

Profiles in Community

2026 • Section A



Profiles in Community: The Faces That Make Our Home

Community shows up in many quiet, ordinary moments. It's the quick wave across Main Street, a knowing smile shared in the grocery aisle, or a brief pause to catch up at school pick up on a busy afternoon.

It is the joyful swell you feel when a neighbor shares a major life milestone or caught a long-awaited break. It's the somber huddle we assume when someone in our circle experiences a loss, rallying around the belief that no one should carry hard times alone.

Community is built on local trust. It's knowing the face behind the counter whether you are spending \$3 on a morning coffee or shaking hands over a major, once-in-a-

lifetime investment.

In this year's edition of **Profiles in Community**, the *Addison Independent* is proud to once again strengthen those local ties. Our goal remains simple: to put names to the familiar faces you pass every day, and to introduce you to people and businesses you may not yet know.

With the relentless pace of national and international news constantly competing for our attention, it is good to ground ourselves right here where our lives actually happen. The people who shape our days aren't on a distant screen; they are living, working and raising families right alongside us.

For decades now, we have put together this annual

showcase of local businesses and organizations. We delight in watching the story of our community unfold: seeing familiar smiles gain a few silver hairs, celebrating as long-time professionals step into exciting new roles, and patronizing our neighbors who have taken the leap to launch their own businesses.

We hope you enjoy perusing these pages and taking the time to reacquaint yourself with the people who make up local economy. Beyond the products and services offered throughout Addison County, it is those people — their dedication, their stories, and their daily greetings — that make this place home.

— The Editors

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Meet the Addy Indy TEAM



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Front Row: Rachelle Talbert (intern), Sequoia (office canine), Christy Lynn (advertising / co-publisher), Katy Foote (advertising), Marin Howell (news), Sarah Pope (design / obituaries), John McCright (news).



From *The Addison County Independent's* first issue in 1946 to today our mission has been the same: to report the day-to-day events of the county and serve as a mirror that reflects life as it's being lived throughout Addison County.

We do that by covering town and school news, sports, social news, events, arts and leisure, business and professional news, letters and commentary — and almost 50 special sections

that put a focus on important aspects of our communities.

As we have for the past 80 years, we invite you to join us five days a week to learn about your neighbors, schools and community.

And, yes, that's FIVE days a week. For those of you who don't receive our four newsletters (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday), please go to addisonindependent.com and sign up for the newsletters at the top of the screen. It not

only allows us to be in regular touch with our subscribers (and those of you just browsing), but it's Addison County's source of breaking news. Plus, the newsletters are free!

We work hard to cover as much Addison County news as we possibly can all with the hope that the most complete picture of the county will yield strong, resilient, respectful and fun-loving communities. We invite you to join us by becoming a subscriber and ADDY ALL-STAR supporter!

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Left to Right: Sarah Peluso, Beth Stanway, Jamie Warner, Amey Ryan, Levi Doria, Katrina James



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HISTORY BUFFS RE-ENACT a Revolutionary War battle at the Mount Independence State Historic Site in Orwell.



THE CHIMNEY POINT State Historic Site in Addison is situated in an 18th-century tavern on Lake Champlain.

Selling History at Vermont Historic Sites in Addison County

By JING WILLIAMS

ADDISON COUNTY — Selling history and a pride in Vermont is the mission of the Vermont State Historic Sites, two of which are nestled in Addison County. Chimney Point in Addison and Mount Independence in Orwell both carry deep history in Vermont, and preserving them is important, said Laura Trieschmann, state historic preservation officer.

“I think it’s very important for people to experience a place, a site where history happened firsthand,” Trieschmann said. “It’s wonderful to read about these places or see pictures of them and add your own imagination to it, but actually putting your feet on the ground where history happened is very moving and provoking and can stay with people.”

Historic sites in Vermont must meet certain criteria, Trieschmann said. They need to hold state or national significance, be eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, have some sort of endowment of help with maintenance and be feasibly presentable to the public, she said.

Although not a business in the traditional sense, running Vermont’s historical sites is a business endeavor. They manage budgets, resources, accessibility,

facilities and produce income that goes right back into the sites, Trieschmann said. Employing local residents and welcoming tourists are also goals of the sites that center them in community.

With around 1,100-2,000 yearly visitors at Chimney Point and 2,500-3,000 at Mt. Independence, the sites attract tourists to Addison County, who come not just for the beautiful views but also the rich history.

Chimney Point is “one of the most strategically significant and intensely settled sites in the Champlain Valley,” Trieschmann said. First inhabited by Native Americans around 9,000 years ago, the original human inhabitants hunted, fished and camped at what is now called Chimney Point. In 1731, the French settled there, building a fort to keep the English out. The French stayed in the area and in 1785, built a tavern that was visited by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. The tavern, still standing today, is the heart of the Chimney Point Historic Site.

The Historic Site also has a museum — with a special exhibit this summer. Pieces from the exhibit “Unfinished Revolutions: Vermont Student Art Celebrating the 250th” are on display at Chimney Point now. The exhibit

was organized by the Vermont Agency of Education and originally hung in the Statehouse. Artwork, submitted by Vermont children in kindergarten through 12th grade, expresses “themes of history, progress and the ongoing journey towards liberty and equality,” Trieschmann said.

Five seasonal staff — Susan Bodette, Elisa Nelson, McKenna White, Adam Kemp and Michael Blakeslee — welcome visitors, run educational programs and generally care for Chimney Point, under the direction of Historic Sites Regional Administrator Elsa Gilbertson. (All the Chimney Point people also work occasionally as needed at Mount Independence, and four of the Mount Independence staff sometimes work at Chimney Point when needed.) Adult visitors pay \$6 for admission, and the site is free for those younger than 16. Fees go into a special fund that pays for seasonal staff, exhibits, special activities and

events, Trieschmann said.

Vermont historic sites are funded by taxpayers, but the level of care the 88 buildings, seven bridges, four monuments and 11 underwater

preserves require sometimes requires more funding, Trieschmann said. Grants and funding from organizations like the National Park Service and American Battlefield Protection Program supplement Vermont tax funds, provided in part because of the national significance the sites hold.

“The vast majority of the sites have some national significance to tell the story of our country going back to the Revolutionary War presidents, how presidents were formed,” Trieschmann said. “This is where they grew up and how they were affected by what Vermont has to offer.”

Mt. Independence is one of the most intact and significant Revolutionary War sites in the United States, Trieschmann said. Around 13,000 troops were stationed there defending America’s independence in 1776 and 1777, scaring off British troops and giving Americans more time to prepare for war. Although it was overtaken by British and German troops in the summer of 1777, it was reclaimed by the Americans after they defeated the British in Saratoga that fall.

Seven seasonal staff — Tobrina Calvin, Paul Andrisin, Steven Whalen, John Melanson, Luke Calvin, Nancy Bird and Steve Bird — welcome visitors, run educational programs and generally care for Mt. Independence, under the direction of Gilbertson, who is also the regional administrator at this site.

Every late summer around 30 reenactors camp, cook, dress and talk like 1700s soldiers at Mt. Independence for the Soldiers Atop the Mount event. The reenactors return this Sept. 5 and 6, when they will again demonstrate what life was like for Revolutionary War fighters. Trieschmann said this event brings history to life.

“And I think for students, for children, it’s really eye-opening to

watch them interact with reenactors because they get to feel included in what it was really like,” she said.

Trieschmann also emphasized the important partnerships the Vermont Historic Sites have with Vermont State Parks and Fort Ticonderoga. Fort Ticonderoga owns part of Mt. Independence, and the Vermont Department of Historic Preservation collaborates with the state parks as much as possible for programming, shared spaces and staffing, she said.

With six miles of walking trails, one of which is ADA accessible, Mt. Independence’s seven seasonal staff help maintain the trails and site, Trieschmann said. Admission to Mt. Independence is \$8 for adults and \$1 for ages 6-16. The site is also supported by the Mount Independence Coalition, an organization of volunteers who run educational programming, raise funds and even published a book on Mt. Independence history. Volunteers like the coalition are integral to keeping the sites running smoothly, Trieschmann said.

“Vermonters have a very strong association to the state historic sites,” Trieschmann said. “They very much love them, they appreciate them ... Vermonters see these places as parts of their community, and they take very strong association to them.”



“The vast majority of the sites have some national significance to tell the story of our country going back to the Revolutionary War presidents, how presidents were formed.”
— Laura Trieschmann



THE TWO STATE Historic Sites in Addison County — Chimney Point in Addison and Mount Independence in Orwell — have their own staffs, but most fill in at the other when the need arises. They all welcome visitors, run educational programs and care for their sites. Shown at a recent activity at Mount Independence are, from left, front row, Paul Andrisin, Leo Elder, Tobrina Calvin and McKenna White, and, back row, Mark Brownell, Elisa Nelson, Steven Whalen and Historic Sites Regional Administrator Elsa Gilbertson.

Independent photo/John Flowers



STAFF DRESSED FOR re-enactment at Mount Independence last month are Michael Blakeslee, left, and John Peterson.

Independent photo/John Flowers

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Left to right: Brian, Conor, Jake, Bela, Deb

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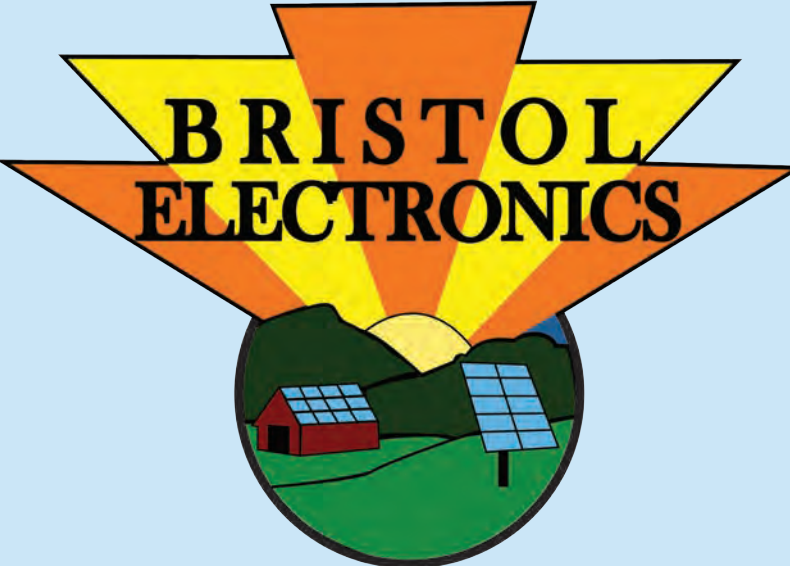


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Profiles in Community

2026 • Section B



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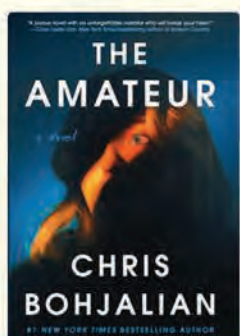
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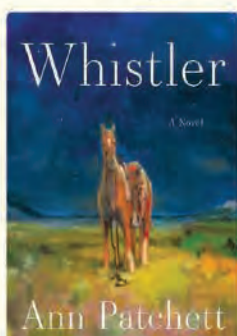


The Amateur
Chris Bohjalian

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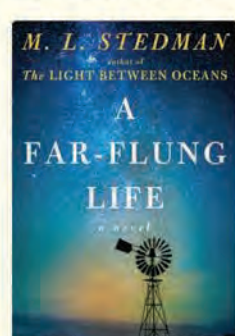


History Lessons
Zoe B. Wallbrook

A wonderfully satirical depiction of the politics of university academic departments as well as a good mystery! I can't recommend it highly enough, but don't want to give anything away...



Mary
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A Far-Flung Life
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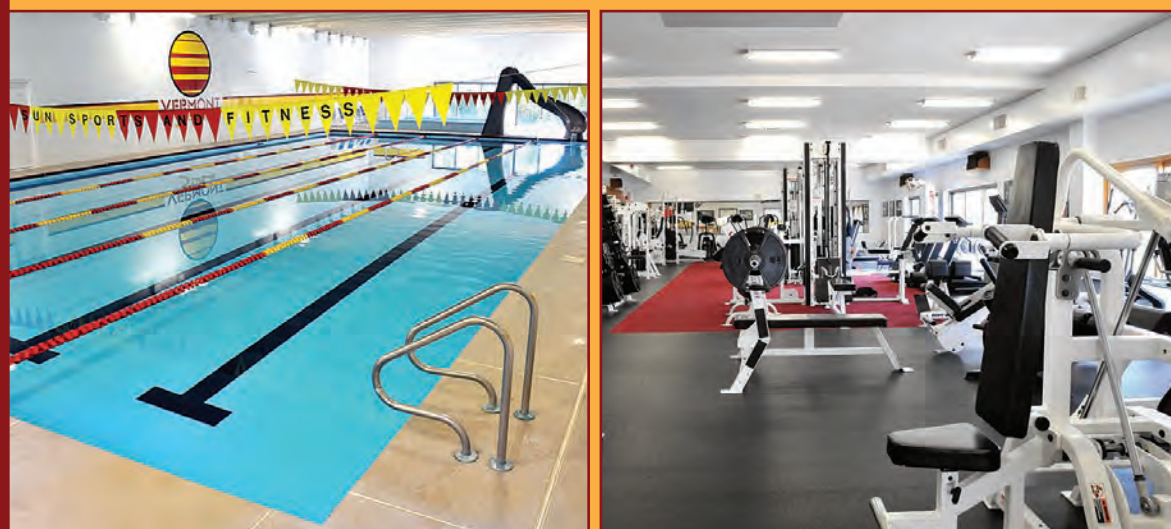
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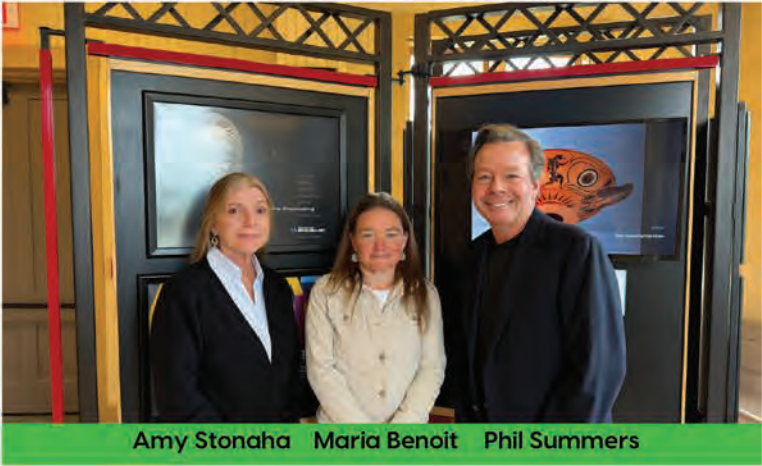


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CHRIS NATHAN ADDS chalk pastel, above, to a cow painting in his Ferrisburgh home. Below he proudly displays the finished product.
Photos by Violet Nathan



Former art therapist now paints his own art catharsis

By RACHELLE TALBERT

FERRISBURGH — When artist Chris Nathan sets up his easel to paint, he hopes people will peek over his shoulder and say it looks like a fever dream.

Nathan fills his canvases with bright colors, textures and multiple art mediums. His wild technique matches the chaos of his daily life, he says. As a stay-at-home dad in Ferrisburgh, Nathan tries his best to weave art into his routine. With a young son, a dog and a backyard full of chickens, his home is always full, with many things going on at once or left unattended.

“Living is messy, living is chaotic,” Nathan told the *Independent*. “Right now, if art is going to be part of the situation, it somehow has to fit into that.”

Rather than separating art from his life, Nathan paints the world immediately around him: his chicken coop, the Vermont landscape and cows at nearby farms. He constantly changes where he works, moving between an easel outdoors, a drafting table in the living room and his covered porch.

“I always dreamed of having a dedicated studio, but I seem to gravitate towards making the world around me my studio,” Nathan said.

Though Nathan often paints everyday life, he doesn’t focus on the subject of his work — it’s all about the process.

“This is just my world, and I guess it becomes a means to something bigger,” Nathan said. “When I draw a cow, the cow is

just the excuse for the crazy mark making, for the chaotic color.”

The chaos of Nathan’s process is a therapeutic way to let himself lose control, something he learned from his past as an art therapist.

Eight years ago, Nathan got a master’s degree in art therapy while working as an administrator in Boulder, Colo. When he moved with his wife, Violet, to Vermont in 2022, he worked at the Counseling Service of Addison County. He has since left that job due to burnout, but his experience has impacted the process of his work.

To Nathan, art therapy focuses on reaching emotions without the analytical mind getting in the way. The creative process helps move past rational thought to work through unconscious feelings, and then transform them by creating art.

Now, Nathan finds that his work feels like therapy. In a recent piece, he used a linocut tool to carve into the canvas, digging out the forms he was painting. Nathan then dropped ink into the grooves, and covered everything up with oil paint. It was a process of change — and letting himself lose control.

“I need to let myself get lost. I need to have a cathartic experience where (I’m thinking), ‘Why am

I feeling like I’m on the verge of tears in the middle of making this thing?’ But I am. Because part of me is falling apart. As I’m making the thing because I’m undoing things. I’m surrendering, I’m letting things be messy,” Nathan said.

“I know this sounds like, am I talking about making art or am I talking about therapy? I don’t know.”

For Nathan, art has always been a way to handle hard times. He was raised in Manhattan by a single mom, and his childhood wasn’t always easy.

“Art therapy is kind of a reflection of how my life went in general, where I did have somewhat of a challenging childhood, and I did retreat into art making as one of my ways to cope,” he explained.

These days, at age 56, Chris Nathan focuses on his art and family, while his wife works in quality assurance for the Burlington aviation technology company Beta. Nathan values Violet’s input — for art and everything else.

“I really could not do what I do right now without her, and she’s really been instrumental in me, allowing my artist identity to grow,” he said. “My life as a family person is, at the end of the day, much more important

than any sense of projecting artist identity. I’d much rather be known as a caring father.”

Chris and Violet live with their 7-year-old son, Oscar. Chris’s daughters, Emersyn (25) and Avery (22), both live in Colorado.

Nathan hopes to continue spending time with his family and, as an artist, continue to put his work out into the world.

Nathan owns a small business called Farmhouse Scribble, in which he makes one to three pieces per month to sell as postcards, prints, magnets and original paintings. Currently, he works part-time at Middlebury’s Sparrow Art Supply, where he sells his pieces in the store. In addition to his hourly income, he receives a check from Sparrow every month for about \$100 — indicating that the store sold a couple of his items.

“I’m very tentative about selling,” Nathan told the *Independent*. “But it’s important for my own self-esteem, my own confidence, my own growth as an artist as well.”

Nathan plans to knock on the doors of other retailers to start selling his work. With more stores carrying his art, he thinks his monthly \$100 could turn into \$500 or \$1,000. He is also in the process of setting up a website to market his work, in hopes of improving his confidence and inspiring others with his process.

“I want to give people permission to lose themselves, to let go,” Nathan said. “Because that’s how I learn. That’s how I grow, is to take risks and recover.”



“I want to give people permission to lose themselves, to let go.”
— Chris Nathan



A MIXED MEDIA piece by Chris Nathan depicts a local Vermont cow, rendered with stylized colors and textures.

Artwork by Chris Nathan



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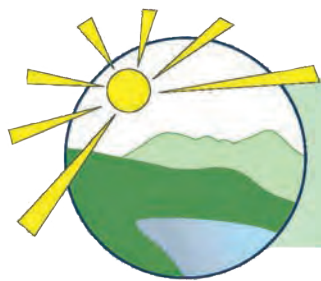


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2026 • Section C

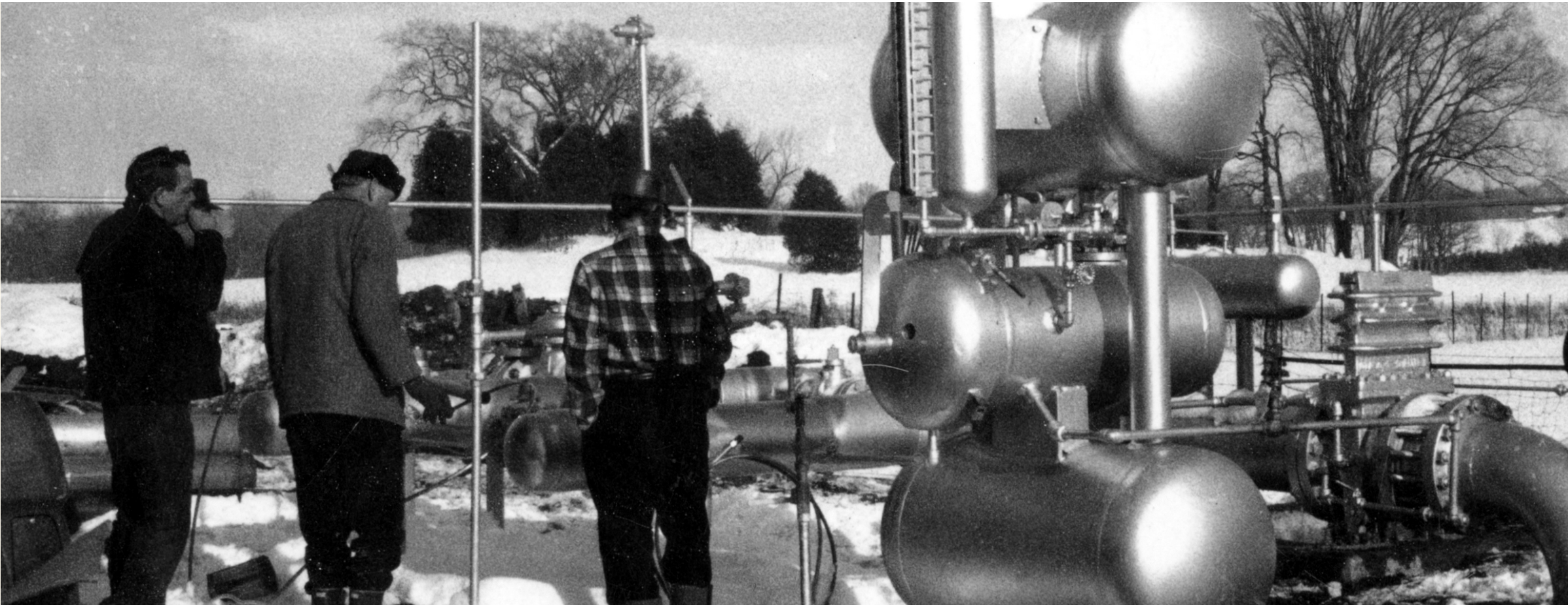


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Left to Right: Jackie Devoid, Virginia Deering, Judy Nuceder, David Hanson, Yuri Balcazar, Lisa Bristol, George Devoid, Jen Devoid.
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Pictured (top left to bottom right): Matt, Resident Services; Jordan, Resident Services; Angela, Resident Services; Nima, Dining Services Director; Judy, Resident Services; Josie, Health Services; Emma, Health Services; Jennifer, Dining Services.



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By ELOISE CHRISTY
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Cram is owner of AlwaysEvolving Details, a Bristol mobile auto detailing business. “Cleaning” isn’t a big enough word to describe what goes into auto dealing. For sure, detailers meticulously remove dirt, but they also restore the car to look and smell showroom new. He started the company in 2020 after years of working labor-intensive jobs that often kept him away from home.

“Our little girl was growing up, so I couldn’t do that stuff anymore, like nighttime jobs,” Cram said.

“One job I had, we would destroy vehicles and this is the exact opposite of that. It’s an entirely different direction. I got sick of destroying vehicles and wanted to make them clean and new instead.”

Working throughout Addison and Chittenden counties, Cram is a local who knows his way around. He brings his services directly to customers’ homes. Over the years, as more mobile detailers entered the market, he realized that the business would have to grow with the competition while also staying positive and honing his craft.

“Now that there’s a bunch of mobile detailers, we added other things to our service, like houses,

pressure washing and painting,” Cram said. “You’ve got to keep always evolving and that’s where the name came from.”

The business began as a family effort. Cram’s wife, Monteez, helped launch AlwaysEvolving Details before taking a position with a bank when work slowed seasonally. Today, Cram works most jobs alone. From time to time when Cram has easier jobs, his 8-year-old daughter, Meadow Rose, joins him, helping out where she can and earning an ice cream cone at the end of a long day.

“My wife started with me, but the winters were getting slow, so she transitioned to a teller position,” he said. “It is full-time and it’s been a little harder. I do take (my daughter) and pay her. She does some waxing. We have fun.”

Although now it’s just Cram working, completing about three vehicles per day instead of his previous six, the slower pace allows him to focus on quality over quantity. His drive to do a good job and satisfy his customers has only increased.

“Every year these customers keep calling me back,” he said. “I get new people and they seem to call me back too. Every year it gets a little bit bigger, which is exciting. I start to think, what’s next year going to bring?”

Having a lifelong interest in cars and describing himself as a “gearhead,” Cram has turned his lifelong passion for cars into a career. He developed the skills and attention to detail he relies on today through a previous employer who taught him how to professionally detail vehicles.

“He had a couple of sports cars,” he explained. “When work was dying down, he’d put me in the shop and say, ‘OK, I’m going to show you how to detail.’ He was very fussy and that fussiness

“I make sure it’s very meticulous and I’m very fussy. I treat every vehicle like it was my own. I don’t want to do anything half-way, I try to give people what they pay for.”

— Devin Cram



DEVIN CRAM BOUNCED around to several different jobs, including one where he destroyed cars. Now he happily runs his own business, AlwaysEvolving Detailing, where he restores cars so they look as close to showroom new as possible.

Independent photo/Eloise Christy



SOME VEHICLES TAKE more time than others to detail, but Devin Cram gives each one the attention it deserves, using a meticulous, hands-on approach backed by years of experience.

Independent photo/Eloise Christy

transferred over. I thank him so much for that.”

That methodical approach remains at the core of his business today.

“I make sure it’s very meticulous and I’m very fussy,” he said. “I treat every vehicle like it was my own. I don’t want to do anything half-way, I try to give people what they pay for.”

AlwaysEvolving Details offers a full interior and exterior detailing, buffing and paint work, along with pressure washing and other exterior home services. Full detailing starts at about \$170 for most cars and \$190 for SUVs and trucks, with discounts available for multiple-vehicle jobs and holidays.

Cram charges by the job rather than by the hour. While most vehicles take between about 2.5 and 4 hours to complete, he said some require considerably more time.

“It’s like, ‘Oh man, I’m struggling with this,’” Cram said. “But it’s OK, as long as the customer is happy at the end. Recommendations and word

of mouth... get us most of the business.”

Running a business has also changed Cram on a personal level. He admits he wasn’t the most organized high school student, but now he keeps his schedule planned out and puts his family first.

“I got my laptop so I know what my week looks like coming ahead,” he said. “That helps me and then I always have to put my little girl first. She goes first and then my wife, and I make sure they get where they need to be. I’m on until 5 p.m. most days.”

For anyone thinking about starting a detailing business, Cram believes that success doesn’t require expensive equipment, but more so determination. A really good shopvac, some microfiber towels, and a positive attitude would be a good start.

“I’ve done rigs up in Lincoln, places with no spigots and you just carry five-gallon buckets,” he explained. “You get your soap and water, wax it on and wax it off.”

Working in the community where he grew up, Cram feels

at home with his work and his customers, viewing Addison County as the “sweet spot” for him. After working only a few years in this business, he believes that this is all he needs to live a content life in rural Vermont.

“We try to do good,” Cram said. “If you put good in the world, it will come back to you. For a while, I was lost. This has been really nice, meticulous, and mindful. The peace of mind you get... I can work with earbuds and just wax and breathe in and out. It’s calming and when you’re inside a vehicle and it’s 105 degrees out, you really need to breathe.”

Cram laughed that he was an “’80s freak” who grew up loving “The Karate Kid” movies. He credits this film with inspiring both his logo and his outlook.

“I was born in the ’90s, but I loved the ’80s and the whole Karate Kid thing,” he said. “It relates to the bonsai tree (his logo), and I thought if I could mix my martial arts world with the car world and have this balance, I’d be one happy camper.”



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Three generations of the LaRoche family are working at Dunmore Marine Service now. Marc LaRoche, center, bought his dad's business, Gill's Place Boat Repair, in 2023, and renamed the business, Dunmore Marine Service. Cooper, left, works with his dad Marc, center, and grandfather Gill, right, to offer all the same great services.

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Marc LaRoche, who has worked with his father, Gill, at the boat repair shop in Salisbury for the past 32 years, is in his third year of taking over the reins of the business that operated since 1983 at the Salisbury shop.

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Service has always been the heart of their business and will continue to be so. With more than 90 years of combined experience working on boats (Gill started in 1970 at Vergennes Marine), Gill and Marc, and Marc's son, Cooper, have seen it all and know boats and engines inside and out.

Marc also started a companion business setting up and taking down docks and boat lifts mainly on Lake Dunmore/Fern Lake, as well as doing dock work via his barge.

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Back row, from left: Drew Pettis, Kelsey Many, Brian Sherwin, Gary Hobbs, Bryson Sherwin
Front row, from left: Chantel Bolduc, Don Maglienti, Emily Johnston, Shelly Edson, Ben Eglash
Not pictured: Chad Kimball, Wes Kimball, Melissa Sullivan

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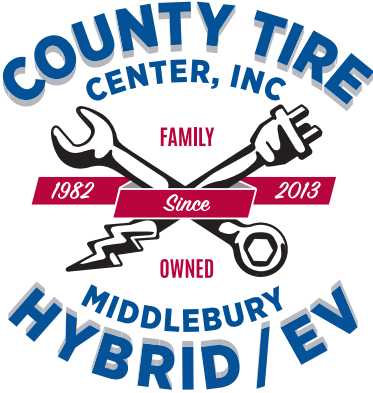
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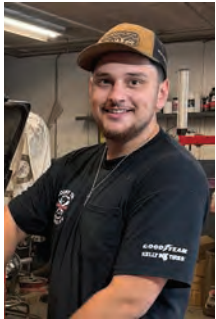
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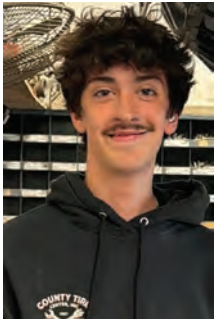
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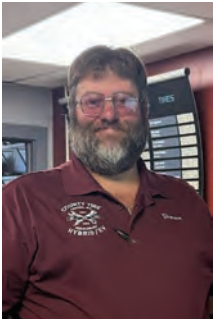
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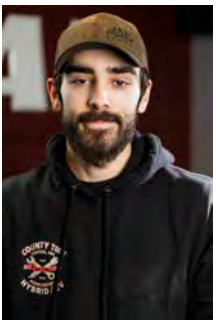
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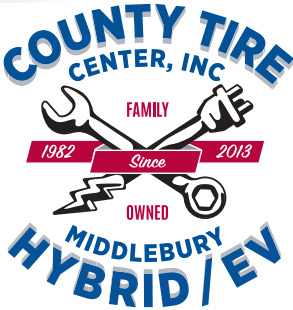
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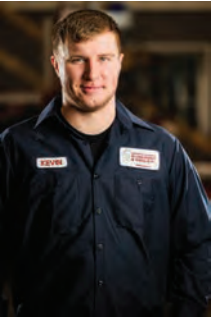
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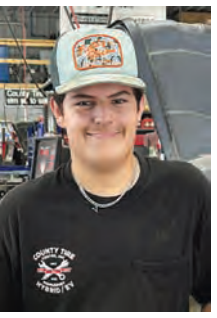
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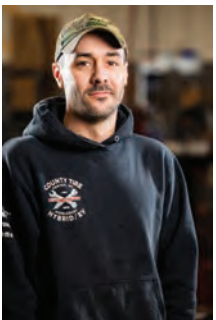
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The Village Creemee Stand on West Street in Bristol celebrates its 45th year in business in 2026. Two familiar faces you may see there are, top right, Starksboro resident Molly Mangini, and, bottom left, assistant manager Noble Westbrook, a grandson of the stand's founder. He says the unique spelling (only one "e" at the end instead of two) makes Village Creemee stand out from its competitors.

Over in Middlebury at the creemee window at Shiretown Marketplace, Charlie Palmer, bottom right, offers a cool treat that would make anyone smile.

Independent photos/Steve James



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