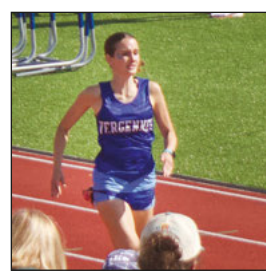




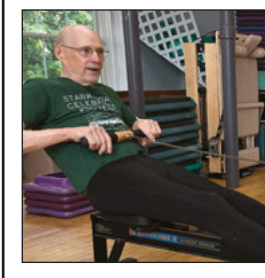
Music games

A long-time DJ creates a game and app that taps players' musical memories. See Arts + Leisure.



Track champs

Addison County athletes found success at state track and field meets last week. See Page 1B.



Million meters

Rich Warren set a fitness goal and stuck with it over decades. See the results in Health & Well-being.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Vergennes battery project on hold

Lightshift puts project on 'pause'

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

VERGENNES — The company that proposed building a battery energy storage system at 99 Pantan Road in Vergennes has put the project on pause. The Wednesday announcement comes on the heels

of a tense informational meeting in the Little City last week that featured pushback from residents who've expressed safety concerns about the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) infrastructure, which has the potential to save

locals money.

"We've heard from the community, and for now we are pausing the project as we continue ongoing conversations," a Lightshift spokesperson said in an email to the *Independent*.

"We will keep meeting and engaging with residents to

determine a path forward for this important work, including the possibility of another location."

When asked to elaborate about what "pausing" the project means, and if the company has terminated its 45-day advance notice submission with the Vermont (See *Vergennes battery*, Page 17A)

Summer meals connect kids to food on vacation

By ELOISE CHRISTY

ADDISON COUNTY — As schools close and kids shed their bookbags, readying to embark on exciting summer adventures, they must continue to stay properly fueled.

While vacation can be a time of fun and play,

some families still face the realities of hunger.

This summer, kids and families can look forward to the free Summer Meals Program that is offered for children 18 and under from June 15 to Aug. 14. Subsidized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, breakfast, lunch and

more look to fill the nutrition gap for children.

With this program, children can eat for free at any summer meal site around Addison County. Families can see the exact locations of these sites in mid-June. Please visit (See *Summer meals*, Page 8A)



PORTER HOSPITAL EMERGENCY Department RN Barb Wagner feels regal in the tiara she wore during a recent party celebrating her retirement after 52 years of service to the county's hospital.

Photo courtesy of Porter Emergency Department

Wagner caps half a century of healing

Porter nurse saw many changes

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Porter Hospital Emergency Department officials have learned to expect the unexpected at any hour of the day.

But most were very surprised this past Friday to see a very

familiar face, Barbara Wagner, RN, saunter to the ED dressed in scrubs and seemingly ready to work.

A few days earlier, they'd given Wagner a retirement sendoff after (See *Nurse Wagner*, Page 12A)

Rep. Sheldon passing environmental baton

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — When Rep. Amy Sheldon, D-Middlebury, recalls being first elected in 2014 to co-represent the Addison-1 district in the Vermont House, she uses the analogy of a trapeze artist making a trepidatious reach from

the stability of a platform to a bar swinging in mid-air.

After a dozen years in the Statehouse, during which she's chaired the House Environment Committee for eight of those years, Sheldon is reaching for the next (See *Rep. Sheldon*, Page 14A)

Graduation!

SATURDAY SAW SCORES OF area seniors pick up their diplomas at commencement ceremonies in both Bristol and Middlebury. Right, Middlebury Union High School senior Cooper Cannon awaits her trip to the podium. Bottom photo, three members of the Mount Abraham Union High School Class of 2026 — secretary Wyatt Moyer, treasurer Louisa Guilmette and vice president Isla Underwood — share their thoughts during what was a soggy celebration. See more photos and stories on Mount Abe (Page 13A) and Middlebury (Page 10A).

Photos by Buzz Kuhns and Steve James



By the way

Vergennes Union High School staff have been working on securing a special speaker for this Friday's graduation ceremony. Early this week they got word (See *By the way*, Page 17A)

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IN A STUDENT-LED play at Lincoln Community School last week, sixth-grader Juniper Bates plays Lux, one of four new interns at Meda, the social media company that makes money off people's attention.

Independent photo/Steve James

Students explore social media in a musical

By JING WILLIAMS

LINCOLN — There may be spotty cell phone coverage at Lincoln Community School but that hasn't stopped the 16 fifth- and sixth-graders there from teaching their classmates, friends, and family about the negative impacts of cell phones and social media on all of us.

Students staged their original production "Never Be Lonely Again: The Musical" on Friday, June 5, in two performances, one for the school and one for the community. Students wrote the script and lyrics, choreographed (See *Social media*, Page 15A)

Andy Mitchell takes lead role in film festival

Emmy winner already on job

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — Renowned local filmmaker Andy Knight Mitchell has traveled to all corners of the world to document subjects ranging from great white sharks to Buddhist monks.

Now the five-time Emmy Award winner will get a chance to display more of his creative talents right outside his front door, as the new managing producer of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival, or MNFF.

Mitchell's appointment became official on Monday, June 8, whereupon he quickly became immersed in the building of MNFF12. This year's festival is scheduled for Aug. 26-30. It will offer screenings of scores and movies submitted by first- and second-time filmmakers, along with a plethora of special events featuring film industry experts and honorees.

But in the meantime, Mitchell will get adjusted to his new cinematographic milieu, and he (See *Mitchell*, Page 18A)

Meet the candidates for Middlebury's next Dog Mayor

MIDDLEBURY — The Middlebury Dog Mayor election season is in full swing! We have 5 candidates in the running, all well qualified and capable of doing an outstanding job for the Shire Town.

The polls close at 11:55 p.m. on Monday, June 15. Each vote is \$5 and there is no limit — supporters can vote as often as they wish for as many of the candidates as they wish.

The candidate headshots are attached, and their bios are as follows:

CANDIDATE #1:

Angel Bess: "A vote for Bess brings Happi-ness! Vote Angel Bess Zelfiff for your next Mayor!"

All about Angel

Bess:

- No arrest record
- Mature (13 years)
- Quiet, hardly barks

Loves to walk

Cute

Loyal

Works for Milk

Bones

House trained

Unique

perspective (only sees through one eye)

Adopted from Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society



ANGEL BESS IS running for Dog Mayor under the slogan "A Vote for Bess brings Happi-ness!" and believes her maturity and unique perspective (she's monocular) set her apart.

Photo from Homeward Bound

CANDIDATE #2:

Otto: "I'm all ears, so all voices in Middlebury will be heard! Even though I'm small, I can have a mighty bark when needed to get things done!"

All about Otto:

- Dachshund
- Eight years old but young at heart.
- Has lived in Middlebury his whole life.

Loves squeaky

toys, going for walks

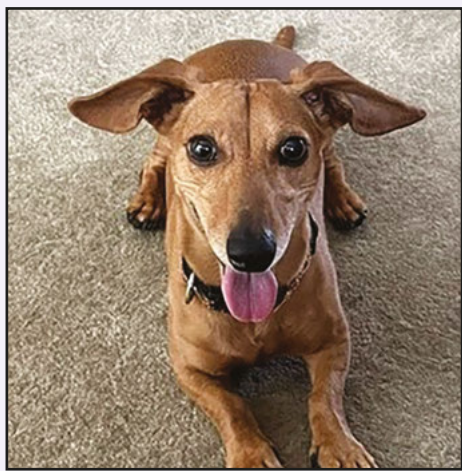
and smelling along the way.

Enjoys supervising

the office staff at

Comfort Hill Kennel.

(See Dogs, Page 3A)



OTTO IS RUNNING for Dog Mayor under the slogan "I'm all ears, so all voices in Middlebury will be heard!" and knows his supervisory experience at the kennel is sure to help him win.

Photo from Homeward Bound

Starksboro walking path celebrates local history, 250th

BY MARIN HOWELL

STARKSBORO — Vermont's towns are rich in history, and many residents are digging into that historical treasure trove as we approach the nation's 250th anniversary next month.

That's certainly been the case in Starksboro, where students at Robinson Elementary School have created a walking path highlighting local connections to the American Revolution and how the town's residents experience "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Installing the walking path is one of several activities students have taken part in to celebrate the semiquincentennial. Pupils have also installed flags for veterans of the American Revolution buried in the local cemetery, joined an American Symbols Coloring Contest and created mini comics inspired by what "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" means to them.

The walking path features the work of students in multiple grades. For the project, fifth- and sixth-grade students at the school worked with historians in the community and researched local connections to the American Revolution.

They used those explorations to create signs for the walking path with information about individuals like Abraham Hall and Ezekiel Pease, who fought in the Revolutionary War and have ties to Starksboro.

"I think it's been really neat for students in older grades to sort of take a historical perspective on where they're at," said Kerry Lake, second-grade teacher at Robinson Elementary School. "Especially the (sixth-grade students) ... who are getting ready to move on to middle

school and high school, just to give them a historical perspective of connections here in Starksboro as connected to this big event in our nation."

Second graders in Lake's class also contributed to the walking path, conducting interviews with community members about what brings them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Excerpts from those interviews are featured on signs with a photo of the interviewer and interviewee.

"I just think that (interview) piece helps expand their connection not only to the wider community but the tenants that our country was founded upon," Lake said.

Students' work was on display during a school-wide event on June 4, where pupils got a chance to walk along the path and view the signs their peers had put together. That day, the Robinson student body walked the path more than 500 times — doubling its goal of 250 laps.

The June 4 event kicked off with the national anthem, a reading from the Declaration of Independence and an explanation of the 250th anniversary and what is being celebrated. In addition to participating in the walk-a-thon, some students took part in a Preamble to the Constitution Oration Challenge. Pupils also enjoyed popsicles on the warm June day and wore red, white and blue face paint and temporary tattoos.

As part of the program, each student received a pocket-sized copy of the Constitution.

"We wouldn't have been able to make this event happen without grant funding awarded by the Vermont Humanities Council in Partnership with the Vermont



ROBINSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL students on June 4 check out the walking path installed at the school to celebrate the nation's semiquincentennial. The path was created by Robinson students and highlights local connections to the American Revolution and how Starksboro residents have found "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Photo courtesy of Kerry Lake

250th," Lake said. "The event was furthered by the support of our faculty and staff at Robinson and the community members who shared their time and thoughts with our young scholars."

Lake said the hope is to have

the walking path available for community members to visit on the July 4. A virtual tour of the path should be available soon on the Robinson Elementary School website and at <https://tinyurl.com/lakesblog>.

Bank gives boost to East Middlebury care home

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — National Bank of Middlebury (NBM) is matching community donations to the Addison Home Fund, dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000, through Friday, June 19, in support of a new, nonprofit residential care home that's being installed in a former East Middlebury residence.

The *Independent* in January first reported on Addison County Home Health & Hospice's (ACHHH) purchase of a 2,963-square-foot, five-bedroom home at 427 East Main St. in East Middlebury that's being renovated into a level-three residential care home for up to eight medically frail adults.

ACHHH hired Salamander Construction to make an estimated \$500,000 in improvements to the

building in hopes of welcoming residents into the home this summer.

Residents of the new facility will live in a home-like setting with 24-hour staffing, receiving nursing oversight, three nutritious meals each day and snacks, medication management, assistance with activities of daily living, laundry services and "opportunities for socialization and engagement."

When residents need more support than living at home allows but do not require intensive nursing home care, local options are limited. This new ACHHH facility will allow community members to remain in Addison County, close to family, friends, and familiar surroundings.

NBM recently announced its plans to help ACHHH underwrite costs of the project.

As of last week, ACHHH was roughly midway to its \$500,000 fundraising goal, according to Maureen Conrad, ACHHH's director of development.

National Bank of Middlebury President Caroline Carpenter was

happy to see the care home come into being.

"Addison County has needed something like this for a long time," she said. "Addison County Home Health and Hospice has been part of this community for decades, and this project is exactly the kind of thing neighbors do for neighbors. We're glad to help it move forward."

Deb Wesley, the top administrator of ACHHH, thanked NBM for its financial support.

"We are honored to be the recipient of a donation from the National Bank of Middlebury, as well as matching funds from our generous members," she said.

"NBM has supported us every step of the way for the past 58 years. We look forward to many

more years of solid partnership, and we are exceptionally appreciative of this opportunity. This is one of the reasons that we bank locally."

Wesley said the new care home project has been a labor of love.

"We have always believed that our friends and neighbors deserve to remain in our county as they age and are so pleased to be able to provide safe, comfortable housing for eight of our neighbors right here in the county we all know and love," she said.

To donate, please click here: tinyurl.com/mppbyuee. To donate by check, make it payable to ACHHH and mail

to P.O. Box 754, Middlebury, VT 05753, with "Addison Home Fund-NBM" in the memo line.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.

"Addison County Home Health and Hospice has been part of this community for decades, and this project is exactly the kind of thing neighbors do for neighbors. We're glad to help it move forward."

— Caroline Carpenter

FETCH THE FINEST FOR THIS FATHER'S DAY

HARE AND THE DOG

MIDDLEBURY, VT
VERGENNES, VT
WWW.HARE.DOG

Lincoln event uplifts LGBTQ+ youth

LINCOLN — The Lincoln Library and Lincoln School District are co-hosting an event aimed at supporting Vermont's queer and transgender youth.

The "Heck Yeah" event is slated for Thursday, June 18, from 4-6 p.m. at the Lincoln Library. Community members

can drop by throughout the gathering to create artwork and letters with messages of affirmation for LGBTQ+ youth around the state.

The event is being supported by Outright Vermont, a nonprofit working to build "a Vermont where all LGBTQ+ youth have

hope, equity, and power!" The organization has hosted Heck Yeah parties and works with communities to organize their own gatherings.

The June 18 event in Lincoln is open to all ages and will feature ice cream and lawn games. Art supplies will be provided.

in Vermont

4,500

of us don't have kitchens to cook in

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source: mychamplainvalley.com/top-stories/2025-state-of-homelessness-in-vermont-report

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MIDDLEBURY CO-OP 50th ANNIVERSARY 1976-2026

Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op is Turning 50!

Save The Date

Saturday, August 22

50th Anniversary Celebration on the Green
10 AM-3 PM • Middlebury Town Green
Live music, food trucks, family activities, local partners and vendors, giveaways, and more!

Memory Archive Opening Reception
6 PM-9 PM • Town Hall Theater's Jackson Gallery
Join us for opening night as we celebrate stories, photographs, and memories from the Co-op's first fifty years.

Both events are free and open to the public.

CO-OP MEMBER DEALS

Members Take an Extra 20% Off

June 10 - June 16

Dogs

(Continued from Page 2A)

CANDIDATE #3: Huckleberry: "You're in Luck with Huck!"

All about Huckleberry:

- Expert greeter, professional tail-wagger and full-time good boy
- Neutered, fully vaccinated and a proud patient of the Homeward Bound clinic
- Middlebury resident
- Friendly with children, adults, dogs and cats alike
- Has many canine friends throughout Middlebury
- No criminal record, unless being excessively adorable is considered a crime



HUCKLEBERRY IS RUNNING for Dog Mayor under the slogan "You're in luck with Huck!" and thinks his popularity around town helps him keep his paw on the local pulse.

Photo from Homeward Bound

"As Mayor, I would work hard to bring people and pets together, encourage kindness throughout the community and ensure that every dog gets the chance to make a new friend. I am proud to support Homeward Bound and would use my position to help bring awareness to the many wonderful services they provide, including adoptions, affordable veterinary care, community events and programs that help keep pets and families together."

CANDIDATE #4: Lulu: "Licks for all!"

All about Lulu:

- Summited the tallest peak in Vermont (Mount Mansfield) despite standing less than one foot tall.
- Excellent sniffer
- Chicken connoisseur
- Master of diplomatic relations with humans and dogs alike
- Extensive field experience in squirrel reconnaissance
- Committed public servant, available for belly rubs 24/7
- Masterful napper: can nap anytime, anywhere, on any surface
- Lulu has her own campaign website! Visit it here: tinyurl.com/luluformayor



LULU IS RUNNING for Dog Mayor under the slogan "Licks for all!" and feels her skills in squirrel reconnaissance makes her the right choice for Middlebury.

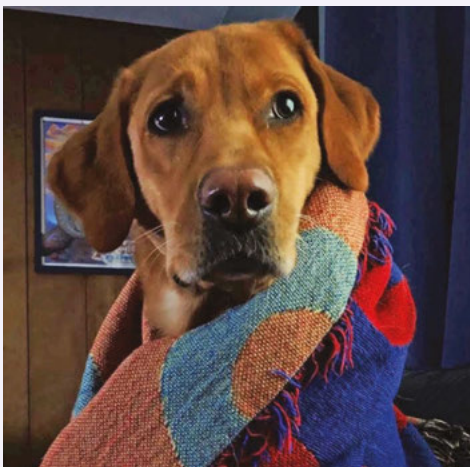
Photo from Homeward Bound

CANDIDATE #5: Tela: "Because she's a good girl."

All about Tela:

- When she's not working up at the college, Tela can be found exploring the woods throughout the state
- A very social and happy-go-lucky demeanor accompany her every whim
- At home she enjoys the company of her best cat bud Jimmy Paige as well as her big brother Drexel for visits
- Due to her extensive work with students from many different backgrounds Tela has developed a bilingual repertoire of tricks!
- She is just as happy bringing comfort for any/all reasons in this cold climate
- She is as sweet as a lullaby on a whispering breeze

Note: Tela is the current Middlebury Dog Mayor; she won the inaugural election in 2025. As per town management, a dog may serve up to two 1-year terms, so Tela is eligible to run again.



TELA IS RUNNING for reelection under the slogan "Because she's a good girl," which she feels she has proven to be true during her first term.

Photo from Homeward Bound

VOTE!



The grassland bird who wears a reverse tuxedo

By LOREN MERRILL

If you live near a large meadow, hayfield or grassland, you may have recently noticed some bubbly robotic noises emanating from those areas. It might sound like an overexcited android, but the real source is a medium-sized songbird, the bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*).

One of the few avian grassland specialists in the Northeast, bobolinks have recently returned from their wintering grounds in southern South America and are now fully engaged in breeding activity.

While the female bobolink is cryptic in both plumage and behavior, the male bobolink stands out in almost every regard. His bold black and white plumage (worn in a "reverse tuxedo" style with white on the back and black on the front), effervescent song, and helicopter flight display provide a captivating performance for bystanders.

Bobolinks are members of the blackbird family (Icteridae), and like some other blackbirds (notably red-winged blackbirds), they have a polygynous mating system, where one male mates with multiple females. However, females also solicit extra-pair matings, with around 40 percent of clutches containing eggs sired by different males.

Genetically, this bet-hedging strategy ensures offspring express greater variation than if sired by one male. From a behavioral standpoint, having multiple mates invested in the outcome of a given nest may increase nest protection and nestling provisioning.

Once a female bobolink has selected a primary mate, she then selects the nest location on the ground. She is solely responsible for building the cup-shaped nest. The female first clears the nest site of all vegetation and creates a shallow depression in the ground. She builds an outer wall of coarse grasses, then lines it with finer material. Once the nest is complete,

or close to it, the female lays 3 to 7 blue-gray or beige eggs with maroon or purple flecks.

Incubation lasts approximately 13 days, and once the eggs hatch, the chicks are fed an invertebrate diet. They grow rapidly, and on day 10 or 11, the chicks leave the nest. At this stage, they are still unable to fly, but the longer nestlings remain in a nest, the greater the chance an entire clutch will be lost to a nest predator. By leaving the nest and dispersing into the surrounding grassy habitat, the probability that all chicks are lost to a single predation event drops significantly. After 13 days, chicks are capable of short flights, and by day 17 they can fly extended distances.

Bobolinks prefer to nest away from the edges of their grassland and various studies have shown that they generally nest at least 50 to 100 meters from the periphery of the open habitat. This is presumably to avoid nest predators like raccoons, and brood parasites like brown-headed cowbirds, both

of which are more likely to search for nests close to the edge of forests and shrublands. Bobolinks will therefore avoid an otherwise appropriate nest habitat that does not provide interior grassland areas sufficiently buffered from the edges of forests, shrublands or roads.

The bobolink has one of the most impressive migrations of any passerine, embarking on a round-trip flight of roughly 12,500 miles each year, traveling to southern South America for the winter and back to the Northeast in May. These lengthy annual journeys mean that a bird may travel the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe 4 to 5 times over its life.

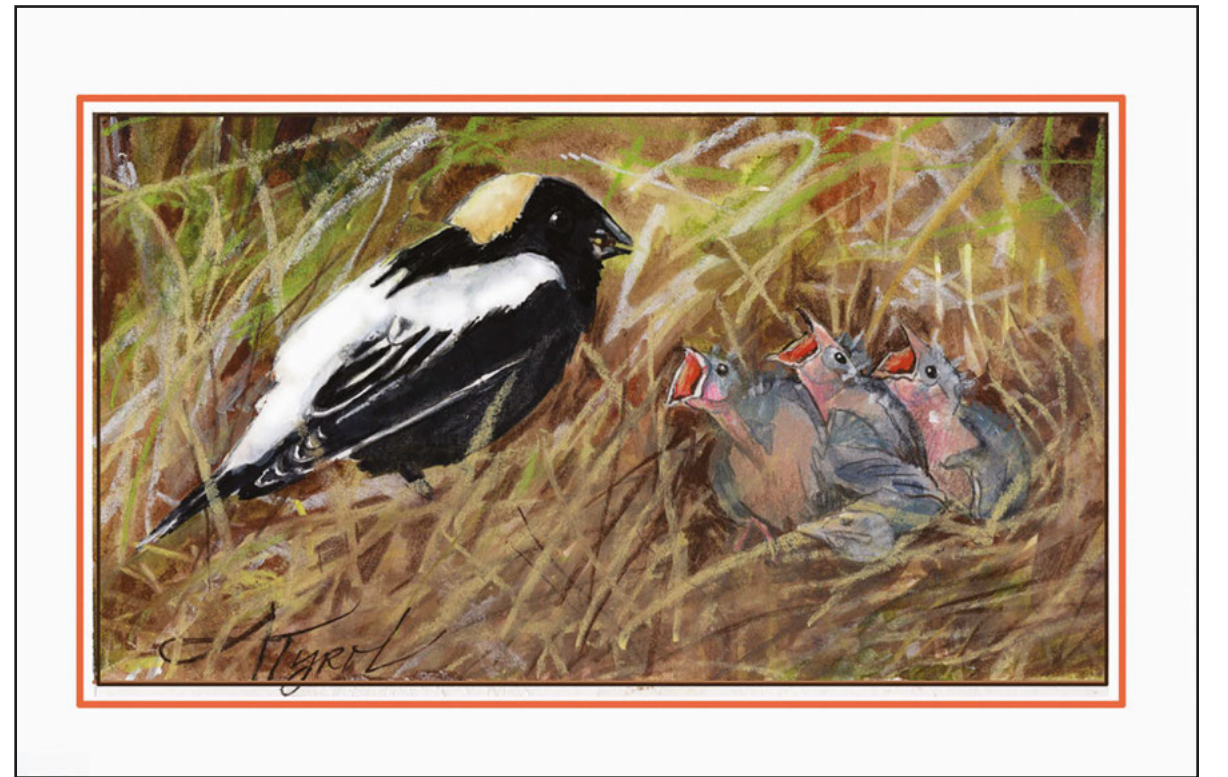
Like most grassland bird species, the bobolink's populations have declined significantly in the past 60 years — an estimated 63 percent drop since 1966. The primary causes of its decline are loss of

habitat and the early mowing of hayfields before nestlings have fledged. In the Northeast, old fields and meadows are increasingly disappearing as they revert to forestland or are developed.

To help bobolinks and other grassland birds, meadows and fields can be maintained via prescribed burns and mowing, and hayfields and silage should not be cut until after the young birds have fledged from the nest. These actions can help ensure that the bobolink — and its wonderfully bubbly song — remain a part of the northeastern landscape.

Loren Merrill is a science writer and photographer with a PhD in ecology. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. *The Outside Story* is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.

The Outside Story



Local Girl Scouts sell more than 8,000 packages of cookies

COLCHESTER — Four Addison County Girl Scouts were recognized as some of the top cookie sellers on May 30 when the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains held its Young Women of Distinction ceremony at Saint Michael's College in Colchester.

The ceremony recognizes the hard work these Girl Scouts put in to make the world a better place. Gold Award Girl Scout Madison Duffy of Concord, N.H., has educated her peers and others about the dangers of melanoma. Silver Award Girl Scout Wednesday Belanger of Shelburne, N.H., created a little food pantry for her neighborhood. Bronze Award Girl Scout Amelia Eckhardt of Landgrove, Vt., spread cheer through greeting cards distributed by Meals on Wheels.

"To every Girl Scout here today, your Gold Award journey may seem daunting," Duffy said, "but remember: The world needs your ideas, your voice, and your heart. Start small, dream big, and never underestimate the difference you

can make." Among the top 100 Girl Scouts honored for selling cookies were the following who appeared at the ceremony:

- Alivia Germain of Bristol — 2,107 packages
- Abbygale Trudo of Shoreham — 1,449 packages
- Tiana Mosier of Starksboro — 1,223 packages
- Rachel Torrey of Addison — 1,139 packages

A total of 3,461 Girl Scouts sold cookies this year, with the top seller, Caroline Hunt of Northwood, N.H., reaching 3,592 packages.

The Girl Scout Cookie program is the largest girl-led entrepreneurship program in the world. It teaches Girl Scouts critical life skills, including goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. They use the proceeds from their cookie sales to fund their Girl Scout membership and activities, like field trips, community service projects, and more.

ADDISON COUNTY

School News

Two students from Addison County graduated from Clark University, which held its commencement ceremony in Worcester, Mass., on Monday, May 18. **Eli Burgess** of Lincoln graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Finance and **Noah Engvall** of Bristol graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.

POTSDAM, N.Y. — The State University of New York at Potsdam

recently named **Max Carpenter** of Middlebury to the dean's list.

Carpenter, whose major is Archaeological Studies, was among 134 students who were honored for academic excellence in the Spring 2026 semester.

CHICOPEE, Mass. — **Jemimah Duodu-Dzomeku** of Bristol received a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Elms College following the conclusion of the Spring 2026 semester.

Elderly Services Inc. ESI College



Doctors without Borders: Caring for Refugees in Africa and the Middle East

Wednesday, June 25
10:00-11:30 AM
The Congregational Church of Middlebury

Using stories and photographs from his work with Doctors Without Borders in Tanzania and Lebanon, Dr. Morris Earle will offer a firsthand look at life inside refugee camps. What challenges do displaced people face each day? What forces drive people from their homes and how do host countries respond? With more than 100 million people worldwide displaced by war, drought, poverty, and climate change, this class explores the human realities behind one of the defining global issues of our time and how our futures may be more connected than we realize.

Morris Earle, MD is a pediatrician who has worked in primary care in Middlebury and in pediatric intensive care in Massachusetts. Since 1980, he has also worked in global health. From 2017 to 2026, he completed five assignments with Doctors Without Borders in Tanzania and Lebanon.

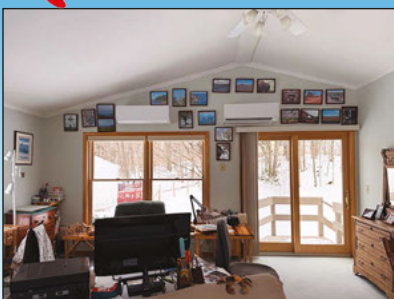
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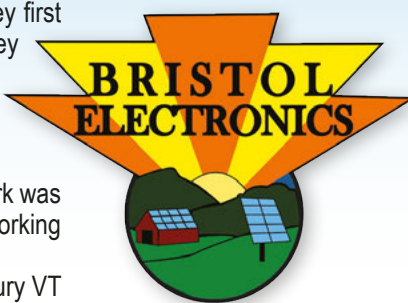
Middlebury, VT Homeowner Recommends Bristol Electronics



"Bristol Electronics installed heat pumps in our home, and we had a great experience working with them. They first came to evaluate our home and explained everything we would need. When they returned with the quote, they took the time to go over it thoroughly and answered all of our questions. Everyone was very professional and friendly throughout the entire process. Once we decided to move forward, they handled everything, including applying for all of the rebates, which made the process much easier for us.

The installation crew was respectful of our home and cleaned up at the end of each day before leaving. The work was done very well, and everything is working great. We have hardly run the furnace at all. It was truly a pleasure working with all of them."

Rick & Judy Cole, Middlebury VT



Guest Editorial

A.I. is a public resource. You should own half of it

By SEN. BERNIE SANDERS

Artificial intelligence will almost certainly be the most transformational technology in the history of the world. It will profoundly affect the life of every man, woman and child in our country. It will bring — and is already bringing — unimaginable changes to our economy, our democracy, our emotional well-being, our environment and how we educate and raise our children. Further, there is a very real fear that as A.I. becomes smarter than humans it could eventually function independently, with potentially catastrophic consequences.

The question, then, is not whether A.I. will change the world. It will. The question is: Who will own and control that future? Who will benefit from it, and who will be hurt by it? Will A.I. be used to make life better for working families? Will it enrich our quality of life? Will it help us eliminate poverty, extend life expectancies and solve the climate crisis? Or will the future of humanity be determined by a handful of billionaires who have promoted and developed A.I., with virtually no democratic input, who stand to become even richer and more powerful than they are today?

That is the choice before us.

Let us be clear. Artificial intelligence was not created out of thin air. The data and language used by generative A.I. tools didn't just pop into Sam Altman's head or Elon Musk's imagination. A.I. is built on our collective intelligence: our books, songs, artwork, journalism, computer code, scientific research, videos, conversations, images and ideas spanning generations. That is not just the opinion of Bernie Sanders. According to Mr. Altman, the head of OpenAI, A.I. models were trained on our "collective experience, knowledge" and "learnings of humanity."

For the most part, tech oligarchs have fed this knowledge into their A.I. models without permission, without acknowledgment, without compensation. In other words, the creative work of millions of people — writers, artists, musicians, journalists, teachers, scientists and ordinary citizens — has essentially been stolen by some of the wealthiest people in the world. It's time for us to reclaim it.

Since A.I. is built on the collective knowledge of humanity, the wealth it generates must benefit humanity. Not just Mr. Musk, Mr. Altman, Dario Amodei and other moguls whose companies are positioned to dominate the industry. Not just venture capitalists in Silicon Valley or money managers on Wall Street who undoubtedly see A.I. as the next great wealth-extracting machine.

That is why I will soon be introducing the American A.I. Sovereign Wealth Fund Act. This legislation would give the public a direct ownership stake in the largest A.I. companies in our country. How? It would create a sovereign wealth fund through a one-time 50 percent tax — not on the profits of OpenAI, Anthropic, xAI and other companies, but paid with something far more valuable than that: the stock.

If passed, this legislation would do two crucial things. First, it would give the public a direct role in determining the future of this technology. No longer would the future of A.I. and the transformation of human life that it will bring be dictated by a handful of Big Tech oligarchs. The federal government would have the power, through its voting shares and an equal representation on each company's board, to block decisions that hurt our citizens and to push for policies that help them.

Second, this legislation would guarantee that the trillions of dollars potentially generated by A.I. are used to improve the lives of all of us — not simply to make the richest people in the world even richer. If the big A.I. companies continue to grow as rapidly as many analysts expect, then the value of the sovereign wealth fund will grow as well — and the benefits to the American people will grow along with it.

This is not an original idea. It has been proposed by scholars. It has been endorsed by some of the leading A.I. companies in America. OpenAI, for example, recently proposed creating a "public wealth fund that provides every citizen — including those not invested in financial markets — with a stake in A.I.-driven economic growth." Anthropic, led by Mr. Amodei, similarly proposed the creation of "national sovereign wealth funds with stakes in A.I." Mr. Musk, who runs xAI, wrote, "Universal HIGH INCOME via checks issued by the Federal government is the best way to deal with unemployment caused by AI."

Dozens of sovereign wealth funds exist all over the world to ensure that ordinary people benefit from national wealth. Norway's sovereign wealth fund, one of the largest in the world, was funded from the country's oil wealth and is now worth more than \$2 trillion. Instead of a few oil executives pocketing all the benefits of this national resource, Norway made the decision that this wealth should be used to improve life for all of its people.

This concept has already been put into practice right here at home. Fifty years ago, Alaska created a sovereign wealth fund from the state's oil revenues. For decades, it has paid annual dividends directly to Alaskans. Moreover, public pension funds in states across the country already hold hundreds of billions of dollars in the stock of companies throughout America. Even President Trump, in an executive order, has proposed establishing an American sovereign wealth fund.

To start, the billions, if not trillions, of dollars generated by this fund would provide direct payments to the American people. And as the fund generates more and more wealth, the proceeds would be used to ensure that every man, woman and child in our country has a decent and dignified standard of living, including health care, education and housing.

Needless to say, I recognize that for the government to have a major stake in a company, particularly one for which A.I. is only part of its business, is complicated. More details — including the specific spending priorities and the mechanics of implementation — will be included in the legislation I unveil in the coming weeks.

(See Bernie's editorial, Page 5A)



Grad in training

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Marrisie Oak of Orwell tries on sister Savannah Tomaszewski's graduation mortarboard after Saturday's Middlebury Union High School commencement exercises at the Memorial Sports Center.

Independent photo/Steve James

Growing a garden of democracy

This spring, preparing our small kitchen garden, I was, as usual, surprised by how many rocks and stones were caught up by the rake. A song from years ago started echoing in my mind, and the political situation of years past became very loud. The song, "Inch by Inch," written by David Mallett in 1978, was basically a hymn to the newfound hopefulness in America. Civil Rights would become real for all people, the Vietnam War would end, and the back-to-the-land movement would flourish and save Mother Earth.

My husband Don and I, like so many others of our generation, grew up under the dark cloud of racial injustice and the threat of being sent to kill (or be killed by) innocent people in a land that had never harmed us.

I was brought up in an integrated school system where many of my parents' best friends were people of color. My mom and her close friend, who was black, co-led our local Brownie Troop, and later my best friend and I co-led an integrated troop at the local black-majority church. We participated in demonstrations and political actions for years; we believed a new era of justice was imminent. But it was not until Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke out in opposition to the Vietnam War that my parents felt they could oppose it as well.

When student deferments to the draft ended, Don and I were among the lucky ones. Don's draft number

came up early and he had to report for his physical in Berkeley, where we then lived. He had hoped a letter from a doctor would be enough to prevent him being drafted. No such luck.

But shortly thereafter, the law changed to allow Conscientious Objector Status on the grounds of belief, not just religious conviction. Don's appeal was approved by his home Selective Service Board in Camden, New Jersey and thus began two years of Alternative Service, which eventually led to us moving to Vermont.

We had read about Vermont in the Whole Earth Catalog: it was lauded as a place where people with widely different beliefs co-existed and might help one another. We bought an old farm, had only book learning to figure out what we were doing and were frequently assisted by neighbors who never asked about our political affiliations.

I think they may have found our efforts at "farming" a source of great amusement, but the only time I was corrected was when the neighbor's son took me aside after a gathering to point out that women were not supposed to be in the same room with the men; we were supposed to be in the kitchen while men continued talking in the living room.

A few years after moving to Vt., we started a family (See *Ways of Seeing*, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Cheryl Mitchell



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A few years after moving to Vt., we started a family (See *Ways of Seeing*, Page 5A)

The true colors of Laundry Love

By MARK DEMERS

It was long assumed by people who knew me that I was color blind. If not "blind," my sense of color was significantly compromised. Blues? Greens? Forget it! I asked my wife one day: "Have you seen my black sweater?" She replied, "You don't own a black sweater." And then ... I went to the optometrist.

Growing up in the 1960s, I was part of the generation where the boys wanted to look like The Beatles, or Elvis or anyone who wore tight pants, longish hair and shoes that came to a point. My mother was of the generation that would have none of it. Haircuts were a regular occurrence. When I attended a private high school where uniforms ruled out any fashion statements, at least I was one of the crowd.

How do you look when you step out in the morning? AI defines business casual as "Striking a balance between professional polish and everyday comfort, relying on tailored trousers or chinos, classic collared shirts or blouses and optional layering pieces like blazers or sweaters." Colors? "A well-curated business casual wardrobe leans heavily on neutral base colors." How are you measuring up so far?

I read a story about a Jewish family in the 1940s, living under the constrictions of ghetto life and

desperate for food. The daughter, a young girl of 8 or 9, was sent out of the ghetto to get provisions. She was the "least Jewish-looking" in the family. Before she set out, the adults did their best to dress her up. "Remember," they told her, "We can't all be beautiful; but we can all be less ugly." I think of that line every time I look in the mirror.

I have the luxury of good nutrition, a roof over my head and a partner who is determined that I will have clean clothes. I also have access to health care. The eye doctor informed me that I had cataracts that had been growing for some time. Eyeglasses were correcting the vision challenges, but it was time for the cataracts to go.

People come into our office at Addison Community Action looking for assistance with a myriad of issues. It's hard not to form judgements; but one can assess without judging. Even the most humble wardrobe could sparkle if it were clean.

I had cataract surgery last summer. The difference was as profound as it was immediate. I had been seeing the world behind a veil of yellow film. After the surgery it was as if someone had washed my eyes and I was truly seeing for the first time.

A load of laundry at a laundromat can cost anywhere from \$8 to \$15 — and considerably more for a larger family or if you are washing and drying (See *Laundry love*, Page 5A)

Letters to the Editor

Vekos proud of service, excited for the future

With a heavy but resolute heart, I write to confirm that I will not be seeking re-election as state's attorney for Addison County. The last three and a half years have been the most challenging and rewarding of my 30-year career as an attorney, litigator and advocate. The brightest points being when our office has been able to obtain justice for victims — especially in cases of domestic and sexual violence.

I have also genuinely enjoyed getting to know the wonderful and hardworking members of law enforcement whose dedication and commitment to public service is truly an inspiration. I hope that police officers around the county know that they can continue to rely on the support of the Addison State's Attorney's Office, always. This expression of respect and gratitude also extends to the members of the Department for Children and Families who work tirelessly to support families in need and strive to ensure that the

(See Vekos, Page 4A)

Show up for Bolles and Stroup

As someone who has had the privilege of working alongside both Ari Bolles and John Stroup in our community, I am excited that Addison-3 has the opportunity to elect two strong representatives this year.

I know Ari through our work together on the Ferrisburgh Town Center Committee and as fellow community volunteers and school parents. Ari is thoughtful, creative, and one of those people who truly listens. She has a remarkable ability to understand complex issues, bring people together and turn ideas into action.

I know John through his years of service to our school district, his volunteer work, and as a fellow parent and supporter of our local athletes. John brings steady

(See Show up, Page 5A)

I'll be voting for Bolles on Aug. 11

I'm excited to support Ariel Bolles for our next Addison-3 state rep.

There are three democrats and two republicans running for the two Addison-3 state representative seats and there will be a primary August 11. I encourage you to check out all the candidates and get to know their platforms.

I am enthusiastically supporting Ariel, because I appreciate her clear and straightforward policies on education, healthcare, taxation and housing. Full disclosure, Ariel is a long-time dear friend of mine which admittedly creates some bias, but also allows me to fully know, appreciate and communicate Ariel's depth of character and capacity.

Ariel is not a career politician, but a genuine human, parent and member of our community who is intelligent and compassionate. She is exactly what we need in a politician these days! I think you'll also find her to be a thoughtful listener who will take our concerns to the Vermont House. She represents all of us.

Finally, Ariel has spent the past

(See Waltien letter, Page 5A)

Opera Company of Middlebury is top quality

You don't have to go to New York City to find great opera. It's right here in Middlebury at the Town Hall Theater.

This past weekend's performance of "La Traviata" was a "brava et bravo" experience of the highest order. Such terrific voices with superb orchestral accompaniment with a deeply felt and creatively expressed message of love winning that brought tears to my eyes and hope in my heart.

Thank you THT for making it happen again! And Doug Anderson, you're a fantastic Artistic Director!

David Benedict
Middlebury

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Letters to the Editor

Is it time to consider a smaller police force?

Five years ago, my wife and I made the documentary film, "The Price of Safety." We initially set out to unpack data suggesting racial bias during traffic encounters but soon expanded the scope to cover the Vergennes police budget. At the time, the police department accounted for 31% of city expenditures. Today it accounts for 34%. The FY27 budget proposes 37%. To put this in perspective, a 2021 analysis by the UVM Center for Research on Vermont found the state-wide average was only 11%.

Facing a proposed 17% property tax increase for the next fiscal year, it's worth asking, how did we get here? I think there are a multitude of factors:

- In 2019, facing similar budgetary issues as today, the then city manager proposed reducing the police force. City council opted to increase the tax rate instead, with one councilor stating, "we built the police station [in 2014] knowing that we were going to build the police staff along with it." True to word, the police budget after adjusting for inflation has doubled

in the last 15 years.

- In 2020, the police department unionized. This new structure allows them greater bargaining power with the city, resulting in negotiations like the one in 2025 that gave officers a 10% salary bump for the first year of the three-year contract along with the city covering 100% of their BlueCross health insurance plan.

- Due to these contracts, the city is now obligated to pay 100% of the health insurance costs of the officers during a time of unprecedented increases in health insurance rates. According to a NHPR article from 2025, "Vermont has the highest premiums for employer-based health insurance of any state. For this year, BlueCross raised its rates by nearly 20%..."

So, what can we do? I think it is time to consider a smaller police force. The standard argument that more public safety officers ensures a safer community is weak. Vermont consistently ranks as one of the safest states in the country, and nationally,

crime has been trending down. I appreciate and respect the work of our police department. I also believe we have other priorities. A thriving community is not defined by a large police presence but by the citizens who inhabit it, volunteer, engage in public service and feel connected to one another through a shared sense of pride.

If we continue to defer maintenance on our sidewalks (often forcing wheelchair bound people to ride in the street), postpone capital projects for decades (sewer system/fire station), and underinvest in quality-of-life elements including parks and recreation (we still don't have a city-owned playground for young kids) then we are actively fracturing our community's future.

I firmly believe a new direction is warranted for the vitality of our city and ask you to consider, what is the ultimate price of safety?

The Price of Safety is available to watch for free at thepriceofsafetyfilm.com.

Chris Spencer
Vergennes

Bernie's editorial

(Continued from Page 4A)

But the principle is simple: When a public resource generates wealth, the public should share in that wealth. A.I. is being built on a public resource far more valuable than oil: the accumulated knowledge, creativity and labor of

mankind.

The future of A.I. and the fate of humanity must not be decided behind closed doors in Silicon Valley. It must not be dictated by billionaires seeking to maximize their power and profit. It must be decided by workers, parents,

teachers, artists, scientists, communities and the American people. It's our future. We must decide it.

This piece by the Independent U.S. senator from Vermont originally ran in the New York Times.

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

and were blessed to have some old friends move to the area about the same time. It was at a gathering of these friends, Fran and Spence Putnam (he had also done Alternative Service) that I first learned the song which includes the line: "Man is made of dreams and bones." The joy of planting gardens and living close to the land was so palpable and joyous at that moment in time. Even though we eventually began to realize we would never be able to send kids to college or actually retire, being

close to the land has continued to be an immense joy.

This year, as I raked up big rocks and stones, yet again, I was imagining each one as another failing in our democracy: "This rock is our current dictator, this rock is the war against people of color, this rock is the greed of the billionaire class, this rock is the war against Iran, this rock is sending us to kill innocent people, this rock is getting us in bed with Putin..." And then the phrases of the song came ringing through and I thought, we can actually make

a difference here: inch by inch, row by row. Each small effort of resistance, each time we experience joy in the face of adversity, each time we help our neighbors, this lovely garden of democracy will indeed flourish. May it be so.

Cheryl Mitchell is president of Treleven, a retreat and learning program located on her family's sheep farm in Addison County. She does freelance consulting on issues related to children, families, social policy and farm to community work. She can be reached at cheryl.w.mitchell@gmail.com.

Laundry love

(Continued from Page 4A)

bedding. We can't make everyone "beautiful," but we can help ensure that people have clean clothes and bedding. We can get a Laundry Love program going in Middlebury or Bristol, similar to what is currently done in Vergennes. Addison Community Action, a program of CVOEO, is willing to provide the baseline funding — donations will always be welcome! What we need now are the "volunteer champions,"

the folks with — dare I say — the vision that sees this as an opportunity where we can be good neighbors to each other.

Laundry Love is a global program. (visit laundrylove.org) There are over 300 Laundry Love locations across the United States providing this service — free washing and drying to low-income households. 70% of low-income families without a washing machine regularly skip doing laundry in order to pay for

other necessities.

I can leave the house in the morning and head to work with a measure of confidence. My eyes are good enough to know I'm not the most handsome specimen, but I have the wherewithal to be "a little less ugly." Laundry Love can provide that same opportunity for others. Email me if you think you might be one of those "volunteer champions" — people seeing the world for what it is and for what it can become — for ourselves and

Show up letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

leadership and a proven ability to navigate difficult challenges. He isn't afraid to tackle difficult issues or make tough decisions when needed.

What impresses me most are the qualities they share. Both care deeply about our communities and are willing to do the hard work of public service. Neither is

afraid to ask difficult questions, challenge the status quo or seek accountability when something isn't working. Both take the time to listen, learn and understand complex issues before making decisions.

That's what makes them such a strong team. Ari brings creativity and a systems-minded approach, while John brings pragmatism

and proven leadership. Together, they would represent Addison-3 exceptionally well.

I've seen both Ari and John consistently show up for our schools, our towns and our neighbors. On August 11, let's show up for them.

Lindsey Brown
Ferrisburgh

Waltien letter

(Continued from Page 4A)

6 years of her nearly 15 years of design strategy experience working in civic tech. As someone who has dedicated her career to improving government services, Ariel understands both the opportunities and the challenges of making government work better for everyday people. Ariel's track

record of listening to those most affected by decisions, leading change in complex systems and finding common ground will serve our district well in the State House.

Please check out her website, and if you're as excited about her campaign as I am, consider making a donation, volunteering to help and getting the word out. Visit

arielbolles.com

Early voting will begin soon. Strong communities depend on active participation and now, more than ever, we need to exercise our right to vote and have a say in the local decisions that affect our neighbors, families and future.

Ali Waltien
North Ferrisburgh

(Continued from Page 4A)

children of Addison County are safe and well cared for.

The lowest points of my experience with the Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriff's has been the decimation of my office. When Dennis Wygmans was state's attorney, he had a full complement of seven staff members, including three deputy state's attorneys. Today, the office has one deputy SA, one victim advocate and one administrative secretary — for a total of four staff members.

Despite under staffing, our office has continued to maintain an efficient and productive pace with an average clearance rate of 104% in the last 12 months. In June 2026, Addison County's clearance rate was ranked second-highest in the state. In the last year, we filed an average of 41 new criminal cases per month. As of June 1, 2026, there were a total of 296 criminal (felony and

misdemeanor) cases pending. In addition to the criminal cases, our office is responsible for prosecuting juvenile delinquency and petitions for children in need of services (CHINS) — which there are countless dockets and daily emergencies.

As my term comes to a close, I look forward to exciting new opportunities in the future. The decision to step aside from public office is a complicated one. The current staff at the SAO (Carol Volk and Rick Nolan) are at the top of my mind. I hope that the new state's attorney will value their extraordinary skills and experience and hold them in the high regard that they deserve.

I am excited to hear that Peter Bever has thrown his hat in the ring. If elected, I hope that Peter chooses to continue the DUI and DLS Diversion programs that I have developed with the Addison County Restorative Justice Service. I also hope that he

continues my policies of taking immigration (and other collateral) consequences into account when making charging and sentencing decisions.

Finally, I wish to thank the people of Addison County for giving me the opportunity to serve. It has been a tremendous experience that I have cherished. For the State's Attorney's Office going forward, I hope that the office remains open to kindness and understanding — concepts that are indispensable in a fair and rational system of justice.

Eva Vekos
Middlebury

Editor's note: Vekos explains that the clearance rate is the ratio between how many cases filed verses closed in any given time period, so when more cases are closed than filed that means the backlog of cases (from the pandemic, for instance) is getting cleared up and the rate is above 100%.




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Yellow House thanks local businesses


At the Yellow House Community, our residents have big hearts and big dreams. This past Memorial Day, two businesses helped make those dreams come true.

Thank you to the talented crew at Silver Maple Construction for donating both time and materials to build the Yellow House parade float. And thank you to G. Stone Motors for providing the float trailer (and a junker each summer so we can enter the Demo Derby). We are grateful for your support and friendship!

Elise Haydon
YHC Executive Director

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ADDISON
COUNTY

Obituaries

Linda S. Bowker, 94, formerly of East Middlebury

SUN CITY CENTER, Fla. — Linda Bowker, 94, of Sun City Center, Fla., formerly of Princeton Junction, N.J. and East Middlebury, Vt., passed away peacefully June 3, 2026. She was born in Worcester, Mass., and spent her early childhood in nearby Shrewsbury.

She is preceded in death by her loving husband and constant companion, John; her parents, Duane and Margaret Sprague; and siblings, Jean Kiendl, Duane Sprague and Carlton Sprague. She is survived by their three children, Wendy Lodge, John S. Bowker (Joanne) and Denise Bowker; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Linda was a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority at the University of Vermont. Linda's career started as a tech in one of Rutgers University's computer labs and progressed to the go-to person for analyzing data for RCA-GE Astro Space Division. She retired from RCA-GE in 1989 to travel the country with John.



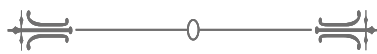
LINDA S. BOWKER

Linda was involved in projects all her life, from sewing to little league concessions to household improvements. She will always be known for the WHISTLE. The Bowker kids knew to come running.

Following her retirement, John and Linda traveled to all 48 contiguous states in their beloved

“Roo” motorhome, visiting many quilting shops. After settling in Sun City Center, John and Linda became active members in the volunteer emergency squad, where they worked as dispatchers for over 20 years. They were very active in the SCC New England Society and hosted numerous events throughout the years. Linda loved the Sew ‘n Sews club, and was known for her skills in making all of her own clothes plus doll clothes that have been donated around the area.

The one constant in Linda's life, starting at age 15, was the presence of John. They met at his 16th birthday party, dated through high school and college and were married Aug. 17, 1953, in the Congregational Church in Middlebury. For nearly 80 years, they were never more than an arm's length apart from each other, greeting each other with a kiss every day they were married. She lived for 108 days without him, and that was enough. They are on their way to forever together. ◊



Richard A. Eddy Sr., 87, of Brandon

BRANDON — Richard Anthony “Dick” Eddy passed away peacefully at Rutland Regional Medical Center Saturday morning, June 6, 2026, with his oldest son at his side. He is pre-deceased by his older sister Dianne and his parents, Carroll and Dorothy.

He is survived by his three children, Richard Jr. (and his wife Robin) of Vergennes; Lisa of Bloomington, Ind., and John (and his wife June) of Rutland. He is also survived by his younger brother John (and his wife Rose) and his younger sister Barbara, all of Florida. He has five grandchildren: Lauren Davis (Mechanicville, N.Y.) and Linnea Eddy (Rutland) by Richard; Alan Mella and Sarah Mella (both of Indiana) by Lisa; and Tyler (of Bristol) by John. He has one great-grandchild, Layne (of Bristol) by Tyler. Additionally, he is survived by many nieces and nephews and their families.

Dick was born Aug. 7, 1938, at Porter Hospital in Middlebury, but lived most of his young life in Cambridge, Mass., where he attended school and enjoyed a close relationship with his three siblings. After exploring some of the country, he moved back to Vermont in the 1960s and in



RICHARD A. EDDY SR.

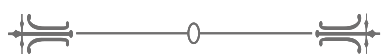
1965 he married Janice Masterson and they had their three children together, raising their family mostly in upstate New York before again moving back to Vermont in 1979.

Dick dabbled in several vocations, such as logging and auto mechanics, but for most of his life he made his living as a house painter. Dozens upon dozens of houses in the Middlebury area and Addison County have been painted by him in the past. When not working, he enjoyed fishing, camping, and hanging out with

friends, playing cards and listening to country music, which he was a lifelong fan of. He also enjoyed spending time at his Aunt Doris' famous horse farm, located on South Street in Middlebury.

After retiring, he got to spend more time on some of his other interests, like going to flea markets. One thing he especially enjoyed in his later years was going to Abenaki powwows, where he would play the drums. Over the course of all his years spent in the Middlebury area, he made many close friends, and several were able to come visit him in the hospital before he passed, which he deeply appreciated. They can attest he was always ready with a joke and a smile. He was also known for his generosity, one example being giving a friend rides to their numerous dialysis appointments.

The family would like to thank the staff at RRCM for the excellent care they gave him for four weeks, and the family finds comfort in the words of Rev 21:4 which reads in modern English: “He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more. Neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore, the former things have passed away.” ◊

Catherine
'Kay' Audette,
graveside service

BRISTOL — A graveside service for Catherine “Kay” Audette, 97, of Ballston Spa, N.Y., who passed away April 26, 2026, will be held at 10:30 a.m., at Mount Saint Joseph Cemetery in Bristol, Vt. Family and friends are welcome to attend.

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Obituaries are on pages
6A, 7A and 8A



Norma LaPlant DuBois, 79, of Richford

RICHFORD — Norma LaPlant DuBois, 79, of Richford, Vt., passed away on the evening of May 21, 2026.

Born Dec. 15, 1946, Norma was the beloved daughter of Viola and Howard LaPlant. She was the youngest of the LaPlant siblings, following Howard “Junior”, Robert “Bob”, Roger “Bill”, and Audrey. Raised in a loving, hardworking, and musical family, she carried those qualities with her throughout her life.

Norma grew up playing the piano and trumpet, ice skating and cross-country skiing, reading, cooking with her mother, wallpapering with her father, and following her older siblings everywhere.

A proud Franklin County girl and graduate of Bellows Free Academy, Norma went on to earn her nursing degree. She had a special gift for welcoming new life into the world and spent many years caring for new mothers and babies. Later in life, she earned her real estate license and enjoyed a successful second career helping families throughout Addison County find places to call home. She especially loved getting behind the wheel, exploring back roads, and sharing in the excitement of helping people begin a new chapter in their lives.

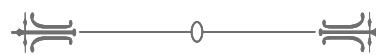
She is survived by her brother, Bill LaPlant (Margot); her daughter, Sarah Bicknell (Peter); her son, Joe LaBerge; her grandchildren, Gavin Bicknell, Michaela Bicknell (David Gundersen), Isaac Bicknell,



NORMA LAPLANT DUBOIS

Mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, auntie, and friend to many, Norma will be remembered for her witty personalized limericks, her ability to play both lively polkas and Beethoven with ease on her treasured piano, her love of books and photography, and the care she showed by sending boxes of goodies near and far to those she loved.

She is survived by her brother, Bill LaPlant (Margot); her daughter, Sarah Bicknell (Peter); her son, Joe LaBerge; her grandchildren, Gavin Bicknell, Michaela Bicknell (David Gundersen), Isaac Bicknell,



Albert Roy ‘Alpine’ Bingham III, 75, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Albert Roy “Alpine” Bingham III was born Nov. 2, 1950, in Burlington, Vt. He died from an aggressive cancer in the 75th year of his life on June 6, 2026, at Suncoast Hospice Care in Pinellas Park, Fla.

Alpine graduated from MUHS, where members of the boy's ski team nick-named him “Alpine Albee,” a moniker that stuck for life. He then attended Norwich University and the University of Vermont.

A popular Middlebury resident, Alpine was known to all he met as a witty, intelligent, and creative individual who was a brilliant conversationalist. Growing up in the 50s and 60s steeped Alpine in politics, leading to a keen interest in town affairs, and a run for selectman.

Alpine had a love for farming, which was nurtured at an early age by his grandfather and father. He had a knack for showmanship, leading to dozens of ribbons and rosettes throughout his 4-H years. He was especially fond of Suzybelle, a beautiful Jersey cow.

An accomplished downhill skier, Alpine was a ski instructor at the Middlebury College Snow Bowl for many seasons. He was gifted with the ability to help even the youngest of skiers to overcome their fears.

Dozens of friends will recall long summer evenings filled with epic volleyball games on the front lawn of the “Bingham Ranch” on Creek Road, the place where he grew up, and where his 101-year-old mother

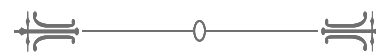
ALBERT ROY “ALPINE”
BINGHAM III

lives to this day. Many will recall the boisterous mid-summer parties he threw, which were called the “Bing Bong Bash,” featuring live bands on the front porch.

His farming operations included the raising of Rose Veal, which was wholesaled at local restaurants. Chef Woody Danforth, owner/chef of the popular Woody's Restaurant said Alpine's veal was “the best” he'd ever prepared.

Alpine also raised dairy replacement heifers for local farms, and later milked cows at the Bingham Ranch. After shipping milk for several years, Alpine moved on to cheddar cheese making, producing a sharp cheddar that was widely sought-after.

Ever the entrepreneur, Alpine had several business ventures, which included planning for a gasohol plant (scotched by the end



Seymour Karl Rettinger, D.D.S., 90, formerly of Middlebury

PLACENTIA, Calif. — Seymour Karl Rettinger, D.D.S., passed away June 6, 2026, at age 90. Born in New York City, he earned his dental degree from Columbia University and served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force. He practiced general dentistry at Rockefeller Center in Manhattan for decades before retiring first to Cornwall and then Middlebury, Vt., where he founded Addison County Dental Care. He later moved to San Diego and Placentia, Calif., to be near family. He was a passionate creator of stained-glass art.

A devoted husband, father,

and grandfather, Sy is survived by his sons, David and James; daughters-in-law, Julie and Michelle; grandchildren Ellery, Brendan, and Connor; and nephew Rob Wenig. He was preceded in death by his wife, Charlotte; his sister, Frances; and nephew, Peter.

Funeral services will be held June 26, at 9:30 a.m., at Riverside Nassau North Funeral Home, Great Neck, N.Y., followed by interment at Mount Hebron Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Open Door Clinic in Middlebury. ◊

Delaney Bicknell, Alexis LaBerge, and Reilly LaBerge; her great-grandson, Augustus Gundersen; and her much-loved nieces, Sharon Jedware (Mike), Diane Stowe (Larry), Bev Doe, and Barbara Martin (Bob), and her nephew Kenneth LaPlant (Doreen). She was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers, Junior and Bob; her sister, Audrey Gagne; and her nephew-in-law, Jamey Doe.

Above all, Norma will be remembered for her deep love of family, her fierce opinions, and her independent spirit. Her love, wisdom, humor, and presence touched many lives and will be deeply missed.

A private family service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Addison County's animal shelter, Homeward Bound, 236 Boardman Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753.

The family extends their gratitude to the MICU staff at The University of Vermont Medical Center for their compassionate care.

Honored to be serving the family of Norma DuBois is Rett Heald of the Heald Funeral Home, where messages of condolence are welcome at www.healdfuneralhome.com. ◊

of the 1970's oil embargo), and a successful rubbish collection business that was later sold. A skilled innovator, Alpine obtained a federal license and created a Bloody Mary inspired liquor, “Killer Tomato,” that was a hit at Angela's Restaurant. Later, Alpine took an interest in metal work, creating fine furniture from wrought iron.

Sadly, Alpine was dogged throughout his life by mental health issues, which culminated in his being unsheltered, and unprotected by a society that seemingly has few resources for the compassionate care of people who suffer. This led to irrational behaviors, including hitchhiking to Florida several years ago, where he was unable to escape from his illness.

He is survived by his mother, Marilyn W. Bingham, and brothers Michael, Eric, Craig (Beth Diamond), his Aunt Joan Bingham, three nieces, and several cousins.

Alpine was predeceased by his father Albert Roy Bingham Jr., his brother Stephen, sisters Penny and Susan, and his beloved grandparents.

A Memorial Service will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The American Cancer Society, or the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Condolences and remembrances may be mailed to Marilyn W. Bingham, Post Office Box 2, Middlebury, Vermont 05753. ◊

SEYMOUR KARL
RETTINGER, D.D.S.

OBITUARY Guidelines

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

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

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Quincy Sinclair McDougal, 34, formerly of Lincoln

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. — Quincy Sinclair McDougal died unexpectedly March 23, 2026, in Fayetteville, N.C.

Quincy was born at home in Bristol, Vt., Jan. 11, 1992, to Mary E. Arbuckle and Nicholas U. McDougal. He grew up with his older brother Nick in South Lincoln, exploring the meadows, streams, and forests of Addison County. They made regular childhood visits to extended family on the coast and mountains of Maine, where Quincy was the youngest of a large and adventurous group of cousins.

Quincy attended the Lincoln Community School and the North Branch middle school before first venturing beyond the Green Mountains to attend the Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Conn. There, he developed his passion for athletic achievement and competed on both the lacrosse and football teams. Quincy left a lasting impact on Hotchkiss faculty and classmates, who describe his tenacity and fearlessness, his warmth of soul, and how he was a “friend who always had your back.”

Quincy’s drive and head-first pursuit of his interests would be a defining part of his life, and during his grade school years his interest in aviation led to participation in the Flight Experience For Youth program at Sugarbush Soaring in Warren, Vt., where he worked as line crew in exchange for flying lessons. He achieved his private glider pilot certification at age 15, and took his dad for a glider ride above the Mad River Valley ski slopes where his dad first taught him to “snowplow” as a kid.

Quincy successfully balanced high school athletics and academic achievement and was admitted to Amherst College, where he regretted having to pick just one sport. He chose lacrosse, and continued to thrive in the comradery and competition of team sports while majoring in Economics



QUINCY SINCLAIR MCDOUGAL

and Psychology. At Amherst, as at Hotchkiss, Quincy forged friendships that would endure through the years and across the diverging paths of life that followed.

After helping Amherst Lacrosse reach the NESCAC championship game in an 18-3 2015 season, Quincy graduated and entered the fast-paced world of finance, working as analyst for firms in New York, then Boston. Over the course of his twenties he established himself in his field, but found himself seeking other ways to direct his energy, ambition, and immense capacity for hard work.

Pausing to reflect on his career, Quincy threw himself with characteristic focus and determination into a developing interest in road and gravel bicycling. In August of 2021, he headed west to begin his next adventure, and departed from the Canadian border near Whitefish, Mont. to ride the 2,400-mile continental divide bike route, arriving in October at the Mexican border in Columbus, N.M. He bicycled to higher elevations than he’d piloted a glider as a teenager, and reported back to Vermont when cell service allowed with descriptions of glaciers, wildfires,

and desert, and of encounters with bear, elk, and antelope.

Since childhood, Quincy had been inspired by the idea of military service, specifically the Special Forces. In 2022 he enlisted in the Army National Guard as an 18x and was assigned to the 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne). In the following years he excelled in Special Forces Selection and Assessment, completed the rigorous Special Forces Qualification Course, and in the summer of 2025 invited his family to the ceremony at Fort Bragg, N.C., in which he officially donned the Green Beret. Quincy described having “found his tribe” in this new brotherhood of service members.

Quincy achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant and chose to specialize as Special Forces Medical Sergeant. He trained hands-on in life-flight choppers and emergency rooms, delivering babies, responding to emergencies, and becoming an expert at saving lives.

Throughout his lifetime of achievements, Quincy was to those who knew him a good hang, a thoughtful and caring friend, brother, teammate, cousin, nephew and son. — never boastful, a quiet leader among his peers, always conscientious and attentive towards his relationships old and new.

Quincy is survived by his parents, Nicholas U. McDougal and Mary E. Arbuckle; his brother, Nicholas C.A. McDougal; his aunt, Jane O. McDougal; and the large extended Arbuckle family in Maine and beyond. He is survived by his wife (separated), Storm Bowen, who remembers their adventures together fondly. He is also survived by his current partner, Diana Gibson, who he looked forward to making a life with in Utah.

All are invited to a celebration of Quincy’s life at his mother’s home Saturday, July 11, from 2-5 p.m., at 444 French Settlement Road, Lincoln, Vt. ◊

Sally Ann (James) Rublee, 75, of Vergennes

VERGENNES — In the early evening of June 1, 2026, Sally Ann (James) Rublee, at the age of 75, was called home to be with the Lord. She passed away peacefully at her residence in the Vergennes Grand Memory Care, Vergennes, Vt., from sudden complications of longstanding Alzheimer’s Dementia.

Sally was born Sept. 27, 1950, in Underhill, Vt. Her parents, the late Frank James, Sr. and Agatha (Cartinelli) James moved the family to Bristol, Vt., in 1965, after 15 years in Middletown, Conn., to start “Frank and Aggie’s Laundromat” business on Main Street. It is still in operation today under a new name and ownership. Sally worked part time in the family business as needed.

Sally graduated from Bristol High School in the class of 1969 and pursued a career path as a nurse’s aide, working first at the Brandon Training School and later at Porter Nursing Home in Middlebury, Vt. She then branched into hospitality, working at the Basin Harbour Club, in Vergennes, Vt.

In 1995, at age 45, Sally moved, continuing to work in the hospitality industry, to the Boca Grande Resort, in Boca Grande, Fla. Sally fell in love with Florida and bought a property in Bradenton and enjoyed it until moving back to Vermont at age 72 in 2024 to



SALLY ANN (JAMES) RUBLEE

be near her family that she loved dearly. They meant the world to her.

Sally was a sweet gal, with a great smile, an easy laugh, a quick wit, and a great sense of humor. She loved rock ‘n’ roll and country music, music potlucks at Fay and Dud Leavitt’s home, and live Starkstock events at Horace’s back in the day.

Down to earth and a very caring person, Sally made friends easily wherever she was. She lived at Pleasant Hills apartments in Bristol for a year, where Nana and Joanie were her best buds. In March 2025 Sally moved into the Vergennes Grand, where once again she was quickly known for her sense of

humor, always cracking jokes, and taking everything in stride. All of the staff were wonderful to her and we are very grateful.

Sally had no natural children, but she considered her little pup Tucker and Momma Cat her family. Tucker who passed in Fla. will be interred with her. Momma Cat, which Sally loved for over ten years, was graciously adopted by her friend, Joanie, so Sally could move into the Grande knowing Momma Cat was in good hands.

Besides her parents’ passings, Sally was pre-deceased by her older brother, Frank James Jr., and she is survived by her brothers Robert James and Gary James (wife Barb), two nieces, five nephews, seven great-nieces, nine great-nephews, two great-great-nieces, and one great-great-nephew.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 27, at Mt. St. Josephs Cemetery in Bristol. A time to enjoy great food, sharing stories and laughter, as was Sally’s wish, will start at noon at the First Baptist Church of Bristol’s Fellowship Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Homeward Bound, Addison County’s Humane Society, 236 Boardman St., Middlebury, VT 05753, www.homewardboundanimals.org.

“I see one set of footprints — Jesus carried me — and I’m free!” ◊

Shawn Kenneth Sears, 56, formerly of Leicester/Whiting

TUTWILER, Miss. — Shawn Kenneth Sears, 56, passed away May 20, 2026, in Tutwiler, Miss.

Born April 6, 1970, in Burlington, Vt., Shawn was the son of Kenneth Dukette and Crystal (Dukette) Sears. He was raised in Leicester and Whiting, Vt., attended local schools, and graduated from Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon.

Throughout his working years, Shawn was employed as a flagger for construction companies and as a production worker for various manufacturing businesses. He was known as a hardworking man who enjoyed staying busy and working with his hands.

Shawn enjoyed woodworking, trapping, working on vehicles, and riding four-wheelers. He especially loved spending evenings around a campfire and watching the sunset. He appreciated the outdoors and the simple pleasures of life.

Shawn is survived by his mother, Crystal Sears; a very special stepdad, Jim Russo; his daughter, Kayla Sears; his granddaughters, Eliza Freegard and Jaelynn Socinski; his four brothers, Jason Dukette, Kenneth Dukette Jr., Steven Sears, and Jamie Allen (Dukette); as well as his nephew, Ethan Dukette. He is also survived by many extended family members and friends.

He was predeceased by his father, Kenneth Dukette; his infant son, Michael Sears; his brother, William Dukette; his beloved “sissy,” Tina Dukette; his paternal grandparents, Lenard and Lena Dukette; as well as his maternal grandparents Harold



SHAWN KENNETH SEARS

and Aledia Sears.

Services will be held at the convenience of the family.

If friends should desire,

DAD DESERVES TOP SHELF!

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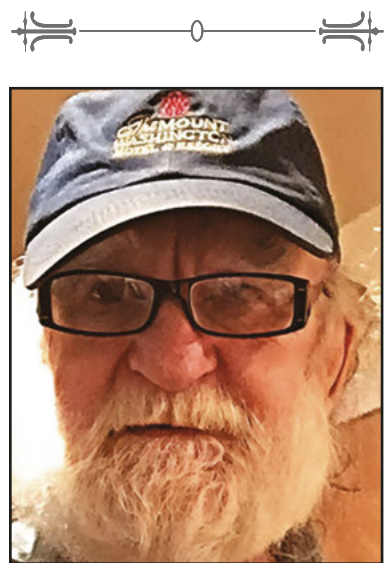
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contributions in memory of Shawn may be made via check to Therapeutic Works Inc., and sent to Devlin Funeral Home, 332 North Street, Bennington, VT 05201, to be recorded for the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.devlinfuneralhomevt.com.

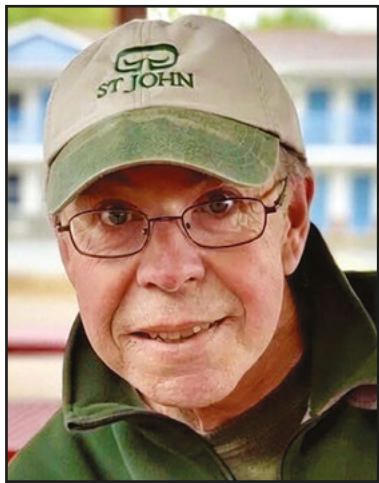


STANLEY G. BRINKMAN

Stanley G Brinkman graveside service

VERGENNES — Please join family and friends to bid a final farewell to Stanley G Brinkman June 28, at 2 p.m., at St. Peter’s Cemetery on South Maple Street in Vergennes. This is a simple goodbye ceremony.

He left his physical body on March 28 at 4:20 p.m. and now we can celebrate his 84 years of life on his birthday, June 28.



MICHAEL SCOTT GOODSPEED

Michael Scott Goodspeed 64, of Goshen

GOSHEN — Michael Scott Goodspeed, affectionately known as Woody, age 64, passed away peacefully with family by his side June 5, 2026, at his home in Goshen. To view the complete obituary please visit www.millerandketchamfuneralhome.com.



KRISTIN ANN BARROWS

Kristin Ann Barrows graveside service

VERGENNES — A graveside burial service for Kristin Ann Barrows who passed on March 26, 2025, will be held June 18, 2026, at 11 a.m., at St. Peter’s Cemetery in Vergennes, Vt., on what would have been her 50th birthday. If you’re so inclined, please wear red as it was her favorite color. ◊

Obituaries are on pages 6A, 7A & 8A

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ADDISON COUNTY

Obituaries

James M. Skidmore, 80, of Bristol

BRISTOL — James “Jim” M. Skidmore peacefully passed away Monday, June 1, 2026, at his home in Bristol, Vt., closely followed by their beloved little dog Miss Ellie.

He was born July 29, 1945, in Camden, N.J., then moved to Vermont in 1972. Other than his family, Jim loved anything automotive. He enjoyed working on cars, building street rods, and going to car shows. He was a member of the Vermont Street Rodders Club, and a lifetime member of the National Street Rod Association. Jim also owned his own repair shop, The Skidmore Service Center, for 30 years, but was an auto mechanic for around 60 years. He was an active member of the First Baptist Church of Bristol, where he served as a trustee for many years.

Jim is survived by his wife, Nancy (Burritt) Skidmore; his children, Bill Skidmore and Bonnie (Skidmore) Crowe; his son-in-law, Randy Crowe; his two grandchildren, Emily and Nikki Crowe; his numerous brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law; and many nieces



JAMES M. SKIDMORE

and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents, Charles and Elsie Skidmore; and his brothers, Richard and John Skidmore.

A service will be held to celebrate Jim’s life on June 20 at the First Baptist Church of Bristol at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the First Baptist Church of Bristol (10 Park Place, Bristol, Vt.) to help support the church he loved so much. ☐

Obituaries are on pages 6A, 7A & 8A

Betty Simons, 84, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Betty Simons of Middlebury, died June 4, 2026. She was 84.

Summer meals

(Continued from Page 1A)

hungerfreevt.org/summer-meals to see what is fully available in your area. Last summer there were free meals sites in Middlebury, Salisbury, Shoreham, Bristol, Starksboro, Vergennes and Bridport.

Completely free. No paperwork or IDs are required.

“Summer meals is an awesome federally funded program, administered in Vermont by the Agency of Education,” said Erica Morrell, the meal programs specialist with Hunger Free Vermont, a nonprofit working to end hunger in Vermont permanently. “This program works to fill the gaps in child nutrition during the summer, providing breakfast and lunch, when school is out, making up for what kids might miss.”

A summer of food support is provided to everyone. Hunger Free Vermont works with the Agency of Education and the USDA to maintain a list of Vermont sites and updates it weekly on its website, according to Morrell. This list is updated from the start of the program until mid to late August, when it ends.

During the school year, children receive two to even three meals a day through school programs. Summer meals help to maintain support of kids’ nutrition, something that is vital even when classes conclude.

“We emphasize the importance of nutrition as part of a kid’s day and their education,” said Kathy Alexander, child nutrition director

at Mount Abraham Unified School District and Addison Northwest School District. “That doesn’t stop being true just because it’s summer vacation.”

Meals are offered at a variety of sites, including schools, recreational centers, and summer camps, like Camp Kookamunga in Middlebury. Many of these sites are sponsored by local school districts. Sponsors typically remain in the summer meals system for multiple years, making it a very secure program. In addition to these sites, a program of non-congregate sites was created during the pandemic and continues expanding access to meals. These sites allow children and their families to pick up the makings for meals to eat at home, rather than eating the meals on site.

The non-congregate meal sites include Mount Abraham Union High School, Lazy Brook Mobile Home Park in Starksboro, and the American Legion in Vergennes. Other non-congregate sites mentioned by Steven Marinelli, director of food services for the Addison Central School District, include Mary Hogan Elementary School, Middlebury Union Middle School, and a site in Bridport beginning in July.

The kits at these sites are called Meal Kits for Kids and contain seven breakfasts and seven lunches and can be picked up by parents or guardians. The meals are designed to be easy for children to prepare and contain proteins, whole grains, fruits, vegetables and milk. There are also weekend meal kits available to take away on Friday

Sheriff’s deputy speaks with an alleged jumper

ADDISON COUNTY — A deputy from the Addison County Sheriff’s Department looked into a June 5 report of a person talking about jumping off the bridge on Route 116 into the river in Bristol. The officer spoke to the person and they indicated they were just resting and not trying to jump.

Between May 10 and June 6, the Addison County Sheriff’s Department completed patrols in multiple towns; stopped 212 vehicles for various motor vehicle violations; attempted to serve 79 pieces of civil process around the county; three times provided free car seat inspections for families with a new child safety seat, including one family that had recently been in a crash; and provided VIN inspections for residents of New Haven (2), Leicester, Shoreham (2), Monkton and Salisbury.

The department also honored former deputy Robert Grant at a funeral service in Addison on June 6.

In other recent activity, Sheriff Michael Elmore and his deputies:

- On May 10 provided blue lights for a road race in Leicester.
- On May 11 conducted two background investigations.
- On May 12 provided blue lights for road construction.
- On May 12 arrested Lisa Oliver, 47, of Milton for driving with a criminally suspended license.
- On May 13 assisted a person who had locked their keys in their car in Bridport.
- On May 13 assisted state police with a welfare check in Ferrisburgh.
- On May 13 received a report that a utility company was blocking a road in Leicester. The deputy spoke with the workers about how they had set up their worksite.

• On May 14 assisted state police with a car stop in Ferrisburgh.

• On May 15 assisted a person who had locked their keys in their car in Middlebury.

• On May 15 logged a report that a person had left the trash transfer station in Middlebury without paying. Deputies contacted the person, and they returned to the transfer station to pay for the waste they had dropped off.

• On May 16 participated in “Big Truck Day” in Shoreham. Deputies ran the rollover car to show the importance of wearing seatbelts and what can happen when you don’t.

• On May 16 provided security in Middlebury while an evicted person retrieved their belongings.

• On May 16 cited Megan Smith, 57, of Weybridge for driving under the influence after deputies got a report of erratic driving on Route 7.

• On May 18 participated in a Crown Point, N.Y., press conference to kick off the Buckle Up safety campaign.

• On May 19 and 20 Sheriff Elmore took part in the New England Sheriff’s Summit in Burke.

• On May 21 helped a motorist change a tire in Benson.

• On May 22 assisted with a tractor-trailer unit with locked up wheels on Route 116 in Starksboro.

• On May 23 looked into a complaint about people yelling at each other in the middle of the road on Route 73 due to a possible road rage incident. Deputies separated the people involved and calmed them down.

• On May 23 observed teens hanging over the train bridge in Middlebury and spoke to them about the dangers of being on train

tracks.

• On May 23 assisted with a broken-down vehicle in Bristol.

• On May 24 provided traffic control for Middlebury College graduation.

• On May 24 provided traffic control for the Orwell Memorial Day parade.

• On May 25 participated in the Middlebury Memorial Day parade.

• On May 25 provided traffic control for the Vergennes Memorial Day parade.

• On May 26 provided blue lights for road construction in Monkton.

• On May 26 provided traffic control for students at the Leicester elementary school as they walked to the cemetery.

• On May 26 conducted two background investigations.

• On May 26 assisted state police as they arrested an intoxicated driver in Orwell.

• On May 27 assisted a person who had locked their keys in their car in Middlebury.

• On May 28 checked out a report of a family fight in Starksboro and found it was a verbal argument and everyone was separated for the evening.

• On May 29 provided an escort for an oversize load from the New Hampshire border to the New York border.

• On May 29 transported a person from jail to the courthouse for a hearing and then returned them to jail.

• On May 29 assisted Middlebury police with a traffic stop in New Haven.

• On May 30 helped out state police at a trespassing incident in Addison.

• On May 31 transported a person to a detox facility on behalf

Sheriff’s

Log

of Middlebury police.

• On June 1 transported a person from the jail in St. Albans to the court in Middlebury for a hearing.

• On June 1 transported a person from the Rutland jail to court for a hearing in Middlebury.

• On June 1 transported a person to a detox facility on behalf of Middlebury police.

• On June 2 conducted two background investigations.

• On June 2 took a person to jail after they were arrested by Middlebury police on a warrant.

• On June 3 assigned extra deputies to court duties due to the number of court hearings this day.

• On June 4 escorted three oversize loads to Marshfield.

• On June 4 met with Addison Housing Works in Vergennes to learn more about the program they run and see some of their facilities.

• On June 4 transported a person to a mental health facility in Brattleboro.

• On June 4 assisted a rescue squad with a call on Sand Road in Ferrisburgh.

• On June 5 celebrated the end of school with elementary school children in Leicester.

• On June 5 transported a person to court after they were arrested by Middlebury police.

• On June 5 met with a Bristol resident to discuss a speeding issue.

• On June 5 helped out state police with a call in Ferrisburgh.

• On June 5 cited Phillip Smith, 47, of Milton for driving under the influence and driving with a suspended license after he almost struck a cruiser during a traffic stop in Starksboro.

for children who are enrolled in large recreational programs.

Last year, 1.5 million meals were distributed throughout Vermont, and this year that number is expected to be even higher.

“We’re hopeful for a really robust summer program here in Vermont again this year, with some new programs like Meals on Wheels and home deliveries being introduced,” said Morrell. “It is a great program for entire communities and expands through people using it.”

In the Middlebury area, the Addison Central School District is one of the program’s sponsors and runs approximately eight sites in the area. These sites won’t be offering the seven-day meal kit, but hot meals are guaranteed.

“People come and pick up freshly made meals each day,” Marinelli said. “We usually provide three hot meals a week and two cold meals, like sandwiches or salads.”

Fresh food and variety are crucial to the program. Meals in the Meal Kit for Kids could look like tortillas, bread, bagels, fresh fruit, vegetables, and always a protein, such as tuna, chicken, turkey, peanut butter or yogurt. At regular sites, the meals are served cafeteria style.

The districts are also partnering with local producers, helping the program as well as the community. Along with ACSD’s work with Addison County Relocalization Network (ACORN), a food hub supporting farmers and food producers in the area, the Mount

Abraham and Addison Northwest school districts are partnering with the Weybridge dairy Monument Farms. Due to this, local foods are included in all the summer meals this year.

“When people arrive at our sites, they’re getting homemade, quality meals,” said Marinelli. “We are utilizing locally sourced products, supporting our local growers and producers, and providing a huge benefit for families.”

He confirmed that ACSD has sites based out of Mary Hogan Elementary School, Middlebury Union Middle School, and then for July at Bridport Central School. There will be a free barbecue kickoff to celebrate the summer food services on Friday, June 19, at Mary Hogan Elementary. Kids 18 years and younger will be free, and parents and family members may attend for a \$5 fee. This is an important time for talking with families and explaining the program.

The summer meals programs not only benefit children and families, but also local schools, farms, and food producers by introducing federal reimbursement dollars into the Vermont community.

“We want families to come,” Alexander said. “It is a mutually beneficial program, helping to sustain what we do, our community, and families. It’s really a win-win, and everyone is welcome. If you feel like you could use some food, we want you to stop by any of our sites.”

Man cited for unlawful mischief

VERGENNES — On June 6 Vergennes police issued a citation to Andrew Sumner, 37, of Bristol for unlawful mischief following an investigation into a property damage incident in Vergennes.

The investigation determined that Sumner intentionally damaged the property of another person. As a result, he was issued a citation to appear in court on the charge of unlawful mischief. This charge is an allegation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

Between June 1 and June 7, Vergennes police also conducted 15 traffic stops, four directed patrols, one foot patrol, three vehicle identification number verifications and one VIN number inspection.

In other recent activity, city police:

• On June 1 were notified of an alarm, which turned out to be a false alarm.

• On June 1 conducted a local background check.

• On June 1 took a report of a suspicious man rummaging through recycling totes. Police were unable to locate and identify the person.

• On June 2 assisted parents with an out-of-control juvenile.

• On June 2 while conducting traffic enforcement officers heard screaming in the area of the Vergennes Falls Park. The person was issued diversion paperwork for consumption of alcohol by

Vergennes

Police Log

someone under age 21 and released to a sober party.

• On June 3 participated in Walk and Roll to School.

• On June 3 investigated a motor vehicle crash on Main Street. Police cited Scott Brooks of Winooski for driving while under suspension and with no insurance.

• On June 3 cited Peter LeClair, 60, of Ferrisburgh for driving with a criminally suspended driver’s license following a traffic stop on North Green Street. LeClair was issued multiple traffic tickets and the passenger was given a ticket for having an open container.

• On June 3 received reports of an intoxicated person walking on Main Street. Officers patrolled the area but were unsuccessful in locating anyone that was intoxicated.

• On June 3 received a cell phone that was found on Main Street.

• On June 4 received a report from a person claiming that his ex-girlfriend was engaged in sexual activity with two men behind a local business. Officers learned there had been an earlier dispute involving the caller and another person regarding the same woman.

(See Mischief, Page PBA)

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MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING EMERGING FILMMAKERS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD

A Community Announcement From the Board of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival

To all our many supporters in Middlebury, Addison County and throughout the region, we are very happy to announce that Andy Mitchell has been named the new Managing Producer of the Festival beginning June 8th and we know he will bring great insight, energy and passion to his new role.



Andy attended Middlebury College in the Class of 1996 and has called Middlebury home for the last 22 years, raising his family here, alongside his wife Lisa. He has spent much of that time giving back to the community he loves. He co-founded Middlebury Underground, a non-profit multidisciplinary arts organization whose flagship event, Foodaroo, welcomes thousands of people each year and this summer will be the gathering's 11th season. Through his involvement with MUD, Andy has been a consistent presence in the local arts and cultural landscape.



Andy's professional achievements are extensive and diverse. He is a five-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker as a Producer, Director, Writer and Director of Photography. His work appears on Netflix, National Geographic, Disney+, BBC, and many other platforms. Andy's credits include the global hits *Secrets of the Whales*, *Penguin Town*, and

Inside the Mind of a Dog. Over a 25-year career, Andy has filmed on every continent and in every ocean, documenting the inhabitants of our planet from great white sharks to Buddhist monks, and natural disasters to rock stars.

Andy brings to the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival a heartfelt enthusiasm for its mission of championing emerging voices in independent film. He brings a wealth of industry experience, as well – including 15 years as an Emmy Awards judge.



Above all, Andy has cultivated a genuine, homegrown belief in MNFF's future. He means it when he says that

“MNFF has always represented something I care about deeply – providing new filmmakers an outstanding platform to showcase their work and network with others at the outset of their film careers. Continuing that tradition, and embracing MNFF's amazing community of supporters, many of whom are friends and neighbors in the town I've called home for over two decades, feels like a natural and exciting next chapter.”

Andy joins a team that includes MNFF Artistic Director and Co-Founder Jay Craven, Co-Founder Lloyd Komesar and Associate Producer Annika Ellis. We are confident that, together, they will bring us an exceptional 12th Annual Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival. So, if you see Andy around town, please come up, say hello and congratulate him on becoming MNFF's new Managing Producer!



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MUHS graduates honored as a 'match for this moment'

By MARIN HOWELL

MIDDLEBURY — While Middlebury Union High School commencement this past Saturday was undoubtedly a joyful occasion, graduating seniors on that morning were reminded that the world they're stepping into can be filled with hardship.

"There is a lot of work to do out there. You know. You invited us again and again to talk with you about what was happening in and troubling you about the world around you, and it hasn't been easy," MUHS Principal Caitlin Steele told graduates. "And yet, I stand here as you embark with a lot of hope in my heart for what you will contribute to a hurting world because of what I have already seen you give to your community here."

Steele highlighted how students' time at MUHS has prepared them for what's ahead, stating that public school can serve as a training ground for life in "the real world."

"It is an invitation to grow as individuals and to grow closer as a community," she said. "If we get it right, we become brighter versions of ourselves, and the world around us gets a little brighter, too. Class of 2026, in your time at MUHS, you accepted that invitation, and you made the most of it."

Steele shared what she admires most about the graduating class, such as how they speak up when things aren't right.

"From your earliest days here, you were raising your voices to tell us — through your actions and words — that this school was not a match for your post-pandemic needs, that we needed to do things differently. You invited us to be humble, to learn and to innovate," she said. "But while you called out what needed to change, you also leaned in with us to make change happen."

She listed ways graduates had invested in the MUHS community,

whether through the teams they played on or the warm welcome they offered incoming ninth-grade students.

"When things are dark and hard in the world, investing in joy and community is a deeply wise and sustaining action," Steele said.

Steele also noted the diverse examples of leadership the Class of 2026 displayed — from providing input on superintendent candidates to quieter acts of service behind the scenes.

"It all matters. Diversity in leadership is necessary for a healthy school and a healthy world," she said. "Whatever community you join next, I encourage you to find the need there and lead into it."

Steele told students the world needs leaders like them and invited them to brighten the corners of the world they're headed off to.

"Luckily for us, you are a match for this moment," she said. "I am proud and impressed by what



Quinn Mackey, surrounded by family holding photos of her younger self

you have done with your time at MUHS, and I am excited for you to join communities that need your leadership, your honest critique and your commitment to making this world a better place."

Student speaker Theo Fallis highlighted some of the changes seniors experienced in recent years, including the rise of artificial intelligence and the arrival and loss of classmates.

"We have changed ourselves as well, as individuals and as a whole," he said. "We have gained life experience through the constant interactions we share with each other."

He noted graduates have not only completed their high school career at MUHS but also their childhood in rural Vermont — a place that builds resilience. Fallis acknowledged the change graduates will encounter in the years ahead but emphasized that resilience will remain.

He referenced the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus's words that "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man."

"Looking back into the words of Heraclitus and forward into the next step of our lives, the river will change and you will change, but it is important to remember that what got you to where you are is what will get you to where you want to be," he said.

Student speaker Peter Conklin also reflected on graduates' time at MUHS, thanking staff and his classmates for the moments they've shared. He recalled numerous memories from high school, such as Model United Nations conferences, talent show performances and support offered by educators.

"Thank you Mrs. Stoddert, Mrs. Slater, and Keith for helping me realize that teachers care more about your wellbeing than how many missing assignments you have," he said.

Conklin acknowledged that graduation marks an end, as students leave the MUHS building they've spent so much time in. He noted his time there has been shorter than other graduates, as he joined the MUHS community during his sophomore year.

"In the time I have been here, though, I have had so many great moments and had the honor to meet all of you. Thank you all for being in this world with me," he said. "I can't promise I'm going



Mary Harrington and Solstice Binder



Quinn Doria and Kenyon Connors

to remember implicit derivatives, entropy, procedural justice or synecdoche, but the one thing I will take away from these three years are the memories with all of you."

Student speaker Maya Breckenridge's speech focused on kindness. She shared a memory from Group Cooking Day in 11th-grade, where she worked alongside Reece Thibault, a member of the MUHS Class of 2026 who died in July 2025. Breckenridge and Thibault were scolded for digging into the steak they made prior to a potluck that afternoon, she said. When the potluck came around, Breckenridge said she felt like she didn't deserve to take part in the meal, but Thibault made sure she got a plate.

"That moment really stuck with me," she said. "Reece showed me that kindness and empathy are among the simplest things that

we can offer, but often the most powerful things we can receive."

Breckenridge said she hopes graduates will carry that lesson with them moving forward. She recognized the challenges they've encountered in recent years, but also the people graduates connected with throughout high school — people who have supported students along the way.

"Just by being present for their students they showed us how to navigate whatever life throws at us," she said. "And given our track record, there's more to come, but we've learned that only kindness and compassion can guide us through difficult times. As we move forward, I know that the Class of 2026 will be the person who brings someone a plate."

Saturday's commencement (See MUHS Grads, Page 11A)



Jonathan Kafumbe with his mother Betty and brother Joshua, who graduated MUHS last year



Cierra Miller

Independent photos / Steve James



Maryam Khan, who will attend Kansas University, with her sister Subia, who graduated MUHS last year, and their mother Amtul and father Farhad Khan

MUHS Grads

(Continued from Page 10A)
 recognized 118 members of the Class of 2026. Eight students graduated Summa Cum Laude, 18 earned Magna Cum Laude and 20 earned Cum Laude honors.

Before they walked across the stage, Addison Central School District Superintendent Wendy Baker shared some remarks with graduates.

"I've been known to say that it is more important to consider who we are than what we do," she said, noting that being ourselves requires knowing who we are. "That's a tall order at any age, but perhaps especially for you in a moment like this."

She referenced a question posed by author Belden Lane, who asked us to consider what happens when a child finds themselves alone in a wilderness without any way of proving their worth.

"Lane suggested that, in that moment, the achiever is reduced to something utterly ordinary, and that only then, is she truly able to be loved," Baker said. "Not when she wins. Not when she performs. Not when she proves herself. Only when she's ordinary."

Baker told graduates they will soon walk into wildernesses of their own — spaces where they are no

longer known by what they have or haven't done.

"You may meet moments of loneliness or confusion in that wilderness that has no mirrors or signs telling you who you are — where the applause has gone quiet and you are left, just you, in the silence. I promise you, you'll be safe there," she said. "In that silence will be an invitation to answer a question that matters: Who are you when there's nothing to prove, no one to impress, no relationship to chase or hold, and how do you muster the courage to let that unique soul meet the world that surrounds you?"

As they embark on new journeys, Baker encouraged pupils to set goals, work hard and let themselves be ordinary sometimes.

"The person you are in moments like these — unglamorous, uncertain, unproven — that person is the one you can trust the world to love. Good things will come from the love you find in that place," she said. "The actual, complicated, beautiful, ordinary human underneath all the plans, applications and goals will be the one with the strength and grace to set the world on fire. I wish each of you the very best as you get to know that human who sits within you."



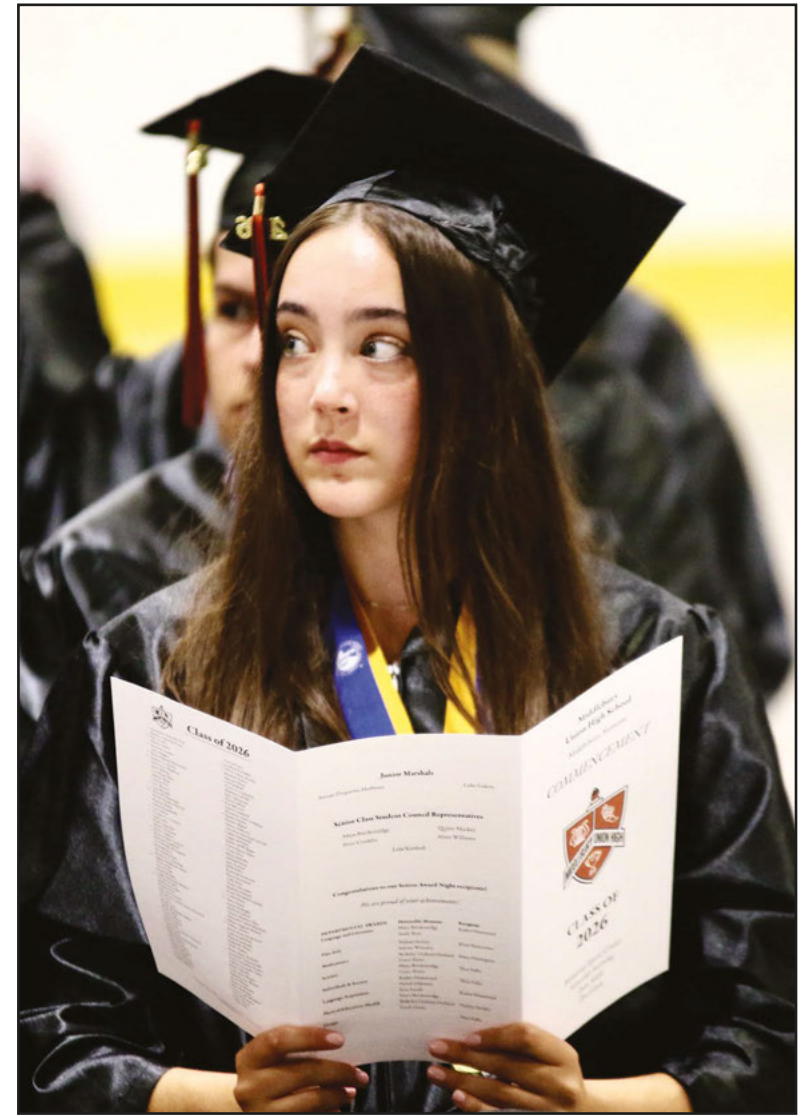
Independent photos / Steve James



CONGRATS TIGERS

MEMORIAL SPORTS CENTER was packed this past Saturday as family, friends and well-wishers celebrated the Middlebury Union High School Class of 2026. Pictured at the graduation ceremony clockwise from above; newly-minted grads Cooper Cannon, left, Lia Calzini and Sawyer Cash Witscher; a trio of personalized mortarboards; a graduate follows along with the commencement program; graduating senior Mercedes Sheldrick shows off her diploma with Principal Caitlin Steele; and Cash Witscher walks across the stage.

Independent photos/Steve James



proudly congratulates all of our 2026 PROGRAM GRADUATES

Your drive, expertise, and hard work have set the stage for success, whether you're stepping into a new career, heading to college, or leading in our community. We are incredibly proud of everything you've achieved and can't wait to see what you do next.

Career and Technical Education builds strong futures, and our graduates are leading the charge.

ADDISON REPERTORY THEATRE

- Bailey Antos-Ketcham - Home*
- Sierra Bloom - Home
- Finch Goetz - MUHS*
- Joshua Goff - VUHS
- Jeremy Holzhammer - Home*
- Rainie Kuebler Raymond - MUHS
- Steven Lackard - MUHS
- Oprea Littlefield - MUHS

DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

- Morgan Beenen - VUHS
- Caden Cousino - MUHS
- Ezaias Herben - MAUHS*
- Lucas Huestis - MUHS
- Callie Jennings - MAUHS*
- Tennessee LaRoche - MUHS*
- Autum Loven - VUHS
- Jacob Mikkelsen - MAUHS*
- Lily Morris - VUHS
- Emily Norris - MAUHS
- Timothy Ploegman - Home*
- Heaven Ross - MUHS
- Asher Stevers - MAUHS

EDUCATION & HUMAN SERVICES

- Riley Abbott - MAUHS*
- Cara Bougor - MUHS
- Vanessa Brown - VAL
- Brianna Foss - MUHS*
- Isabella Jenkins-Pratt - VUHS
- Mercedes Sheldrick - MUHS
- Ariel Zieller - MUHS

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING

- Gabriel Hamel - MUHS
- Dimitri Rodrigue - MAUHS
- Raphael Mitchell - MUHS

MEDICAL PROFESSIONS

- Hannah Bertrand - OVUHS*
- Katelyn Busby - MUHS*
- Noah Drake - MUHS
- Sadie German - MAUHS*
- Madelyn LaDuke - MUHS
- Kendra Mahler - MUHS*
- Cierra-Rayne Miller - MUHS
- Sadie Shepard - MAUHS*
- Sophia Thomsen - MAUHS
- Alyssa Warren - MUHS*

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Alyza Bagley - MUHS
- Josh Bapp - MAUHS
- Wyatt Cavoretto - MAUHS
- Trenon Cioffredi - MUHS
- Kisung Davis - MUHS
- Jonathon Deering - MUHS
- Tyson Hallock - MAUHS
- Mason Harrington - MUHS
- Valkyrja Hotmer - Home²
- Brayden McKee - MUHS
- Mya Provencher - VUHS
- Yankee Rheume - MUHS
- Ryan Squier - OVUHS
- Jose Francisco Santiago Loyola - VUHS
- Hunter Sunhawk - MUHS
- Harold Tricou - MAUHS

DIESEL POWER TECHNOLOGY

- Austin Adams - FHUMHS
- Chris Brown - MAUHS
- Zach Coleman - OVUHS
- Ben DeBisschop - MUHS*
- Wyatt Gillett - MUHS
- Alfredo Hernandez Baltazar - VUHS
- Jonathan Kehoe - MUHS*
- Payton Lavoie - VUHS*
- Dylan Layn - MAUHS
- Jackson Paquin - VUHS
- Quinn Quenville - OVUHS
- Kameron Raymond - MUHS

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Calvin Almeida - VUHS*
- Carter Antos-Ketcham - MAUHS*
- Evan Audy - MAUHS
- Hailey Chase - MAUHS²
- Aidin Hodzic - MAUHS
- Hayden SantaMaria - MAUHS
- Emily Sherman - MAUHS*

CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

- Wesley Audet - MUHS*
- Owen Butterfield - MUHS
- Claude Godard - MUHS²
- Samuel Luis - OVUHS
- David MacDonough - VUHS
- Sutton Rubright - MUHS*
- Cole Shepard - MAUHS*
- Kenneth Sullivan - VUHS
- Logan Thibeault - VUHS
- Tyrese Tucker - MUHS
- Matthew Whelan - MUHS

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

- Nevaeh Berry - MAUHS
- Hailey Chase - MAUHS²
- Skyler Choiniere - MUHS*
- McKenzie Forbes - MUHS*
- Katelyn Forbes - MAUHS
- Claude Godard - MUHS²
- Morgan Larocque - MAUHS*
- Lola Rollins - VUHS
- Makayla Warner - MUHS

CULINARY ARTS

- Willow Hotchkiss - VUHS
- Tracy Whalon - MAUHS

WELDING & FABRICATION

- Zachary Benson - Mill School
- Austin Gero - MUHS
- Valkyrja Hotmer - Home²
- Keldon LaPell - WRVHS
- Shayne Russell - MAUHS*

²Denotes a dual program concentrator

*Denotes membership in the National Technical Honor Society





BARBARA WAGNER RECENTLY retired from Porter Hospital early this month after a 52-year career as a Registered Nurse, most of it spent in Porter's Emergency Department.

Independent photo/John Flowers

Nurse Wagner

(Continued from Page 1A)

her 52 years working as a nurse at Porter, most of it in the ED.

No, Wagner wasn't picking up an impromptu shift. She had generously agreed to an interview with the *Independent* at her suddenly former stamping grounds and had agreed to be photographed in a workplace she could navigate blindfolded.

"Recently recognized with a DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award, Barb has spent decades caring for generations of patients while helping teach, mentor and inspire caregivers across Addison County," reads a post on Porter's Facebook Page saluting her for her years of service. "Known for her compassion, steady presence and dedication to others, Barb's impact can be felt far beyond the walls of the ED and throughout the community she's served for more than five decades."

Nursing was a job she was born to do.

"I knew I wanted to either be a nurse or a teacher," said Wagner, who was raised in Fair Haven. "I became a nurse who teaches."

Her first nursing job, after graduating from the Mary Fletcher School of Nursing, was in the intensive care unit at what was then known as Fletcher Allen Hospital in Burlington. While there, during the early 1970s, she met a woman who told her, "I have the perfect person for you — my brother."

That man was Paul Wagner, who would become her husband.

"Fifty-five years later, here we are," Barb said, glancing at Paul, who sat in on the interview.

Following their marriage in 1971, the couple moved to the Wagner Farm off North Cream Hill Road in Bridport. That same year, Barb applied for a nursing job at Porter. She was looking for a gig close to home.

Surprisingly, Porter gave her a pass.

"They said, 'You have too many credentials, we don't have a job for you,'" Wagner recalled.

Fortunately, she found a landing spot with the late Dr. Ted Collier, an internal medicine physician whose practice was affiliated with Porter.

She enjoyed her job at Collier's office, but left while pregnant with her first child, son Jeffrey. The couple's second son, Phillip, would come along in 1974. Wagner wanted to maximize her home time with her children while Paul worked on the farm, but it was proving financially untenable.

"We realized we were getting in debt," Wagner recalled.

With that in mind, Wagner again applied for a nursing job at Porter, in 1974.

This time, the hospital was ready for her. She was hired to work evenings/nights, which is what Wagner wanted. This would allow her and Paul to do their respective jobs and not have to hire a babysitter.

"We didn't want anyone else to raise our kids," she said.

Wagner's first day at work was an interesting one.

"I came into work and they said, 'You're the evening supervisor,'" she said, with a grin.

And by supervisor, it meant overseeing the entire nursing

staff — while performing her own nursing chores.

"I told them, 'But I don't even know where the toilet is,'" Wagner chuckled. "They said, 'Oh, you'll find it.'"

As one can imagine, Wagner stayed busy at work and that made the time fly faster. Yes, there was the occasional pandemonium of an overflowing emergency room and other small crises, but Barb has thrived in that environment. She also enjoyed the requirement that she, as the evening supervisory, be present for every birth in the maternity room.

Her goal, as she put it, was to be there to "catch that baby," but ruefully explained, "that darn OB (doc) would come in just in the nick of time and say, 'OK, I'm here, move over.'"

SEEN SOME CHANGE

Wagner would again briefly interrupt her nursing career in 1976 to have the couple's third (and final) child, Sarah. But she was back on the job around six months later, ultimately settling into the ED where she solidified her legendary RN status.

She leaves knowing every nook and cranny in what is now a much larger Porter Medical Center than it was when she started.

When she debuted, the hospital had one emergency room, and the waiting area was in what is now the reception area of the original 1924 hospital building. Doctors were called into the ER to deal with each specific emergency. Nurses did a lot of triage work, including stabilizing patients until the docs arrived.

"We carried a lot of responsibility," Wagner said of the nursing staff.

Porter's Emergency Department eventually moved to the ground

Locals earn degrees from CCV

VERMONT — The following local students earned associate degrees at the Community College of Vermont on Saturday, June 6.

Bristol

- Danniell W. Auclair
- Jacob William Denny
- Ami L. Hough
- Skylar Kate Xavier Maguire
- Sydney Hope Perlee
- Alexis Louise Porter
- Emily Danielle Pricone

Ferrisburgh

- Kimberly A. Crawford

- Siera Marie Owen
- Sarah Beth Kelley Perrotte

Middlebury

- Jose Samuel Arias
- Crystal E. Chaveco
- Katie L. Nop
- Kirsten Sargent
- Makayla M. Shute
- Gabrielle Joy Sullivan

Monkton

- Samantha Marie Paquette

New Haven

- Ashley Jean Gorton
- Shayna Marie Rowell

Ripton

- Felix Ljosa

Starksboro

- Noel E. Gates

Vergennes

- Nathalie N. Fassett
- Erica Karin Glesmann
- Alyssa J. Ouellette
- Ashlyn-Mckenzie Perkins

Weybridge

- Maggie Ann Duprey

Whiting

- Payton Cole Thurston

Arts group gears up for 5-Towns silent auction

The Five Town Friends of the Arts group is preparing for its annual July 4 Silent Auction on the Bristol Village Green, and the Bristol-based nonprofit is reaching out to area businesses, artists, and community supporters for donation of items to stock the auction.

For many years, the silent auction has been a favorite July 4 tradition, with visitors from throughout the region stopping by to browse unique items, bid on local experiences, and support arts enrichment

programming that directly benefits the communities of Bristol, Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven and Starksboro. Proceeds from the auction fund arts grants, community arts programming, and scholarships for local young artists.

In the coming weeks, Five Town Friends of the Arts board members will contact local businesses to ask for auction donations, such as gift certificates, gift baskets and specialty products. For more information, go to Stownfriendsofhearts.org.

Monkton needs your help harvesting wild parsnip

It's time again for our Monkton's annual wild parsnip eradication gatherings at Morse Park. The Monkton Conservation Commission has organized a series of four sessions, beginning this Thursday, June 11. The other three sessions will be held on June 18, June 25 and July 2. All sessions are 7-8:30

p.m. and are canceled in the event of heavy rain or thunderstorms. Come armed with a parsnip shovel or other removal tool that works for you, heavy gloves, and protective clothing. Organizers also recommend bug/tick spray. Cold water and other drinks will be provided.

floor (where the radiology department is now located), expanding to four rooms and five beds. Now the ED has 10 beds in its own area, with more upgrades in the offing.

The Porter campus is a lot larger now, with new structures, wings and a Helen Porter Rehabilitation & Nursing building erected in 1992.

Wagner's grateful nurses' compensation has increased. When she started at Porter in 1974, she was — as a supervisor — making \$3.12 an hour.

There were no CT scan or MRI machines in use at Porter 50 years ago. The lab occupied a single room, offering limited services. Wagner saw huge technological advances during her tenure that have allowed Porter Medical Center to provide better and more timely care.

"We've come a long way," she said.

Porter's close relationship with neighboring Middlebury Regional EMS and other emergency responders has made Wagner very happy.

"They're lifesavers," she said of the county's EMS community.

Technology and training are imperative in the business of healing, but Wagner believes one skill is underrated.

"Sometimes, the most important thing you can do is just *listening*," she said.

But she also knows instinctively when and how, to jump in when action is needed.

"It feeds my desire to *do*," she said, trying to find the right word. "I don't like to sit and watch; I want to be a part of things, to be active."

Indeed, ED work kept Wagner up to speed on best practices for every demographic in our county. The ED is used by folks of all ages, experiencing many different kinds of ailments. Her experiences in Porter's ED — along with her desire to share — have made her a go-to educator.

In addition to treating patients, she's trained generations of future nurses in the areas of trauma, emergency pediatrics, CPR and advanced first aid. She'll continue to provide that training and remain a key member of Townline First Response Squad, an organization she founded back in 1977 to respond to medical emergencies in Addison and Bridport.

Wagner recalled starting that volunteer organization in light of calls she'd receive at home, after

work, from folks asking for advice — or a consult — on an injury or malady. She did it gladly but got to thinking about the void in quick medical care in rural areas.

"I started to think, 'Who's going to take care of my family when I'm at work?' I thought, 'We should have a first response group.'"

Filling out the volunteer roster was arduous, at first.

"You know that when you say, 'We should,' it really means, 'I do,'" she said with a mischievous smile.

Wagner has stepped up to do some very difficult and heart wrenching work. She acquired extensive training to become one of only three sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) nurses — and the *only* pediatric SANE — in Addison County. She's been a leader in developing Vermont medical standards for sexual assault victims

and an active committee member setting SANE policy and procedures. The Atria Collective (formerly WomenSafe) conferred its Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award to Wagner in 2016.

Wagner is thankful that the Porter ED has seen many more happy endings for patients than sad ones. But the sad ones stay with you. Like a vehicle accident one day that decimated a family of five. She's not allowed to share details but recalled the accident claimed the lives of both parents and two children. The fifth occupant in the vehicle, a little boy, was saved because of the

Teddy bear he had tucked in to his snowsuit.

"You take those home with you and you go home and hug your own children," she said.

The ED of course also sees folks who are there due to their own poor judgment. Among them are people who've gotten incredibly drunk. Wagner confessed to having, on occasion, used the inebriated person's camera to take a photo of them (and then return it immediately without sharing said photo) to give them a sober view of what they'd looked like

at one of their worst moments.

What has she emphasized to aspiring nurses?

"Be kind. Smile. Listen to the patient. Don't jump do a conclusion."

What will she miss about her nursing job?

The people, the camaraderie, and a sense of belonging to a team that works to make people feel better.

What won't she miss? "Getting vomited on," she quickly responded.

While she's getting done at Porter, Wagner will remain active. She'll still teach, will remain on Townline First Response, and she'll have more time to cook, craft, knit, crochet and cross stitch.

She's living her golden years with the same philosophy she espoused as a nursing school student.

"You can change the negative to a positive," she said.

John Flowers is at johnf@addisonindependent.com.



BARBARA WAGNER AND her husband Paul have been married even longer than Barb has worked at Porter Hospital.

Independent photo/John Flowers

Mischief

(Continued from Page 8A)

After reviewing the information, no criminal activity was identified and no police action was taken.

- On June 4 assisted a person with resources for obtaining a relief from abuse and a no trespass order.

- On June 4 checked the welfare of a Vergennes resident who did not answer the door when Age Well was there. The resident was found to be OK and was not home at the time of the visit.

- On June 4 assisted Vermont

State Police in locating a person involved in an incident they were investigating. The person was located, found to be calm, and advised officers that he was experiencing personal difficulties and was in contact with counseling and support services. State police spoke with the person and no further action was taken.

- On June 5 participated in a funeral procession.

- On June 5 took a report from a Vergennes resident that their

neighbor has not let their dogs outside in a couple days. A message was left for the owner.

- On June 5 responded to a two-car motor vehicle crash on Green Street near School Street. The at fault operator was issued violations for no insurance, suspended license and starting parked vehicles.

- On June 5 conducted a welfare check on a child. They were in good health.

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Mt. Abe graduates urged Be wary of AI, and show heart

By JOHN FLOWERS

BRISTOL — Yes, folks as young as 18 can feel nostalgia.

Mount Abraham Union High School Class of 2026 President Charlie Prouty conveyed that sentiment — as it relates to the inexorable advance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into everyday life — during his message at the MAUHS commencement ceremony on Saturday.

“As a class, as a generation, we’ve been submerged into technology that’s redefining our education and our futures. We’ve been thrown into a deep digital landscape before even learning how to swim,” he told his 89 fellow graduates, their families, friends and other MAUHS stakeholders who had assembled on a rainy Saturday student sendoff.

“For better or worse, technology is adapting quicker than we can understand it,” he continued. “Just as the Beatles redefined what it means to record music, we have the opportunity to not only redefine how we interact with technology or each other, but with the world.”

Prouty cautioned that while AI is becoming a gamechanger, not all those changes should be welcomed.

“Greatness is the beauty of creation, of a process, a pursuit. There’s a false perfection in quickly gaining an answer from AI, one that viciously murders the depth of a creative process,” he

said. “If we had chosen to walk into Mt. Abe as freshmen and used AI in order to spit out an entire four years’ worth of high school, to then convince someone into handing us a diploma, we would’ve lost the depths of what can be gained in learning, the depths of what our diplomas represent.”

He drew upon the words of 19th-century author Herman Melville, of “Moby Dick” fame, to further make his point: “It’s better to fail originally than succeed in imitation.”

Extending Melville’s thesis to 21st-century high school graduates, Prouty reasoned that “Without the process of learning, the product gained is hollow. The product of our past four years isn’t the thin pieces of paper we receive in a few moments; it’s the experiences that thicken them with life.”

Sweeping technological changes like AI should make 2026 graduates more protective of, and nostalgic for, their pre-AI experiences, according to Prouty.

“Life circles us back to understanding grief. The loss of something. The loss of a simpler time before AI. The loss of our certainty in entering Mt. Abe every week,” he said.

The class of ’26 should take solace in collective memories built at the MAUHS campus in Bristol, according to Prouty.

“We’re not losing this place. The building will still be here... well until it erodes off the bank, but let’s not think about that,” he joked about the structure’s perch near the lip of a defunct gravel pit. “In graduating, we might be losing the impermanent spark that breathed life into the building’s walls, with our class moving elsewhere, but that doesn’t mean we lose our stories. The building will forever be solidified in our experiences, and our experiences will forever be solidified in its brick — fortified by our understanding of what it means to pursue something.”

Guest speaker Lisa Grzyb, an MAUHS English teacher, used Vermont’s topography and some of her own parenting experiences to reassure and encourage the new graduates about how far they had come, and how it always helps to view challenges from a mountain peak.

“When my own kids were little, and they would fall down, the first thing they would do is jump up and call out ‘I’m OK’... Like even if they weren’t, and sometimes when they were in the very act of falling, they’d be like, ‘I’m good!’” Grzyb recalled. “It went against my instincts as a parent to stand by and believe my little ones that they were and would be OK without my help. The image of them reassuring me that they are OK has echoed through the years as they have taken successively

bigger steps towards greater independence. But the kids are OK — in fact, these young adults are amazing.”

Grzyb marveled at the amount of knowledge the 2026 graduates had already accumulated during their young lives, from knowing how to dissect a diesel engine and diagnose its failures to writing lyrical vignettes.

“You all have made me laugh so hard and have moved me to tears with the power of your stories. And I am so grateful to all of you for that; you have helped fill my life and the lives of everyone present,” she told the graduates, seated on both sides of the commencement stage.

While she knows not all of this year’s graduates would remain in the 5-Town area, Grzyb said MAUHS would forever be an important part of the new graduates’ lives.

“Take this space, graduates, these valleys among the mountains, and fill them with memories made with those you love, and those you will come to love,” she said.

“When you find or create a new space where you belong, it will feel like an electric sunset, like a solar eclipse. You have and will continue to change — more rapidly than the mountains around us, and with no less significance. And the impact of your life will resonate through this valley. Look to the mountains in your life as a touchstone for what remains constant as a landmark to determine how far you’ve come and, if needed, where to return.”

Mount Abe Principal Shannon Warden commended the graduates for the many ways they showed heart during their MAUHS careers.

It began with using “HEART” as an acronym to define a successful student: Here, Engaged, Appropriate, Responsible and Timely. But she lauded the class of ’26 for showing heart behind the utilitarian acronym and the heart beating in their chests. She referred specifically to “the heart that represents compassion, empathy, joy, your morals, and gauge of character — who you genuinely are when no one is watching.”

She urged the graduating seniors to “have the heart” to stand up for what’s right, to support others when they’re struggling, to persevere when things get tough, to have the humility to ask for help when they need it, and to celebrate others’ successes.

“We are so proud of all you’ve achieved and the great things you will go out and do,” Warden said. “Continue to demonstrate HEART as it has and will serve you well. But most importantly, continue to lead your lives with heart.”

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Photos by Buzz Kuhns



Teacher Lisa Grzyb



School board member Kristen Ninneman hugs her daughter Gretchen Toy.



Charlie Prouty



Rep. Sheldon

(Continued from Page 1A)
 trapeze bar that will lift her out of politics and back into an arena where she'll focus on consulting, environmental education and writing.

Montpelier is quite the spectacle, but lawmakers are increasingly operating without a metaphorical net as Washington D.C.-style politics creep into a legislative process that used to observe unwritten rules of engagement.

"We have a practice the major parties have abided by for more than 200 years, to get the minority voices heard," Sheldon said during a recent interview with the *Independent*. "One of those ways is by separating committee work from the floor, having committee work being focused on good policy. That got (derailed) in my committee this year, and I'm sad for that."

Sheldon's House Environment Committee indeed took its turn in Montpelier's legislative meat grinder this year, as have panels focusing on education reform and budgeting. House Environment received blowback on provisions of [Act 181](#) that included a "road rule" that would trigger Act 250 review with construction of a

road when the length of any single road is greater than 800 feet, or the length of all roads and any associated driveways in combination is greater than 2,000 feet; and a similar Act 250 review for any development in (Tier 3) land areas of "critical natural resources," which might include headwater streams, habitat connectors and forest blocks.

The Legislature — following public outcry — ultimately repealed those two provisions of the 2024 law, which Sheldon's panel played a major role in shaping.

Sheldon said much care and research went into all provisions of Act 181. But she also acknowledged this year's call for amendments to the two provisions to the law.

"My decision to step back on (the road rule and Tier 3), I stand by them," she said. "It could have been handled way differently, but in the moment, we did what we needed to do."

But Sheldon continues to have misgivings in the manner in which Act 181 was rolled out.

"(Gov. Phil Scott) was always using 'scary' maps, and that continued with the Land Use Review Board," she said of the



REP. AMY SHELDON, D-Middlebury, won't seek reelection after a 12-year run representing the Addison-1 district in the Vermont House.

Independent photo/John S. McCright

panel that administers Act 250, Vermont's land use law. "When we revisited the statute, we told them not to do that. We said, 'Make a recommendation to the Legislature for how (the Agency

of Natural Resources) should map these resources,' and they went directly to the public — almost bypassing the stakeholder group — and brought them scary maps, on purpose."

Suddenly, sewing public mistrust in Act 181 became an early political wedge issue for the 2026 midterm elections, according to Sheldon.

She said she received numerous anti-Act 181 emails during the 2026 session, though none came from her Middlebury constituents. The most vocal — and sometimes caustic — of the emails came from other parts of the state or from out of state, according to Sheldon.

She pointed to "Americans

for Prosperity (AFP)" — an out-of-state political action group — as having taken a lead role in opposing Act 181, as it did on Act 18, the so-called "Clean Heat Standard" of 2023.

The group was founded in 2004 as a conservative/libertarian advocacy group, funded by the Koch family. It is credited with supporting the Tea Party movement during the Obama presidency and for opposing effort to raise the federal minimum wage, among other things.

Sheldon is concerned the statewide media isn't shedding more light on the growing lobbying efforts of outside-of-Vermont PACs like AFP. The social media trolling was at times intense. It's a situation that made some lawmakers reluctant — and sometimes fearful — of engaging with folks online.

"I only heard from a couple of people with very thoughtful input on the 181 pushback, and at the time I didn't respond because you don't know who they are or what they're going to do with (the feedback)," Sheldon said. "You sort of lose trust, and that's a big challenge for politicians. When you're (in Montpelier), it feels like everything we do is livestreamed in real time, and now people know where I live. And I don't know anything about any of those folks — and they can hide."

Was the Act 181 acrimony the tipping point in Sheldon's decision not to run? She says it wasn't, and she had her 2026 nomination papers — complete with signatures — ready to file just a week before the May 28 deadline for major party candidates.

Ultimately, it was the changing political dynamics in the Statehouse and her desire to advocate for the environment in other ways that prompted her to take a pass on a seventh term.

"I've done more than I ever thought I could have. I've learned things I didn't know about. My world has expanded in many beautiful ways," she said of her 12 years in the House.

Sheldon, after being elected, said she'd hoped to serve for 10 years.

"These last two years really were the icing on the cake, if you will," she said. "I wanted to make sure I didn't have any regrets when I left. I feel quite happy with the way things have worked."

First-time candidate Mike Roy, a Middlebury Democrat, will run alongside incumbent Rep. Robin Scheu, D-Middlebury, in the two-seat district. There are no Republicans in the running.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sheldon's proud of what she's

been able to accomplish during her tenure — particularly as it relates to Act 250, enacted in 1970 when Vermont was undergoing significant development pressure. The law provides a "public, quasi-judicial process for reviewing and managing the environmental, social and fiscal consequences of major subdivisions and developments in Vermont. It ensures that larger developments complement Vermont's unique landscape, economy, and community needs," according to the state's Act 250 webpage.

Sheldon's appreciation of Act 250 extends to its chief architect, the late state Sen. Art Gibb, D-Weybridge.

"He was one of my inspirations back in the day," Sheldon said, noting they both served together with the Middlebury Area Land Trust during the 1980s.

"(Gibb's) portrait was in the legislative lounge (in the Statehouse) for many years, as I was working (on Act 250 legislation). I would sit near his portrait at times and 'confer' with him," she said with a smile.

She also did a lot of networking with colleagues and a cross-section of business/environmental stakeholders to craft updates to Act 250. For example, the Legislature in 2024 created (through Act 181) a professional, five-member Land Use Review Board to modernize and administer Act 250. This professional panel replaced the former part-time, citizen-led Natural Resources Board.

Lawmakers also recently added an Act 250 criterion that requires that development not result in undue adverse impact on forest blocks and habitat connectors. That criterion (8c) takes effect this coming Dec. 31.

Sheldon is proud of both the Land Use Review Board and 8c changes to Act 250 and believes they'll serve the state well for generations of Vermonters. She acknowledged the need to rapidly grow the state's housing stock, but believes it can be done without making a casualty of the state's top calling card.

"A healthy environment is foundational to the future success of humanity," she said. "We're missing that — even in the dialogue that's occurring in Vermont. It barely gets press coverage. We can have a thriving technical, evolving human economy as well as a thriving, larger environment that supports all species. There's no vision that I'm seeing that's bringing that together. I hope, to the best of my ability, to articulate that and inspire."

In addition to the Act 250 changes, Sheldon is proud of work her committee did in:

- "Getting biodiversity included in statute as an important piece of the vision for the state of Vermont."
- Elevating Vermont conservation designing, in that it's now required in official town plans to design for forest blocks and habitat connectors.

• Prohibiting wanton waste when it comes to wildlife. In other words, codifying in state law that "If you take an animal, you need to be intending to use it," Sheldon said.

Any disappointments?
 "How Act 181 was handled," she said. "I'm not disappointed that we tried, because I think these incremental changes in the environment are what's adding to very expensive fixes later on — from water and air pollution to fragmented landscapes. We need, as a species, to figure out how to avoid the 'death by 1,000 cuts' to our shared resources that we all value and need," Sheldon said.

While Amy Sheldon will become less of a presence in state politics, you'll still see her around — riding her bike and ratcheting up her work with students on planned use, conservation, and other natural resources principles, in a way that will encourage the next generation of environmental stewards.

She'll become more active as a consulting natural resource planner in her solo business, Landslide Natural Resource Planning Inc.

You might also see Sheldon's name at your local bookstore in the near future.

"I have an outline for a book I've been working on for at least 10 years. I hope to get that out in the world and bring it to the next generation," she said. "We've been graduating environmental studies majors from colleges in Vermont since the 1960s. But I don't think we've provided a vision to them for carrying that forward after graduation. That's really what I want to work on."

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RUTLAND NORTHEAST
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Social media

(Continued from Page 1A)
 the show, and designed the set and costumes, with sixth-graders taking the lead. The students' primary teacher Laurindo Da Costa, music teacher Carina Ellis, and school nurse Cat Mannigan all helped direct and manage the show.

The musical followed Sam, played by Lincoln Ratta, a young boy who recently downloaded social media apps and starts getting addicted, much to the chagrin of his best friend Wesley, played by Caleb Smith. Wesley wants to spend time with his friend, playing outside and biking like they used to, but Sam is too engrossed in his tablet to hang out.

Sam drifts farther away when "Meda," the tech company that owns apps like "Instagreat," wants Sam to test out their new app, "Holo-Friend," featuring a hologram friend who scrapes user data for information about them. Sam's energetic Holo-friend Gabby, played by Sophie Rossier, finds out Sam likes biking and suggests they watch videos of biking instead of

Sam actually going outside for a ride with Wesley, who invited him.

Sam's sister Lux, played by Juniper Bates, is one of four new interns at Meda, where she becomes suspicious about the company's intentions, especially after learning that Holo-friend is designed to get people like her brother addicted. Lux's fellow interns aren't as convinced but evidence continues to pile up that the CEO of the company is trying to get — and keep — users addicted.

In a dramatic moment, Sam pushes Wesley to the ground after Wesley and a group of friends confronted Sam about growing distant and only ever spending time with Holo Gabby. The Meda team, including the CEO, played by Theo Moreau, and his assistant Jerry, played by Jasper Olstad, celebrates the early success of their new app and sing the song, "You'll Never Be Lonely Again." An ominous chorus of "You'll never be lonely again with your AI hologram friend" excites Holo-Gabby, who enthusiastically dances along.

Eventually, Sam's friends and Lux reach a breaking point and decide separately to sabotage the Holo-friend launch party. As journalists ask the CEO about Holo-friend, Lux plays a recording of him and Jerry singing that people will "spend every waking moment with their holo friend" and they'll "make so much money, will have too much to spend." After, Sam's friends come to the launch announcing that Meda is making money off our attention and only wants to get people addicted.

Sam realizes the truth about Meda and apologizes to his friends, telling Wesley that they can go biking again (but only if they stop for a creemee on the way). The whole cast comes to stand in front of the stage, holding hands and singing "Real conversation, face to face, real connection cannot be replaced."

THE BACKSTORY

Real communication and connection are what students gain from writing screenplays like this one, said Kevin Commins, a Weybridge screenwriter and producer who gave the students guidance on the script they wrote.

"The writing skills focus in your mind, they teach you how to build coherent thought," Commins said. "To write, you have to sit down and you have to figure out what it is that you want to say. It's beginning to be a lost art and it's unfortunate because along with it, it teaches concentration. It teaches communication, which is the essence of a human being."

Throughout his career in Los Angeles and Vermont, Commins had never worked with children on screenwriting before and was impressed with the students' script and how they worked together. He said he played a minor role in developing the script but tried to give them tips as needed.

Clint Bierman, the lead guitarist for the Vermont band The Grift, also helped out by guiding students through writing four original songs for the show, using their lyrics and teaching them about tempo, genre and mood. Bierman then recorded the songs for use in the production.

When teachers Da Costa and Ellis originally brought up the impacts of social media to their class, they said students didn't view it as a major issue because many of them don't have a cell phone or use social media. But after reading "The Amazing Generation," a young readers edition of the book "The Anxious Generation," students started to see how much of a problem social media addiction is nationwide.

They were shocked to learn that the average American teen spends five hours a day on social media. When Olstad saw the statistics, he



WESLEY'S FRIEND, played by Hailey Brown, helps Wesley, played by Caleb Smith, up after Sam shoves him in the park during a rehearsal of the Lincoln Community School musical last week. Wesley and his friends had been trying to spend time with Sam and confront him about all the time he was spending with his "holo-friend" Gabby.

Independent photo/Steve James



LINCOLN STUDENT SOPHIE ROSSIER plays "Gabby," an artificial intelligence-created "Holo-friend" created by Meda in the school play.

Independent photo/Steve James

was shocked.

"At first I wondered, is that actually true?" he said in an interview before during rehearsals.

Statistics were a large part of the book, but they weren't meant to scare students, the teachers said.

"When we read the book and we looked at the data, I think the kids were able to come to the conclusion themselves that this is something that's concerning for kids in their age group and the age group that they're moving into over the next couple of years nationwide," Da Costa said.

"It's important to note that the book is really informative about what the dangers of tech can be, but it is meant to be information without shame. It's not trying to get kids to not engage with devices or tech at all, but instead to be smart consumers of that," Ellis added.

That includes understanding the incentives that social media and tech companies have to keep users online, and how addictive the platforms can be, topics that the students wanted to highlight in the

musical. After reading the book, students began writing narrative pieces on the topic, and later some took the initiative to combine them into a script.

After this whole experience, many Lincoln students said they will continue to stay away from social media. One student said his brother scrolls for an hour of Instagram reels every day, and he tries to tell him about the harm. Another student asked her parents about their own screen use.

"My parents were surprised when I asked them how much time they spent on screens, and my mom said two hours per day," Bates said. "That adds up to one month every year. Even two hours a day is still a lot."

Ellis said she feels the students have a good grasp on the impacts of screens and social media, and she hoped the audience comes away with the same message.

"Even though I was aware of some of this before we dove in with the kids, I myself am definitely thinking about my technology use

in a different way these days," Ellis said. "We want all the kids in our community to hear this message, but really our audience is all the adults and parents too and we're hoping for them to hear this message."

According to Ellis and Da Costa, the audience of around 100 did resonate with the message of the play. There was "laughter sprinkled throughout, audible gasps at real-life statistics, and applause and hollers when characters decided to make a stand," Ellis said of the performances and "a lot of misty-eyed adults" in the room when students held hands singing "real connection cannot be replaced."

Many students in the play said they wouldn't want to have a hologram friend like Sam did, with one saying he felt a "holo-friend" was less appealing than social media and he wouldn't ever want one. Bates agreed.

"What's it going to do? It can't pick anything up, it can't go biking with you," Bates said. "It's kind of there to just convince you to stay on social media."

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Pictured (L to R): Ben Fuller, Gretchen Kellogg, Wendy Hunt, Susan Hayes, Kelley Knight, Tammy Leno, Brooke Zeno, Missy Clifford, Heather Barnard, Catherine Bressette

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Monkton teen wins land steward award

MONTPELIER/MONKTON — The Vermont Land Trust (VLT) last week recognized Hailey Chase of Monkton with a Land Steward Award, along with a check for \$500. Eight other students across the state also received awards.

"We applaud Hailey and the other winners for their achievements," said Tracy Zschau, president and CEO of VLT. "These students are dedicated to sustainable land stewardship, from working with livestock to growing food and caring for forests and trees. They care deeply about Vermont's working lands and apply their learning mind-set to ensure our working lands remain vibrant for future generations."

This is the 22nd year of VLT's Land Steward Awards. Since 2005, the land trust has recognized outstanding high-school juniors and seniors who are dedicated to agriculture and forestry. Instructors from Vermont's farming, forestry, and natural resources programs can nominate students for the award each spring.

Graduating senior Hailey Chase of Monkton, VT, was nominated by Aaron Townshend, her Natural Resources Management instructor at Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury.

"Hailey frequently exceeds

expectations," Townshend said. "She is a student of the natural world, fluent in the scientific process, and passionate about agriculture education."

Chase has received several "Outstanding Student" awards for her academic work and been nominated to the National Technical Honor Society. She is active in FFA at both the local and state levels, where she has served in top-tier leadership roles, competed in agricultural career development

"They care deeply about Vermont's working lands and apply their learning mind-set to ensure our working lands remain vibrant for future generations."

— Tracy Zschau

events, and taken the initiative to launch new programs.

Chase also works on the family homestead in Monkton. She cares

for the dairy cows, chickens, and goats, and is also involved in maple sugaring.

Chase plans to study natural resource management at Paul Smith's College and use her degree to educate future land stewards.

"I enjoy working in land stewardship because I believe everything we do circles back to the land we live on," said Chase. "I hope to become an agriculture teacher, to teach the youth of tomorrow about our lands."

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YOUR TOWN - YOUR CARE

Vergennes battery

(Continued from Page 1A)

Public Utility Commission (PUC) and if it will definitely not pursue a project at 99 Pantan Road, the spokesperson said, “unfortunately, that’s all I can share right now.”

When asked if Lightshift had withdrawn its 45-day notice, or terminated or paused its project in any official way with the PUC, a representative explained, “an advance submission filing can remain open in our system until the expiration of the valid period for the type of case it is, or when a petition for the project is filed,” and noted Lightshift’s expires on December 17 of this year. They added, “if a petition for the project is not filed by that date, the advance submission will automatically close.” Said petition, which Lightshift previously said it hoped to file for before the end of the year, would kickstart the PUC’s regulatory role.

While the 4.99-megawatt, five-shipping-container-sized facility could reduce electric bills for Vergennes residents and Vermonters, improve delivery to homes and businesses, hasten integration of renewable energy on the grid and contribute significantly to the city’s grand list, it’s a project that’s generated frustration, anger and fear.

Concerns about the possibility of a fire at the facility and opposition to the project, which were catalyzed in December when the company filed the 45-day notice letter with the PUC — the body that regulates such projects — were front and center during a June 3 informational session. Roughly 35 people attended in person, with others tuned in via Zoom.

The meeting was marked by interruptions from attendees, and visible and audible frustration from the audience and panelists.

Panelists — Lightshift Managing Partner and Co-Founder, Michael Herbert, Chief Technology Officer, Joe Leavitt, and Director of Market Development, Laura Coriell, plus cofounding principal of Energy Safety Response Group,

Paul Rogers — spent a significant portion of the more than two-hour meeting discussing safety and trying to reassure residents.

Panelists said the systems are safe and cited rigorous testing of the technology, which is designed to prevent fires from spreading from unit to unit and features around-the-clock-remote-monitoring. The batteries will automatically shut down if that connection is lost. Additionally, Rogers, who has a quarter-century of experience as a New York City firefighter, claimed a fire would be less likely to occur than an airplane crash.

A professor in the electrical engineering department at the University of Vermont previously compared the danger posed by BESS to gas stations.

If a fire did occur, the company asserted the toxins released are no worse than during a house fire.

What is different is how first responders address the flames. The protocol is to monitor them until they die out.

Vergennes Fire Chief David DiBiase met with Lightshift and previously gave the project his seal of approval from a safety perspective. He reasserted his comfortability in a public statement dated June 3 that was distributed at the informational session.

“From where we sit, VFD has no safety objections to this project. Our operational familiarity with this corridor informs our view that the risk profile here is consistent with, and in our judgement no greater than, other facilities already operating in close proximity to residential areas in this part of the city,” the statement reads.

“We are not in a position to weigh in on zoning, and we won’t. But within our lane, we are comfortable with what we have seen.”

During the meeting, one of the resounding themes was that attendees were particularly concerned with the proposed location. Though the 99 Pantan Road parcel Lightshift has been eyeing is industrially zoned, it

abuts land that is zoned as medium density residential.

Among those who have taken issue with the project are three would-be neighbors: Rebecca Chauvin, owner of WOWTOYZ, the owners of the Strong House Inn, and Waterbury resident Carrie Hathaway, who owns a farmhouse near the site and plans to build five homes that would neighbor the battery facility.

Following the meeting, Herbert told an *Independent* reporter, “We have explored a lot of alternative sites, like I said, this site checked all of our boxes for a good site for one of our projects.”

He added, “We’re always open to talking to landowners about sites for our projects, we’ve done that a lot in Vergennes, in the surrounding county, in the state of Vermont. I think it’s not as easy as some would make it seem to find a good site for these kinds of projects, and so, I think we believe in the criteria of this site being good for energy storage, and we’re open to talking about other locations. I wouldn’t necessarily say alternative locations, but we’re always open to that conversation as developers of these projects.”

Though residents were concerned with the proximity of residences and businesses, Lightshift has pursued a BESS project next to an elementary school in Groton, Mass.

“We completed a unique 3 (megawatt) battery storage system that combines a peak shaving application with a dedicated microgrid providing backup power to a local school. This innovative project highlights how energy storage can simultaneously provide critical backup power, community savings and grid reliability,” according to the company’s website.

Rogers told attendees “they’re everywhere already.”

Even in New York City’s tightly packed skyscrapers.

“When we put them outside, we’re like, we’re not worried,” he said.

“We were more concerned about putting them in the high-rise building. That was what our goal was when we first looked at these things.”

YEARS IN THE MAKING

While Lightshift introduced the project to the Vergennes City Council during a meeting last October, Lightshift’s interest in the Little City long predates that. The company has been working on a Vergennes project for five years and approached Green Mountain Power three years ago.

“The company filed an interconnection request in 2023,” according to a GMP spokesperson. “The PUC approves or disapproves projects, and if a project in a utilities service area gets regulatory approval the utility is required to connect it to the grid.”

City Manager Ron Redmond said he invited Green Mountain Power to attend the June 3 meeting, but the electricity utility declined, he said.

When asked what makes Vergennes worth five years of research, Herbert said, “It is an area within the state of Vermont that has very high penetration of solar generation. It has, if you look at the solar hosting map, Green Mountain Power, all the lines are bright red, the substation is overloaded, the lines are overloaded. And building projects like this is something that can relieve that constraint and do it much more cost effectively than expanding the substation or adding additional distribution lines, so it’s a very good site on those grounds.”

He added, “It kind of needs to be connected to that substation or one of the lines, like very close to that substation to be able to offer those types of benefits to the power group.”

During the meeting, an attendee asked how much the company would profit off of the project, to which Herbert said it was too early in the process to have an estimate.

“Because we don’t know how much the project’s going to cost, because we haven’t bought the equipment yet, we haven’t signed a contract with any utility yet,” he said during the meeting.

When asked by an *Independent* reporter after the meeting what similarly sized projects have generated, he said, “I don’t have a number off the top of my head that I would be comfortable sharing.”

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)

that their top pick would be in attendance at commencement at 6 p.m. in the school gym — U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders will give a graduation address. Also delivering remarks will be Principal Jody Chamberlin and four student speakers: Chance Koenig, Kyan Barcomb, Phoebe Raphael and Gina LeBeau. Special music is also planned; no word if Bernie will singalong.

Two other prominent Vermont politicians will be in Vergennes next Wednesday, June 17. Democratic gubernatorial candidates Amanda Janoo and Aly Richards will speak at a candidates forum at the Vergennes Opera House that day at 6-7:30 p.m. You can register for the event online at the Vermont Conservation Voters website.

Attention Bristol residents: The Lawrence Memorial Library on June 22 will pivot to a pop-up location in Bristol’s industrial park to temporarily provide services during the LML’s ongoing renovation at 40 North St. As part of that renovation, workers found what LML Librarian Katie Male-Riordan described as “legacy building materials” on the first floor of the building that included asbestos in the wall plaster and PCBs in carpeting adhesive. “The safety of our staff, patrons and community

is our top priority, and we are committed to ensuring all remediation meets the required standards before reopening,” Male-Riordan wrote in a recent email to the community. The new LML pop-up location will be 74 Munsill Ave., Suite 100 in the BristolWorks complex. That location will provide reading materials including interlibrary loan, public computer access and printing, meeting space and library programming. Pop-up hours will be Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tuesday & Thursday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Saturday, 10a.m.-2 p.m. A book drop will be available at the 74 Munsill Ave. location beginning this week and will be accessible 24/7. “We are grateful to Kevin Harper and BristolWorks for partnering with us to keep library services accessible to our community,” Male-Riordan said.

Sunday, June 14, volunteers are invited to help spruce up the maintain paths at Spirit In Nature off Goshen Road in Ripton. Helpers are asked to gather at 12:30 p.m. and work until around 2:30 p.m. Bring work gloves, loppers, hand saws, chain saws, pry bars and clippers. The crew will be removing some debris, trimming back some older paths, and clearing ground on some rerouted paths. While a couple of tasks take skills, it will mostly be (See SPiN, Page 18A)



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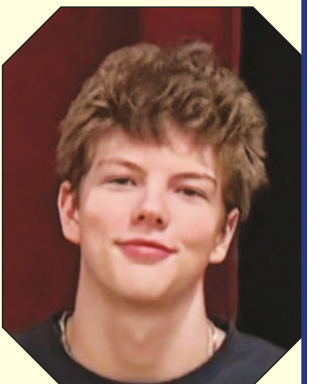
Nino’s celebrates **Noah Buschmann’s** graduation from Mount Abe. After a great two years at Nino’s, Noah is moving on to work with kids at summer camp in the Adirondacks and chase more mountain peaks.

Noah enjoys nature, rock climbing, skateboarding and music. He is a walking index of music and musicians. His extensive knowledge of audio equipment solved many problems at Nino’s. Noah notices what people are playing and often says, “Oh, you like that - check this out...” It is common to hear “Noah turned me onto this” whether it is Alice in Chains or Bill Withers. No doubt his listening skills contributed to his exceptional emotional intelligence.



Noah is curious and empathetic. Whether it is pizza, or people, he wants to understand why he is getting a specific outcome. It makes him a great leader and a kind human being.

When I asked Noah if it bothers him that everyone asks him, “What’s next after graduation?” he replied, “No, because every conversation teaches me something.” Noah, we will miss you. You have taught us all so much and contributed to a beautiful vibe at Nino’s. It has been fun witnessing you grow into a respected leader and kind teacher. You are a blessing, Noah. Everything is better when you are around.



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Mitchell

(Continued from Page 1A)

couldn't ask for a better cast to bring him up to speed: MNFF Artistic Director and Co-Founder Jay Craven, Co-Founder Lloyd Komesar and Associate Producer Annika Ellis.

Let's be clear; Mitchell has considerable experience with film festivals — mainly when it comes to accepting awards. His latest offering, "Yo! Love is a Rebellious Bird," won the Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Achievement at this past February's Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany.

"I started to talk to some of the people who run Berlinale, picking their brains," he told the *Independent*.

He liked what he heard and was already very familiar with MNFF, as a longtime supporter and audience member.

"I came back and decided to apply for the (managing producer) job," Mitchell, a Middlebury College graduate, said. "I'd been kind of looking for a pivot for a while. I love what I do, but the industry is changing and I'm tired of traveling."

Mitchell and his wife, Lisa, have long been invested in Middlebury's arts scene. The couple co-founded Middlebury Underground, a 501(c)(3) non-profit multidisciplinary arts organization dedicated to

bringing diverse cross-sections of the community together through unique shared experiences. Known as MUD, the organization's flagship event, Foodaroo, welcomes thousands of people each year, and this summer will be the gathering's 11th season.

Lisa Mitchell is the executive and artistic director of Middlebury Town Hall Theater, which has been a key MNFF partner since the curtain first went up on the festival in 2014.

Festival organizers are confident Andy Mitchell has the demeanor and chops for his new role.

He's a five-time Emmy Award-winning filmmaker as a producer, director, writer and director of photography. His work appears on Netflix, National Geographic, Disney+, BBC and many other platforms. His credits include the global hits "Secrets of the Whales," "Penguin Town," and "Inside the Mind of a Dog."

He's found a lot of success and gained a ton of filmmaking experience during his 25 years in the film industry. But he'll never forget the challenges of earning his stripes.

"The fact that (MNFF) is about new filmmakers, that's what really pushed me," Mitchell said. "I want to help inspire the next generation."

Komesar retired from his MNFF producing role after the festival

hired Caitlin Boyle in 2024 as its first executive director. Boyle left that role last year, prompting the MNMFF board to search for a managing producer. Komesar, who has come out of "retirement" to help construct MNFF12, said he believes Mitchell is a perfect complement to the festival leadership team.

"I think we needed to focus more on maintaining the depth of our relationship with our community, which has made everything possible," Komesar said of the many donors, sponsors, volunteers, host families and other stakeholders who make MNFF jump off the screen.

"Everything has been built from the bedrock foundation of community support," he continued. "I think it was crucial that we address the importance of that community relationship with our next hire. Getting that right was very important. Having Andy join is totally organic. We're not searching for someone who would spend a lot of effort finding their way. We have someone who found his way with the community 20-plus years ago."

Mitchell's presence at the helm is bound to attract more established industry talent — and up-and-comers — to the festival, Komesar reasoned.

"If I were a filmmaker coming



ACCLAIMED MOVIEMAKER AND Middlebury resident Andy Mitchell has been hired as managing producer of the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival. The 12th MNFF will take place in downtown Middlebury this Aug. 26-30.

Independent file photo/Steve James

up here and I knew the managing producer was a five-time Emmy Award winner who has done work in all conditions, can speak to cinematography, directing, writing, producing, working with large organizations and independent filmmakers ... I'd be pretty happy knowing that if I had

a conversation with Andy Mitchell, I could learn a lot," Komesar said.

Mitchell is pleased with the "mentor" aspects of his new job.

"I've spent my career helping, nurturing, mentoring young filmmakers. That's a big part of my motivation for doing this," he said. "As a director, I have a lot to learn from Lloyd and Jay about running a festival, but I feel there's a lot of overlap as a director, where you make a shooting script and then you go out and hope for the best. If things go wrong, you problem solve in real time."

Festival board Co-Chairs Maggie Keith Gerakos and Alex Draper echoed Komesar's satisfaction

with Mitchell's hiring.

"In a very strong group of applicants, the breadth of Andy's professional experience and his deep involvement in the Middlebury community made him the obvious and exciting choice. We're thrilled," Draper said in a press release.

"We're all so excited to welcome Andy into this role as we head into MNFF12, and to usher in the next phase of this wonderful festival under his leadership," Keith Gerakos said. "We couldn't have asked for a better result of our search — the future is bright for MNFF."

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Spin

(Continued from Page 17A)

basic labor — and a great way to meet people as well as take care of a well-loved resource. Questions? Contact Laurie Cox at lmminercox@gmail.com.

The Bristol Libanus Lodge will host a breakfast on Sunday, June 14, from 7:30-10 a.m. to help offset the cost of battery-operated rescue tools for the Starksboro Fire Department. Breakfast — for only \$9 for adults and \$5 for young children — will include sausage, eggs, bacon, gravy and biscuits, home fries, pancakes, French toast, fruit salad, apple bread pudding and juices. The Libanus Lodge is located at the corner of Elm

and North Streets in Bristol. The battery-operated rescue tools cost approximately \$25,000, so financial donations would also be appreciated by Starksboro firefighters.

The Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department also has a benefit cooking. The department will hold its much-anticipated chicken barbecue on Sunday, June 14, from noon to 2 p.m. — or until the chicken runs out — at the department's headquarters off Route 30 in Cornwall. Eat in and visit with neighbors and your local emergency responders, or take your chicken dinner home to enjoy there. Full meals will cost \$15, and hot dogs are free.



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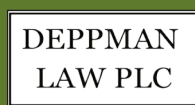


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SPORTS

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Title game on tap for Eagle nine

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

BRISTOL — Baseball is a superstitious sport. So it makes sense if Eagle baseball coach Jason Barnard is a little superstitious, too.

All spring he's been skirting around the question "does the team have any goals this season?" He's had six words on the tip of his tongue since the start. But on Tuesday, after his Mount Abraham Union High School baseball team defeated U-32, 10-1, in the Division II state semifinals, there was no more hesitation. He said it loud and proud.

"We want to win a championship!"

The No. 1 Eagles are 14-1-1 as they prepare for the Division II title game at the end of the week. The date and time were still to-be-determined as of Wednesday deadline. Also after deadline Wednesday, No. 3 Otter Valley Union High School played No. 2

Lyndon to determine who would join the primarily junior Eagles at Centennial Field in Burlington for the final game.

Luck truly had nothing to do with the June 9 victory over No.-5 seed U-32.

"These guys have really come together, and they got each other's backs."

— Coach Jason Barnard

have a deep bench and show a high baseball IQ.

"These guys have really come together, and they got each other's backs," Barnard said of what got his Eagles the win on Tuesday night. "They're fighting for a common goal. It's a team up and down the lineup."

As for what's gotten his team as far down the road as they could go he said, "It's really everything. It's

our chemistry with the team, it's our lineup, it's our pitching, it's our defense."

Base hits defined the semifinal against U-32, a team the Eagles had yet to see this season. All of the Eagles' 10 hits were singles.

A two-run single hit by senior Evan Corrigan got the Eagles on the board in the bottom of the first.

Mt. Abe benefited from a U-32 error in the outfield that gave two more runners the opportunity to dart home. Another Eagle got home on a passed ball.

While the Raiders got one back in the top of the fourth, another three Eagle runs were on the horizon. Mt. Abe got three more runners to stomp on home plate in the bottom of the fifth.

Mt. Abe finished the game with two more in the bottom of the sixth, bringing the final tally to 10-1.

Here's who had multiple hits for Mt. Abe:

- Cam Castillo went 2 for 4 with 4 RBIs
- Evan Corrigan went 1 for 3 with (See Eagles, Page 3B)



EAGLE SOPHOMORE CALVIN PECK watches closely to see if he should spring to second or dive back to first during a Division II semifinal game in Bristol on Tuesday, June 9. Mt. Abe beat U-32, 10-1. Independent photo/Sophia Keshmiri



SENIOR QUINN DORIA fights for a groundball during a Division I quarterfinal on Thursday, June 4, in Middlebury. The Tigers lost, 10-8, to Champlain Valley Union. Independent photo/Steve James

In upset, Tiger girls' lax ousted from playoffs

MIDDLEBURY — The No. 2 Tiger girls' lacrosse team is out of playoffs after a Thursday quarterfinal and going 11-1 in the regular season. The June 4 loss to No. 7 Champlain Valley Union, who Middlebury Union High School beat twice in tight games earlier this year, was just the team's second in 2026.

A trio of unanswered goals in the second quarter helped propel the Raiders to the Division I semifinal on Tuesday against No. 3 Burr and Burton.

In addition to ousting the Tigers, CVU is the only team this season to keep MUHS to fewer than 11 goals in a 2026 game.

The Thursday quarterfinal "was

not how we envisioned our season to end," Coach Caroline Wood said.

"The game itself was not our best, but we were still able to celebrate the small wins and positives. We played great defensively. We battled on the draw circle, and we had the honor of celebrating Isabel Quinn's 100th career goal as a junior!"

(See Ousted, Page 3B)



OTTER VALLEY JUNIOR Marek Heitmann slides home during a state quarterfinal against MUHS. Otter Valley won, 11-1, at their home field on Friday, June 5. Independent photo/Steve James

Otters overcome Tigers during state tournament

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

BRANDON — Otter Valley Union High School was onto the Division II baseball semifinal on Wednesday night after defeating the Middlebury Union High School nine, 11-1, in a quarterfinal game late last week. It ended in just six innings.

The No. 3 Otters played No. 2 seed Lyndon on Wednesday, June 10, after deadline. Otter Valley was 11-3-1 ahead of that semifinal game. Whoever won is due to play in the championships against Mount Abraham Union High School at the

end of the week.

The June 5 game against No. 6 Middlebury, which ended its season 8-6, began with the Tigers taking, and holding, a 1-0 lead thanks to a run driven in by senior co-captain Gabriel Velez. He went 2-for-3 in Brandon that night.

The Tigers held the one-run lead until the fourth inning, when the Otters went up, 2-1.

On the Otters' next ups, the team added another eight runs to the tally, giving themselves a 10-1 cushion. One final run in the sixth inning helped OV end the game then.

Otter Valley senior Jackson Howe pitched the entire game, striking out 11 Tiger batters. He allowed just four hits.

- Here are Otter stats:
- Senior Jacob Warrell, 3-for-4, 2 RBIs
 - Junior Max Potter, 1-for-4, 2 RBIs
 - Freshman Justin Hendee, 1-for-4, RBI
 - Sophomore Lucas Whitney, 1-for-2, RBI
 - Senior Dominyk Waite, 2-for-4
 - Junior Marek Heitman, 2-for-3 (See Otters, Page 1B)

MUHS freshman, two Mount Abe jumpers win state titles

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ADDISON COUNTY — A Middlebury Union High School freshman took first place on the track at the Division II state championships in Burlington last Friday, and two Mount Abraham Union High School athletes won titles in field events.

Tiger Josephine Ives completed

the girls' 1,500 meter race in four minutes, 55.73 seconds, a personal best time. She was almost two second ahead of a Lamoille junior in second and almost four second ahead of a U-32 sophomore in third.

The county had two other winners in competition at Burlington High School on June

5. Mount Abe junior Jackson LaMarche won the boys' pole vault with a height of 3.49 meters, and fellow Eagle junior Truman Sawyer captured the long jump title with a leap of 6.18 meters.

The Eagles proved dominant in the field, as they have all season. In addition to his long jump title, (See Track titles, Page 3B)



FRESHMAN QUIN DUBOIS launches himself over a hurdle during the boys' 110m state championship race in Burlington on Thursday. Dubois set two personal bests and finished eighth overall. Independent photo/Jing Williams

VUHS junior wins track title

By JING WILLIAMS

BURLINGTON — Vergennes Union High School track and field athletes set over 20 personal records, brought home multiple top-six ribbons and even won a state title at the Division III State Meet on Thursday, June 4, at Burlington High School.

Twenty-one Commodore athletes ran, hurdled and threw at the meet, setting a collective 21 personal bests across 12 running events and one throwing event despite the hot and sunny weather. As a team, the VUHS girls scored 17 points, tying with Fairfield for 10th place out of 20 teams. The Commodore boys earned 7 points and 14th place. White River Valley won both team titles with 116 points in girls' competition and 138 in boys'.

VUHS junior Isabelle Van Voorst won the D-III title in the girls' 400 meters, setting a personal best and a new school record, clocking in at 1:01.46. Seeded number one by

about a second, Van Voorst was neck and neck with Peyton Bliss of Peoples Academy until coming around the curve at 200 meters, where the Commodore co-captain pulled ahead and won the race by more than a second.

"Honestly, it felt like any other race," Van Voorst said. "I had to really focus on not putting too much pressure on myself, I'm just trying to go out and run my very best. It was a little scary until the final 50 meters, but then I felt pretty good."

Commodore senior Carter McGuire also placed in the 400m, earning fourth, dropping over two seconds from his personal best, and over three from his season best, coming in at 53.88 and definitively winning his heat. Also scoring individually, Lauren Hill finished sixth in the girls' 800m race, setting a personal best at 2:45.65.

McGuire was additionally part of the boys 4x400 meter relay team (See VUHS, Page 3B)

Tiger girls fall to Harwood

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — The No. 4 Middlebury Union High School girls' tennis team was ousted from playoffs in the semifinals by No. 1 seed Harwood, 5-2, on Friday. That round, played at Harwood, marked the third time the Highlanders defeated the Tigers this year.

"Hoping to tie the overall at two wins each, MUHS was overwhelmed by a deep Harwood team," Coach Dan Comar said of the June 5 matches.

The loss came two days after the 9-5 Tigers earned a 5-2 playoff win on Wednesday, June 3, over No. 5 Montpelier.

MUHS junior Stella Lenti, an exchange student from Italy, ended her school-year-long stay in Vermont with a 13-1 record in matches. "Her only loss came in (See Girls' tennis, Page 2B)

ScoreBOARD

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Softball

- 6/5 Missisquoi vs Mt. Abe.....10-7
- 6/5 Lake Region vs VUHS8-5

Baseball

- 6/3 Enosburg vs VUHS13-2
- 6/5 Mt. Abe vs Harwood12-4
- 6/5 OV vs MUHS.....11-1 (6 inn.)
- 6/9 Mt. Abe vs U-32.....10-1

Boys' Lax

- 6/5 Woodstock vs MUHS15-7
- 6/5 Milton vs MAV8-6

Girls' Lax

- 6/4 CVU vs MUHS10-8
- 6/5 MAV vs Hartford11-10
- 6/9 U-32 vs MAV16-13

Boys' Tennis

- 6/5 MUHS vs Brattleboro5-2
- 6/8 MUHS vs Burr & Burton5-2

Girls' Tennis

- 6/3 MUHS vs Montpelier5-2
- 6/5 Harwood vs MUHS5-2

Schedule

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Baseball

- (D-II Final at Centennial Field)
- 6/TBD Mt. Abe vs TBDTBD

Boys' Tennis

- (Final at St. Mike's)
- 6/11 MUHS vs Burlington..... 3:30 PM

When I grew up, I wanted to be Vic Johnson

As a kid, my goal was to be a baseball player when I grew up. Of course. Most of my friends had the same dream.

This was post-war baseball, after WW2, after the Yanks had saved the world from tyranny in Europe and the South Pacific, truly the National Pastime and passion.

Jackie Robinson and other Black pioneers, magnificent players — Willie Mays, Henry Aaron, Ernie Banks, Minnie Minoso, and others, changed the face and nature of the game.

The three best teams in baseball were in the same city, New York, until the Dodgers and Giants split for the Coast in '57 (though the Braves and Indians had their day in the sun).

The Yankees had elegant Joe DiMaggio, and we had truculent Ted Williams, a war hero.

Reality intruded on that dream of mine fairly quickly. I was never the best player on my teams in the

PAL (Police Athletic League) or at Lewiston (Maine) High School.

I had a backup plan. I would be a sports cartoonist.

I would be Vic Johnson.

Most days, my dad walked home from work at nearby Bates College, stopping at Ernie's Store to buy the Boston paper, first the *Herald*, later the *Globe*. I got the sports section when he was through with it.

Newspapers in those days had a resident sports artist who illustrated game accounts, heroes, and newsworthy stories, both local and national, in striking pen and ink drawings.

Boston had six major daily newspapers in the mid-1950s. The artist at the *Herald* was Vic Johnson.

Man, I loved his work. The *Globe* had Bob Coyne.

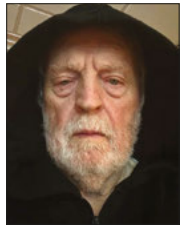
From the very beginning, I liked

to draw — and I liked to see my pictures up on the wall at school. When I was 11, I drew a picture of a Red Sox player at Spring Training in Florida and sent it off to Vic Johnson.

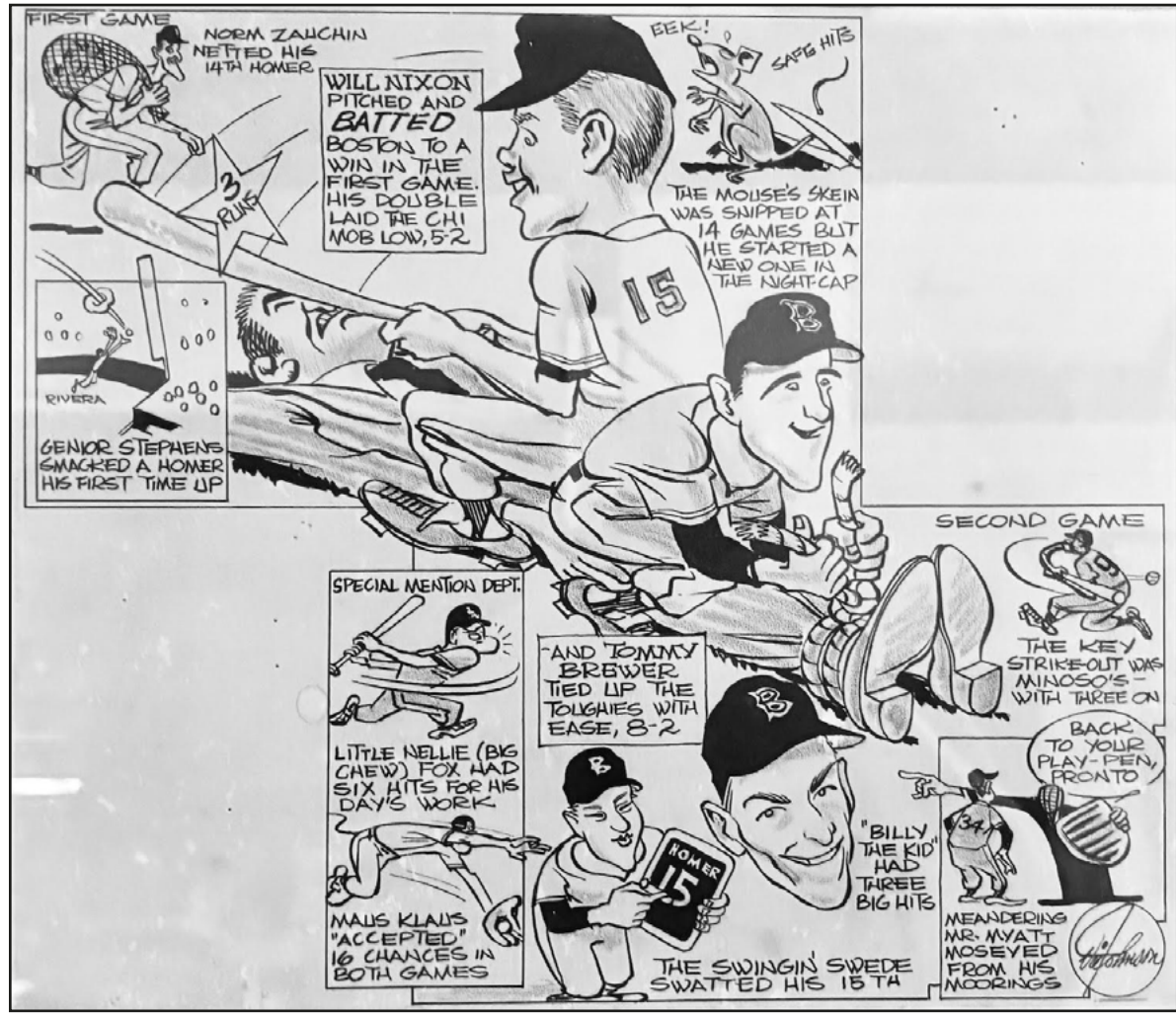
A couple weeks later, I received a lovely note from him, on *Herald* letterhead, dated April 5, 1956 (I still have it, yellowed and brittle).

"I want to thank you for sending me this drawing you made," he wrote, "and must say it is very good for an 11 year old boy. . . . Just to show my appreciation for your interest I am sending you one of my original cartoons."

The note was encased in a tube along with an approximately 13"x16" artistic rendering of a doubleheader sweep by the Red Sox over the Chicago White Sox on June 26, 1955. It was the actual



Sports (Mostly) **KARL LINDHOLM**



AN ORIGINAL CARTOON by Boston *Herald* cartoonist Vic Johnson, depicting the action in a doubleheader sweep by Red Sox over the White Sox on June 26, 1955. This was a gift to the columnist from Johnson himself 70 years ago.

drawing, in India ink on a sheet of heavyweight drawing paper, which appeared in the newspaper the next day.

The central image is of two ball players, Red Sox pitchers, subduing a Chicago mobster: one, Willard Nixon "pitched and BATTED Boston" to the win in the first game, and the other, Tommy Brewer "tied up the toughies with ease," to win game two.

Surrounding this diagonal central image are smaller depictions of the games' highlights, along with snappy, often alliterative prose: "Little Nellie (Big Chew) Fox had six hits"; "The swinging Swede (Jackie Jenson) swatted his 15th (homer)"; "Meandering Mister Myatt moseyed from his mooring" (that's White Sox third base coach George Myatt) and was thus ordered by the umpire: "Back to your playpen, pronto."

It's one of my favorite things, collected over a lifetime, a treasure. It has hung on the wall every place I have lived since I first had my own space.

As time went on, I continued to enjoy drawing and submitted cartoons to my high school newspaper and yearbook, and then in college at Middlebury, to the *Campus* newspaper.

It became a satisfying hobby. Somewhat like my earlier aspiration to be a ballplayer, reality imposed an awareness that my gifts were really not that special.

That's OK. I found teaching (and coaching), writing, working with young people allowed ample outlets for my creative impulses.

This Vic Johnson story has an interesting coda:

In the fall of 2015, I went to Cuba with a dozen or so other *Beisbol aficionados* with a group called Cuba Ball, led by EJ "Kit" Krieger. Though he grew up in Brooklyn, Kit has lived in Vancouver, B.C., Canada since 1969.

We called him *El Jefe*.

Kit has developed over time deep connections to Cuban baseball, visiting Cuba over 30 times, 20 trips with Cuba Ball delegations. It was a terrific experience for me. I told you all about it at the time! (reads the columns online at tinyurl.com/KarlInCuba.)

For many years, Kit organized an annual raffle among his



AN ORIGINAL CARTOON by Canadian artist Bob Krieger of Brett Millier, a "perfesser" at Middlebury College who taught a Canadian literature course at Middlebury (hence the Margaret Atwood novel in her glove). Brett worked at over 200 San Francisco Giants games from 1984-86 as the message board operator (Bob Brenly was her favorite Giants player).

Cubaballistas, 50 bucks a ticket, 100% of the money to benefit Cuban ex-ballplayers who were indigent. The prize of the raffle was an original cartoon, a caricature of the winners themselves on a baseball card format, drawn by Bob Krieger, Kit's brother.

For 32 years, Bob Krieger was the resident editorial and sports cartoonist for *The Province*, a major newspaper in Vancouver and British Columbia. His work is stunning and wickedly satirical.

I won that raffle in 2017 and was ecstatic. Bob wrote and asked for a couple pictures and a summary of my baseball experience. I asked if he would do a caricature of my wife Brett instead. It is so hard to find gifts for her on her birthday and holidays: this would be special.

Brett has a genuine baseball biography. She operated the message board at Candlestick Park

for the San Francisco Giants for three summers (over 200 games!) as her graduate school summer job before coming to Middlebury to teach American literature in 1986.

Bob depicts her in her Giants home uniform, a Stanford Cardinal patch on the sleeve, a book by Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood in her glove (she taught a Canadian literature course at Midd), and the stats of Bob Brenly, her favorite Giants player on the message board.

Brett and I live like rich folks, with original art on our walls by Vic Johnson and Bob Krieger.

Lucky us.

Karl Lindholm is the emeritus dean of advising and an assistant professor of American Studies (retired) at Middlebury College. He can be contacted at lindholm@middlebury.edu.

Tiger boys' tennis makes finals

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

MIDDLEBURY — The No. 4 Tiger boys' tennis team is championship-bound after upsetting their way to the Thursday finals. Middlebury Union High School defeated No. 1 Burr and Burton, 5-2, in Manchester on Monday.

"The Burr and Burton team played with heart and dignity. They were skilled tennis players and conducted themselves wonderfully. Their coach was delightful," MUHS Coach Ken Schoen said.

"The atmosphere was a highly positive one and the fans and teams conducted themselves with grace and dignity. Many of the matches could have gone either way. Quality play all the way."

Thursday's title matches will take place beginning at 3:30 p.m. at St. Michael's College in Colchester. Can the Tigers take down undefeated No. 2 Burlington

in the 2026 state champion matches on June 11?

"Winning the state championship is well within our team's ability to accomplish on Thursday," Schoen said. "These are two really good teams."

"However I am not concerned with winning or losing," he continued. "I am focused on helping our boys to maintain their focus on what is most important in competition ... My goal and our team's goal is to play well, to treat our opponents with dignity, and to maintain our grace and poise, win or lose. I already view these boys as champions."

Here's how individual matches went against Burr and Burton:

- No. 1 singles Charles Young (M) def. Liam Hershberg (B), 6-0, 6-1
- No. 2 singles Davis Johnson (B) def. Adrien Malhotra (M), 2-6, 7-5,

- 1-0 (10-5)

- No. 3 singles Spencer Copeland (M) def. Luke Bronstein (B), 6-2, 3-6, 1-0 (10-5)

- No. 4 singles Leo Swenton (M) def. Forrest Barnes (B), 6-4, 6-2

- No. 5 singles Lucca Pacheco (B) def. Xander Lu (M), 6-0, 6-3

- No. 1 doubles Nate Cook-Yoder and Nathan Stefani (M) def. KJ Nalampang and Cle Martini (B), 6-3, 6-3

- No. 2 doubles Arthur Calvi and Kirin Biancosino (M) def. Gavin Bronstein and Luke Miojek (B), 6-4, 6-2

Here's how the team did during their 5-2 victory on Friday, June 5, in the quarterfinal matches in Middlebury against No. 5 Brattleboro:

- No. 1 singles, Young (MUHS) def. Mark Richards (Brat) 6-0, 6-1
- No. 2 singles, Elias Frazer Olsen (Brat) def. Malhotra (MUHS) 6-2, 6-2

- No. 3 singles, Copeland (MUHS) def. Eli Welch (Brat) 6-4, 7-5
- No. 4 singles, Swenton (MUHS) def. Seamus Bald (Brat) 6-2, 7-5
- No. 5 singles Dash Mayse (Brat) def. Lu (MUHS) 7-5, 6-3

- No. 1 doubles Stefani and Cook-Yoder (MUHS) def. Hudson Smith and Logan Waite (Brat) 6-4, 6-0
- No. 2 doubles Calvi and Alex Andersson (MUHS) def. Zane Rizvi and Felix Hulme (Brat) 6-3, 6-3.

ADDISON COUNTY — Both local high school boys' lacrosse teams capped their seasons in the quarterfinal round.

The Division I Middlebury Union High School team faced Woodstock for a third time this season, and fell 15-7 on Friday, June 5, about an hour-and-a-half from their home field. The teams, seeded fifth and fourth respectively, had split a pair of regular season contests, with the Tigers coming out on top in the most

Season over for boys' lax

(See Boys' lax, Page 3B)

MAV girls' lax falls to U-32 in semifinals

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

BRISTOL — The No. 3 MAV girls' lacrosse game dropped their Division II semifinal to No. 2 U-32 after narrowly making it out of the quarterfinals with an 11-10 win over No. 6 Hartford late last week.

The Tuesday, June 9, semifinal ended the combined team of Mount Abraham and Vergennes Union high school athletes with a 9-6-1 record in a season that was chalk full of extremely close, competitive contests.

"We came into this game with the mindset that we would show up for one another and make U-32 work for a win, and we did just that," Coach Emiko Bennett said after the semifinal loss. Her Eagles

Softball season comes to a close in Addison County

blows being handed to them from Missisquoi.

That same day, VUHS (No. 6 in Division III) fell 8-5 to No. 3 Lake Region, bringing the Commodores' season record to 4-11.

Here are the stats from the Eagles' quarterfinal:

- Senior co-captain Gretchen Toy, 1-for-4, double, 3 RBIs
- Junior Emmy Rougier, 2-for-4, RBI

Girls' tennis

(Continued from Page 1B)

the first match of the year versus a Division I team," Comar noted.

"The other highlight was No. 2 Anna Wolosinski, finishing her four-year varsity tennis career with a third set tie break win 11-9," he added.

"With the season coming to an end and a host of young players returning next year, assistant coach Guy Magnano gave this advice, "Play a lot of tennis."

Here are the details from the Harwood matches:

- No. 1 singles Stella Lenti (M) def. Savannah Fulton (H), 6-3, 6-4
- No. 2 singles Anna Wolosinski (M) def. Ella Day Ore (H), 6-4,

- led, 10-7, at halftime.

"I am so beyond proud of how they showed up today and every day throughout this season."

Here are the game stats for MAV:

- Junior Thompson Davis, 4 goals, 1 assist, 3 draw controls
- Senior co-captain June Yates-Rusch, 3 goals, 11 draw controls
- Sophomore Olivia Sawyer, 3 goals, 1 assist, 5 draw controls
- Sophomore Callie Rule, 1 goal, 3 assists, 2 draw controls
- Freshman Delia Park, 1 goal
- Sophomore Mattea O'Bryan: 1 goal, 1 assist

Four days before that, on Friday, June 5, the Eagles hosted Hartford in Bristol, where the home team

won a nailbiter.

The Eagles had a 10-9 lead going into the fourth period, but about halfway into the final quarter, Hartford matched MAV.

Then Davis got the ball to Sawyer for the winning goal with just over three minutes left in the game.

Here are the Eagle game stats:

- Sawyer: 4 goals, 1 assist, 3 draw controls
- Yates-Rusch, 3 goals, 1 assist, 3 draw controls
- Rule, 3 goals, 2 assists, 1 caused turnover
- Davis, 1 goal, 4 assists, 5 draw controls
- Senior co-captain Scout Jacobson, 2 caused turnovers

Here are the stats from the Commodores' quarterfinal:

- Senior co-captain Morgan Larocque, 1-for-4, RBI
- Junior Reagan LaFreniere, 1-for-2, RBI
- Senior co-captain Brooke Barnard, 1-for-3, RBI

Here are the stats from the Commodores' quarterfinal:

- Freshman Ayla Kittredge, 2-for-4, double
- Junior Ryenn Wissel, 2-for-4, 2B

- def. Allegra Muller (Mplr) 6-4, 4-6, 10-5
- No. 2 singles Wolosinski (MUHS) def. Emily Tringe (Mplr) 6-4, 6-4
- No. 3 singles Alex Cook (Mplr) def. Luksch (MUHS) 3-6, 7-5, 10-5
- No. 4 singles Fiona Murphy (Mplr) def. Taylor (MUHS) 6-0, 6-2
- No. 5 singles Khan (MUHS) def. Akari Damon (Mplr) 6-3, 6-4
- No. 1 doubles Alex Garcia/Vicky Garci (MUHS) def. Celeste Hierlihy/Ada Clar (Mplr) 6-2, 6-2
- No. 2 doubles Nicolai/Porter (MUHS) def. Lillian Fitch/Regan Walke (Mplr) 6-3, 6-3

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Eagles

(Continued from Page 1B)

2 RBIs
 • Abe Ready went 2 for 3 with 1 run scored
 • Stefan Johnson scored 3 runs.
 In addition to getting the game started for the Eagles on offense, Corrigan led the defense from the mound.
 “Evan came in, shut everything down, really got us going in the first,” junior Cam Castillo said after the game.
 A sole hit and unearned run were all Corrigan allowed the Raiders in the four innings he pitched.
 Also in that time, Corrigan struck out five Raiders — three of those at the very beginning of the game.
 He closed the top of the first with three consecutive strikeouts and got a fourth in the top of the second.

Corrigan’s teammates closed that round on defense with a double play strung together by his infielders. Shortstop Irie Mazur recovered a ground ball that he threw to third baseman Abraham Ready. He sent the ball to first, for the third out.
 Juniors Jackson Jennings and Ready closed the game, pitching for one and two innings, respectively. During the sixth and seventh, Ready threw five strikeouts. The Raiders got just one hit off of him, for a total of two throughout the game.
 Last Friday, June 5, the Eagles took on No. 9 Harwood in the quarterfinals. Like the semis, it was a slaughter. Mt. Abe won, 12-4.
 Here are some of the hitting stats from the game:
 • Castillo, 3-for-4, 2 doubles, 4 RBIs

- Junior Clark Crary, 3-for-4, RBI
- Junior Stefan Johnson, 3-for-4, double, 2 RBIs
- Corrigan, 1-for-4, double, RBI
- Senior Brody Barnard, 1-for-3-, RBI
- Sophomore Calvin Peck, 1-for-3, RBI
- Ready, 1-for-2, double

Coach Barnard said teamwork has gotten the team this far, “and everyone kind of having a really good bond,” he added.
 Castillo noted that “everybody picks each other up in the dugout, really helps each other out when people are down, gets everybody back up.”
 Playing their game will be key to taking the 2026 title, Castillo said.
 “Don’t let the lights get too bright. I think we got it.”

Ousted

(Continued from Page 1B)

The junior co-captain scored three key goals in the second half for the Tigers, getting her team within two goals of the Raiders with about six-and-a-half minutes in the final quarter remaining.
 Sophomore goalie Nova Bojanowski made a number of key saves to keep the Tigers right there with the Redhawks and to close a stellar rookie season as the starting varsity goalie.
 In addition to her spree at the end of the game, Quinn opened scoring on the Fucile Field with a goal just 55 seconds into the game.
 That was the only time the Tigers held a lead.
 The Redhawks went up, 3-1, with three minutes and 14 seconds remaining in the first.
 At that point, Ellie Conklin took the reins on offense for the Tigers.
 Between the end of the first quarter and the beginning of the third quarter, the sophomore scored three consecutive goals.
 With about two minutes to go, Conklin, who was in the eight meter, got a short pass from senior co-captain Quinn Doria, who fed her the ball from just outside. Conklin took a few steps with it and sent a shot that got the Tigers within a goal of the Redhawks.
 She struck again with just under a minute left in the quarter.
 In the final minute of the first quarter, freshman Morgan McNulty was awarded a free position shot. She took the opportunity to hit Conklin, who was waiting near the left goal post. Her shot was good to tie the game, 3-3, before the buzzer rang.
 The Redhawks shut out the Tigers

in the second quarter, and went up, 6-3.
 Bojanowski made three tough saves, including a free position shot and a breakaway that caught her defense off guard, in the middle of that 12 minutes.
 The Tigers called a timeout with roughly four minutes to go that broke up the Redhawk onslaught.
 CVU scored with just under two and a half minutes left before half. The Redhawks put two more in the back of the net in that time, the first with just over a minute remaining and the second with 10 seconds to go. Coming out of half, the Tigers had a 6-3 deficit to address. Conklin got to work.
 About 30 seconds into the third she ran the ball in for a midrange shot in front of the net with defenders crowding her, shrinking the gap to 6-4.
 The Redhawks scored twice more after that, gaining an 8-4 cushion with about eight and a half minutes to go in the quarter.
 After that, a CVU shot went off the crossbar and Bojanowski made another critical save that came from in front of the net.
 Quinn closed the third with a last minute goal. She ran the ball all the way up the field and to the CVU net to give the Tigers a fighting chance, and a boost of energy, in the final frame.
 Under 30 seconds into the fourth the Redhawks took back a four goal, 9-5, lead.
 Quinn got that back with seven and a half minutes to go in the game. With two defenders working to keep her at bay, she somehow managed to break through for a close range shot.
 A minute later she got the ball

back and ripped one from long range on the right, bringing the score to 9-7.
 Again the Redhawks gave themselves some insurance with a tenth goal, this time with about four minutes and 48 seconds to go.
 Bojanowski prevented anything more from CVU after the team got another good chance in the final four minutes.
 The Tigers managed one more goal with just over two minutes left. Senior co-captain Lia Calzini was awarded a free position shot from the right corner. She found McNulty cutting into the eight meter, and the freshman scored.
 McNulty’s goal brought the final tally to 10-8.
 Here’s who scored, had assists and draw controls:
 • Isabel Quinn, 4 goals, 1 draw control
 • Ellie Conklin, 3 goals
 • McNulty, 1 goal, 1 assist
 • Junior Alice Livesay, 1 assist, three draw controls
 • Sophomore Louisa Orten, 3 draw controls
 • Calzini, 1 assist
 • Freshman Dana Livesay, 1 draw control
 The 20-member Tiger team graduated four seniors on June 6 — Calzini, Doria, senior co-captain Kenyon Connors and Matty Austin.
 Though they retain a core of the team for next year. That includes Quinn, who has scored at least three goals in 10 of her last 11 games, sisters Alice and Dana Livesay, who were consistent playmakers on attack, Conklin, who was a consistent goal-contributor, Orten, a force to be reckoned with on ground balls and Bojanowski.

VUHS

(Continued from Page 1B)

(along with Quin Dubois, Elliot Cosgrove and Marwan Liebhaber) that placed fifth in 3:55.33 and improved on their season best by over six seconds. The girls’ 4x400 team of Faith McAllister, Hill, Ellie Wilkinson-Sachs and Georgia Kunkel also secured a ribbon, placing fourth in 4:48.6. The girls’ 4x100 team of McAllister, Hill, Ila Borah and Madeline Shugart claimed fifth (56.2) and the boys’ 4x800 quartet of David Coburn, Henry Stroup, Rowan Neffinger and Chance Koenig started off the meet with a sixth place finish in 9:36.29.
 Koenig, co-captain and one of the team’s seniors who has run all four years, said he was happy with how the meet turned out. Despite setbacks this season, he said the Commodores really showed up.
 “I think everybody’s been really

strong and really perseverant,” Koenig said. “It’s been kind of a rocky season in terms of meets. We’ve had a lot of things cancelled and moved around because of weather, but everybody’s been together as a team ... It’s been a great year and we’re in a really great spot going forward. I think it’s only going to improve from here.”
 Koenig is one of four seniors, along with McAllister, Wilkinson-Sachs and McGuire — all of whom have been running for multiple years and been consistent members of Commodore teams. Wilkinson-Sachs is also a co-captain, as well as junior Madeleine Stroup.
 It was a “fantastic” meet and showing for the Commodores, according to Coach Bradley Castillo, who has been involved with the team for over two decades. Castillo also emphasized the weather setbacks of

the season and was impressed with the personal records and placings at the championship meet.
 “With weather and availability, it was just kind of a messy season that ended as good as it could,” Castillo said.
 Along with Van Voorst’s state championship, he was “incredibly happy with our drops in the 800 and 200 races, those were huge improvements, and our relays kind of outperformed where we thought they were going to be, which was exceptional to watch.”
 Other top 10 VUHS finishes at the meet included:
 • Boys’ 110m hurdles, 8. Dubois, 18.61.
 • Girls’ 800m, 8. Wilkinson-Sachs, 2:47.38.
 • Girls’ 200m, 9. Van Voorst, 28.71.

Track titles

(Continued from Page 1B)

Sawyer was the runner-up in the boys’ triple jump (11.76 meters), and Mount Abe senior James Mount took second in the javelin (42.22 meters).
 Also finding success in the field was Tiger Vivian Mott. The MUHS senior came in third in the girls’ long jump, landing 4.62 meters away from where she left the ground — a personal best.
 In the team scoring, the Mount Abe boys grabbed third place behind U-32 with 202 points, and Fair Haven (37) rounded out the top five on the boys’ side. MUHS boys earned three team points and 13th place. The Tiger girls’ team was 12th with 16 points. The girls did not score any team points.
 Meanwhile, Orwell resident Jacob Desrocher was a member of the Fair Haven Union High School

4X100 relay team that earned second place.
 Here’s how other local athletes did during the D-II state championship meet.
Middlebury Union High School
 • Sophomore Raine Evans Nash, fifth, boys’ 110 meter hurdles (17.84 seconds, PR)
 • Junior Judah Matovu, sixth, boys’ long jump (5.74 meters, PR); 12th, boys’ 200 meters (25.28 seconds)
 • Freshman Elise Almstrand, Mott, freshman Penny Lickun, Sophomore Selma Citarella, 10th, girls’ 4x400 relay (4:48.68)
 • Sophomore Cameron Vose, Lickun, freshman Mia Rosen, Ives, 11th, girls’ 4x400 relay (4:48.68)
 • Rosen, 12th, girls’ 1,500 meters (5:41.59)
 • Citarella, 19th, girls’ 200 meters (29.88 seconds)
Mount Abe Union High School

- Sophomore Jaret Sturtevant, fourth, boys’ 110 meter hurdles (17.13 seconds, PR); fourth, boys’ 300 meter hurdles (46.61, PR)
- Freshman Del Guilmette, fifth, boys’ 1,500 meters (4:19.39, PR); fifth, boys’ 3,000 meters (9:34.29, PR)
- LaMarche, freshman Matthew Steele, freshman Pax Gundersen, Sawyer, fifth, boys’ 4x400 relay (3:58.51)
- Junior Bowen Lutz, sixth, boys’ pole vault, (2.74 meters, PR)
- Sophomore Charlotte Desilets, freshman Emily Wells, sophomore Juliana Murphy, sophomore Eliza Ruble, ninth, girls’ 4x100 relay (56.70)
- Desilets, 10th, girls’ long jump (4.27 meters, PR)
- Gundersen, 13th, boys’ 400 meters (58.35 seconds, PR)
- Steele, 18th, boys’ 1,500 meters (5:04.82)

Boys’ lax

(Continued from Page 2B)

recent one in overtime.
 Also on June 5, the D-II combined team of players from Mount Abraham and Vergennes

Union high schools, seeded No. 6, closed the season with an 8-6 road loss to No. 3 Milton.
 — Sophia Keshmiri

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Contact Liz Pecor at
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NEWS

MONKTON — Remember that there is now a bin to recycle your plastic film items and a separate bin to also put your stretchy film items in at the Monkton recycling center. The next date to bring your trash and recycling items is Saturday, June 13, from 9 a.m. till noon.

Check the website recycling@monktonvt.com for more information.

Go to the Monkton Friends Methodist Church on Saturday, June 13, for Share your Craft Stash from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.. This event brings from 9 a.m. till noon. (See Monkton, Page 5B)



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community calendar

THURSDAY

Green Mountain Club hike: Charlotte Wildlife Refuge in Charlotte. Thursday, June 11. Easy 2.7-mile hike with gravel and grass paths. Scenic views of farms, the Adirondacks, and Lake Champlain to the west and the Green Mountains to the east. Elevation gain of 250 feet. Allow two hours for the outing. Dogs not allowed on this property. Bring bug spray, snacks and water. Free. Contact Steve Ralph at 802-398-5448 or sralph00@gmail.com to register. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

FRIDAY

Open mic night hosted by 3 Piece Suit in Bristol. Friday, June 12, 5-8 p.m., BCC Botanicals, 140 North Street. 3 Piece Suit is a band of talented high school students playing bluesy rock jams. Kick off the end of the school year and celebrate the talent of this community. For more info visit bristolcollaborativecampus.com.

Friday night music in New Haven. Friday, June 12, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Brett Hughes & the Honky Tonk Crowd, food from A Taste of Abyssinia and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

SATURDAY

Monthly wildlife walk in Middlebury. Saturday, June 13, 7-9 a.m., meet at the parking area of Otter View Park at the intersection of Weybridge Street and Pulp Mill Bridge Road. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust invite community members to help us survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. For more information, call 802-388-6019.

Craft stash sale in Monkton. Saturday, June 13, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Monkton Friends Methodist Church, 78 Monkton Ridge. Replenish your craft supplies. Sewing machines, knitting machines, fabric, yarns, thread, quilting mats, craft books, ribbon patterns, craft kits for kids, and more items than we can list. Call 802-453-2870 for more information.

Tag sale in Bristol. Saturday, June 13, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Bristol Baptist Church, 10 Park St. Treasures galore. All proceeds go to Young Life Addison County to help local teens go to summer camp. If you have questions, call 802-453-4573.

Blood drive in Bristol. Saturday, June 13, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Bristol Federated Church, 37 North Street. Donors of all blood types and those giving platelets are needed. All who give June 1-28 will receive a \$15 e-gift card to a merchant of their choice, plus automatic entry for a chance to win one of two \$7,500 gift cards. For more info visit RedCrossBlood.org/June.

Addison County Bike Club Family Ride: Moosalamoo Campground in Salisbury. Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m., Meet at Moosalamoo Campground parking lot. Looking for good beginner trails for young riders to learn on? These rides are family-friendly and considerate of kids' skills and endurance levels. Fun for kindergarten age and older. The ride will go along the campground trail, great for beginners. Cold treats will be available at the end of the ride. Look out for July and August family ride info soon. RSVP required.

Tie-Dye Day in Cornwall. Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m., Cornwall Town Hall; 2629 Route 30, Cornwall. Cornwall Recreation Committee will supply dyes, rubber bands and buckets. Bring your shirts, fabric or any material suitable for dyeing. You will be dyeing with laughter and leaving feeling totally groovy. Free.

Addison County Regional Energy & Eco Fair in Vergennes. Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Vergennes city green. Come have a conversation about energy and nature-based solutions for your home or business. Cohosted by the Vergennes and Weybridge Energy Committees and Addison County Regional Planning Commission. Free. Event contacts: jlarson@acrpc.org or cherylbrinkman3@gmail.com.

Cat Cafe at Bixby in Vergennes. Saturday, June 13, 11-1 p.m., Bixby library. Join us for a Cat Cafe with Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society. Meet and play with sweet, adoptable cats while enjoying light refreshments. This event has limited capacity—email miranda.degreenia@bixbylibrary.org to reserve a 20-minute spot. For more info visit presentation: Vermont and its Role in the American Revolution in Orwell. Saturday, June 13, 1-2 p.m., Mount Independence State Historic Site, 497 Mount Independence Road. Paul Andrischin, historian and Mount Independence site interpreter, gives an illustrated talk on Revolutionary Vermont and its role in the American Revolution.

Takeout chicken and biscuit supper in Vergennes. Saturday, June 13, 5-6 p.m., Vergennes United Methodist Church, Main Street. Chicken and gravy, over biscuits, stuffing, vegetable, cranberry sauce and dessert. Take out only. Must preorder by 7 p.m. Thursday, June 11. To order call 802-877-3150.

Meet the Candidates in Middlebury. Saturday, June 13, 5-8 p.m., VFW Post 7823, 530 Exchange St. Light refreshments will be served. Paid for by the Addison County Republican Committee. For more information, contact Senator Steven Heffernan at stevenood@gmail.com.

Silent movie: "The Kid" in Brandon. Saturday, June 13, 7 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Square. Charlie Chaplin's 1921 classic, also starring a young Jackie Coogan, is shown with live music by Jeff Rapsis. Part of the annual Silent Movie Series featuring live accompaniment. Concessions support future screenings. Free.

Green Mountain Club hike: Mt. Abe in Lincoln. Saturday, June 13. Hike Mt. Abe from Lincoln Gap. Moderate to strenuous hike of about 5.5 miles round trip with 1,600 feet elevation gain. Panoramic views from the alpine summit. To register, contact Dwight Griesman at dwight.griesman@gmail.com. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.



Flock together

GRAB YOUR BINOCULARS and join the Otter Creek Audubon and Middlebury Area Land Trust this Saturday, June 13, from 7-9 a.m. for a day of spotting birds and other critters at Otter View Park and Hurd Grassland. Whether you're a seasoned birder or just curious, everyone's invited to join the fun.

Photo by Carol Ramsayer

SUNDAY

Fire Department Annual Chicken Barbecue in Cornwall. Sunday, June 14, noon, Route 30 Station, 1952 Route 30. Half-chicken meals with salad and sides, kids can enjoy free hot dogs while they last. Table seating and take out available. Slow cooked with CVFD's secret sauce. This community event is a great opportunity to see neighbors and old friends, see the fire trucks, learn about serving on the fire department and meet the volunteers. Proceeds benefit the work of the department. \$15.

Sunday Sessions: Bob Recupero in Middlebury. Sunday, June 14, 4-7 p.m., The Ralph Myhre Golf Course, 317 Golf Course Road (Patio at the Tavern on the Tee). Bob Recupero is known for his soulful voice and masterful guitar playing. His performances, encompassing genres such as Americana, folk and country-blues, offer a heartfelt experience that connects deeply with his audience. Free.

Mason's monthly charity fundraising breakfast in Bristol. Sunday, June 14, 7:30-10 a.m., Bristol Masons Lodge, corner of North and Elm streets. This month, the Lodge has voted to donate all proceeds to the Starksboro Fire Department. We will be serving sausage gravy with biscuits, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, homefries, pancakes, French toast, maple syrup from Alan Mayer's sugarhouse, assorted juices and apple bread pudding. \$9 for adults; \$5 for children under 12.

MONDAY

Monday Night Bingo in Middlebury. Monday, June 15, 4:30 p.m., Addison County VFW 7823, 530 Exchange St. \$1,000 Jackpot. Quickies start at 6 p.m., regular bingo starts at 7 p.m. Kitchen is open from 5-6:30 p.m. Open to the public. Benefits Veterans Programs.

Monkton history scanning evening in Monkton. Monday, June 15, 7-8:30 p.m., Monkton Town Hall. Help us save the stories of Monkton's past. Bring photos or documents from life in Monkton, from the recent past to long-ago days. We'll scan your precious memories and return the items to you immediately. The most popular items in our current museum exhibit are photos of people from the '50s and stories from WWII. Light refreshments and a slide show of pictures from earlier scanning days will be shown.

Vergennes City Band rehearsal. Monday, June 15, 7-9 p.m., Vergennes Opera House. Instrumentalists of all experience levels are invited to join the Vergennes City Band for community rehearsals. For more information, contact Sue O'Daniel at sodaniel27@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY

Warren Kimble interviews cartoonist Harry Bliss in Middlebury. Wednesday, June 17, 3 p.m., EastView at Middlebury, 100 Eastview Terrace. The conversation will center on Bliss's work as a cartoonist and illustrator, with particular focus on his 24+ covers and numerous cartoons and illustrations for The New Yorker magazine.

Chicken BBQ in the park in Bristol. Wednesday, June 17, 5 p.m. until sold out, the Bristol Green. One meal includes a half- or quarter-chicken, potato salad, baked beans, a drink and a roll. This usually sells out fast! Cooked by the Sons of the American Legion.

Bixby Speakers' Bureau: "Bringing Hope through Education to Girls and Young Women in Afghanistan" in Vergennes. Wednesday, June 17, 5:30 p.m., Bixby Library, 258 Main St. Ann Straub and Taniya Noori, co-directors of the Afghan Tutoring Network, will share their experience helping to provide an education for 40 girls in Afghanistan. Three Afghan Middlebury College graduates will also share their immigration journeys from Afghanistan to Middlebury College. Free. For more info visit bixbylibrary.org.

Strawberry Festival and Concert in Shoreham. Wednesday, June 17, 6-8 p.m., the Town Green's gazebo. Bring your lawn chairs or picnic blankets for seating on the lawn, enjoy your shortcake and listen to the music provided by Nick Thornblade and his accordion. Since the Church will close in December, this is the last Strawberry Fest that the Church will sponsor. Strawberry shortcake: \$4-\$7.

Bristol Town Band Summer Concerts on the

THURSDAY

Park in Bristol. Wednesday, June 17, 7 p.m., Town Green. The Bristol Town Band is back for its 156th year of weekly evening concerts. Each Wednesday through Aug. 26 the Town Green will be filled with music and events. Bring a picnic and chair to enjoy the music with family and friends. We welcome new members. Call 802-281-2315 for more information about joining the band.

Friends of the TAM Chipman Hill sunset bird walk with Eilyn Montgomery in Middlebury. Wednesday, June 17, 7 p.m., Chipman Hill Trailhead on Washington Street Ext. Chipman Hill in the evening comes alive with birdsong. We will stop at several view spots to take in the sunset. Plan on hiking about two miles with some steep parts. Attendees should wear hiking shoes and bring a flashlight or headlamp and a pair of binoculars. We will have a few pairs to share. A phone with the Merlin ID app is helpful but not necessary. We will be joined by Kevin Fox, MALT's executive director. Notification of rain postponement by email the day before if needed. Limited to 20 people. Registering in advance is required. Sign up at secure.lgiforms.com/form_engine/s/_OliV05YJwvIYqUJbWA7Zg.

THURSDAY

Heck Yeah Party for Pride Month in Lincoln. Thursday, June 18, 4-6 p.m., Lincoln Library, 222 W River Rd. Heck Yeah is a community art-making event. Every day, LGBTQIA+ youth face a barrage of untrue, harmful messages. Community members gather at these events to create messages of affirmation ("heck yeahs") in the form of letters and artwork, which will then be sent to Vermont's queer, trans and non-binary youth across the state. This is a family-friendly event and open to all ages. Ice cream, lawn games, and art supplies will be provided—just bring your positive energy.

"Trolley Tires to Rubber Tires": Bristol Historical Society presentation. Thursday, June 18, 7 p.m., Bristol Historical Society. Railroad researcher and historian Jim Jones will present a program on the history of Burlington's Streetcar Era. For more info visit bristolhistoricalvt.org.

Green Mountain Club hike: Burnt Hill in Hancock. Thursday, June 18. Hike a lovely, quiet section of the Long Trail from Middlebury Gap to Burnt Hill, an area frequented more by moose than people. We will look for signs of moose and learn about trail adoption and trail maintenance. Bring hand clippers and a 1-inch pantbrush if you have them and learn from the "Tom Sawyer" of the field. Moderate hike of five-mile round trip and 1,000 feet elevation gain. Leashed dogs allowed. Contact Morris Earle at morrisearle@gmail.com for information or to sign up. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

FRIDAY

Friday night music in New Haven. Friday, June 19, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Blues Without Borders, food from Cravens and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

Dogteam Theatre Project presents New Student Works in Middlebury. Friday, June 19, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre. The Dogteam Theatre Project provides transformative experiences for emerging and professional artists. Come enjoy the new work. Free.

SATURDAY

Let's Go Birding beginner bird walk in Middlebury. Saturday, June 20, 9-11 a.m., Wright Park parking lot north of Pulp Mill Bridge. Nature enthusiasts of all ages are invited for this bird walk through part of the TAM. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair from OCAS. Local naturalists will offer a station with a hands-on discovery activity. Trail-appropriate snack available. Family-friendly but not appropriate for strollers or wheelchairs. Rain or shine. Contact 713-818-7033.

Let's Go Birding with MALT and Otter Creek Audubon in Middlebury. Saturday, June 20, 9-11 a.m., Wright Park, Seymour Street Extension. Join MALT and Otter Creek Audubon to identify birds by sight and song on a guided morning bird walk. Suitable for beginners and experienced birders alike. Family-friendly event with light snacks and a hands-on activities table.



KIDS TAKE OFF at the start of the 1K race on a rainy Sunday afternoon at the Common Ground Center in Starksboro. Adults and older kids also took part in a 5K across the field and on the scenic trails at center.

Photos by Jim Mendell

Starksboro camp hosts 5K and 1K runs

STARKSBORO—In the pouring rain on Sunday, over 100 runners of all ages ran the trails at Common Ground Center in Starksboro. It was the first event of its kind ever held at the family and retreat center.

First came the 1K designed for families with kids as young as 2 years old.

“We heard about Common Ground going to Footprint Farm up the road,” said Jessica Burns from Huntington. “We did the 1K race. Our first time here. We love it here. It exceeded our expectations. We

stayed for three hours. The tacos were delicious. We hope to back for Camp Common Ground and stay for a week.”

Then came the 5K. “We toured the site a few days earlier for our wedding summer next year, heard about the 5K and decided to run,” said Garrett Pitt from Shelburne. “The trails were well marked with a good mix of single track and dirt road as they went through the woods and fields. Afterwards I took a dip in the creek.”

“We love to give back to the community,” said Lazarus Koep, of Stone Corral Brewery, which provided tacos and beer for the event. “Common Ground Center is a wonderful place that shares our values. I was married there and has a special place in my heart. Common Ground allows kids and families of all income levels to have a chance to enjoy summer camp.”

Proceeds from the event will go to scholarships for center’s programs. Over 40% of campers receive scholarships.

“I have never run through the woods before,” said Starksboro



SEAN COLLIE LEADS A PACK IN THE 5K

resident Jake Mendell. “I want to do it again next year even in the rain. No one got injured even though it was a slop track.”

EMS was at hand, but with nothing to do.

The event was initiated by Cathy

Narigon, a Common Ground Center board member.

“I’m a runner of half and whole marathons,” she said. “It is a great way to experience the beauty of a place. And the beauty of the land at Common Ground is awesome.”



Monkton

(Continued from Page 4B)

attendees together to share crafts and crafting supplies, machines for any crafts such as sewing machines, sergers, etc. Donations from other crafters will net you knitting, crocheting, painting or quilting items of all colors and types plus much more to help with your project or to start one. If you are cleaning out your “stash” of craft items, you can contact Priscilla Pierce at 802-453-2870 to donate or to get more information on this event. Sounds like a fun day for all!

Join Sam Champagne of Champagne’s Black Belt Academy for free Taekwondo intro classes. You will learn basic kicks, stances and movements introducing beginner techniques. Build your confidence, learn focus and discipline. The starting date for children (ages 6 to 12) is Monday, June 15, from 5 to

5:45 p.m. at Morse Park Pavillion and Green off Pond Road. The adult intro class will begin on Wednesday, June 17, from 6 to 6:45 p.m. also at the pavillion. To reserve a spot or for more information, contact Sam at champagnesbba.com or call 802-730-3015.

Your donations of books to the library will continue through June 23. Bring donations to the library located at 92 Monkton Ridge Road or call 802-453-4471 to inquire what they can accept. Also, if you would like to volunteer to sort books or pick strawberries for the festival on June 28, call the library.

Also watch for information on other upcoming events such as the monthly Poetry Club and Stitch and Spin. Monkton seems to be bustling with happenings! You can always call the Library to check on what’s going on.

READER

comments



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—Christine, Leicester subscriber



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RAIN? NO PROBLEM

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADS!

Each year, we’re continually impressed by the talent, determination and accomplishments of the young people in our community. We’re proud to recognize these hardworking students for all they’ve achieved in the past year. Congratulations to the Class of 2026 and best of luck on your next adventures!

Below is a full list of Otter Valley Union High School and Mt. Abraham Union High School Students of the Week and their destinations in the fall.

What’s Next?

Otter Valley Union High School

- Braeden Waldie — Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania
- Jaydon Connors — Vermont State University, Castleton
- Breanna Bovey — University of Rochester, New York
- Logan Denis — University of Vermont
- Hannah Bertrand — Community College of Vermont
- Zachary Dragon — Vermont State University, Castleton
- Marissa Dick — Regis College, Massachusetts
- Drake Felkl — Vermont State University, Castleton
- Ethan Dukette — Employment, Celebration Rentals
- Hannah Desabrais — University of Vermont
- Sienna-Marie Torres — University of Southern Maine
- Chloe Mol — Simmons University, Massachusetts
- Jacob Warrell — Clarkson University, New York
- Noelle Seigle — Coastal Carolina University, South Carolina
- Jazalyn Madrigal — University of Southern Maine
- Thomic Moyer — Self-Employment, Painting
- Harmony Miller — Keene State College, New Hampshire
- Leanne Thomas — Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Massachusetts
- Roni O’Brien — University of New England, Maine

What’s Next?

Mt. Abraham Union High School

- Charlie Prouty — Bard College, New York
- Louisa Guilmette — Northeastern University, Massachusetts
- Genevieve Forand — Roger Williams University, Rhode Island
- Isla Underwood — University of New England, Maine
- Evan Corrigan — Colby-Sawyer College, New Hampshire
- Maris LaPerle — Washington College, Maryland
- Wyatt Moyer — Saint Michael’s College, Vermont
- Lila Brightman — Tufts University, Massachusetts
- Paige Guilbeault — University of Vermont
- June Yates-Rusch — St. Lawrence University, New York
- Riley Abbott — Community College of Vermont
- Harper Young — Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, New York
- James Graziadei — Kimball Union Academy, New Hampshire (Post-Graduate Year)
- Dylan Layn — WyoTech, Wyoming, or Universal Technical Institute, Arizona
- William Gustin — University of Vermont
- Charlie Germon — University of Tampa, Florida
- Cole Shepard — Electrical Apprenticeship with Newton Electrical Refrigeration and Air Conditioning
- Morgan Larocque — O’Brien Aveda Institute, Vermont
- Jack Anderson — University of Vermont

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

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CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

AL-ANON OFFERS HELP and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit vermontalanonlateen.org for links and list of other meetings in the region. If you'd like to speak to an Al-Anon member, call our answering service (866-972-5266) and an Al-Anon member will call you back.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS in person meetings are available. For a list of local virtual meetings visit <http://bit.ly/district9aa>. For more information visit <https://aavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS is a 12 step program offering recovery from compulsive eating and food behaviors. For meeting times and general information please visit www.oavermont.org or call (802)863.2655.

Public Meetings

VERGENNES FREE THINKERS Founded in 1935 on the principle of one alcoholic helping another to achieve sobriety, A.A. is an effective and enduring program of recovery that has changed countless lives. A.A. has always been committed to making its program of recovery available to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help with an alcohol problem. The Vergennes Free Thinkers meeting was created in January of this year to maintain a tradition of free expression, conduct a meeting where alcoholics may feel free to express any beliefs, doubts or disbelief they may have, to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, and/or their rejection of it, without having to accept anyone else's beliefs or having to deny their own. Meetings are held with a high regard for compassion and inclusion without judgment or exception. If you think we can help, please join us on Thursdays at 6pm by contacting Vergennesfreethinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

Public Meetings

THE TURNING POINT CENTER of Addison County is open for in-person services, Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm, 79 Court St, Middlebury. We are available by phone 24/7 at 802-388-4249.

VERMONT SUPPORT LINE Are you struggling with a challenging situation? Do you have feelings of sadness, loneliness, isolation, anger, or depression? You don't have to face it alone. Talk with a caring person who understands what you're going through today by calling or texting the free and confidential Pathways Vermont Support Line available 24/7 at (833) VT - TALKS.

Services

BROWN'S CONSTRUCTION renovations, interior/exterior painting, drywall, plumbing/electrical services. Fully insured w/ 30+ years of experience covering Northern Addison and Southern Chittenden, references available. Call 802-238-4864

Services

CONSTRUCTION: ADDITIONS, RENOVATIONS new construction, drywall, carpentry, painting, flooring, roofing, pressure washing, driveway sealing. All aspects of construction, also property maintenance. Steven Fifield 802-989-0009.

LAWN CARE Mow lawns, gardening, and other odd jobs. Low rates. Call John 802-999-2194.

MELISSA'S QUALITY CLEANING Services. Residential and commercial. Fully insured. Great rates. Reliable and thorough cleaning. 802-345-6257.

SOFT LANDING EQUESTRIAN. Horse boarding, riding lessons. Experience with horses since 2012. Call 802-398-7361 or 802-307-2930.

SPRING GUTTER CLEANING: call or text Ian @802-349-7871

Free

DIGITAL ACCESS View obituaries, calendar listings and classifieds online at addisonindependent.com. Don't miss out on events, garage sales, or opportunities- check out our free digital listings. Looking to read more? Become a subscriber!

Garage Sales

STORAGE UNIT SALE 121 Tappers Crossing Rd, Ferrisburgh. Fri-Sat June 12th-13th, 8-5. Antique furniture, small collectibles, artwork, and all manner of stuff.

Help Wanted

EVENING FRONT DESK/ CONCIERGE. Swift House Inn - Middlebury, Vermont. We're hiring a front desk professional to anchor our evening shift. This position plays a pivotal role: greeting arriving guests, fielding questions, supporting restaurant reservations, and ensuring the property is secure and guest-ready for the next day. If you thrive on creating memorable experiences and want to grow in the hospitality industry, this is for you. Swift House Inn has 20 guest rooms across three historic buildings, and is home to Jessica's at Swift House

Help Wanted

Inn, one of Vermont's most celebrated fine dining restaurants. Responsibilities: Welcome and check in arriving guests with warmth and professionalism. Answer phones, manage room and restaurant reservations. Provide local recommendations and concierge-style service. Troubleshoot guest concerns and offer proactive solutions. Liaise with Jessica's restaurant team for

Help Wanted

smooth communication. Keep common areas tidy, cozy, and well-presented. Follow nightly checklists and procedures. Lock up buildings and hand off to the overnight security team. You Are... Deeply interested in the hotel and lodging industry, A natural host who loves creating great guest experiences in Addison County, Communicative, warm, and gracious under pressure, Obsessed with

Help Wanted

details and good systems. Reliable, punctual, and self-directed. Shift & Compensation. Hours: 3:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Schedule: Part-time, includes some weekends and holidays. Pay: \$20-\$22 Hourly, commensurate with experience, bonuses and tips. Apply Today. Email your resume and a short note to owner@swift-houseinn.com. Learn more about us at swift-houseinn.com

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Removal Technician

Sanderson-Ducharme Funeral Homes is seeking a dedicated and professional Removal Technician to join our compassionate care team. In this role, you will be responsible for the dignified transportation of decedents from their place of death to our funeral home.

What You'll Do:

- Respond promptly to calls at residential homes, hospitals, and care facilities.
- Maintain the highest level of professionalism and empathy when interacting with grieving families.
- Safely operate company vehicles and specialized equipment.
- Ensure all necessary documentation and identification procedures are followed precisely.

What we're looking for:

- **Professionalism:** A clean, polished appearance and a respectful demeanor.
- **Physical Stamina:** Ability to lift 75+ lbs and navigate stairs or tight spaces.
- **Availability:** Must be willing to participate in an "on-call" rotation, including nights, weekends, and holidays. Per diem.
- **Requirements:** A valid driver's license and a clean driving record are essential.

Why Join Us?

We offer a supportive work environment where your contribution truly matters to the community.

To Apply:

Please send your resume to sandersonf@comcast.net or visit us in person at 117 South Main Street Middlebury, VT.



SANDERSON FUNERAL HOME



Warehouse and Yard Worker

FT Position available

Duties: Loading and Assisting with Customer Orders from the Yard, Warehouse and Store, Stocking Shelves and Filling Propane Tanks. Up to 40 hours per week.

Weekends and dependability a MUST!

Qualified Candidate must have a dedicated work ethic, the ability to lift 50lbs repeatedly throughout the day, and work hard in the spring and summer seasons.

Please stop in to pick up an application or send Resume to:

Middlebury AGWAY Farm & Garden,

Attn: Jennifer Jacobs

338 Exchange St. Middlebury, VT 05753

or by email to info@middleburyagway.com

Middlebury Agway 338 Exchange St. - Middlebury, VT.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Get behind the wheel of a great career!

Do you...

Enjoy driving?
Like meeting people?
Want to make a difference?

Consider a job with Tri-Valley Transit!

- \$2,500 signing bonus
- Starting at \$23.69/hr or more based on experience with growth to \$28.32/hr in one year
- PAID training for your CDL
- Excellent benefits include health insurance, paid time off, retirement plan, and more!

"Our riders are the best part of my job! The bus is like its own community and I love knowing that my work helps other people get to work."

— Robin, TVT Bus Driver



Visit: trivalleytransit.org/job-openings/ to apply!

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities



Volunteer Drivers

RSVP of Addison County is in search of volunteer drivers to help deliver meals or volunteers who can help transport clients to appointments. You can choose what rides you want to take or decline.

If you are interested please give us a call at 802-468-7056.



AmeriCorps Seniors

In print or online, find your dream job with help from the *Addy Indy*.

addisonindependent.com/help-wanted

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

Addison Independent **CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM**

ADDISON INDEPENDENT
58 Maple Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-4944

addisonindependent.com • email: classifieds@addisonindependent.com

Cash in on our 4-for-3 rates! Pay for 3 issues, get 4th issue free! An ad placed for consecutive issues runs the 4th time for free!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

• Special 4 for 3 rates not valid for the following categories: Services, Opportunities, Real Estate, Wood heat, Attn. Farmers, For Rent & Help Wanted

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notices | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Att. Farmers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Card of Thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> Help Wanted | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personals | <input type="checkbox"/> For Sale | <input type="checkbox"/> Cars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Meetings** | <input type="checkbox"/> Trucks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free** | <input type="checkbox"/> For Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> SUVs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lost 'N Found** | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to Rent | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Heat | <input type="checkbox"/> Boats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn & Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Animals | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Wanted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption | | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Rentals |

** no charge for these ads Spotlight with large ✓ \$1

PLEASE PRINT YOUR AD...

Number of words: _____
Cost: \$ _____
of runs: _____
Spotlight Charge: \$ _____
Internet Listing: \$ _____
TOTAL: \$ _____

The Independent assumes no financial responsibility for errors in ads, but will rerun classified ad in which the error occurred. No refunds will be possible. Advertiser will please notify us of any errors which may occur after first publication.

RATES

DEADLINE: Monday at 5 p.m.

- 25¢ per word • minimum \$2.50 per ad
- 50¢ internet listing per issue • minimum 2 insertions

Addison Independent CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

SALES DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE Vermont Soap in Middlebury is looking for a motivated, outgoing and highly organized individual to join our sales team. Must have excellent written and verbal communication skills. Previous sales experience is preferred. Paid vacation time, paid holidays and 401k with employer match. Submit cover letter and resume to nichole@vermontsoap.com.

For Sale

BIKES Three women bikes. Three men bikes. Good condition. \$20-\$60, come see them. Twin Lionel trains with track, \$100 each. 802-349-2391

CHIPPER DR Chipper purchased new in 2007. 13 hp Vanguard engine - pull start. \$1000 - firm cash only. 802-377-5427

Vacation Rentals

ADDISON: LAKE CHAMPLAIN waterfront camp. Beautiful views, gorgeous sunsets, private beach, rowboat and canoe included. \$999 weekly, or call for weekends. 802-349-4212, no texts.

For Rent

ALL REAL ESTATE advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or persons receiving public assistance or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertisement for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination, call HUD Toll-free at 1-800-424-8590. For the Washington, DC area please call HUD at 426-3500.

For Rent

BENSON 1BR/1BA cottage \$1,500/mo, elec/hot water incl. No smoking. Refs/deposit required. Contact info@pleasantvalleyrentals.com.

BENSON 3BR/3.5BA back-of-house apt. elec/heat/hot water included. Chef's kitchen: \$2,750/mo. No smoking. Refs/deposit required. Contact info@pleasantvalleyrentals.com.

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE - 2000 sq ft to 7000 sq ft - Tall ceilings, loading docks, plenty of parking. Middlebury - 802-558-6092

LEICESTER: Active, outdoorsy professional in her 50s with rural home to share, 15 minutes to Middlebury. \$650/month. Must be dog-friendly! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

MIDDLEBURY BRIARWOOD APARTMENTS is currently taking waitlist applications for 2- br apartments. No smoking/No pets. Income limits apply- rent based on income- 2 person minimum occupancy. Equal Housing Opportunity. Handicapped accessible. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. 802-388-4831, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

SALISBURY BASEMENT APT Fully furnished with internet, washer/dryer, one bedroom. No pets, no smoking, and no vaping. Available June 1st, \$1450 a month. 802-238-6497

SALISBURY: Share home, 10 minutes to Middlebury, with independent retiree who enjoys singing and gardening. Looking for compatible housemate to share an occasional meal. \$650/month. Must be cat-friendly! 802-863-5625 or HomeShareVermont.org for application. Interview, references, background checks required. EHO.

For Rent

VERGENNES DOWNTOWN APARTMENT 1BR/1BA apartment in quiet downtown Vergennes building. Bright living space with large windows, open concept kitchen, and off-street parking. Walkable to cafes, restaurants, and local businesses. \$1,525/month. Security deposit \$1,525. 1-year lease. Available May 1. No smoking. Pets allowed with landlord permission. Call or text (317) 379-1587 for details or to schedule a showing.

VERGENNES VALLEY VIEW APARTMENTS is currently taking wait list applications. Occupants must be 62+ years of age. No smoking/No pets. Income limits apply - Rent based on income. Equal Housing Opportunity. 802-247-0165 TTY: 800-253-0191 www.SummitPMG.com.

Wood Heat

DRY OR GREEN firewood for sale. Delivery available. 802-349-4212.

Att. Farmers

1ST CUT, SMALL square, \$3.25. 2nd cut small square, \$4.25. 802-377-5455.

Wanted

LIONS CLUB: needs good items for their annual auction. Please no appliances or electronics. Call for pick up: 802-578-3518 or 802-779-6823. Help us, help others.

Help Wanted ads can be found on Page 8B and 9B.



MARKET REPORT ADDISON COUNTY COMMISSION SALES

RT. 125 • EAST MIDDLEBURY, VT
Sales for 6/4/26 & 6/8/26

BEEF	LBS.	/LB	\$
V. Malnati	1390	2.06	\$2863.40
Gosliga	1415	2.05	\$2900.75
4 Hills	1910	1.80	\$3438.00
B. Dykema	1890	1.70	\$3213.00
Nop Bros	1595	1.80	\$2871.00
C. Palmalee	1490	1.80	\$2682.00
Goodrich	1445	1.80	\$2601.00

CALVES	\$
R. Vandenberg	\$1836.00
Quarry Rd	\$1691.20
Conants Riverside	\$1683.00
Deer Valley	\$1600.50
Rivers Edge	\$1577.80
H. Degraaf	\$1570.80
Barnes Bros	\$1543.80

Total Beef - 113 Total Calves - 186
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 9B and 10B.**

Addison (1)	EBI Consulting (1)
Addison County Clerk (1)	Ferrisburgh (2)
Addison County Maple Sugarmakers (1)	Flynn Law (1)
Addison County Regional Planning Commission (2)	Ripton (2)
Cornwall (1)	Waltham (1)

FULL PASSPORT SERVICE

The Addison County Clerk located in the **Frank Mahady Courthouse in Middlebury** is available to accept passport applications and provide passport photos.
REGULAR HOURS
Monday - 8:30am to 4:00pm
Tuesday - 9:00am to 12:30pm
Wednesday - Closed
Thursday - 12:30pm to 4:00pm
Friday - 9:00am to 12:30pm
APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED
For appointment, go to **www.addisoncountyclerkvt.com** or call 802-388-1966.

Email your Public Notices to **legals@addisonindependent.com** and Jenna makes sure it gets in the paper

TOWN OF WALTHAM NOTICE OF TAXPAYERS PROCESS & DATES FOR 2026 GRIEVANCES

Agreeably to the provisions of Title 32, Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 4111(G), notice is hereby given that the abstract of property owners as of the first day of April 2026 have been completed. The listers have lodged the abstract in the office of the clerk for inspection of the taxpayer. The listers will meet at the Waltham Town Clerk's Office, 2053 Maple Street, Waltham, Vermont, on the following dates and times to hear appeals by taxpayers.

Formal Grievance Hearings will be held at the Waltham Town Clerk's Office on Wednesday, June 17 & Thursday, June 18, 2026 from 4:00-6:00 pm. Please call the town office at (802) 877-3641 or email waltham.vt@gmail.com for an appointment.

Hearings will be by appointment only and will last 20 minutes. Be prepared to present relevant evidence regarding your appeal. All appeals must be in writing. An email is an acceptable way to request a grievance appointment. Emails or letters requesting a grievance must be received by June 16, 2026.

Town of Waltham Board of Listers: Robin Jackman, Alex Cary, Tim Glassberg

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS GRIEVANCE HEARINGS HELD BY THE FERRISBURGH BOARD OF LISTERS

Pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 4111, notice is hereby given that the undersigned Listers of the Town of Ferrisburgh have completed the abstract of property owners as of April 1, 2026. The abstract has been lodged in the office of the Town Clerk and is available for inspection by taxpayers.

The Listers will meet at the Ferrisburgh Town Clerk's Office to hear appeals from taxpayers aggrieved by actions of the Listers and from whom timely grievances have been received.

To be considered timely, grievances must be submitted in writing and must be received by June 19, 2026. We have a Grievance Appeal Form available on our website www.ferrisburghvt.org and paper copies available at the Town Offices. Postmarks will not be accepted.

Grievance hearings will be conducted on the following dates and must be scheduled by calling (802) 877-3429 x7 or reappraisal.ferrisburgh@gmail.com:

- Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Thursday, June 25, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, June 26, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

At the close of grievance hearings, the Listers shall make such corrections to the abstract as are determined upon hearing or otherwise.

Unless cause to the contrary is shown, the contents of the abstract shall become, for tax year 2026, the Grand List of the Town of Ferrisburgh and of each taxpayer named therein.

Given under our hands at Ferrisburgh, Vermont, in the County of Addison, this 5th day of June, 2026.

Board of Listers
Town of Ferrisburgh, Vermont
Brian Goodyear, Roderick Cole, Tim Davis

ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) will hold a third hybrid public hearing on the draft 2026-2034 Addison County Regional Plan. This meeting shall be held on July 8, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

In person meetings will be hosted at the ACRPC Office, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury VT 05753. To attend via Microsoft Teams / Virtual Platform:

Join the Teams Meeting
Meeting ID: 237 317 794 062 4
Passcode: DR6X4dP7
Dial in by phone +1 347-991-8960, enter Pin ID: 367383384#

This hearing is being held pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4348 and §4352. This notice is provided pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §4444. Per Vermont Statute, ACRPC seeks general comments and specific comments with respect to the extent to which the plan is consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. §4302, Vermont's Planning goals and whether the enhanced energy portion of the plan complies with the requirements of 24 V.S.A. §4348(a)(3) and §4352(c).

The Addison County Regional Plan examines the economic, social, and environmental factors that shape and support growth and development in the Addison County Region. It serves as a guide for decision-makers, a vision for the region's future, and an action plan to address key regional issues. The Plan also will be used as regulatory review criteria in Act 250 and Section 248 proceedings. All areas within the jurisdiction of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission are affected.

In addition, the draft Regional Plan incorporates revisions required by state legislation enacted in 2024, including the following elements:

- A Regional Future Land Use Map identifying newly designated future land use areas.
- A Map of Areas Eligible for the State Designation Program, which can provide tax credits and other incentives to support revitalization and development.
- A Map of Areas Subject to Tier 1A and Tier 1B Act 250 Jurisdiction.
- Municipal Housing Targets, specifying the number of new housing units needed by 2030 and 2050, as determined by the State's Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

This hearing specifically acknowledges changes ACRPC has made due to the recent 2026 legislative changes regarding ACT 181. All references to Tier 2, Tier 3, and the "Road Rule" have been eliminated in the Plan.

ACRPC proposes the following Chapters of its Plan. It also proposes to adopt the entire Plan. Accordingly, all Chapters of the Plan will be subject to discussion at the public hearing. Chapters include:

- INTRODUCTION**
- CHAPTER 1:** Natural Resources
- CHAPTER 2:** Energy
- CHAPTER 3:** Transportation
- CHAPTER 4:** Community Infrastructure
- CHAPTER 5:** Population and Housing
- CHAPTER 6:** Economic Development
- CHAPTER 7:** Flood Resilience
- CHAPTER 8:** Future Land Use & Substantial Regional Impact
- CHAPTER 9:** Compatibility
- CHAPTER 10:** Equity, Benefits, and Burdens
- ASSOCIATED APPENDICES and GLOSSARY**

Copies of the proposed plan are available from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury Vermont 05753, or online at www.acrpc.org. For further information, please contact Adam Lougee at (802) 388-3141 or alougee@acrpc.org.

TOWN OF RIPTON INVITATION TO BID - MOWING SERVICES

The Town of Ripton seeks a mowing contractor for 753 Lincoln Rd. (former school) and 25 Dugway Rd. (fire station). Bids are due at the Ripton Town Office, 1311 VT Rte 125, PO Box 10, Ripton, VT 05766, by NOON, Monday, June 22nd.

STATE OF VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT ADDISON UNIT CIVIL DIVISION DOCKET 26-CV-02556

In Re: Abandoned Mobile Home Of Diana Bird (F/K/A Diana Rochette)
44 Hillside Drive, Starksboro, Vermont

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue of an Order of the Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Civil Division, dated June 1, 2026, and filed June 3, 2026, the abandoned mobile home of Diana Bird (f/k/a Diana Rochette) located at 44 Hillside Drive, Starksboro, Vermont, will be sold at public auction at 2:30 p.m. on the 18th day of June, 2026, at 44 Hillside Drive, Starksboro, Vermont:

To wit:
Being a 1986 Holly Park, serial no. O1FPC1492; 14' x 70', sited at 44 Hillside Drive, Starksboro, Vermont.

Terms of Sale: The mobile home to be conveyed in "as is" condition, free and clear of all liens and other encumbrances of record. The minimum bid established by the Court, sufficient to cover costs of sale, is \$12,600.88. The mobile home shall be sold to the highest bidder over the minimum bid. The successful bidder shall make full payment at auction if the bid does not exceed \$2,000. If the bid exceeds \$2,000, the successful bidder shall provide a non-refundable deposit at the time of the auction of at least \$2,000 or 25% of the bid, whichever is greater, and shall make full payment within three working days after the auction. A successful bidder, if other than the park owner, shall remove the mobile home from the park within five working days after the auction unless the park owner permits removal at a later date.

Other terms to be announced at the sale or make inquiries to Lesley Deppman, Esq., Deppman Law, 56 Court Street, Middlebury, Vermont, 802-388-6337.

Dated at Middlebury, Vermont this 4th day of June, 2026.

Plaintiff, ACCT MOBILE HOME PARKS, LLC,
by DEPPMAN LAW PLC, its attorneys

By: /s/ Lesley Deppman
Lesley Deppman, Esq.
Deppman Law PLC
56 Court Street
Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 388-6337; (802) 382-8840 (fax)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION Starksboro Municipal Planning Consultation

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) will meet on **Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 6:30PM**, for a public hearing with the Town of Starksboro's Planning Commission.

The meeting will take place in person, with a hybrid option, at the Starksboro Town Clerk's Office located at 2849 VT Route 116, Starksboro, VT 05487. Virtual log-in directions below.

As per 24 V.S.A. §4350, ACRPC will consult with Starksboro in regards to the municipality's planning efforts, ascertain Starksboro's planning needs, identify needed assistance from ACRPC, and confirm that the municipality is:

- (1) is engaged in a continuing planning process that, within a reasonable time, will result in a plan that is consistent with the goals contained in section 4302 of this title;
- (2) is engaged in a process to implement its municipal plan, consistent with the program for implementation required under section 4382 of this title; and
- (3) is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82530598773?pwd=N0F6NwVpOaGNTUTG8reWgxVTlGbWFLdz09> Meeting ID: 825 3059 8773
Passcode: PC#2023s

One tap mobile
+16469313860,,82530598773#,,,,*77676350# US
Dial by your location
+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 825 3059 8773
Passcode: 77676350
Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82530598773>

Questions, please call either:
Danelle Birong, Community Planner, ACRPC, 802-388-3141
Dennis Casey, Planning Commission Chairperson, Town of Starksboro, 802-453-2639

TOWN OF ADDISON NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS PROCESS & DATES FOR 2026 GRIEVANCES

Grievance hearing will be held at the Addison Town Clerk's Office Friday, June 26, Saturday, June 27, Monday, June 29 and Tuesday, June 30 starting at 9:00AM – 3:00PM. All grievance hearings by appointment only. Please make an appointment by following instructions sent in the mail. All grievances must be in writing and delivered at the Town Clerk's Office on or before June 26, 2026

Title 32. Vermont Statutes Annotated. Section 4111 (G) says:

"A person who feels aggrieved by the action of the Listers and desires to be heard by them, shall, on or before the day of the grievance meeting, file with them his (or her) objections in writing and may appear in person or by his (her) agents or attorneys. Upon the hearing of such grievance the parties thereto may submit such documentary or sworn evidence as shall be pertinent thereto."

Town of Addison Board of Listers:
William Munoff
Terry Cutich
John Spencer

TOWN OF CORNWALL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Cornwall Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, July 1st, 2026 at 7 pm.

The hearing will be held in person at the Town Hall and by Zoom. A meeting link and a dial in number will be published on the agenda for the meeting.

Purpose of the hearing:

To hear an application for a waiver brought by Rebecca Kinkead and Robert Murphy in connection with the proposed minor subdivision on a 185.6 acre parcel located at 83 Abernathy Place, Cornwall.

The applicant seeks to divide their lot into two separate lots, Lot 1 with 178.9 acres, containing the existing barns/agricultural buildings and existing art studio with 1-bedroom Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). Lot 2 will be 6.72 acres and contain the existing single-family residence.

Electronic copies of this application are available to the public on the Town's website, www.cornwallvt.com. The application is also available to the public at the Cornwall Town Clerk's office, 2629 Route 30, Cornwall, Vermont.

Persons wishing to be heard at this public hearing, or their representatives (a licensed Vermont Attorney or an authorized agent), may participate in the hearing by using the online meeting link or the dial in number, or in person. Participation in this public hearing is a prerequisite to the right to make subsequent appeal.

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police are seeking information on the driver who crashed their car in Goshen this past Thursday and then left.

On June 4 at around 10 minutes after 1 p.m., troopers responded to a report of a crash on Gap Road, east of Hathaway Road in Goshen. Police report that someone was driving a 2007 Subaru Impreza eastbound when the car crossed into the oncoming lane, left the roadway and struck a tree. The car was judged to be a total loss.

The driver fled the scene before troopers arrived.

Anyone with information related to this incident is asked to contact the New Haven barracks of the state police at 802-388-4919.

State police also dealt with two other local crashes.

The first crash took place on June 2 at a quarter to 5 p.m., when state police responded to a one-car crash on Monkton Road just south of Bristol Pond fishing access in Bristol.

Troopers report that Jacques H. Bickford, 24, was driving a 2013 Toyota Camry southbound on Monkton Road, lost control of the vehicle, crossed the centerline, traveled onto the shoulder of the road and struck a telephone pole, causing the pole to break. No injuries were reported.

State police detected signs of impairment, so they took Bickford into custody for suspicion of driving under the influence (DUI) and transported him to the New Haven barracks for processing. They cited Bickford

for DUI and released him.

Vermont State Police were assisted by Bristol police and fire.

Shortly after that, the second crash took place on June 2 just before 5:30 p.m. when a 2021 Chevy Equinox crashed in the vicinity of Route 116 and Stetson Road in Bristol. Like in the Goshen incident, here the SUV left the road and struck a tree head-on. The driver, identified as Kayla Tremblay, 34, of Penacook, N.H., was taken to UVM Medical Center for treatment of moderate injuries. Police report that she was not wearing a seatbelt.

The Equinox sustained moderate front-end damage.

Troopers were assisted on scene by Bristol fire and rescue.

In other recent activity, state police:

- On June 2 at around 4:20 p.m. responded to a disturbance outside a Lazy Brook Drive home in Starksboro. Police allege that David Hold, 64, of Starksboro engaged in violent, tumultuous, and threatening behavior directed at specific persons in a public place. The cited him for aggravated disorderly conduct. Police said the victims in this case were three adults in their 20s and three juveniles.

- On June 5 at around 11 p.m. logged a report of a noise disturbance at a home on South Bingham Street in Cornwall. State police responded and ended up citing Gary Ryan Atwood for two counts of violating conditions of release.



RONNIE METCALF CARRIES the Special Olympics torch through Middlebury alongside Middlebury Police Chief Jason Covey on the afternoon of Thursday, June 4. The run along Route 7, accompanied by more than half a dozen police officers, was one of more than 40 torch-carrying routes by Vermont police forces this week. Ultimately, they all ended at St. Michael's College in Colchester for Friday's opening ceremonies and Saturday's Special Olympics competitions.

Independent photo/Steve James

Three cases are flagged for special investigations

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police this past week referred three cases to the Addison County Unit for Special Investigations. Two of them involved alleged sexual offenses, both referred to special investigations on June 1. The third case, referred on June 3, involved a vulnerable adult. No further details were available at press time.

In other action last week, Middlebury police:

- In what police are ascribing to a mental health episode, removed an "out-of-control" guest from the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel who was alleged to have flooded his room at around 11:30 p.m. on June 1. Police also served the guest with a no-trespass order for the Marriott property.
- On June 1, took into protective custody a person on Bakery Lane whom police described as being "incapacitated by alcohol and unable to stand, walk or talk." Police said the person was initially

Middlebury Police Log

taken to Porter Hospital and then taken to a detox facility in Rutland by an Addison County Sheriff's Department deputy.

- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS on a medical call in the Exchange Street area on June 1.
- Assisted a Vermont State Police trooper in processing a driving under the influence (DUI) suspect on June 2.
- Arrested Brittany Aunchman, 31, on an outstanding warrant on June 2.
- Investigated a potential criminal threatening complaint at a Court Street location on June 2. Police said the case remains under investigation.
- Arrested a juvenile driver for

allegations of eluding a police officer and negligent operation of a motor vehicle, following an incident on Route 7 South during the afternoon of June 2.

- Investigated two separate reports of minors being in possession of tobacco on the Middlebury Union High School campus on June 2.
- Responded to a noise complaint at a Dutton Lane residence in East Middlebury on June 3.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS officials on a medical call in the Court Street area on June 3.
- Checked on a "juvenile problem" at Middlebury Union Middle School on June 3.
- Enforced municipal parking rules downtown on June 3, 4 and 5.
- Following a June 4 traffic stop near the intersection of Cross and Main streets, cited Taran Hopkins, 31, of Middlebury for DUI. Police said they measured Hopkins's blood-alcohol content at 0.129%, the legal limit for driving is 0.08.
- Assisted Middlebury and Ripton firefighters at the scene of a car fire off Route 125 East on June 4.
- Responded to a report of an "intoxicated and aggressive" man at the town gazebo on June 4.
- Checked on a "school-related issue" at MUMS on June 4.
- Provided traffic control and participated in the Special Olympics torch run through downtown Middlebury on June 4.
- Cited William Prater, 32, of Proctor for eluding law enforcement in a grossly negligent manner and excessive speed, following an attempted traffic stop on Court Street on June 5. Police allege that Prater fled the scene at "excessive speeds," prompting

police to end their chase so as not to endanger the public. A police investigation let them to Prater's motorcycle, which they seized as evidence.

- Helped an Addison County Sheriff's Department deputy process a DUI suspect on June 5.
- Helped Green Mountain Power at the scene of a downed wire on Quarry Road on June 5.
- Conducted traffic control on June 5 for the Middlebury Union High School parade on Court Street preceding the annual awards ceremony.
- Checked on a report of two people arguing in a vehicle parked off Seminary Street Extension on June 5.
- Assisted a person experiencing a mental health crisis in the Case Street area on June 5.
- Were informed that trash had been dumped on a portion of the Abbey Pond Trail on June 6. Police continue to investigate the case.
- Served a no-trespass order on June 6 on a person who wasn't wanted at a Washington Street location.
- Responded to a reported verbal dispute between two Cedar Court neighbors on June 6.
- Located a set of keys on June 6 that a person had lost in a North Pleasant Street parking lot.
- Helped a driver who had run out of gas for their vehicle on Route 7 near the Sugar House Motel on June 6.
- Investigated a report of a suspicious vehicle on Court Street on June 7.
- Tended to a "juvenile issue" in the Buttolph Drive area on June 7.
- Were informed of a theft from a Court Street property on June 7. Police said the case remains under investigation.

Public Notices

can be found in this
ADDISON INDEPENDENT on Pages 9B and 10B.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Cellco Partnership and its controlled affiliates doing business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) is proposing to collocate antennas at 47-ft on a 39-foot Building located at 86 Main Street, Middlebury, Addison County, Vermont 05753. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Project 260067707PR, EBI Consulting, 21 B Street, Burlington, MA 01803, EBI@EBIReplies@ebiconsulting.com or at (617) 715-1822.

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH NOTICE OF HEARING

The Ferrisburgh Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold the following public hearing on **Wednesday, July 1, 2026**, beginning at 7PM, at the Ferrisburgh Town Office at 3279 US Route 7 and remotely via Zoom:

Application Number 26-076: New contractor's yard with on-site stone-cutting operation, approximately 36,000sf of new building construction (enclosed shop/storage building, office building, and two lean-to structures) and associated site work; Applicant: Birdseye Building Company; north side of Tupper's Crossing; Parcel ID 10/01/58.2 Lots 3A & 3B; Mixed-Use District (MU-2); Conditional Use.

The files for the above application are available for inspection at the Town Office, Monday through Friday from 8am to 4pm. Applications will also be posted to the town website (ferrisburghvt.org) by the Friday before the hearing. Written comments may be submitted before the hearing at the Town Office or by email to zoning@ferrisburghvt.org. **NOTE: Participation in this local proceeding is prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.**

Remote access via Zoom:
Direct link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85348244829?pwd=bxd0K1x18CbdNTPzU2pbHAMAz3v2F3.1>

Or go to Zoom.com, select "Meet" from top menu bar, then "Join Meeting," or call 646-558-8656 to join by phone. Meeting ID = 853 4824 4829 / Passcode = 979133

LEGAL NOTICE:

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF LAW PRACTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Flynn Law PLC, mailing address P.O. Box 292, Middlebury VT, will cease the practice of law, effective July 29th, 2026.

All active clients are currently being notified directly regarding the status of their pending legal matters and transfer of their files.

Any former clients who wish to retrieve their physical or digital file or obtain information regarding their closed matters must contact the law office not later than June 29th, 2026 through the following:

Phone: (802) 349-2772
Email: kelly@flynnlaw.info
Mail: P.O. Box 292, Middlebury, VT 05753

If the files are not claimed by July 2nd, 2026, they will be stored for a period of seven years after the matter closed.

Dated: June 3, 2026
Kelly Flynn
Flynn Law, PLC
P.O. Box 292
Middlebury VT 05753

STATE OF VERMONT, SUPERIOR COURT PROBATE DIVISION, ADDISON UNIT DOCKET NO.: 26-PR-1928 IN RE ESTATE OF: ORVAL DAVIS NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To the Creditors of: Orval Davis, late of Orwell, Vermont. I have been appointed to administer this estate. All creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate must present their claims in writing within four (4) months of the first publication of this notice. **The claim must be presented to me at the address listed below with a copy sent to the Court. The claim may be barred forever if it is not presented within the four (4) month period.**

Dated: 06/03/26

Paul S. Kulig, Facey Goss & McPhee PC
PO Box 578, Rutland, VT 05702
(802) 773-3300
pkulig@fgmvt.com

Publication: Addison Independent
Publication Date: 6/11/26
Name of Probate Court: Vermont Superior Court, Addison Unit, Probate Division
Address of Court: 7 Mahady Court, Middlebury, VT 05753

ADDISON COUNTY MAPLE SUGARMAKERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, June 18th 2026, at 6pm
at Burnham Hall, 52 E. River Road, Lincoln, VT.

AGENDA WILL INCLUDE:

- 1.) Review of Financials
- 2.) Field Days overview
- 3.) Election of Officers
- 4.) Any other business deemed necessary

TOWN OF RIPTON NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

Notice is hereby given in accordance with 32 VSA §4111 that on June 2, 2026 the Listers lodged the Abstract of the 2026 Grand List in the office of the Town Clerk. Grievances must be received in writing at the Town Office by 5:00 p.m., June 17, 2026. The listers will meet June 17th at 5:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Grievance hearings are by appointment. Contact the listers at listers@riptonvt.org, 802-388-2266, or PO Box 10, Ripton, VT 05766.

Ripton Board of Listers: Alison Joseph Dickinson, Beth Eliason, Erik Eriksen

Stop by any of these 50+ locations for your copy of Addison County's award-winning community newspaper!

Interested in selling the *Addison Independent* at your business?
Call Sean at 802.388.4944 or email frontdesk@addisonindependent.com.



ADDISON:

- West Addison General Store

BRANDON:

- Brandon Discount Beverage
- Champlain Farms
- Hannaford
- Green Mountain Market
- Junction Store & Deli
- Morningside Bakery
- Union Street Grocery
- Walgreen's

BRIDPORT:

- Broughton's Big Country Hardware
- Pratt's Store

BRISTOL:

- Bristol Country Store
- Bristol Discount Beverage
- Champlain Farms
- Maplefields

SHAW'S

- Walgreen's

EAST MIDDLEBURY:

- Goodro Lumber
- Green Mountain Market
- Maplefields

FERRISBURGH:

- Green Mountain Market

LEICESTER:

- Leicester General Store

LINCOLN:

- Lincoln General Store

MIDDLEBURY:

- Addison Independent Office
- Champlain Farms
- Costello's Market
- Greg's Market
- Hannaford
- Hare and the Dog
- Kinney Drugs
- Maplefields
- Middlebury Discount Beverage

MIDDLEBURY NATURAL

- Foods Co-op
- Otter Creek Bakery
- Rosie's
- Shaw's
- Stewart's Shop
- Stone Mill Public Market
- Vermont Book Shop
- Vermont's Own
- Village Depot
- Walgreen's

NEW HAVEN:

- Village Green Market
- Rivers Bend Campground (seasonal)

N. FERRISBURGH:

- Stewart's Shop
- Russell Memorial Library

ORWELL:

- Orwell Free Library

RIPTON:

- Ripton Country Store

SALISBURY:

- Kampersville Store (seasonal)

SHOREHAM:

- Shoreham Service Center

STARKSBORO:

- Jerusalem 4-Corners Store

VERGENNES:

- BJ's Farm Supply
- Champlain Farms
- Hare and the Dog
- Kinney Drugs
- Shaw's
- Maplefields Vergennes

WHITING

- Whiting General Store

ALSO AVAILABLE AT:

- Eastview at Middlebury
- Porter Hospital/Rehab

ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT
Serving Addison County, Vt. Since 1946

ARTS & RECREATION

The Addison Independent

June 11, 2026

DJ FATTIE B GETS PEOPLE TO OPEN UP WITH A NEW GAME

Kyle Thompson, also known as DJ Fattie B, holds the board game "Drop the Needle" he created that encourages people to open up about their memories and opinions relating to music. Thompson now lives in Vergennes and wears many hats as a musician, DJ, graphic designer and producer.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KYLE THOMPSON

From dropping out of college to rap in one of Vermont's most beloved bands to writing a book about DJing and creating Vermont's 2022 Best Hip-Hop Album, it seems like Kyle Thompson would be satisfied with his artistic ventures.

By **JING WILLIAMS**

Yet Thompson, better known as DJ Fattie B, hasn't stopped creating new and innovative art. This time, he's produced a board game and

an app designed to connect people on a deeper level by talking about music and life stories.

Both the game, "Drop the Needle," and app, "yovogo," provide curated questions, from light-hearted to achingly personal, inviting people to sit down with friends, family and even strangers to chat about everything from the creepiest song they know to the last time

they surprised themselves.

Thompson, 56, a Vergennes resident who grew up in Bristol, has always been captivated by the power of storytelling through music and design. While attending Mt. Abe, he started DJing with his brother at drug-free parties for teens from Bristol, Vergennes and Middlebury. He loved the experience and a month into an accounting degree at Champlain College, was rapping over a beat at a party when he was invited to audition for a band. He got in as a rapper and the band Belizbeha was born.

Dropping out of college, Thompson spent the next nine years on the road, performing around 250 gigs per year across the U.S. and overseas.

"We had no internet, no money, no GPS,"

Thompson said. "We were just 20-year-olds in a van driving around the country, trying to find the next gig ... the fact that our parents all trusted us to do it and that we did it, it's pretty cool."

"I'VE ALWAYS JUST HAD THAT KIND OF 'WHY CAN'T I' ATTITUDE."

— Kyle Thompson

The band dissolved around 2001, and Thompson went back to Champlain as a graphic design and media communications double major. He started DJing again, beginning a decades-long stint at Club Retronome (a regular Saturday night '80s dance party at Burlington's Club Metronome), where crazy events were the norm. When something salacious

happened, Thompson would rip off a piece of paper, write a few words and shove it in his bag. Years later, when he opened the bag

See **GAME** on page 2



Emily Joeckel Smith will be the first "Artist of the Month" featured at the Brandon Artists Guild on Center Street in Brandon. Her work will open on June 12 with an artist talk from 7-8:30 p.m.

COURTESY IMAGE

Brandon Artists Guild kicks off summer artist talk series with stained glass artist, June 12

The Brandon Artists Guild is launching its 2026 "Artist of the Month" Artist Talk series — a five-part program running through the summer and fall. The series opens with a talk by featured artist Emily Joeckel Smith, a stained-glass artist and traditional glass painter, whose work transforms light and color into striking visual narratives. The first event will be held on Friday, June 12, from 7-8:30 p.m., at the Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center Street in Brandon. Come at 6 p.m. for a free social hour with light refreshments. Free and open to all

Smith will share her journey into the ancient and luminous art of stained glass — from her inspirations and creative process to the technical mastery behind cutting, painting and assembling glass into finished works of art. Guests will have the opportunity to view Smith's pieces up close, ask questions and connect.

"My work centers on animals and the subtle connections they share with the larger rhythms of the universe and with one another," Smith said. "As a stained-glass artist and traditional glass painter, I draw inspiration from the quiet magic of the natural world."

For more information contact 802-247-4956, hello@BrandonArtistsGuild.org or visit BrandonArtistsGuild.org.

GAME

continued from page 1

"I was a 400-pound '80s DJ," primarily on his couch with a headset that transcribed his words.

During a cardiac scare in 2021, Thompson was feeling extremely low when he received a Facebook message from a fan named Jada that turned everything around. Jada heard Thompson was sick and wrote that her son Reese was thinking of him and going through his own cardiac issues. Thompson saw the message from Reese as a sign from the universe and realized he wanted to make an album about signs like this one. So he did. His album "Gumbo" won Best Album at the 2022 Vermont Hip Hop awards and even featured Reese on the drums in the song "Good Heart Money," about giving while expecting nothing in return.

Needless to say, when Thompson is inspired to do something, he's determined to make it happen.

"I've always just had that kind of 'why can't I' attitude."

So, in 2024 he started a podcast called "3Some," where he interviews people about why certain songs have such deep-seated connections to our memories.

And when Thompson's sister Stephanie Larsen asked him eight months ago if he could create a game about music and memories, Thompson thought "why not?" Observing positive feedback to Thompson's podcast 3Some, where guests discuss three songs that hold significant meaning in their lives, Larsen saw the potential for a game discussing music and memories. Perhaps a deck of questions, where the person with the best answer or story would win the round.

Thompson jumped on the idea, using his graphic design experience for the cards, box and questions. Now, the game "Drop the Needle" is finalized and available to pre-order at droptheneedlegame.com. The first 1,000 games are expected by August and by the third order Thompson hopes to have them in distribution in larger stores.

The questions, many submitted by his friends, range from "Name a song you love but from an artist you can't stand" to "What song played at your first school dance?" The game is family friendly, but Thompson is excited to release expansion packs like the "spicy pack" every

and spread the memories on his kitchen table, his wife at the time suggested he write a book about them. So he did, writing

"THEY WERE ALL SAYING TO THIS ONE WOMAN, THANKS FOR SHARING THIS AND SHE SAID, 'I DIDN'T INTEND TO CRY TODAY,' BUT THAT'S WHAT THESE CONNECTION STORIES DO. **YOU OPEN UP AND YOU LET YOUR SOUL OUT AND PEOPLE CONNECT TO THAT.**"

— Kyle Thompson



few months, to mix the game up.

After hosting two demo parties, Thompson feels confident the game brings people together and creates intriguing conversation, based on the crying and howling laughter he heard.

"For one of the groups, five minutes before I walked over, they were laughing and then hugging and crying to each other and it was not a sad thing, it was a beautiful thing," Thompson said. "They were all saying to this one woman, thanks for sharing this and she said, 'I didn't intend to cry today,' but that's what these connection stories do. You open up and you let your soul out and people connect to that."

Thompson wanted a portion of the profit to go toward charity, so a friend suggested Musicians on Call, a nonprofit that brings celebrities like Noah Kahan and Kelly Clarkson into hospitals to play for patients and staff. Thompson was hooked and decided 10% of each game will be donated to MOC.

"They're angels on Earth," Thompson said. "So I reached out to them, and the rep suggested we can have the games in the rooms of these families whose loved one is at the end of their life and they could be having these conversations."

At the end of a call with the MOC representative, she suggested it would be great if conversations prompted by the game were recorded so family members could listen when their loved one was gone. Thompson

Continued on next page

thought of his own parents and grandparents and how he wished he could still listen to their stories. So in his typical “why not” attitude, Thomas started on an app, just after the call two months ago.

Yovogo, with “yovo” standing for your voice, was designed by Thompson and Mike Stolarz of Capacitor Design Network. On yovogo, users create “group pods” with whomever they want, from big groups to one-on-one. A user can select a category of questions, and a long list appears to choose from, or they can create a custom question. Users then send a question to their pod, and each records an answer.

After recording, pod members can listen to each answer one after the other, which Thompson calls “family brunch,” where everyone sits down to listen, feeling connected even when far away from others.

The app also records conversations in real time, with pre-selected or custom questions. When a custom question is entered, the user will be asked if they want to submit it as a potential game addition. Similarly, in Drop the Needle, users can submit their own question ideas, which if accepted, will display their name on the card.

One feature of yovogo that Thompson is excited about is recording stories and conversations over a photograph, so they are forever linked.

“If you had a picture of your grandfather in his uniform about to go to war, you could send it



“Drop the Needle” has 150 cards with different questions prompting conversations about personal experiences with music. Many of the questions were submitted by Thompson’s friends and game players will have their own opportunity to submit their questions to the game.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KYLE THOMPSON

and say, grandpa, tell me where your mind and your heart was when this was taken. When he hits record, it attaches the audio to that picture, so anytime you open that after he’s gone, his voice is automatically talking to you.”

The app has many potential uses, Thompson said, especially for recording family stories. A father of his friend was recently diagnosed with

“WE HAD NO INTERNET, NO MONEY, NO GPS. WE WERE JUST 20-YEAR-OLDS IN A VAN DRIVING AROUND THE COUNTRY, TRYING TO FIND THE NEXT GIG... THE FACT THAT OUR PARENTS ALL TRUSTED US TO DO IT AND THAT WE DID IT, IT’S PRETTY COOL.”

– Kyle Thompson

early-onset dementia, and plans to use the app to record for his family as much as possible before he starts to decline.

“It’s crazy to think about, but it’s a really intense and beautiful way to tell people what this app is about,” Thompson said.

After two rounds of beta testing, the app will go on the market. If invited to join a group pod, users won’t have to pay, but to create their own, they will pay a small amount. Both the game and app will fill a need we have to connect deeply right now, Thompson said, and he’s confident both will take off quickly.

“The common theme of what I’ve tried to curate with the podcast, game and the app is human connectivity and sharing stories that matter,” he said. “I feel like it’s such a weird world right now where we don’t sit down and really speak to each other anymore. It’s a rare thing and these are all products that get us to do that.”



Kyle Thompson has been DJing professionally for over 25 years at a variety of venues and occasions, including at Club Metronome, where the inspiration for his book “I was a 400-pound DJ” came from. He started to learn DJing the summer after his seventh-grade year and has been making new mashups and tracks ever since.

SUPPORTING RECOVERY, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

with Jane Lindholm of Vermont Public

**JUNE 18, 2026 FROM 6-8 PM
TOWN HALL THEATER
MIDDLEBURY, VT**

Join us for a community conversation about the state of addiction, recovery, and peer support in Addison County!

This is a free event hosted by the Turning Point Center of Addison County



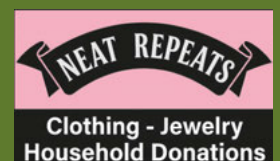
Turning Point Center
OF ADDISON COUNTY



Pre-registration encouraged.

Scan code to register now!

With special thanks to:



UPCOMING MUSIC

Ripton's Sarah King releases first song since cancer diagnosis

Award-winning singer/songwriter Sarah King from Ripton joined forces with longtime friend and occasional musical collaborator John Galgano (IZZ, Renaissance) to record an ethereal, poignant cover of Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here" last summer, as part of studio time she won from the Great River Folk Festival Songwriter Competition (La Crosse, WI) in 2023. The track showcases a more dreamy, plaintive side of King's vocals, often previously praised for their power and strength. Galgano arranged and recorded all instruments from his home studio on Long Island, keeping the guitars close to the original, while adding lush layers to support King's mournful harmonies. King opted to give a nod to another Pink Floyd favorite, "Great Gig in the Sky," with improvised wails as the song builds, also in part, as she says, "to prove to myself I could still sing."

King has had a wild ride since 2024's release of her debut solo album "When It All Goes Down."

Diagnosed with thyroid cancer just three days after the album dropped, she canceled all performances after Grace Potter's Grand Point North that July — a festival appearance King called her "temporary farewell" show. Four days later she underwent her first surgery to remove over 70 lymph nodes from her neck.

After months of nerve-wracked waiting and worst-case scenarios, multiple surgeries, radiation, and vocal rehab, she returned to performing briefly in 2025, but tragedy struck again: her father died unexpectedly in July 2025.

"My dad had become my biggest supporter," King said. "Despite his own challenges, he came to every performance I had in eastern Massachusetts, was always the first to buy new merch or support crowdfunding and made sure I knew he always had my back... Suddenly, I became an orphaned young adult with cancer, and I felt so alone and lost."

King held up her end of the contracted shows on her calendar, with the first a mere two weeks after her father's death.

"Town Hall Theater graciously offered to postpone the show, but I knew my father would have personally crawled back from his watery grave, waving his crutches, had I even considered



Sarah King and John Galgano release an ethereal cover of Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here" to honor their late fathers.

COURTESY IMAGES

canceled a show on his behalf," King reflected. "He loved live music."

King returned to Wisconsin to play the sets she'd earned by winning the 2023 Songwriter Contest and planned to utilize the studio time with Brett Huus at Sound Strations during her trip.

Galgano and King had once played "Wish You Were Here" on the fly at an acoustic show years ago, and she knew how familiar he was with the instrumentation. They'd often said they should record their version "someday" — and that someday had arrived. Galgano noted the timing felt right for him too — his wife's father had also died the year before. His instrumental arrangement and her vocals came together beautifully across the miles, but neither musician had a concrete release day in mind.

See MUSIC on page 15

NEW ON THE POINT music Presents

SONGBOOKS

Main Street Landing Lake Lobby and Film House
60 Lake St, Burlington

JUNE 12
Free and open to the public

Community Singing Workshop (4-5pm): Learn a Ukrainian folk song, try out some new vocal techniques, share positive energy through song! Register here and then stay for our free concert. →

Songbooks Concert (5:30-6:30pm): Wander through an immersive performance experience (no registration required)

JESSICA'S
AT
SWIFT HOUSE INN

SUMMER HOURS

Wednesdays - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Thursdays - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Fridays - 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Saturdays - 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Sundays - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Mondays - Closed
Tuesdays - Closed

The Blue Bar at Jessica's
Is Open 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Seven Days a Week

BOOK ON OPENTABLE

ART ON EXHIBIT

BRANDON ARTISTS GUILD

7 Center St. Brandon. For more info visit brandonartistsguild.org or call 802-247-4956.

Artist of the Month Series: Emily Joeckel Smith.

Emily Joeckel Smith is a stained-glass artist and traditional glass painter, whose work transforms light and color into striking visual narratives. An opening reception and artist talk will be held Friday, June 12, from 7-8:30 p.m., at the Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center Street in Brandon. Come at 6 p.m. for a free social hour with light refreshments. Free and open to all. On view through June.

EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury.

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-458-0098 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"Homer Wells: A Retrospective." The work of Monkton artist Homer Wells will include both wall-based works and sculptural pieces, tracing the evolution of his practice and highlighting the innovation that has defined his career. On view through July 5.

EDGEWATER ON THE GREEN

6 Merchants Row, Middlebury

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-989-7419 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"To Belong," a new body of work by Rory Jackson that moves between two landscapes he calls home: the mountains and fields of central Vermont and the coastal fishing villages of western Ghana. On view May 23-June 21.

JACKSON GALLERY

68 S Pleasant Street, Middlebury

Visit townhalltheater.org/jackson-gallery or call 802-382-9222 for more info.

"Abstractions." Created over decades, this exhibit shows award-winning Burlington architect Tom Cullins's art in tandem with his prolific career. Shape and shadow, negative space, and carefully chosen color palettes are distilled into abstractions that illustrate the essence of the place and time that inspired him. The exhibition will include works in watercolor and mixed media, photographs and wooden assemblages. On view May 26 through Aug. 8.

JOHNSON EXHIBITION GALLERY

78 Chateau Road, Middlebury

For hours and info visit middlebury.edu/events

"Spring Reunion." This second annual Middlebury College alumni art exhibition showcases recent work by Middlebury class of 1986 alumni John Aicher, Monica Carroll, Cynthia Kirkwood, John Moyers, Elizabeth Needham and Phoebe Twichell Peterson. The Johnson Exhibition Gallery and the Studio Art Department proudly support this exhibition, 40 years in the making! On view through Aug. 5.

See EXHIBITS on page 12

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. Management opportunities are coming your way, Aries. It is time to step up and take the lead. Your confidence has long been a strong character trait, so push forward.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, patience will pay off big time when a long-awaited piece of news finally arrives. The weekend is a perfect time for walking in nature or tending to the garden.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Your curiosity is leading you down a fascinating path right now, Gemini. This could spark a new interest. Stay flexible, as a last-minute change of plans might be in the cards.

CANCER: June 22/July 22. Cancer, emotional clarity might help you address a minor concern with grace and ease. You often project a gentle strength that helps to draw people closer to you.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. It's time for your inner child to come out to play, Leo. Say yes to a game night or a creative pursuit. Joy will be the primary focus this week, leading you to have more fun.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Virgo, a breakthrough in your wellness routine may be on the horizon, leaving you feeling energized and refreshed. People might notice the glow and ask for your secret.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, artistic inspiration might just be everywhere you look this week. Whether gazing at the clouds or the buildings

around you, you might be inspired to create something.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Transformation is in the air, Scorpio. You might be shedding an old habit for a better one. You may be stepping into a more powerful version of yourself soon enough.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. Sagittarius, it's time to share your knowledge with others, which can bring you a sense of fulfillment that you might not have seen coming.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. Career goals are moving forward at a steady, satisfying pace, Capricorn. Keep your eyes on the future and trust the process. You're doing amazing work.

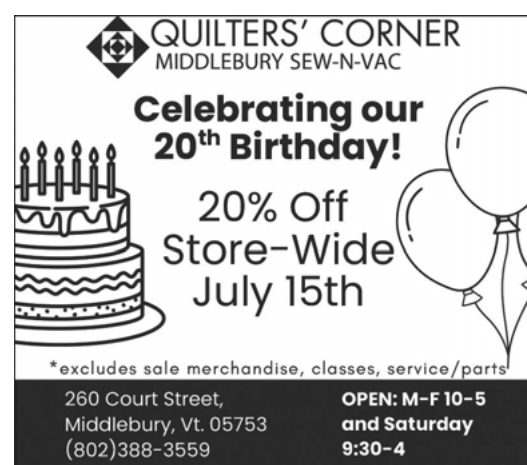
AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Social activism or community work may give you a sense of purpose that is much-needed right now, Aquarius. Your ability to think creatively will help immensely.



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JUNE 13 — Paavo Nurmi, runner (d)
JUNE 14 — Eric Heiden, speedskater (68)
JUNE 15 — Mohammed Salah, soccer player (34)
JUNE 16 — Joyce Carol Oates, writer (88)
JUNE 17 — Venus Williams, tennis player (46)

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 18 — Isabella Rossellini, model & actress (74)
JUNE 19 — Tobias Wolff, writer (81)

CALENDAR

June 11-20

2026

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

"LA TRAVIATA" BY OPERA COMPANY OF MIDDLEBURY IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, June 11, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Merchants Row. A full production of Verdi's "La Traviata," reimagined in the roaring '20s. Pre-show talk with Dr. Danielle Simon at 6:30 p.m. For more info visit townhalltheater.org.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE: CHARLOTTE WILDLIFE REFUGE IN CHARLOTTE.

Thursday, June 11. Easy 2.7-mile hike with gravel and grass paths. Scenic views of farms, the Adirondacks, and Lake Champlain to the west and the Green Mountains to the east. Elevation gain of 250 feet. Allow two hours for the outing. Dogs not allowed on this property. Bring bug spray, snacks and water. Free. Contact Steve Ralph at 802-398-5448 or sralph00@gmail.com to register. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

SPARROW PLEIN AIR FESTIVAL WEEKEND BEGINS IN MIDDLEBURY.

Friday, June 12, 8 a.m.-7 p.m., Sparrow Art Supply. Sign up for a choose-your-own-adventure weekend of outdoor art-making with optional demonstrations and on-site guidance each day. Kickoff at The Blue Bar at Swift House Inn from 5:30-7 p.m. for all registered artists.

Kids' prices and supply bundles available. \$45-\$80. Registration required: sparrowartsupply.com.

FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC IN NEW HAVEN. Friday, June 12, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Brett Hughes & the Honky Tonk Crowd, food from A Taste of Abyssinia and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

"BABEL 46" BY OPERA COMPANY OF MIDDLEBURY YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, June 12, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Merchants Row. See the U.S. premiere of Xavier Montsalvatge's multilingual postwar opera "Babel 46." Pre-show talk with Alejandro Roca at 6:30 p.m. For more info visit townhalltheater.org.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

MONTHLY WILDLIFE WALK IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 13, 7-9 a.m., meet at the parking area of Otter View Park at the intersection of Weybridge Street and Pulp Mill Bridge Road. Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust invite community members to help us survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and the Hurd Grassland. Birders of all ages and abilities welcome. For more information, call 802-388-6019.

"LA TRAVIATA" BY OPERA COMPANY OF MIDDLEBURY IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 13, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Merchants Row. Final performance of Verdi's "La Traviata," reimagined in the roaring '20s. Pre-show talk with Douglas Anderson at 1 p.m. For more info visit townhalltheater.org.

SILENT MOVIE: "THE KID" IN BRANDON. Saturday, June 13, 7 p.m., Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Square. Charlie Chaplin's 1921 classic, also starring a young Jackie Coogan, is shown with live music by Jeff Rapsis. Part of the annual Silent Movie Series featuring live accompaniment. Concessions support future screenings. Free.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE: MT. ABE IN LINCOLN. Saturday, June 13. Hike Mt. Abe from Lincoln Gap. Moderate to strenuous hike of about 5.5 miles round trip with 1,600 feet elevation gain. Panoramic views from the alpine summit. To register, contact Dwight Griesman at dwight.griesman@gmail.com. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

"BABEL 46" BY OPERA COMPANY OF MIDDLEBURY YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, June 14, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Merchants Row.

Final performance of the U.S. premiere of "Babel 46," a powerful one-act opera set in a refugee camp after World War II. Pre-show talk with Patrick Diamond at 1 p.m. For more info visit townhalltheater.org.

SUNDAY SESSIONS: BOB RECUPERO IN MIDDLEBURY.

Sunday, June 14, 4-7 p.m., The Ralph Myhre Golf Course, 317 Golf Course Road (Patio at the Tavern on the Tee). Bob Recupero is known for his soulful voice and masterful guitar playing. His performances, encompassing genres such as Americana, folk and country-blues, offer a heartfelt experience that connects deeply with his audience. Free.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

FREDERIC CHURCH EXHIBIT RECEPTION IN MIDDLEBURY. Wednesday, June 17, 5 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Lower Lobby. As part of this year's celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of the American landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), the Museum has organized the exhibit "Frederic Church in Vermont." It brings together for the first time numerous drawings, oil sketches and finished paintings that were either created during his visits to Vermont or resulted from them.

SUMMER LIVE MUSIC:

ALBANY SOUND IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, June 17, 6-8 p.m., Tillerman, 1868 Route 116. Enjoy live music and tacos, creative cocktails and mocktails, snacks and paletas. Bring your own blankets and chairs for the lawn. There will be some tables and chairs set up. For more info visit thetillermanvt.com/live-music.

FRIENDS OF THE TAM CHIPMAN HILL SUNSET BIRD WALK WITH ELLYN MONTGOMERY IN MIDDLEBURY.

Wednesday, June 17, 7 p.m., Chipman Hill Trailhead on Washington Street Ext. Chipman Hill in the evening comes alive with birdsong. We will stop at several view spots to take in the sunset. Plan on hiking about two miles with some steep parts. Attendees should wear hiking shoes and bring a flashlight or headlamp and a pair of binoculars. We will have a few pairs to share. We will be joined by Kevin Fox, MALT's executive director. Notification of rain postponement by email the day before if needed. Limited to 20 people. Registering in advance is required. Sign up at secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/_OliV05YJwvIYqUlbwA7Zg.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18 GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE: BURNT HILL IN

Continued on next page



View Middlebury Community Television's Schedule Online!



Programs to Look Out For:

- The Talk: Transgender Students - 06/16 - 5PM
- All Things LGBTQ - 06/17 - 5PM
- HCC Board Meeting - Live! 06/18 - 5PM
- MCTV Late Night Lofi - All Night - 10PM
- Democracy Now! - Weekdays - 8AM
- Church Services - Sunday - 7AM

This ad is sponsored by the Addison County Independent middleburycommunitytv.org

HANCOCK. Thursday, June 18. Hike a lovely, quiet section of the Long Trail from Middlebury Gap to Burnt Hill, an area frequented more by moose than people. We will look for signs of moose and learn about trail adoption and trail maintenance. Bring hand clippers and a 1-inch paintbrush if you have them and learn from the "Tom Sawyer" of the field. Moderate hike of five-mile round trip and 1,000 feet elevation gain. Leashed dogs allowed. Contact Morris Earle at [morisearle@gmail.com](mailto:morrisearle@gmail.com) for information or to sign up. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

FRESHIE FRIDAYS CONCERT: REDADMIRAL IN BRISTOL.

Friday, June 19, 5-8 p.m., BCC Botanicals, 140 North Street. An evening of good food, live music, and joyful gathering around the greenhouses. REDAdmiral plays foot-stomping alt-rock garage-grass dance music. For more info visit bristolcollaborativecampus.com.

FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC IN NEW HAVEN.

Friday, June 19, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Blues Without Borders, food from Cravens and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

DOGTEAM THEATRE PROJECT PRESENTS NEW STUDENT WORKS IN

MIDDLEBURY. Friday, June 19, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre. The Dogteam Theatre Project provides transformative experiences for emerging and professional artists. Come enjoy the new work. Free.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20

LET'S GO BIRDING BEGINNER BIRD WALK IN

MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 20, 9-11 a.m., Wright Park parking lot north of Pulp Mill Bridge. Nature enthusiasts of all ages are invited for this bird walk through part of the TAM. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair from OCAS. Local naturalists will offer a station with a hands-on discovery activity. Trail-appropriate snack available. Family-friendly but not appropriate for strollers or wheelchairs. Rain or shine. Contact 713-818-7033.

THE MET LIVE IN HD: "EUGENE ONEGIN" IN

MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 20, 12:15 p.m. talk; 1 p.m. showing, Town Hall Theater, Anderson Studio, 76 Merchants Row. Encore showing of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin." Soprano Asmik Grigorian returns to the Met as Tatiana; baritone Igor Golovatenko reprises his role as Onegin. Directed by Deborah Warner. Timur Zangiev makes his Met conducting debut. Pre-show talk by OCM Chorus Master Nathaniel Lew. Tickets: \$10-\$24.

DOGTEAM THEATRE PROJECT PRESENTS

"DISQUIET" BY IVAN VYRPAEV IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, June 20, 2 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre. In the Manhattan penthouse of reclusive, Nobel-nominated writer Ula Richté, a carefully staged interview with a Polish journalist is meant to cement her legacy. With her agent and lawyer steering every word, the evening begins under tight control — until the script falls apart. What follows is an unguarded reckoning with the dark side of success, the cost of denying one's roots, and the fierce, exhilarating courage it takes to tell the truth. Free.

DOGTEAM THEATRE PROJECT PRESENTS NEW STUDENT WORKS IN

MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 20, 4:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre. See Friday, June 19 listing. Free.

DOGTEAM THEATRE PROJECT PRESENTS THE OAKWOOD PROJECT BY LUCAS KAVNER '06.5 IN

MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, June 20, 7:30 p.m., Mahaney Arts Center Seeler Studio Theatre. Oakwood is a North Hollywood apartment complex that houses young performers and their guardians during brief, hopeful stays in Los Angeles. Around the kids linger the half-permanent residents of a transient industry: an aging acting coach, a struggling actress who never left, college kids drawn by the cheap rent and dorm-like

atmosphere. In Oakwood, nearly everyone is passing through, and nearly everyone is under pressure — to succeed, to belong, and to make the sacrifices mean something. Free.

MILES DONAHUE QUARTET: JAZZ FROM MOVIES & TV IN MIDDLEBURY.

Saturday, June 20, 7:30-9:15 p.m., Town Hall Theater, Rothrock Main Stage, 76 Merchants Row. Featuring celebrated jazz trumpeter, vocalist, composer and educator Miles Donahue, the evening promises an unforgettable mix of jazz standards, original works and beloved classics. The quartet will blend timeless repertoire with virtuosic improvisation and dynamic musical interplay. Tickets: \$15-\$50; cash bar.

PRIDE. RECOVERY. COMMUNITY.
PRIDE MONTH
FILM SERIES

WHEN: Saturdays in June, 2pm

WHERE: Turning Point Center of Addison County

JUNE 13

The Half of It
2020, 13+. A quiet, heartfelt story about connection, loneliness, and self-discovery.

JUNE 20

The Miseducation of Cameron Post
2018, 16+. A moving story of resilience and reclaiming identity in the face of harmful systems.

JUNE 27

Moonlight
2016, 17+. A deeply human story exploring identity, vulnerability, and emotional survival.

LOGISTICS

- FREE, but advance tickets are required.
- Light refreshments provided (while supplies last)

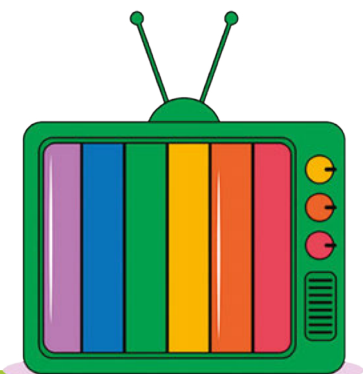
WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- People in recovery (all pathways)
- LGBTQ+ community members
- Allies, friends, and family
- Anyone seeking connection and community

Questions: fable@tpvt.org



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FILM SCREENING

Chaplin's 'The Kid' will screen in Brandon

Silent film with live music returns to Brandon on Saturday, June 13, with a screening of Charlie Chaplin's classic comedy/drama "The Kid" (1921). The film will be presented at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Town Hall and Community

Center, located on Route 7 in Brandon, and will feature live accompaniment by Jeff Rapsis, a New Hampshire-based composer who specializes in creating music for silent films. The program is free and open to the public;



Charlie Chaplin and child actor Jackie Coogan star in "The Kid" (1921), to be screened with live music on Saturday, June 19, at 7 p.m., at the Brandon Town Hall and Community Center, Route 7, in Brandon. The program is free and open to the public; donations are accepted to support silent film programming at Brandon Town Hall.

"CHAPLIN'S FIRST REAL FEATURE MIXES SLAPSTICK AND SENTIMENT IN A WINNING COMBINATION, AS THE TRAMP RAISES A STREETWISE ORPHAN. WONDERFUL FILM LAUNCHED COOGAN AS A MAJOR CHILD STAR, AND IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY."

— Leonard Maltin's *Movie Guide*

donations are accepted to support Brandon Town Hall's silent film programming.

Chaplin was already the world's most popular comedian and filmmaker when he produced "The Kid," his first feature-length project.

The movie, with its daring mix of intense drama and slapstick comedy, proved an instant sensation and marked one of the high points of Chaplin's long career.

"The Kid" follows the story of a tramp (Chaplin) who attempts to raise an orphaned boy on his own. It includes several classic scenes and is highlighted by a sequence in which Chaplin battles authorities attempting to return the child to an orphanage.

Co-starring with Chaplin in "The Kid" was five-year-old Jackie Coogan, who turned in what many critics rank as the best child performance of the entire silent film era. Chaplin himself worked closely with the young Coogan for more than a year to develop the youngster's acting abilities.

Coogan went on to a long career that much later included the role of "Uncle Fester" in the popular 1960s *Addams Family* television show.

The screening enables local audiences to experience silent film as it was intended to be shown: on the big screen, in restored prints, with live music and an audience.

"If you can put pieces of the experience back together again, it's surprising how these films snap back to life," Rapsis said. "By showing the films under the right conditions, you can really get a sense of why people first fell in love with the movies."

In creating music for silent films, Rapsis performs on a digital synthesizer that reproduces the texture of the full orchestra and creates a traditional "movie score" sound.

For more info about the music, visit jeffrapsis.com.

PUZZLES

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ACROSS

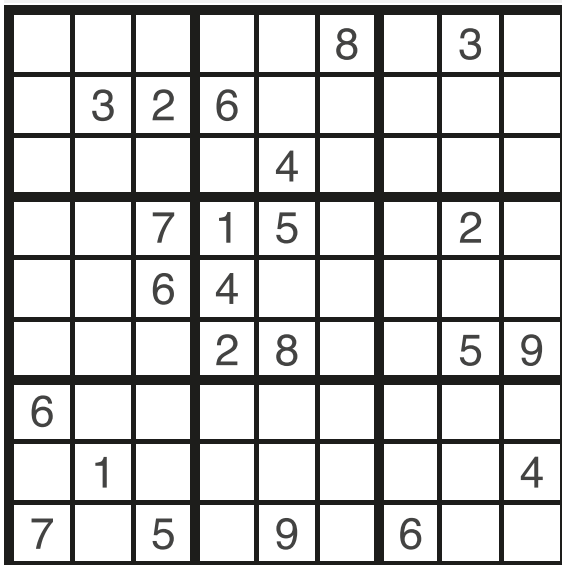
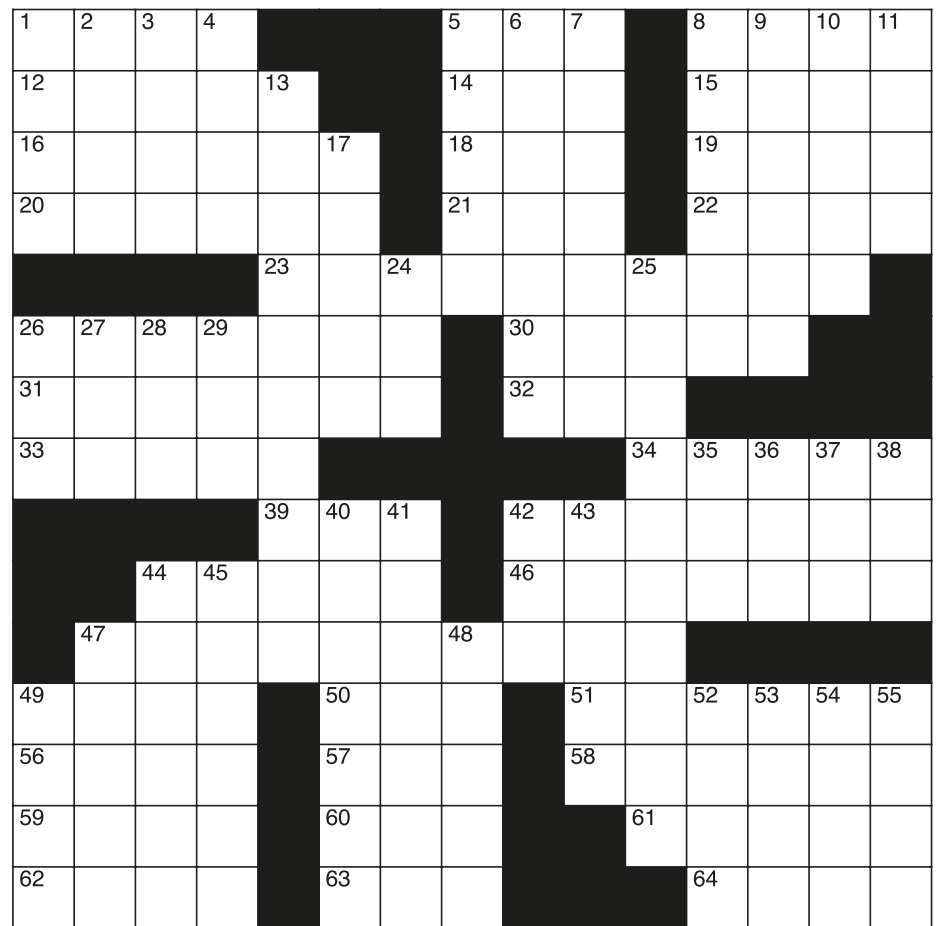
- 1. Sealed with a kiss
- 5. Large sandwich
- 8. Swiss city
- 12. Japanese persimmons
- 14. When you hope to get somewhere
- 15. Wings
- 16. A name of God
- 18. Elected official (informal)
- 19. Abnormal breathing
- 20. "Seinfeld" character
- 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 22. Something for sale
- 23. Gets rid of

- 26. One who touts
- 30. Blemished
- 31. Less than exciting
- 32. Born of
- 33. N. German town
- 34. Notes
- 39. Move away from land
- 42. Vulcanite
- 44. More ignoble
- 46. Child actor Kirk
- 47. Written works
- 49. Sea vessel
- 50. Residue
- 51. Engraved
- 56. Having sufficient skill
- 57. One and only
- 58. Erase
- 59. Broad inlets

- 60. Nightmarish street
- 61. Play again
- 62. Formerly (archaic)
- 63. Add a color to change the color
- 64. Move swiftly and lightly

DOWN

- 1. Scottish island
- 2. River in the Netherlands
- 3. Asian people
- 4. Fuzzy fruit
- 5. Ninth month (abbr.)
- 6. An idealistic social reformer
- 7. What you owe



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

- 8. Colorless mineral
- 9. Overjoyed
- 10. Rattling breaths
- 11. Tropical Old World tree
- 13. A citizen of Senegal
- 17. Greek mythological beauty
- 24. Wrath
- 25. Instrument to measure wind speed
- 26. Luxury carmaker
- 27. Bitterly regret
- 28. Not or
- 29. Google certification
- 35. Midway between northeast and east
- 36. Space station
- 37. Relating to the ears
- 38. Congressman
- 40. Yelled at
- 41. Rudely assertive
- 42. Defunct European money
- 43. Shared one's soul
- 44. Onion rolls
- 45. A way to state clearly
- 47. Relating to a lobe
- 48. Underlying message
- 49. Hollywood pig
- 52. Indicates pitch
- 53. Filament of a feather
- 54. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles
- 55. Diminish

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 15.

SPARROW ART SUPPLY

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FIND THE ARTISTS!

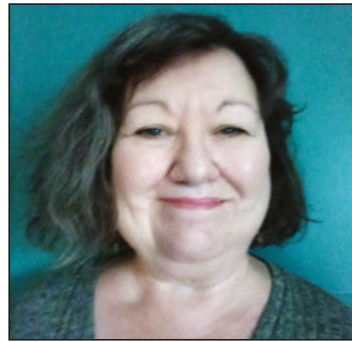
Sparrow Plein Air Festival • June 12-14

Look for easels, sketchbooks, and artists and watch paintings come to life around Middlebury

Limited artist spots still available!

ASK A MASTER GARDENER

GROWING GREAT HYDRANGEAS



Deborah Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener who volunteers as a garden columnist and participates in Bennington County Extension Master Gardener Chapter activities.

Hydrangeas are such a familiar fixture in home gardens, it's easy to assume there's not much you need to know about them. While it's true, they're easy to grow, there are a few things you should know when adding a hydrangea to your yard.

By **DEBORAH J. BENOIT**

Hydrangeas are deciduous shrubs. Some have leaves or flowers that change color as temperatures cool in autumn. They grow well in part shade to full sun in northern climates, with morning sun preferable. They like rich, moist (but not wet) soil and can benefit from supplemental watering during hot, dry weather.

You may have heard that hydrangeas grow on old wood — or new wood. Their flowers are white, or perhaps pink or blue — or that you can change the color of the flowers by amending the soil to make it more acid or more alkaline. While these things may be true (or not), the first thing you need to know about growing hydrangeas is the type of hydrangea you want to grow.

Smooth hydrangeas (*Hydrangea arborescens*) are also called wild hydrangeas. They are native to the eastern and central United States and hardy in U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zones 4 to 7, with some varieties hardy to Zone 3. They produce flowers on new wood (this year's growth), so

prune in late winter or early spring before new growth appears. Flowers form in large clusters of pale green, changing to white as they mature.

Bigleaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), also known as French hydrangeas, are the most common hydrangea grown in the United States. Their flowers will change color depending on the pH of the soil. In acidic soil, flowers will be blue. In alkaline soil, flowers will be pink. Bigleaf hydrangeas are hardy in Zones 5 to 9. Since they bloom primarily on old wood, winter dieback may mean no flowers. Consider planting these hydrangeas in an area protected from harsh winds and provide winter protection. Bigleaf hydrangeas include mountain hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla serrata*) which are hardier than other bigleaf hydrangeas, mophead hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), and lacecap hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla normalis*).

Panicle hydrangeas (*Hydrangea paniculata*) are the most cold-hardy hydrangeas (Zones 3 to 7). They bloom on new wood and bear large, cone-shaped, white flower heads that change to pink as the season progresses.

The leaves of oakleaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) resemble those of an oak tree, making this type of hydrangea relatively easy to identify. Depending on the variety, in autumn leaf color will change to shades ranging from red to purple. They're native to the southeastern United States and hardy in Zones 5 to 9. Oakleaf hydrangeas bloom on old wood and may not flower after a harsh winter. Shelter from strong winds and consider winter protection in colder zones.

For something a bit different, consider climbing hydrangeas (*Hydrangea anomala petiolaris*). This woody vine can grow over 30 feet, so it'll need a sturdy structure for support. It's hardy in Zones 4 to 8. While it can take a while to get established, it produces lacecap-type flowers and will bloom in the shade. Once established, climbing hydrangeas can be quite vigorous. Plant them away from walls that their aerial roots may damage. Prune to keep their size and weight under control.

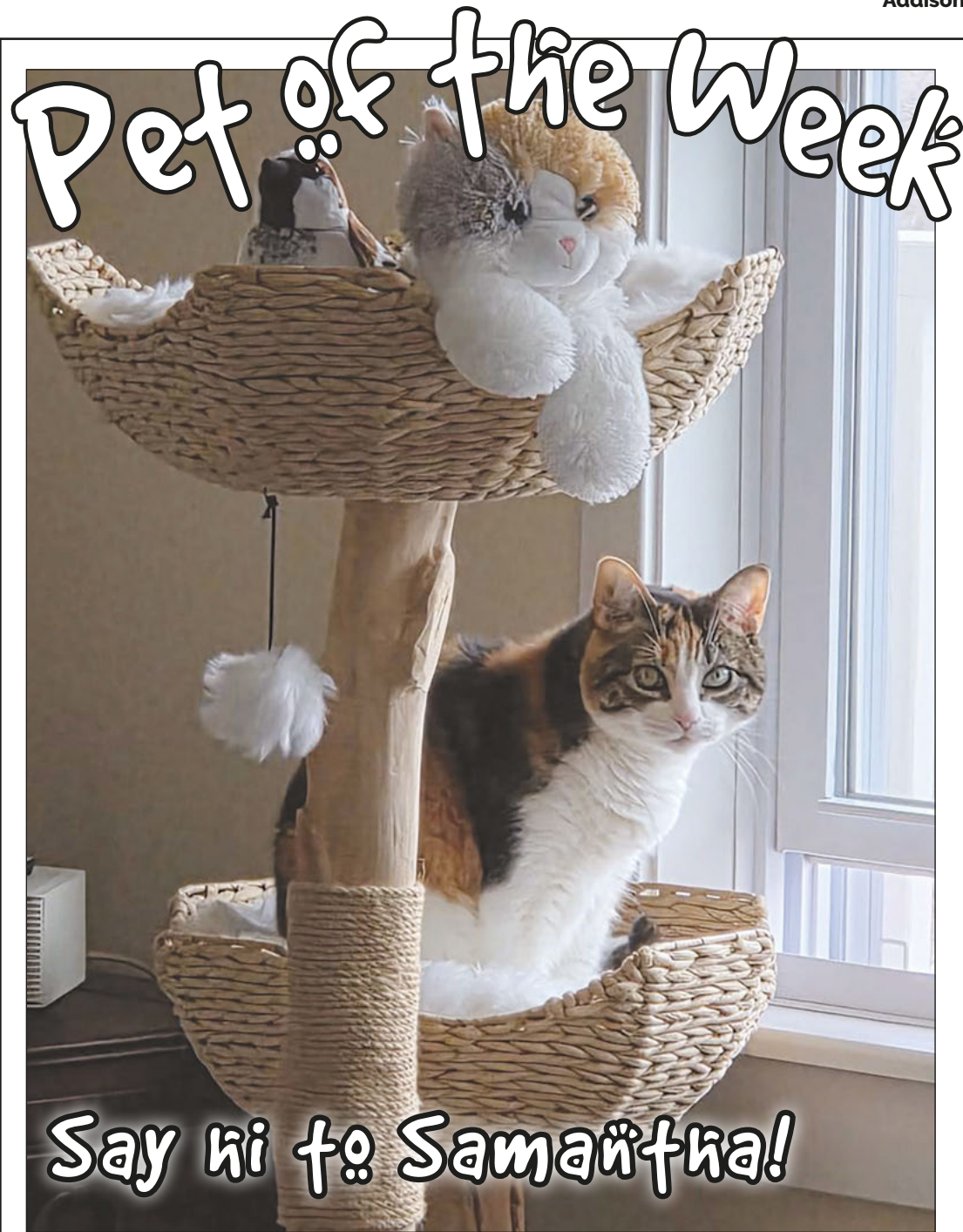
If your hydrangea isn't blooming, the problem



A monarch butterfly on a panicle hydrangea. Although hydrangeas are not the absolute best pollinator plants, they do produce nectar and pollen that attract bees and butterflies.

PHOTO BY DEBRA HELEBA

See **HYDRANGEAS** on page 12



Samantha enjoys her perch with her best friend, Gracie, at the Residence at Otter Creek in Middlebury.

Submitted by Pat Thompson of Middlebury.

Pet of the WEEK

Make your pet famous!
 Submit your pet by scanning the code or emailing a photo and short description to:
elsie@addisonindependent.com

Pets In Need

HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Ox



Ox is a handsome dude who arrived with a couple of his buddies after their family lost their housing. He's very curious and attentive, and he loves to be a lap cat. He would do well to be adopted with one of his friends or to have another cat buddy in his new home.

Piper



Meet **Piper**, a striking 3-year-old dilute calico girl with soft grey and cream tones. She arrived at the shelter after her family could no longer care for her. She has been quite shy since arriving and will need a family who can give her the patience to build her confidence on her own timeline. She is used to being a house cat and is ready to return to that life.

Zoey



Beautiful **Zoey** arrived at the shelter when her family was no longer able to care for her. She was initially very shy, she seemed very uncertain about all of the changes. She's been coming out of her shell day by day and we are now able to see that she is a sweet girl who just needs to get her confidence back. A low-energy home that is willing to be understanding of her timidness would be the best fit for her.

Lennox



Lennox is a striking 2-year-old girl with a one-of-a-kind look and an even more lovable personality. Her absolute favorite pastime is playing fetch with tennis balls, and she'd thrive in an active home where she has plenty of space to run, play, and burn off energy. While she can be a little cautious when meeting new people, Lennox warms up quickly—especially if tasty treats are part of the introduction. Once comfortable, her fun, affectionate side shines through. She's a smart pup who enjoys learning and would do best with an adopter excited to continue building her confidence and working on training together.

Misty



Misty is a very loving senior lady who loves to play with toys and greet people with a wagging tail. This 9-year-old still has a lot of energy but enjoys a good snooze here and there, too. Misty loves food and happily gobbles up both breakfast and dinner. She is quite the talker and thrives on attention. Misty has been successfully treated for skin issues; she looks and feels so much better than when she arrived!

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
 236 Boardman Street | Middlebury, VT

EXHIBITS

continued from page 5

LAKE CHAMPLAIN

MARITIME MUSEUM

4472 Basin Harbor Road,
Vergennes
For more info contact
info@lcmm.org or 802-
475-2022.

"Fragments: Voices of the American Revolution on Lake Champlain." Combining archaeological research, shipwrecks, original artifacts, and first-person accounts, visitors can reflect on the events of the American Revolution on Lake Champlain, including the Battle of Lake Champlain, and the impact it had on people from multiple perspectives. On view May through Oct. 18.

"Parley and Protocol, War and Peace." This exhibition by the Vermont Abenaki Artists Association brings together historical documents, maps, and art with work by present-day American Abenaki artists, sharing Indigenous perspectives on the founding of the United States. On view June through Oct. 18.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

72 Porter Field Road, Middlebury

For more info visit middlebury.edu/museum/exhibitions

"With Time." The photographs in this exhibit range in date, but all feature older adults. None focuses on a choice these individuals made to either fight or embrace the aging process. Instead, the photographers approach their subjects with a spirit of curiosity. Some are portraits, and a few feature celebrities. In the main, though, these are studies of human beings who have simply become who they are with time. On view through Aug. 9.

"Frederic Church in Vermont." This exhibit brings together for the first time more than forty graphite drawings, oil sketches, and finished paintings by Frederic Church created during or as a result of his visits to Vermont over 30 years. On view through Aug. 9.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

"Portals: New Perspectives," juried by Ann Jastrab, explores thresholds, transitions and ways of seeing. Photographs range from literal portals such as windows, doors and mirrors to more conceptual shifts in light, space, and perspective. Featuring artists from around the world, the exhibition includes 35 works in the gallery and 40 in the online gallery. An opening reception will be held on Friday, June 5, from 4-7 p.m., with complimentary mead tastings. Free and open to all. On view through June 27.

PLANK ROAD ART STAND

7824 Plank Rd., Bristol

Open Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays or by appointment.

For more information visit brendamyrickart.com, call 802-458-1415 or email brendamyrickart@gmail.com.

"Past and Present" featuring the artwork of Brenda Myrick, the estate of Barbara Lane, and Jim Lienau. This self-serve roadside gallery is housed in a repurposed horse trailer, lovingly transformed into a one-of-a-kind art space. The art stand features original artwork, hand carved wooden fish, animal step stools, and cards,

with new work being added regularly. On view through October.

ROKEBY MUSEUM

4334 Route 7, Ferrisburgh

For more info visit Rokeby.org or call 802-877-3406

"Help Each Other," is the 2026 seasonal exhibit created by Quaker Pirate, Todd Drake. The Quaker Pirate creates art that challenges us to help one another, to be emotionally and spiritually connected, and to persist and survive in today's world. On view through Oct. 11.

SHELDON MUSEUM

1 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit henrysheldonmuseum.org

"Drawing on the Archive: Tillie Walden's Charity & Sylvia," invites visitors into a layered conversation between past and present, pairing the Museum's archival and object collections with Tillie Walden's contemporary illustrations. Together, these materials illuminate the lives of one of America's earliest documented same-sex couples, who built a shared home, tailoring business, and life in early Vermont. On view May 2-Jan. 2, 2027.

"Time Keeping." Artifacts and archival treasures from the 18th century through today will be presented in conversation with New England contemporary artist Luciana Frigerio's 'Clockworks,' the magically crafted worlds of paper theater within vintage clocks and watch housings. Showcasing stories of far-reaching possibilities in layers of time, Luciana Frigerio's captivating mixed media collages mirror Henry Sheldon's own passion for storytelling through paper and material culture. On view May 2-Jan. 2, 2027.

"Uncovering Wallpaper Design: 1800 – Present." The wallpaper in the Museum's collection tells the story of artistic process, globalization, and design tastes from the 1800s to present day. While wallpaper operates as a backdrop, bringing it to the forefront sheds light on the skill and process of creating these designs. Many the wallpapers on display are block printed. In a contemporary world where so much of production is now automated, these wallpapers invite viewers to slow down and consider the process, layers, and method on display in these prints. On view May 2-Nov. 7.

"Remembering the American Revolution." This exhibition features objects related to the American Revolution, as well as items produced to commemorate those events, notably for the World's Fairs of 1876 and 1926, and the U.S. Bicentennial of 1976. Collected by Henry Sheldon and community members, past and present, these artifacts illuminate how methods of commemoration and exhibition have shaped public memory, attesting to different ideas about American identity, gender roles, race, war and pacifism, rebellion or resistance, across different historical and political contexts. On view May 2-Jan. 2, 2027.

"Icy Artifacts of the Everyday." These objects and photographs from the past speak with the "Tempestry," an artistic display of Addison County climate data, knitted by the hands of nearly 100 current community members from locally sourced and hand dyed wool. On view May 2-Jan. 2, 2027.

HYDRANGEAS

continued from page 10

might be pruning at the wrong time. If it blooms on old wood, flower buds form shortly after flowers fade, so pruning should be done soon after flowering. For those that flower on new wood, buds form on the current year's growth, so pruning should be done in late winter or early spring before new growth and buds form. Pruning to remove damaged or diseased branches can be done at any time.

With so many varieties available and their long bloom time, it's no wonder hydrangeas are such a popular addition to the garden. For answers to your home gardening questions, contact the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardeners Helpline online at go.uvm.edu/gardenhelpline or by phone at 802-656-5421 on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.



Oakleaf hydrangeas provide vibrant color to the garden in the fall.

PHOTO BY DEBRA HELEBA



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"A Prayer for the Oceans," by Phoebe Twichell Peterson ('86) is on view at the Johnson Exhibition Gallery in Middlebury.

COURTESY IMAGE

Spring Reunion at Johnson Gallery

This second annual Middlebury College alumni art exhibition showcases recent work by Middlebury class of 1986 alumni John Aicher, Monica Carroll, Cynthia Kirkwood, John Moyers, Elizabeth Needham and Phoebe Twichell Peterson. The Johnson Exhibition Gallery and the Studio Art Department

proudly support this exhibition, 40 years in the making! Free and open to all.

Johnson Gallery summer hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday, Thursday 1-6 p.m. The gallery is located on the second floor of the Johnson Memorial Building (78 Chateau Rd. in Middlebury).

MUSIC

continued from page 4

Then, Galgano's dad died May 2, and their grief turned into purpose: should they release the song for Father's Day, in honor not only of the dads they

now missed, but all the classic rock-loving dads missed by others? The answer was a resounding yes!

King is still adjusting to her new normal after so much loss and change in such a short time. She does not yet have any plans to return to touring like she was before, and has no performances currently booked. While her voice feels freer than it had in years ("I had 24 tumors in my neck. No wonder singing had become truly physically painful," she noted), her body is still adjusting to medications that now keep her alive. Instead of using her voice primarily to sing, she's also using her voice in another medium, writing a memoir about the last two years.

Listen to the new release available now and learn more at sarahkingsings.com.



SARAH KING

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Stay Sharp

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The Dogteam Theatre Project presents a benefit showcase of new work June 19-20

In association with Middlebury College, the Dogteam Theatre Project announces its 2026 Building Season June 19-20 in the Seeler Studio Theater at Mahaney Arts Center in Middlebury.

The Dogteam Theatre Project, now in its fourth season, is a professional theatre company structured around a series of building and producing summers, with the former dedicated to script development and training and the latter to rehearsing and producing two plays in rep in New York City. For this building summer, 16 students join professional theatre makers for a two-week residency at Middlebury College dedicated to script development and advanced training for actors, directors, designers, playwrights and stage managers.

Professional guest artists include playwrights Lucas Kavner '06.5 and Kallie Kimball, actors Kristen Connolly '02 and Stephen O'Reilly, stage manager Joel Cote, casting director Susan Shopmaker, lighting designer Charlotte Seelig, sound designer Stefán Örn Arnarson, and scenic designer Jeff Modereger.

This summer's Building Season will culminate in "Trailblazing," a series of benefit readings and design presentations on Friday, June 19 and Saturday, June 20. All events are open to the public. A suggested donation price of \$20 for the whole series.

ABOUT DOGTEAM

The Dogteam Theatre Project provides transformative experiences for emerging and professional artists, creating meaningful theatrical engagements for diverse audiences. Among its programs, the Dogteam Theatre Project provides training opportunities for emerging theatre artists in all realms of the field, including but not limited to acting, directing, playwriting, and design disciplines. The Dogteam Theatre Project produces theatrical works, including works in translation, reflecting the stories of our more connected world. The Dogteam Theatre Project is helmed by Alex Draper and Olga Sanchez Saltveit (co-artistic directors), Todd Canedy (company and budget manager), and Mark Evancho (resident designer).



Dogteam Theatre Project kicked things off with a workshop early this week led by Casting Director Susan Shopmaker (British Academy of Film and Television Arts Award winner for "The Holdovers").

SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Events

FRIDAY, JUNE 19, AT 7:30 P.M.

Student Plays I

Staged readings of new works written, directed, and performed by Middlebury students of the Dogteam Theatre Project

Student Design Presentations (throughout Friday-Saturday)

Featuring: Hannah Alberti '26, Evan Berger '26, Morgan Chacon '28, Alex Garcia '26, Ramyn Zhang '28.5

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, AT 2 P.M.

Disquiet

by Ivan Vrypaev
Translated by Noah Birksted-Breen
Directed by Olga Sanchez Saltveit

In the Manhattan penthouse of reclusive, Nobel-nominated writer Ula Richte, a carefully staged interview with a Polish journalist is meant to cement her legacy. With her agent and lawyer steering every word, the evening begins under tight control — until the script falls apart. What follows is an unguarded reckoning with the dark side of success, the cost of denying one's roots, and the fierce, exhilarating courage it takes to tell the truth.

Featuring: Kristen Connolly '02, Alex Draper '88, Joel Cote, Patrice Cahill '25.5, Dominick

Hutchins '27, Ryan Ulen '26, Ramyn Zhang '28.5, Alex Garcia '26 and Zoe Park '26.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, AT 4:30 P.M.

Student Plays II

Staged readings of new works written, directed, and performed by Middlebury students of the Dogteam Theatre Project

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, AT 7:30 P.M.

The OAKWOOD project

Written and directed by Lucas Kavner '06.5

Oakwood is a North Hollywood apartment complex that houses young aspiring performers and their guardians during brief, hopeful stays in Los Angeles. Around the kids linger the half-permanent residents of a transient industry: an aging acting coach, a struggling actress who never left, college kids drawn by the cheap rent and dorm-like atmosphere. In Oakwood, nearly everyone is passing through, and nearly everyone is under pressure — to succeed, to belong, and to make the sacrifices mean something.

Featuring: Joel Cote, Stephen O'Reilly, Alex Draper '88, Hannah Alberti '26, Morgan Chacon '27, Bel Crosby '26, Henry Garcia '26.5, Mariah Gunnison '29, Zoe Park '27, Jamie Schwartz '27, Coco Zhu, Cole Newman '27, and Ryan Ulen '26.

Health



& Well Being

PARTICIPANTS IN THE recent Run into Summer race in Vergennes helped raise more than \$1,000 for Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports. Independent photo/Steve James

A special publication of the Addison Independent June 11, 2026

Rowing a million meters Starksboro man sticks to plan for staying healthy



By JOHN S. McCRIGHT

STARKSBORO/BRISTOL — Rich Warren is a professor of electrical engineering by training, but one of the most important lessons he likes to pass on to people is one involving personal health and well-being. Specifically, he thinks people keep their body fit by regular exercise.

“If you don’t have any risk by pushing it — you should push it,” he prescribes.

Warren knows a few things about pushing himself.

On May 24 the Starksboro resident celebrate his 75th birthday by climbing on a stationary rowing machine (commonly referred to as an “ERG”) at the Bfit exercise center in Bristol, and wrapping up a fitness goal he has been working toward for more than a quarter of a century. That day he complete the last 2,000 meters of his pursuit to complete a total of 1 million meters on a Concept 2 rowing machine.

AFTER WRAPPING UP his effort to row a million meters on a stationary rowing machine in Bristol on May 24, Rich Warren displays a medal, a tiara and an official Concept 2 million-meter t-shirt, which recognized this significant accomplishment in Warren’s journey to keep healthy.

Photo by Rebecca Ryan

“It wasn’t like a super feat; other people have done it,” Warren said in a recent interview.

Nevertheless, he knows it was quite an accomplishment.

Warren’s affection for

rowing goes back to childhood.

“I think the seed was planted back when I was around 10 or 11 years old,” he wrote in a message to the Addison Independent. “My dad built a summer camp on Lake Rescue in Ludlow, and we spent each summer there. My dad let me use his 12-foot aluminum fishing boat with a 5-1/2 HP Johnson outboard. Each Friday he would buy me a 6-gallon tank full of boat gas. I guess that was sort of my allowance.

“I would often run out of gas on Wednesday or Thursday, so if I wanted to go and see my friends, I would have to raise the motor and row there,” he continued. “To get there as quickly as I could, I would row as fast as I could. That gave me a lot of practice rowing.

“This sort of activity probably carried on for another five or six years, and after that I didn’t row much, but I always thought about it, and whenever I had a chance to get into a rowboat, I would always row as fast as I could.”

A few decades passed, and Warren noticed a pattern. He would run for a while and then put exercise aside.

“I was up and down — getting in shape, letting it slide,” he recalled. “I knew that health was important.”

So in the 1980s he bought used Concept II Model A rower. Unlike today’s exercise equipment, the Model A didn’t measure meters completed, or even track his time. It just had a bicycle speedometer. “I don’t think the speed was very closely related to the simulated speed of the boat,” he wrote.

“The Model A was quite primitive compared to newer models (See Warren, Page 6)

“I was up and down — getting in shape, letting it slide. I knew that health was important.”

— Rich Warren

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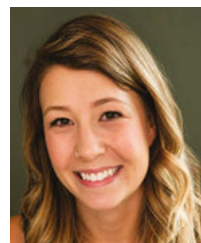
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Patients are bringing TikTok and AI to the exam room

More patients are walking into medical appointments armed with information they found online, whether from a TikTok video, a Facebook group or an artificial intelligence-powered chat-bot.

Sometimes that research helps people recognize symptoms earlier or arrive more prepared to ask questions. In other cases, it creates confusion, requiring clinicians to help patients sort out credible guidance from misinformation.

“It can make the conversation more focused and more engaged,” says Jeremiah Eckhaus, MD, associate medical director for high value care at University of Vermont Health. “But it has to stay open-ended.”

What’s changed isn’t just how much information patients have access to, but where that information comes from, and how authoritative it can feel.

MORE INFORMATION

Before social media and search engines, many people relied on a small circle for health advice: family members, friends or a primary care provider. Today, those networks have stretched far beyond geography.

Online communities connect people navigating similar diagnoses, treatments or life stages. For patients with rare conditions or complex needs, especially in rural areas, those connections can offer validation and practical insight that might not exist locally.

“Anytime you have more people

thinking about something together, you’re going to get more ideas and support,” Dr. Eckhaus says.

For some patients, that shared experience helps reduce isolation and encourages earlier engagement with care.

OVERWHELMING

But the volume of information — and the way it is presented — can also distort expectations.

“What I hear from patients is that social media can highlight extremes of parenthood and the transitions associated with it,” says Jennifer Auletta, a behavioral health integrated care manager at University of Vermont Health-Central Vermont Medical Center.

In areas like pregnancy and postpartum mental health, she says, online content often presents only two possible narratives: Everything is either going perfectly, or something is seriously wrong.

“Most people are somewhere in the middle,” Auletta says. “That’s harder to find online.”

That absence of nuance can fuel anxiety, particularly when algorithms prioritize emotionally charged or sensational content over balanced perspectives.

“It can also shape what patients expect to hear before a clinical conversation even begins, or it can inhibit patients from sharing,” Auletta says. “This happens a lot in postpartum emotional transitions.”

AI tools add yet another layer to how

patients interpret their symptoms and options.

Unlike social media, which centers on shared experiences, AI often presents information as direct answers. The language can sound authoritative, even definitive, despite the uncertainty inherent in medicine. “There’s a tendency to simplify and land on one answer,” Dr. Eckhaus says. “But in medicine, we work hard to do the opposite.”

Clinicians are trained to consider multiple possibilities at once, weighing incomplete information and changing circumstances. AI tools may reinforce a

single explanation, especially if it aligns with what a user already suspects.

That dynamic can lead to confirmation bias, where patients fixated on a diagnosis before a full evaluation has taken place.

SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

For some patients, online tools feel easier than reaching out to a clinician.

“I’ve heard people say they turn to AI because they feel the responses are less judgmental,” Auletta says.

That sense of safety can be meaningful, especially for patients grappling with stigma, fear or uncertainty. But AI tools

(See Exam room, Page 7)



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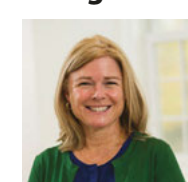
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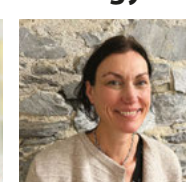
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Anemone Fresh, (right)
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Stop bleeding and save a life

Severe bleeding can become deadly in just minutes. In rural areas, help may take longer to arrive, so regular citizens can learn how to stop heavy bleeding, which saves can save a life before emergency crews get there.

When someone loses a lot of blood, every minute matters. In many rural communities, emergency medical services must travel long distances. Weather, mountain roads, and limited ambulance coverage can also slow response times. That means the people nearby — neighbors, family, coworkers, or even strangers — may be the first and most important helpers.

The good news is that anyone can learn the basics of bleeding control. The national “Stop the Bleed” program teaches simple steps that can keep a person alive until professional help arrives.

The first step is learning how to recognize dangerous bleeding. Severe bleeding may include:

- Blood that is pooling on the ground
- Blood that is soaking through clothing or bandages
- Bleeding that will not stop after several minutes of pressure
- Blood spurting from a wound

If you see these signs, quick action is important.

The next step is knowing what to do. These three actions can help stop life-threatening bleeding:

Apply firm pressure. Use your hands, a clean cloth, or a bandage. Press hard

on the wound. Keep steady pressure for several minutes.

Pack the wound. If the wound is deep, pack it with cloth or gauze. Then press firmly on top.

Use a tourniquet. A tourniquet (turn-uh-kit) is a tight band placed around an arm or leg above the wound. It slows blood flow to help stop severe bleeding.

These steps are simple, but practice helps people feel confident using them in an emergency. That is why community training matters.

Rutland Regional Medical Center periodically provides Stop the Bleed classes, which give hands-on practice with these life-saving skills. During the class, you will learn how to recognize dangerous bleeding, use proper pressure, pack wounds, and place a tourniquet correctly. Most classes take less than two hours, but the skills you learn can last a lifetime. These classes are open to the public and designed for everyday people. You do not need medical training to attend.

Learning these skills can make our community safer. In a rural area, the person who saves a life may be the one standing nearby.

Take one hour to learn how to act in an emergency. One day, your knowledge could help save a friend, a neighbor, or even a member of your family.

Editor's note: Sheena Fisher, MSN, RN, CEN, is senior director of emergency services at Rutland Regional Medical Center, which provided this story.



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Eat well, spend less, start before the grocery store

Six realistic ways to stretch your food budget without sacrificing nutrition

Groceries are expensive. Even people doing everything “right” are feeling it.

But according to Leah Pryor, executive chef and culinary medicine leader at University of Vermont Health-UVM Medical Center, eating well on a budget is less about finding the perfect recipe and more about how you think about food in the first place.

“Unfortunately, we as a society do a really good job of shaming food that isn’t ‘fresh,’” Pryor says.

That pressure can make healthy eating feel like it requires organic ingredients, hours of cooking and a bigger budget than many people have. It doesn’t. Pryor says the real goal is getting the nutrients you need in a way that fits your life.

Here’s how to begin with six tips to stretch your food budget and eat healthy.

1. Start With What You Already Have

Before you shop, check your fridge, freezer and pantry. Skipping this step often leads to buying food you already own or don’t use in time. Building meals around what’s already there cuts waste and lowers your grocery bill.

Even small habits, like freezing bread, tortillas or vegetables before they go bad, can help stretch what you buy.

2. Make One Ingredient Do More

Instead of planning single meals, think about how many meals one item can

support.

Pryor points to a whole chicken. One purchase can become several meals: roasted chicken, soup, broth, tacos or grain bowls. The upfront cost may seem high, but the value comes from how far it goes.

“It’s about how many ways you can use something,” she says.

The same idea applies to staples like rice, beans or greens. When you plan for overlap, you spend less and waste less.

3. Use Frozen and Canned Foods Strategically

Fresh isn’t always better or cheaper. Frozen fruits and vegetables are picked at peak ripeness and flash frozen, which helps preserve nutrients. They also last longer, reducing waste.

“Canned and frozen are your friends,” Pryor says.

Frozen vegetables may not work for every dish, but they’re well suited to soups, casseroles or blended dishes. They’re especially useful if you don’t have time to cook every day or worry about food spoiling before you can use it.

Canned items are also a quick and easy option. Choosing lower-sodium versions and cooking more from whole ingredients gives you greater control over salt.

4. Build a Pantry That Works for You

A reliable pantry makes healthy meals easier, even when fresh food is limited or



costly. Think beans, grains, canned fish, spices or sauces you actually like.

“Your pantry should reflect what you like to eat,” Pryor says. “If food feels familiar and satisfying, you’re more likely to use what you buy.”

5. Consider Local Options — When They Make Sense

In Vermont, local food can be both an opportunity and a challenge.

Buying directly from farms or joining a community supported agriculture (CSA) program can mean fresh, seasonal produce at a lower cost per item. But it works best if you’re realistic about what you’ll use.

For some people, cooking around what’s in season saves money and improves quality. For others, it can lead to waste.

One solution is splitting a share with
(See Eat well, Page 7)

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Warren

(Continued from Page 1)

and quite noisy, but it did the job,” Warren noted.

For a while in the mid-1990s, Warren and a pal got into the routine of going for a bike ride after work, then Warren would get on his Model A rowing machine for 20 to 30 minutes. How much was he doing this because it was competitive and how much because it was fun?

“Most of it’s fun and for health reasons,” Warren said, though he acknowledged that exercising was an important mental break from his work.

But rowing fell away again, though he returned to it a few years later.

“I started counting my meters rowed in 1998,” he said.

Because his original machine didn’t actually track distance, he was actually counting his time spent rowing. He figured that he traveled a certain distance per 10 minutes rowing, though he says he low-balled the formula to insure that he was not counting meters he hadn’t really done.

“I was counting a really slow time so I wouldn’t be exaggerating,” he said.

In the early 2000s he found a good deal on a used Model C Concept II, which is quieter and better engineered. He got back into a brief period of steady rowing and by the spring of 2006, he had had rowed 215,000 meters. But for the next six years he didn’t row at all, though he was doing some cycling.

“I had these slack-off periods,” he said. “There’d be a few years where I’d gain weight, I’d get the point where I couldn’t walk up a hill without breathing hard.”

In 2012 he retired from what used to be called Vermont Technical College in Randolph, where he taught electrical engineering. He joined Bristol Fitness, which is now called Bfit, and participated in yoga and group classes; rowing became secondary.

Then in April 2019, he suffered a cardiac infarction. “That’s a fancy way to say heart attack,” Warren said.

Doctors installed a stent and told him to go to cardiac rehab.

“About three weeks later I began rowing again at cardiac rehab,” Warren wrote. “Within five weeks I rowed a couple of times at a rate better than I had rowed in the past 20 years. I rowed steadily for a little over a year.”



STARSBORO RESIDENT RICH Warren perfects his technique and powers through another pull on the rowing machine at the Bfit fitness center in Bristol on May 24 — his 75th birthday. That afternoon he wrapped up a multi-year effort to row a million meters, which he did in part at the center and at times on his own rowing machine at home.

Photo by John Burbank

Although he switched to walking on a treadmill for a while, in 2024 began to row again in earnest.

“There was some point in 2024 where I came to the realization that the world around me was becoming younger than me, and if I was to complete my goal while still on this earth, I should probably put more focus into rowing,” he summed up.

He started rowing once a week at Bfit. In early 2025, he decided to set a date for the completion of his million-meter goal, and chose his 75th birthday — May 24, 2026.

“In mid 2025 I realized that I would need to do some rowing at home to meet my goal by that date, so I got my Model C out of storage and set it up in the spare bedroom,” Warren said. “This enabled me to row an additional once or twice a week at home.”

By increasing the frequency of his rowing workouts, Warren was able to row 147,000 meters in 2024, and 250,000 meters in 2025. He rowed 248,000 meters in the first five months of 2026.

He said he liked to work out at the gym — the equipment is better, and the social

interaction was enjoyable. He sings the praises of Bfit, which is women-owned and forward-thinking. He has rowed 60% of his one million meters at Bfit.

Matthew Dickerson, a friend who was at the 75th birthday party where Warren completed his big rowing goal, was impressed.

“It’s a pretty big accomplishment,” Dickerson said. “He’s old enough to be the grandparent of some of the trainers at the gym, I think.”

Dickerson noted that Warren’s heart ailment both motivated him and probably made it more difficult to achieve.

“He really cranked up his pace the last year,” Dickerson said.

Warren tends to agree that his health scare played some role. That’s why he urged people to check with their own doctors to make a fitness plan that fits their personal condition.

“If they have a condition where they can exercise, they should exercise,” he said. “They should treat every day of the rest

of their life like they are in cardiac rehab — not just the first three months,” after a heart attack.

Now that he’s reached 1 million meters, what’s next?

Warren said that he’s working on his times. He monitors how fast he can complete 500 meters on the rowing machine display and sets goals for that. Plus, at 75, he still working to improve the way his body moves on the rowing machine.

“Instead of accumulating meters, I’m going to work on my performance, work on my form,” he said,

And he advocates for other exercises, too. He said he still likes walking on the treadmill, and even in rural Starksboro he finds places to go walking outside.

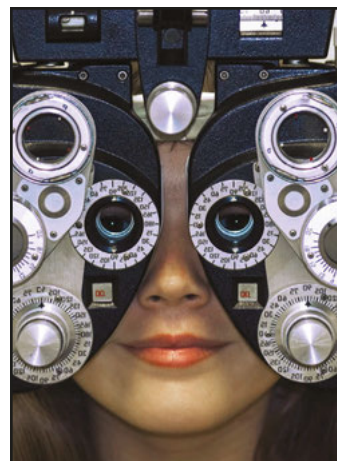
“I walk 4.3 miles per hour,” he said proudly.

And he urges others to go for variety as well.

“Join a fitness center,” Warren advises, “but also do other things to keep moving.”

“They should treat every day of the rest of their life like they are in cardiac rehab.”

— Rich Warren



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do not build relationships over time or recognize subtle patterns in behavior and history the way a professional can.

At the same time, clinicians often meet patients during stressful or vulnerable moments, when trust may already feel fragile and time limited.

A STARTING POINT

“I really like it when patients come in with information,” Dr. Eckhaus says. “It can help guide the discussion (about what they’re thinking and what matters to them).”

When patients and clinicians treat it as a shared reference, not a verdict, it can deepen conversations rather than derail them.

The challenge is keeping that information in context. Guidance from reliable sources, like major medical organizations, established health systems and peer reviewed research, can help ground what patients find online.

Ultimately, online information works

best as a starting point, not a substitute, for care.

Authorities offered the following recommendations to make the most of your doctor’s visit.

- Bring what you found: If you read something online, share it. It’ll help your clinician understand what you’re seeing and thinking.

- Say what’s worrying you: Context matters, so be direct about your concerns — no matter how small.

- Use online information to prepare, not diagnose: It helps to think of questions but does not provide a final answer.

- Check your source: Where is the information coming from? An established medical organization? Look beyond viral posts and personal stories.

- Stay open to possibilities: Symptoms can have more than one explanation. A diagnosis takes time, context and, sometimes, testing.

Editor’s note: This story was provided by University of Vermont Health.

Eat well

(Continued from Page 5)

a neighbor or friend to reduce cost and makes the food easier to use before it goes bad.

6. Plan Just Enough

Meal prep doesn’t have to mean cooking everything in advance. It can be as simple as:

- Knowing which meals you’ll make with what you buy

- Prepping a few ingredients ahead of time

- Having a plan for leftovers

Even a loose plan can help you avoid last-minute takeout or extra trips to the

store.

The Bigger Shift

For Pryor, healthy eating isn’t about doing everything perfectly. It’s about reducing waste, building a few core skills and using what’s available, whether that’s frozen vegetables, canned fish or a whole chicken.

“Most people can feed themselves something,” she says. “The question is, how do we make that something more nutritious and more accessible?”

Editor’s note: This story first appeared in the University of Vermont Health newsletter.



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