**Maureen Cevoli
 Bristol**

Beamish letter

(Continued from Page 4A) bear the costs associated with implementing the ordinance.

Although the ordinance quotes the ATV Safety Institute’s warning that “ATVs are for off-road use only,” it directly contradicts this and the Institute’s advice to “never operate on public roads” and “always avoid paved surfaces.” In other words, the ordinance gives lip service to protecting Orwell residents but then does

the exact opposite.

It should also be noted that Mr. Flowers’s chronology of events ignores a key fact — that the 2021 town survey on the subject of opening up the town to recreational ATVs showed that two thirds of respondents opposed doing this. Still, the selectboard revisited this issue in 2024 because, as Mr. Flowers wrote, one “citizen requested that the selectboard resurrect talk of an ATV/UTV ordinance.” At

a public meeting later that year, while rules of conduct for the meeting were being followed, more Orwell residents spoke up against opening up Orwell to recreational ATVs than in favor of it. The petition to let town residents vote to disapprove this new ordinance garnered 85, not the 72 signatures reported, which was well above the 49 required.

**Julia Beamish
 Orwell**

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

How did we get here? My new book, “Deadly Divide: How Insects, Pathogens, and People Defied the US-Mexico border” explores this, and the answer might surprise you. It turns out, cattle ticks and the fear of spreading cattle disease drove the construction of the earliest border infrastructure even as concerns about disease reinforced longstanding ideas about race and racial difference. As people began to conceive of Mexican cattle and bugs as diseased and threatening, those same ideas began to extend

to humans south of the border as well.

Over time, infrastructure used to control animals and bugs became tools for controlling human migrants. In the process, Americans began to conceive of those human migrants as invasive pests, which justified their exclusion and harsh treatment. In recent months, that racialized view of non-citizens as subjects in need of control has extended to any person, citizen or not, who “looks like an immigrant” or who simply dissents. Now, it seems even unborn children

may suffer the consequences of an exclusionary system that has spun out of control.

At a recent panel to discuss my book, one of the participants asked, “Where does the border live?” Our conclusion was that these days, its everywhere. It’s along our southern border, it’s in our communities, it’s in our homes and it is tearing this “nation of immigrants” apart. When will we say enough is enough?

Mary E. Mendoza is an assistant professor of history and Latino/a Studies at Penn State University.

Addison County CELEBRATES The Week of the Young Child

Join us as we spotlight the young children in our community!

<p>Kick off Saturday Sat., April 11 Peter Kohn Field Middlebury College 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Middlebury College SAAC Sports Saturday Cheer tunnel, field games, and more!</p>	<p>Tue., April 14 Mad Taco Free kid meal w/purchase of regular meal kids 8 & under</p> <p>Cubbers Free Slice kids 8 & under 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.</p>
<p>Wed., April 15 Lulu’s \$1 Creemees 11:00 - 6:00 p.m. kids 10 & under</p> <p>Rockers Pizza \$1.00 cheese slices kids 6 & under 3:00-6:00 pm</p>	<p>Thur., April 16 Minifactory Free Peanut Chocolate Chunk Cookie w/ \$10 purchase</p> <p>Morningside Bakery Free Cookie w/ \$10 purchase</p>

Artwork Displays

Bixby Library, Lincoln Library, Starksboro Public Library, Ilsely Library, VT Book Shop, Middlebury Town Offices, Sarah Partridge Library, Russell Memorial Library, Shear Cuts, Simon Says

Addison County Early Childhood Network

Elderly Services, Inc. Spring 2026 Community Education Series

<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>

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 Elderly Services, 112 Exchange Street, Middlebury

**To RSVP or learn more, call Susan Bruce at Elderly Services:
 802-388-3983 • www.elderlyservices.org**

ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

Wayne William Clark, 88, Shoreham

SHOREHAM — Wayne William Clark, 88, of Shoreham, passed away on Sunday, March 8. He was born Feb. 9, 1938, to Edris (Martell) and Leroy Clark in Lincoln, Vt. He was the second of nine children.

Wayne joined the U.S. Army after high school and was honorably discharged in 1967. He worked many years for Agway as a truck driver. Wayne was a long-time member of the Champlain Valley Fiddlers Club, American Legion and the VFW. When he got the opportunity, he really enjoyed fishing with his grandchildren. Wayne always enjoyed going to auctions to hunt for treasures, especially fiddles! He was an avid bingo player and inevitably would come home with his winnings.

He is survived by his daughters, Celine (Dennis) Huestis of



WAYNE WILLIAM CLARK

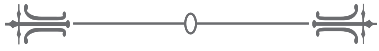
Tennessee and Lisa Lashley of Kentucky; sister Hilda Michaud; brothers Fletcher, Philip, Morris and Larry; and sisters-in-law Janice, Roberta, Judy and Gwen.

He is also survived by four grandchildren, Nicholas (Jordan) Huestis, Skylar (Juan) Baltazar, Kellisa Lashley and Logan Lashley; and four great-grandchildren, Grayson, Jensen, Ashton and Myla. Also surviving is his long-time partner Pearl Parent.

He is predeceased by brothers Eugene, Daniel and James; sisters-in-law Catherine, Louella and Marilyn; grandson Andrew and great-granddaughter Riley.

A graveside service will be held at the Maple Cemetery in Lincoln April 11 at 11 a.m. A celebration of life will be held at the American Legion in Bristol following the service.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Sanderson Funeral Home. Online condolences are at www.sandersonfuneralservice.com.



Douglas L. Tracy, 94, of Lincoln

LINCOLN — Douglas L. Tracy passed away Wednesday, April 1, peacefully at his home in Lincoln. He was born in Hinesburg Dec. 23, 1931, to Forest "Rick" and Margaret (Amour) Tracy.

He lived in Charlotte until 1941, when he moved to the family farm in Hinesburg.

He married Lucille Isham in 1953. She predeceased him in 2014.

In his early years he was a farmer and drove a milk truck, delivering to Shelburne Creamery. He then worked for Hinesburg Sand and Gravel. He spent the last 21 years of his work career as a loader operator for J.P. Carrera.

He is survived by his son Leslie Tracy of Lincoln, daughter Marcia Jimmo of Bristol and son Douglas Tracy of Shoreham, and a sister Ellen Williams of Pennsylvania. He leaves four grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

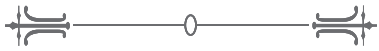
He was predeceased by his parents and his sister and brother-in-law, Patricia and Richard Dube of Maine.

A graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 6, at Maple Cemetery in Lincoln.

Memorial contributions may be made to Addison County Home Health and Hospice or to Bristol Rescue Squad.



DOUGLAS L. TRACY



Joseph S. Pieciak Jr., 82, of Brattleboro

BRATTLEBORO — Joseph "Joe" Stanley Pieciak Jr., 82, of Brattleboro, Vt., died peacefully at home on April 3, 2026, surrounded by his family.

Born Sept. 24, 1943, in Holyoke, Mass., he was the son of the late Joseph and Sophie (Babiasz) Pieciak Sr. and grew up in Chicopee, Mass. He was a graduate of American International College, where he earned a degree in accounting and becoming the first in his family to graduate from college



JOSEPH S. PIECIAK JR.

Joe moved to Brattleboro in 1970 and later founded Pieciak & Company, building a respected

accounting practice and lifelong relationships with clients and colleagues. He was deeply committed to his community, serving in various leadership roles.

He was predeceased by his wife of 59 years, Carolyn Sullivan Pieciak, in 2025. He is survived by his daughters, Elizabeth Lawyer (Travis) of Brattleboro and Jennifer Rau of Chicopee, Mass.; his son, Mike Pieciak of Winooski, Vt.; his brother, Michael J. Pieciak of Chicopee, Mass.; and four grandchildren.

Calling hours will be held Thursday, April 16, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Atamaniuk Funeral Home in Brattleboro. A funeral Mass will be held Friday, April 17, at 1 p.m. at St. Michael's Catholic Church, with burial to follow.

To share a memory or offer condolences to Joe's family, please visit www.atamaniuk.com.

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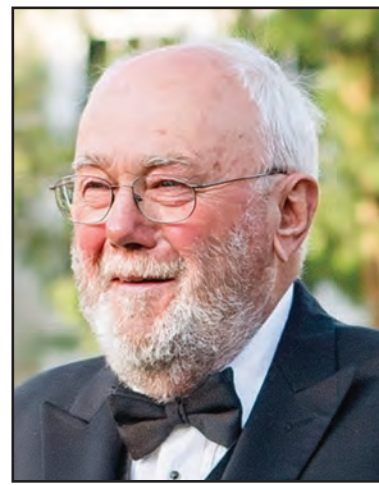
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John R. Donnelly, 91, of Panton

PANTON — John R. Donnelly, 91, of Panton, Vt., passed away Wednesday, April 1, at 8:45 p.m., at his home. He was born Jan. 15, 1935, in Waterbury, Conn. to Eugene and Margaret Donnelly. John lived a long and invigorating life, his youthful energy always outstripping his age. His love for the outdoors and teaching was only surpassed by his love for his wife, Melinda Donnelly.

John is survived by his wife, Melinda "Mindy" Donnelly; his four children: Dorothy Perket of Vermont, her husband Chris and their son Dashiell, Annie Donnelly of Florida, Tom Donnelly of Maryland and his wife Karen, and Sarah Donnelly of California; and many loving nieces, nephews, and extended family.

John proudly served in the U.S. Air Force during the end of the Korean War, using the resulting GI bill to enter the collegial world as



JOHN R. DONNELLY

an undergrad at the University of Vermont, ending with a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. His specialty was forestry, a passion he followed throughout his life. He was a professor and professor emeritus for 40 years at the University of

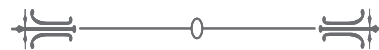
Vermont, teaching generations of students the wonders of nature and forestry.

John and his wife Mindy were avid sailors, taking their love for the outdoors onto Lake Champlain and beyond. Later in his sailing career John discovered the pleasure of sailing with the Diamond Island Yacht Club, and he and Mindy were members for years.

Calling hours will be at Brown-McClay Funeral Home, Vergennes, Wednesday, April 8, from 5 to 8 p.m.

A funeral mass will be held at 11 a.m., Thursday, April 9, at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Vergennes, Vt. There will be a reception to follow at Saint Peter's Parish Hall. Arrangements are in care of Brown-McClay Funeral Home, Vergennes.

Memorial contributions can be made to the National Park Foundation at www.nationalparks.org.



Jean Munton Hance, 96, of Vergennes

VERMONT/CALIFORNIA — Jean Munton Hance, a woman of remarkable strength, creativity, and wit, passed away peacefully, shortly after returning to California to be near her family. She was 96.

EARLY LIFE & A YOUNG PATRIOT

Born in Troy, N.Y., Jan. 4, 1930, to Albert Francis Munton and Ruth Elizabeth Drake, Jean was part of a lively household of seven sisters. Her childhood was marked by shifting landscapes, a response to the automobile retail industry demands of her father in various towns across the Northeast. The family followed. Jean adapted to the routine of changing schools and leaning on her own independence to face challenges. At just 14 years old, she volunteered as an Aircraft Warning Spotter during the early years of World War II, informed and ready to identify the silhouettes of planes overhead as friends or foes.

THE PERFORMER & THE TRAVELER

Jean's youth was filled with music and creative works. While attending Pittsfield High School in Massachusetts, she graced the stage with her voice in Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance" as Hebe and spent many hours at the piano. She continued to sing and play piano throughout her life.

After graduating from Cathedral High School in Burlington in 1948, Jean's adventurous spirit took her to Tennessee. There, she developed advanced sewing skills that ignited a passion for adapting the textures, colors and types of fabrics to fully serve the breadth of family life.

She eventually returned to her family in St. Albans, Vt., where she met the love of her life, James E. Hance. The two were married Feb. 16, 1952, and went on to raise what Jean proudly described as "four perfect children."



JEAN MUNTON HANCE

A CAREER OF VISION

In 1965, Jean moved her family to Burlington and broke into the world of television at WCAX TV. In the film department, she was a behind-the-scenes force, editing films, managing advertisement placement, and coordinating camera work under the tutelage of the department head.

Ever aware when there was a signal for change, Jean moved to Los Angeles in 1974 to pursue new horizons for herself and opportunities for her children. When contemporaries said she wouldn't make it alone, in characteristic fashion she opined "If the road is there, I'll make it." And so she did, with an Auto Club map, four kids, and a 70s Ford LTD pulling a U-Haul across America, spurred by the wings of desire for a better life and the courage to change.

Arriving in Sherman Oaks, Calif., her skill with textiles and understanding of the power of decor led to a successful second career. She worked as a designer for Bullock's Department Store, a premiere fashion and "pioneering suburban luxury retail store." She remained a designer until her retirement. Never one to

stop learning, she also attended college in California, focusing her studies on Women's History and Childhood Development. Her advice was always: "If life isn't working for you, face it, and take action."

COMMUNITY & REFLECTION

Jean returned to her Vermont roots in 2003, settling in Vergennes on Walker Avenue. She was a beloved member of the community, an active member of St. Peter's Parish, and a proud member of the Red Hat Society, and cherished her neighbors of 24 years as family. Whether she was sharing observations of daily life through her writing or enjoying summers at the family camp in St. Albans Bay, Jean lived with an outspoken and funny grace that drew people to her. In January 2026, Jean made her final move back to California, completing the circle of a life well-lived by spending her final days surrounded by three of her four children and her grandchildren.

FAMILY & LEGACY

Jean was predeceased by her husband, James E. Hance, and her sisters Ruth Wells, Helen and Ed Kahrs, and Elizabeth and Ron Stephany. She is survived by her sisters, Mary Munton, Alberta Munton, and Carole and Werner Hoffmann; her four children, Catherine Moulaison and husband Russell, Jeanmarie Hance and husband Ray Torres, Tom Hance and his wife Shirley, and Barbara Saltzberg and husband Kenny; her grandchildren, Natasha Hevesy and husband Christopher, Brijean Murphy, Sierra Buzzell and husband Fred and Travis Saltzberg; and with her six great-grandchildren. Her brave spirit and pointed sense of humor will be missed.

A celebration of Life will be planned in the coming months in Vermont.



Florence A. Gill, 96, of Cornwall

CORNWALL — Florence A. Gill, 96, died April 7, 2026, at Shard Villa Residential Care in Salisbury. She was born on Jan. 8, 1930, in Shoreham, in the same house her mother was born in. She was the daughter of Joseph and Ada (Hickory) Burgess. She married Garner Joseph Gill Sept. 29, 1962, and together they raised two sons, Brian and James.

She is predeceased by her husband, Garner; her son, James; two brothers, Walter and Clarence; and two sisters, Margaret (Hansen) and Ellen (Young).

The family would like to thank everyone at Shard Villa, Addison County Home Health and Hospice,

Project Independence, Porter/UMV Medical Center, and all of the independent caregivers who helped at her home.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Middlebury April 14, 2026, at 10 a.m. Please join the family for a luncheon and time of remembrance in the church fellowship hall following the service.

A private graveside committal service and burial will take place, at a later date, in Mt. St. Joseph Cemetery in Bristol.

In lieu of flowers, Florence has asked for spiritual bouquets.

Arrangements by Miller & Ketcham of Brandon.



FLORENCE A. GILL

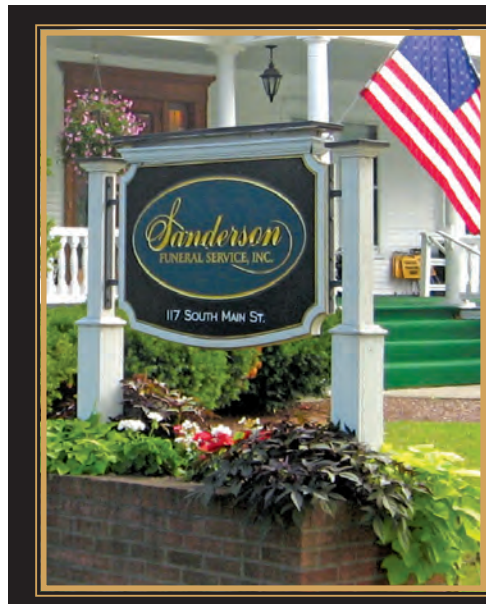


PRISCILLA BAKER

Priscilla Baker celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY — Please join us on Saturday, April 25, at 1 p.m. at the Congregational Church in Middlebury, Vt. Link below to live stream the event: www.youtube.com/@midducc/streams.

Priscilla died peacefully Feb. 5, 2026. She lived by the belief that her life belonged to the community.



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Obituaries

Alec Foote, 45, of Barre

BARRE — Born in Middlebury Nov. 8, 1980, Alec Foote passed away unexpectedly March 31, 2026, at his home, in the arms of his father.

The son of Peter Foote and Mary McClintock, Alec grew up in Montpelier alongside his sister, Katy, in a close-knit neighborhood filled with friendship and adventure. He loved being outdoors — riding his bike at top speed, exploring the woods, and spending long days with neighborhood friends.

A gifted athlete, he played soccer and football at U-32 High School, graduating with the Class of 2000. A fierce competitor, he brought determination and heart to everything he did.

After high school, he remained in the Montpelier area, where he built a strong reputation as a contractor and eventually started his own business. He took great pride in his work and the relationships he formed along the way.

In 2015, Alec married Melissa D'Amico, and together they made their home in Barre, where they welcomed their dog, Cooper. In



ALEC FOOTE

their new home Alec especially loved bringing people together. In his view, there was no better occasion than a backyard gathering filled with a roaring bonfire, good food, and the company of family and friends. He was known for his pig roasts specifically. He was happiest when hosting and sharing those moments with others. Alec was someone who did his best to take care of the people in his life.

In time, Alec and Melissa went their separate ways, but always remained close friends. In the years that followed he continued to take great joy in caring for his property — expanding the beautiful flower gardens and, with the help of friends, building a backyard pond of his very own which he was incredibly proud of. He found peace there, often relaxing on his deck, grilling, and enjoying the results of his hard work.

Alec is survived by his father, Peter; his mother, Mary; his sisters, Katy and Chelsea; his niece, Sophia; his brother, Charles; his stepmother, Sharon; and many cousins, aunts and uncles. He was deeply loved by his family and friends and will be forever missed.

Alec will be remembered as a kind and generous person with a big heart.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, April 18, at 2 p.m. at the Old Town Meeting House in East Montpelier.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Turning Point Center of Addison County. ◇



GILLIAN B. (WIDEAWAKE) GERO

Gillian Gero celebration of life

MONKTON — Gillian B. (Wideawake) Gero, 50, died in an automobile accident Oct. 26, 2025, in Leicester, Vt. A celebration of her life will be held April 19, 2026, at the Ferrisburgh Town Hall on Route 7 in Ferrisburgh, Vt.

Please join us anytime from 1 to 4 p.m. to honor and remember Gillian. ◇

Newton faces more penalties

By ALAN J. KEAYS, VtDigger

A former Addison County sheriff with criminal convictions could land on a national database that flags when someone has lost the certification they need to work as a law enforcement officer.

Peter Newton's two-year probation for assault and lewd and lascivious conduct already prohibits him from holding a law enforcement job.

Now, the Vermont Criminal Justice Council has scheduled a hearing to consider sanctions up to and "including permanent revocation" of Newton's law enforcement certification for "alleged unprofessional conduct."

The hearing is set for June 16. Newton was sentenced in October 2025 after earlier pleading guilty to charges of felony lewd and lascivious conduct and misdemeanor simple assault. They were lesser charges than those initially brought against him in June 2022, which included counts of felony sexual assault and unlawful restraint.

Newton's sentence included two years of probation, with a condition that he not work as a law enforcement officer, according to court records.

Christopher Brickell, executive director of the Vermont Criminal Justice Council, said Thursday that Newton's past law enforcement certification has lapsed. Still, Brickell said, there are reasons for moving forward with the hearing to address his certification.

"You can still decertify somebody," Brickell said. He added that a decertification sanction by the panel gets reported to a national database alerting law enforcement agencies around the country of the action in Vermont as they consider someone for employment.

Newton couldn't be reached Friday for comment.

If the state panel does act against Newton's certification, he'd become the third sheriff in recent years to have action taken against his law enforcement certification in Vermont.



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. ◇

Lynn Bascom, 69, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — We are sad to announce the recent passing of our brother, Lynn Bascom. There will be no services, burial will be at the Seeley District/VFW Cemetery, near his parents, Charles Sr. and Lois Bascom.

He was a longtime Middlebury resident, MUHS Class of 1975 and VTC Class of 1977. He was employed at Polymers and more recently at Vermont Hard Cider.

Lynn will be missed by his twin, Lyle Bascom, brother Charles Bascom II and sister, Nancy B. Howe.

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Addison County Communications Union District dba Maple Broadband
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Seder

(Continued from Page 1A)

Jewish Seder, an event Ayoub said packed the college's Arabic House. "It was really well attended," she recalled. "Students were sitting on the floor, which is why this year we decided to have it in a bigger venue to accommodate the larger interest in this kind of event."

It's an event Ayoub said the department is hoping to host annually, and one that's intended to be educational.

Zev Gold is a student at the college who helped organize the event with the Arabic Department and in consultation with the Charles P. Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life. He noted American Judaism is largely Ashkenazi — descending from communities that lived in parts of Europe — since many Jews emigrated to the U.S. to flee from antisemitism in Europe.

He said the Arab-Jewish Seder is aimed at educating attendees on a Jewish tradition that's less prominent in American Jewish circles, as well as helping Arabic students develop a broader understanding of how Arabic can be used in a religious context.

"While it is a holy language for Islam and the language of the Qur'an, it's also been a language that has been used in liturgy and song and poetry in religious contexts for Jewish populations for centuries," he explained.

Ayoub said she feels it's important that students understand Jewishness is part of the Arab world and that the two are not mutually exclusive.

"I think that that idea is something that a lot of people miss," she said. "Historically, in my classes, I've noticed the way that students are so

surprised to hear that there (is) such thing as Arab Jews."

Monday's Seder was also aimed at building community.

"I think in this particular moment when there's so much political upheaval in the Arab world ... I feel like we have a role to play to build community and to build a kind of togetherness that crosses religious lines and crosses ethnic lines," Ayoub said. "That's why it feels a priority for me to host events that really bring people from different parts of the community together to really show what we're capable of."

Other examples of such events include a series of gatherings with visiting Lebanese chef Dima Adra held at the college last week (see related story).

"These kinds of events really give our students a kind of exposure to what living in community means and living in community that really respects our diverse backgrounds," Ayoub said, adding that it is also a priority for her to create a space where students feel a deep sense of belonging. "Everyone in this room is going to have something to connect to in what's being presented, and we need to remember that's what Jewishness is all about, as well," she said.

— Dima Ayoub

PASSOVER SEDER

Monday's Seder attracted over 40 participants — double last year's attendance, according to organizers.

To start, Gold touched on the Jewish Diaspora, noting that many Jews settled in places like Persia, Iraq, Egypt and across north Africa after the Jewish temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in the 6th century BCE and again in the 1st century.



AN ARAB-JEWISH SEDER hosted by the Middlebury College Arabic Department this past Monday attracted over 40 participants — double last year's attendees, according to organizers. Those putting together the event noted it was aimed at educating participants on a Jewish tradition that's less prominent in American Jewish circles and building community.

Photo by Joshua Glucksmann

"The vast majority of the world's Jewish population lived from Morocco to Persia until the 13th century," he said. "Everywhere Jewish people have created community, they have cultivated traditions."

He explained that many Jews from Spain, North Africa, much of the Balkans and the rest of the Arab world follow what's known as Sephardic traditions, noting Mizrahi Jews (communities originating in the Middle East) also practice a variety of those traditions.

Monday's gathering highlighted different Arab-Jewish traditions relating to the Passover Seder. Gold explained that Passover is a week-long holiday celebrated by Jews during the month of Nisan on the Hebrew calendar (occurring around March-April).

"The holiday celebrates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt," he said.

He noted the Seder — which means "order" in Hebrew — is how Jewish people celebrate and retell that Passover story. It consists of 15 steps, which participants can follow along with in a guide called the Haggadah.

"So, you can imagine as this vibrant, cultural celebration of Jewish history and tradition, it

comes with a lot of variety, it comes with a lot of interpretation that is different for a people that has now spanned across the world in all four corners," Gold said.

For example, he explained that while a Seder plate containing symbolic foods is often the centerpiece of the celebration, the Yemenite Jewish tradition displays those foods directly on the table, as was done on Monday.

Other traditions from Jewish communities across the Arab world woven into the Seder included the haroset — a sweet paste that "represents the mortar of the bricks made by the Israelites as slaves" and is eaten with bitter herbs and Matzah, unleavened bread.

The haroset used on Monday drew from Sephardic traditions, which use dates, oranges and nuts. Throughout the evening, Gold pointed out some of the linguistic similarities between Arabic and Hebrew, as well as differences in the pronunciation of Hebrew amongst Arab-Jewish communities and Jewish communities made up of non-

native Arabic speakers.

Ten steps into the Seder, participants splintered off to enjoy a meal together. Monday's dinner featured Fattoush (a salad made with vegetables like lettuce, tomatoes and radishes), a dish called Mujaddara that's made with lentils and rice, as well as a few desserts made by members of the community.

Otter Creek Yoga founder Joanna Colwell was among the community members in attendance.

"Jews and Arabs are cousins, and ... there's a lot of efforts to make us hate each other, and it's really cool to just be together and be cousins."

— Joanna Colwell

"I think that Jews and Arabs are cousins, and also, like we learned at the beginning of the Seder, there are many Arab Jews just like there are Arab Christians," she said. "There's a lot of efforts to make us hate each other, and it's really cool to just be together and be cousins."

ACORN Executive Director Lindsey Berk said she found the linguistics aspect of the Seder to be particularly interesting.

"(Gold) is breaking down words that I've heard many times in Hebrew and didn't actually know what they meant," she said. "To

me, the linguistic overlap between the two languages just really ties into what (Colwell) was saying, that Hebrew and Arabic are very much cousins and people who practice different religions, a lot of it comes from the same root."

After the meal, attendees gathered back together for the final few steps of the Seder. The last step is Nirtzah, which Gold explained marks the conclusion and acceptance of the Seder with final songs and the proclamation that next year's Seder be "in Jerusalem."

He noted that proclamation doesn't always denote territorial hope.

"I think it's important to mention in this moment, Jerusalem, Judaism's holiest site, stands for redemption and revival," he said.

Gold said Jerusalem, or Yerushalayim in Hebrew, has an "interesting, yet debated, etymology." Breaking the Hebrew word into two can help us understand the proclamation, he said, as "Yeru" could mean "awe" or relate to the verb "to see," and "Shalaiym" at its root means peace.

"I think this is a better way of closing out a Seder like this," he said. "Next year may we be in awe and peace, may we see peace."



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Lawmakers aiming for balance

S.325 would give land use reform process more time

Happy April! Spring is a hopeful time of year in Vermont — may this season of renewal bring a bit of joy to you, despite so much heartache around the world.



Legislative Review
by Sen. Ruth Hardy,
D-Addison County

Tax Time. April is also tax time, with April 15th the deadline for filing your state and federal income tax returns fast approaching. While most federal tax changes made last summer largely benefit wealthy Americans and big corporations, we made changes to state tax laws last year that will benefit moderate income Vermonters, seniors, families with young children, veterans, and military retirees. 2025 Act 71, which was my bill, expanded Vermont's list of tax credits and exemptions. Read this excellent summary of Act 71 for more details.*

You can find a complete list of Vermont's tax credits and more information about filing your personal income taxes on the Department of Taxes website. Many tax credits are refundable, which means that if you qualify for one, even if you don't owe taxes, you should file your income tax return to receive a check from the state. Check out Anti-Poverty Tax Credits for a Strong Vermont, for more information about how such tax credits could help you if you are struggling financially. Finally, the United Way has a free online tax filing assistance tool which may be helpful — My Free Taxes — so check it out!

Land Use & Housing. Recently, the Senate advanced a bill to spur more housing development and slow down the land use reform provisions included in 2024 Act 181, which was itself a major overhaul of Vermont's land use law, known as Act 250. Our work got a lot of attention, so I'm going to try to answer some questions and give you some links to where you can learn more.

Two years ago, the Legislature passed Act 181, with the goal of loosening the requirements of Act 250 to make it easier to build

housing across Vermont. Act 181 created a new process and structure for planning the future land use of Vermont. Act 181 defined three land use tiers: Tier 1 in cities and towns where most development would occur; Tier 3 where environmentally sensitive areas would be protected; and Tier 2 with everything else, including sparsely populated rural areas, farmland, and forestland. Act 181 also included a land use planning process that begins with municipal town plans and maps, then moves up to regional planning commission plans and regional maps, and finally a statewide land use plan and map approved by the Land Use Review Board.

Finally, Act 181 created a series of "interim housing exemptions" that were meant to spur housing development by exempting many housing projects from a lengthy Act 250 development review. These housing exemptions have been really successful at jump-starting much needed housing development in communities across the state. However, other parts of Act 181, namely the so-called "road rule" that will trigger Act 250 development review for roads longer than 800 feet, and some parts of the preliminary Tier 3 maps have caused quite a few concerns. To address these concerns and give the overall process more time for community engagement, the Senate passed S.325 which extends the housing exemptions, improves the planning and mapping process, loosens the requirements for Tier 3 and the road rule, and delays their effective dates until mid-2028 and early-2030 respectively.

S.325 passed in the Senate Natural Resources Committee on a bipartisan, unanimous vote and all of the testimony we received was supportive of the bill. After it passed, a vocal group gathered at the State House to protest the bill and Act 181 in general. This spurred a partisan split on the Senate floor for many votes, although the final

vote on S.325 was a unanimous voice vote. I support S.325 and giving the process more time and flexibility. I know there are many legitimate concerns about how some elements of Act 181 could impact private land and personal development plans. S.325 is now in the House Environment Committee, so there is still time for more changes to the bill. The Senate Natural Resources will also begin work on H.932 about forestry regulation under Act 250, so there will be more opportunities for changes there too. I have been talking with many constituents, so if you have questions, concerns, or ideas about these bills, please reach out to me and other committee members, so we can better understand your perspective.

There's a lot of misinformation out there, much of it driven by political groups trying to create a wedge issue, so for accurate information about Act 181, you can read the LURB's website on Act 181: Modernizing Land Use Review. You can also check out the Addison County Regional Planning Commission's website about Building the Future of Addison County or the Addison County draft Regional Plan. You can also look up land parcels on the draft Future Land Use Map. You can also contact your town's planning commission, or better yet, join your town's planning commission, as many towns are in the process of updating their town plans as part of this overall work. There's still time to learn more, provide input, be involved, and make changes to the process, maps, and rules that apply!

Thank you for reading and take care.

**Editor's note: The Senator provided lots of hyperlinks to relevant online sites in this column; to follow the link read this column on addisonindependent.com.*

Act 181 is not the right path

Law creates hurdles, oversteps on private land use

"No kings." That's a principle most of us can stand behind. It's also deeply rooted in our state's founding ideals. The Vermont Constitution was shaped with a clear understanding: land ownership and stewardship — from Bristol to Bridport, and everywhere in between — that have long formed the backbone of our state.

Now that Act 181 is law, its consequences are coming into focus. In what are known as "Tier 3" areas especially, the law reaches deeply into private land use in ways that should concern every Vermonter. What may have been presented as a limited measure is anything but small in scope.



Legislative Review
by Rep. Steven Heffernan R-Bristol

From the beginning, land in Vermont has represented independence, opportunity and self-determination. It reflects our shared commitments to our communities and our working lands. But that commitment is now being tested.

Act 181 is at the center of this debate. This legislation has fundamentally changed the way land use is governed in Vermont — for the worse. While it contains provisions that may help a select few municipalities grow, it goes too far in other areas.

Gov. Phil Scott recognized the potential harm and vetoed the bill. Yet the Legislature's supermajority chose to override that veto, asserting that statewide officials, working from behind a computer screen, can manage our land better than Vermonters themselves.

Put simply, this new law adds significant regulatory hurdles to hundreds of thousands of acres of land and strips away important property rights. As Gov. Scott has noted, it deepens the divide between our rural towns and villages and our urban centers. It hurts rural residents seeking to build a home on their own land. It sidelines farmers trying to subdivide property for the next generation. And it leaves behind the rural communities

unique natural resources deserve protection. But this bill goes far beyond that. Estimates suggest it could affect anywhere from 150,000 to 450,000 acres of private land. Even at the low end, that is not a marginal impact — it is a significant intrusion on land that Vermonters own, steward and depend on. It is no surprise that groups ranging from the Vermont Farm Bureau to environmental advocates have raised serious concerns.

This debate ultimately comes down to a core question: who should control the land? The individuals who own and care for it — and who have done so for generations — or a centralized authority making broad determinations from behind a desk?

Protecting natural resources and respecting private property are not mutually exclusive goals. But when policy erodes ownership rights, it sets a troubling precedent. The more control transferred away from the people, the further we

drift from the principle of "no kings," replacing one form of concentrated power with another.

Vermonters have long valued stewardship and local control. We should be cautious of policies that undermine those traditions, even when they are framed with good intentions. Once rights are restricted, they are rarely restored without a fight.

As Gov. Jim Douglas once said, the choice isn't between our economy and our environment — "it's a choice between both, or neither." That's the Vermont way. But that's not the path Act 181 leads us down.

The issue before us is not whether we care about our environment — we do. The challenge is preserving it without leaving rural Vermont behind.

SPRING WILL COME (EVENTUALLY)!

HARE AND THE DOG

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Letters to the Editor

Help the bugs, leave the leaves

To me, gardening feels like one big experiment. Every year I learn new things, and the research is always changing.

Ever since COVID, when I became more bonded to our property from spending so much time at home, I've been trying to garden more for the benefit of wildlife. I'm also aging, and I think now more about what kind of a world I'm leaving for the generations to come. Being a good steward feels important.

Every spring there seems to be this push to clean out the garden beds. I certainly don't want to put any landscape companies out of business, but I do want to mention the latest research on the value of leaving the leaves. Until recently, it was thought that a good time to clean up and remove leaves in our area was in mid-May, when the apple trees were in bloom. We were told that by then, most of the beneficial insects had emerged. Many folks could not wait even that long. They'd clean out their beds at the first stretch of 50 degree days.

However, new research suggests that the best time to get rid of the leaves is likely never! Because it turns out insects are emerging at different times, right on into the summer. And leaves are an important year-round habitat for all manner of insects.

If interested, I invite you to google and read an interview with Max Ferlauto, the Maryland state entomologist who conducted the study along with Karin Burghardt. Their findings may change how you think about your yard and how you garden.

"When you remove your leaves, you reduce your butterfly and moth populations by about 45%."

This year, along with planting more native plants, I am planning to leave the leaves permanently. Besides providing important habitat, they will mulch the beds, add nutrients to the soil and suppress weeds. Hopefully the plants will thrive, and the birds and other wildlife will be happy too!

Susan Humphrey
Weybridge

Vote 'Yes' against ATV ordinance

What's wrong with this picture?

The selectboard of Orwell recently passed an ordinance allowing the use of dangerous and disruptive all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on what have traditionally been the town's safe and peaceful roads. Yet this same ordinance "recognizes" recommendations of the All Terrain Vehicle Institute (an ATV trade association) which state that "ATVs are intended for off-road use only. Never operate an ATV on public roads and always avoid paved surfaces. ATVs are not designed for use on public roads and other motorists may not see you."

The threat to others who may also be using these roads goes without saying. Orwell's ATV ordinance also

includes "regulations," such as speed limits and a prohibition on racing and riding side by side, but these measures are essentially meaningless. Why? Because there is a glaring lack of enforcement, since there is no budget or personnel provided for meaningful control over ATV use.

Orwell residents will have the opportunity to ban this ill-advised local law by voting YES at the Orwell fire house at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 18. The safety and tranquility of Orwell are at stake! Per the selectboard meeting of March 23, 2026, if the voters approve to ban ATVs the selectboard will not take up the issue again.

James Robinson
Orwell



EXPLORING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF THE PIONEERING ACTOR, DISABILITY RIGHTS CHAMPION AND AUTHOR.

MARLEE MATLIN: NOT ALONE ANYMORE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15 7PM

MNFF SELECTS

ADVANCE TICKETS \$14
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ENJOY THE
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Letters to the Editor

Tax law change would have benefited its advocate

When I read Paul Ralston's April 2 letter accusing me of voting against food security measures, I was disappointed but not surprised that he would stoop to misinformation to hide his attempts to manipulate tax law for his own benefit. Some important points that Mr. Ralston did not mention in his letter: he hired his own personal lobbyist to help pass a law that would give him a substantial property tax break through eligibility for the state's Current Use Program, in exchange for donating a relatively small amount of food. Mr. Ralston, who is not a farmer, lobbied for this provision in the Senate's miscellaneous agriculture bill, S.323, claiming he was doing so to help farmers, but in fact real farmers are already eligible for the Current Use Program.

The state's Current Use Program is a voluntary land conservation program that lowers the property taxes of farmers and foresters to keep their land in active production, rather than sell it for development. It is a widely successful program that both protects Vermont's working lands and benefits Vermonters who make their living from the land.

The Senate Agriculture Committee included Ralston's

provision in S.323 with good intentions, believing that incentives for donated food would help improve food security. However, when the bill was sent to the Senate Finance Committee to examine its tax implications, many members of the committee, including me, had questions and concerns. I take seriously my responsibility to pass fair and equitable tax policy.

The chair of the Finance Committee calculated that if this became law, she would be able to donate only a few hundred tomatoes to get the Current Use tax benefit. Adding wealthy landowners like Mr. Ralston to the Current Use program could result in higher education property taxes for other Vermonters, cost the state money as it reimburses towns for forgone municipal property taxes, and add cost to an important program for farmers.

Now is not the time to add pressure to property taxes or the state budget. This tax break, narrowly crafted to benefit Mr. Ralston, was unanimously opposed by the Finance Committee, and on a tri-partisan vote, was eliminated from S.323 by the full Senate.

Many actual farmers, who are already enrolled in Current Use,

regularly donate their products to food security organizations. We absolutely need to find more ways to incentivize this generosity, but tax breaks for wealthy Vermonters is not the answer. While there are fair questions about which landowners should be added to or subtracted from Current Use, adding a small class of wealthy landowners like Mr. Ralston does not benefit land conservation or farm viability.

During my eight years in the Senate, I have been a champion for food security measures, working to expand the farm-to-school program, approve universal school meals, support funding for the Vermont Food Bank and Vermonters Feeding Vermonters, increase SNAP benefits, and create the Farm Security Fund. I have a strong record of working with farm and food organizations to improve food security and farm viability. Rather than reach out to me to collaborate or discuss his ideas, Mr. Ralston tried to jam through a law that would primarily benefit his own personal finances and then attacked me when the Senate voted it down. That is not something to be proud of.

Sen. Ruth Hardy
East Middlebury

Don't forget fallen Green Mountain submariners

On April 9, 1963, USS Thresher (SSN 593) departed the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard with 112 crew members and 17 technical observers for deep diving exercises in an area approximately 200 miles east of Cape Cod.

On April 10, 1963, it was lost with all hands. Two of the individuals on board were Vermont submariners: James P. Ritchie, age 22, from Burlington,

and Edward A. Johnson, 34, from Hardwick.

The submarine sailors from the Green Mountain Submarine Base of the US Submarine Veterans have not forgotten the loss of our brothers. Their deaths resulted in massive design changes to the modern submarine that have undoubtedly saved lives.

The 63rd Memorial Service will be held by the Thresher Base, US Submarine Veterans on Saturday,

April 11, at 1300 hours (1 p.m.), in Kittery, Maine, at the Robert W. Traip Academy (12 Williams Ave.)

To find out more about the Green Mountain Submariners, United States Submarine Veterans Inc., contact Bill Mattoon: cmattoon@vermontel.net

C. William Mattoon
Springfield

'No Kings Rally' critic needs to stop and think

So... you drove by the No Kings 3 rally in Middlebury and observed that "most of the protesters looked like they never got over the thrill of protesting the Vietnam War" and that if Trump were actually a king "there would be no protesting."

My response is as follows:

1. I take it as a great compliment that I was one of the people attending the No Kings 3 who protested the Vietnam War. I, along with many others, also protested segregation, the use of the military against students at Kent State, degradation of the environment and Nixon's corruption. We protested for the rights of women, the

LGBTQ+ community and Indigenous peoples. We were, and still are, a generation of individuals that stand up for something—something bigger and more important than any of us individually.

2. By saying that most of the people at the rally were holdovers from the Vietnam War, you are making an interpretation—something based on your own experiences and biases—not an observation. The crowd of over 1,200 that peacefully assembled on the Green in Middlebury included people of all ages. Students, young couples, families with children and individuals over 60 were all in attendance.

Together.

3. Based on the above "interpretation," may I suggest that you were driving too fast? You might have instead slowed down, parked, gotten out of your vehicle and observed what was going on.

4. Lastly, I applaud your saying "If Trump were actually a king - there would be no protesting." Exactly. That's why people of all ages are out there protesting. Though it must be noted that many European countries have kings and protests still occur there. Just sayin'.

Judy Wiger-Grohs
Middlebury

We need a leader strong in convictions but tolerant

One hundred and fifty years ago, on April 14, 1876, at the dedication of the Freedman's Memorial in Washington, D.C., and at a delicate moment of possibility for a nation in dire need of healing in the aftermath of the savageries of our Civil War, Frederick Douglass spoke eloquently but with unequivocal clarity about the complexity of the man who led the nation through that war as our president; a man martyred and fervently revered to this day for the moral courage he ultimately accessed from the depths of a character cultivated with integrity, courage and ethical gravitas. Douglass expressed this of Lincoln:

"Though high in position, the humblest could approach him and feel at home in his presence. Though deep, he was transparent; though strong, he was gentle; though decided and pronounced in his convictions, he was tolerant

towards those who differed from him, and patient under reproaches."

It's impossible to ignore the stark and agonizing contrast to the prevalence of the unrestrained moral and political corruption we've all been forced to witness and abide in the present. Our current president is no Abraham Lincoln.

But it is not just the grim differences in the individual characters of presidents separated by 150 years that stood out to me in reading Frederick Douglass' eulogy of Lincoln, it is also the following topical references he made that I found distressingly poignant, given our current political and cultural landscape: "We are here in the District of Columbia, here in the city of Washington.... where the ablest and best men of the country are sent to devise the policy, enact the laws and shape the destiny of the Republic....the

members of the American House of Representatives, reflecting the general sentiment of the country; that in the presence of that august body, the American Senate, representing the highest intelligence and the calmest judgment of the country; in the presence of the Supreme Court and the Chief-Justice of the United States, to whose decisions we all patriotically bow; in the presence and under the steady eye of the honored and trusted President of the United States with the members of his wise and patriotic Cabinet...." Contrast indeed!

It seems we are at a moment of reckoning; as a nation, as citizens of that nation, as citizens of a world that has no actual borders, and as fellow beings in a holistic whole. I suppose the fundamental question is: how do we want to treat each other?

Perry Pirkkanen
Salisbury

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.

Saving Lives

Turning Point Center
OF ADDISON COUNTY

The Community of Bristol now has a free, self-serve, public health vending machine offering items like:

- Naloxone (Narcan®)
- Fentanyl & xylazine test strips
- First Aid & Hygiene Kits

Narcan reverses life-threatening overdoses caused by Fentanyl poisoning. It might be a friend, it might be a stranger. You can help save a life.

Visit the Public Health Vending Machine, located behind the Police Station at
Bristol Works, 72 Munsill Ave., behind Building 6
(see map)

Scan for more info

Contact us: info@tpvt.org or (802) 388-4249 | tpvt.org

CUSTOMERS UNDER 18 EARN 10X HIGHER INTEREST

National Bank of Middlebury's Youth iSave add-to CD helps kids and teens earn real interest while learning what it means to save. Available for anyone under 18.

Open a Youth iSave online or in branch! Scan to learn more.

Account must have a child under 18 years of age. Limit one iSave account per child. Account is non-renewable. Penalty for early withdrawal. Child checking or savings account required to open Youth iSave.

Porter Hospital patient becomes aggressive

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police cited Zihan A. Ling, 19, for domestic assault, assault on Porter Hospital staff and disorderly conduct, after responding to a report of an “assaultive, intoxicated patient” at Porter Hospital on April 5.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- Assisted Porter Hospital officials with a patient on March 31.
- Checked on the welfare of a person on Academy Street on March 31.
- Gave an intoxicated man a ride to his home on March 31.
- Responded to a reported “juvenile issue” at Middlebury Union Middle School on April 1.
- Conducted a welfare check on April 1 on a person who was subsequently taken to Porter Hospital by Middlebury Regional EMS.

Responded to a reported “juvenile issue” at in the Sugarwood Court neighborhood on April 1.

Enforced Middlebury’s overnight winter parking ban downtown on April 1.

Arrested Trint Johns, 21, for violating his conditions of release, following an investigation on Court Street on April 2. Police confirmed that Johns was working at the Champlain Farms store on Court Street at the time of his arrest. Johns, according to reporting by the *Barre Montpelier Times Argus*, pleaded not guilty last May in Washington County criminal court to a felony count of lewd and lascivious conduct with a child, two felony counts of possessing child sex abuse materials and a felony count of promoting a recording of sexual conduct involving a child.

Johns was a 20-year-old resident of North Montpelier at the time of his arrest on those charges.

Johns’s presence at the Middlebury Champlain Farms drew concern from at least one resident, who noted the store’s relatively close proximity to Mary Hogan Elementary School.

Middlebury police Chief Jason Covey provided the following statement to the *Independent*: “We did, in fact, arrest Mr. Johns yesterday at the Champlain Farms for violating his court-ordered conditions of release from the Washington County case you referenced. He was unknown to us prior to yesterday’s incident. He was cited and released, per the Attorney General’s Office, and is scheduled to appear in court in Middlebury.”

Johns was released on conditions following his April 3 arraignment in Addison County Criminal Court.

Received a report that

Middlebury Police Log

someone had vandalized tires on a car parked on Mill Street on April 2.

- Responded to a noise complaint in the Short Shannon Street area on April 3.
- Responded to a report of a South Village Green resident who had overdosed on April 3.
- Investigated a parking lot crash off Route 7 South on April 3.

Found a juvenile who had been reported missing from the Middlebury Union High School campus on April 3. Police report that the student was safe when found.

Checked on the welfare of a man found sleeping on the ground near the intersection of Route 7 and Halladay Road on April 3.

Investigated a hit-and-run accident involving two vehicles on Court Street on April 3.

Recovered on April 3 a stolen ATM that had been dumped off Route 17 in Starksboro. Middlebury police continue to investigate the recent smash-and-grab thefts of ATMs from three separate Middlebury stores.

Seized, pending a search warrant, a vehicle that had been involved in a brief car chase with Middlebury police on Court Street on April 3.

Cited Cassie Stearns, 24, of Middlebury for driving under the influence, following a traffic stop on Case Street on April 4. Police said they measured Stearns’s blood-alcohol content at 0.103%; the legal limit for driving is 0.08.

Assisted Vermont State Police and Bristol police in accessing a Garfield Street resident who had barricaded themselves in their Bristol home on April 4.

Responded to a report of a man having a mental health episode in the Maple Street area on April 4.

Investigated a report of suspicious activity in the Woodland Park area on April 4.

Responded to a complaint about a loud party in the Frog Hollow area at around 12:20 a.m. on April 5.

Assisted state police in searching for a vehicle reported stolen from the New Haven area on April 5.

Investigated a report of a suspicious vehicle in the Jackson Lane neighborhood on April 5.

Were informed of the theft of a lawn sign from a Main Street property on April 5.

Gave an elderly resident a ride home from Porter Hospital during the evening of April 5.

Responded to a trespassing complaint at Desabrais Laundry on Exchange Street on April 5.

Both drivers badly injured in two-car Monkton crash

ADDISON COUNTY — A very serious two-car crash on Bristol Road in Monkton on Monday morning sent two people to the hospital and closed the important north-south artery for at least two hours.

Vermont State Police were called to the crash site at 7:42 a.m. on April 6. Troopers report that Adam P. Premo, 34, of Bristol was driving a 2016 Chevy Equinox southbound on Bristol Road and a 2015 Toyota RAV4 driven by Abigail L. Nicholson-Wemette, 22, of Middlebury was headed northbound.

Police said that Premo’s vehicle entered the northbound lane and

Vt. State Police Log

collided with Nicholson-Wemette’s Toyota. Both vehicles came to rest in a different direction than the one in which they had been traveling — the Equinox facing east in the northbound lane, the RAV4 facing south on the northbound shoulder of Monkton Road.

Nicholson-Wemette was taken to UVM Medical Center for treatment of suspected serious injuries. Premo was also transported to

UVMHC; police described injuries as “suspected moderate.”

Troopers were assisted on scene by Middlebury police, Monkton Fire, Bristol Rescue Squad, and Middstate Towing.

State police ask that anyone with information that could assist investigators call the New Haven Barracks at 802-388-4919 or submit an anonymous tip online at vsp.vermont.gov/tipssubmit.

Meanwhile, Vermont State Police jailed a Salisbury man late last week saying that he was involved in a domestic assault.

Police allege that on April 3 between 8:30 and 9 p.m., Cyrus

Bedard, 36, assaulted a family or household member at a West Shore Road home in Salisbury. The victim reported the assault and theft of his cell phone to state police the following morning, April 4.

Troopers responded to the scene and report that during their investigation, Bedard assaulted a responding trooper.

Police cited Bedard for domestic assault, interference with access to emergency services and assault of a protected professional, then they lodged him at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility with bail set at \$200.

Miss Vt. to hold wildlife educational fair in Vergennes

VERGENNES — Addison native Sophia Parker is well known as a dedicated and passionate wildlife advocate. She is the youngest licensed wildlife rehabilitator in Vermont’s history and has spent the last decade at the helm of Otter Creek Wildlife Rescue alongside her mother, Julianna Parker. The 27-year-old is also a combat medic and Sergeant in the Vermont Army National Guard, a Registered Nurse, and holds the title of Miss Vermont 2025.

Parker and a team of volunteers are planning a first-of-its-kind Wildlife Service Fair for Sunday, April 19 from 1 - 4 p.m. at the American Legion Hall on Armory Lane in Vergennes. The event is open to the public and free to attend.

The fair will feature presentations by Sophia Parker, retired Game Warden Dale Whitlock and a live raptor demonstration by Craig Newman of Outreach for Earth Stewardship.

“We are grateful for this unique opportunity to come together with a focus on wildlife work and key wildlife issues,” said Julianna Parker. “We look forward to learning from each other, engaging in civil conversation across differences and deepening bonds with like-minded friends

and colleagues.”

Parker has spent her year as Miss

Vermont championing her cause across the state. Her community

service initiative is Wildlife (See *Wildlife fair*, Page 12A)

MiniBury
BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE ADDISON INDEPENDENT

Are your kids as excited about Artemis II as ours are?!

We want to see it!

Share your family’s excitement — send us your photos, artwork, space-themed dinners, kid questions, or any other details about how you’re celebrating this historic mission.

Your submissions could be featured in next week’s MiniBury!

Email your space love to hello@minibury.com



UPCOMING SAAC EVENT



Bringing together Middlebury student-athletes, youth and community members.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11TH AT 11AM

Week of the Young Child, WOYC, is “an annual April celebration focusing public attention on the needs of children (birth to age 8), their families, and early childhood educators”. Join SAAC Sports Saturday to kick off the Week of the Young Child and close out NCAA DIII Week.

Meet at the tables at Peter Kohn Field at 11:00 AM to take part in WOYC festivities!



- 10:00AM - Women’s tennis start
- 11:15AM - Cheer tunnel for women’s lacrosse
- 11:30AM - Field games with SAAC
- 12:00 - Women’s Lacrosse game start
- 12:00 Softball game start

Peter Kohn Field Sports Station on Grass Fields

Addison County Substance Use & Prevention Coalition

Parent SURVEY

Addison County parents of 6th - 12th graders, we want to hear from you! Please help inform and improve prevention programs for youth and families in our community. At the end of the survey, you will have a chance to enter a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate to a local restaurant!

Scan Here!

bit.ly/2026_AC_ParentSurvey

UNITED WAY Addison County



MISS VERMONT 2025 and licensed wildlife rehabilitator, Sophia Parker. Photo by Miss Vermont Scholarship Organization

Wildlife fair

(Continued from Page 11A) Rehabilitation and Stewardship of the Natural World, and her message was heard in countless schools and civic organizations. “The wildlife community is made up of very busy, hardworking people,” said Sophia Parker. “We rarely get the chance to all come together in the same place. I am

excited to gather in service of Vermont’s diverse and abundant wild birds and mammals, and to share our love of wildlife with members of the public as well.” Parker will crown Miss Vermont 2026 on Sunday, April 26 at Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe.

Monkton

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

NEWS

MONKTON — Ever wondered where the airport is on Old Airport Road? The industrial history of Monkton extends beyond the advent of airplanes to the colonial period. The state of Vermont was only a year old when Stephen Barnum quite literally stumbled upon an iron deposit on his newly purchased farmland in 1772. Six years later, Stephen’s cousin Barnabas Barnum would be the first casualty in the Battle of Shelburne in 1778 on the future estate of the man who’d construct the Airport Road as a landing strip for his plane so he could assess his burgeoning Vermont Kaolin Corporation in the 1950s.

At an April 20 talk you can hear the story of the iron ore and Kaolin industries in Monkton and discover how these operations shaped the landscape as we see it today. Focusing a historical lens on local landscapes forges new connections that allow us to become closer to our backyards, neighbors, and ancestors.

The presenter, Samantha Ford, is the owner of Turn Stone Research. She teaches and

researches Vermont’s history from a land-based perspective. Her background as an assistant town clerk first illuminated the vast treasure troves that are the land records housed in every town hall in the state. Sam prefers to learn and teach outside and is happiest when others are inspired to share their own personal history with her during a walk in the woods.

Do you want to know what the selectboard is going to do about Piney Woods Road? The town will hold an informational meeting at 7 p.m. this Saturday, April 11, at Town Hall (280 Monkton Ridge). There will be a presentation on the various options that the selectboard can make followed by a Q&A from the community.

Monkton’s town hall will take place on April 20, 7 p.m. at 92 Monkton Ridge Rd. Light refreshments will be provided. In-person attendance is encouraged, but a Zoom link is available for those unable to come. Contact Lauren Parren with any questions at monktonmhs@gmail.com. Many thanks to our sponsors who are listed at monktonhistory.org.

New Haven

Have a news tip? Contact Kim Callahan at kimcallahan99@gmail.com.

NEWS

NEW HAVEN —Where are the peepers? It seems late this year and I think we are all just about ready to hear their song of spring!

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, April 15, 7 p.m. at the Town Offices to hear a presentation by Matthew Dickerson, Addison Independent outdoor columnist and Middlebury College professor. Dickerson is the author of seven books about river ecology and two books exploring environmental literature. He is also a former artist-in-residence at Glacier National Park, Acadia National Park and Alaska State Parks. Dickerson will share his knowledge, experience, observations and photographs related to river ecology and fishing

on both local rivers and in some of our national parks.

5 Town Friends of the Arts presents Sara Grey and Kieron Means in concert on Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m. at the New Haven Community Library. The mother-son duo will play American music, which is distinct from Americana—theirs is the real deal. Old-time ballads, cowboy songs and Primitive Methodist hymns are all grist to their individual mill. Grey’s unique banjo style and Means’ blues-inflected guitar are in perfect harmony, and this instinctive family symbiosis is what sets them apart. The performance is part of the Winter into Spring Musical Library Tour. Admission is free, but donations are welcome.

The library is offering another program as part of its Simple Wellness Series on Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m. Once a month, participants gather to practice a healthy-living skill together. This month, the discussion will focus on the benefits that writing of any kind can bring for us and how we might incorporate it into our daily lives. The goal of this series is to draw attention to and practice easy, free skills to promote health.

On Monday, April 20 at 5 p.m., the library will hold a Mini-Bookshelf Craft Project. Materials will be provided to create a pocket-sized bookshelf inside a tin. Children old enough for an intricate craft (around 8 and up) are welcome to join.

This month’s book club meeting will take place at the library on Wednesday, April 29 at 6 p.m. The read is “My Side of the Mountain” by Jean Craighead George. “The defining childhood classic about a boy finding his own way in the wilderness—a nostalgic book for readers young and old who have ever wanted to run away from home.” This title will appeal to young and old, so bring the kids, grandkids, mentees, friends, or

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A) invited to attend and answer questions about how the session in Montpelier is progressing. Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbets will also attend, while U.S. Sen. Peter Welch, D-Vt., has been extended an invitation. A luncheon will follow the meeting at noon.

Hey folks, you might have been targeted by playful pranks on April Fool’s Day this past April 1. Now get ready for “April Food’s Day,” a community potluck dinner to “celebrate the power and joy of sharing food with our neighbors,” according to organizers of the event, slated for Saturday, April 11, from 5-7 p.m. on the Bristol Town Green. Folks of all ages are welcome, as are leashed pets. Bring something to share, and organizers — the Rural Adult Twenty Somethings (RATS) will bring the plates and cutlery. The group will gratefully accept donations to help fuel future potlucks and leverage grants for other neighborly events.

Spring is here, and with it brings renewed momentum toward completion of the Ilsley Library expansion- and renovation project at 75 Main St. in Middlebury. As part of its contract, ReArch Construction will be repaving the “upper” municipal parking lot behind the Ilsley. Just four months remain until the \$17 million construction is completed and the full upper parking lot is restored. The Ilsley library’s grand reopening has been scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 29, with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 5, is the rain date. Ilsley Library project questions? Contact Director Dana Hart at dana.hart@ilsleypubliclibrary.org.

Bristol’s Mt. Abraham Union High School will host a Veterans of America Craft and Vendor Fair on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with proceeds to support the Veterans’ Place in Northfield. There will be crafters and vendors offering a wide variety of products for sale, including food and a raffle. The Veterans’ Place has provided high quality, supportive housing services to homeless veterans for the past 16 years. The organization collaborates with the Veterans Administration and social service agencies to deliver comprehensive, integrated services to help homeless veterans transition to stable and permanent housing. If you’d like to register as a vendor, please email marcie.brown@hotmail.com, or pampermeheather@gmail.com.

Average gasoline prices in Vermont have risen 18.1 cents per gallon during the the past week, averaging \$4.08 per gallon right

now, according to GasBuddy’s survey of 626 stations in Vermont. Prices in Vermont are 81.2 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 98.2 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Vermont was priced at \$3.73 per gallon earlier this week, while the most expensive was \$4.39 per gallon, a difference of 66 cents. Meanwhile, the national average price of gasoline has risen 11.8 cents per gallon during the past week, averaging \$4.06 per gallon right now. The national average is up 65.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 85 cents per gallon 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.

Be advised that the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Vermont highway safety advocates will conduct a “national, high-visibility enforcement effort” from April 9-13 to remind drivers of the potentially deadly dangers of being distracted behind the wheel. Law enforcement nationwide will work together to enforce laws prohibiting distracted driving. April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

State officials have just released a report on Vermont revenue collections for the month of February. The report shows the state’s general, transportation and education fund receipts in February were a combined \$196.26 million, which was \$5.86 million (2.9%) less than the \$202.12 million that the state’s Emergency Board had forecasted for the month. Total General Fund revenues for February were \$116.01 million, which was \$3.89 million (3.25%) below the \$120.01 million monthly cash flow target. Transportation Fund revenues were \$18.13 million, which was \$3.86 million (17.54%) less than forecasted. On the brighter side, the monthly Education Fund revenues of \$62.02 million were \$1.9 million (3.7%) above their February cash flow target of \$60.12 million. According to Vermont Secretary of Administration Sarah Clark: “Revenues to the Education Fund remain ahead of their forecasted target. General Fund and Transportation Fund revenues are behind their cumulative targets for the fiscal year, but the General Fund shortfall represents less than half of a percentage point from the expected cumulative total, and the Transportation Fund is behind by just over 2%.”

anyone else who is interested. Copies are available at the library.

Do you have ideas for what you would like to see in the historic depot space? Are you interested in it being a place for community events, art and music programming, or free exhibits? Perhaps you think it should be the home of the Historical Society, a meeting space, part of a library extension or a place for senior or children’s programs?

Maybe you have other ideas. The New Haven Community Trust and the New Haven Neighbors are working to gather your input this spring, so that the project can begin to take shape. A call for volunteers and an online survey will be coming soon. With your input, you will have a chance to win an exciting prize at Village Green Market, Tourterelle, Misty Knoll or a kids’ basket of goodies.

Make a Pete’s Stop!

Still independently owned and operated.

Middlebury location has moved to New Haven!

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Free with new tire purchase:

- Mounting
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*Applicable to passenger and light truck tires only

Ask us about:

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Enter to win a set of (4) tires (with installation) a value of up to \$1,000.

Stop by our New Haven location April 1st-May 29th to enter!

2 WINNERS!

No purchase necessary to enter.
No cash value substitute.
Offer must be redeemed by 12/31/26.

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Janoo

(Continued from Page 1A)

Scott hasn't said yet whether he'll seek a sixth term, and no other Republicans have thrown their hat into the ring.

In an interview with the *Independent*, Janoo described how her candidacy has been prompted by the current moment, and how she'd aim to help Vermonters navigate a path forward through steps like moving toward universal primary care, supporting small businesses and preparing for federal actions that affect the state.

"I've spent my entire life, or career at least, focusing on government planning and economic systems change and policies. Those are skills I think we need right now, and I happen to have them," Janoo said. "These are dark times, but they're times that

ask things of us, call us to step up in ways I think we wouldn't have anticipated, and this is something I can do."

FROM VT TO THE UN

Janoo, 38, was born in Norwich; her family moved to South Strafford soon after. She was homeschooled until middle school, later attending the Newton School in Strafford and Hanover High School across the river in New Hampshire.

Janoo studied political science and global political economy at Macalester College in Minnesota, where she began diving into Heterodox economics — theories and schools of thought considered outside of the mainstream, such as feminist and institutional economics. She built on those explorations at Oxford and Cambridge universities in England, as well as through a Fulbright research scholarship studying a women's labor movement in India.

Janoo went on to work for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, initially based out of Vienna, Austria, but she also traveled around the globe to provide countries with industrial policy support. For example, she worked with the government of Myanmar on rural-urban inequality reduction.

"A lot of my strategy was, I didn't feel like it's appropriate to come in as an outsider and be like, 'Here's what you should do,'" she said of her work with the UN. "So it was a lot of 'How do we facilitate and help governments and multi-stakeholder coalitions to really clarify what is it that you want to achieve with this economic policy in the first place, and then on that basis, what are the kinds of activities you think are important to protect or promote in order to get there, and then what are the tools you have, etc.'"

In 2020, Janoo joined the Wellbeing Economy Alliance, a global coalition "working towards an economic system that serves

people and planet." She later helped establish what's now known as the Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont (WEAV), a network that "facilitates creative conversations across Vermont about our economy and the beliefs, values and aspirations that shape and reshape it."



"People and planet are not here to serve the economy, the economy is here to serve us."

— Amanda Janoo

She's served in various roles for other organizations, including as a board member for the ACLU of Vermont and a steering committee member and economic advisor for the Fund Vermont's Future coalition, which advocates for changes in the state's budget process.

"I've really spent my career focused on working with governments here and around the world to build more resilient and people-centered economies that work for communities as opposed to just the wealthy few," Janoo explained.

She boiled down the vision for the kind of economic change she and others have been working toward.

"People and the planet are not here to serve the economy, the economy is here to serve us," she said. "How do we really design an economy that's truly working for us, for our communities, for our young people, for our elders, for our ... working lands and natural beauty, all of it?"

Janoo pointed to places where such explorations have unfolded, including in Washington state, where the Washington Economic Justice Alliance is working to implement a 10-year plan aimed at dismantling poverty and promoting wellbeing in the state.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reforming Vermont's economic system is part of Janoo's platform. "A lot of our economic development philosophy has been ... always looking to the outside as the source of our prosperity — like we need more people, we need more investment, we need more companies to come set up here," she said. "And it's like, OK, but why don't we start with what we have and actually build on that?"

Janoo sees Community Wealth Building, an economic development model, as one way to strengthen Vermont's economy and keep more of its money circulating in the state. That approach would seek to help Vermont businesses buy from one another rather than selling largely to outside markets.

"There are different strategies for doing that, but particularly in Vermont where our government is the largest employer and actual sector in the state, public procurement can be a really powerful way of supporting small businesses," she said.

She noted that 99% of Vermont's businesses are small businesses,

most of which are sole proprietors.

"Right now our small businesses are struggling massively, and there's a lot of different aspects to that," she said.

She pointed to the need to address cost burdens in areas like health care and suggested Vermont could create "clusters" that allow small businesses to pool resources like legal, accounting and insurance services to reduce costs.

Janoo said she also believes the economy of the future will have to be a green economy, one with an eye for sustainability and environmental considerations.

"We already have so many businesses that are doing this and have that consciousness," Janoo said. "If the government strategically supports them, so they are prepared to not only compete nationally but globally, that can be a huge driver of larger, good-quality and meaningful work."

HEALTH CARE, SCHOOLS

Another focus of Janoo's platform is health care. "That's, I think, the most urgent issue because it's not only creating a huge pressure on our state budget but on all of our businesses," she said.

Janoo described her vision for a state-funded universal primary care system, an initiative she said could be supported through an income surcharge on the state's top earners.

"If we pass that ... we'd have more than enough money for the state to just pay primary care physicians directly an annual salary, bring primary care providers back to our communities, provide admin, physician assistants, mental health support, so it's embedded in our communities and everybody can go and see a doctor for free and every doctor can actually provide patient care without having to deal with insurance and middlemen," she said.

Plans for health care reform also tie into how Janoo would look to address rising education costs in Vermont — an issue lawmakers have been trying to tackle, largely through the landmark education reform law Act 73.

Janoo has been critical of the argument that consolidating schools is the path toward achieving savings, stating she hasn't seen evidence that would reduce property taxes and that doing so doesn't address the key cost drivers of health care and mental health support for students.

"If you don't deal with the cost drivers, you're never going to actually reduce the pressure, you're just ostensibly cutting public education funding," she said. "We need to get to actually the root drivers of these costs, which is our broken, profit-oriented health care system."

HOUSING, FEDERAL ACTION

Janoo outlined a separate approach for reducing property taxes, specifically having properties like second homes taxed at a higher rate, with that money used to lower property taxes for primary residents and for programs supporting Vermonters in building their own homes.

"There's no building incentives for individuals at all right now, it's all for big contractors," she said.

Aly Richards launches bid for governor

By SHAUN ROBINSON
VTDigger.org

NEWBURY — Aly Richards, who led a lobbying group that won major increases to public child care funding in Vermont during the past decade, announced her bid for governor on Monday.

Flanked by dozens of supporters on a snowy morning outside the Newbury Village Store, the former CEO of Let's Grow Kids said she sees "a five-alarm fire" of social and economic challenges facing Vermont "everywhere we look." And she took aim at Republican Gov. Phil Scott, whom she said hasn't done enough to fix those challenges since he was first elected in 2016.

"You've got to ask yourself: Are you better off now than you were 10 years ago?" Richards asked the crowd. "When people can't afford to live here, you know we've got a

problem, OK? It's not working. It's time for a new approach."

Richards is the second Democrat to launch a bid for governor this year. Amanda Janoo, an economist from Strafford, announced her campaign last month and has already reported raising a substantial amount of campaign cash. As of Monday afternoon, Richards' campaign had not filed its first batch of campaign fundraising data.

Richards, 40, of Montpelier, had worked on former President Barack Obama's 2008 campaign and then in the office of former Vermont Democratic Gov. Peter Shumlin, finishing her tenure there in 2015 as deputy chief of staff.

It's not yet clear that Richards, or Janoo, would face Gov. Scott in an election this fall. Scott hasn't announced whether he'll seek a sixth two-year term.

But Richards made the case

in an interview last week that Scott has done little more than call out the problems the state is facing, namely that it has grown increasingly unaffordable, it doesn't have enough housing, and its population is aging without younger residents staying to build up the workforce.

"I think the diagnosis of the challenges has been correct. I think the methods have not worked," she said.

Richards said after the event she'd release more detailed policy positions in the coming weeks. On the top issue facing the state today, she said she doesn't support forcing school districts to consolidate, something Scott has argued is essential to reducing the overall costs of the education system.

The *Independent* will publish a full interview with Richards at a later date.

"But if you support individuals to build their own houses, they're going to live in them, as opposed to contractors who will sell them back to you at market rate."

Janoo's other ideas for addressing the state's housing crisis include helping Vermonters more easily build housing through cooperatives, making more building materials in Vermont and developing more apprenticeship programs and vocational training with carpenters.

Looking to the national level, Janoo outlined how she'd look to help the state respond to federal actions impacting Vermont. She pointed to the March 11 Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid at a South Burlington home that led to the detainment of three people, none of whom were named on the criminal warrant officers used to enter the house.

"There's no situation where ... our state police should be helping ICE," she said. "We don't have to and we shouldn't, but even that I don't think is sufficient."

Janoo said she believes states need to be taking a more proactive approach to contending with federal

action.

"30% of our budget comes from the federal government, and most of that is for health care," she said. "That's partially why my proposal for a state-funded primary, preventative health care policy feels so important, so that we are not just going along with the federal government because of budgetary considerations."

COMING TOGETHER

If she goes on to face Scott in the general election, Janoo would be the latest Democrat trying to unseat the popular Republican governor. Scott has previously beaten Democratic challengers by large margins, most recently winning 73.4% of the vote in the 2024 Vermont governor's race against Esther Charlestin.

Janoo acknowledged where Scott has succeeded with Vermonters, but argues the state feels worse off than it was 10 years ago and that its future requires a change.

"We are in a moment where we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that created them," she said.

Janoo said she's found a level of excitement in her visits with

Vermonters around the state.

"I think people are really yearning for something that feels more systemic and more transformative," she said. "I think we might be surprised by what people are ready for."

Janoo's campaign had raised \$80,281 as of Tuesday, and she noted almost 300 people have signed up to volunteer.

Janoo said bringing people together is a goal of her campaign. This past Friday, she was gearing up for a meet and greet followed by a dance party in White River Junction.

"How do we invite people into a movement for justice because it feels good to be a part of it? That is part of what I'm really hoping to also do with this campaign ... to be able to support some of that culture-building work," she said.

"So we can hopefully break down some of the divisions, because we're so fractured right now, politically, ideologically, class, identity, etc., but I think there's a lot more that unites us right now than divides us in terms of our aims and the challenges we face."



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OVUUS budget

(Continued from Page 1A)

Rutland Northeast Superintendent Rene Sanchez said he was please in a message to the community on Tuesday evening.

“Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in the process. Your engagement and support are an important part of our work to serve students and our community,” Sanchez wrote. “We appreciate your continued partnership and look forward to moving ahead together.”

OVUUS educates children in Leicester, Whiting, Goshen, Sudbury, Brandon and Pittsford

The revised budget that passed represents a 2.8% overall spending increase compared to this year and a 4.84% increase in per-pupil spending to \$14,168 — that is \$577 less than the state average, according to the school district.

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 OV school board Chair Laurie Bertrand said reflected 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.

The OV budget approval came a week after residents of Orwell and five Rutland County towns OK'd the revised Slate Valley Unified Union School District's \$32.3 million budget. The vote wasn't as close as OV's, with 778 ayes and 546 nays on March 31.

The approved budget reflects \$202,500 in cuts that the board made since the initial budget failed 952-1,125 on Town Meeting Day.



THE TEAM AT Starksboro's Hillsboro Sugarworks gets some help with boiling sap. Local sugarmakers reported a slow start to this year's season but are hoping to see their syrup production end up around average.

Maple season

(Continued from Page 1A)
3 million gallons during the 2025 maple season.

The team at Twin Maple SugarWorks puts out 5,600 taps, beginning in February. Gale said Twin Maple saw a later start this season, which for the most part didn't take off until March 7, “which is kind of on par with last year, but it was so cold,” he said.

In addition to cold temperatures, Gale said Twin Maple got a lot of snow this year. While the amount of snow was manageable at the sugarhouse, he said it was much deeper in the woods, reaching over 40 inches at the top of one of the main lines.

Gale noted the snow was really granular underneath, making it difficult to move around in even on snowshoes with cleats.

“When the season started, I

thought we were going to have a shorter season, high sugar content because of the drought, and lower volume,” he said, noting that's largely been the case.

“We had waist-high snow that the guys were tapping in, and they said it was basically powder, so they would sink to the bottom. So that slowed things down.”

— Bill Heffernan

“Sap coming out of the woods has been 2% (sugar content), volumes are definitely down.”

Gale expected Twin Maple to end up with around 20,000-30,000 gallons less sap than it did last year, but with syrup production closer to what they've seen in the past due to higher sugar content in the sap.

The team at Hillsboro Sugarworks in Starksboro is also hoping to end up with an average season after a slow start.

“It started slow, we were a little worried I guess, and then March was OK,” sugarmaker Bill Heffernan told the *Independent*.

The sugarworks has over 50,000 taps on Hillsboro Mountain and

began tapping in the first week of December. Like Twin Maple, Heffernan said the Hillsboro team had to navigate a lot of snow in the sugarbush.

“We had waist-high snow that the guys were tapping in, and they said it was basically powder, so they would sink to the bottom,” he explained. “So that slowed things down.”

Heffernan said the team had been hoping to catch up on syrup production throughout the rest of the season. When the *Independent* spoke with him this past Friday, he expected Hillsboro's season would wrap up in 10-15 days.

Twin Maple was also nearing the end of its season early this week. On Monday, snow was still falling in Lincoln. The sugarworks had collected another 4,100 gallons of sap that morning, but warmer weather was on the way.

“Unless it turns off colder, I don't think we'll squeak through the end of this week,” Gale said. “We'll probably get a couple good runs, and that'll be it.”

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Education

(Continued from Page 1A) has one, about a year old, that is already proving to save its member school districts money, even with its limited offerings.”

The CESA model already in place is the Vermont Learning Collaborative which delivers services to schools in southeastern Vermont.

Conlon stressed the CESAs wouldn't govern their member schools; they would exist as cost reducers and could “evolve to meet the needs of member districts,” he said.

H.955 also calls for each CESA to form a study committee that would lead a voluntary merger study among its member school districts. Conlon likened this process to that of Act 46, a school governance consolidation effort that led to PreK-12 budgeting and unified school boards throughout the state.

Act 46 was also intended to save money through streamlined governance, but it hasn't proved a substantial cost saver.

All member school districts would be required to participate in the H.955 merger study process, which would unfold in 2027 and 2028.

“If (the committee) decides it's inadvisable (to merge), the process stops there,” Conlon said.

But if the committee decides a merger has merit, the panel would follow a process that would lead to a public vote.

“It's a voluntary process, one that respects local voice and local vote at the end,” Conlon said.

“Save our schools” activists might find solace in the fact that H.955 doesn't prescribe forced mergers. But the bill also doesn't come with a financial lifeline to tiny schools that are testing taxpayers' limits. Conlon said Vermont — per Act 73 — is scheduled in 2028 to pivot to a foundation formula for school funding. This formula will calculate school funding allowances based on a “weighting” system that will better tailor state funding to student

needs. For example, schools serving children with special needs will receive slightly higher state aid for such students through the weighting system.

Conlon said the new foundation formula is intended to better equalize spending among school districts than the current property tax-based system. But it will also mean higher spending school districts — like ACSD — will face some very tough decisions based on the new state aid rules, according to Conlon.

“It's a voluntary (merger) process ... but everyone who has these conversations should understand that the foundation formula is probably going to be a reality,” he said. “Will they be prepared for adjusting to that new financial reality if they don't come up with some sort of merger plan?”

LOCAL REACTION Local officials this week were still digesting the specifics of H.955. But ACSD Superintendent Wendy Baker offered her early thoughts on the new law.

“The bill largely mirrors the published recommendations of the Redistricting Task Force, and accounts for consistent themes continually raised since then in testimony, community, and field feedback,” she said.

“H.955 strikes an intentional balance between an honest recognition that our state is not yet prepared to successfully support aggressive transformation timelines or mandated district mergers and an important acknowledgement that the majority of Vermont students would benefit from our ability to meet this moment in Vermont's

history differently.” Vermont House Speaker Jill Krowinski, a Burlington Democrat, offered her support of H.955 after the House Education Committee passed it on April 2. The bill now goes to the House Appropriations and Ways & Means Committees before a House vote. Then it would advance to the state Senate.

“H.955 is the critical next step in our work to address challenges facing our public education system,” Krowinski said in a written statement. “It builds for a more stable future by moving us toward scale, creating statewide cohesion and support for our system, and providing resources to help communities navigate making local decisions for the future of their schools. This legislation addresses cost drivers impacting the education system, ensures local voices are heard in the decision-making process, and puts us on a path to create greater educational opportunities for every student, at a cost Vermonters can afford.”

One of the first state senators who will see H.955 when it goes to the upper chamber is Sen. Steven Heffernan, R-Bristol, who is on the Senate Education Committee. Heffernan said that after listening to testimony in his committee for two years he knows that Vermonters would welcome some kind of coordination across the large number of schools across the state, but he also recognizes that Vermonters have an independent streak that will make such coordination a challenge. “They want coordinated

graduation requirements and coordinated school calendars and services,” he told the *Independent*. “They want some sharing of resources, but most march to the beat to their own drum.”

As such, Heffernan likes the idea of CESAs in H.955 and thinks it will lead to some savings.

“If we can share resources, we can help share costs,” he said. But he cautioned that CESAs won't be a panacea.

“CESA won't solve the current problem we have, it's going to cause more bureaucracy,” Heffernan said. He will be happy to see the foundation formula kick in, because he thinks it will control spending.

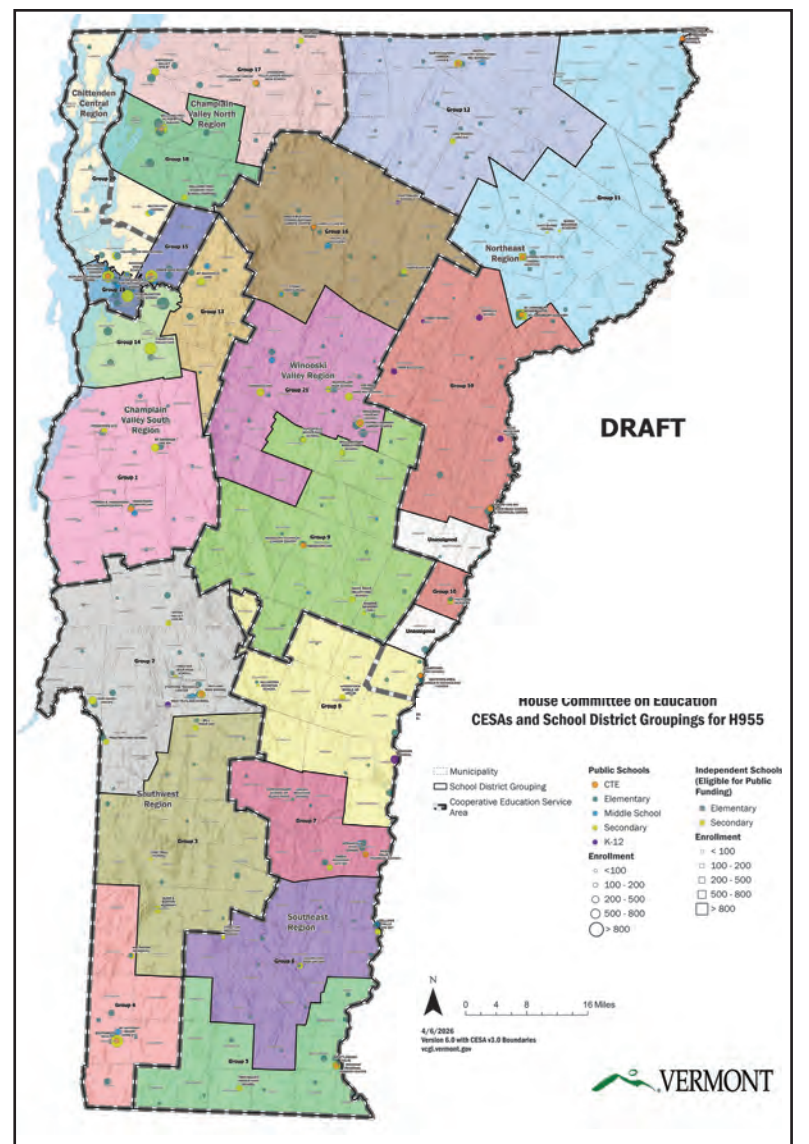
“We need to set a realistic amount (of education spending) per child, that is hopefully going to cover any special needs child, and it has to be where we can afford it in Vermont,” Heffernan said.

WHAT'S NEXT

What happens to H.955 when/if it crosses over to the Senate is anyone's guess. The Senate, like the House, has a Democratic majority. Education reform — along with Vermont's lack of housing and spiraling health insurance premiums — are the top “affordability” issues that have dominated the legislative agenda this biennium. This is also an election year, and members of both major parties are treading more carefully as November approaches.

But Gov. Phil Scott, who's seeking another two-year term, isn't happy about potentially seeing the 2026 session adjourn without making major headway on right-sizing the state's school system to reflect its ongoing enrollment decline. Scott in January of last year pitched an education system revamp that, among other things, called for a new foundation formula, funded by a single statewide education property tax rate; and consolidating Vermont's current 287 schools (serving 83,733 students) into five regional districts.

Scott has said he wouldn't sign



THIS MAP SHOWS seven regional Cooperative Education Services Areas (outlined by thick borders) that would be created through H.955, an education reform bill the House Education Committee passed on April 2. CESAs are intended to provide economies of scale for public education services. Addison County schools would be included in a Champlain Valley South CESA in this version of the map.

H.955 in its present form.

Conlon said he believes Scott should've been more personally involved in his education revamp messaging this year.

“I think the problem with the governor's desired path is that it requires somebody to go out there and really making the case to Vermonters,” he said. “It really requires him to make the case to Vermonters. He has not, to date, done that.”

Conlon said he's discussed education reform with Vermonters

in every corner of the state during the past two years and has found no support for forced school mergers.

“I share (Scott's) concern that this state needs to adjust to demographic changes. But Vermonters largely expressed skepticism, and he needs to be the one out there making the case. He's the only one who can do it,” Conlon said.

Editor's note: John S. McCright interviewed state Sen. Steve Heffernan for this article. Heffernan is brother-in-law to reporter John Flowers.

Bolles

(Continued from Page 1A) during a Tuesday phone interview. "Our dollars haven't been going as far as they used to. You can feel kind of helpless in the face of many of those issues."

Bolles has had enough of feeling helpless. Fueled by a desire to foster ground-up change, the Ferrisburgh Democrat has decided to run for one of the two seats representing the Addison-3 district in the Vermont House.

"I had a few friends nudge me to run. At first, I kind of laughed it off. But when a couple more people asked more seriously, I began to consider it," Bolles said. "I realized it would be an amazing opportunity. (Serving in the House) is something I'm interested in doing and it would be an honor to represent my neighbors in that way."

Bolles, who specializes in design strategy and service design for government products and websites, joins an Addison-3 candidates' field that this far also includes incumbent Rep. Rob North, R-Ferrisburgh, and fellow Ferrisburgh Democrat Mike Kane. Addison-3 encompasses the communities of Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes, Waltham and part of New Haven.

Bolles originally moved to Vermont from Maine when she was 5. She grew up in Charlotte, "a town we never could have afforded to live in if it weren't for the fact that my dad was the minister at the Congregational church, which meant that we got to live in the parsonage for free," she said.

Her father also worked as a school bus driver, newspaper deliveryman and columnist, while

her mom taught piano lessons and early childhood music.

Upon graduation from high school, Bolles spent a few years in Burlington before attending Columbia College in Chicago. She would spend the next 17 years in the Land of Lincoln, with 14 of those years working in the IT design industry.

She and her husband, Spencer, moved back to Vermont almost five years ago. They have two young children.

Bolles is able to do her job from home, which has helped her remain active with her family and allowed her to become more invested in her community. She currently serves on the Ferrisburgh Town Center Committee and previously volunteered on the Addison Northwest School District Comprehensive Equity Assessment Committee.

She's also proud to have founded the Soup and Bread Community Dinners offered at the Vergennes Congregational Church. Modeled after a program Bolles encountered in Chicago, the dinners are open to anyone interested in homemade soups and neighborly conversation. Volunteers cook the soup and source bread donations. Attendees are invited to make a donation, with the proceeds pooled to assist local nonprofits.

Organizers put on three soup and bread dinners during the Vergennes program's inaugural year, with more to be held this fall when the weather starts to get cold again.

Bolles is emphasizing four issues during this early phase of her campaign, all of them intertwined under an "affordability" banner: housing, health care, education,



FERRISBURGH DEMOCRAT ARIEL Bolles has entered the race for the two seats representing the Addison-3 district in the Vermont House.

Photo courtesy of Ariel Bolles

and tax reform.

"I really wanted to focus on things that affect people materially," she said. "These are the big topics I hear about when I talk to neighbors and what I see in the newspaper and Front Porch Forum. They seem to be top-of-mind issues for everybody — and they're so interconnected."

She called the housing shortage an "immediate issue" that's of prime concern for many working families in Addison-3 and beyond. She noted the median home price in Addison County has reached

\$531,500 (up 33% over three years), while the median rent has soared to \$2,187 per month (citing realtor.com).

"Everyone deserves safe, stable, affordable housing and they should not have to move out of state to get it," she said.

So what does Bolles propose to do about it? She would support an increase in taxes on non-owner-occupied, second home, vacation rental and investment property by supporting the Prosper Act's (H.794) new property tax classification for non-homestead residential properties.

She's also a fan of limiting the purchase of single-family and two-family homes by institutional investors, as described in H.607.

Building more housing must also be part of the solution, according to Bolles. That housing should be "affordable and climate-resilient," which she said could be facilitated by creation of a statewide land bank to acquire vacant, abandoned and tax-delinquent properties and return them to productive use as permanently affordable homes. This is a tool currently being developed by a working group of the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development, she noted.

Bolles called health care a "public good," and she wants to move Vermont closer to universal coverage by "making our local systems work better for Addison County and Vermont." She

supports the work of groups such as the 802 Vermont Universal Healthcare Coalition in identifying innovative solutions for tackling these health care challenges.

"I also recognize that our school districts' budgets are healthcare budgets, because the largest driver of property tax increases is often the rising cost of employee health insurance premiums," she said.

If elected, Bolles said she'd work to appropriate funding for community health care centers and free clinics to expand primary care, mental health and home health services.

"Everyone deserves safe, stable, affordable housing and they should not have to move out of state to get it."

— Ariel Bolles

"By shifting appropriate care out of expensive hospital systems and into community health centers and school-based clinics, we can lower overall costs and stabilize the insurance premiums that start in our municipalities and education budgets," Bolles said.

Bolles's perspectives on education are informed by her work on the ANWSD Equity Committee.

"I saw that our schools are the heart of our rural towns and there's so much opportunity to make local schools into thriving community hubs. We can stabilize school budgets, protect taxpayers and fairly compensate our educators, but only if we stop pretending that endless consolidation is the answer," she said.

Bolles pledged to "include local education experts and community members in decision-making about local schools and school districts,"

while "pursuing thoughtful approaches to efficiency" — including shared services and cooperative agreements between districts.

"I support the work underway by the Vermont School District Redistricting Task Force to explore shared services cooperatives as a more flexible alternative to one-size-fits-all consolidation," she said, adding, "I support expanding Career and Technical Education offerings in response to student demand and ensuring equitable access across Addison County."

Bolles acknowledged the financial stress working families are feeling, and their inability to absorb higher taxes. She believes part of the answer lies in asking the highest earners to pay more.

"Put simply: if you have more, you need to do more," she said. "We live in a time of unprecedented wealth and income inequality, and we need to do what we can to level the playing field."

To that end, Bolles supports bills like H.794 and S.282, which would create a 2% income tax surcharge on individual income over \$250,000, an additional 6% on income over \$500,000, and a 4% wealth transfer tax on investment income for high-earning households.

"These measures would generate \$75 million annually, revenue we could invest in universal healthcare implementation and school budget support, addressing two of the biggest cost drivers for Addison County homeowners," she said.

You can find out more about Bolles at her campaign website, arielbolles.com.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

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SPORTS

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PANTHER LACROSSE DEFENDERS like Marcy Sweeny keep Wesleyan from nearing the net during a game on the Peter Kohn Field on Saturday, April 3. Senior co-captain Caroline Adams dubbed the team's defense the game's stars.

Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri



MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE SENIOR co-captain Caroline Adams maneuvers passed a Wesleyan defender during Saturday's game on Peter Kohn Field. Adams scored twice as the Panthers won 5-4.

Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri

Panther women's lax holds onto undefeated season with Hail Mary goal

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — Of the 35 goals Panther lacrosse player Caroline Adams has put in the back of the net this season, her most recent must be one of the most memorable.

There were 1.2 seconds left on the Peter Kohn Field clock this past Saturday afternoon, the game tied 4-4, and Middlebury

had just been awarded the ball at the top of the 12-meter line after a Wesleyan player was called for laying on top of it.

With two defenders set up in front of her on the right and left, ready to collapse, Adams picked up the ball, took a few steps and got off a bounce shot — an intentional choice. It hit the line near Wesleyan goalie

Izzy Weintraub's ankles, sprang into the net and lifted the score to 5-4.

"It was either a quick-hit pass or a shot, and they had to clear a lane," Adams said. "So I thought, let's just try and shoot it."

In addition to clinging to their undefeated season during the April 3 game, the 11-0 Panthers

also dealt No. 4 Wesleyan their first loss of the year.

The last time the two teams met, Wesleyan knocked the Panthers out of the 2025 NESCAC tournament, and delivered the four-year defending NCAA championship team their sole loss of 2025. That game ended 13-10, Wesleyan.

The win this past Saturday

bumped the Panthers from third to second place in the national Division III women's lacrosse ranking. Middlebury sits just behind Salisbury.

Though the game came down to a moment of offensive wit, defense defined the game.

"It was as I expected, a defensive battle," Panther Coach Kate Livesay said. "Both

teams have great goalies, great defenses, and you know, you really have to earn every scoring opportunity."

No matter how many times each offense swung the ball from the top of the arc, around the back of the frame and back to where they started, it proved challenging for players on

(See Women's lax, Page 3B)

Mixed results for Panther nine

Baseball team wins one late, drops two next day

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College men's baseball team is 12-7 after dropping double header games to Amherst on Saturday, April 4.

The day before, Middlebury came back from a three-run deficit in the seventh to beat the team 4-3.

The game was scoreless until the fifth, when the Mammoths scored two runs. They scored a third in the sixth.

First year Sam Gersch got the Panthers on the board for the first time in the seventh inning. With two

outs, he hit a triple that brought in first year Henry Ayers, who hit a single previously to get on base.

In the ninth, a hit from Ayers helped the Panthers tie the game, 3-3. A single got him to first, and then one from junior Joe Basso to second. On the next at bat, Gersch was walked, leaving bases loaded.

(See Baseball, Page 2B)



BASEBALL
Wrap-Up

Panther softball claims five out of six games

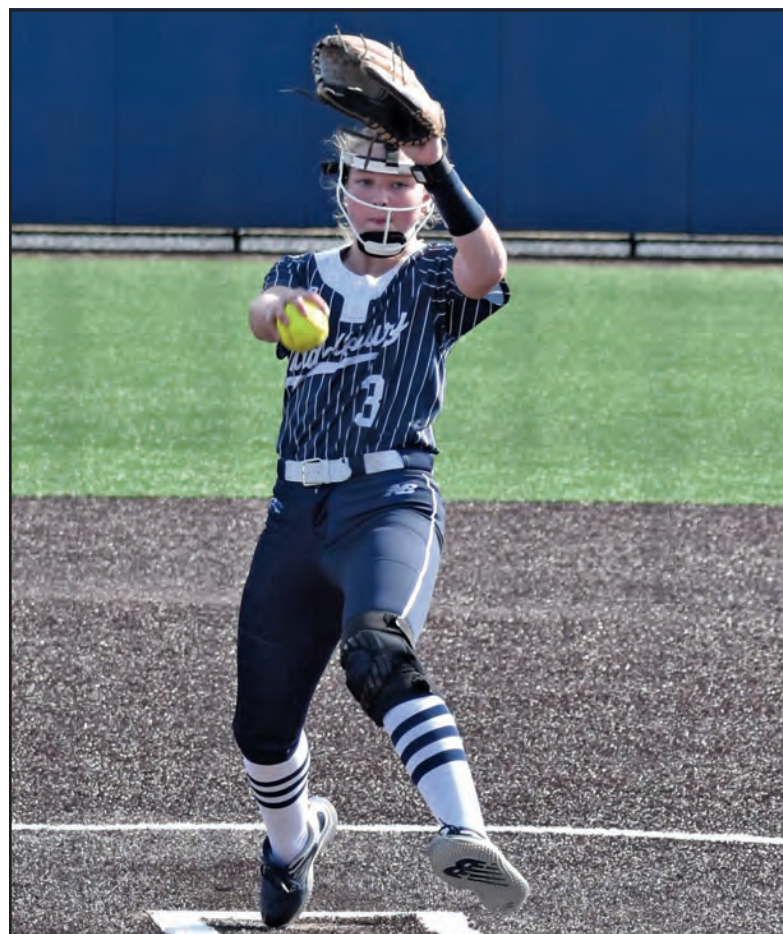
By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College softball team won five of six home games last week, including a sweep of two NESCAC double headers on Friday and Saturday.

The long weekend kicked off with two games against Hamilton College on Friday, April 3, with what turned out to be the Panthers'

closest game of the week. They came back from a 2-0 deficit in the top of the fourth to win the game 3-2 in the fifth. Though the game was scoreless until the fourth, the Panthers nearly took the lead in the bottom of the second.

With one out, first year Reagan Adiletta connected with the ball for a double, the Panthers' first hit of the game. Katelyn Mikros, a fellow



FIRST YEAR PANTHER PITCHER Emily Dowd kept the Continentals on their toes in the first game of last Friday's double-header and came out on the winning side of a 3-2 decision.

Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri

Midd men's lax ends three-game drought

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury College men's lacrosse team tipped their record back to a winning one after defeating No. 24 St. Lawrence University 14-8 on Tuesday, April 7.

The Panthers' record is now 6-5. Middlebury never trailed, taking a 13-4 lead, their biggest of the game, with 6:15 left in the third quarter.

The game was only tied once, 1-1, in the opening minutes of the first quarter. Sophomore Charlie O'Connor put one away for the Panthers less than a minute-and-a-

half in, and the Saints responded at 9:27.

After that, seniors Brendan Hickey and Logan White scored two more goals, ending the quarter 3-1, and the Panthers ran away to a 8-3 halftime lead.

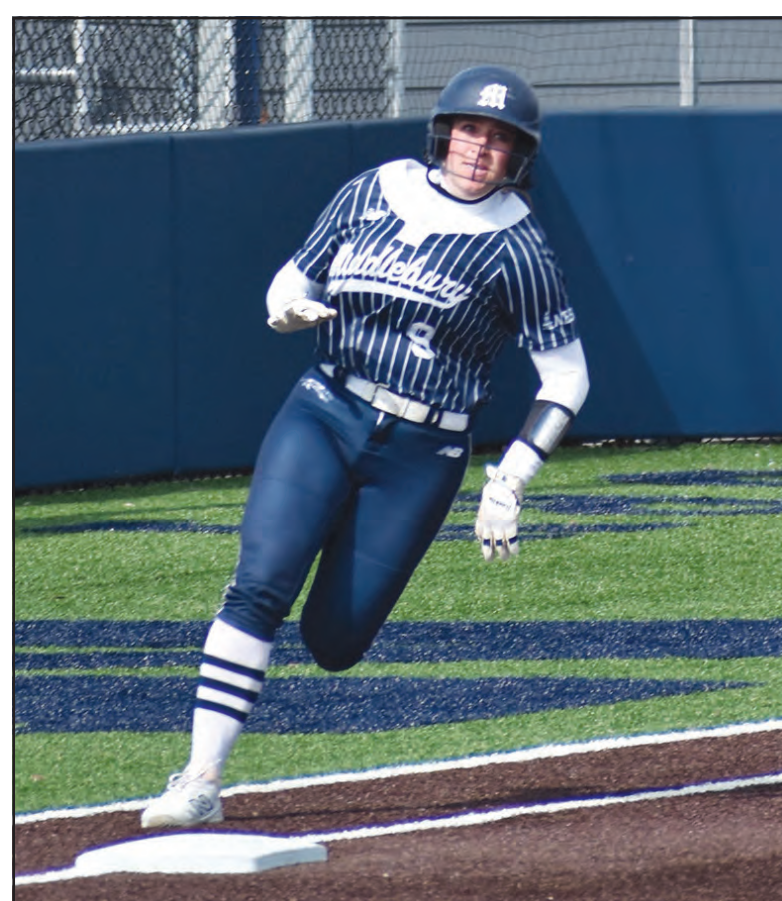
White, a captain, had six more before the end of the game. Senior co-captain Cooper DeMallie had two, and senior co-captain J.D. Farkas, sophomore Bradford Tudor and junior Will Ford each had one.

Not only did the victory end a three game drought for the Panthers — they fell 8-7 to Hamilton on

April 1, 14-6 to Wesleyan on April 4 and 17-7 to Tufts on March 28 — it also got the Saints back for ending the Panthers' 2025 season. Middlebury dropped a second round 2025 NCAA game to SLU last May by one goal, 10-9.

It was a repeat of an earlier regular season game that year, which the Panthers dropped 7-6 to the Saints.

The Panthers play next at Colby College on Saturday. Middlebury enters that game ranked 16th nationally as of April 5 for Division III teams. A week prior they stood at No. 10.



PANTHER SENIOR JEN Westphal rounds first base on her way to second during a home game against Hamilton on Friday, April 3. Middlebury won 3-2.

Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri

shortstop. Carroll came off the base and headed back and forth a few steps between third and home, before darting toward the Continental catcher and sliding in for the Panthers' first run of the game.

While the Continentals focused on Carroll, Adiletta got to second and Fleming to third.

On the next at bat Mikros walked, this time the Continentals having to sweat out a bases loaded, one out situation.

Junior Olivia Scholes stepped

up to the plate and got the ball in play, but her hit to the Continental catcher made Fleming, who was running home, an easy target for a second out.

Hamilton tried their hand at throwing out Scholes to close the inning, but a stray ball gave her the chance to take second, and more importantly, Adiletta to sneak home. That run tied the game, 2-2.

The next Panther batter hit a groundout, cutting off the most prolific inning of the game.

(See Softball, Page 3B)

Score BOARD

COLLEGE SPORTS

Baseball

4/1 Midd vs VSU Lyndon.....	16-7 (7 inn.)
4/3 Midd vs Amherst.....	4-3
4/4 Amherst vs Midd.....	6-3 (7 inn.)
4/4 Amherst vs Midd.....	9-1
4/8 Midd at RPI.....	Late

Softball

4/1 Keene State vs Midd.....	13-6
4/1 Midd vs Keene St.....	10-2 (5 inn.)
4/3 Midd vs Hamilton.....	3-2
4/3 Midd vs Hamilton.....	4-1
4/4 Midd vs Trinity.....	7-3
4/4 Midd vs Trinity.....	4-2

Women's Lacrosse

4/4 Midd vs Wesleyan.....	5-4
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Men's Lacrosse

4/1 Hamilton vs Midd.....	8-7
4/4 Wesleyan vs Midd.....	14-6
4/7 Midd vs SLU.....	14-8

Women's Tennis

4/4 Midd vs Williams.....	7-0
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Men's Tennis

4/4 Williams vs Midd.....	6-1
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Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Softball

4/13 VUHS at Richford.....	4:30 PM
4/14 Mt. Abe at Spaulding.....	4:30 PM
4/18 MUHS at Spaulding.....	11 AM

Baseball

4/13 VUHS at Richford.....	4:30 PM
4/14 Fairfax at VUHS.....	4:30 PM
4/14 Mt. Abe at Rutland.....	5 PM
4/16 BFA Fairfax at Mt. Abe.....	4:30 PM
4/18 MUHS at Spaulding.....	11 AM

Boys' Lax

4/15 S. Burlington at MUHS.....	4:30 PM
4/17 Burlington at Mt. Abe.....	4:30 PM
4/18 MUHS at Rice.....	11 AM

Girls' Lax

4/13 Burlington at MUHS.....	4:30 PM
4/13 Mt. Abe at Spaulding.....	4:30 PM
4/16 MUHS at MMU.....	4:30 PM
4/18 BFA St. Albans at Mt. Abe.....	10 AM
4/18 CVU at MUHS.....	11 AM

Girls' Ultimate

4/13 Montpelier at MUHS.....	4 PM
4/16 MUHS at St. Johnsbury.....	4 PM

Boys' Ultimate

4/13 MUHS at Montpelier.....	4 PM
4/15 St. Johnsbury at MUHS.....	4 PM

Boys' Tennis

4/14 St. Johnsbury at MUHS.....	4 PM
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Girls' Tennis

4/14 MUHS at Harwood.....	4 PM
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Track & Field

4/13 Mt. Abe at Burlington.....	3:15 PM
4/14 MUHS, VUHS, at CVU.....	3:30 PM

(See Schedule, Page 2B)

Old Mister Whittingham goes to Florida

Middlebury College baseball coach Mike Leonard allows me, a baseball alum, longtime faculty/staff member at the college, and a lifelong fan of the game, to say a few words to his team at an early indoor practice. I'm grateful for that.



**Sports (Mostly)
KARL
LINDHOLM**

My brief remarks are a version of the old "play hard, have fun" message: I remind them to appreciate one another as teammates and the opportunity to compete intensely, to live in the moment, playing in this great game.

As I was driving in that morning, thinking about what I might say, a memory of Old Mister Whittingham popped into my head.

When I was a kid playing high school baseball in Lewiston, Maine, Old Mister Whittingham often came to our practices and games. That's what we always called him, "Old Mister Whittingham."

He was a familiar presence, standing on the sidelines, apparently quite content, enjoying baseball and our exuberant play in springtime. We liked him there. We would wave or say hello and he would return our greeting.

We lived in the same neighborhood, he and I, and I

would see him walking now and then, a heavy-set man in a ball cap in a winter coat even on warm spring days. Our conversations were pleasant, if perfunctory, an old man and a teen-ager.

I do remember one encounter in particular. In the tenth grade, jayvee baseball, I hit a home run in a game, a rare occurrence as it turned out. The ball went over the fence in left field, and hit off the back wall of the Armory, the building adjacent to the field.

Old Mister Whittingham told me after the game that it reminded him of the balls Bobby Flynn used to bang off the Armory wall when he was a player at LHS. That remark had me floating on air for weeks.

Bobby Flynn was my baseball coach at Lewiston High, and later both the ski and baseball coach at Bates College. He played five years in the Pittsburgh Pirates system and was a legendary local athlete — and a wonderful man.

I wrote the lines above, this bit of nostalgia, in my room at the Holiday Inn in Winter Haven, Fla., just a couple weeks ago. I was there to take in the spring break games of the Middlebury College baseball team. I told people I was "on assignment from the *Addison Independent*."

From the window of my fourth-floor room, I could see the baseball fields at Chain O'Lakes Park, within walking distance, where Middlebury would play two of their games. The 7,000-seat stadium where the Red Sox played their spring training games from 1966-1999 was demolished in 2024 and replaced by a complex of baseball fields in a \$20 million renovation.

I keenly remember my first time at Chain O'Lakes Park. It resides on my Bucket List, my *Reverse* Bucket List: experiences I have already had that are now wonderful memories.

...
In March of 1985, my

Middlebury College classmate Jon Coffin and I took a week's vacation from our jobs to go to Florida for MLB spring training.

Our hope, beyond immersing ourselves in baseball, was to meet Ted Williams, the hero of our youth, who in those days attended the Red Sox camp and taught hitting to the younger players (who better?)

Our goal was to get his signature on a poster of his likeness that had been Jon's for 25 years at that time, a beautiful drawing of "Number Nine" standing in repose, leaning on his bat.

On our first day, we found Ted with a contingent of minor leaguers on one of the lower fields. When he walked off the field for a break, we approached him like nervous kids. Jon asked him to personalize the message on the poster: "Please write 'To the Coffins.'"

"You don't want me to do that," he said. "This poster's not worth anything if I write that. You can't sell it."

Jon was mortified at the thought. "I'm not selling it. It's priceless to me if you sign it to my family." So Ted wrote a personal greeting in his graceful script and Jon had his treasured family artifact, still up on the wall now in his condo in Brunswick, Maine.

I have been to spring training often since then, three other times to Winter Haven, in 1990 for the "honeymoon" of my second marriage: she's as much of a ball fan as I — a good thing.

March is a great time to be away from Vermont. It's such a terrible month. The fact there is baseball in March, and it's in warm weather, is a gift.

When I played baseball at Middlebury, eons ago, we had a spring trip, my sophomore year, and only that year. We went "south" for games in New York state (Army at West Point), Connecticut (Coast Guard and UConn) and Massachusetts (Brandeis in Boston). We lost 'em all.

I make this trek south now to watch Middlebury play against other teams from cold weather



AT HIS FIRST spring training experience in Winter Haven, Florida, our columnist met Ted Williams, who appeared delighted to make his acquaintance.

Photo courtesy Jon Coffin

states making the same pilgrimage. I have often found the time to see some Major League games too.

This year, in Winter Haven, and nearby Davenport, the Middlebury team played Bethel University (Minn.), Augustana College (Ill.), St. Olaf's (Minn.), Lawrence (Wis.), and ended with three games against NESCAC rival Colby College (Maine). MLB teams had already left for their home cities for the start of the regular season.

I came to Winter Haven this spring with my friend Jim. We met in formation at an Army Reserve meeting in Maine in 1968 and we have been friends ever since. He played basketball and baseball at Bates College and was a high school coach in both sports.

It's fun for me to watch baseball with someone with his depth of knowledge of the game.

Watching these Middlebury games is my absolute favorite baseball. The baseball itself is good, competitive — it looks like baseball! You get all the sounds of

the game (I know, old folks, it's a ping not a crack of the bat now; get over it!). The players work hard to be good players, go to class, take their studies seriously.

And the hoopla is minimal.

It's all baseball. No constant blaring noise like at the big-league parks with their giant TV screen in centerfield (the jumbotron — sounds like a dinosaur!). Even at the lower levels, there's music between innings and every player has their walkup music.

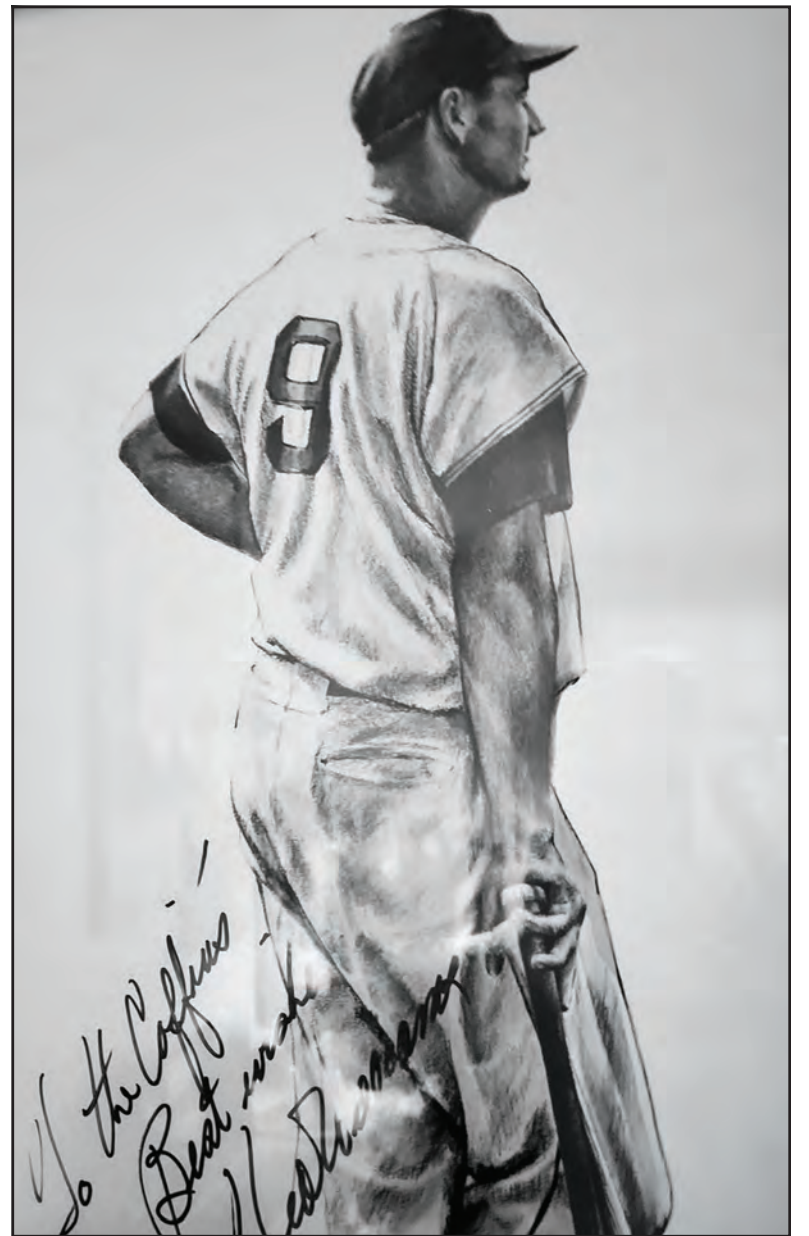
Baseball is made for conversation. At these games in Winter Haven, I

talk to the parents of players and ask them about their kids' whole lives: what their majors are, summer jobs, future plans.

It never crossed my mind that when I got to be this age, I might be my own version of Old Mister Whittingham.

It's OK with me.

Karl Lindholm Ph.D. is the Emeritus Dean of Advising at Middlebury College and Assistant Professor of American Studies (retired). He can be contacted at lindholm@middlebury.edu.



GETTING TED WILLIAMS'S signature on this poster was a goal of the columnist and friend at his first Florida spring training in 1985.

Photo courtesy Jon Coffin

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Baseball

(Continued from Page 1B)

A single hit by junior Anthony Pellagrini got two runners in, tying the game at 3. And the Panthers still had a runner on first and second. One more single is all it took. Sophomore Brian Olson hit the winning RBI.

The next day, the Mammoths ended the early game 6-3, and the second 9-1.

The defending '24 and '25 NESCAC champion team is 1-2 in the conference so far, with many games left to play.

The Panthers played at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute on Wednesday after deadline.

Next up they play three games against Hamilton on Friday and Saturday in Clinton, N.Y.



SPORTS
We've Got it Covered!

Schedule

(Continued from Page 1B)

COLLEGE SPORTS	
Baseball	
4/10 Midd at Hamilton	4 PM
4/11 Midd at Ham. (DH)	12&2:30 PM
4/14 Plattsburgh at Midd (DH)	2& 5 PM
4/15 Union at Midd	3:30 PM
4/17 Midd at Wesleyan	4 PM
4/18 Midd at Wes. (DH)	12&2:30 PM
Softball	
4/11 Bowdoin at Midd (DH)	12&2 PM
4/12 Bates at Midd (DH)	12&2 PM
4/18 Midd at Tufts (DH)	12&2 PM
4/19 Midd at Colby (DH)	12&2 PM
Women's Lacrosse	
4/11 Colby at Midd	12 PM
4/15 Hamilton at Midd	4 PM
4/18 Midd at Amherst	2 PM
Men's Lacrosse	
4/11 Midd at Colby	12 PM
4/18 Amherst at Midd	2 PM
Women's Tennis	
4/11 Trinity at Midd	10 AM
4/12 Midd at Tufts	10 AM
4/18 Amherst at Midd	12 PM
4/19 Hamilton at Midd	10 AM
Men's Tennis	
4/11 Midd at Trinity	12 PM
4/12 Tufts at Midd	12 PM
4/18 Midd at Amherst	12 PM
4/19 Midd at Hamilton	12 PM
Track & Field	
4/11 Midd at UMass Invite	10 AM
4/18 Middlebury Invitational	11 AM

Women's lax

(Continued from Page 1B)

both teams to find the net. The Panthers outshot the Cardinals 21-17 and 16-12 for shots on goal.

It wasn't until about five minutes into the second that anybody was able to break through. The Cardinals seized on a free position shot to take a 1-0 lead.

Adams didn't just close scoring for the Panthers — she opened it, too.

Within two minutes of Wesleyan's opener, she found a lane after taking the ball from the top left corner of the 12-meter to the right, split two Cardinal defenders on her way to the front of the net and popped a shot past the goalie.

With just under three minutes to go, the Panthers took a 2-1 lead off an earned free position shot, made by senior Haley Hamilton.

Three of the game's nine goals came in the last four minutes of the third period.

Wesleyan tied it 2-2 with 3:53 left, but the Panthers briefly took a 3-2 lead before the minute was up.

Hamilton was running with the ball on the right looking for a teammate. Just after she crossed the goal line, Hamilton caught Parker Hanson cutting in front of the goal from her post behind the net. The first year took a beat and popped a quick shot into the top of the frame from just outside the crease.

The Cardinals got their third with 50 seconds left in the quarter, making it a tie game going into the final 15 minutes.

Wesleyan got on the board again quickly, with a goal under 40 seconds into the fourth.

With 8:38 left, Hanson crossed a ball in from the left goal line to junior Kendall Coyne cutting



WESLEYAN DEFENDERS COLLAPSE around Middlebury senior Haley Hamilton as she takes a shot during a home game on Saturday, April 3. Hamilton scored one of the five goals that helped the Panthers defeat the Cardinals by one, and hold on to their undefeated season.

Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri

toward the goal. She got a close range shot past the Wesleyan goalie, tying the game and teeing up Adams for her Hail Mary eight-and-a-half minutes later.

"We just never gave up," said Adams, who scored her 200th point for Middlebury on Saturday.

"I think our shots weren't falling all the time, but our defense really, really held us in the game. They played incredible, they caused so many turnovers. They just never let up. And they really, they kept us in this game."

Adams commended the effort of Panther goalie Elizabeth Savage, a junior, who had eight saves.

"Just really proud of this team," Adams said. "I'm excited for the rest of the season. As a senior, it's bittersweet, but just really excited and really proud of how the girls came together today and just never gave up. Our bench had the best energy. So every single person on this team is so important and such a part of this team."

Softball

(Continued from Page 1B)

That offensive spark bled into the Panthers' defense in the top of the fifth. Two fly balls and a pop up made for one, two, three easy outs for Middlebury.

With the Panthers back at bat, the Continentals got two outs in a row before Carroll managed a single. Westphal followed up with a line drive to left field, allowing Carroll to score the Panthers' third run, and getting herself in scoring position at second base.

Westphal made it to third after Fleming came up and hit a single, and then rounded to second. But a groundout closed the inning.

Hamilton had the chance to tie it after a double and single got a Continental runner on third. But a groundout on their fifth at bat of the inning dashed those hopes.

Besides a single from Mikros,

the sixth ended in another one, two, three.

The Panthers clinched the win in the top of the seventh, after catching a foul ball and throwing two runners out at first.

They took a half hour to gear up for the next bout, and before the end of the night had defeated the Continentals again, this time 4-1.

"We were really excited to come out and get two big conference wins. In the NESCAC, every win is a big win and we were lucky to have an opportunity to compete together for each other," Coach Kelly Bevere said.

"Our pitching was really good in both games today," she said of Dowd and senior McKenna Long, who pitched the second game.

"And we had enough key hits to put some runs on the board," Bevere added.

Earlier in the week, on Wednesday, April 1, Middlebury split a pair with Keene State, dropping the first but 13-6, but claiming the second 10-2.

On this past Saturday, the Panthers tallied their 19th and 20th wins this season, defeating Trinity 7-3 in the first game and 4-2 in the second.

The wins bring the Panthers to an overall record of 20-2, and a NESCAC record of 4-0. The only other conference school who can tout a perfect NESCAC record is Williams, who is also 4-0. The Panthers don't face the Purple Cows until the end of the month in Williamstown.

The Panthers face Bowdoin and Bates in double headers on Saturday, and Sunday, respectively. The Saturday games will be played at noon and two, as will the Sunday matches.

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OTTER CREEK ENGINEERING

Bristol Beat

Lincoln Library to host Vermont Reads Speaker Series on Tuesday

LINCOLN—The Lincoln Library will host the next installment of the Vermont Reads Speaker Series Tuesday, April 14, from 7-8:30 p.m. This month's featured presenters are the Lincoln Conservation Commission and biologist Tina Scharf. With a professional background in wildlife and fisheries, Scharf has successfully spearheaded a dedicated volunteer effort to eliminate invasive poison parsnip and chervil from every corner of Lincoln.

The evening offers a chance to learn about the commission's ongoing work, identify invasive plants, and hear about new initiatives. Whether you want to find out how to get involved or simply want to celebrate the achievements of this active volunteer group, all are welcome to attend.

The library is hosting an afterschool craft session Wednesday, April 15, from 3-4:30 p.m. Young creators will be making daffodil garlands to celebrate the arrival of spring. Whether you're a seasoned crafter or just looking for

Lincoln

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

NEWS

some creative fun after school, all are welcome to join.

The Town of Lincoln is looking for a volunteer to serve as Tree Warden. This important role helps to oversee shade trees on public property, including those around schools and within public road rights-of-way. This is a voluntary, one-year appointment made annually by the selectboard. Specific experience or training may be required.

If you're passionate about trees and want to serve the Lincoln community, please contact selectboard chair Tim McGowan at tmcgowan@lincolnvermont.org or call the town office at 802-453-2980. You need not be a resident to apply.

Until next time ... Where Flowers Bloom, So Does Hope.

Write, read or listen to poems around Bristol

By MARIN HOWELL

BRISTOL — A months-long celebration of poetry in Bristol will culminate this month with several opportunities for community members to write, read or listen to poems around town.

April — which is National Poetry Month — marks the final stretch of "PoemVillage," four months' worth of free poetry workshops and other community events that have unfolded in Bristol. Community members still have a chance to get involved in the festivities, as several more activities and installations will continue through this month.

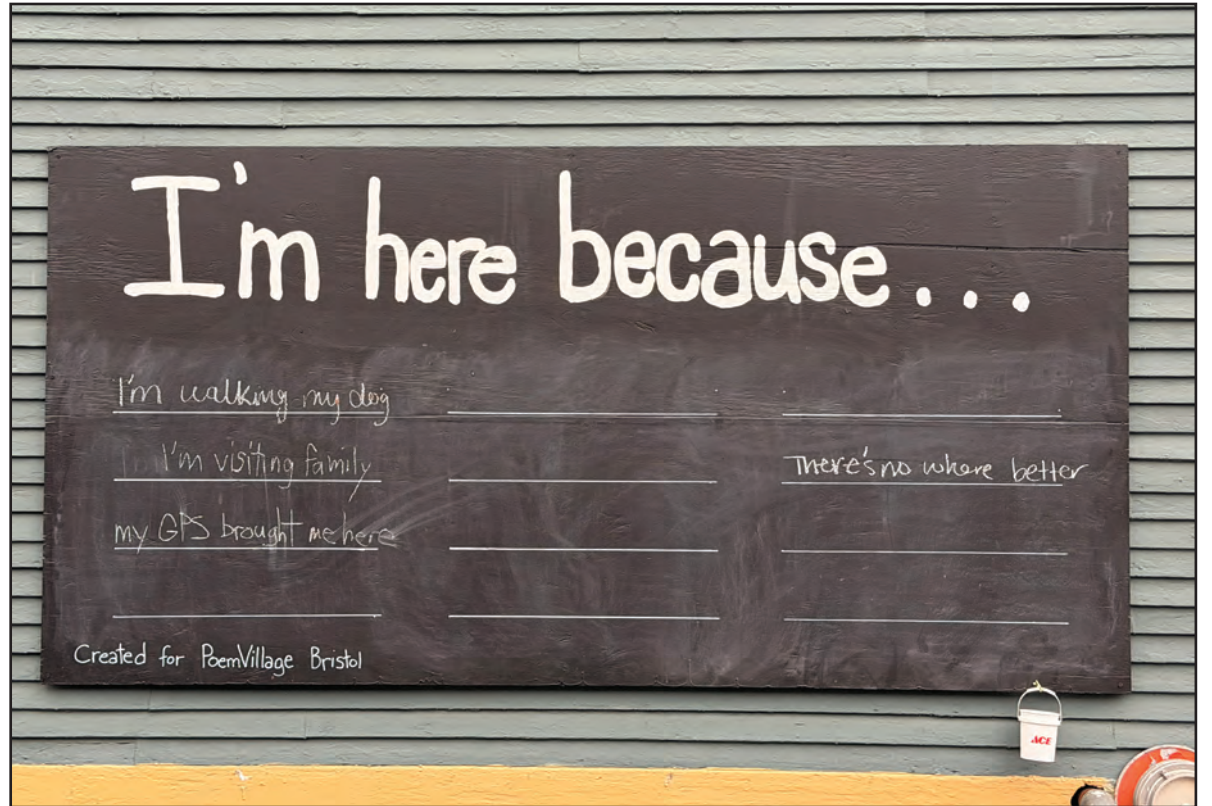
Bristol's PoemVillage programming was inspired by similar events in parts of the state like Montpelier and Randolph. It's being supported by the Vermont Arts Council's Arts Project Grant and organized by the nonprofit Bristol CORE and the Lawrence Memorial Library.

The Discover Bristol website notes the project has also been supported by local artist and poet Lily Hinrichsen and a team of dedicated volunteers.

"It's been going great," Bristol CORE Executive Director Courtney Radford said. "We've had 11 events so far between the beginning of the year and now. They've all been really well attended; we've been really happy with the variety of audiences we've been able to connect with through events."

Those events kicked off in January and have been geared toward poets of all ages, from a poetry workshop for kids in February to an event led by health coach Jnana Sagara on "Planting Seeds: Poetry to Grow Towards Tomorrow" held last month.

Throughout the past few months, community members have also submitted original works to be featured in a literary gallery around town. Radford said the team received 46 submissions from adults around Vermont, including each community in the Bristol 5-Town Area, Brattleboro, Middlesex, Woodstock and Gilford, among other towns.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE invited to answer the prompt "I am Here Because..." on this chalk wall located on the side of the Dunshee Block in Bristol — the three-story building at 19-21 Main St. It's one of a few interactive installations featured around town this month as part of Bristol's PoemVillage. Photos courtesy of Courtney Radford

"We've had a good swath of people from across the state," she said.

In addition to those submissions, Radford said the gallery will feature 14 poems written by 5th- and 6th-grade students at the Red Cedar School in Bristol. Community members can find an interactive map of where all those poems are located at www.discoverbristolvt.com/poemvillage.

Radford encouraged residents to take a self-guided tour of the literary gallery throughout this month, after which featured poems will be posted on the Bristol CORE and library websites.

GET INVOLVED

Community members will have other opportunities to engage with poetry this month, including through three interactive installations around town. Radford said signs with "Poetry Factoids" can be found throughout Bristol, and a chalk wall located on the side of the Dunshee Block — the

(See Bristol, Page 5B)



BRISTOL'S POEMVILLAGE PROGRAMMING will culminate this month with community members reading, writing and listening to poetry. Over 40 poems submitted by Vermonters will be displayed around town throughout April, including the two poems pictured here.



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Bristol

(Continued from Page 4B)
 three-story building at 19-21 Main St — asks residents to answer the prompt “I am Here Because...”

Another installation invites community members to engage with their inner poet and attach their work to a “PoetTree” in the center of three trees located next to Cubbers Restaurant and in front of Walgreens — the same one used for the Bristol Gratitude Tree. Similar to the gratitude tree, a nearby kiosk will provide residents with all the materials they need to write a haiku and hang it on the tree. Radford said community members are encouraged to sit on the bench under the tree and reflect on nature as they pen their poems.

Each of those installations will remain up through this month, as will the literary gallery. Radford pointed to a handful of poetry events community members can also attend in the coming weeks. Those include:

- Somatic Poetry: A free

restorative yoga class featuring nature poems this Friday, April 10, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Yoga Grace Studio above Cubbers.

• Ten Vermont Poets You Should Know (But Probably Don’t): A presentation by Middlebury poet Cindy Ellen Hill held in collaboration with Bristol Elder Eagles. The event is open to all ages and will take place on Friday, April 17, from 10:15-11:30 a.m. at Howden Hall.

• Poets of Addison Poetry Reading: An afternoon of poetry with Hill, Hinrichsen and fellow local poets Ruth Farmer, Elaine Pentaleri and David Weinstock. That’ll be held at the Bristol Village Co-Housing’s Peake House at 16 North St. on Sunday, April 19, from 1-2 p.m.

Radford said PoemVillage’s culminating event will be “Open Mic Poetry with Zig Zag Lit Mag” at Minifactory, 16 Main St., on Sunday, April 26, from 3-4 p.m.

“Folks are invited to bring their

own verses or just come and enjoy the open mic,” she said.

For more details on those events and PoemVillage visit www.discoverbristolvt.com/poemvillage.



Go, Eagles!

THE MOUNT ABRAHAM playing fields have been busy as the Eagle spring sports teams shape up and tune up for competitions. Just outside the Bristol school building last week, a boys’ lacrosse goalie faces a barrage of shots, which he stops methodically. Eagle boys’ lacrosse opens play with a home game against Burlington on Friday, April 17, at 4:30 p.m.

Independent photo/Steve James

Learn about Piney Woods Road repair options

MONKTON — In order to obtain additional input from Monkton residents to inform the selectboard’s decision about what to do with the Piney Woods Road, the board will host an informational meeting at 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 11, at the Monkton Town Hall on Monkton Ridge. There will be a presentation on the various options that the selectboard can make followed by a Q&A with the community.

By state statute, the selectboard has authority over maintaining town roads and is required to make a decision on what to do with Piney Wood Road. Under Vermont law (19V.S.A. §304), selectboards are responsible for laying out, constructing, maintaining and operating town highways and bridges. They must maintain Class 1, 2 and 3 highways, with

Class 3 roads requiring year-round negotiability for standard vehicles, though they may limit maintenance on certain roads. Selectboards must maintain Class 3 highways to be negotiable under normal conditions all seasons of the year, including adequate surface, base and drainage.

As background: Piney Woods Road has been closed since the July 2024 flooding disaster.

FEMA inspected the damage and prepared Damage Description and Dimensions reports that included mitigation measures with cost estimates to reopen the road. The Vermont Agency of Transportation completed hydraulic studies for the three drainage basins and provided replacement recommendations that FEMA used in preparing its reports.

FEMA’s estimated cost to

reopen the road is \$1,200,000. With FEMA providing 75% and the state picking up 12.5% of the cost, that would leave Monkton with 12.5% of the cost, or \$150,000. The town has so far received \$804,476.85 from FEMA and could receive up to an additional \$89,386.31 from FEMA to repair the road so long as it aligned with the approved scope of work. The additional funding could be available if the cost for the Piney Woods work overruns the initial cost estimates.

The referenced reports and documents are available for review at the Monkton Town Office or by request by emailing the town administrator (townadministrator@monktonvt.com).

The info session will be recorded and slides available following the session. The info session will also be accessible via zoom — the link will be posted on the town website the day of the event.

Piney Woods Road has been closed since the July 2024 flooding disaster.

Police respond to vehicle operating erratically

BRISTOL — Bristol police on March 28 were told of a vehicle that was being driven erratically on West Street. Police located the vehicle and determined the driver was not impaired.

Between March 22 and 28 Bristol police completed 28 foot patrols, conducted 10 traffic stops and checked security at Mount Abraham Union High School seven times, at Bristol Elementary School seven times and at local businesses six times.

Police also processed eight fingerprint requests and conducted one welfare check.

In other recent activity, Bristol

Bristol Police Log

- On March 25 received a report of a theft on West Street. An investigation is ongoing.
- On March 26 received lost property that was found on West Street. Police located the owner and returned the property.
- On March 26 helped a community member with a criminal investigation question.
- On March 26 received a report of a theft on South Street. Through their investigation, police determined the incident was not criminal in nature.
- On March 27 received a late report of a motor vehicle crash that took place on Airport Drive.

• On March 27 helped the Colchester Police Department on South Street.

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NEWS

LEICESTER — The Leicester Historical Society is sponsoring Prize Bingo Saturday, April 11, at 1 p.m., at the Senior Center. Refreshments served and all are welcome.

Green Up Day is coming! Residents are encouraged to Green Up throughout the week of April 27. Bags and gloves are available at the Town Office. On Green Up

Day, May 2, a trailer will be set up at the Town Shed for folks to drop off their filled bags. A free hot dog lunch for volunteers will be held at the Town Office from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Your lunch ticket will double as a raffle ticket. For more information, or to volunteer to clean up a road segment, contact Diane Benware at (802) 247-3786.

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community calendar

THURSDAY

april 9 **Bixby Library Book Sale donations in Vergennes.** Thursday, April 9, 2026, 3-6 p.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library, 258 Main St. (back parking lot.) Finished with your winter cabin fever reading? Donate your used books! Fiction must be published after 2015 or written by a popular author, and non-fiction must be current and saleable. Donated books will be featured at the book sale on Saturday.

Juana Gamero de Coca Symposium in Hispanic Studies: "Femicides and Gendered Violence in Latin America" in Middlebury. Thursday, April 9, 4:30 p.m., Middlebury College, Sunderland Language Center, Dana Auditorium. Argentine anthropologist Rita Segato presents on gender-based violence in Latin America, followed by discussion with students, faculty and community members. Presented in Spanish with real-time English translation. Hors d'oeuvres at 4 p.m. Free.

"Linux for Normal People" workshop in Brandon. Thursday, April 9, 6 p.m., Brandon Free Library, 4 Franklin Street. Tired of Big Tech? Wondering if Linux is right for you, but don't know where to begin? Bring an old computer (and/or a burning desire for freedom) for a free introduction to free software.

True Crime Podcast Club in Middlebury. Thursday, April 9, 6 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, NBM Meeting Room. Discussion of Up and Vanished (Season 1): The Disappearance of Tara Grinstead. For ages 18 and up. Free.

FRIDAY

april 10 **Juana Gamero de Coca Symposium in Hispanic Studies: "Huesera: The Bone Woman" film discussion in Middlebury.** Friday, April 10, 4:30 p.m., Middlebury College, Robert A. Jones '59 House, Conference Room. Director Michelle Garza Cervera discusses her 2022 film, followed by a conversation in Spanish with Argentine anthropologist Rita Segato on gender-based violence in Latin America, with English translation. Free.

SATURDAY

april 11 **Monthly Wildlife Walk in Middlebury.** Saturday, April 11, 7-9 a.m., Otter View Park, Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Road. Join Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust for a guided survey of birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. Free.

Spring Breakfast at Shoreham Congregational Church. Saturday, April 11, 8:30 a.m., 28 School St. Enjoy plain or blueberry pancakes or French toast with Vermont maple syrup, sausages, home fries, quiche, and beverages. \$12 for adults, \$6 for children, and \$30 for families. Please bring a non-perishable food item or paper product for the food shelf to help those in need.

Bixby Library Used Book Sale in Vergennes. Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Bixby Library's Otter Creek Room, 258 Main St. The first Bixby Used Book Sale of the year! Peruse the updated selection of donated books people have read over the winter.

Red Cross blood drive in Bristol. Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Bristol Federated Church, 37 North St. Donors of all blood types encouraged. First-time donors welcome. Give by April 12 to receive a Red Cross x Life is Good T-shirt while supplies last. More info: redcrossblood.org or 1-800-RED-CROSS.

The Monkton Minibeats music and playtime in Monkton. Saturday, April 11, 9:45-11 a.m. at the Town Hall Community Room, Monkton Ridge. Ari and Julia, a guitar and banjo duo from Charlotte, will provide music. Kids up to 5 years old can make their own instruments, play and interact with others. Contact Larkin Brown (larkinbrown13@gmail.com) if you have questions.

Legislative luncheon in Middlebury. Saturday, April 11, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Middlebury American Legion Post 27, 49 Wilson Rd. Community legislative discussion sponsored by Bridport Grange and Addison County Farm Bureau. Lunch by donation will follow the discussion, with time to visit with invited guests and representatives. RSVP to Bill at 802-881-8836 or wjscottjr@comcast.net.

Loree Griffin Burns Author Talk in Vergennes. Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m., Bixby Memorial Free Library, 258 Main St. Special presentation and Q&A. Burns will discuss her latest children's nonfiction book, "Extreme Birdwatching." Learn about the finches of a remote island in the Galapagos and the family of scientists who visited them for four decades.

Week of the Young Child SAAC Sports Saturday at Middlebury College. Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m., Peter Kohn Field. Community event bringing together Middlebury student-athletes, youth and families with games and a cheer tunnel for women's lacrosse. Part of the Week of the Young Child celebration. Free.

Vietnam Veterans lunch in Ferrisburgh. Saturday, April 11, 11:30 a.m., Cross Life Church, 1759 Route 7. The Seth Warner-Rhoda Farrand Chapter of the DAR hosts a lunch for Vietnam veterans and their spouses. Let us know who and how many are coming so that we have plenty of food on hand. Contact Joy at swrfdar@gmail.com.

Free Family Day at the Museum at Middlebury College. Saturday, April 11, 1-4 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Lower Lobby and Museum. Art making activities for ages 5 and up, inspired by objects in the museum's collection; family art-themed bingo; guided gallery drawing. Free snacks and refreshments. Registering helps organizers know how many attendees to expect. midd.art/family-day.

Prize Bingo in Leicester. Saturday, Apr 11, 1 p.m., at the Senior Center. Sponsored by the Leicester Historical Society, refreshments served, all are welcome.

King Pede card party in Ferrisburgh. Saturday, April 11, 6:30 p.m., Ferrisburgh Town Hall and Community Center, 3279 Route 7. Sandwich supper before an evening of fun and games. King Pede requires some serious thinking so



Stock up on stories

THE BIXBY LIBRARY book sale is back, offering everything from well-loved classics to hidden gems. Browse a wide selection of discounted reads while supporting the Vergennes library this Saturday from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Bixby Library photo

come prepared to use your strategic skills in this longstanding Ferrisburgh tradition.

North Branch theater production: "Journey to the top" in Ripton. Saturday, April 11, 7:30, Ripton Community House, 1283 Rte. 125. Don't miss this student-written original play about a delightfully varied group of characters making a trek to the top of a great mountain, a place no one has ever been. Refreshments available at intermission. Tickets: \$10, with \$3 of each going to support Atria Collective.

SUNDAY

april 12 **CORRECTION: Charity fundraising breakfast in Bristol.** Sunday, April 12, 7:30-10 a.m., Libanus Lodge #47, corner of North St. and Elm St. The Masonic Lodge hosts its monthly charity breakfast. All proceeds go to a person or group in need in the Five Town Area. Menu: Sausage gravy with biscuits, eggs, bacon, sausage patties, sausage links, home fries, pancakes, French toast, with Vt. maple syrup, assorted juices, and apple bread pudding. Adults: \$9, under 12: \$5.

Breakfast buffet in Vergennes. Sunday, April 12, 8-10 a.m., St. Peter's Parish Hall, 85 South Maple St. Menu includes omelets, scrambled eggs, French toast, plain and blueberry pancakes with maple syrup, sausage gravy on biscuits, cornbread, home fries and mini muffins. Juice, tea and coffee available. \$13 adults, \$8 children 8-12; under 8 free. Sponsored by Vergennes Council of the Knights of Columbus.

Red Cedar School Flea Market in Bristol. Sunday, April 12, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., The Tillerman's Red Barn, 1868 N. 116. Shop for household items, sports equipment, books, clothing, toys and more. Proceeds benefit the Red Cedar School Scholarship Fund.

MONDAY

april 13 **Cribbage Night in Bristol.** Monday, April 13, 7 p.m., Libanus Lodge #47, corner of Elm and North streets. Semi-monthly cribbage games hosted by the Masons. Players of all skill levels are welcome.

TUESDAY

april 14 **Lunchtime Concert Series: Kathryn Blume in Vergennes.** Tuesday, April 14, 12:15 p.m., St. Paul's Episcopal Church's Parish Hall, 6 Park St. Singer/songwriter Kathryn Blume is an award-winning solo performer and theater artist. Free and open to the public.

The Bixby Library Book Club: "House Rules" in Vergennes. Tuesday, April 14, 6 p.m., Bixby Library, 258 Main St. "House Rules" by Jodi Picoult is a captivating novel about family, perception, and the fine line between innocence and guilt. Jacob Hunt, a teenager with Asperger's Syndrome excels in forensic analysis. But when a murder shakes his small town, Jacob suddenly finds himself as the prime suspect. All readers are welcome and for more information, stop by the circulation desk or email martha@martha.sanborn@bixbylibrary.org.

Book talk: "Tiny Humans, Big Emotions" in Middlebury. Tuesday, April 14, 6:30-8 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 68 S. Pleasant St. NYT bestselling author Alyssa Blask-Campbell discusses young children's emotional development, offering practical strategies for co-regulation and responding to big feelings. For parents, educators and caregivers. Tickets include a signed copy of the book. More info at seedandsew.org.

Conservation biologist speaks in Lincoln. Tuesday, April 14, 7-8:30 p.m., Lincoln Library, West River Road. The Lincoln Conservation Commission and biologist Tina Scharf will present in this edition of the Vermont Reads Speaker Series. With a professional background in wildlife and fisheries, Scharf has successfully spearheaded a dedicated volunteer effort to eliminate invasive poison parsnip and chervil from every corner of Lincoln.

WEDNESDAY

april 15 **"Underwater Archaeology of Lake Champlain" lecture in Orwell.** Wednesday, April 15, 6 p.m., at Orwell Free Library. Chris Sabick of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum presents information on archeological excavations and other research efforts on the Revolutionary War, highlighting

the aftermath of the Battle of Valcour Bay. Find out more: orwellfreeibrary.org.

Tome Talk: "The Professor and the Madman" in Middlebury. Wednesday, April 15, 7:30, Ilsley Public Library, NBM Meeting Room. Book discussion of "The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity, and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary" by Simon Winchester. Copies available at the library. Free.

Armchair Naturalist Talk in New Haven. Wednesday, April 15, 7 p.m., New Haven Town Offices, 78 North St. Matthew Dickerson, *Addison Independent* outdoor columnist and Middlebury College professor, presents on river ecology and fishing, sharing insights, observations and photographs from local rivers and national parks. Free.

THURSDAY

april 16 **Circle of Life Story Hour in Middlebury.** Thursday, April 16, 10-11 a.m., EastView's MeadowSweet neighborhood, 100 EastView Terrace (North Parking Lot). Bringing babies, toddlers and preschoolers together with seniors. Caregivers and little ones can enjoy an hour of stories, songs and social connections. To register, contact Amberly Selleck (amberlyploof@gmail.com) or Kris Diehl (KDiehl@eastviewmiddlebury.com).

Chamber of Commerce After Hours Networking Mixer in Middlebury. Thursday, April 16, 5:30-7 p.m., Turning Point Center, 79 Court St. Connect with fellow chamber members, build business relationships, and exchange ideas and leads while getting to know the local business community. Enjoy light refreshments and door prizes.

New Moon Women's Circle in Benson. Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m., Mercy Ecospirituality Center, 56 Howard Hill Rd. The circle will include intentional practices like journal prompts and meditations to reflect on the past month and will provide an opportunity to connect with other like-minded women in the community. mercyecology.org/programs.

Sara Grey and Kieron Means in concert in New Haven. Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m., New Haven Community Library. Old-time ballads, cowboy songs and hymns performed as part of the Winter into Spring Musical Library Tour. Free; donations welcome.

Cabin Fever Lecture: "What Conservation Work in the Amazon Actually Looks Like in Practice" in Middlebury. Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m., Ilsley Public Library, Duolos Building. Kevin Fox, executive director of the Middlebury Area Land Trust, discusses his work leading U.S. conservation efforts in the Amazon, including challenges, partnerships and successes in protecting ecosystems and supporting communities. Sponsored by Otter Creek Audubon. Free. More info at 802-388-6019.

FRIDAY

april 17 **"Ten Vermont Poets You Should Know (But Probably Don't)" talk in Bristol.** Friday, April 17, 10:15 a.m., Howden Hall, West Street. Sure, you can quote Robert Frost—but his work is just the tip of the literary iceberg of Vermont poetry. Cindy Ellen Hill presents this lively dip into the works of lesser-known Green Mountain poets from the 1800s-present, including several Addison County neighbors! Feel free to bring one poem of your own to share. Open to all ages.

Late Night with Your PEEPS in Middlebury. Friday, April 17, 6 p.m., Teen Center, 77 Mary Hogan Drive. Interested in April's Peep Diorama Contest but don't have materials? Come to the Teen Center for a night of crafting fun to create your very own peepstastic scene. All supplies provided.

SATURDAY

april 18 **Friends of the TAM: Chipman Hill Lollipop hike in Middlebury.** Saturday, April 18, 8:30 a.m., Chipman Hill trailhead, Washington St. Ext. Join the Middlebury Area Land Trust for an easy to moderate 3-mile loop hike exploring Chipman Hill and looking for signs of spring. Some steep sections. Registration encouraged. Free. More info: maltvt.org/friends-of-tam-chipman-hill.

CALENDAR ONLINE
addisonindependent.com



Celebrate World Tai Chi and Qigong Day, April 25

NEW HAVEN — A World Tai Chi and Qigong Day event will take place Saturday, April 25, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the New Haven Town Gym, 50 North St. Part of global festivities that include hundreds of cities, the morning will feature demonstrations and performances beginning at 10 a.m., with opportunities to participate, learn or observe. Come celebrate our local Tai Chi forms, instructors, and friends.

Expect Qigong; Tai Chi walking; Yang, Sun, Tung, Cheng Man-Ch'ing, Yang 24; Bafa Wubu, and sword and fan demonstrations. Donations will benefit Age Well, helping older Vermonters live healthy, independent lives. For more information, contact Jerry Henderson at jerry@skyrivertaichi.com or 802-598-1830. To learn more about the history of this world-wide celebration, visit worldtaichiday.org.

MALT fosters walking buddies with new Friends of the TAM

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Area Land Trust, or MALT, is rolling out a club to unite people who have a love of the organization's Trail Around Middlebury, known as the TAM. If you have wished that MALT had a Friends of the TAM group that you could join to meet other TAM enthusiasts to enjoy time out in nature and contribute to stewardship of the trail? The wait is over. MALT is piloting a Friends of the TAM group, that will feature nature hikes on Chipman Hill in Middlebury this spring. Walks will be chosen based upon the season and the interests of the participants, but, no matter what the primary objective, you can always be sure that we will be listening for birds and will be on the lookout for interesting flora and fauna as group members walk the trail. The Friends' goal is to be out in nature with kindred spirits. Spending more time in nature builds a deep-seated love of our natural world and a desire to

protect and steward it. MALT has high hopes that this volunteer community model could end up being a long-term MALT/TAM stewardship force multiplier. This group will be kicked off with a Chipman Hill lollipop hike on Saturday, April 18, 8:30 a.m. This will be an easy/moderate hike of around three miles, starting and ending at the Washington Street Extension trailhead. Participants will be looking for signs of spring. This nature walk will be followed by a nature talk led by herpetologist Jim Andrews on Wednesday, May 13, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. He will be focusing on the identification of birds (by sight and song), trees (by bark, buds and leaves), and perhaps a few amphibians (by sight and call). Attendance for both is limited to 20 people. For more information and to register in advance, see www.maltvt.org/Friends. Contact Holly Fulton at holly@maltvt.org with any questions or for additional information.



MEMBERS OF THE Salisbury community gathered at the town library late last month to officially kick off renovation of the historic building. Sitting on the steps of the library are selectboard member Johnathan Blake and Matt DeBisschop of DeBisschop Excavating. Shown standing, from left, are library Director Alissa Shethar; library board President Kate Williams; selectboard Chair Pat Dunn; Courtney DeBisschop, Hunter Hedenberg, Nicole Benton and Marie Leduc of Silver Maple; Ashar Nelson of Vermont Integrated Architecture; Brent Rakowski of Otter Creek Engineering; library board member Deb Brighton; Brandon Streicher (DeBisschop Excavating); and Clerk of the Works Bill Casavant.

Salisbury community gathers to launch renovation

SALISBURY — Nearly 40 community members gathered at Salisbury Town Hall on March 26 to mark the start of a long-anticipated renovation project nearly 30 years in the making. Selectboard Chair Pat Dunn thanked the many community members — especially Deb

Brighton, Glen and Barbara Andres, and Merle and Kathy Schloff — for their “relentless and selfless drive” in bringing the project forward. In a symbolic gesture, Dunn passed the keys to the building to Courtney DeBisschop of Silver Maple Construction. Following the ceremony, attendees

walked over to the Meeting House, where the library is temporarily located during construction to enjoy coffee, apple fritters and other refreshments provided by the Salisbury Library Board. The project team includes Silver Maple Construction, Otter Creek engineering, DeBisschop

Excavating, Spafford Well Drilling, Vermont Integrated Architecture, and Bill Casavant (Salisbury Clerk of the Works). The renovation will preserve the building's historic character while adding the much longed for plumbing, improving accessibility, functionality and community use for years to come.

Middlebury Rotary grant applications due this Friday

MIDDLEBURY — In the spring of 2025, the Rotary Club of Middlebury provided more than 20 local organizations with more than \$50,000 for projects which addressed homelessness, elderly services, childcare, poverty eradication, hunger, health, youth

sports and economic development. The club focuses its manpower and money primarily in seven areas of concern as selected by Rotary International: conflict prevention and resolution — fostering peace; disease prevention and treatment; water and sanitation; maternal and

child health; basic education and literacy; economic and community development, and protecting the environment. If you think they might be able to help your organization, please visit middleburyrotary.org and if your request seems compatible

with their guidelines, complete the Grant Application form found on the website in the “Request help from Rotary” section. Applications for financial support in 2026 are now being accepted. Please submit your application on or before April 10.

STUDENTS OF THE WEEK FROM AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

Vergennes Union High School Scout Jacobson

Scout Jacobson from Vergennes is the latest Vergennes Union High School Student of the Week. Getting to experience a wider variety of classes at VUHS has been informative for Scout. She has really appreciated the opportunities to take Dual Enrollment classes at the Community College of Vermont and feels this has helped her figure out her college plans going forward. Scout is involved in the VUHS lacrosse program and with Rice's volleyball program. She also plays unified basketball and works with another student-athlete as a coach and advocate. Another highlight is her participation in VUHS National Honor Society's Penguin Plunge. During her high school years, she has amassed 632 hours of community service already, her favorites being her hours working for the fish fry at the American Legion, reading to local elementary school students, completing vision screenings at regional schools in Vermont, and working as co-president for the Vergennes Leos, writing grants and organizing volunteer events. In her spare time, Scout enjoys paddle boarding with her mother and sister on Lake Champlain. She also likes to target practice with her father and brother at North Country Gun Club. One message Scout would like to pass on to other high school students is, “Who you are in high school doesn't dictate who you are for the rest of your life.” After her internship with Diagnostics Imaging in Rutland, Scout plans to go to college, majoring in radiography. We wish her all the best!



Scout Jacobson
VUHS

Middlebury Union High School Navah Glikman

Middlebury Union High School is proud to recognize senior Navah Glikman as its Student of the Week. Navah lives in Middlebury with her parents, Dave and Eilat, and their pet parrot, Yaffo. She has an older brother who attends Carleton College. When reflecting on her experience at MUHS, Navah shared that she enjoys school because she is surrounded by passionate students and teachers, creating a supportive and inspiring learning environment. “All of my teachers have been great,” Navah said. “I have had Mr. Comar for two years, and he is passionate about his subject and prioritizes learning over perfection and grades. Ms. Martin is dedicated and thorough, and she is so positive and supportive. Mr. Krahn and Ms. Carroll help me look at things from new perspectives.” Navah has earned Honor Roll recognition all four years of high school and is currently completing the IB Diploma Programme. She attended RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Academy) and recently performed as Fontaine in the senior play “Grease.” Navah credits her mother, an astrophysicist, for inspiring her interest in STEM. At school, Navah has served as a Peer Leader Coordinator, co-president of SCOHR, student representative to the school board, and tried cross country for the first time this fall. She also plays tennis in the spring. Outside of school, Navah works weekends as a barista at Royal Oak Coffee Shop, babysits, and works as a lifeguard at the town pool during the summer. In her free time, Navah enjoys creating watercolor art, going to the gym, practicing yoga, taking walks, spending time with friends, and cooking with her dad. Reflecting on her high school experience, Navah shared that she has learned the importance of putting herself out there and being authentic. She believes that the right group of friends and supportive adults will appreciate you for who you are. Her advice to others: “Accept challenges. Don't turn down opportunities because life is hard — you have to choose your ‘hard’ and persevere through it.” In the fall, Navah plans to attend college out West, where she intends to pursue a path in medicine, with the goal of becoming either a doctor or a physician assistant. Middlebury Union High School congratulates Navah on her many accomplishments and wishes her continued success throughout her senior year and beyond.



Navah Glikman
MUHS

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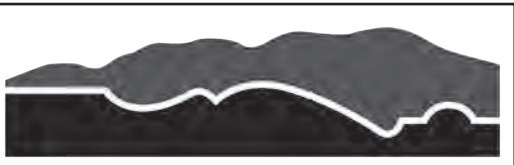
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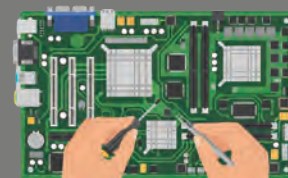
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ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aaavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

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.

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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.

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Help Wanted

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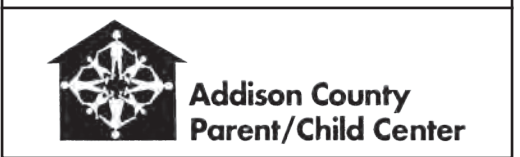
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Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 10B and 11B.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

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Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Spring Clean Up Volunteers

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To learn more please reach out to Olivia at OliviaO@lcomm.org

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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

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

RATES

- 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
- Notices
- Card of Thanks
- Personals
- Services
- Free**
- Lost 'N Found**
- Garage Sales
- Lawn & Garden
- Opportunities
- Adoption
- Work Wanted
- Help Wanted
- For Sale
- Public Meetings**
- For Rent
- Want to Rent
- Wood Heat
- Real Estate
- Animals
- Att. Farmers
- Motorcycles
- Cars
- Trucks
- SUVs
- Snowmobiles
- Boats
- Wanted
- Real Estate Wanted
- 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 Rent

ALL REAL ESTATE advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes

For Rent

it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national

For Rent

origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of dis-

For Rent

crimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

For Rent

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

For Rent

VERGENNES VALLEY VIEW APARTMENTS is currently taking wait list applications. Occupants must be 62+ years of age. No smoking/ No pets. Income limits apply - Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE - 2000 sq ft to 7000 sq ft - Tall ceilings, loading docks, plenty of parking. Middlebury - 802-558-6092

MIDDLEBURY ONE BED-ROOM Small ground floor. Very nice convenient in-town location for pet friendly. \$700. No smoking. 802-388-4831

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

ORWELL: Outdoorsy retiree who enjoys landscaping, hiking, swimming. Seeking companionable dog-friendly housemate to share her rural home. \$350/month. 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

RUTLAND: Share home with outdoorsy vegetarian in her 70s who enjoys antiquing and gardening. \$650 plus small utilities share. Private bath. Must be cat/dog friendly! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

WEYBRIDGE: Active woman in her 80s who enjoys theater, film, concerts. Enjoy sharing company, attending events together, providing occasional help around the house in exchange for low or no rent. Must be dog-friendly! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

Wood Heat

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

Att. Farmers

1ST CUT, DRY ROUND bales, 4x5, \$50.00 each. Round bales for bedding \$35.00. 4x4 wrapped baleage bales \$60.00. Quantity discounts available. 802-989-0187.

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

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Counseling Service of Addison County, Inc.
Developmental Services HIRING EVENT
WORK WORTH DOING
 On-the-Spot Interviews!
 Join our **Developmental Services Department** and make a difference every day.
 Starting at \$20/hour Up to \$500 Sign-On Bonus
 Great benefits package, meaningful, rewarding work
Wednesday, April 22nd
12 Noon - 5 PM
 109 Catamount Park, Middlebury, VT 05753
 Come prepared with your current resume.
 Scan for more info.
 802-388-4021 WWW.CSAC-VT.ORG
WORK WORTH DOING

Help Wanted

Help Wanted ads can be found on Pages 10B and 11B.

AUCTIONS

ONLINE AUCTION

(1731) FARM MACHINES AUCTION

ONLINE AUCTION: Thursday | Apr. 23 | 10AM
 PREVIEW: Thursday | Apr. 16 | 11AM-1PM
 LOCATION: Addison, VT 05491

Featuring over 90 lots of hay wagons, running gear, tedders, rakes, plows, fencing supplies, tractor attachments, fuel tanks, shop tools, chainsaws, heaters, conveyors, blowers, and a wide assortment of equipment parts and hardware.

THOMAS HIRCHAK COMPANY
 THCAuction.com • 802-888-4662

Help Wanted



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

MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT
 Sales for 4/2/26 & 4/6/26

BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
Gosliga	1550	1.95	\$3022.50
Vorstevel	1589	1.90	\$3011.50
Correia	1260	1.90	\$2394.00
Rowell Farm	1330	1.85	\$2460.50
J. Fifield	2050	1.77	\$3628.50
Four Hills	1785	1.75	\$3123.75
Sunderland	1270	1.74	\$2209.80
K. Rousseau	1305	1.70	\$2218.50

CALVES	LBS.	/LB	\$
Barnes Bros			\$1820.00
Riverhill			\$1872.00
Iroquois			\$1748.00
Vorstevel			\$1587.60
R. Forbes			\$1585.30
Deer Valley			\$1596.00
J. Fifield			\$1624.00

Total Beef - 124 Total Calves - 121
 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 11B and 12B

- Act 250 (1)
- Addison (1)
- Bristol (1)
- Middlebury (2)
- Monkton (1)
- Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (2)
- Shoreham (1)
- SVUUSD (1)
- Tri-Town Water (1)
- Vergennes (1)
- Weybridge Cemetery Association (1)

Service Technician - HVAC/Plumbing

J.W. & D.E. Ryan is seeking a licensed service technician with experience installing, maintaining, troubleshooting and repairing plumbing, heating, and air conditioning systems.

Competitive pay commensurate with experience and full benefits package including:

- Health Insurance
- 401k with company match
- Paid time off
- Paid holidays
- Company Vehicle
- Training/Education
- Short and Long Term Disability
- Life Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Boot Allowance

Interested candidates may call 802-877-3118 or email tanya@jwderyan.com

J.W. & D.E. Ryan Plumbing & Heating
 155 Main Street • Vergennes
 (802) 877-3118 • www.jwderyan.com

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Subscribe!
802-388-4944

OTTER CREEK WATERSHED INSECT CONTROL DISTRICT PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY MOSQUITO LARVICIDES

On or after April 27th, 2026, the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (OCW) will be applying ground and possibly aerial treatments of mosquito larvicides on surface waters in the towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Proctor, and Salisbury to control mosquito larvae populations. Those treatments will use Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti), Bacillus sphaericus (BS), and Spinosad, which are bacterially derived larvicides. Ground applications of Cocobear (mineral oil) and Methoprene may also be used in selected wet areas to target mosquito pupae and prevent adult emergence.

Exclusion requests need to be renewed annually. Please send a written request to the OCW mail or email address below.

In accordance with paragraph 6.06 (a) of the Vermont Rule for the Control of Pesticides, the OCW applied for a permit to conduct larvicide applications from the Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

Further information can be obtained from:
 Jeff Schumann, OCW Board of Trustees Chair or OCW Operations Coordinator, Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District, P.O. Box 188, Brandon, VT 05733 (802) 247-6779 or by emailing ocwid@gmail.com

Comments or complaints about OCW larvicide operations should be addressed to:
 Director, Public Health & Agricultural Resource Management Division, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, 116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901 (802) 522-6973, steve.dwinell@vermont.gov

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:

TOWN OF ADDISON DRB PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Addison Development Review Board will convene a public hearing on Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:00PM at the former Addison Central School located at VT Route 22A and VT RTE 17 West Addison, VT.

1. DRB Application #26-02 Lisa Preston, Dillon Preston & Hanna LaFrance requesting to gain approval to subdivide the property located at 4 Walton Lane, Addison, VT. If ready will plan for a final.
2. DRB Application #26-04 Brad Stefanic requesting approval to subdivide the property located at 3936 Lake Street, Addison, VT into two parcels. If ready will plan for a final.
3. DRB Application #26-05 Rene and Suzanne Many requesting change of office to an apartment located at 3395 Mountain Road, Addison, VT.
4. DRB Application #26-08 Charlene Goodell requesting (3) lot subdivision located at 3857 VT Route 22A, Addison, VT.
5. DRB Application #26-09 Nottanson Family Revocable Trust-Jeffrey & Mary Jane Nottanson, Trustees (2) lot subdivision located on Grandey Road, Addison, VT.

The applications are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office during normal office hours. Interested parties who wish to appeal or to be heard must attend the hearing or may be represented by an agent or an attorney. Communications relating to the application may be filed in writing with the Board either before or during the hearings.

N.B.: Participation in a hearing is necessary to establish status as an "interested party" and the right to appeal a decision rendered in that hearing, according to the provisions of 24 V.S.A.117 S.S.4464 (a) (1) (C), 4465(b) and 4471 (a). Participation consists of offering through oral or written testimony, evidence or a statement of concern directly related to the subject of the hearing.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Scott Grant, Vice Chair
 Starr Phillips, Board Secretary
 Daniel Rossignol, Zoning Administrator

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:

 All or a Majority of the Board of Commissioners of the Tri-Town Water District No. 1

Weybridge Cemetery Request for Bids

Weybridge Cemetery on Quaker Village Road is seeking bids for the 2026 mowing season. Call Charlie Jordan 802-578-9919 for details.

TOWN OF MONKTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Monkton Development Review Board will hold the following hearing on Monday, April 27, 2026, beginning at 7:30 PM. The hearing will be held in person at the Town Office, located at 92 Monkton Ridge. The hearing will also be available via Zoom and login information is below.

- a. Kevin & Bonnie Brennan, 25-402 Preliminary Subdivision Application - 115 Owl's Mountain Road, Monkton, PID (5.101.153007) 2 lot subdivision.
- b. Michael & Patricia New, 25-401 Preliminary Subdivision Application - 886 Pond Road, Monkton PID (13.215.004.000) 2 lot subdivision.
- c. Pete Norris, 26-4-1-DRB Sketch Review for subdivision of 80+- acre lot.

An electronic copy of the application can be obtained by emailing zoning@monktonvt.com. A hard copy of the application is available at Town Hall by appointment. Please call 802-453-3800 to make an appointment.

Remote Access: Join Zoom Meeting
 https://zoom.us/
 Meeting ID: 802 453 3800 * Passcode: 1762
 Phone In: 1-646-558-856 * Meeting ID: 802 453 3800 * Passcode: 1762

ACT 250 NOTICE MINOR APPLICATION #4A0078-6 10 V.S.A. §§ 6000 - 6111

The President & Fellows of Middlebury College have filed application #4A0078-6 for a project generally described as demolition of Battell Hall, a first-year residence dorm on the Middlebury College campus, with associated site improvements and infrastructure modifications. No new construction is proposed or authorized. The project is located at 63 Château Road in Middlebury, Vermont. The application may be viewed on the Land Use Review Board's Act 250 Database (<https://anrweb.vt.gov/ANR/Act250/default.aspx>) by entering project number "4A0078-6."

No hearing will be held, and a permit may be issued unless, on or before Wednesday, April 29, 2026, a party notifies the District 9 Commission in writing of an issue requiring a hearing, or the Commission sets the matter for a hearing on its own motion. Any person as defined in 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1) may request a hearing. Any hearing request must be in writing, must state the criteria or sub-criteria at issue, why a hearing is required, and what additional evidence will be presented at the hearing. Any hearing request by an adjoining property owner or other person eligible for party status under 10 V.S.A. § 6085(c)(1)(E) must include a petition for party status under the Act 250 Rules. To request party status and a hearing, fill out the Party Status Petition Form on the Board's website: <https://act250.vermont.gov/documents/party-status-petition-form>, and email it to the District 9 Office at: Act250.Essex@vermont.gov. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law may not be prepared unless the Commission holds a public hearing.

For more information contact the District Coordinator listed below.

Josh Donabedian
 District 9 Coordinator
 111 West Street
 Essex Junction, VT 05452
Joshua.Donabedian@vermont.gov

Place Your Public Notice in the Paper of Record: The Addison Independent!
 Email your Public Notices to legals@addisonindependent.com and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper.

**SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
2026-2027 BOARD MEMBERS**

The Slate Valley Unified Union School District is seeking school board members to fill vacant seats on the District School Board through March 2027. To complete our board, we need:

- One (1) Benson citizen (starting July 1, 2026)
- One (1) Orwell citizen (beginning immediately)
- Two (2) West Haven citizens (beginning immediately)

If you are interested in serving your community, please submit a letter of interest to the Slate Valley School Board, in care of Superintendent of Schools, 33 Mechanic Street, Fair Haven, VT 05743 or email: bfarrell@svuvt.org.

Position will remain open until filled. EOE

**TOWN OF SHOREHAM
SHOREHAM SELECTBOARD & PLANNING COMMISSION
Special Meeting**

Saturday, April 11, 2026
5:00 PM-7:00PM

At the Shoreham Firehouse
53 Firehouse Road

Zoom Link URL
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86379808940?pwd=dYtNoi4crF8Q11suL4o1O-cOivsRb.1>

Meeting ID 863 7980 8940

Passcode 593111

Phone Number (646) 931-3860 OR (929) 205-6099

AGENDA

- 5:00 Lasagna Dinner (served by the Shoreham Fire Department)
- 5:45 Call to Order
- Presentation + Q&A: Future Land Use Maps (Katie Raycroft-Meyers, Addison County Regional Planning Commission)
- 6:15 Presentation + Q&A: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Andrew L'Roe [ACRPC] & Sandy Korda)
- 7:00 Meeting Adjourned

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CITY OF VERGENNES WWTF UPGRADE**

Bids for the construction of the Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade will be received at the Vergennes City Hall located at 120 Main St., Vergennes, VT 05491 until Thursday, May 14th at 10AM local time. At that time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read.

The project includes the demolition of select structures and comprehensive upgrades at the Vergennes VT wastewater treatment facility. The projects includes three Bid Alternates.

The project must achieve substantial completion and final completion within 880 days and 940 days, respectively, from Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages are \$1,500 per calendar day.

The Issuing Office is Wright-Pierce. Information and Bidding Documents for the Project can be found at the following designated website: <https://www.wright-pierce.com/projects>

Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website at a cost of \$65 per download.

To be considered a responsive Bidder, the Bidder shall have obtained at least one set of Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office using the name that is to appear on the Bid Form. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda, lists of plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website. It is the Bidder's responsibility to check the designated website for addenda.

A pre-bid conference for the Project will be held on Thursday April 23rd at 10AM at Vergennes WWTF, 36 Canal St., Vergennes, VT 05491. Attendance at the pre-bid conference is encouraged but not required. Following the pre-bid conference attendees are invited to a tour of the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

For all contract requirements regarding funding agency notifications, funding agency requirements, bid submittal, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding Documents.

This contract is expected to be funded in whole or in part by the State of Vermont Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) program and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Rural Utilities Services (RUS) program. Consequently, the following provisions apply to this work:

A bid must be accompanied by Bid security made payable to Owner in an amount of 5% of Bidder's maximum bid price and in the form of a certified check or Bid bond issued by surety meeting the requirements of the General Conditions. No bid may be withdrawn for at least 60 days after receipt of bids unless released by the Owner.

Neither the State of Vermont nor any of its departments, agencies, or employees is or will be a party to this contract. The word "agency" in the contract documents refers to the DEC and all other involved funding agencies.

The contractor must comply with the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) SRF special requirements contained in the CWSRF Supplementary Conditions. Failure of the successful bidder to complete the pre-award requirements of this program may result in finding that the bidder is non-responsible and therefore not entitled to award of this contract.

The contractor must comply with all Federal Requirements per the Supplementary Conditions.

The contractor must comply with Davis-Bacon (DB) and Davis-Bacon Related Acts (DBRA) as stated in the Supplementary Conditions. All laborers and mechanics employed by the contractor and subcontractors on this project shall not be paid less than the prevailing wage rates contained in the wage determination published in the bidding documents. Any laborers and mechanics not listed in the wage determination shall be paid at least as much as the lowest wage rate for other similar trade classifications already contained in the wage determination published in the bidding documents.

The Contractors and subcontractors shall upload their certified weekly payroll to a share site provided by the Engineer and shall be in accordance with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation provided guidance documents, including the EPA Davis Bacon Handbook and various fact sheets. Payroll noncompliance and other related payroll issues identified by the Owner and/or Wright-Pierce staff or designated consultants shall be resolved by the contractor/subcontractor in a timely manner to maintain compliance with Davis Bacon requirements throughout the project.

This project is not subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA) requirements. AIS applies.

Section 746 of Title VII of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 (Division A - Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017) and subsequent statutes mandating domestic preference applies an American Iron and Steel requirement to this project including P.L. 113-76. All iron and steel products used in this project must be produced in the United States. The term "iron and steel products" means the following products made primarily of iron or steel: lined or unlined pipes and fittings, manhole covers and other municipal castings, hydrants, tanks, flanges, pipe clamps and restraints, valves, structural steel, reinforced precast concrete, and Construction Materials. The following waivers apply to this Contract: 1) De Minimis, 2) Minor Components, and 3) Pig iron and direct reduced iron.

The Owner is working with Efficiency Vermont on incentives. The contractor shall be knowledgeable in eligibility requirements and work with Efficiency Vermont on incentives.

The Owner reserves the right to waive any informality in or to reject any or all Bids if deemed to be in its best interest.

This Advertisement is issued by:

Owner: City of Vergennes
By: Ron Redmond
Title: City Manager

City police arrest Colchester man for DUI

VERGENNES — Last week Vergennes police personnel pulled a Colchester man over for using a cellphone while driving that led to an arrest for suspicion of driving under the influence of drugs.

After Jacob Cowin, 26, was stopped on April 3, and the police officer had the chance to speak to him, the officer observed indicators consistent with possible impairment.

Based on the officer's observations and Cowin's

performance on a series of standardized field sobriety tests to assess dexterity and coordination that the officer conducted, Cowin was placed under arrest.

He was transported to the Vergennes Police Department for processing and further evaluation. Cowin was cited to appear in court on June 8.

Last week Vergennes police also conducted 11 traffic stops, 14

directed patrols, one foot patrol, and two vehicle identification number verifications, and took fingerprints

Vergennes Police Log

four times.

In other recent activity, city police:

- On March 30 documented an ongoing mental health issue.

- On March 30 took a report from a contractor that someone he was doing work for had refused to pay the final bill. Both parties involved were instructed to seek legal council, as this was a civil matter that needed to be handled in court.

- On March 30 took a report from a passer-by that a young girl, about five years old, wearing a pink shirt, was walking south on Main Street toward the Otter Creek Bridge. The girl appeared to be crying, there were no adults around and she sat down on the sidewalk as the complainant drove by. The area was thoroughly patrolled and police were unable to locate the girl.

- On March 30 conducted an interview for an ongoing investigation.

- On March 31 assisted Vermont State Police by removing a coyote from Route 7 in Ferrisburgh, after it had been hit by a vehicle.

- On March 31 assisted a person at the police department who appeared to be experiencing some mental health issues.

- On April 1 assisted a Vergennes resident with a civil issue.

- On April 1 conducted a welfare check and found the subject was OK.

- On April 2 assisted a Vergennes resident with a civil matter.

- On April 2 conducted a welfare check and found the person was OK.

- On April 2 took a report of a motor vehicle that failed to yield to a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Main Street and Macdonough Drive. It was said to be a light colored sedan with what appeared to be Pennsylvania

license plates. Officers attempted to locate the vehicle, but were unsuccessful.

- On April 3 responded to the report of a possible crash involving two tractor-trailer units. The rear of one trailer was reported to have hit the driver's side mirror of the other parked unit. Both had left by the time police arrived.

- On April 3 responded to a disabled tractor-trailer unit on Main Street near South Water Street and directed traffic until the truck was towed.

- On April 3 responded to Vergennes Laundry for the report of a man who entered the establishment and handed handwritten notes, which were perceived as threatening. A trespass notice was issued to him on behalf of the business.

- On April 3 received a report from Valley Vista regarding inappropriate behavior exhibited by an employee to a resident. The employee was terminated from their position. Police said the behavior was not criminal in nature.

- On April 4 were notified of an alarm at a Vergennes business that turned out to be a false alarm.

- On April 4 took a report of a suspicious individual walking in the Booth Woods neighborhood. Officers responded and patrolled the area.

- On April 4 assisted the Vermont State Police with a mental health call.

- On April 5 a Vergennes resident reported losing their credit card and inquired if it was turned into the police station.

- On April 5 took a report from an individual who had concerns about a family member who has been exhibiting frequent mental health issues. The police department will coordinate resources for the individual through Project Vision North.

- On April 5 assisted with a child custody dispute and ensured a successful child custody exchange.

**TOWN OF BRISTOL
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Bristol Development Review Board will hold the following hearings on April 28, 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 #26-400: David Livingston, LLC of Hardscrabble Road (Parcel #020116) is requesting Final Plat Review for a 2-lot subdivision subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, SECTION 931.

Permit #26-301: Mountain Bike Bristol (Bristol Recreation Club) of Airport Drive is requesting Conditional Use Review for hiking and biking trails to be located on the lands of A Johnson Company (Parcel #060112.1) subject to Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, SECTION 350.

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/87551027651> • Meeting ID: 875 5102 7651 • Passcode: 088114
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87551027651?pwd=mJnqMmaORm2lufotVEEBidXObjJLJl.1> Phone In: +1 646 931 3860

**OTTER CREEK WATERSHED
INSECT CONTROL DISTRICT
PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY MOSQUITO
ADULTICIDES**

On or after April 27th, 2026, the Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (OCW) may be making ground applications of adulticides along the public and private roads in the towns of Brandon, Goshen, Leicester, Pittsford, Proctor, and Salisbury to control adult mosquito populations. Applications of PermaSease (a family of synthetic pyrethroid insecticides) will be made with ultra-low volume truck-mounted sprayers. Zenivex E-4 RTU (a non-ester pyrethroid) may be substituted for PermaSease.

At least six hours in advance of spraying to control adult mosquitoes, specific route information and the pesticide(s) to be used will be posted to <https://ocwid.com/public-notice>. The OCW also provides email notifications of all planned spraying. To subscribe to the spraying notification email list, please send a request to: ocwid@gmail.com.

The OCW's published spray routes can be viewed at: <https://ocwid.com/route-maps>.

The OCW call center phone number is (802) 247-6779; the call center will take requests for treatment during the season.

If you wish to opt out of all adult mosquito treatment and not have the road(s) abutting your property sprayed, please send a written request to the OCW. If you submitted an opt out (No Spray Zone) request for your property last year AND there have been no changes in ownership, contact information, or property boundaries, an email to the OCW containing your 911 address and requesting No Spray Zone status again this year will suffice. If you did not submit an opt out request last year and/or there have been changes in ownership, contact information, or property boundaries, please send a letter to the OCW address given below listing the name(s) of the property owner(s), his/her/their contact telephone number(s), the 911 address of the property, and a property map which clearly shows the property boundaries along the public right of way. Property maps can be obtained from Town Clerks or online at <https://maps.vcqi.vermont.gov/ParcelViewer>. Upon receipt of your request an OCW employee will contact you and then will mark your property as a No Spray Zone. Opt-out requests must be renewed annually.

In accordance with paragraph 6.07 (a) of the Vermont Rule for the Control of Pesticides, the OCW has applied for a permit to conduct truck-mounted mosquito adulticide applications from the Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

Further information can be obtained from: Jeff Schumann, OCW Board of Trustees Chair. Or questions mailed or emailed to: Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District, P.O. Box 188, Brandon, VT 05733, (802) 247-6779, ocwid@gmail.com, <https://ocwid.com>.

Comments or complaints about OCW adulticide spraying operations should be addressed to: Director, Public Health & Agricultural Resource Management Division, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, 116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901, (802) 522-6973, steve.dwinell@vermont.gov.

This draft Selectboard meeting agenda is subject to change.

**TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY SELECTBOARD MEETING
ROOM 116 – LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
TOWN OFFICES – 77 MAIN STREET
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2026 - 7:00 P.M.**

Also available via Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81436891043>
By Phone: +1 (305) 224-1968 (not toll-free)
Webinar ID: 814 3689 1043

For those wishing to watch but not participate:
Selectboard meetings are livestreamed to MCTV's YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/MCTV_Vermont
and also broadcast live on Comcast Channel 1071

AGENDA

- 7:00 1. Call to Order
- 2. *Approval of Agenda
- 3. *Approval of Consent Agenda
 - 3a. *Approval of the Minutes of the March 24, 2026 Selectboard Meeting
 - 3b. *Acceptance of Selectboard Subcommittee Meeting Minutes (if any)
 - 3c. *Approval of Applications - Renewal of State Licenses/Permits (if any)
 - 3d. *Approval of Check Warrants
 - 3e. *2026 Town of Middlebury - Local Emergency Management Plan - Adoption
 - 3f. Consent Agenda Placeholder
 - 3g. **Town Manager's Report
- 7:05 4. **Citizen Comments
- 7:10 5. **Better Middlebury Partnership - Mural Art Project - Presentation
- 7:20 6. *Public Hearing & Adoption - Proposed Relocation of Town Highway
- 7:45 7. *Selectboard Resolution - Communities of Addison County - Regional Collaboration/Shared Services
- 7:50 8. *Annual Nominations to Town Boards/Committees/Commissions & Other Official Positions
- 8:00 9. **Annual Town Greenhouse Emissions - Annual Presentation to Selectboard
- 8:15 10. **Charter Review Committee - Presentation/Update
- 8:25 11. **Dept. of Public Works Leadership - Transition & Update
- 12. Agenda Placeholder
- 8:35 13. **Selectboard Member Concerns
- 8:40 14. **Executive Session - Negotiation of a Contract - Finance
- 8:50 15. *Action on Matters Discussed in Executive Session
- 8:55 16. *Adjourn

* Possible Decision ** Discussion

**TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
SOUTH STREET – PHASE V
SEWER & STORMWATER REPLACEMENT**

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed Bids for the construction of the **Town of Middlebury South Street - Phase V Sewer & Stormwater Replacement Project** will be received at the **Middlebury Department of Public Works located at 1020 Route 7 South, Middlebury, VT 05753, until 10:00 a.m. local time on May 4th, 2026** at which time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read. The mailing address for bids is **Middlebury Department of Public Works located at 1020 Route 7 South, Middlebury, VT 05753. Bidders submitting a bid by U.S. Mail shall allow for adequate delivery time.** The Project consists of **replacement of approximately 600 LF of sanitary sewer main and approximately 750 LF of stormwater piping on South Street and associated appurtenances.**

Bids will be received for a single prime Contract. Bids shall be on a lump sum and unit price basis, [with additive alternate bid items] as indicated in the **Bid Schedule**.

The Issuing Office for the Bidding Documents is: **Otter Creek Engineering, Inc.** Prospective Bidders may examine the Bidding Documents at the Issuing Office (**404 East Main St., Middlebury, Vermont, (802) 382-8522**) on Mondays through Fridays between the hours of **8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call the Issuing Office to make an appointment.** Bidders may obtain copies of the Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office as described below.

Bidding Documents also may be examined at **Otter Creek Engineering, Inc., 110 Merchants Row, 4th Floor, Suite 15, by appointment only.**

Printed copies of the Bidding Documents may be obtained from the Issuing Office, during the hours indicated above, upon payment of **\$100** for each set. Checks for Bidding Documents shall be payable to **"Otter Creek Engineering, Inc." mailing address: P.O. Box 712, East Middlebury, VT 05740.** Upon request and receipt of the document **payment** indicated above. The date that the Bidding Documents are transmitted by the Issuing Office will be considered the Bidder's date of receipt of the Bidding Documents. Partial sets of Bidding Documents will not be available from the Issuing Office. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for full or partial sets of Bidding Documents, including Addenda if any, obtained from sources other than the Issuing Office. **Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for issuing Addenda if any, to parties obtaining Bidding Documents from sources other than the Issuing Office.**

Electronic copies of Bidding Drawings and Documents are available as portable document format (PDF) files upon request to all parties recorded as having officially received the Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office.

A pre-bid conference will be held at **10:00 a.m. local time on April 8th, 2026 at the Middlebury Department of Public Works located at 1020 Route 7 South, Middlebury, VT 05753.** Attendance at the pre-bid conference is **highly encouraged but is not mandatory.**

Bid security shall be furnished in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

Owner: Town of Middlebury
By: Mark Pruhenski
Title: Town Manager
Date: 04/01/2026

ARTS + LEISURE

The Addison Independent

April 9, 2026



Trad music takes teens to Sweden

The Vermont Folklife Young Traditions Touring Group will take off for their annual tour — this year to Sweden — on April 16, but first they'll give a local concert here at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society in Middlebury, on Saturday, April 11, at 7 p.m. Free and open to all. Donations welcome.

PHOTO / CHRISTINA KENNEDY

It's called "Trad." And no, it's not PluggnB, Amapiano 2.0, Thug Metal or any of those micro-vibes trending now. Trad music is the OG sub-genre — it's traditional.

"At its core," describes the Vermont Folklife's Young Tradition Touring Group website, traditional music "is an attempt to reproduce what came from a previous generation, and the generation before that, and the generation before that, but each attempt at reproduction inevitably, intentionally or unintentionally, adds to or takes away elements so that it fits an individual's current experience and circumstances."

This year's Touring Group has 24 kids (ages 13-19), from Vermont, Quebec, Maine and Massachusetts — including four from Addison County: brothers Henry and Sam Kervick of Cornwall, and sisters Lux and Isolde Tierney of Starksboro.

"I started when I turned 7," said Lux, now 16,

who plays fiddle and mandolin. "I was taking lessons with Lausanne Allen from Starksboro and she asked me if I wanted to try traditional music... The first year I joined I remember being one of the youngest people... One of my favorite memories was on the tour bus in Cape Breton when we were all playing together at the back of the bus — I really felt like part of the community."

Henry chimed in during a group video interview last week: "During the first few rehearsals I was feeling pretty nervous," said the 15-year-old fiddler who's now in his third season. "I was surprised how quickly you felt like you belonged, and you were a part of the group."

"I think one thing that always surprises me is how quickly it all comes together," added 14-year-old Isolde, who plays guitar and ukulele. "Once we start our tour and we're

jamming on the bus... it all comes together. It feels like a big community."

In his first year on the Touring Group, Sam is already impressed with "how vast traditional music is."

"I WAS SURPRISED HOW QUICKLY YOU FELT LIKE YOU BELONGED, AND YOU WERE A PART OF THE GROUP."

— Henry Kervick

"I didn't know there was so much Trad music that people played out there," said the 13-year-old accordion player. "I think it's super amazing."

This crew of 25 teens is led by Ian Drury (the program director) and managed by Christina Kennedy (the mom of a Maine Touring Group alum).

Drury has been director for the past four years. Something surprising about Drury?

He can beatbox.

See **TRAD** on page 3

FILM REVIEW

“Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore” profiles a trailblazing actor still in the game



By JAY CRAVEN

More than three decades after becoming the first Deaf actor to win an Academy Award, Marlee Matlin remains one of the most recognizable and influential figures in American film and television. The new documentary film, “*Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore*” offers a deeply personal portrait of an artist whose career reshaped both Hollywood and public perceptions of Deaf performers.

Directed by actor and filmmaker Shoshannah Stern—herself Deaf—the film approaches Matlin’s life not simply as a biography but as a conversation across generations. Stern brings a perspective rarely seen in documentary filmmaking: a director who shares Matlin’s cultural and linguistic experience. The result is an intimate and revealing look at the challenges Matlin faced navigating an industry that long struggled to accommodate Deaf artists.

Matlin burst into public consciousness in 1986 with her remarkable performance in *Children of a Lesser God*. At just 21, she won the Academy Award for Best Actress, becoming the youngest winner in the category at the time. The achievement was historic — but the film makes clear that it was only the beginning of a far more complicated journey.

Through archival footage, interviews, and candid reflections, the documentary traces the years that followed:

the intense scrutiny of sudden fame, struggles with addiction, and the difficulty of sustaining a career in an industry that often treated her success as an anomaly rather than a turning point. Yet Matlin’s persistence helped open doors. Over the decades she appeared across film, television and theater, advocating consistently for accessibility, captioning and greater representation for Deaf performers.

One of the film’s central themes is the evolution of deaf visibility in media. When Matlin first arrived in Hollywood, opportunities for Deaf actors were exceedingly rare, and hearing performers were often cast in Deaf roles. The documentary places her career within that larger context, showing how the landscape has slowly shifted — due in part to Matlin’s activism and refusal to disappear from public life.

Stern’s direction emphasizes dialogue — sometimes literal, sometimes cultural. Conversations between Stern and Matlin form the emotional spine of the film, revealing moments of vulnerability, humor and reflection. Their exchanges highlight how one artist’s breakthrough can resonate across generations, inspiring new voices while also illuminating the obstacles that remain.

What emerges is a portrait of a performer who is both trailblazer and survivor. Matlin’s story is not framed as triumph alone, but as a complicated path marked by setbacks, resilience and an unwavering belief that deaf stories deserve to be seen and heard.

“*Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore*”



“*Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore*” will screen at 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 15, at the Marquis Theater in Middlebury, as part of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Selects Series.

ultimately becomes more than a documentary about a single career. It is a meditation on representation, language, and the long arc of cultural change — told through the life of an artist who helped move that change forward.

New York Times critic, Alyssa Wilkinson, a special guest at last year’s Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, wrote that, for Marlee Matlin, “the path was littered with frustrations in a world that still treats deaf people as second-class citizens. Matlin talks about how solitary she often felt, set apart not just from the hearing world but at times from the deaf one, too. She speaks, with nuance but also pain, of her relationship with her ‘*Children of a Lesser God*’ co-star William Hurt, who was 16 years older and, she says, abusive at times. (In 2009, he issued a public apology ‘for any pain I caused.’) She also addresses the clear anti-deaf bias that surfaces in the news media — demonstrated, pointedly, by archival clips of interviewers saying offensive things — and how it shaped her addiction struggles as well as the way she presented herself in the years following her Oscar win.”

“*Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore*” was an official selection at each of our nation’s most prominent film festivals: Sundance, Tribeca, South By Southwest, and Hot Docs. The film will screen at 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 15, at the Marquis Theater in Middlebury, as part of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Selects Series. Tickets are available at the door — or in advance at middleburymarquis.com.

Jay Craven is artistic director of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival (MNFF).

TRAD

continued from page 1

"We wanted to mention Ian's beatboxing," Lux said smiling. "It's a good way to hype up the group, and everyone likes to join in."

"Ian is always super positive and enthusiastic and brings a lot of energy to the group," Henry said.

The group also has "two artist leaders, who select much of the music the group plays each year and works with the group on rehearsing, arranging and performing the music," explained Sam and Henry's dad, Drew Kervick.

This year's artist leaders are Ethan Tischler of Maine, and Alex Kehler of Quebec. Kehler is an American-born musician playing violin, nyckelharpa, cittern and hurdy gurdy. Growing up in Nova Scotia, he now lives in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and enjoys a busy career somewhere between the folk and classical worlds. He is best known for his work as a versatile crossover specialist with La Nef and Skye Consort. Tischler is a Maine-based musician/educator with roots in the Champlain Valley of Vermont.

"As a teacher, I've worked in groups and one-on-one with students in Vermont and Maine," read's Tischler's bio on the Touring Group's webpage. "I appreciate working with music learners of all ages, and strive to pass along key foundations and theoretical concepts in music alongside a genuine joy and lightness in music-making as a whole."

The group also has two youth artist leaders. They each bring their own set of music that they arrange for the group and they serve as the peer leaders of the group. This year's youth artist leaders are Beck Welling (Maine) and Elle Freebern (Vermont).

Though the geography is widespread, this is a tight group.

Once they pass auditions, the Touring Group rehearses one weekend a month starting in September until the tour (which typically happens in April.) Practices (11 a.m.-5 p.m.) are followed by evening performances and sometimes Sunday rehearsals as well.

Chops — check.

These teens memorize all the music they play and sing. Instruments played in the group include fiddle, guitar, ukulele, flute, piano accordion, cello and harp, plus voice. And they sing in multiple languages as well.

Shall we say it again? *Chops!*



Henry and Sam Kervick of Cornwall and Lux and Isolde Tierney of Starksboro are four of 25 teens who will travel to Sweden this month with the Vermont Folklife Young Traditions Touring Group. They'll be performing in Middlebury before their trip abroad on April 11.

PHOTO / CHRISTINA KENNEDY

The group has performed in recent years with the band Genticorum from Canada and the Pine Tree Flyers from Maine. The last three tours the group has taken were to Cape Breton, Quebec and a New England tour. This year — actually, this month — the group will be traveling to Sweden for the annual trip.

"I think it's going to be a big change in a lot of ways," Isolde said, imagining what Sweden will be like. "I think we'll bring a lot of traditions back with us."

The group will spend three days in Stockholm, and then have shorter stays in Örebro, Tobo, Järvsö and Gävle. "They will have workshops with some of Sweden's foremost musical tradition bearers, including Väsen, Lena Jonsson, and Northern Resonance," Drew shared.

"I'm looking forward to going to Sweden," Sam said. "I'm especially looking forward to learning from Lena Jonsson."

"While we're there, we're going to have an exchange with three youth groups too," Henry added. "It'll be a cool cultural exchange with similar traditional music groups there."

These students will take off for Sweden on April 16, but first they'll give a local concert here at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society in Middlebury, on Saturday, April 11, at 7 p.m.

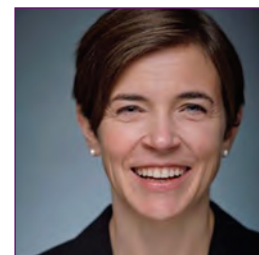
When: Saturday, April 11, 7 p.m.
Where: CVUUS, Middlebury

Come check out this concert and learn more about how this generation is shaping Trad music. Free and open to all with donations welcome. To learn more visit vfolklife.org/touring-group.

GREAT DECISIONS LECTURE SERIES

Lectures will be conducted in person and virtually on Zoom

EastView's 2026 Great Decisions lecture series continues!



Multilateral Institutions in a Changing World Order
with Middlebury College Professor
Sarah Stroup

Thursday, April 16 at 2:30 pm
Community Room (or via Zoom)

Call 802-989-7501 for Zoom link.



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UPCOMING

MUSIC

Boogie on over to the Vergennes Opera House for the LC Jazz free community concert and dance, April 18

The Vergennes Opera House will present the eighth annual LC Jazz free community concert on Saturday, April 18, at 7:30 p.m. This will be the first LC Jazz event in the newly reopened Vergennes Opera House with a new elevator tower providing access for everyone.

Donations of any amount are encouraged for this very popular free community concert and dance. Proceeds go toward the LC Jazz Music Student Scholarship Fund. Though this is a free concert, people are being asked to reserve their tickets via the Vergennes Opera House website at vergennessoperahouse.org.

The evening will feature music for many dance styles, including fast and medium swing, Latin, funk/rock and ballads. Vocal pieces will be performed by Middlebury's Liz Cleveland and Monkton's Tony Panella. A special feature will include four Vergennes Union High School student vocalists, Phoebe Raphael, Gina LeBeau, Bryan Norton and Jeremiah Peryea.

Instrumentalists include saxophonists Jeff Rusik, Larry Maier, Micah

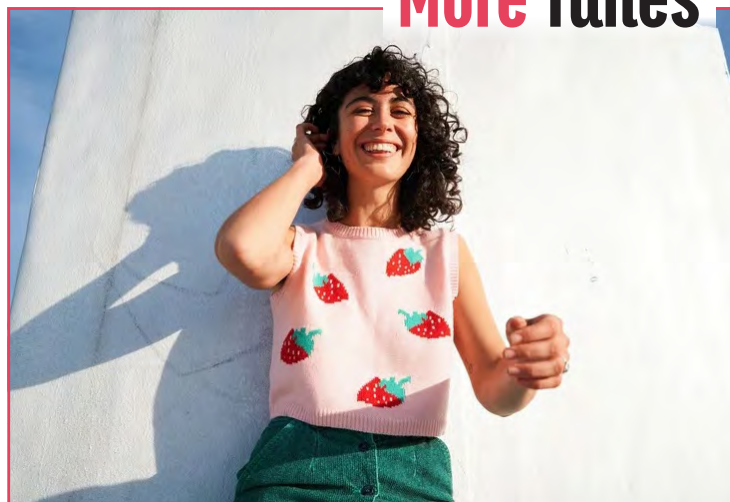
Clevenstine, Steve Sawyer, and Jennifer Murdock; trumpeters Jim Lanpher, Barry McDonald, Tony Panella, Sue O'Daniel, and Dennis Brusco; trombonists Jeff Johnson, Steve Rooney, Dave Tatlock, and Bill Bowers; pianist Owen Clevenstine, guitarist Michael Corn, upright bassist Steve Peery, and drummer Parker Mann. Dave Clevenstine will run sound and Steve Sawyer is the music director and the evening's emcee.

Shake off the winter stiffness and come boogie-down at the Vergennes Opera House. The fantastic music is provided by many familiar faces in this tight-knit 18-piece orchestra, and the singers add an extra special element to the entire event. Attendees are encouraged to bring their dancing shoes and a little something for the scholarship fund.

The Opera House doors and cash bar open at 6:30 p.m., with general seating. The music begins at 7:30 p.m.

For more information contact the Vergennes Opera House via email at info@vergennessoperahouse.org or call 802-877-6737.

More Tunes



Katie Martucci will perform an intimate concert on Sunday, April 19, at 4 p.m. with Jacob Drab at Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio in Middlebury.

Lush and deeply personal sounds from Katie Martucci come to Middlebury

The P.M. Sundays concert series (that ran from fall 2025 to spring 2026) will conclude on Sunday, April 19, at 4 p.m. with a performance by Katie Martucci with Jacob Drab at Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio in Middlebury.

Martucci is a performer, bandleader, singer and composer, and a graduate of the New England Conservatory. She has appeared on The Tonight

See MIDDLEBURY on page 8

Banjo and guitar tunes bring twang to the New Haven Library, Thursday, April 16

The third annual Winter Into Spring Musical Library Tour keeps going this month with Sara Grey and Kieron Means at the New Haven Library on April 16, at 7:30 p.m. The series is presented by the 5 Town friends of the Arts along with the 5 Town libraries.

Sara Grey and her son, Kieron Means, play American music, as distinct from Americana — theirs is the "real deal." Old-time ballads, cowboy songs and

See NEW HAVEN on page 8

Local luthier lights up Starksboro session

The Starksboro Public Library will host another coffeehouse-style music session on April 17, at 7 p.m., featuring Micah Plante. Plante is a local luthier with his own shop (Plante Guitar Co., on Main Street in Bristol) and organizer of a community jam. Come hear this all-around great singer, writer and player perform an acoustic show in the Starksboro library.

See STARKSBORO on page 8

JESSICA'S
AT
SWIFT HOUSE INN

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

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"Ekphrastic – Art and the Word." Ekphrastic writing is a vivid, imaginative literary description of or response to a work of visual art, such as a painting, sculpture, or photograph. Originating from Greek, it aims to make the reader visualize the art, often exploring the scene's emotional, narrative or thematic depth through poetry or prose. These pairings are the result of a workshop held last month in honor of Bristol's inaugural Poem Village. On view through April. (BTW: April is celebrated nationally as Poetry Month.)

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.

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.

See EXHIBITS on page 15

Get your exhibit listed.

EMAIL ELSIE: elsie@addisonindependent.com

Cosmic Forecast



ARIES: March 21/April 20. Aries, you have a certain energy that is building this week. Momentum increases the second you stop overthinking, so jump into whatever you were planning to do with two feet.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Something cozy, such as a hobby, recipe or routine could turn into something surprisingly productive, Taurus. Don't dismiss passion projects this week when comfort meets opportunity.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Gemini, your words equal magic this week. Conversations open doors and can help clear up confusion about important topics, even about budding relationships.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Peace will look good on you this week, Cancer. You will be exuding quiet confidence. It is a good time to organize your space or schedule a spa session. Relax as stress levels drop.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. The spotlight is yours, Leo, even when you are not trying to be in it. This is a great week to share ideas, pitch something creative or post fun content on social media.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. A small, healthy habit or tweak to your lifestyle can change your whole week, Virgo. Tiny improvements will produce a huge payoff that you will enjoy.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. A random invite or chat leads to a helpful connection, Libra. Say yes to invitations to go out, as it is time to be a social butterfly for the foreseeable future.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, you are giving off quiet power vibes this week. Your focus and follow-through is all based on trusting your instincts. Someone in your circle is noticing your efforts.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Sagittarius, going on an adventure doesn't have to necessarily mean traveling. This is a good time to try a new class, go to a show or experiment with new cuisine.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Capricorn, you are building something solid behind the scenes. It may take a lot of time, but steady effort now will likely lead to bragging rights.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Collaborations sparkle for you this week, Aquarius. All of those ideas that you think are unusual will turn out to be genius. It's all about perspective and looking at things the right way.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Your inner world could intersect with the outside world this week, Pisces. Expect a few days of creative, dreamy and intuitive moments where you daydream on purpose.

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APRIL 10 — Cosimo de' Medici, banker & politician (d)
 APRIL 11 — Mary White Ovington, co-founder NAACP (d)
 APRIL 12 — Saoirse Ronan, actor (32)
 APRIL 13 — Cathreine de' Medici, Queen Consort of France (d)
 APRIL 14 — Loretta Lynn, country singer (d)

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

APRIL 15 — Emma Thompson, actor (67)
 APRIL 16 — Alek Wek, model (49)

CALENDAR

April 9-26

2026

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

"LOOKING FOR JOE: THE AMAZING LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH ADDISON" IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 9, 7-8 p.m., Anderson Studio at Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. Featuring Doug Anderson and actor Jeremy Holm, this show explores the hidden history of Addison County's namesake. Proceeds benefit Town Hall Theater and the Henry Sheldon Museum. Tickets: \$25-\$50 generous. Tickets: addisonarts.org/event/looking-for-joe-the-amazing-life-and-times-of-joseph-addison.

"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 online at go.middlebury.edu/tickets.

FRIDAY, APRIL 10

JUANA GAMERO DE COCA SYMPOSIUM IN HISPANIC STUDIES: "HUESERA: THE BONE WOMAN" FILM DISCUSSION IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 10, 4:30 p.m., Middlebury College, Robert A. Jones

'59 House, Conference Room. Director Michelle Garza Cervera discusses her 2022 film, followed by a conversation in Spanish with Argentine anthropologist Rita Segato on gender-based violence in Latin America, with English translation. Free.

"LOOKING FOR JOE: THE AMAZING LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH ADDISON" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 10, 7-8 p.m., Anderson Studio at Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. See details in April 9 entry.

"THE MAIDS" PLAY AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. Friday, April 10, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Theater. Details in April 9 entry.

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.

FREE FAMILY DAY AT THE MUSEUM AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. Saturday, April 11, 1-4 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center

Lower Lobby and Museum. Art making activities for ages 5 and up, inspired by objects in the museum's collection; family art-themed bingo; guided gallery drawing. Free snacks and refreshments. Registering helps organizers know how many attendees to expect: mid.art/family-day.

"THE MAIDS" PLAY AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. Saturday, April 11, 2 and 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Theater. Details in April 9 entry.

VERMONT FOLKLIFE'S YOUNG TRADITION TOURING GROUP PERFORMANCE IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, April 11, 7 p.m., Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 2 Duane Ct. A joy-filled evening of traditional music featuring teen musicians from New England and Quebec playing fiddle, guitar, cello, harp, accordion and ukelele. The final Vermont concert before their April tour to Sweden. \$20 suggested donation; all proceeds go to support the group. For more info, visit vtfolklife.org.

NORTH BRANCH THEATER PRODUCTION: "JOURNEY TO THE TOP" IN RIPTON. Saturday, April 11, 7:30, Ripton Community House, 1283 Rte. 125. Don't miss this student-written original play about a

delightfully varied group of characters making a trek to the top of a great mountain, a place no one has ever been. Refreshments available at intermission. Tickets: \$10, with \$3 of each going to support Atria Collective.

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.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

LUNCHTIME CONCERT SERIES: KATHRYN BLUME IN VERGENNES. Tuesday, April 14, 12:15 p.m., St. Paul's Episcopal Church's Parish Hall, 6 Park St. Singer/songwriter Kathryn Blume is an award-winning solo performer and theater artist. Free and open to the public.

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 midfilmfest.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

SARA GREY AND KIERON MEANS IN CONCERT IN NEW HAVEN. Thursday, April 16, 7 p.m., New Haven Community Library. Old-time ballads, cowboy songs and hymns performed as part of the Winter into Spring Musical Library Tour. Free; donations welcome.

"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

Continued on next page.

MCTV SCHEDULE Channels 1071 & 1091		MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY TELEVISION: P.O. Box 785, Middlebury, Vt. 05753		Please see the MCTV website, www.middleburycommunitytv.org , for changes in the schedule; MCTV events, classes and news; and to view many programs online. Submit listings to the above address, or call 802-388-3062.	
Through the Night: Bulletin Board, VT Media Exchange Channel 1071 Thursday, April 9 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Public Affairs 8 a.m. Congregational Service 12 p.m. Selectboard 9 p.m. Democracy Now 10 p.m. Eckankar Friday, April 10 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. Public Affairs Saturday, April 11 4 a.m. Democracy Now 5 a.m. Public Affairs 8 a.m. All Things LGBTQ 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, April 12 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, April 13 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, April 14 4 a.m. Democracy Now 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 Wednesday, April 15 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 (& 7p.m.) 9:30 p.m. Eckankar 11 p.m. Democracy Now Channel 1091 4/9/2026 Thursday, April 9 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Yoga for Kids 7:30 a.m. Yestermorrow Speaker Series 9 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. MUM'S Talent Show Friday, April 10 6 a.m. Tai Chi	6:30 a.m. Yoga 7:30 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. MUMS Talent Show 7 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 8:30 p.m. Regarding Frost Saturday, April 11 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga & Yoga 7:30 a.m. Regarding Frost 8:30 a.m. MUMS Talent Show 11 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 5 p.m. MUM'S Talent Show 7 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 10 p.m. Yestermorrow Sunday, April 12 4 a.m. Gardens & Nature 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7:30 a.m. Kim's Art Show 12 p.m. Regarding Frost 5 p.m. MUMS Talent Show 7 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra Monday, April 13	5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 12 p.m. School Board Meeting/s 6 p.m. ACSD Board Meeting 9 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra Tuesday, April 14 4:30 a.m. Yestermorrow 5:30 a.m. Tai Chi 6 a.m. Yoga 8 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 3 p.m. Kim's Art Show 5:30 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra Wednesday, April 15 5 a.m. Tai Chi 5:30 a.m. Chair Yoga 7 a.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra 9 a.m. School Board Meeting/s 2 p.m. Authors and Poets 7 p.m. Vermont Youth Orchestra	

Top Pick

Lunchtime Concert with Kathryn Blume

Come hear Kathryn Blume — an award-winning solo performer, theater artist, and lifelong musician — perform at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Vergennes on Tuesday, April 14, at 12:15 p.m. She has studied songwriting with Myra Flynn and Dar Williams and is part of the duo Designated Sinners. She is currently putting together a music video for her song "Red Tent Afternoon" and is working on her first album, produced by Chad Hollister. During the day, she's a therapist at the Hinesburg Counseling Collaborative. Bring your lunch and sing along!



SUNDAY, APRIL 19

POETS OF ADDISON CO. POETRY READING IN BRISTOL. Sunday, April 19, 1 p.m., Bristol Village Co-Housing's historic Peake House at

16 North St. Join for an afternoon of poetry featuring Addison County poets Cindy Ellen Hill, Ruth Farmer, Lily Hinrichsen, Elaine Pentaleri and David Weinstock.

LIVE MUSIC: KATIE MARTUCCI DUO WITH JACOB DRAB IN BRISTOL.

Sunday, April 19, 4 p.m., Peake House, 16 North St. Martucci's music is lush, cinematic, and deeply personal. Tickets: \$15 - \$28 townhalltheater.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

LUNCHTIME CONCERT SERIES IN VERGENNES. Wednesday, April 22, 12:15 p.m., St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Guitarists and vocalists Sallie Mack and Rosi Gowdey perform an eclectic program of folk, bluegrass, ballads and original compositions on guitar and keyboard. Bring lunch and enjoy the concert in the parish hall. Free.

MUSIC IN THE PARLOR IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, April 22, 2026, 6:30 - 8 p.m., the Tilleran Inn & Restaurant, Route 116 North. Free Wednesday night music series; artist TBD.

THURSDAY, APRIL 23

NER OUT LOUD READING IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, April 23, 7:30 p.m., Hepburn Zoo, 121 Hepburn Road. Students from Oratory Now read selections from the New England Review and student writers read their own poetry and prose aloud on stage. Free and open to all.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB WALK AT MEANS WOODS IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 24, time TBD, 619 Seminary St Ext. Will the Dutchman's breeches be hanging out to dry? Join this easy walk and find out. About two miles with little elevation gain. Contact David Andrews at 802-388-4894 or vtrevda@yahoo.com for details. More info at gmcbreadloaf.org.

Middlebury College Musical Theatre. Tickets: \$5-\$10.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17

"TEN VERMONT POETS YOU SHOULD KNOW (BUT PROBABLY DON'T)" TALK IN BRISTOL. Friday, April 17, 10:15 a.m., Howden Hall, West Street. Sure, you can quote Robert Frost—but his work is just the tip of the literary iceberg of Vermont poetry. Cindy Ellen Hill presents this lively dip into the works of lesser-known Green Mountain poets from the 1800s - present, including several Addison County neighbors! Feel free to bring one poem of your own to share. Open to all ages.

COFFEEHOUSE IN THE LIBRARY IN STARKSBORO.

Friday, April 17, 7-9 p.m., at the library in the village. Micah Plante performs this month for a music series that highlights Addison County musicians, organized by Johnne Dickason of Starksboro. Some refreshments will be available. Donations welcome. Let's give these local players some love.

"MEAN GIRLS: THE MUSICAL" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, April 17, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. See April 16 listing. Tickets: \$5-\$10.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18

FRIENDS OF THE TAM: CHIPMAN HILL LOLLIPOP HIKE IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, April 18, 8:30 a.m., Chipman Hill trailhead, Washington St. Ext. Join the Middlebury Area Land Trust for an easy to moderate 3-mile loop hike exploring

Chipman Hill and looking for signs of spring. Some steep sections. Registration encouraged. Free. More info: maltvt.org/friends-of-tam-chipman-hill.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE AT MT. MOOSALAMOO IN GOSHEN.

Saturday, April 18, time TBD, meet at parking near the campground off Goshen Road. A moderate hike to Mt. Moosalamoo. Seven miles roundtrip, with an elevation gain of 850 feet. Wear appropriate clothing and bring water and a snack or lunch; hiking poles recommended if you use them. A co-leader may offer an optional 3.5-mile wildflower hike with 250 feet of elevation gain. Register with leader Ruth Penfield at ruthpenfield@gmail.com or 802-458-1116. More information at gmcbreadloaf.org.

BLACKOUT POETRY WORKSHOP IN VERGENNES.

Saturday, April 18, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Library, 258 Main St. Celebrate National Poetry Month by learning to create blackout poetry from old books. The technique involves blacking out most of the page's text to let a few chosen words spark new meaning. Add drawings, patterns, or collage, and watch the text transform into a poem new with meaning. RSVP is required, email: miranda.degreenia@bixbylibrary.org.

"MEAN GIRLS: THE MUSICAL" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, April 18, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. See April 16 listing. Tickets: \$5-\$10.

ODE: AN IMMERSIVE SONIC EXPERIENCE IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, April 24, 5:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater's Anderson Studio, 76 Merchants Row. This immersive interdisciplinary vocal performance lies at the intersection of resonance, consciousness, soma, intuition and human experience. Sliding scale tickets: \$0-\$20. More details: townhalltheater.org.

LOCALS NIGHT AT LINCOLN PEAK VINEYARD IN NEW HAVEN.

Friday, April 24, 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 O and Schu. More info at lincolnparkvineyard.com.

"NONSENSE" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, April 24, 7:30 p.m., Rothrock Main Stage at Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. When 52 sisters are accidentally poisoned, the remaining Little Sisters of Hoboken stage a musical revue to raise money for funeral costs. This Middlebury Community Players show features song, dance and comic performances in a vaudeville-style show. Tickets: \$25-\$40. Tickets: addisonarts.org/event/nonsense.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25

WINTER TRAVELING BOOK CLUB IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, April 25, 1-2 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. Meet at the Henry Sheldon Museum or join online to discuss "Deep North: Stories of Somali Resettlement in Vermont." Part of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's Winter Traveling Book Club. Free with registration. More info at lcmm.org.

POETRY READING AND OPEN MIC IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, April 25, 2 - 4 p.m., Ilsley Library, 30 Main St. Celebrate Poetry Month with an afternoon of words and peace. Hosted by the Otter Creek Poets. No sign-up required, simply arrive ready to read your poetry or short prose. Free entry.

BRATTLEBORO CAMERATA CONCERT IN CORNWALL.

Saturday, April 25, 7 p.m., The Meeting House at Cornwall. Jonathan Harvey leads a program of works by composers Arvo Pärt and Johannes Ockeghem. Sliding scale tickets: \$15-\$35. Find out more: ottercreekmusicfestival.com.

"NONSENSE" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, April 25, 7:30 p.m., Rothrock Main Stage at Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. See details in April 24 listing.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE ON MINNIE BAKER/CHANDLER RIDGE TRAIL IN GOSHEN.

Sunday, April 26, time TBD. Hike a pretty section of the southern Moosalamoo Recreation area with views of the Adirondacks. A six-mile hike with about 1,200 feet of elevation gain over moderate terrain, with an option to do more distance. Bring water, layers, snack or lunch and insect repellent. To register, contact Dwight Griesman at dwight.griesman@gmail.com. More info at gmcbreadloaf.org.

"NONSENSE" IN MIDDLEBURY.

Sunday, April 26, 2 p.m., Rothrock Main Stage at Town Hall Theater, 76 Merchants Row. See details in April 24 listing.

ALL THESE LITTLE THINGS ART SONG CONCERT IN SALISBURY.

Sunday, April 26, 3 p.m., the Salisbury Congregational Church, Maple Street. Soprano Mary Hubbell, flutist Alice Jones, and pianist Jingjing Wan perform candid and consoling art songs featuring the poetry of women from the turn of the 20th century. Sliding scale tickets: \$15-\$35. Find out more: ottercreekmusicfestival.com.

OPEN MIC POETRY WITH ZIG ZAG LIT MAG IN BRISTOL.

Sunday, April 26, 3-4 p.m., Minifactory, 16 Main St. Open mic poetry event hosted by Zig Zag Lit Mag. Bring a poem to share or come listen. Drinks available for purchase. More info at zigzaglitmag.org.





The New Haven Library will host Sara Grey and Kieron Means for music concert on April 16, at 7:30 p.m.

PHOTO BY BEN PALEY

NEW HAVEN

continued from page 4

Primitive Methodist hymns are all grist to their individual mill. Grey's unique frailing banjo style and Means' blues-inflected guitar are in perfect harmony, and this instinctive family symbiosis is what sets them apart.

Helen Hummel will conclude this year's series in May. The venues for this series are the libraries in each of the five towns (Lincoln, Starksboro, Monkton, New Haven and Bristol). All shows start at 7:30 p.m. and are free with donations welcome.

MIDDLEBURY

continued from page 4

Show Starring Jimmy Fallon and continues to earn recognition for her evocative songwriting and distinctive



KATIE MARTUCCI

voice. Her latest release, "Note to Self" (La Reserve Records), explores what she calls the "unspoken third thing in the room" — stories of friendship, family history, imposter syndrome, her personal journey with epilepsy, and more. Inspired by the writing and production styles of artists such as Madison Cunningham and Emily King, Martucci's music is lush, cinematic, and deeply personal.

Tickets are \$15 for students, \$25 in advance, and \$28 at the door. Purchase online at townhalltheater.org, by phone at 802-382-9222, or in person at the Town Hall Theater box office, Monday–Friday, 12–5 p.m. Presented in partnership with Valley Stage Productions.

STARKSBORO

continued from page 4

"It's a beautiful old building and is really nice acoustically," said Johnne Dickason, a fellow musician and Starksboro resident who's the energy behind this new music series. "We won't need much amplification, if any."

Donations are welcome at the event. And those interested in performing, should text Dickason at 802-777-1231.

More Tunes

Middlebury's Diana Fanning to perform in Burlington and beyond

Head up to Burlington on Sunday, April 12, at 4 p.m., to hear Middlebury pianist Diana Fanning perform at St. Paul's Cathedral. She'll perform favorite works by Beethoven, Janáček, Debussy and Chopin. Free and open to all.

Or jet-set to Germany, where she'll play for the fourth time at the Musikhaus Brunthal, just outside of Munich on April 24. Wow! That is probably a long shot, but cool to hear about these international trips for a local piano star.

In July, Fanning will join the Point CounterPoint Faculty musicians in a Middlebury concert to benefit the new Point CounterPoint Foundation. Mark your calendars for Thursday, July 23.

This summer Fanning will also play with the Central Vermont Chamber Music Festival, with concerts scheduled in Randolph and Woodstock.



Diana Fanning will perform favorite works by Beethoven, Janáček, Debussy and Chopin at St. Paul's Cathedral in Burlington on April 12, at 4 p.m.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / STEVE JAMES

PUZZLES

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ACROSS

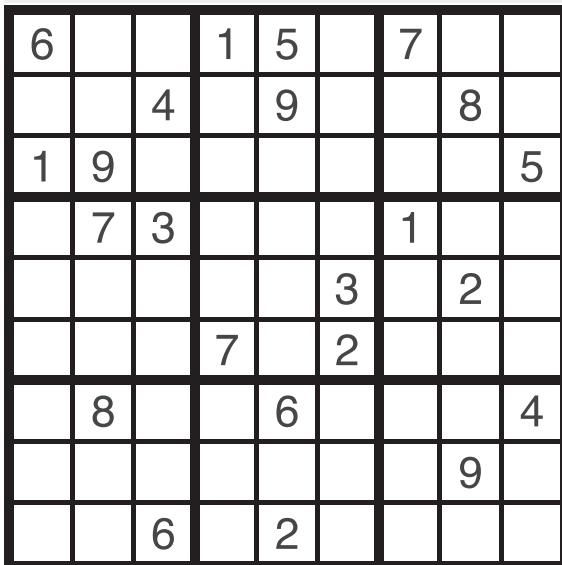
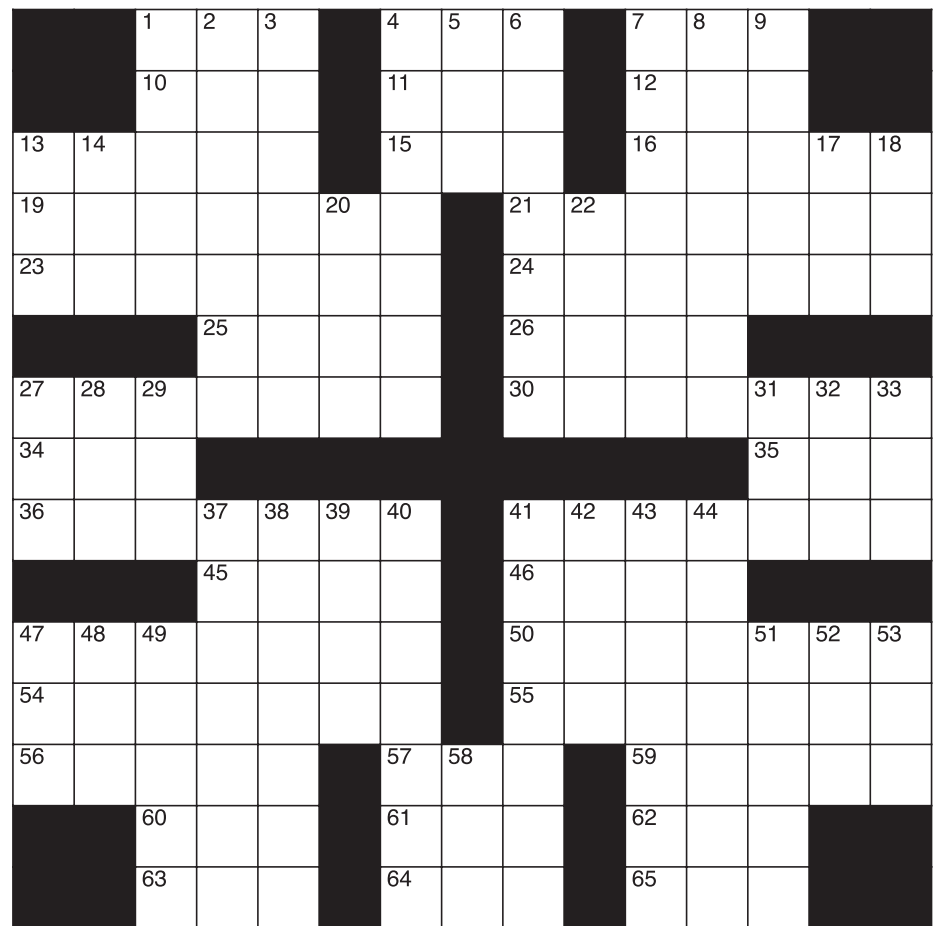
1. Health care pros
4. A person inhabiting Benin
7. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
10. Split pulses
11. Frozen water
12. Small constellation
13. Perennial mountain rice
15. Pick up
16. Japanese historical period
19. Suggesting the horror of death and decay
21. Unattached
23. Fishing port in SE France
24. Products for dogs
25. One point south of southeast
26. Having the skill

- or resources to do something
27. Involve oneself deeply
 30. Immobile
 34. ___ pai dong; Hong Kong food stall
 35. Move quickly on foot
 36. Gathered
 41. A way through
 45. Another name for Thor
 46. Sharp dueling sword
 47. The supreme commander of a fleet
 50. Seasoned sausages
 54. Path
 55. Christian hermit
 56. Ancient region of Asia Minor
 57. Where wrestlers go

- to work
59. Roman statesman
 60. Explosive
 61. Licensed for Wall Street
 62. Where golfers start
 63. Grow old
 64. Autonomic nervous system
 65. No seats available

DOWN

1. A legally binding command
2. General feeling of discomfort
3. Dribble
4. Soft touch
5. South American plant
6. Clouds of gas and dust in space
7. Warm-blooded



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.

vertebrates

8. Lines created by folding
9. Strong belief
13. Senior officer
14. Adult
17. Joint entrance examination in India
18. Passports and drivers' licenses are two
20. Those who go against an accepted authority
22. One point east of northeast

27. Journalist Tarbell
28. One's mother (British)
29. Nowhere to be found
31. A way to save for old age
32. Fall behind
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. The work of a sailor
38. Mark with striae
39. Energy, style and enthusiasm
40. Sticky situation
41. Monetary units of

- Spain
42. Three-banded armadillo
 43. Chooses
 44. More disreputable
 47. Defensive nuclear weapon
 48. "The Partridge Family" actress Susan
 49. Livestock owners assn. in Spain
 51. Duplicating machine (abbr.)
 52. OJ trial judge
 53. Politician
 58. Airborne (abbr.)



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colored pencil

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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

START YOUR GARDEN EARLY WITH COLD FRAMES



Bonnie Kirn Donahue is a UVM Extension Master Gardener and landscape architect from central Vermont.

Utilizing cold frames in early spring is a great way to jump start the vegetable growing season.

Cold frames are wood boxes with slanted, transparent glass or plastic tops that are placed directly on top of the soil in your garden. These boxes allow the sun to filter in, warming the air in the box.

By **BONNIE KIRN DONAHUE**

This creates a greenhouse-like

environment with moist air and warm soil that encourages plant growth.

As the days get warmer, there is a risk that the cold frames could get too hot and damage your plants. To prevent this, the lid can be propped open to help moderate the air temperature. You can keep a thermometer in the box to track the temperature.

If you are germinating seeds (especially warm season crops like tomatoes, peppers and zucchini), try to keep the air temperature between 70-75 F during the day. Cool season crops (like lettuce, spinach and peas) prefer air temperatures to be lower, about 50-60 F.

Fresh, leafy vegetables like leaf lettuce, spinach, kale, arugula and Swiss chard can be easily grown in cold frames. Seeds can be planted directly into the ground, or in trays set on the soil surface. If your goal is to grow full heads of lettuce or kale in your cold frame, you may not have as much room as you would if starting seedlings in the cold frame.

For seed and plant spacing, check the seed packets or websites. I like planting lettuce seeds densely in rows so that I can eat what I thin out. This also can be done for other leafy greens such as spinach and kale. While it takes patience to thin out and wash the tiny plants, young greens are a delicacy.

Radishes and scallions also are great vegetables to start in cold frames. Simply follow the spacing instructions in the seed packets or plant them in trays. Thinning the plants over time can provide snacks for you. Radishes may not appreciate being transplanted, so consider this if you plan to grow them in containers.

Just like in summer, make sure to water the plants when the soil is dry. You can test this by checking whether the soil is moist at a depth of one-fourth inch under the surface. If it is moist, you won't need to water. If it is dry, it is time to water.

While seed packets may say that leaf lettuce or greens take 50 days or more to mature, if you are happy eating smaller plants, you will have greens to eat much sooner. The same goes for scallions. Radishes will be ready to harvest in as soon as three weeks.

Cold frames can be made out of scraps that you may have lying around, including pieces of lumber, old windows (make sure the glass and finishes are lead-free) or a roll of see-through plastic. Check out this resource for tips on how to build your own cold frame: go.uvm.edu/cold-frames.

If you're excited about getting your garden started this year, give cold frames a try, and soon you'll be eating fresh vegetables out of your garden.



Leaf lettuce, spinach and other leafy greens easily can be grown in coldframes by planting seeds directly in the ground or in trays set on the soil surface.

PHOTO/BERNADETTE KAUFMANN/PIXABAY

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Pet of the Week



Hi, I'm Milo!

This is Milo, my 7-year-old bestie. He doesn't make great first impressions with people or animals, so not many people have gotten to know him. But if you take the time, he's the sweetest, silliest, most enthusiastic, and loyal friend! His passions include screaming at anyone in the driveway and chasing squirrels.

Submitted by Elizabeth Stivison of Middlebury.



Pet of the WEEK

Psst... It's free!

Send us a picture of your pet!
elsie@addisonindependent.com

Pets In Need

HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Boogie



Boogie is a big boy for his age; he's only 6 months old but looks like a full-grown cat! Even though he doesn't have the kitten looks, he has the classic kitten energy, and playing is his favorite thing to do! He was found alone at 3 weeks old and nursed to health as a solo kitten. He hasn't had a lot of interaction with other cats since arriving at the shelter, but we will be introducing him to others so he can make buddies and learn how to cat from other cats!

Lola



Lola is a sweet, energetic kitty with big, expressive eyes. This past October, Lola was hit by a car and treated at a local emergency hospital. When she arrived at Homeward Bound shortly after, she had a lot of physical restrictions in place to help her heal. In mid-January, she had her follow-up x-ray, which released her from all exercise restrictions. Lola was adopted into a loving home shortly after and was there for a couple of months, where we learned that instead of the shy, quiet girl she first presented as, she is energetic and VERY playful! We think her best match would be a family that is ready and willing to play with her and let her get her sillies out!

Orca



Orca is an amazing cat! She currently holds the position of Official Lobby Cat and is endlessly entertaining staff and volunteers. She may not be kitten-sized, but she has kitten energy. This little lady takes both playtime and naptime seriously! She enjoys affection and will let us pick her up and snuggle her. She's a great cat that needs to find a family that will enjoy both her playful and sweet sides. She is so curious and fun!

Coco



Coco is your typical adolescent trying to figure out his long legs. He greets people with a wiggly body and propeller tail, and he wants you to know that ball is life! Coco is looking for a household with set routines and structure to his daily life. We're unsure if Coco would want to live with other animals at this point in his life and should be in a child-free home. Coco loves to snuggle and play. He's potty trained and knows "sit".

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.

Homeward Bound
 Addison County's Humane Society



Want to learn more?

Call or check our website.
 We may have a pet for you!

802-388-1100 | HomewardBoundAnimals.org
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EXHIBITS

continued from page 5

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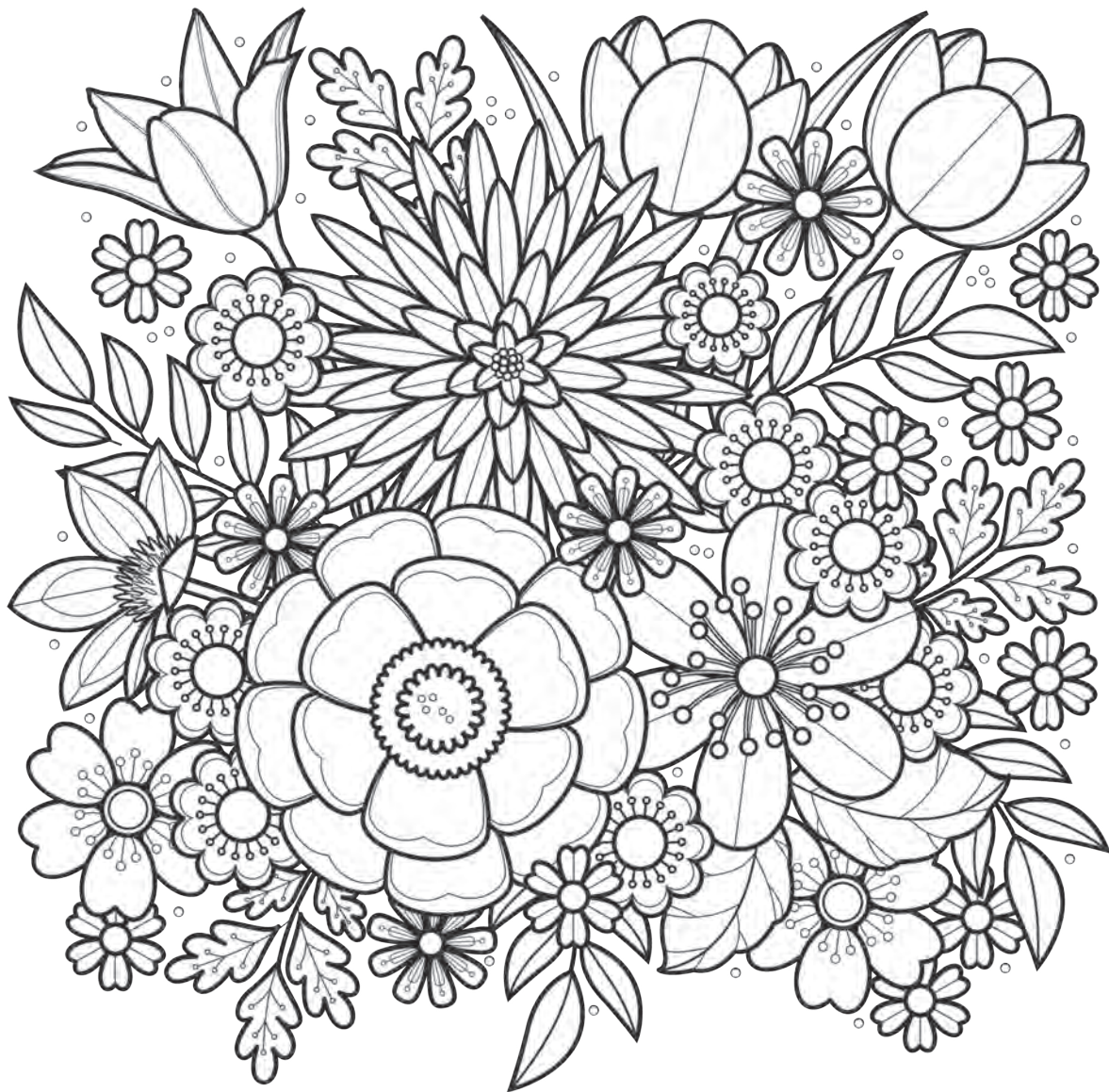
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Feel free to tear out this coloring page or go to addisonindependent.com/contests for a printable version.

Winners will be announced in the May 7th edition of the *Addison Independent*.

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ADDISON COUNTY

Early Childhood Guide

- Act 76 living up to its promise
- Childcare is always improving
- Educators taught to see infants as capable, curious and connected
- Families stay connected to preschools
- Programs cultivate social-emotional learning
- Storytelling engages young minds
- And More

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Addison Early Childhood Regional Council

Working Together for Kids and Families

Each April, Vermont joins communities across the country in celebrating the *Week of the Young Child*, a time to recognize the importance of early learning and the people who make it possible.

As part of the statewide Building Bright Futures Network, the Addison Early Childhood Council has spent the past year listening to and learning from families, educators, health providers, and community partners in the Addison region to understand what's working well and where support is needed.

REGIONAL DATA HIGHLIGHTS

"The State of Vermont's Children: 2025 Year in Review" highlights statewide trends and Addison County's unique strengths and challenges.

- Child population: Addison County is home to roughly 2,300 children from birth to age 8.

- Child care access: Our child care programs are strong, but there are not enough child care spots in our region, especially for infants and toddlers. Families continue to face waitlists and limited options, especially for nontraditional hours.

- Developmental screening: The Addison region performs above the statewide average, with over 70% of children receiving recommended developmental screenings. This demonstrates strong coordination among pediatric practices, early educators, and family support programs.

- Economic stability: Approximately one in three children in Addison County lives in a household earning below Vermont's livable wage, highlighting the importance

of accessible child care, transportation, and wraparound supports.

- Mental health: There were increased referrals for early childhood mental health services in 2025.

WHERE WE FOCUSED OUR ENERGY

Throughout the year, the Addison Regional Council focused on several key areas to strengthen our region's early childhood system:

Supporting Migrant Families

We created a Migrant Family Support subcommittee to better understand and respond to the needs of migrant children and families in the region. This group has begun mapping resources, identifying barriers, and building relationships with trusted community partners to ensure all families can access early learning, health care, and basic needs.

Addressing Substance Misuse with Compassion and Collaboration

In November, the Addison Regional Council hosted a conversation with local experts about substance use. We focused on empathy, reducing stigma, and how we can work together to support families. The discussion helped Regional Council members understand families' challenges and strengthen referral pathways.

Understanding Statewide Policy Recommendations & Proposed Universal Pre-Kindergarten Changes

Each fall, Building Bright Futures publishes Policy Recommendations from Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council Network for the coming year. As part of the Network, the Addison Regional



Council helped to shape the 2026 Policy Recommendations.

Priorities include streamlining fingerprint-based background checks for child care workers, advancing pre-K access, and sustaining efforts to protect Vermont's new child care investments. Our Regional Council took a closer look at potential local and statewide Universal Pre-K changes and talked about what potential local and statewide Universal Pre-K changes could mean for local programs, schools, and families. The conversation helped

partners plan ahead for possible changes in funding, enrollment, and how services are offered.

Deepening Understanding of Grief, Loss, and Postpartum Mental Health

Presentations from Empty Arms Vermont and Blooming Circle gave us a clearer picture of what families face during pregnancy loss, infant loss, and postpartum mental health challenges. This helped our region strengthen how we show up for families with understanding and coordinated support.

(See Council, Page 4)

Council

(Continued from Page 3)

ADDISON COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD SUMMIT

In October, the Council hosted the second annual **Addison County Early Childhood Summit**. This year's Summit theme focused on Transitions, bringing together early childhood educators, health professionals, family service providers, and community leaders to explore how we can strengthen systems that support children and families, especially during key transitions like entering child care, preschool, and kindergarten.

If you are interested in joining the Addison Early Childhood Regional Council, please contact Building Bright Futures Regional Manager Darla Senecal at dsenecal@buildingbrightfutures.org. Our meetings are open to



anyone who is invested in the well-being of children and families in the Addison region.



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Cultivating a Culture of Inquiry:

By JACQUELYN PRIME

Over the past several years, Reggio-inspired early childhood education has steadily deepened across Vermont, supported by RIVET (Reggio Inspired Vermont Early Education Team), a growing network of educators committed to reflective practice, collaboration, and research alongside children. What began as a small circle of practitioners has evolved into a dynamic statewide community guided by the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach. This approach is grounded in documentation, professional dialogue, and a shared vision of children as capable, curious, and rich in potential.

The Reggio Emilia approach traces its roots to a vision held by the citizens of Villa Cellia, a village on the outskirts of Reggio Emilia that suffered the ravages of World War II. Guided by educator Loris Malaguzzi and shaped by families rebuilding their community, the philosophy emerged from a deep commitment to democracy, participation, and the rights of children. At its core is the understanding that children are protagonists in their own learning. Teachers are researchers and collaborators, engaged in processes of observation, interpretation, and co-construction rather than the delivery of predetermined content. The environment serves as a third teacher, intentionally designed to provoke inquiry, foster relationships, and facilitate dialogue.

Documentation functions as both a research tool and a communicative act, making learning visible and opening space for reflection. Central to this philosophy is the concept of the hundred languages of children, which recognizes the many symbolic and expressive

ways children construct meaning through materials, movement, sound, light, storytelling, and countless other forms of representation.

To be Reggio-inspired in Vermont is not to replicate the schools of Reggio Emilia, but to interpret its principles with integrity and intentionality within local contexts. Across the state, educators are grounding this work in place-based inquiry, building relationships with forests, rivers, farms, and seasonal rhythms as essential contexts for children's research and meaning-making.

In 2025, Mary Johnson Children's Center in Middlebury deepened its commitment to this work by sending four educators on a week-long study delegation to Reggio Emilia, Italy. During the visit, educators spent time in infant and toddler programs as well as preschool settings, engaging in dialogue with curriculum leaders, studio teachers, educators, and families. Much of the experience also included lectures and extended study within the Loris Malaguzzi Center, where participants explored documentation, *progettazione* (a responsive and reflective approach to curriculum design based on children's ideas and evolving inquiries), and the values that underpin Reggio Emilia's educational approach. The experience profoundly supported the growth and development of teachers, deepening their image of the child as capable and full of potential, and expanding their understanding of learning as a co-constructed process. Educators strengthened their capacity to form intentional relationships with materials, recognizing them as languages for thinking and expression.

Within Vermont, mentorship



The Growth of
Reggio-Inspired
Practice Across
Vermont

has been central to sustaining and deepening this work. Supported by Building Bright Futures grants, RIVET has organized documentation initiatives at Mary Johnson Children's Center and across the state, creating meaningful entry points for educators across a wide spectrum of experience. For those new to the field, documentation has served as an accessible pathway into Reggio-inspired practice. For more experienced educators, it has offered depth, complexity, and opportunities for critical reflection. Through sustained observation, the study of documentation, and facilitated

professional dialogue, educators have strengthened their ability to interpret children's thinking and to respond to children's questions and ideas with thoughtfully designed materials and experiences through intentional *progettazione*.

RIVET's broader efforts have further expanded this statewide community of practice. Centers have opened their doors for reciprocal visits, creating opportunities for educators to study environments and curriculum in context. Presentations at the Vermont State Kindergarten Conference have introduced

(See Inquiry, Page 8)

Seeing Infants
as Capable,
Curious and
Connected

Reggio-Inspired Learning Begins at Birth



By COURTNEY OTIS

A baby leans forward, studying the light as it reflects across the floor.

Another pauses, hand hovering, deciding whether to reach for a basket or turn toward a familiar voice.

An educator waits nearby, not to direct, but to notice.

In a Reggio-inspired approach, these are not small moments.

They are the curriculum.

When many people hear the word school, they picture desks, letters, and older children. Yet learning begins long before that. From the very start of life, infants are building theories about the world: Who will respond to me? What happens when I move my body? How do things feel, sound, change?

Reggio-inspired education invites us to see babies

differently, not as empty vessels waiting to be filled, but as strong, capable, and full of potential. Infants are researchers. They are communicators. They are citizens of our community.

This image of the child changes everything.

It means we slow down.

We observe before we step in.

We value wonder over rushing.

We create environments that invite exploration rather than entertainment.

A simple mirror becomes a place for identity.

A basket of natural materials becomes a laboratory of texture and sound.

A caregiving routine becomes a conversation of trust.

Even diaper changes, bottles, and transitions hold rich opportunities for connection

(See Reggio, Page 7)

Life can be heavy.

Our muscles are strong, willing and ready to help shoulder the load.

At Addison County Home Health and Hospice, we support families through both joyful and challenging times, helping guide decisions about healthcare needs and lifestyle changes.

We collaborate with community organizations and healthcare providers to deliver supportive and preventative services for families with newborns and young children who may be at risk for medical or emotional challenges. Some private insurance policies have postpartum benefits, which may include supportive skilled nursing visits.

Our maternal-child health nurses provide in-home visits during the prenatal and postpartum period, offering education and guidance relating to pregnancy, labor and deliver, breastfeeding and newborn care.



You don't have to navigate this journey alone, we're here to support you every step of the way!



Reggio

(Continued from Page 6)
 and learning. When an educator narrates, waits for a response, or offers a choice, a child experiences respect. Over time, that respect grows into confidence.

Families are essential partners in this journey. You are your child's first teacher, and your knowledge, culture, and dreams shape the classroom community. When we listen to families, we build continuity between home and school, helping children feel safe, seen, and understood.

What might look like simple play from the outside is actually deep intellectual work. Infants

are forming relationships, testing ideas, and building the foundation for how they will see themselves as learners for years to come.

When we trust babies to be capable, they show us just how much they can do.

Reggio-inspired learning reminds us that education is not something we start later. It begins in arms, on the floor, in eye contact, in shared discovery. It begins at birth.

Editor's note: Courtney Otis is Curriculum Coordinator at Red Clover Children's Center in Middlebury.



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Inquiry

(Continued from Page 5)

Reggio-inspired perspectives to a broader audience. Ongoing communities of practice and study groups have created sustained spaces for dialogue, supporting educators in developing shared language around documentation, ethics, and collaborative research. This work has fostered relationships across programs and contributed to a culture of intellectual rigor, reflection, and professional generosity.

This past fall, Camp Meade opened its doors to educators who gathered for a RIVET mini-conference centered on children's relationships with trees and the natural world.

The gathering emphasized the importance of engaging with the hundred languages through direct, material experience. With the guidance of Vermont artists who generously donated their time and materials, participants explored the creation of natural pigments, experimented with printmaking and photography, engaged in papermaking and clay work, and developed handmade books. These experiences were not approached as technical skill building alone, but as opportunities to build relationships with materials. Through experiencing texture, resistance, transformation, and possibility firsthand, educators



expanded their capacity to thoughtfully extend children's inquiries. The focus on trees and local ecology reflected Vermont's commitment to grounding Reggio-inspired practice in place-based relationships.

Building upon years of study, mentorship, and collaborative infrastructure, Vermont now stands at a significant moment. With the generous support of the Vermont Department of Children and Families Child Development Division and RIVET, in partnership with Reggio Children and North American Reggio Emilia Alliance, the Exhibition and Atelier Mosaic of Marks, Words, Material and the NAREA 22nd Summer Conference will be hosted at the Winooski School District this summer.

The Mosaic of Marks, Words, Material Exhibition and Atelier will offer educators, children, and families the opportunity to engage directly with

documentation and pedagogical research emerging from Reggio Emilia's city-wide system of early education and care. Visitors will encounter panels, artifacts, and materials that illuminate children's thinking and the collaborative processes that sustain it. More than an exhibition, it represents an invitation to dialogue, reflection, and continued growth. The NAREA 22nd Summer Conference will feature two Italian educators from Reggio Emilia, as well as opportunities to interact with materials in the atelier and to visit Reggio-inspired Vermont early childhood programs.

For further information about the Mosaic of Marks, Words, Material Exhibition and Atelier and to register for the 22nd NAREA Summer Conference, visit the RIVET website at www.rivetnetwork.net.

Editor's note: Jacquelyn Prime is an MJCC Teacher and RIVET Steering Committee Member.

Act 76 in Action: Supporting Families in Addison County

By **KIMBERLY BELL**

For families with young children, access to reliable, affordable child care can make all the difference. In Vermont, that support is becoming more of a reality. Parenting comes with many challenges, but finding quality care and building a support system shouldn't be one families face alone. For my husband and me, having moved here, that sense of community has grown through our daughter's school, my work, and the relationships we've built along the way.

In 2023, legislative Act 76 was passed to expand public access to affordable, high-quality child care from birth to pre-K in Vermont. The law also created a payroll tax, with contributions from employers, to fund ongoing child care subsidies and future investments. Through the Child

Care Financial Assistance Program, eligible families can afford care by covering part or all of the cost, reducing out-of-pocket expenses and supporting parents' ability to work, attend school, or participate in job training.

Following this monumental bill, "more than 100 new programs have opened, adding over 1,700 spaces and 400 early childhood educator jobs." These numbers reinforce Vermont's commitment to supporting young families. Looking closer to home, how has this bill affected our small community in East Middlebury and throughout Addison County?

Following the passing of Act 76, Mary Johnson Children's Center expanded its East Middlebury location by 16 spots (10 for children age 18-36 months) and hired four

(See Act 76, Page 10)



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Act 76

(Continued from Page 9)
 additional teachers. This state funding made in-house growth possible, allowing the school to better serve local families. As shared by those directly impacted:

“By having our children enrolled in the program at MCNS (Middlebury Cooperative Nursery School), we have both been able to work full-time while contributing to our community and our families overall financial stability. I was able to return to a career that I love and have invested a lot of time and education in throughout my adult life.”

— Ashley Sherry

“MJCC allows our family to have flexibility and support as working parents, while knowing that our child is in the hands of trusted, capable, empathetic, and

dedicated people. Knowing the most critical period of a child’s development is birth to 5, every parent in Vermont deserves that kind of piece of mind.

— The Paterno Family

“[Mary Johnson Children’s Center has] created a world-class, evidence-based program in our town, and it is an extraordinary gift to raise our children alongside them. MCNS/ MJCC supports families every day and makes it possible for working parents like ourselves to remain rooted in this community

— Sarafina Midzik

“I’m so grateful as a working parent to be able to drop my child off at a school that takes the time to get to know who she is as a person.”

— Reed Tso

These experiences highlight a broader truth: Access to high-

quality early childhood education supports not only children, but entire families and communities.

So what is next for early childhood in Vermont’s legislation? As of March 2026, S.206 — the ECE profession bill — is under consideration. It seeks to establish a statewide licensure system for early childhood educators, creating clear qualifications, career pathways, and professional recognition. By aligning credentials across the field, the bill aims to support and retain high-quality educators in our communities.



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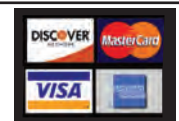
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Why have Week of the Young Child?

You may be wondering how the Week of the Young Child started and why we celebrate it not only as a community but nationally.

100 years ago, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (known as NAEYC) began, and at the time it was called the National Association for Nursery Education. This was a time when educators and researchers began to mold nursery schools for young children to attend. Around 40 years later they evolved into the current name that many refer to as NAEYC. When

this happened, Head Start programs were launched so there began to be a focus on preschool education. For the Green Mountain State we started the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children in 1972. By having this Association, educators have worked together to advance early childhood education as a profession.

Why is this even important? Think back to your grandparents' or great-grandparents' time. Most stayed home and helped on the farm or around the homes. They didn't have a lot of education. I

myself went to preschool part-time for socialization and to get comfortable with a group of children my own age before the school years began.

Today most families have both

parents working and their children in

(See *Why?*, Page 12)



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Why?

(Continued from Page 11)
 an early education center, early education registered home, or a preschool program. The importance of having quality early childhood education places to learn is due to how short a window our young children's growth and development happen. The first five years of life is when 90% of the child's brain is developed. Having a child in a play-based program helps the child to learn naturally the developmental skills they will need before entering kindergarten. They are learning how to regulate their emotions and work on social emotional skills while there. They are learning cognitive skills, large and gross motor skills and so much more. They get real life experiences that they can't get from being on technology or going to work with a parent.

Our own Gov. Phill Scott has made proclamations that the Week of the Young Child be celebrated. These proclamations were issued in partnership with VTAEYC and others to emphasize the importance of early childhood education. The need for early childhood education continues to

grow, and future early childhood educators are needed to provide rich, high quality educational experiences for young children and their families. S.206, The Early Childhood Educator Professional Bill has been making progress in the Senate. This bill is a major step in ensuring early childhood educators are recognized and valued as professionals. No longer will they be looked at as a babysitter or daycare provider but as the Early Educators that they are. This will ensure transparency for families and accountability for the great investments Vermont has made in the early childhood workforce so far.

So, on this Week of the Young Child, celebrate that the educators are improving the profession to offer the best education for your young children. Children will enjoy daily activities such as Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Work Together Wednesday, Artsy Thursday, and Family Friday. I encourage you to celebrate with your child on these days with some hands-on activities to make lasting memories and support their brain development.



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Learn about social-emotional learning

By PEG SUTLIVE

“Social and emotional skills are the ‘bricks and mortar’ of all areas of development,” according to Jack Shonkoff, Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (Epstein, 2009).

In the world of early education, Addison County educators fully embrace the importance of this learning. Social and emotional development is a child’s developing capacities to experience, regulate, and express a range of emotions, develop close relationships with other children and adults, actively explore their environments, and learn. Just like how children learn to walk, talk and read in an individual way, children also learn social-emotional skills at their own unique pace.

To understand more about

what this learning looks like in a classroom, I interviewed Sarah Perrotte, an early educator at the Addison County Early Learning Center (ACELC). At ACELC there are two classrooms: a Head Start preschool, and an Early Head Start toddler classroom. Sarah is one of three teachers in the toddler classroom, along with Holli Boise and Amy Stonoha.

Peg: Hello, Sarah! Can you tell me a little bit about how you became an early educator?

Sarah: My passion is advocating for children and families during the earliest years, because that’s when brain development is happening most rapidly. The first three years are foundational, and I believe every family deserves the support and resources needed to give their

(See Sutlive, Page 15)



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Sutlive

(Continued from Page 13)

child the strongest possible start.

Peg: In a typical day, what are some ways that you plan and include social-emotional instruction?

Sarah: We prioritize intentional social-emotional teaching. In our small groups, we focus on three things: helping children name their emotions, teaching them to advocate for their needs, and facilitating inclusive peer interactions like turn-taking.

Peg: Are there specific tools or materials that support children's SEL (social-emotional learning)?

Sarah: Tools can support social-emotional learning, but what matters most are the relationships we build with children. When adults are responsive to their needs and emotions, children feel safe,

included, and able to grow their social and emotional skills.

Peg: Here is a scenario that I know many families can relate to. How might your team respond?

Two children are playing with Magna-Tiles. One child is gathering most of the Magna-Tiles to keep in front of him. The other child reaches for some and gets upset when the other child yells "Mine!"

Sarah: When resources like Magna-Tiles are limited, we use it as a teaching moment. We model "turn" using both sign language and verbal cues. If a child is struggling, we use a visual timer so they know exactly when it will be their turn again, ensuring everyone feels supported and included.

Peg: How is the way you teach SEL different from the practices, say 20 years ago?

Sarah: We've moved from a reactive to a proactive model. By intentionally teaching emotional




literacy and social skills daily, we are helping children build a toolkit for navigating life's challenges.

Peg: If you could give advice to parents as they navigate the emotional development of

toddlers, what would it be?

Sarah: Be patient with yourself because it's not always easy. The goal is to help your child feel safe expressing their emotions. It takes practice, but the benefits are huge!






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Schools make family connections



At **Starksboro Cooperative Preschool**, family and community are central to everything we do. As a cooperative preschool, families play an active role in supporting the program. Parents contribute through shared responsibilities that help keep tuition costs manageable while strengthening their connection to the school. These contributions might include shoveling snow, washing towels or donating snacks.

Throughout the year we host family celebrations that allow time to connect more deeply with one another. In a rural community like Starksboro, these gatherings create meaningful opportunities for families to meet, share experiences, and form lasting friendships.

One especially memorable celebration took place in November as we prepared for Thanksgiving, when we invited families to join us for "Breakfast in the Forest." Parents and grandparents arrived bundled in warm layers after a light dusting of snow to share the morning with the children. We offered coffee donated by Ridge Roaster, tea, carrot cupcakes made with carrots from Footprint Farm, along with bagels, fruit, and warm apple cider. Teachers tended a small fire while children proudly guided their families to their favorite places in the woods. The morning was filled with outdoor play, conversation, and a quiet morning in nature. Most importantly, the gathering gave families time to connect with one another. By the end of the morning many of us were saying the same thing: "We should do this every week!"

Here are what other preschools around the area are offering as ways for families to connect.

At **Orwell Early Education**

Program we strive to host family events every month but the event everyone loves the most is our annual museum. We hang panels of the children's work, pictures of their creations through the year and display art on tables. We have computers playing videos. It's a wonderful celebration of the children's work and growth and inspires family conversation with one another as we celebrate a year of hard work.

Mary Johnson Children's Center: Each fall, we host a family dinner where children make sauce, bread, salad, and even gelato. Our annual pumpkin pie-making gathering brings families together before Thanksgiving, and classrooms often host events inspired by the interests of the children. Our toddler group had a rave this fall, and another group met at the pump track for bike riding.

At **Quarry Hill School** our Peace and Love Celebration is a pizza party where we recognize and share our learning about the many people who have made contributions in our world and community that make things more just, kind and beautiful for everyone. We learn about Martin Luther King, Jr., children's author Todd Parr, and local peacemakers who work in hospitals, are volunteer firefighters, librarians or make sure we have good food to eat.

At **Wren's Nest at Willowell**, every fall we do a welcome potluck for our families in the evening, as a chance for teachers and students to get to know each other with families and siblings joining in. We also have a lantern walk during the darkest time of the year. Students bake bread and make lanterns that light the way as they walk through the forest with a song they learn.



Forest schools raise the next generation of environmentalists



By **EMMA SEKERCAN**

In a society increasingly consumed by time spent indoors, distracted by technology and disconnected from the outdoor world, forest schools are becoming more and more critical to the health and wellbeing of our children and the environment.

Experiences in early childhood greatly influence the trajectory of children's lives. When children can truly connect with the natural world, they develop an innate awareness, curiosity, and care for the ecosystems that are crucial to our planet's survival.

Environmental education in our school systems is often taught through the context of massive, far away issues such as the deforestation of rainforests and endangered animals that live on other continents, before students even know the plants and animals in their backyard. David Sobel

writes in his book "Beyond Ecophobia," "If we want children to flourish, to become truly empowered, then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it."

We must allow children to start by connecting with and caring about the local environments that cradle them. This allows them to have the capacity to learn about and think of solutions for broader issues as they grow older. Children form a deep sense of place when they spend significant amounts of uninterrupted and child-led time outdoors in a permanent location(s). Children become in tune with the weather, seasons, plants, animals, the way the creek bends, the good climbing trees, the list could go on. At forest schools, (See Forest schools, Page 18)



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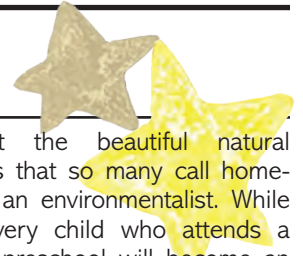
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Forest schools



(Continued from Page 17)
nature as much as they learn from teachers and each other.

Tucked up on a hill in Bristol, between a swath of forest and a meadow leading to wetlands, you'll find Wren's Nest Forest Preschool. Here, a bustling group of 3- to 5-year-old children can be found immersed in the Vermont landscape. In her book "Teaching The Cedarsong Way," Erin Kenny writes, "Many leading adult environmentalists cite two primary reasons for their commitment to stewardship and their involvement

with environmental activism: Extended periods of unstructured nature time during childhood and a nature mentor who taught them to respect the natural world."

At Wren's Nest, the children continue to deepen their connection to each play spot in the forest with every visit. While their time is unstructured, they naturally fall back into the rhythms of the forest and the inspiration that specific downed logs, branches, rocks, acorns, etc. in each place hold. The children are already developing a sense of

respect and empathy for nature and each other, guided by the mentorship of teachers who care deeply about the earth. We use inquiry based teaching to guide the children to understanding the forest and how to respect it.

Forest schools not only allow young children to deeply connect with the outdoor world, they also allow children the space to develop critical thinking skills, perseverance, emotional regulation skills, and teamwork. These important skills are needed to stand up for and

protect the beautiful natural spaces that so many call home to be an environmentalist. While not every child who attends a forest preschool will become an environmental activist, the traits and values that forest school fosters will create a generation of people who can move through life and lead compassionately; as critical thinkers, and clear communicators.

Editor's note: Emma Sekercan is a teacher at Wren's Nest Forest Preschool.



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DIRECTORY

Center/Home	Name	Ages	Schedule	PreK Partner	Town	Notes/Contact Info
Center	Quarry Hill School	3-5	School Year/school day	Yes	Middlebury	www.quarryhillschool.org office@quarryhillschool.org
Center	Otter Creek Child Center	6 wks-5	Year Round, M-F	Yes	Middlebury	www.ottercreekcc.org office@ottercreekcc.org
Center	Evergreen Preschool	3-5	School Year/half day and full day	Yes	Vergennes	Evergreenpreschoolvt@gmail.com
Center	MAUSD Early Education Program	3-5	School Year/half day and full day options	Yes	Bristol	lindsay.hance@mausd.org
Center	MAUSD Early Education Program	3-5	School Year/half day and full day options	Yes	Bristol	heidi.bullock@mausd.org
Center	Wren's Nest Forest Preschool	3-5	School Year, M-F, 8-4:30	Yes	Bristol	info@willowell.org
Home	Carolyn Fogg	Birth-12	Full Year, M-F, 7-4:30	Yes	Monkton	cfogg1979@gmail.com
Center	Starksboro Cooperative Preschool	3-5	School Year, M-F, + Summer Program, half day, 7:30-1, & full day, 7:30-4:30	Yes	Starksboro	starkscoop@gmail.com
Center	Aurora Preschool	3-5	Year Round, 7:30-5	No	Middlebury	auroralearningcentervt@gmail.com
Center	Bristol Family Center	6 wks-6 years	Year Round, M-F	Yes	Bristol	www.bristolfamilycenter.org awhitcomb@bristolfamilycenter.org
Center	Addison County Parent Child Center	0-5	School Year, 8-4 and M-F, 8-4 in summer	Yes	Serving Addison County in Middlebury, with transportation	dbailey@addisoncountypcc.org
Home	Mountain Road Preschool	6 wks - 10 yrs	Full Year, M-F, 7:15-4:45	Yes	Addison	mountainroadpreschool@yahoo.com
Home	Misty Scott	6 wks - 12 yrs	Full Year, M-F, 7-5	No	Vergennes	www.facebook.com/CuriousKidsChild-CareMistyScott ckcc@comcast.net 802-877-6977 3 STAR Provider
Home	Evelyn Burlock	6 wks - 12 yrs	Full Year, M-F, 7-5	No	Vergennes	eburlock27@yahoo.com 802-877-2506
Center	Mary Johnson Children's Center (MJCC)	3 mos - 5 yrs	Full Year	Yes	Middlebury	www.mjccvt.org office@mjccvt.org
Center	Middlebury Cooperative Nursery School (MJCC)	18 mos - 5 yrs	Full Year	Yes	East Middlebury	www.mjccvt.org office@mjccvt.org
Center	Orwell Early Education Program (MJCC)	3 yrs-5 yrs	School Year & Summer Session	Yes	Middlebury	www.mjccvt.org office@mjccvt.org
Center	Middlebury After School Program (MJCC)	K-5th grade	After School- School Year until 5:30. Summer 8-5	No	Middlebury	www.mjccvt.org school-age@mjccvt.org

DIRECTORY

Center/Home	Name	Ages	Schedule	PreK Partner	Town	Notes/Contact Info
Home	Heather Armell	6 wks-5 yrs	Full Year, M-F, 7:15-4:30,	No	Monkton	littleykes2007@yahoo.com
Home	Bethany Hallock	Birth to 12	Full Year, M-F 7:30-4:30,	No	Ferrisburgh	gbthallock@juno.com
Home	Donna Meacham	Birth to 12	Full Year, M-F, 7:30-4:30	No	New Haven	dondarmea@gmavt.net 802-453-5383
Center	Lincoln Cooperative Preschool	3-5	7:30-3. Some after care available	Yes	Lincoln	preschool@gmavt.net
Home	Sunshine Childcare	Birth-5	Full Year, M-F, 7-5	No	Addison	sunshinecc21@gmail.com
Home	Jennifer Cyr Family Child Care	Birth-4	Year-Round, M-TH	No	Middlebury	www.jennifercyrfamilychildcare.com jennifercyr2@gmail.com
Center	Addison County Early Learning Center (Head Start)	16 mos-5, 12 mos-5 starting Sept. 26	Preschool-School Year, Toddler classroom-Year Round, both, M-F, 8:30-2:30	Yes	New Haven	psutlive@cvoeo.org, Peg Sutlive
Public Pre-K (Center)	ANWSD Early Education Program	3-5	School Year only, 8:15 -1:15. Extended care, 1:15-4:30	Yes	Ferrisburgh	mtierney@anwsd.org, Marcie Tierney
Home	Laura Weber	Birth-12	Year Round, M-F, 7-4:30	No	Hancock	lmw15vt@yahoo.com
Center	The Ark Preschool/Kindergarten	3 yrs-Kindergarten school year. 3-10 summer	School Year & Summer program, M-F, 7:30-5	No	Waltham	arkdirector@victoryvt.org Rachael Boyce, Director 802-877-3393
Center	Cornerstone Preschool	3-5	School Year, M-F, 7:30-5	No	Vergennes	office@cornerstone-prek.org
Center/School	Bridport Central School Preschool	3-5	School Year, M-Th, 7:45-2:45	Yes	Bridport	Heather Adams, Preschool Director, 802-758-2331 hadams@acsdvt.org
Center/School	Mary Hogan Preschool	3-5	School Year, M-Th 8:15-2:15	Yes	Middlebury	Kim Forbes, Preschool Director 802-382-1438 kforbes@acsdvt.org
Center	A.R.K. Child Care at Whiting	6 wks -5	Year Round, M-F, 7:30 -5	No	Whiting	Rebecca Kerr, Program Director 802-623-7991 arkchildcare2018@gmail.com
Home	Muffy's Family Child Care and Preschool Program	Infant-School age	Year Round, M-F, 8-4:30	Yes	Orwell	muffykgart@gmail.com 802-948-2561 (Leave message)
Home	Discovery Hill Child Care and Preschool	Infant-School age	Year Round, M-F, 7-4:30	Yes	Bristol	kidsfirstdhfcc@yahoo.com 802-989-1225
Home	Stacey Rheaume	6 wks - 12	Year-Round, M-F 7-4:30	No	Salisbury	rrheaume5@yahoo.com 802-349-5082

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DIRECTORY

Center/Home	Name	Ages	Schedule	PreK Partner	Town	Notes/Contact Info
Center	Bridge School Beginners Preschool	3-5	Year Round, M-F, 8-3:30 with AfterCare until 4:30 during the school year	Yes	Middlebury	Lindsay Hard Director/Lead Teacher lindsay@bridgeschoolvermont.org 802-388-3498
Center	Salisbury Family Center	6 wks-5	Year Round, M-F, 7:30-4:30	No	Salisbury	Christian Bowdish, Director salisburyfamilycenter@gmail.com 802-352-9800
Licensed Home	Pea Ridge Farm School	2.5-5	Year Round, M-F, 8-4		Middlebury	
Home	Anne Audy: Superhero Academy	Infant-School age	School Year, M-F, 7-5. Summer part-time only	No	Ferrisburgh	Anne.Emmel.Dunham@gmail.com 802-355-0506
Center	Red Clover Children's Center	Birth-3	Year Round, M-F	Yes	Middlebury	admin@redcloverchildren.org Redcloverchildren.org
Center	The Growing Tree	12 mos-5	Year Round, M-F, 7:30-8:30	No	Ferrisburgh	thegrowingtree.squarespace.com tgtaddison@gmail.com 802-759-2924
Home	Samantha Latreille Child Care	Birth-School Age	Year Round, M-F, 7:15-4:30	No	Bridport	Slatreille123@gmail.com 802-349-2565 Samantha Latreille



Mother appreciates early education for her children



By SAMANTHA PAQUETTE

As an early educator in one of the preschool classrooms at Bristol Family Center, I have been given the opportunity to learn and grow in this field with continuous support from my director, assistant director, and coworkers.

Also, I am currently enrolled in my final semester at the Community College of Vermont, where I will soon complete my Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. The knowledge I've gained from my classes, various trainings, and the guidance of the early educators I work beside has helped me better understand each child and how to support them in meaningful and developmentally appropriate ways.

Although I am an early

educator, I am also a mother to two young boys. As a parent, I am deeply grateful that my children have had access to early childhood education at Bristol Family Center. Their early educators have given them the opportunity to learn crucial developmental skills that have helped them form relationships, build independence, and grow into confident learners.

As early childhood educators we shape the young minds of children by giving them the confidence, curiosity, and perspective to explore the world, all while ensuring they feel safe, loved, and supported. We are the steppingstones in a child's educational journey, influencing how they see themselves, others, and the world around them.



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Early education is more than daycare

By **JESSICA RINGEY**

Being an early educator is more than a profession to me; it's a calling that I truly believe shapes the foundation of human development. As early educators we work with children during the most formative years of life. In these years, learning is not just academic; it is emotional, social, physical, and deeply personal. To be an early educator is to stand at the beginning of someone's lifelong journey and is so important and special.

Early childhood education is powerful because it honors the whole child, their curiosity, emotions, relationships, and their emerging sense of self. In the infant room learning looks like building connection, trust, and offering exploration. Every coo, every reach, every

moment of eye contact is communication. Every routine, feeding, diapering, napping and curriculum becomes a chance to build security and belonging.

The Week of the Young Child is a reminder of why our work matters. A reminder that early childhood programs are a school not daycare. It highlights the dedication, patience and passion that early educators bring into the classrooms every single day. It is also a celebration of the children and their joy, their resilience, and the incredible growth.

Being part of this field is an honor. It is meaningful, emotional, and deeply rewarding. I am grateful for the opportunity to support children and families during these precious early years and I am

(See Ringey, Page 27)



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MIDDLEBURY
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Center expansion opens more childcare slots, aids economic development

By **JOHN FLOWERS & JOHN S. McCRIGHT**

MIDDLEBURY — The Otter Creek Child Center (OCCC) at 150 Weybridge St. was a hub of industriousness and creativity for the second half of 2024 through most of 2025 — without a single kid taking part.

Toy loaders, excavators and dump trucks that got regular workouts in the Middlebury center's front yard gave way to the real McCoy's, operated by adults who erected a major addition to the building that, once completed this past November, made every toddler (and parent) proud.

"The kids have absolutely loved the space," said Linda January, OCCC's executive director.

"It's a really beautiful space, and it feels really special to be in a building that is designed for young children."

The \$10 million expansion and renovation effort began in March of 2024 with the removal of an on-site barn (that now stands at Sunrise Orchards in Cornwall). The centerpiece of the project is a three-story, 12,000-square-foot addition. The new space, coupled with renovations to the original OCCC building, is allowing the center to dramatically ramp up both its staffing and enrollment.

In December of 2023 the Middlebury Development Review Board gave its unanimous approval to OCCC's expansion plan, which will create 77 much-needed additional childcare slots, for a new total of 139. With 10 of the 13 classrooms open, the center currently has 98 children enrolled, and expects to ramp up to full capacity in the fall, January said.

More children means more classes and more teachers. As of last fall, OCCC ran five classrooms while overseeing the College Street Children's Center, which runs three. The new space in the expansion allows for the addition of two infant rooms and a toddler classroom.

Since the 2022-2023 academic year, OCCC has increased its ranks by six teachers, and it's adding nine more. That will bring OCCC's total staffing to 24 classroom educators, six "floating" educators, an executive director, three program directors and a newly created post of family & engagement coordinator. Plans call for the addition of two new preschool classrooms during the fall of 2026, if enrollment allows.

And that shouldn't be a problem for OCCC, which last fall had 240 kids on its waiting list.

There was a time when cash-strapped childcare organizations could only afford compensation on par with the fast-food industry. But a 0.44% state payroll tax created through Act 76 of 2023 has generated new funds to help the state's childcare centers expand their enrollment capacity, upgrade their facilities, and increase compensation and professional development opportunities for their educators and staff.

Also fueling the OCCC expansion — also called the Community Child Care Expansion Project — has been an assortment of grants and a \$4 million commitment from Middlebury College, the county's largest employer. The institution's buy-in has included the gift of a 2.5-acre Weybridge Street

(See *Expansion*, Page 29)





Ringey



(Continued from Page 25)
proud to stand alongside other educators who give so much of themselves to this work.

I am a proud mom of four children, ages 2, 9, 10 and 14. I work full-time as a lead teacher in the infant room and I am a full-time student through Vermont State Colleges. I am expecting to receive my bachelor's degree and teaching

license in the Spring of 2027. All four of my children have attended the Bristol Family Center. It has become such a special place in our family and I'm so thankful for the opportunity that they got to be in such a loving experience there.

Editor's note: Jessica Ringey is Lead Teacher in the Infant Room at Bristol Family Center.



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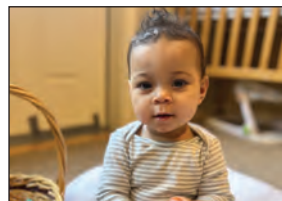
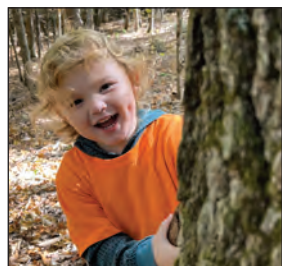
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Expansion

(Continued from Page 26)

parcel just west of OCCC to help make the new addition possible. A dearth of childcare and affordable housing have been major impediments to Addison County's — and indeed, the state's — efforts to attract young families to populate schools and fill jobs.

The college's, state's and federal government's recent investments in OCCC are now mushrooming at 150 Weybridge St. A walkthrough of the building last fall as construction was in the home stretch allowed a visitor to easily imagine children coloring, reading, laughing and singing in any of the 13 classrooms. That's more than triple the four classrooms OCCC had before temporarily relocating to the college-owned Inn on the Green in 2024.

Children returning to 150

Weybridge St. found, in addition to the more numerous and spacious classrooms, three playgrounds and a butterfly garden.

KITCHEN & ELEVATOR

A commercial kitchen will be equipped to pump out around 400 meals a day, once the expanded center reaches full capacity.

Ample lighting, cascading through a generous number of windows, showers children and educators with Vitamin D and good vibes.

An elevator helps ensure OCCC is accessible to all staff, kids and visitors.

"We'll be fully compliant with ADA; we weren't before," January said, noting the original building's many limitations.

Need a spot to stash your gloves, scarf or backpack? There are cubbies everywhere. There's



a special storage area inside for strollers. Since OCCC serves children ages 6 weeks to 5 years, a lot of strollers are needed for the tiniest tots.

A little library is taking shape near the corridor linking the new addition with the 100-plus-year-old structure OCCC has called home since 1984.

A large mechanical room that serves as the building's central nervous system includes heat pumps that will crank out cool air during the summer. Natural gas is used only to heat radiant flooring; the rest of the building will run on electricity. The structure has been prepped to host solar panels — likely on its south facing roof — if a pivot to green energy proves feasible.

Wood, PVC, glass and steel aren't the only materials that

have flooded OCCC site during construction, according to Naylor & Breen Project Superintendent Jason Wisell. He noted the rear slope of the expansion parcel tapered down to the Otter Creek. That slope had to be built up.

"When we started last spring, we had to bring in gray dirt to bring (the topography) up to the new grade to start our foundations. We brought over 1,500 dump truck loads of fill in, just to get started."

As construction head toward the finish line, he estimated that another 1,000 truck loads would be needed on top of that, by the time all was said and done.

A wider, two-way access/exit driveway leads from Weybridge Street to a more ample parking area for up to 42 vehicles. A (See Otter Creek, Page 36)

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We can all be peacemakers

By ERIN DAVIS

We are emerging from a period of Wintering at Quarry Hill School. During the darkest time of the year we find ourselves serving warm foods for snacks like oatmeal, scrambled eggs, and homemade cheesy pasta. We read stories about winter animals that create gentle dens under the snow. We look at books that illustrate the tracks of our local animals and even spy these prints in our own play yard, mostly from bunnies, but also birds or mice, and play with toy families of these animals in our snowy white playdoh.

At circle time, we light a candle and notice how it slows us down as it gently glows. We think about how we can make our own light shine, singing songs like "This Little Light of Mine." This idea of a "shining light" inside of us ties beautifully into our annual exploration of Peacemakers.

Peacemakers are people who use their own "light" to make the world more gentle and fair.

This unit starts in January when we return from the busy holiday season around the time of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Our study begins with MLK as we get to know his face in photographs and illustration. We listen to the sound of his distinct voice in audio recordings of his "I Have A Dream" speech. And we think about how he used his voice to make our public spaces more safe, fair and accessible: schools, buses, parks and restaurants.

Our study evolves to include other leaders, artists and everyday people throughout history who have shared their gifts generously. We soon begin to notice peacemakers in our own community in our firefighters and EMT's who help people when they are having a bad day, trash collectors who help keep our town clean, librarians who help us pursue our curiosity, nurses who help babies be born, doctors who work to heal us when we are sick, friends who

(See Peacemakers, Page 31)



Peacemakers

(Continued from Page 30)

help and comfort us when we are in need. There are so many peacemakers all around us.

What is a peacemaker?

- They are helpers.
- They take care of other people.
- They are kind to friends.

The children begin to incorporate this vocabulary into their interactions with each other, "Olivia was a peacemaker, she gave me a turn!" And soon begin to self-identify as peacemakers. "I was a peacemaker, I helped set the napkins," or "I helped my mom pack my lunch," or "I let Liam go first."

We celebrate these moments of patience, generosity and helpfulness as we learn and grow together. Again we sing together a new song: "We are the peacemakers, we know just what to say / We are the peacemakers, we know just what to do / I am a Peacemaker and you can be one too."

We can all be peacemakers.

Editor's note: Erin Davis is an early childhood educator at Quarry Hill School.



Storytelling can engage young minds

By **GABBY SULLIVAN**

Throughout this year, I engaged in an ongoing storytelling project grounded in Reggio-inspired approaches, particularly the practice of observing children's interests and relaunching investigations based on their wants, needs, and levels of engagement. My goal was to explore multiple ways to support storytelling and written expression while remaining responsive to how children connected with their work.

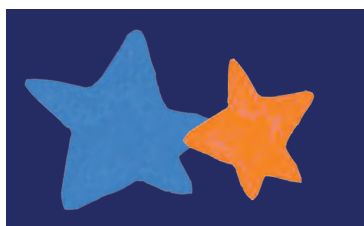
At the beginning of the year, storytelling was introduced through familiar and meaningful themes such as fishing and hunting. These experiences

provided a concrete foundation for narrative development, allowing children to form stories based on real-life experiences, imaginative play, and shared classroom explorations. From there, I expanded the project by having children read different types of stories and experiment with changing story endings as a way to explore narrative structure and cause-and-effect within storytelling. While this approach offered valuable learning opportunities, it did not fully sustain the level of engagement I was hoping to see.

As the project evolved, children demonstrated a strong interest in introducing monsters, villains, and

"evil" characters into their narratives. Rather than redirecting or minimizing these darker themes, I intentionally allowed space for them to unfold. In Reggio-inspired practice, children's ideas, no matter how complex or uncomfortable, are seen as worthy of investigation. Monsters and antagonists often represent children's attempts to process fear, power, justice, and control. By permitting these themes, children were able to externalize emotions, experiment with moral roles, and explore cause-and-effect within a safe and imaginative context.

This led to the introduction (See *Storytelling*, Page 32)



Natural Beginnings

Vicki is a board-certified registered lactation consultant who offers home, phone, and telemedicine visits for breastfeeding mothers who are facing various challenges in Addison and Rutland counties, and some areas in New York State. She also has a monthly prenatal breastfeeding class available on Zoom. Mothers can feel overwhelmed when trying to balance milk production, latching issues, nipple soreness, engorgement, pumping, and returning to work. Vicki is available to help during this transitional period – you are not alone! Schedule an appointment today.

Vicki is a provider for BCBS, MVP, CBA Blue, and Vermont Medicaid for in-home and virtual consultations, personal use breast pumps, and pumping supplies.



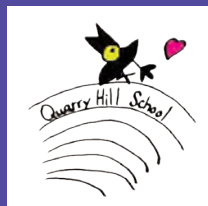
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Storytelling

(Continued from Page 31)

of pop-up books and the incorporation of monsters and villains as central story elements. This relaunch transformed the investigation and reignited excitement around storytelling. Children became deeply engaged in designing their own monsters and problem-solving how to turn their two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional pop-up characters within a story. This process supported not only narrative thinking but also spatial awareness, fine motor skills, and collaborative dialogue.

Allowing darker play without shutting it down communicates trust in children's capacities and honors their full emotional range. When educators remain present, curious, and reflective, children learn that their thoughts are valued and that complex feelings can be explored safely through play and art. Open-ended materials, flexible story outcomes, and minimal adult control created an environment where children felt empowered to take creative risks and expand their ideas beyond conventional or "safe" storylines.

Through this Reggio-inspired process of listening, reflecting, and relaunching ideas, I observed a genuine sense of joy and confidence emerge in the children's

storytelling. They became invested in their characters, their books, and the stories they were creating. I feel especially proud of this project because it reflects a responsive teaching practice that values children's voices and demonstrates how meaningful learning can grow when educators remain flexible, reflective, and open to following the children's lead.

Children are viewed as capable, complex thinkers who construct knowledge through experience, dialogue, and creative exploration. This philosophy strongly supported my storytelling project, in which children engaged in creating and reimagining stories through hands-on experiences, including the design and construction of pop-up monster books. Storytelling became not just a literacy activity, but a vehicle for emotional expression, identity exploration, and collaborative meaning-making.

In the end, the value of this work lies not in the stories themselves, but in what they revealed children's capacity to imagine, to confront complexity, and to create meaning when given the freedom to do so.

Editor's note: Gabby Sullivan is a Preschool Teacher at Mary Johnson Children's Center.



Expressing gratitude helps everyone



By **MONICA BENJAMIN**

Around Valentine's Day, when we are all thinking about love, I like to expand that to include kindness and gratitude too. Chocolate and valentines are lovely, but a grateful heart lasts a lot longer than a box of candy.

Journaling is one of my favorite small habits. I'm not always consistent with journaling — some weeks I'm on a roll, and other weeks my notebook gathers a little dust. When I'm in one of those slumps, gratitude journaling is my reset button. It's quick, simple, and a gentle way to reconnect with what really matters.

Here's a recent example from my own list:

I am grateful for:

- My husband, who somehow manages to be my biggest cheerleader, steady teammate,

and voice of calm all at once. His support, encouragement, and sense of humor keep our family running and keep me grounded.

- My daughter, who has taught me the true meaning of love — and who also finds new and creative ways to challenge me every single day.

- The staff at Mary Hogan School — teachers, paraeducators, school nurse, custodial staff, and school nutrition staff and anyone else I forgot — who show up every day to make the school a safe, joyful place for kids to learn and grow.

- Middlebury Snowbowl, our family's home away from home in the winter time and our favorite place to ski — so welcoming, so family-friendly, and where we always know we'll run into friends to ski with.

That little list took me about

seven minutes to write. Seven minutes! Yet the boost it gave my mood lasted far longer. Putting gratitude into words has a way of shifting your mindset from "everything is going wrong" to "actually, there is a lot going right."

When life feels hectic (which, as parents, it often does), try pausing for a moment and writing down a few things you're grateful for. It doesn't have to be fancy or profound —

just honest. It's amazing how such a small act can soften a hard day.

Editor's note: Middlebury resident Monica Benjamin is a nurse practitioner at Porter Pediatrics in Middlebury.



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Parents need to play, too

By **MONICA BENJAMIN**

Parents, book a playdate for yourself. You won't regret it.

I didn't fully appreciate the importance of playdates for parents until I became one myself. Getting together with other families who have kids around your child's age — letting the kids play while you get some grown-up conversation — feels pretty magical. But let me tell you what might be even more magical: parent playdates without the kids.

Every Thursday, I have the privilege of getting together with a group of friends to move our bodies and reconnect. In the winter months, we head to the Snow Bowl to skin up the mountain (yes, we literally hike uphill with skis on — surprisingly fun!) and then enjoy a few lift runs. When the weather warms up, you'll find us paddle

boarding on Lake Dunmore, running or walking on the TAM, or finding some other way to be active around town.

These Thursday evenings are sacred. My husband and my daughter know that on Thursdays, starting around 5:15 pm, Mom is off duty — they'll see me in the morning. After our exercise, we usually linger for food, drinks and unhurried conversation. I look forward to Thursdays all week.

It's a powerful reminder that as parents, we need time to play with our friends too. I am without a doubt a better parent because of this time — more patient, more present and more myself. So don't hesitate to make a playdate with your friends. It's not selfish: it's essential, and well worth your time. After all, kids shouldn't be the only ones who get to have fun playing.



Editor's note: Middlebury resident Monica Benjamin is a nurse practitioner at Porter Pediatrics in Middlebury.

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Otter Creek

(Continued from Page 29)

sidewalk on the building side of the driveway gives folks of all ages safer passage to the facility.

As an extra security measure, the building has but one public access — through a glass doorway that's monitored by

the front office, which will “buzz in” visitors and parents. Other doorways are locked and can only be opened by staff.

There are many striking exterior features within the new construction, but one of the most endearing — and practical — is

the covered porch that adorns the entire parking lot-facing façade of the addition.

And speaking of practical, the building is endowed with 17 commodes — adult versions as well as mini comfort stations for those still in potty training.

“There are itty bitty toilets in all of the classrooms, and classroom sinks are installed at child height so even one-year-olds can wash hands on their own,” January noted in a recent interview.

The staff aren't the only one glowing over this wonderful new childcare space. OCCC board member Meg Howard, who also has a child at the center, is bowled over by the outcome of the project.

“It was absolutely worth the effort,” she said, marveling at the way the new construction is sized for its smallest clients.

“When you have a space that is curated specifically for the use case it was meant for — in this case childcare — the organization can operate better for children, staff and all the teachers.”

Construction crews will be finishing up a few details this spring, January said. And they will come back in the fall to plant some trees and line the parking

lot, she added.

HELP FROM THE COLLEGE

January gave a shout-out to the college for its support of the project. Whereas a lot of funding came from five years of raising funds through state and federal grant, the college did kick in a substantial amount of money in addition to the neighboring land. January also praised the college for the loan of the Inn on the Green space during construction.

“The Inn on the Green (worked) out well for us. It's actually allowed us to do a little expansion. We've been able to do five classrooms over there.

January is glad that the expanded space will help it meet one of its important goals — that it serve more Addison County families.

“It increases access to childcare for more families, and it supports family mainly so (that after the birth of a child) they could go back to works, full-time or part-time.

“The larger goal was to increase capacity of childcare in the county and the economic impact of that is families have more access to childcare slots and can go to work.”

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



Happy Birthday, Baby!

By SARAH HARRIS

Somehow it happened: our baby turned one this winter. Which is also to say that my husband and I survived our first year of parenting. And what a year it was. So much has happened since February 2025, when our daughter's challenging birth landed us in the Dartmouth-Hitchcock NICU. The three of us weren't together in those early golden hours. Instead, we packed our baby off in an ambulance, in the care of highly qualified strangers, who drove her over the mountains in the middle of the night.

Thankfully, she got strong quickly, and four days later we were home — exhausted, weepy at the sheer love of it all, and ready for our real life to begin. I remember my husband taking her on a tour of the house, explaining the art on the walls. Art? Who

could be bothered with art? I was consumed by milk, measuring my worth in ounces as I pumped colostrum, parceled out precious donor milk from the freezer, and waited for my milk to come in. Milk — how much expressed, how much drunk, how much time at breast or bottle — ruled our days and nights. It was pretty much all I thought about for months. The cool thing is — it worked. The baby grew.

This first year of parenting has thrown us a lot of curveballs, and I've never worked so hard or been so tired. I've also never been so joyful. Bringing home a baby and watching them grow right in front of you: it's utterly quotidian and miraculous, a chaos project with its own ancient schedule. Now, a year in, our daughter crawls, dances to music and pets the cat. She points at everything and asks, "What's that?" We answer over



and over again, helping her build her world as it expands beyond our cocoon.

In late February we threw a big party to celebrate her birthday. In truth, it was also a party for us. We hadn't hosted a big gathering since before the baby was born; it was nice to remember that we

could. I was glad to be surrounded by our friends and family — the people who supported us this first monumental year, and who will shape our child's life in the years to come. Because here's the thing about turning one: you and your child have come so far. But you're both still at the beginning.

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