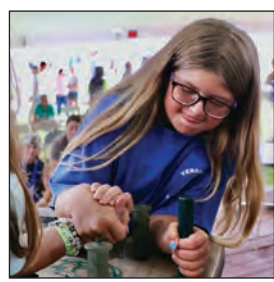




Analog reality

Find out about an evening of words and art coming to Ripton this month. See Arts +Leisure.



Tough guys

Arm wrestlers competed at Addison County Fair & Field Days last week. See Page 1B.



Joyspan

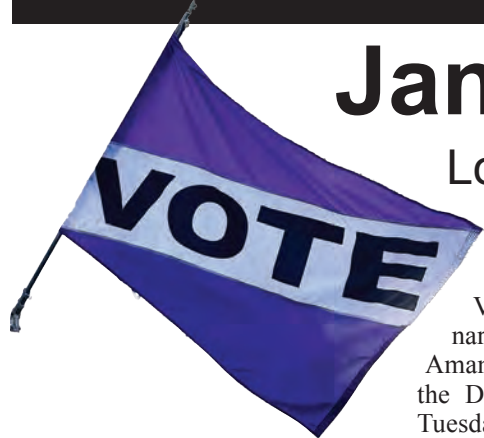
The CEO of a local retirement home focuses every day on making life better. See Page 12A.

ADDISON COUNTY INDEPENDENT

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Janoo, Gray win Dem races for top state jobs

Local voters mirror trends from rest of state

By ANGELO LYNN

ADDISON COUNTY — Voters in Addison County followed Vermonters throughout the state by narrowly supporting political-newcomer Amanda Janoo over Aly Richards in the Democratic primary for governor on Tuesday, while also widely supporting

Molly Gray over Ryan McLaren in the race for lieutenant governor.

Results as of Wednesday noon, with 98% of the votes counted, showed Janoo defeating Richards with 49.1% to 46.5%, with 39,271 voting for Janoo and 37,201 voting for Richards. Voters cast 3,500 write-in votes, or 4.4%. Gov. Phil Scott was

uncontested in the Republican primary.

In the lieutenant governor's race, Gray, who served as Vermont's lieutenant governor from 2021 to 2023, demonstrated her strong name recognition and experience with a convincing win over top challenger Ryan McLaren. She garnered 60.7% of the vote to McLaren's 27.6%. Esther Charlestin, a third candidate in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor, received 10.9%

of the vote. Gray received 50,390 votes to McLaren's 22,935 and Charlestin's 9,056.

Low voter turnout had been a concern going into Tuesday's primary, but proved unfounded. According to preliminary data from the Vermont Secretary of State's office, the overall number of voters participating in Tuesday's election was around 111,000, or about 22% of registered voters. That's (See Democrats, Page 17A)

Stroup & Bolles top Dems in Addison-3

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

ADDISON COUNTY — Democrats in Vergennes and five surrounding towns on Tuesday sent Ariel Bolles and John Stroup to take on two Ferrisburgh Republicans in a race for two Vermont House seats representing Addison-3 in the Nov. 3 general election.

Stroup of Vergennes earned 998 votes, or 34.53% of the ballots cast in the Tuesday democratic primary, and Bolles of Ferrisburgh took 943, or 32.63%, according to unofficial results from the Secretary of State.

The pair, who both prioritize healthcare reform, housing and education, ousted Michael Kane, a Vergennes Democrat, in what was one of two contested legislative primaries in the county. Kane garnered 497 votes, or 17.20%.

Come the general election in November, voters in Addison-3 — which takes in Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Vergennes, Waltham and part of New Haven — will choose between Democrats Bolles and Stroup, incumbent Rep. Rob North, R-Ferrisburgh, and Ferrisburgh Republican Joe Baker, to fill two seats in the statehouse.

The race became a question mark for Democrats when incumbent Addison-3 Rep. Matt Birong, a Vergennes Democrat, announced earlier this year that he would not seek another term.

As well as winning the open seat, the pair of recently nominated Dems will be looking to take back (See Addison-3, Page 13A)



That didn't take too long. Route 125 between East Middlebury and Ripton opened up late last week after being closed for 11 days for a major culvert installation — a day ahead of schedule! Route 125 was closed between Lincoln Road in Ripton and Upper Plains Road in Middlebury on July 27. The (See By the way, Page 16A)

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Make way for booklings

MEG BAKER DONS a yellow vest and a stop sign to warn away traffic on Main Street in Middlebury this past Thursday as volunteers walk more than 40 carts filled with books from the temporary library in the National Bank of Middlebury's Duclos Building south a few blocks to the century-old Ilsley Library building, its renovation is nearly completed. See a story and more photos on Page 14A.

Independent photo/Steve James

County hospital trims budget for state review

By JOHN FLOWERS

MIDDLEBURY — State health care regulators last week began their review of a Porter Medical Center fiscal year 2027 budget proposal reflecting spending of \$131,285,450, an increase of 0.4% compared to the \$130,762,036 in spending that PMC is projecting for this fiscal year.

The bottom line, according to a narrative and slide show that Porter officials presented to the Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) on Aug. 5, is that "Vermonters will not pay more for care at Porter Hospital in FY27."

Porter Medical Center includes the county hospital, Helen Porter Rehabilitation & Nursing,

and around a dozen affiliated physicians' practices. Porter is an affiliate of the University of Vermont Health Network.

In its FY27 presentation, PMC showed it plans to continue its recent pattern of conforming to spending guidelines prescribed by the GMCB, which oversees Vermont's health care system. For

example, the PMC budget reflects:

- The guidance of -1% commercial net patient revenue growth from the current year's budget to next year's budget. This was made possible due to a commercial rate cut realized as a result of Act 55 — the so-called reference-based pricing (See Hospital budget, Page 16A)

Vt. is writing laws on artificial intelligence

Limiting problems, accessing pluses

Latest in a series

By JING WILLIAMS

VERMONT — In the 2026 legislative session, Vermont lawmakers succeeded in drawing some lines around acceptable uses of artificial intelligence in the Green Mountain State, but also saw one bill vetoed.

Among several AI bills passed by the General Assembly, Addison

County Sen. Ruth Hardy sponsored one addressing the use of AI in elections; Gov. Phil Scott vetoed a different major bill addressing AI data centers.

"You can spread rumors and lies or discredit and damage the reputation of a candidate really quickly using AI and have an impact on elections," Hardy said in (See Artificial intel, Page 15A)

ICE arrests roofers at work in Cornwall

By JING WILLIAMS & SOPHIA KESHMIRI

CORNWALL — Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents took two roofers into custody over the weekend while they were doing work on a Cornwall woman's home.

Mary Richards said ICE agents never approached her to tell her what was going on nor what authority they had to be on her

property, and they never showed her any warrants during the Aug. 8 arrests.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Boston Field Office, which is responsible for New England, did not respond to a Monday email request to questions, including the reason for the arrests and for warrants, by deadline on Wednesday. (See ICE in Cornwall, Page 18A)

Mom teaches kids & others how to milk

By RACHELLE TALBERT

Cassie Westcom from Granville used to own a farm with 90 cows. Now, she only has 10, but she hopes to share her dairy farming knowledge with the next generation.

At Addison County Fair and Field Days last week, Westcom demonstrated cow milking in the dairy barn. Though happy to explain the steps, the milking was as much for onlookers as it was for her own two kids, Elizabeth, 5, and John Henry, 3.

No longer a full-time dairy farmer, Westcom said she keeps her remaining cows for the sake of her kids — with whom she hopes to share the joy of raising cows.

"They love them," Westcom told the *Independent*. "Elizabeth really loves the cows, and John Henry hasn't decided if he really likes them yet. If he likes them, he likes them. If he doesn't, he'll have something else he likes."

The kids' love for the cows has grown at Field Days. Westcom has (See Milking, Page 16A)



JOHN HENRY WESTCOM, 3, looks adorably at his mom, Cassie Westcom, as she milks their cow in the Field Days milking parlor last week. Though no longer a dairy farmer, Westcom is still sharing her dairy farming skills with the next generation.

Independent photo/Rachelle Talbert



CATIE RAISHART OF Foxglove Farm feeds chickens at the Leicester property. The Raisharts have for a decade hosted overnight stays in a log cabin at the farm, inviting visitors to learn more about the farm’s operations during their stay.

Photo by Ethan Abitz

Farm stays connect visitors with Vermont ag community

Agritourism helps bring many visitors to Vermont and helps boost economy

By MARIN HOWELL

VERMONT — The log cabin at Foxglove Farm in Leicester didn’t have running water or electricity when Catie and Mark Raishart lived in it after moving to the property. Today, the cabin features a full kitchen, gas fireplace and space for visitors from all corners of the globe to kick their feet up and familiarize themselves with a part of Vermont off the beaten path.

The Raisharts welcome guests to the cabin throughout the year, inviting them to explore the property and learn more about the farm’s operations during their stay. The farm is one of many around Vermont offering overnight farm stays — a unique lodging opportunity that’s grown in popularity among both visitors and the farms hosting them.

“For our family, that cultural, educational piece has been pretty incredible,” Catie Raishart said of Foxglove’s experience hosting farm stays. “Also, honestly, just the source of income has allowed us to maintain our life.”

Foxglove Farm began hosting guests back in 2016. The

Raisharts had previously lived in the cabin while building their house on the 70-acre property. After that, the cabin largely sat empty, she noted.

“There was one year where we were kind of scrambling to pay our property taxes, and we were like, ‘Oh, well, what if we just rent out the cabin and see what happens,’” Raishart recalled. “So, we put it on Airbnb, and it booked pretty quickly, and it has been booking solidly ever since.”

“What started as a scramble turned into this almost identity,” she added.

Over time, the Raisharts modified the cabin with amenities including a full bathroom, hot water and three double beds for visitors. The small farm and homestead the cabin sits on features a working forest stewarded by the Raisharts, who run a bird-friendly maple syrup operation, grow flowers and create handmade gifts at Foxglove.

Guests can keep to themselves and enjoy a quiet stay if they’d like or participate in activities like a sugaring lesson or flower-

arranging workshop.

“They are welcome to participate in any part of the sugaring that we offer, and people often do,” Raishart said. “They can also just sit in the yard, and pet the dogs and chat with us, and they often do.”

Raishart noted the cabin has typically been booked 90% of the year and hosted guests from at least 17 different countries, according to statistics from Airbnb. While visitors come to Foxglove throughout the year, March is always a busy month for stays — just in time for peak maple season.

FARM TOURISM

Agritourism opportunities such as the farm stays offered at Foxglove have helped bring many visitors into the state. The term “agritourism” is a broad one, encompassing the various ways farms open

their doors to the public for experiences ranging from pick-your-own produce to educational opportunities.

According to data from the 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture, agritourism generated an estimated total income of \$47.5 million in Vermont in 2022 (the most recent survey data). That figure includes both direct-to-consumer food sales by Vermont farms, as well as “agritourism and recreational services, such as farm tours, hayrides, hunting, fishing, etc.” Many of the agritourism opportunities offered by Vermont farms were on display for Vermont Open Farm Week, Aug. 3-9.

Over 300 Vermont farms provided agritourism and recreational services in 2022, according to the census. It can be hard to say how many Vermont farms are hosting farm stays specifically, though the offering is becoming more common, noted Lisa Chase of the University of Vermont Extension Vermont Tourism Research Center.

“We are definitely seeing more of it,” Chase told the *Independent*. “Agritourism has grown in general here in Vermont, around the U.S. and around the world. Agritourism, overnight farm stays, that is something that is growing more and more. Visitors are seeking that out, and as farms are looking to diversify, that becomes a really good option for farms looking to have revenue come in from different sources.”

She noted farms offer different types of stays.

(See Farm stays, Page 3A)

“While financial benefits certainly matter a lot, many farms are also doing it for more altruistic, community-minded reasons because they want to share what they have and educate the public.”

— Lisa Chase

Feds OK money for park pavilion in Vergennes

Little City awarded over \$400,000 for project

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

VERGENNES — The Little City was recently awarded over \$400,000 in federal funding to build a pavilion over recreation courts in Veterans Memorial Park. The initiative could both improve accessibility to recreation resources in Vergennes and protect the courts from wear and tear.

“It’s really for a lot of everything,” Recreation Committee member Robyn Newton said explaining the purpose of covering the courts. “And it will just allow us to be able to use it ... throughout the year, longer into the evenings, and for more activities.”

The Vergennes Recreation Committee aspires for construction to begin late next summer or fall, Newton said, though

“It was like the grant to kind of get us kickstarted again. So now we have our work cut out to get the rest of the match.”

— Robyn Newton

to kind of get us kickstarted again. So now we have our work cut out to get the rest of the match.”

There are many benefits to covering the courts, which themselves cost roughly \$300,000 (\$200,000 in grant money and \$100,000 in donations), Newton explained.

“It protects our \$300,000 investment, obviously from weather, sun,” she said. “But more importantly, we wanted to provide a space that could be more used completely year round.”

For example, Newton said, rain won’t stop kids from going to the courts to play a game of hoops. Additionally, it will save volunteers time come winter.

“We spend well over 100 volunteer hours every winter snow blowing the

ice rink, or having problems with it having to shut down when we get some intermittent rain in the middle of winter and melts some of the ice,” she said.

The city will also be able to keep the rink open for longer skating hours with the addition of lights, Newton said.

“In the summer too, it is also able to be used as an event space for concerts or renting for parties, outdoor exercise classes, because you just can’t depend on the weather,” she added.

Veterans Park will be filled with the music of a free concert on Friday, Aug. 28, from 5:30-8 p.m. to get fundraising going. Those who wish to donate can do so on the vergennes.org website under the pavilion tab.

The new courts and planned pavilion are just the start of what the Recreation Committee hopes to improve in Veterans Park.

“We’re working with another grant that the Rec. Committee got (See Pavilion, Page 3A)

Vergennes considers a second bond vote for sewer project

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI

VERGENNES — Due to differing interpretations of the language of a bond that voters approved in 2022, Vergennes officials say residents might need to weigh in again if they are to borrow the full \$25.5 million the city needs to pay for its massive, state-mandated, \$42.5 million sewer infrastructure overhaul.

A legal opinion given to the city in June indicated that it was acceptable for the city to use up to \$25.5 million. But a more recent revised opinion provided on July 28 states otherwise.

“The ballot authorized general obligation bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed \$25.5 million, but also stated that the authorized amount: ‘shall be reduced by state and federal grants-in-aid estimated at 8 million to 13 million dollars

received by the City for the improvements,’” according to a memo City Manager Ron Redmond sent to city councilors on Friday, Aug. 7.

The estimated cost of the project, intended to remedy several deficiencies in the city’s sewer and wastewater system identified by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation in 2018, has grown tremendously since that time. When voters approved the \$25.5 million bond in 2022, the project was anticipated to cost significantly less. In December, the figure skyrocketed to over \$40 million.

At that time, and in further communications, officials understood that it was acceptable to use the full \$25.5 million in borrowing for the project, in

(See Sewer, Page 3A)



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6 PM – 9 PM

Town Hall Theater’s Jackson Gallery

Explore an exhibit of stories, photos, and memories from the Co-op’s first 50 years.



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Aug 12 - Aug 18

Farm stays

(Continued from Page 2A)
“Various online sites (like Airbnb or Hipcamp) make it easier for farms to offer overnight farm stays,” Chase said. “Some are in the farmhouse with the family or in cabins, others are very rustic and some might be a place to camp.”
An agritourism survey conducted with farmers around the country found various motivators for farms offering agritourism opportunities like overnight stays, including building goodwill in their communities and educating people on agriculture.
“While financial benefits certainly matter a lot, many farms are also doing it for more altruistic, community-minded reasons because they want to share what they have and educate the public,” Chase said.
For Raishart, some of her favorite memories from offering farm stays have been welcoming visitors from across the globe. She recalled a time when a family from Pakistan was visiting with their son in the U.S., and Raishart’s son immediately connected with the grandfather despite the language barrier.
“I have this memory of my son and him holding hands and walking around the yard looking at the chickens together but not talking,” she said, noting how such stays have allowed for other cultural exchanges. “We live in



THE LOG CABIN at Foxglove Farm in Leicester hosts guests throughout the year for overnight farm stays, helping support Cattie and Mark Raishart’s family and connecting them with visitors from all over the world. Such stays are offered by farms across the state and represent one aspect of the state’s agritourism industry.

Photo by Ethan Abitz

Sewer

(Continued from Page 2A)
addition to the received grant money. However, now the city is being advised to reduce the amount it borrows by the lower limit of received grant money to comply with the language of the article.
Though city councilors discussed the issue during a meeting on Monday, Aug. 10, they

opted to table the matter. Included in the agenda packet was a draft resolution and potential verbiage of a warning article to be included on the general election ballot this November. City councilors would have to vote on those in the future.
Redmond was scheduled to meet with the Vermont Bond Bank and DEC on Wednesday afternoon.



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Leicester; it’s rural, our driveway is 1,000-feet-long, I don’t know how else I’d be able to offer something so rich for my kids.”
SMALL TOWN LIFE
Raishart sees farm stays as a way to bring more visitors to smaller communities in Vermont like Leicester, which might not typically attract a lot of tourists.
“There’s areas of the state where tourists would automatically think to gravitate towards and to have these spots highlighted that are a little bit more off the beaten path I think benefits our local economy,” she said. “We recommend for our guests a whole host of restaurants...they often visit the state park and then even just gas stations.”
Chase shared a similar sentiment.
“One of things that overnight farm stays does is gets people out of the more urban areas onto the winding, dirt roads and out into the most remote and rural parts of our state,” she said. “It really helps to spread the tourism around, and also the job opportunities because in the most rural parts of our state there’s not a whole lot of opportunities to generate income, and agritourism provides those opportunities.”
Raishart has learned a lot about hosting farm stays over the years. She shared some of her tips for those interested in the option, including the power of nice bedding, not being afraid to start small and asking questions of those with experience.
“Be authentic,” Raishart said. “People are coming to Vermont, and that authenticity I think is something that Vermont does really well, and that’s something you can offer. Also, that’s something that varies person to person and farm to farm, and it’d be interesting for people to see a full scope of who lives here.”
Chase underscored the value of authenticity, a key strength of Vermont’s agritourism industry.
“I think agritourism fits so well with the Vermont tourism brand and our approach to inviting visitors to Vermont because it really connects our love of nature, our care for the working landscape and our focus on local food,” she said. “Agritourism falls in the intersection of those areas, and a lot of visitors who come to Vermont are specifically seeking that kind of opportunity.”

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Pavilion

(Continued from Page 2A)
that is developmental planning for the Veterans Park as a whole. So there’s a lot that we want to do” Newton said.
“There’s a lot that needs to be redone. So the pavilion itself will take care of the basketball court area. The next phase is really working on upgrading the tennis court and pickleball court area.”

Thank you

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of you for the beautiful cards, thoughts and well wishes for my 100th birthday!

It is nice to know there are so many thoughtful people out there.

You all made my 100th birthday a great day!!

Thanks again.

— Pearl Parent



ANDY WOHL IS blending two of his passions into a new business expected to open in Bristol this month. The coffee and vinyl shop, Off the Record, will offer a selection of espresso drinks and audio discs.

Independent photo/Marin Howell

Coffee and vinyl shop opening in Bristol

By MARIN HOWELL
BRISTOL — Bristol business owner Andy Wohl is bringing two of his passions to a new offering expected to open downtown later this month.
Wohl has been busy working on Off the Record, a new coffee and vinyl shop located at 25A Main St. He told the *Independent* he hopes to be open for the annual Pocock Rocks Music Festival & Street Fair on Aug. 15 if all goes to plan.
“I’ve always loved a slow morning, cup of coffee, throwing on a record and just taking a second to enjoy the day,” Wohl said of the inspiration for the shop. “Records are kind of coming back these days because with how fast-paced everything is today, people are really looking for a chance to just take a step back, slow down, maybe throw on a record.”
Wohl has lived in the Bristol community for the past six years. He’s spent much of his life

working in kitchens and runs Off the Hook, a food business inside the South Mountain Tavern just a few doors down from the new shop. He’ll continue running Off The Hook after the store is up and running.
Once open, Wohl plans to offer a selection of espresso-based drinks at Off the Record, using beans from Little Seed Coffee Roasters in Middlebury. Along with grabbing a cup of coffee, visitors will be able to peruse a variety of records Wohl’s been acquiring.
Vinyl records on display in the shop offer a taste of what could be in stock — from Tracy Chapman and Fleetwood Mac to The Beatles and Bob

Dylan.
“I really likes all types of music,” Wohl said. “Anyone that feels like reaching out (on Instagram @offtherecordvt) can feel free to, and if they have any suggestions for newer titles that they want me to carry, I will definitely look into it and do my best to get them in.”
Wohl said he’s received a lot of support from the community and is excited to bring the idea for Off the Record to life.
“I’m just looking forward to having a cool space for everyone to be able to hang out, listen to music, get a quick, good cup of coffee,” he said.

“Records are kind of coming back these days because with how fast-paced everything is today, people are really looking for a chance to just take a step back, slow down, maybe throw on a record.”

— Andy Wohl

Elderly Services, Inc.

Fall 2026 Community Education Series

September 9:
Managing diabetes in older age
Type 2 diabetes has profound impacts on us as we age, affecting physical health and making us vulnerable to developing dementia. It is also expensive to manage. But Type 2 diabetes is not inevitable; you can take steps to prevent or delay it. You can also manage the disease to prevent further health complications. In this session you will learn proven ways to help improve the condition as well as delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes.

Presented by: Magie Young, MPH, RDN, CD
Mountain View Nutrition
Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 4:00 p.m.
at Middlebury Congregational Church

September 23:
Advanced Care Planning
Back by popular demand! Learn how the Vermont Advance Directive process works. Get free forms and informational brochures. Ask questions about your advance directive. We will discuss:

- How to use advance directives to make a plan for serious illness or end-of-life circumstances.
- Available tools to plan for your healthcare (advance directives, DNR/COLST, disease-specific addendums).
- Advance care planning conversations with your loved ones and clinicians.

Presented by: Taylor Murray, Vermont Ethics Network Advance Care Planning Program Manager
Wednesday, Sept. 23, 4:00 p.m.
at Middlebury Congregational Church

September 29:
Medicare Open Enrollment
Time to sign up for Medicare? Need to make changes? Age Well’s State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Team will walk you through the steps to prepare for Medicare’s Fall Open Enrollment, the time of year when you can change your Medicare coverage. Information presented will include: the differences between plans, when and how to change drug coverage, benefit programs that help to pay for Medicare costs, and how to use Medicare.gov.

Presented by: Sam Carleton, Age Well
Tuesday, Sept. 29 2:30 p.m.
at Elderly Services, 112 Exchange St., Middlebury

October 14:
Driving and aging — challenges and strategies
Join us for an informative session on driving in your later years. Understand how age-related changes affect your driving and about the challenges faced by older drivers in Vermont. Discover helpful tips on staying independent, safe, and mobile behind the wheel. Learn about the Yellow Dot Program, a statewide initiative that gives first responders quick access to important medical information during a crash or emergency. Get ideas for how to approach the difficult conversation about driving retirement and start planning for the future. Don’t miss this chance to plan ahead and stay prepared!

Presented by: Julia Irish,
Vermont Department of Health
Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 4:00 p.m.
at Middlebury Congregational Church

October 28:
Building Brain-Healthy Habits
This Alzheimer’s Association program provides research-backed guidance on brain health and outlines the importance of taking action at every age to protect your brain. Research shows there are everyday habits you can build today to help protect your memory and thinking as you get older - potentially reducing your risk or delaying the onset of cognitive decline. It’s never too late to start improving your brain health!

Presented by: Jordan Cotto, Vermont Chapter/ Alzheimer’s Association
Wednesday, Oct. 28, at 4:00 p.m.
at Middlebury Congregational Church

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Editorial

Janoo gets votes for change over Richards’s credentials

Esteemed journalist Chris Graff summed up the Democratic primary race for governor perfectly in his Wednesday op-ed: “Intensity beats out competence almost every time in hotly contested primary elections. And that’s the key takeaway from Amanda Janoo’s narrow win over Aly Richards in Tuesday’s Democratic gubernatorial primary,” Graff wrote. “The outcome is especially interesting because Richards had most of the conventional advantages – money, organization, endorsements, and political connections – and still lost.”

Graff also neatly summed up the essence of each candidate’s campaign: “Richards presented herself as a pragmatic problem solver who knew how to make government work and who could build a broad coalition. Janoo presented herself as a disruptor: tax wealthy Vermonters, provide universal primary care, reduce reliance on Washington, challenge corporate power and rethink the state’s economic model.”

But back to Tuesday’s turnout. “In a low-turnout Democratic primary,” Graff explained, “ideological intensity can matter enormously. And it did on Tuesday: The electorate voted for change over credentials.”

Graff, who served as the Vermont Bureau Chief for The Associated Press in Montpelier from 1978 to 2006, has covered a lot of political contests in Vermont, yet was still fascinated with the results.

“Janoo’s victory was narrow enough to resist easy explanations,” Graff writes. “She defeated Richards by just over 2,000 votes out of 70,000. What’s truly fascinating is how geographically eclectic the results are. Janoo won because she combined progressive strength around the state with a decisive breakthrough in the state’s largest Democratic vote center.

“Chittenden County supplied almost half of her statewide victory margin. Within the county Richards won the suburban communities while Janoo ran up margins in Burlington and Winooski large enough to offset those losses. The most telling statistic: Janoo won the Chittenden Central Senate district by roughly 2,000 votes, which is roughly her margin of victory.

“But interestingly, looking outside Chittenden County there is no real pattern. The map doesn’t show an urban-rural split or a north versus south or progressive versus moderate.”

As for voter turnout, the 70,000 who voted in this year’s primary was significantly higher than the 50,000 who voted two years ago (in 2024) but far less than the 100,000 who voted in 2022, Graff reported, making the point that primaries are a far cry from the 372,885 who voted in the General Election two years ago. That is, what works in the primary can’t always be assumed will work in November.

We’ll expand on two of Graff’s points as a path forward: 1) the intensity of Janoo’s campaign and 2) the sincerity of her message.

“Intensity” infers her vibrant grassroots support. That is, it was her strong network of grassroot supporters, campaigning door-to-door, working the phones, being out at public events, creating a movement that converts voters into active campaign workers.

Marry that “intensity” of supporters with a fun, novel and exciting campaign message and you create a vibe that ripples throughout the state and creates enthusiasm for the candidate and her vision for change.

But it’s the fundamental message for change that may carry the day this November.

Even as voters may struggle to articulate what change might look like, they know they don’t want 10 more years of what Janoo has rightly labeled “managed decline.” Voters also rightly understand that the economic dynamics they are working with — supply side economics, better known as the trickle-down economic theory — favors the wealthy and leaves them worse off. They are hungry for change because the current system, which Phil Scott and John Rodgers embrace, has made living in Vermont more expensive in terms of health care, housing and property taxes, and has produced worse educational outcomes, fewer manufacturing jobs, and has hastened youth flight from Vermont.

Scott also has the Trump albatross hanging from his neck. In blue Vermont, Scott’s been smart enough to keep his distance from Trump and to meekly protest at his most outrageous offenses, but that’s hardly enough for the many Vermonters nauseated by Trump’s direct attacks on the nation’s democracy, his reckless and needless war in Iran, selling out Ukraine to Russia and turning America’s back on our European allies, not to mention his abhorrent environmental policies, his personal corruption and shameless waste of national resources on vanity projects like the White House renovation, the botched Reflecting Pool, the proposed arch, and on and on and on. In presidential politics, what we don’t criticize, we embrace, and there’s far too much Scott has left unsaid to the nation’s detriment and to Vermont’s shame. States have a role in keeping the rogue president in check, but Scott has failed that task.

Over the next two-plus months, Janoo has a herculean task of getting her name known to tens of thousands more Vermont voters, not to mention convincing them to support her optimistic vision. Moreover, she must demonstrate she can pay for her ideas without undo harm. Janoo remains the clear political underdog, but she has a compelling case to make, just as voters are tiring of Scott’s empty promises on affordability.

OTHER RACES:

In the other major state race, Molly Gray’s name recognition and fighting spirit helped her cruise to a win in the Democratic lieutenant governor’s race, even as Ryan McLaren posed a stiff challenge and demonstrated he’s a future talent in the party.

In Addison County’s contested GOP Senate race, Steve Heffernan scored an impressive victory followed by Republican newcomer Andrew Klein, setting up a competitive General Election race against Democratic incumbent Ruth Hardy and newcomer Hannah Sessions. It’s a race sure to increase local voter turnout this November.

Angelo Lynn

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INDEPENDENT

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Impressive
HOW FAR CAN a 4-year-old throw a cast iron skillet? You'd be pretty surprised. Little Sydney Cobb or Bristol showed a crowd of onlookers at the Field Days Skillet Toss competition last week.
Independent photo/Steve James

Vt. roots forge dear connections

Summer nights like these are about being self-indulgent. As a 24-year-old Vermonter, this looks like a few beers with an old friend, talking about the future and fate, and getting lost in people’s eyes. Not romantically, just curiously. Always looking for recognition. For example, I see a boy I used to know out of the corner of my eye now. My gaze chases him across the bar, but he seems to be having his own game of attention tag with a little girl outside that he’s waving down, ultimately leading to a somewhat delayed acknowledgement. What I’ve come to learn about Vermont is that six degrees of separation doesn’t apply here. It really only takes the distance between the start and end of a trail, the crossing of two hands on the same Shaw’s shelf or the science of how a voice moves across a table, to bridge the gap between two familiar humans.

The person I choose to prove this point with tonight is Maizy. One of the kindest humans I know, one of the smartest (a therapist at 24!) and one of the silliest. Our friendship has bloomed in the years since leaving high school, but there are many others that have stayed that one or two degrees of contact apart. For example, the son of a father I see walking up the bar porch steps now. We lock eyes on the first try! Which leads to a quick update about my life, and the “what is he up to?” questions about his son. Deeming it not quite appropriate, I leave out the most important one: is he still wearing the wizard hat? But I get a pretty clear picture of his current state of affairs anyway.

After retrieving another Corona Extra and a few limes, we resume our life check-in: Maizy weeks away

from completing grad school, me months out from a trip to Southeast Asia. We recap friend and family life footnotes, too. A friend’s boyfriend deployed; a high school connection losing a parent; a great aunt in the process of dying; a younger sister starting middle school; an older sister turning 30. Between whispered remarks and moments of heartache, we find ourselves wondering how we got here. How we got so lucky.

I think back to the weekend in early June, when we flew to Portland, Oregon to visit hometown friends who recently moved. Though the trip itself was wonderful — and included a surprise reveal, too much fried vegan food, a queer drag show and lots of couch catch-ups—my highlight was our untimely layover at the Newark airport on our way home. We had made the rookie mistake of doing a Sunday red-eye in order

to optimize friend time, having the reverse effect of non-optimal levels of sanity when we missed our second flight. Though the six-hour layover tragedy was not lost on us, we quickly resigned ourselves to our fate. A surprisingly good one.

The following hours included Terminal 3’s finest: Dunkin’ shakin’ espressos, smoothie bowls and a frozen veggie burger brunch. We entertained ourselves with Love Island’s latest episode and pretended the wooden crumb-filled chairs were sand-dusted seats in paradise. I even went on a shopping spree at the convenient bookstore and bought a \$30 sticker book. We commenced each passing hour with a joke more absurd than the last. Spending at least half the layover

(See Ways of Seeing, Page 5A)

Ways of Seeing

By Inana Breck-Arndt



Sustain the abundance we grow

Care, connection and collaboration are not simply values to which we aspire. They are the conditions that allow communities to grow, flourish and bear fruit.

Just as healthy soil depends on countless unseen relationships among roots, fungi, insects, microbes and water, a healthy society depends on networks of trust and mutual responsibility. When those relationships are nurtured, the ground remains fertile. Growth follows. Abundance follows. When they are neglected, the ground hardens, growth slows, and what once seemed plentiful begins to wither.

Across Vermont and across the world, we are living through a time that demands greater care in how we steward our shared resources. Energy is expensive, both economically and environmentally. Food is getting more expensive and less nutritious. Housing has become scarce and increasingly unaffordable. Working families, young people, elders and the people who keep our communities running and guide us with wisdom, often struggle to find rents they can afford, and only dream of owning a home.

Farming reminds us that no harvest is inevitable. Every season begins with faith, courage and careful preparation. Seeds are chosen with intention, often purchased with precious resources, then entrusted

to fertile soil with hope for what they might become. Success is never the work of one person alone. It depends on many hands, changing weather, a measure of luck and communities willing to support local farms and businesses.

The same is true of human flourishing. Housing is about more than shelter; it is about belonging. A home is the stable ground where children grow, neighbors become friends, workers build careers, and communities invest in one another. Without that foundation, every other challenge becomes harder. Economic opportunity, educational success, public health and civic participation all depend on people having a secure place to call home.

Nature offers another lesson. A forest is not simply a collection of trees but a living community. Birds disperse the seeds of the shrubs and trees that feed them. Squirrels unknowingly plant future forests by burying acorns and nuts. Underground fungal networks allow trees to exchange nutrients, share resources, and even support young saplings growing in the shade. Diversity strengthens the whole. What appears to be competition is often revealed as cooperation — a resilient system built on mutual care.

(See Neighbor Matters, Page 5A)

Neighbor Matters

By Stephen Rinker



Letters to the Editor

Member of Middlebury energy panel clarifies his comments

Thank you to John Flowers for his great effort to capture the complexity of last week’s Middlebury selectboard decision to support the use of gas rather than electricity to power sludge treatment in our updated sewer treatment plant. As a former local paper reporter, I have some experience with how hard reporting on such thorny, controversial topics can be. Thus, I’m writing not to criticize how my remarks to the meeting were presented but to clarify them.

In the report, I was described as following Ross Conrad with remarks endorsing his critique of choosing gas. In fact, though, I was changing the subject. Like Ross and other members of the town’s Energy Committee, I have doubts about the long-range quality of the affordability and reliability analysis that supported the 5-2 vote in favor of gas. But I could see which way the vote was headed based on projections of the project cost to local taxpayers and sewer users. And so I turned to the one projection everyone seemed to agree on: choosing gas would make it impossible for Middlebury to reduce its contributions to climate-changing pollutants enough to meet our adopted climate action goals.

I believe it is important for government officials at all levels to have targets for reducing fossil fuel emissions. There is no question that such emissions are relentlessly increasing climate change risks to life as we know it. When chosen targets no longer seem feasible, we need our leaders to clearly say why that is so. But beyond that, we need them to then propose changes that can minimize the damage we will do to ourselves and others by falling short.

To its credit, the selectboard struck me as unhappy at the environmental implications of its vote on the sludge technology. Several members said publicly or in private the vote was hard for them personally. Perhaps it’s unfair to ask this of such volunteer leaders, but the proof that they take the town’s actions to address climate change seriously now needs refreshing. I look forward to seeing what they are inspired to do to try to offset the target busting impact of the vote they concluded was financially necessary.

Barnaby Feder
Middlebury

There is beauty in rewilding our lawns, rather than mowing

Thank you for the article on the rewilding program at Middlebury College. I think about the amount of energy needed to create the steel, plastic and wiring components for walk-behind, self-propelled or sit-on power lawn mowers. I think about the energy needed to transport these machines from where they are manufactured to the dealership and from the dealership to the homeowner’s home. I think about the energy needed to operate these machines, be they fossil fuel or electric powered, and to maintain them, sharpening blades, buying new blades, changing oil if not electric/battery, etc. How many tens of millions of power lawn mowers do we have in our country?

I built a new home in Bristol, and the lawn produced many flowering clovers, Queen Anne’s lace, dandelions and other wildflowers or what some call weeds. Most are low-growing, 6 inches or so, some much taller. I have many insects flying from flower to flower. There is color, depth and diversity in my lawn. Let me say, I see several homes in town that don’t have grass lawns, but a variety of vegetation not needing mowing and attracting pollinators. I wish I saw more.

I’ve had several (not many) people ask me when I’m going to mow my lawn. I don’t understand

(See Ryersbach, Page 5A)

Reasoning for Scott’s veto doesn’t hold up

By BEN EDGERLY WALSH, VPIRG

Let’s start with what isn’t in dispute. The data center bill Governor Phil Scott vetoed, H.727, was among the strongest such laws written in any state. AI data centers are driving up electric bills across the country and having major impacts on air, water and climate pollution in the process. And here in Vermont, that now-dead bill that would have addressed each of those issues passed both the House and Senate with overwhelming support from both Democrats and Republicans, before being killed by Gov. Scott and the 52 Republican representatives who voted to sustain his veto.

You may hear that the final bill was somehow “worse” than the earlier House version — a fumble, a bill that “shape-shifted” into something that demanded a veto, as one commentary in VTDigger put it recently.

The truth of the matter is that the final bill built on what the House started and protected Vermonters more effectively in almost every way than that initial version.

Op-Ed

Let’s take a look at what actually changed.

On your electric bill, the earlier version the governor preferred directed utilities to “mitigate the risk” that other ratepayers would cover “unwarranted” data center costs. To “mitigate” means to reduce impacts, not eliminate them, meaning the governor’s preferred bill inherently allowed data centers to pass on even some unwarranted costs to Vermonters.

The Legislature rewrote that to require other ratepayers to be “insulated from all costs” tied to data center deployment.

On pollution, the Legislature turned vague language into hard requirements. It required data centers to maximize on-site renewable energy. It required them to fund energy-saving projects in surrounding communities, to offset their inherent environmental impact. And it barred them from running on-site fossil fuel generators except in a genuine

emergency, preventing the kind of practices that have spiked air pollution in communities across the country.

So put the question plainly to every representative who voted to sustain the veto, every organization like Vermonters for a Clean Environment that has since complained about this stronger version of the bill, and Governor Scott: which of those provisions made the bill worse? Was it the one that shields your power bill? The one that cuts pollution? The one that delivers benefits directly to any communities hosting data centers?

The only way the “it got worse” math works is if weaker protection for Vermonters is the goal.

The governor also offered another reason for his veto. In his veto letter, he wrote that the bill imposed “new and unnecessary regulatory systems” that were only “seemingly aimed at data centers” and would drive other businesses away.

The reality is that the bill was narrowly targeted, at data centers alone, at a time when state after

(See Walsh Op-Ed, Page 7A)

Ways of Seeing

(Continued from Page 4A)

fixated on our frequent bathroom breaks like toddlers learning how the body works, and the latter laughing on the floor about how people were vacating our area (only leading to more vacating and more laughing). By the time we found ourselves receiving the “It’s almost your turn to board!” text, I felt a strange sense of sadness. I couldn’t fully put a pin on it, but it was more than the giggles that I didn’t want to stop.

Sitting at the bar in our hometown now has made me realize that this special feeling

— being fully seen and held by a friend, in all the serious and non-serious ways — was not unique to us being on the trip, but put context around our relationship. Like the connections that I have with other lasting Vermont friends, this place, as cliché as it sounds, builds people differently. We talk of my one-way ticket across the world and I wonder how people are shaped elsewhere and what other luck I might find.

With the mosquitos fully joining our conversation and the people slowly disappearing from the bar, Maizy looks up at me a final time.

The last bitter sip of beer swishes in the back of my throat till she lands on her words. “One day you need to come back.” I’ve never heard such conviction behind such simple words, but my own seems to fly out of me, like the magnet this state is, and I say yes.

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

Neighbor Matters

(Continued from Page 4A)

Our communities must function the same way. Nonprofits, faith communities, businesses, farmers, educators, municipal leaders and neighbors all have roles to play. There is much work to do and we all must participate. New housing must be built, older homes restored, childcare and workforce partnerships expanded, and downtowns, village centers, and locally owned businesses strengthened. These are not isolated projects; they are interconnected roots of culture, supporting and protecting the healthy soil of the entire landscape.

Meeting the challenges of energy, housing, and food security requires us to think like stewards rather than short-term harvesters. Stewardship asks us to invest in what future generations will need, even when the returns are not immediate. It means supporting sustainable energy production, creating truly affordable housing, preserving working lands, expanding economic opportunity, and ensuring that the people who work in our communities can continue to live

in them. Resilience grows through shared responsibility, not individual accumulation.

Care is the water that sustains hope through difficult seasons. Connection is the root system that helps communities weather storms. Collaboration is the patient work of cultivation—neighbors planning together, organizations sharing resources, public and private partners aligning their efforts, and residents recognizing that the future is something we create together rather than inherit by chance.

Vermont has weathered floods, economic upheaval and changing industries. Yet its history is also one of neighbors showing up for one another, communities rebuilding together, and a shared understanding that the well-being of one farm, one village, or one family is inseparable from the well-being of the whole.

When we create the conditions that allow everyone to take root, we begin restoring the civic soil that sustains us all. The work requires patience, humility and persistence. Every home built, every partnership formed, every opportunity expanded, and every act of mutual

care enriches the ground from which stronger communities grow.

The future we seek is not one where every field looks the same, but one where every field has what it needs to thrive. Our community of communities is strongest when every town, neighborhood, family and individual is connected to a larger ecosystem of care. By investing in renewable energy, affordable housing, sustainable agriculture, and strengthening the relationships that sustain us, we prepare the ground for something more enduring than prosperity alone. We cultivate a future where everyone has a place at the table, no one is left untended, and the abundance we create together nourishes generations to come.

Stephen is a retired carpenter and farmer living in Addison County, and a vital neighbor in the Green Mountain Justice ecosystem. When he isn’t volunteering or working to leave the world a little better than he found it, he enjoys hiking, gardening, and throwing frisbees for dogs.

Letters to the Editor

Secret police forces an eleventh sign of fascism

Over the past months you may have driven by individuals holding “Signs of Fascism” on the Cross Street Bridge, at Triangle Park or along Main Street.

A number of signs of fascism are already occurring and have been observed across the country. Here are a few from “signs” described in previous posts.

- Controlling the media.
- Normalizing corruption.
- Adopting and perpetuating ideology over science and facts.

An 11th sign of fascism and authoritarianism is “using secret police forces to eliminate political opposition, enforce absolute loyalty, and control public behavior through terror.” Secret police operate under a different set of rules than traditional law enforcement. Traditional law enforcement officers adhere to the “rule of law”. They are accountable to the public and government officials.

Members of the secret police are answerable to no one except their superior(s). Their work is clandestine and involves random arrests, incarceration without just cause or due process, torture and murder.

Most likely, the best-known use of secret police is the Gestapo under the direction of Hitler’s henchman Hermann Göring. The Gestapo arbitrarily arrested, jailed, tortured and murdered individuals seen as a threat to the established hierarchy, usually based upon ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and country of origin.

The Gestapo used a variety of tactics to terrorize the citizenry. They routinely used informants — friends, neighbors, classmates — to “out” those suspected of opposition to the Nazi regime.

Throughout history, there have been other examples of the

brutality and ruthlessness of “secret police”. The Spanish Inquisition. The purge before and during the French Revolution. The KGB of the former Soviet Union. The Romanian “Securitate”. Cambodian Khmer Rouge’s Santebal.

Commonalities amongst all of these secret police forces include lack of municipal/judicial oversight, use of fear and terror, pitting neighbor against neighbor, pitting one family member against another, acting with impunity.

In the United States today, we have ICE — Immigration and Customs Enforcement. ICE is an organization that was established by the Department of Homeland Security in 2003 in response to 9/11.

During 2026 alone ICE officers have engaged in activities that mimic “secret police” tactics. Here are a few of the casualties:

- Jesus Manuel Arenas-Silva 2026-07-13
- Felix Alcorta-Rodriguez 2026-06-19
- Mamuka Artmeladze 2026-06-04
- Denny Adan Gonzalez 2026-04-28
- Aled Damien Carbonell-Betancourt 2026-04-12

Since January 1, 2026, there have been 16 more.

As with many secret police organizations, ICE frequently operates “under the radar.” It does its work outside the accepted set of rules governing law enforcement agencies. ICE agents are accountable to no one except their immediate superior and the head of the Department of Homeland Security, Markwayne Mullin.

ICE’s budget makes it the highest paid police force in the country. Despite having a huge budget at its disposal, the department’s hiring and training

programs have come under increasing scrutiny as these programs emphasize bullying, harassing, terrorizing and torturing victims rather than treating them as human beings, innocent until proven guilty. In other words, the majority of ICE agents are well-paid, ill-trained thugs with questionable backgrounds and credentials.

Just recently we have seen an uptick in ICE activity in Vermont. On Saturday, August 8, it was very close to home... in Cornwall.

At this point I am truly wondering... are there really those who are still sitting back doing nothing while all this is happening? Are there really Trump supporters still sitting back while our inhumanity to our fellow human beings continues. If you are one of them stand up...be counted. Be brave. Make your inhumanity known.

A cursory examination of the literature will provide evidence for the current administration’s use of secret police to quell unrest and instill fear.

The above information hopefully explains why some individuals have chosen to stand up and gather frequently in Middlebury with “Signs of Fascism”. If you believe these truths to be self-evident, please join as at our next “Signs of Fascism” rally.

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

A full or partial list of references for this article is available upon request.

Judy Wiger-Grohs
Middlebury

Union Street Meeting House combines food shelf and worship

BRANDON — This July, following a three-year courtship, the Brandon Area Food Shelf and the Brandon United Methodist Church reached an official memorandum of understanding. The contract gives the food shelf use of the entire facility for fundraising and community events, excluding Sunday mornings for worship services and agreed upon times for other church events. The duo will be doing business as the Union Street Meeting House.

The Brandon United Methodist Church is under the direction of a new administrative board and improvements to the facility are underway. Renovations are being made to the community space, bathroom and kitchen to include the addition of a new commercial stove to accommodate future community meals. The first official Community Dinner will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. Dinners will occur monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 6 p.m.

The food shelf is open Sundays from 12:30-2 p.m. and Wednesdays 3-6 p.m. The Union Street Meeting House is open to the public weekly on Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m. for games and socialization. Children under 12 must be supervised by an adult. Beverages and snacks provided. Sunday morning worship is at 11:15 a.m. For more information please contact Vicki Disorda 802-345-4125 or vqueenoftheearth@gmail.com.

The Unions Street Meeting House is also home to the Brandon/ Forestdale Lion’s Club diaper drive. Donations or pick-ups may be made during food shelf hours.

If you would like to volunteer for the food shelf or fundraising activities, contact Kathy Mathis 802-247-6720 or Vicki Disorda 802-345-4125. To RSVP for community meals call 802-247-6524. Leave a message please.

To make contributions to the food shelf, please mail donations to Brandon Area Food Shelf, P.O.

Box 345, Brandon, VT 05733 or drop off items during food shelf hours. To assist with building upgrades, please mail donations to Brandon United Methodist church, P.O. Box 55, Brandon, VT 05733.

Ryersbach letter

(Continued from Page 5A)

it. There is a diversity of house sizes, shapes and color throughout the area. Why should all lawn look the same?

Peter Ryersbach
Bristol

Letters to the editor Can be found on Pages 4A, 5A and 7A



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Obituaries

Walter ‘Gator’ Mumford, 73, formerly of Bristol

UNDERHILL — Walter “Gator” Mumford, 73, of Underhill, Vt., passed away at home Aug. 6, 2026. Gator was born March 30, 1953, in St. Johnsbury, Vt., one of seven children of George Mumford and Virginia (Moulton) Mumford. He graduated from Lyndon State College in 1977. He was known to all as “Gator,” a nickname that stuck with him throughout his life; those who knew him would describe him as playful, easygoing, kind, and warm to everyone he met.

For many years, Gator and his wife, Mary-Jo owned and operated Gator’s, a convenience store in Bristol, Vt. He was also active with the Bristol Rotary Club, where he was honored with the Paul Harris Fellow award, and involved in the 4th of July outhouse races. They also lived in New Haven, Vt., where Gator worked at the University of Vermont Medical Center, before later settling in Underhill.

Gator was a laryngectomee and volunteered with Bud’s New Voices to support others in Vermont going through the same



WALTER “GATOR” MUMFORD

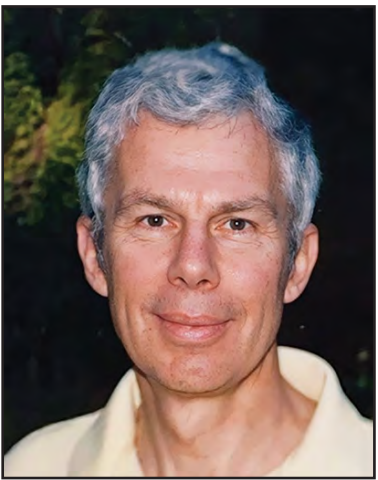
experience. He also visited many patients in the UVM Medical Center who had recently undergone a laryngectomy, offering encouragement and reassurance to them and their families. Gator loved hunting, fishing, playing cribbage, and walking his dog, Gerti. He cherished family vacations in Maine and the time spent with his children and grandchildren.

Gator is survived by his wife, Mary-Jo Mumford; his three children: Andrew Mumford and wife Alison, and their children, Geoffrey and Nora Mumford; Anna Mumford and husband Jon Kennedy, and their children, Maeve and Ronan Kennedy; and Kaylee Mumford and husband Jason Hartman; his siblings, Milton Mumford, Frances Douglas and husband Mark, Leroy Mumford, George Mumford and wife Delores, and Timothy Mumford and wife Gina; as well as many beloved nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his parents, George and Virginia Mumford, and his brother, Stephen Mumford.

A celebration of life will be held Aug. 29, at 11 a.m., at Rock Point Center in Burlington, Vt. Those who wish may make a donation in Gator’s memory to the Alzheimer’s Association, via the family’s Alzheimer’s Association Walk team (Team Mumford).

Arrangements are under the care of Stephen C. Gregory & Son Cremation, South Burlington, Vt. ♦



RUSSELL JOHN LENG

Russell Leng celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY — Please come to remember and celebrate the life of Russell John Leng, who died June 14, 2026, on Saturday, Aug. 29, at 1 p.m., at the Kirk Center, located at the Ralph Myhre Golf Course on Route 30 in Middlebury.

Russ definitely will be there in spirit; this has always been one of his favorite locations in Middlebury. There will be light refreshments, stories, and probably some golf jokes. All are welcome. ♦



SCOTTISH HIGHLAND DANCERS performed a demonstration of the vigorous dance at this year’s Addison County Fair and Field Days, much to the audience’s delight. This was the first year the troupe has shown off their skills at the fair

Independent photo/Eloise Christy

Scottish culture is brought to Vermont through dance

By ELOISE CHRISTY

From motorsports to livestock judging, the Addison County Fair & Field Days has something everyone can enjoy.

New this year was Scottish Highland dancing!

With kilts of different colors, brocaded jackets and big smiles, the Highland Dance Vermont group performed on the big stage to the delight of many fairgoers this past Saturday.

Highland Dance Vermont is led by founder and teacher Katherine Levasseur. The girls on stage begin each dance with hands on their hips or poised above their heads, dressed in wool kilts and lace-up dancing flats called ghillies, ready to hop, kick and prance their way across the stage. With accompanying bagpipe music, each piece is fast-paced and captivating.

For some of the dancers, the performance offered a chance to dance closer to home. Although the group performs at events including Renaissance fairs and other community gatherings, many of its members travel outside Addison County to perform.

“This is an opportunity for (some of) them to perform right here at home,” Levasseur said.

This year marked Highland Dance Vermont’s first appearance at Field Days. Five dancers performed seven routines, including the Highland Fling, Seann Triubhas, Barracks, Lilt, Flora MacDonald’s Fancy, Village Maid, and Sword dance.

Each dance had a unique tempo and the dancers remained on the

balls of their feet, flitting across the stage for most of the routines. As the dancers lined up to perform, Levasseur introduced each dance, explaining its history and significance to Scottish culture.

One dance in particular, Levasseur explained, is called the Flora MacDonald dance and honors the woman who risked everything to smuggle Bonnie Prince Charlie to safety on the Isle of Skye disguised as her maid.

Levasseur has been committed to the art of Scottish Highland dance for over 20 years and her classes range from children as young as 4 to adults.

“We do community-based performances both as an opportunity for the kids but then also as a way to raise awareness for Scottish and Highland dance.” — Katherine Levasseur

Although Levasseur works full time in communications and school affairs, Highland dance is her “passion project” and an effort to keep the tradition alive and introduce it to the next generation.

When the final dance ended, the five dancers stepped carefully around the two swords laid on the floor for the Sword dance, before bowing and leaving the stage. Family members in the crowd waited to congratulate them with applause and hugs.

“We’re ecstatic to be welcomed,” Levasseur said. “It was a great crowd this morning. I wasn’t sure what to expect, but it was a great turnout. It was a lot of fun and these kinds of things are low-pressure... It’s not like a huge stage with a spotlight and it’s unique.”

Snugfest returns for fourth year

HANCOCK — Snugfest, the annual celebration of music, art, sustainable fashion and community, returns to the heart of the Green Mountains on Sunday, September 13 at the Middlebury Snowbowl in Hancock. All festival proceeds benefit The Snug Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to promoting kindness and compassion toward animals, people and the planet.

This year’s musical lineup features Mike & Tessa Gordon, Jen Hartswick, Nick Cassarino, Nate Edgar, Ray Paczkowski, Russ Lawton, Bob Wagner, Hot Pickin’ Party and Electric Bear.

Beyond the music, attendees can explore an artisan market

featuring Vermont makers and small businesses, participate in on-site art activities and enjoy food and beverages from local vendors including Viva el Sabor, Gene’s Chili Hut, Lincoln Peak Vineyard and Weird Window Brewing. The festival also celebrates handmade, vintage, upcycled and sustainably sourced goods, reinforcing the Snug Foundation’s commitment to more sustainable ways of living.

The Snugfest Committee (Colleen Todd, Ray Paczkowski, Jenna & Bill Hunsinger, Brooke Wilcox, Jenn & Eric Montgomery and Alex Cox) founded Snugfest in Ripton from a desire to create a welcoming community where people could coexist with kindness, acceptance and respect for the planet. Since its inception, proceeds from the festival have supported local community programs and individuals experiencing unexpected hardships. Past beneficiaries have included Ripton flood victims, the Ripton Country Store, Wiley Side Farm (a therapeutic farm program for adults with intellectual differences) and Silver Towers Camp (a residential camp for people with disabilities ages six to seventy-five with physical and mental challenges).

Tickets are available through the Snugfest website, with additional opportunities to support the festival through sponsorships, donations, volunteering and participation in the artisan market.



Please join us for a
Celebration of Life for Marilyn Clark
Saturday, August 15 at 2pm
Greenwood Cemetery, Bristol



DAVID BUMBECK

David Bumbeck celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY — Please join us to celebrate the life of David Bumbeck (May 15, 1940 - May 6, 2026), longtime Middlebury resident and professor of art at Middlebury College.

Friends, family and colleagues are invited to share memories Saturday, Aug. 22, from 1-3 p.m., at Middlebury College’s Johnson Memorial Building, 78 Château Road, Middlebury, Vt. ♦



ALPINE BINGHAM

Albert R. ‘Alpine’ Bingham III celebration of life

MIDDLEBURY — Friends and neighbors are invited to come and celebrate the life of Alpine Bingham, who died June 6, 2026. Join the family and share an anecdote or memory you have about Alpine, a truly unique and multifaceted individual who could spin a yarn with the best of them.

The celebration will take place Saturday, Aug. 22, from 2-5 p.m., at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 7823, 530 Exchange St., Middlebury, Vt. 05753. ♦

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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RONALD L. VANDUSEN

Ronald L. VanDusen, 82, of Middlebury

MIDDLEBURY — Ronald L. VanDusen of Middlebury, born April 18, 1944, died July 10, 2026, at the age of 82. ♦



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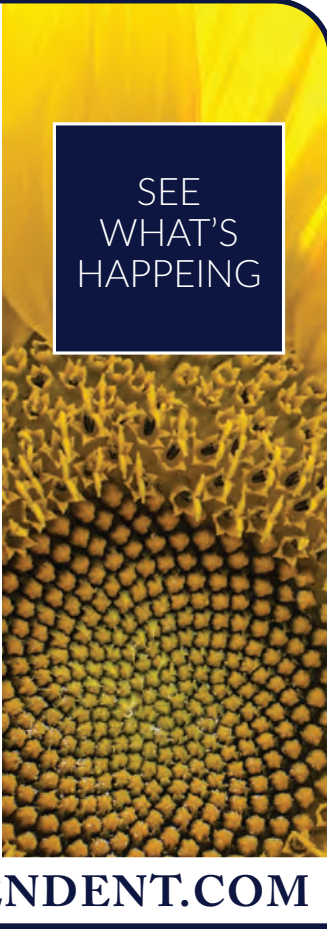


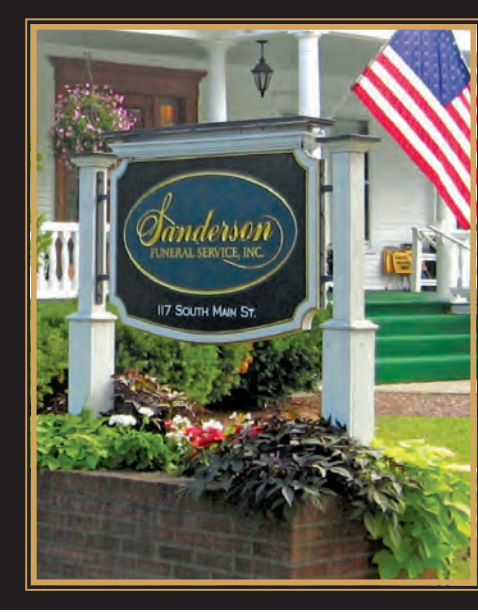
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Letters to the Editor

See Letters on Pages
4A, 5A and 7A.

Gov. Phil Scott’s leadership is failing Vermont

If we want to improve our education system, Phil Scott is not the governor Vermont needs. Good governors lead. Scott has been in office for 10 years, and our education system has been on the decline. The system needs an overhaul; we all know that costs are up, quality is down, and demographics are not in our favor. Productive responses to all three challenges are complex and require creativity. Scott has demonstrated he’s not up to that task. Here’s the most recent evidence:

Nominees reflect priorities. When Scott was reelected in 2024, he nominated Zoie Saunders to be State Education Secretary. Saunders’ educational experience was focused on charter schools in Florida — an academic environment and structure wholly different from Vermont’s and with nothing worth copying.

Six months after the Vermont Senate voted Saunders’ nomination down, Scott appointed her anyway. Leaders do need to make tough decisions; however, if government is to function, tough decisions should have a reasonable rationale. Scott’s support of Saunders was evidence that instead of effectively leading the Agency of Education, Saunders would simply be furthering Scott’s dictates.

Saunders engaged in a Listen and Learn Tour early in 2024. Her tour report, presented in November 2024, analyzed

Vermont’s current education funding system, comparing it to other states. The report, while likely educating Saunders, offers nothing new to the public. Time and public money was spent on unnecessary information, especially given the Commission on the Future of Public Education’s charge.

The Commission on the Future of Public Education was created by the 2024 Vermont State Legislature’s Act 183 (H887), to study problems with our current education system, as well as to propose potential solutions to those problems.

The Commission was to submit their report to the Legislature by October 2025. The Commission spent public money to hire a consultant to improve community engagement in the process. But, in January 2025, Scott lobbied his Transformative Education Plan into the legislative session. This executive-order delivery style was profoundly disruptive to the next two legislative sessions, requiring the Legislature to react to a set of very poorly thought-out proposals. It was not a good use of government time and resources. Scott clearly didn’t care about the Commission’s work, nor about Legislative priorities; he wanted his way. Good leaders don’t throw wrenches into gears.

The controversial response to Scott’s tectonic Transformative Education Plan, H955, was introduced to the Legislature this April by the House Committee

on Education. Scott signed the contentiously derived Act 170 in June. Act 170, Scott’s “...next steps in transforming Vermont’s education system...” includes lofty aspirational statements and lots of significant yet-to-be-determined fiscally and politically charged details which promise to throw more wrenches in future legislative sessions. School districts have until October to collaboratively create seven Cooperative Educational Service Areas (CESAs) statewide; your current school district will be merged somehow at some point.

Scott looks at the bottom line without considering components. The new education funding formula is financially fuzzy and includes a problematic line item: Scott has ignored the out-of-control cost of healthcare that is an independent driver of district budgets. Scott has not acknowledged this problem at all. Consequently, Scott’s efforts at education cost containment will impact education quality.

Scott has not shown the capacity to tackle tough problems collaboratively. He is leading by dictates, proposing poorly- or un-analyzed financial policies, ignoring significant problems like healthcare costs and their impact on our education system and Vermonters. Scott has demonstrated impatience with the legislative process. It’s time for a new governor who can lead effectively.

Christina Wadsworth
Weybridge

Ron Holmes campaign materials are ‘misleading’

My son, Michael Elmore, is the current Addison County sheriff. Recently there have been numerous campaign signs appearing promoting his opponent, Ron Holmes. The large lettering indicates that the candidate is “Sheriff Ron Holmes.” Ron is not the sheriff and never has been elected as a sheriff. Recently, a mailing from Ron went out with more deceptive and misleading information. Ron cites his 25 years of experience in law enforcement. His 25 years was actually as a part-time, and

per diem employee. He was never a full-time employee. His employment in law enforcement ended 14 years ago in 2012. He is no longer a certified as a law enforcement officer yet appears in uniform in his campaign ad.

He directs people to visit his website, but that website was from his last 2022 campaign and no longer exists. There is no access to any position statement that would give an explanation as to why someone should vote for him.

Ron touts honesty as one of his strengths. Along with the above

issues, he has missed the last three financial filing statement deadlines, and as of this date has not filed anything for the July 31 due date. Addison County residents deserve a Sheriff’s Department that has demonstrated integrity, honestly, while meeting regulatory and budgetary guidelines. They have that with Michael and the solid staff that make up the organization.

Paul Elmore
Middlebury

Walsh Op-Ed

(Continued from Page 7A)
state is tightening regulations on “large loads” across the board, sweeping in any business that draws a lot of power. Vermont’s Legislature deliberately chose not to go that route. H.727 applied to data centers, and only data centers, a single and uniquely power-hungry class of user. It answered the governor’s stated concern before he ever raised it.

Lastly, the governor argued “existing Vermont law already provides substantial regulatory authority to prevent harmful impacts.” In essence, “we’re fine, I’m not worried.”

That question, whether Act 250 and other Vermont laws already have us covered, was one of the very first things the Legislature dug into when they took this bill up. The answer? Perhaps on paper, but there were clearly

gaps.

In the context of an industry with numerous players that count their market value well into the hundreds of billions or even trillions of dollars, that can hire armies of lawyers unlike an Act 250 district commission or even Vermont’s Public Utilities Commission has ever seen, that is steeped in a “move fast and break things” mentality, the Legislature chose to do everything it could to fill those potential gaps.

In essence, seeing massive costs and pollution from AI data centers around the country, the Legislature took a “better safe than sorry” approach. The Legislature handed the governor the strongest data center protections in the country: narrowly written, hard on costs and pollution, leaving every other Vermont business or potential

business untouched.

Simply put, the governor’s veto of a bill to protect Vermonters from AI data center costs and pollution is baffling. Vermont needs these protections before we suffer the harms people are already experiencing in other states. Data centers aren’t going away, so we’ll be back next session to fight for Vermonters again.

In the meantime, if a representative (or governor) tells you the bill they helped kill was actually too strong, ask them the one question they still haven’t answered: which protection, exactly, were Vermonters better off without?

Note: Ben Edgerly Walsh is the climate and energy program director of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group.



Shimmering silks

A TINY SPIDER spinning an intricate web in the late afternoon sunlight in Lincoln unknowingly creates a masterpiece of prismatic color.

Photo by Dale Cockrell

Devastation persists in Gaza; death toll still rising

The ceasefire in Gaza has been called a “cruel and deadly illusion” by UNICEF USA. Since the so-called ceasefire on October 10, 2025, when Trump announced his Board of Peace, violence has persisted, adding to the 73,386 Palestinians that have been killed in this war.

The conditions have become ever more dire as the population of Gaza is suffering from malnutrition. It has been projected that 101,000 children alone will have suffered from acute malnutrition by this October. “Israel’s tactical restrictions on the entry of food, the militarization of aid corridors and distribution sites, and the targeted attacks on Gaza’s essential infrastructure have created an environment in which hunger is deliberately used as a means of control over the population,” warns Doctors Without Borders.

Gaza is buried under rubble. With 96% of cropland damaged or destroyed, Palestinians are entirely dependent on the food and water delivered by trucks.

Children in this war have been deliberately targeted. An independent UN Commission report has accused Israel of deliberately targeting Palestinian

children in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the last two and a half years. IDF soldiers have themselves bragged on social media of their killing of children as young as infants. These are evil crimes. Israel’s military, one of the four “superior militaries” in the world, along with the United States, Russia and China, is known for its precision tactical weapons. Their weapons allow the Israeli military to target their opponents with total accuracy. In this case, the children being shot to death have needed only one bullet, most frequently aimed at the head or abdomen.

When will the United States stop sending billions of dollars yearly to Israel to fund their occupation, subjugation and genocide against the Palestinian people? Just look at the data presented by various international monitoring organizations: 73,386 deaths of persons documented by hospital and morgue records, 174,250 Palestinians injured in the Strip, 0 healthcare facilities

functioning at full capacity, 88% of school buildings severely damaged, 82% of all structures damaged or destroyed and 92% of housing units destroyed. And most alarming: 21,589 Palestinian children killed, and 44,500 Palestinian children injured with severe burns and amputations.

Netanyahu has rejected the 15-point Peace Plan brokered by the U.S. Top Israeli cabinet members have called for Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, thereby facilitating the mass migration of the Palestinian People out of Gaza. Starvation, the targeted killing of young children, destruction of all infrastructure, mass killings of civilians and total control over the aid trying to get to the Palestinians can only be called ethnic cleansing. A last figure verified by the Israeli Government, only 4 Israelis have been killed in this war since last October, and these deaths were military casualties.

Linda Brown
Bristol

Invitation for Storytellers 2026

Porter Medical Center’s Palliative Support Services is seeking storytellers for our next storytelling event, which will take place on the evening of
Wednesday, October 14, in Middlebury.

Our theme is
Stories from the Heart: Honoring Spirits Who Have Left This World

Do you have a story to tell about a personal experience of loss and grief, of someone who has left this world, and your own healing? Each story will be no more than 7 minutes in length, a personal and true story told from the heart (rather than read), and include how this experience changed or deepened your life. Seven stories will be selected and those storytellers will be coached to help them prepare for telling their stories before an audience.

Interested storytellers are invited to submit a written draft or a well-developed outline to Jen Guenther at fishercatalley@gmail.com

Deadline for stories: Friday, September 4, 2026, at noon.



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Experiencing the ‘ah,’ ‘aha’ and ‘ha-ha’

Editor’s note: Jing Williams is a Waltham native and summer intern at the Addison Independent.

By JING WILLIAMS

At the end of every day, Agastya International Foundation founder Ramji Raghavan asks himself if there were any “ah,” “aha” or “ha-ha” moments in his day.

I talked to Raghavan when I was on Agastya’s campus in India for three weeks in July with around 20 other students from Lehigh University.

Ramji Raghavan grew up in India, earned his MBA in London, and became a banker in America, but he always had a calling to return to his home country. He had a vision of a campus where students could explore and experience an education built on curiosity and creativity. Twenty-six years ago, he founded Agastya, which reaches 8 million students a year through on-campus and off-campus educational programming, and has the goal of reaching 100 million

underserved students by 2032. Agastya thrives on the ah, aha, ha-ha mantra Raghavan came up with, both a dream for what education should be and a way of life.

Ah represents curiosity. Children are hooked by wonder and want to learn more about something. Aha is their realization of why something happened, how it works or them making a connection they hadn’t before. And finally, the ha-ha is what makes Agastya stand out as one of the most successful educational nonprofits: they make learning fun, exciting and inspire students to stay in school.

India has around 260 million K-12 students and almost 1.5 million schools, both public and private. Traditional educational practices are memorization based, with extreme emphasis on exams, and intense inequalities embedded in the system.

Agastya imagines a different approach to education where students are engaged with hands-

on experiments, encouraged down multiple pathways of success and practice creativity and innovation all the time. The foundation brings students to their campus in Kuppam, India, every day of the week, drives out to students in “labs on a bike” and does outreach programs in 23 of India’s 28 states.

The campus is alive with Agastya’s educational values, from beautiful artwork made from scrap metals to innovation labs where students develop their own scientific models and hundreds of native plants enveloping the area. All of us Leigh students worked on different projects aligned with Agastya’s mission through a Lehigh program called Creative Inquiry.

India has been identified as both the 7th most vulnerable country to climate change and the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world. Despite climate change education being a priority in the 2020 national curriculum, actual climate education is very inconsistent and often taught peripherally, rather than as its own subject. For the past semester and during fieldwork, two other Lehigh students and I have been developing a Climate Heroes Science Kit, designed to align with the national curriculum and provide a hands-on approach to climate change education. Once fully developed, Agastya will distribute thousands of the kits to public schools across India.

While on campus, it was hard not to fall in love with the beauty of the place and the architecture of the learning labs, but most of all, the mantra plastered all over, including the front gate welcoming students and guests to the 172 acres. As we drove past it on our way to the airport for our flight home, I thought about my own ah, aha and ha-ha moments at Agastya, and the lessons that will stick with me forever.

AH

Six days a week, Agastya teachers host night schools where students do their homework and short lessons at a local gathering place, from around 7–9 p.m. One



SMILING INDIAN STUDENTS test the “Climate Heroes Science Kit” developed by Lehigh University students including Jing Williams on Agastya International Foundation’s campus in India. The team spent three weeks in July at the nonprofit refining and testing their kit as part of Lehigh University’s Creative Inquiry program.

Photo courtesy of Jing Williams

night school we visited was hosted in a local temple where Indian college students doing a workshop with Lehigh spoke to the students in the Telugu language and translated for English speakers. One girl, who was dressed beautifully in silk and jewelry and whose dream is to become a doctor, asked about the subjects we were studying back at Lehigh. When I said journalism, she asked about the writing process and told me that water scarcity is a major issue in her area that should be covered.

I was moved.

Across languages, she was challenging me to remember the role of journalism as existing for the people, for democracy, and to strive for that always.

AHA

Around 75 miles northwest of Agastya’s campus lies the city of Bengaluru (Bangalore), home to around 14 million and one of the largest cities in India. One Friday, we took the train to the city and spent the day exploring. Crossing a street corner, I saw a bus roll by and watched a woman drop a plastic utensil out of the window. It wasn’t a new sight, of course — this happens all the time in America. People litter, discarding plastic and non-degradable substances everywhere, without thought for those it will impact.

In India, the problem is severe, especially in densely populated cities. Giant trash mountains in Delhi release toxic fumes and

threaten the health of people and animals powerless to remove the landfill. A staff member from Agastya who researches climate change told us the root of the climate change problem is a lack of empathy across the world. People lack empathy for those impacted by littering, pollution and runoff, choosing to be oblivious because it’s easier.

This message resonated with me. As a child, practicing sustainable habits made me feel I was making a difference, but as I’ve gotten older, I’ve felt my own actions don’t matter compared to major companies. Perhaps true in a sense, this mindset makes it harder to empathize with others, to believe you can make a difference and to see the impacts of your actions. Our science kit won’t be able to change systems outside of children’s power, but if we can empower the next generation to care and advocate for their environment as Climate Heroes, I believe change is to come.

HA-HA

The best part of fieldwork was testing our kit with students, having them perform the experiments using our instructions. Across multiple rounds of testing, we found the favorite experiment was UV beads, which change color from white

to purple, blue or yellow when sunlight hits them, introducing students to UV light and the ozone layer. I’ll never forget the shifting expression of shock to wonder to laughter on one young girl’s face as she watched the beads change color in the sun. The students thought

it was magic, but no: it was science. I realized then why ha-ha is so important: if we want to inspire the next generation to fight against climate change, they need to be enchanted by science, by Earth and feel a deep care for the planet we all share.

This moment gave me hope, both for the impact of our product and for the fight against climate change. It will take all of us. My Creative Inquiry professor often reminds us that we are global citizens who have a responsibility towards everyone. No matter where we are in the world, we can make a difference, and there is always something we can do.

Above all else, what I learned from these ah, aha and ha-ha moments is to actually inspire change, we must believe our actions matter, we must work with everyone we can and if we are curious, innovative and bold, we can create the world we want to live in.

“I’ll never forget the shifting expression of shock to wonder to laughter on one young girl’s face as she watched the beads change color in the sun.”
— Jing Williams



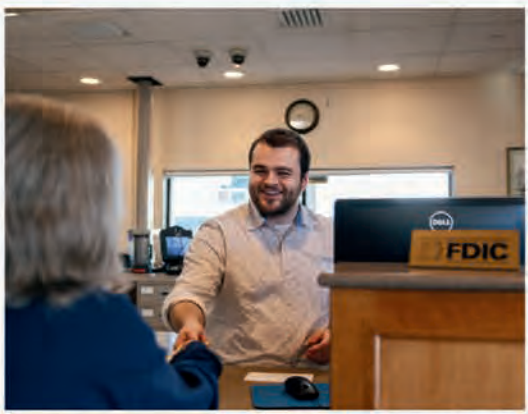
“Brighter minds for a cooler planet” is the mission of the “Climate Heroes” team: Will Kaplan, left, Jing Williams and Ayona Bhadury. The group, part of Lehigh University’s Creative Inquiry Program, worked on developing a Climate Heroes Science Kit alongside Agastya International Foundation while they were on their campus in India for three weeks this July.

Photo courtesy of Jing Williams



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PARENT SESSION

Raising AI-Ready Kids:

What Every Parent Needs to Know—and Do—Now

— Presenter: Giancarlo Brotto —





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TOGETHER, WE WILL EXPLORE:



What every parent needs to understand about AI today—and what is coming next



The skills, habits, and values children will need to thrive in an AI-shaped world



Practical steps families can take now to promote safety, critical thinking, responsible use, and healthy boundaries



How parents and parent councils can help other families and build an AI-ready school community



Parents will leave **informed**, **confident**, and **ready to take action**—not only within their own families, but as leaders and partners in supporting their wider school community.



PARENT SESSION
August 19th
6:30pm – 8:00pm



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Middle/High School
Auditorium

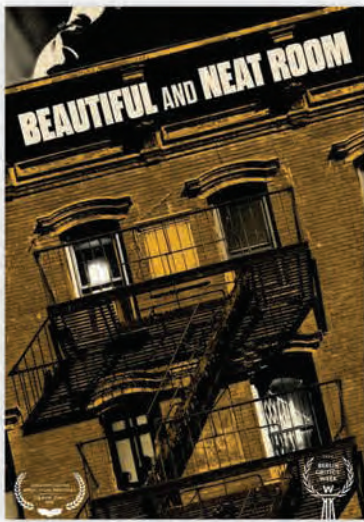


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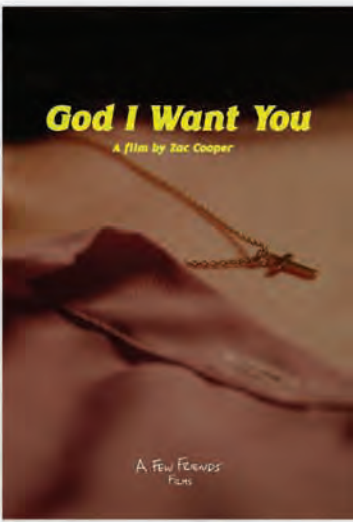


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YOU JUST HAVE TO LOOK

STORIES TO
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DISCUSS



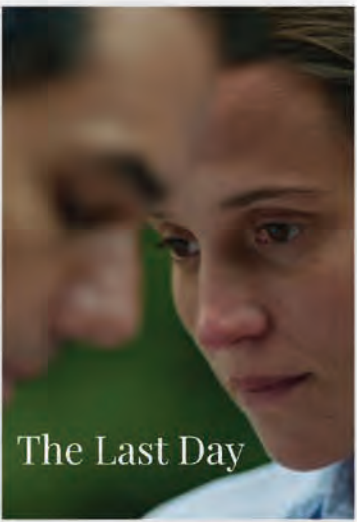
SATURDAY
BEAUTIFUL AND NEAT ROOM



THURSDAY
GOD, I WANT YOU



THURSDAY
IF I GO WILL THEY MISS ME



THURSDAY
THE LAST DAY



SUNDAY
SENDER



THURSDAY
SILENT REBELLION

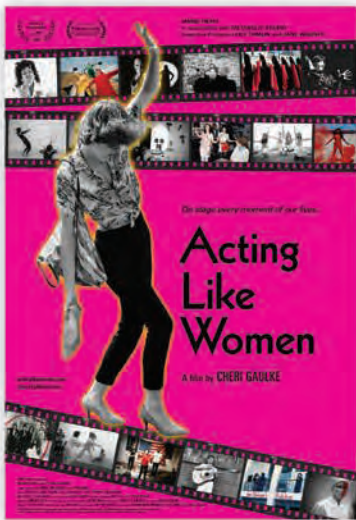


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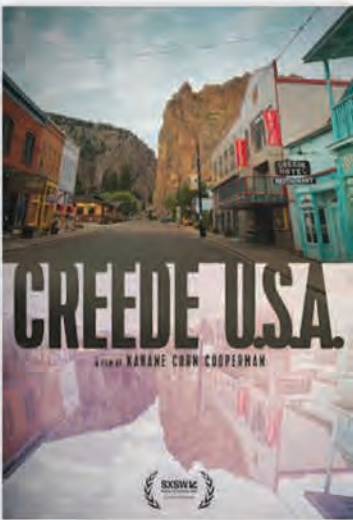


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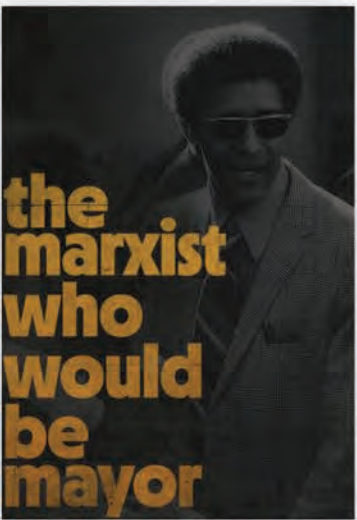
FRIDAY
ACTING LIKE WOMEN



SATURDAY
CREEDE U.S.A.



FRIDAY
DEAR LARA



FRIDAY
KENNY: THE MARXIST WHO WOULD BE MAYOR



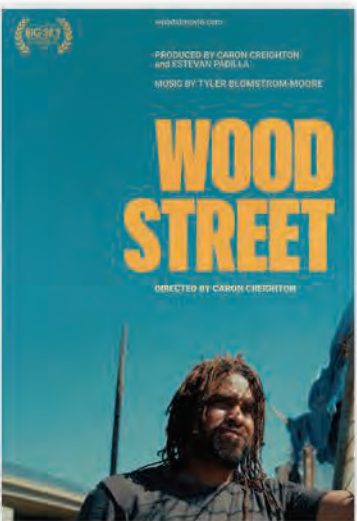
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THE LIVES OF MY FATHER



SATURDAY
MY NDA



SATURDAY
MY SUNNYSIDE



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Field Days 2026

Part 2

There was just as much to do and see during the second half of Addison County Fair and Field Days late last week as there was in the first, which we reported on in the Aug. 6 edition. These fairgoers know from experience. From top right clockwise: 4-H'er Torrey Hanna holds the tail of her cow upside down, brushes it, blow-dries it and applies adhesive to make it fluffy and hold its shape as she prepared to show it; nine-year-old Paisley Dwy of Bridport digs deep to move a block of weights in the kids tractor pull; two cows cuddle during an afternoon snooze in the dairy barn; four-time-defending champ Kristina Buzeman of Addison lets the skillet fly in the annual competition, where this year she finished second; Thomas Putnam, 4, of Vergennes keeps his eye on the finish line of the kids tractor pull; Livia Barnhardt of Leicester tosses a caber, just for good measure, after winning the skillet tossing contest; Josie Depp of Cornwall demonstrates just how far a 6-year-old can go in the kids tractor pull.

Independent photos/Steve James, Jing Williams and Shannon Hart



Art of spinning lives on in community

By RACHELLE TALBERT

While many fiber artists buy yarn from the craft store, some start with wool from the source — right off a sheep’s back.

In 1979, a group of Vermonters came together to learn the traditional art of hand-spinning wool into yarn. Together, they founded the Twist O’ Wool Guild, united by a love of the craft.

Last week, members of the guild brought their spinning wheels, looms and other tools to Addison County Fair and Field Days, inviting visitors to see — and try — the craft for themselves.

Some members were introduced to the Twist O’ Wool Guild years ago at Field Days. Sarah Partington of Monkton joined the guild 16 years ago when she stopped at the tent with her mom. She sat down at the wheel where she was taught how to spin. She’s been hooked ever since.

“I stayed in the tent for like two hours spinning because I thought it was so fascinating. I was with my mom and she literally just left me here in the tent,” Partington told the *Independent*. “It was all downhill from there.”

Now, Partington owns 12 sheep and processes all her own fiber. Though not a common art, Partington has seen more people taking up spinning — in the Twist O’ Wool Guild and elsewhere.

“It’s making a big comeback in the state,” Partington said. “There’s a lot of small groups like this that are trying to bring it back, and we’re recruiting a lot of younger people to learn the

process. And to save it.”

A longtime guild member, Partington demonstrated the early steps of fiber processing to onlookers at the fair. After being shorn, she explained, wool must first be washed to remove hay and manure. Prior to the fair, the guild hand-washed all their wool and laid it all out to dry.

“This has just been washed with Dawn dish soap. That’s all it is,” Kat Cyr, another guild member, told onlookers.

The fleece was washed in small batches over the course of a month, then stored in a large bag. At the fair, Partington demonstrated the next step in the process — aligning all the fibers.

Though many tools can straighten fibers, Partington used a drum card, a rotating mechanism with needles attached. As she rotated the drum, holding fiber over it, the fiber caught on the needles.

“It’s straightening out all the fibers and putting them in alignment into what we call a bat,” Partington explained.

After each bat was completed, Partington handed it to Cyr at the spinning wheel.

“This is a Lendrum Double Treadle,” Cyr said, gesturing to the wheel. “She is manufactured in Canada. They don’t make them anymore because the gentleman who made them has retired. Like, one dude.”

Though many of the guild’s wheels are specialized, and some over 100 years old, the process is accessible to anyone willing to try. As Cyr spun the wool, she

explained each step.

“I’m feeding in a little bit of floof, and then building a twist and letting the twist in to make it stronger,” she said.

The twisting is essential to the spinning process, otherwise the yarn would fall apart. Though all their wheels are different, this one had a spool, called a bobbin, that collected the yarn neatly as it was spun.

After spinning, some guild members use a loom to weave the yarn into fabric, while others take the single ply yarn and twist it on itself, making it a stronger two or three ply yarn.

Susan Flagg of Shoreham sat at a loom weaving a set of napkins. Though the group centers around spinning, it includes all kinds of fiber arts.

“There’s people that are felting, there’s people that are crocheting, all kinds of things,” Flagg said. “Really a lovely, inclusive group.”

The guild allows anyone to come to their meetings for free, and rents equipment for \$10 per year. That way, members don’t have to own anything or have any knowledge coming in.

The guild’s work extends beyond demonstrations at Field Days. Members collaborate on projects throughout the year, many of which are donated or raffled off to support the guild’s programs.

Each year at Field Days, the Twist O’ Wool Guild’s work — passed through many hands — culminates in an afghan blanket. This year, the yarn began as brown and white wool. It was washed, spun and twisted by hand before members crocheted it into individual squares.

“It was the work of a lot of people in the guild,” Meg Ritter, a recent member of the guild, told the *Independent*.

One member might crochet a square or two, adding to the work of others until the pieces became a whole. This year’s afghan was raffled off at Field Days, with the proceeds supporting the guild’s programs.

Though made by many hands, the Afghan blanket brings the guild’s work together into one piece.



FERRISBURGH’S KAT CYR wants to share their love of spinning with the community. In the Twist ’O Wool tent at Field Days last week, Cyr stands by a spinning wheel that’s nearly than two centuries old. Independent photo/Steve James



WHILE SUSAN FLAGG of Shoreham weaves some thread into cloth, left, Peggy Lyons works the treadle on her machine to spin some yarn. Independent photos/Steve James



TWIST O’ WOOL Guild members Sarah Partington, left, and Chrissy Bezdard work side by side to spin a fresh coat of wool. Independent photo/Steve James

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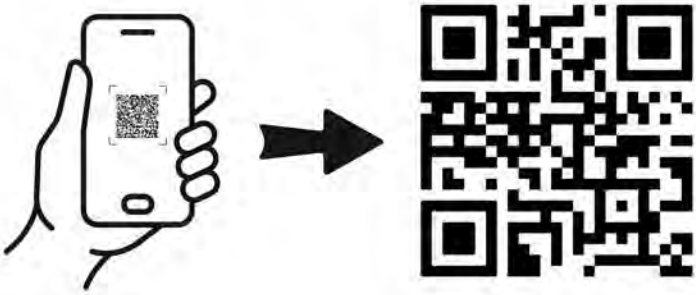
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At Eastview in Middlebury

Boss looks to extends joyspan for residents and staff alike

By ELOISE CHRISTY MIDDLEBURY — Every morning, when David Donahue walks through the doors at Eastview in Middlebury, he reminds himself of one simple fact.

“This is their home,” he says. As executive director and CEO of Eastview, a senior retirement community in Middlebury, Donahue oversees nearly every aspect of the campus that houses 130 residents in 99 units. Tucked off South Street Extension, where wildflowers sway beside its walls and the Green Mountains rise in the distance, Eastview is more than just a workplace — it’s a community in itself.

“It’s a dynamic that I didn’t fully appreciate before I took the job that I try to remind myself every day. I work in their home,” he said. “They live here, so being mindful of how you show up in someone else’s house and honoring that ... I’m making decisions about a place where I don’t live, for people who live here, so how do you engage residents and make sure that their voice is part of the conversation?”

Donahue usually arrives between 7 and 8 a.m. and heads back home between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. But because Eastview never closes, the work doesn’t always end when he walks out of the office.

“It kind of depends on what’s cooking,” Donahue said. “There’s a bit of odd-hour work, stuff that comes up at home. The nature of being a 24/7, 365 days in a year facility is that stuff can come up and email is good and bad. It’s always there and my phone’s next to my bed and you’re reading it and now you’re working ... Sometimes it’s something I can do, sometimes it’s more about making sure the right people are called.”

Donahue, 57, became Eastview’s executive director and CEO in January 2025 after a winding career path that led him in many directions. A 1991 Middlebury College graduate and former football and lacrosse player, he spent two decades in leadership roles at the college before consulting with Eastview and eventually joining the leadership team full-time.

Whether the residents at Eastview are living independently or receiving care in the assisted living areas, Donahue wants all of them to feel seen and heard.

New residents are regularly welcomed into the community, but Donahue said learning their names is a priority. “I know every resident by name,” he said.

Listening to residents and supporting them as they age is one of the reasons Donahue said he was drawn to working at Eastview in the first place. After witnessing his wife trying to help her parents navigate aging and end-of-life care, he gained an appreciation for the challenges that seniors and

their families face.

“A lot of times people want to look past seniors. That they’re invisible to a lot of folks,” he said. “Being in a role to see them, and hear them, and really listen to them is part of what drew me to this work. During the interview process, I said I hadn’t had a lot of experience with seniors, and they asked me, ‘Well, do you have parents?’ And they actually are seniors ... I interact with them all the time.”

Working at Eastview and supporting the senior community in Middlebury wasn’t always the trajectory Donahue imagined for himself when he started off working at college.

Donahue met his wife, Joanie, at Middlebury; she graduated as a Feb after him. After graduation, he stayed on campus working in student life before earning a graduate degree in Education from the University of Vermont. He later worked in management consulting in Colorado before returning to Middlebury to raise his family. At Middlebury College, he

worked in a variety of leadership roles including dean of students, library and information services, development, in the president’s office as a special assistant, and then as chief of staff.

“We ended up having three kids and raising them all here,” he explained. “And then I made sort of a left-hand turn decision to leave the college after 20 years. I recognized that I was very comfortable and that if I wanted to challenge myself professionally, I probably had to get out of Middlebury and do something different.”

Looking back, Donahue said raising his family in Middlebury, coaching his kids in high school lacrosse and building a career at the college all helped shape the leader he is today.

“28 years we’ve been here,” Donahue said. “I think as much as anything, coaching has connected me to multiple generations of the community and families ... To coach and get involved that way really changed my relationship with the community. In a way, it was really helpful for the work I did, but also really gratifying. Knowing (a resident’s) grandson gets a deeper level relationship with the people that are here. When you invest in their kids and grandkids, it just changes how people see you. Makes them more comfortable.”

TO FLORIDA AND BACK

Looking for a new challenge after 20 years at the college, Donahue accepted a job in Florida as Ultimate Medical Academy’s senior vice president and chief of staff. But the pandemic brought him back to Vermont, where he later became chief operating

officer at Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium. Consulting work eventually connected him with Eastview, where he first advised the organization and then became CEO.

Being a CEO and director of Eastview rarely looks the same every day. With a team overseeing nine areas including facilities, dining, technology, sales and marketing, community life, care, operations, finance, and human resources, he has a busy schedule.

“I’m meeting with them every week or so, some every other week,” he explained. “We have a couple of initiatives that we’re excited about that are relatively new. One is Eastview at Home and the other is Eastview Plus.”

Eastview at Home was created recently to help older adults remain safely in their own homes through renovations and accessibility improvements. Safety bars, handles, and reducing hazards make a difference for people who are aging at home. Eastview Plus performs a range of services for residents, including food shopping, helping or sitting in on doctor’s appointments, transportation services, etc.

“Even independent living seniors can use help,” he said.

While many mornings are spent in meetings, preparing plans and helping employees navigate decisions, Donahue tries not to stay behind his desk for too long. One thing that makes working at Eastview unique for Donahue is the fact that when he steps out to see the residents, each has an interesting story to tell about their life — “like a foreign diplomat or someone who had military service,” he noted.

These stories are not only heard by Donahue, but by those who take the time to visit the home and talk with the residents. Middlebury Union High School has a program in which the students are matched up with a resident at Eastview; they interview residents and get to know them.

“I wish there was more of that. I wish that there was more of an opportunity for people to come and hang out because I think even our independent living residents sometimes get a little lonely or would benefit from getting to know someone new,” Donahue said. “It’d be great if more people got to know the people who live here.”

Donahue himself is happy to have a special chance to hang out with Eastview residents. He tries to get around the whole building every week. As he walks through the halls, he explained, he hangs out in the lobby a bit and holds an open-door policy.

“Residents take me up on that,” he said. “In fact, they usually come through saying, ‘You said you have an open door.’ People are comfortable coming in. Usually they have something on their mind, sometimes it’s a fun thing, sometimes it’s a concern or complaint. Either way, it’s good to have a conversation; it’s very rewarding.”



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO of Eastview David Donahue pauses with a resident in the lobby of the Middlebury senior retirement community.

Courtesy photo

He laughed, saying, “It can be really fun to hang out and get to know people. You know, some people have a really good sense of humor. Some people like to give you grief.”

NEIGHBORHOODS

The Garden Song section at Eastview holds 18 memory care units, which are all studio apartments. Meadow Sweet is the assisted living neighborhood, providing different kinds of support with the activities of daily living, and 19 units hold independent living residents.

As Donahue continued walking through each community, people stopped to say hello and chat with him about happenings in their lives. One of the employees in the memory care neighborhood had nothing but good things to say about her boss.

“So this is how it is,” she said while holding the hand of one of the residents.

“He comes out of his office, and we don’t go, ‘Oh no, the boss is here.’”

She then fake whispered in the resident’s ear, laughing and joking, “Tell him we need a raise; he has to say yes, sir.”

Each care unit has a board depicting that day’s schedule. Activities like exercise, word games, Yahtzee, watching World Cup Soccer, poker and cornhole are written out in marker one day this summer. Walking into Meadow Sweet, one of the Middlebury College interns working for Eastview was conducting a close game of cornhole with a group of residents.

As Donahue watched the game, chatting with residents about their family members, sports, and kids, one resident told the *Independent* a little hint about the CEO.

“I’ve never seen somebody work so hard,” she said. “He’s gone to every funeral and everything. He’s

loyal.”

With cheering echoing behind, Donahue walked past into the other independent living areas. The hallways are lined with artwork created by residents over the years. At the end of the hall is a small room for art activities and other crafts. This is where a lot of the creativity happens, whether there is a program being taught by one of the residents or they’re just exploring their artistic freedoms.

“The art program is wildly active,” Donahue said as he peeked in on the explosion of color and shapes that enveloped the room that day. “In large part because of the resident Warren Kimble, a renowned American folk artist. His wife moved into the memory care here ... so he decided to move here too. He has invigorated the art program and everything else.”

TOUCHING BASE

The residents in this area have free access to roam wherever they like, into the garden and around the rooms on their own. The garden is a loop to give residents an easy feeling of movement while being outside and enjoying nature. A library stands open at the end of the hall, ready for use with a list to check out any book.

“People can come and sign out books,” Donahue said. He then laughed saying, “I got in trouble with our resident librarian because I took off the no food and drink sign. We’re adults!”

The community room in Eastview holds different sorts of activities — from stretching and Tai Chi to improv classes. It is the main gathering spot for Eastview residents.

Donahue, using this space and others, has tried to slowly push residents toward today’s technology advancements. In the lobby there is an Amazon Echo,

and he also writes a monthly article in the community’s publication, *The Bugle*.

“It’s a little bit like pushing, gently, because everyone gets set in their ways,” he said. “I think it’s important to challenge them respectfully. To be like, ‘Hey, you know this is the world we live in, there’s things happening.’”

PHILOSOPHY

He uses his articles to help residents learn more about the world that is so rapidly changing around them, but also to learn about themselves too. Donahue said conversations about aging have shifted beyond lifespan and healthspan to include what some call “joyspan” — helping people live longer, healthier and more joyful lives.

“I went to a conference and they talked about *Ikigai*, a Japanese concept,” Donahue said. “It’s your reason for being, and to me, it’s even deeper than a sense of purpose. What gets you out of bed every day? What gets you motivated to do things? I think it’s important at every stage of life, and it’s important as you figure out what do I want to do next. I think it’s something you learn with every chapter of life. So people are rediscovering or identifying a new reason for being ... challenging this community to be thoughtful about that and realize how much they have to offer.”

As he made his way back toward the front of the building, more residents and employees greeted him with large smiles and waves. Concluding his day in an hour or two, he sat down at the small table he keeps in his office where residents stop by to converse.

For Donahue, leading Eastview goes beyond the daily tasks of a CEO and director, like budgeting and strategic planning. It means helping to create a community where people continue to find purpose, connection and joy throughout every stage of their lives.

“I try to use it as a form to press a little bit, not just around technology, but to find your reason for being,” he said.

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Addison County’s Wellspring Singers invite new voices:

Wellspring is a group of caring, musical community members who bring the joy and comfort of singing to residents in local care facilities and Porter Medical Center, community members living with serious illness, as well as to those at the end-of-life.

We rehearse on the first and third Wednesdays from 5-6:30pm in Middlebury, when we learn and practice a diverse repertoire of music. We are committed to singing as called upon (times and locations vary) and to be responsive and adaptive to the needs of those who live with life limiting conditions.

The Wellspring Singers are an integral part of the Palliative Support Services program at Porter Medical Center. Singers who are interested in learning more about singing with Wellspring are invited to be in touch with Louella Richer at lricher@portermedical.org by Wednesday, August 26th for more detailed information, how to join, and where we meet.

University of Vermont Health
Porter Medical Center

Senate

(Continued from Page 1A)
“Looking at the data we had a lot of support from Democrats and Republicans, so we’re going to look to build on that momentum and keep pushing out our message on centrist policies, practical not partisan and how we can best deliver on the policies we think are right for the state of Vermont,” he said on Wednesday morning.



HEFFERNAN

“As we focus on what’s to come, it’s really one north star and that’s to make Vermont a better place for everyone who calls Vermont home,” he said. “It’s not about politics or parties but people and policies and what policies are going to deliver on that goal.”



KLEIN

Klein, a Middlebury College alum and a lieutenant on the Middlebury Department, moved back to Vermont with his family in 2018. He has experience working as an investment banker and with real

GOP PRIMARY ADDISON COUNTY STATE SENATE				
Town	Steven* Heffernan	Andrew Klein	Andrea Treadway	
Addison	128	65	46	
Bridport	97	55	54	
Bristol	160	100	41	
Cornwall	51	29	31	
Ferrisburgh	120	86	40	
Goshen	15	10	1	
Granville	7	8	2	
Hancock	10	6	0	
Huntington	50	30	8	
Leicester	53	33	23	
Lincoln	54	32	16	
Middlebury	179	179	50	
Monkton	95	39	36	
New Haven	122	106	26	
Orwell	86	57	70	
Panton	26	20	6	
Ripton	17	15	2	
Rochester	27	19	8	
Salisbury	34	27	9	
Shoreham	69	24	44	
Starksboro	73	54	8	
Vergennes	95	83	32	
Waltham	26	23	8	
Weybridge	23	17	17	
Whiting	21	15	7	
TOTAL	1,638	1,132	585	
Source: Vt. Secretary of State				*=incumbent

estate investment companies.

Treadway, a bookkeeper and chair of the Orwell selectboard, expressed gratitude for those who supported her campaign following Tuesday’s primary

contest.

“I want to thank everybody that voted for me, and just congratulations to Steven and Andrew,” she told the *Independent*.

Addison-3

(Continued from Page 1A)
the second seat, which was also previously held by a Democrat but flipped by North in 2024.

Here’s the breakdown of Bolles’s and Stroup’s votes in each Addison-3 town:

Addison — Bolles (106, 31.74%), Stroup (106, 31.74%)

Panton — Stroup (79, 33.47%), Bolles (66, 27.97%)

Waltham — Stroup (91, 46.91%), Bolles (43, 22.16%)

Ferrisburgh — Bolles (383, 38.15%), Stroup (303, 30.18%)

Vergennes — Stroup (365, 37.94%), Bolles (287, 29.83%)

New Haven — Bolles (58, 36.25%), Stroup (54, 33.75%)

“I am honored to run as one of your Democratic candidates for the Addison-3 House of Representatives seat,” Stroup wrote in an email about his campaign on Wednesday morning.

“Democracy requires our continued commitment. Thank you to *all* the volunteers who knocked on a door, made a phone call, put up a sign, wrote a letter, made a donation or just talked with a neighbor about our shared hopes for Vermont. Your hard work made all the difference. It was especially heartening to work with so many new voters and young people engaging in politics.”

Also in that email, he congratulated Bolles, and in an interview on Wednesday morning with the *Independent* said, “Mike is a good friend, and he is a dedicated public servant. I’m thankful for Mike Kane,



STROUP



BOLLES

and I look forward to working together with Ariel Bolles in the fall.”

When asked what he is offering that will attract Republican and swing voters who cast ballots for North in the last election, Stroup said, “Democrats and I are offering a really positive vision for Vermont — one that can solve some of our

core problems.” Stroup, a first time House candidate with expertise in education, has entered the arena as the topic has taken a front seat in Montpelier in the last year. The professor of education at Champlain College and former Addison Northwest School District board president brings those experiences to continuing discussions and legislative efforts to get the costs of schooling under control. Like Stroup, Bolles is also a first-time House candidate.

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY ADDISON-3 HOUSE

Town	Ariel Bolles	Mike Kane	John Stroup
Addison	106	72	106
Ferrisburgh	383	145	303
New Haven	58	26	54
Panton	66	55	79
Vergennes	287	168	365
Waltham	43	31	91
TOTAL	943	497	998
*= incumbent			

In addition to the three listed priorities above — healthcare, housing and education — she is interested in tax reform.

Bolles, who specializes in design strategy and service design for government products and websites, views all four issues through the lens of affordability. In a previous interview with the *Independent* she described it as an issue she’s witnessed affecting people first-hand in her community.

She did not return a request for comment before deadline.

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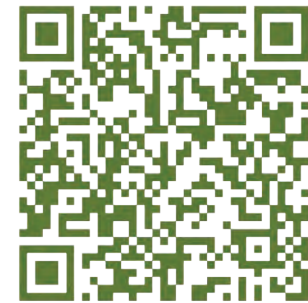
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Peer Recovery Center
OF ADDISON COUNTY



A STAFF MEMBER keeps busy stacking books onto one of the many carts used to ferry books from Ilsley Public Library’s temporary quarters back to its newly renovated space.

Independent photo/John S. McCright



LAURA FETTEROLF, THE branch librarian at East Middlebury (left) and Hayley Coble, the circulation director, oversee the transfer of books in the old Ilsley lobby, which has been preserved.

Independent photo/Steve James

Ilsley book move gets big assist

By JOHN FLOWERS
MIDDLEBURY — It was a scene reminiscent of that masterpiece of American literature, “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.” In that Mark Twain classic, Tom somehow convinces the neighborhood kids to take over his chore of whitewashing his Aunt Polly’s fence.

Heck, some of Tom’s pals even compensate him to get a turn with the brush.

This past Thursday, Aug. 6, scores of people packed downtown Middlebury’s Duclos building for the privilege of carting books — and undoubtedly at least one copy of “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” — around 150 paces up Middlebury’s Main Street for drop-off at the newly expanded and renovated Ilsley Public Library.

“The community came up with this idea,” a beaming Ilsley Library Director Dana Hart said as she and her staff loaded up carts of books at the “Mini Ilsley” at 30 Main St. That’s where a portion of the town’s book collection — and temporary library services — have resided for around 18 months (rent-free, thanks to the National Bank of Middlebury) while the 100-year-old Ilsley Library building at 77 Main St. has been undergoing a \$16.4 million renovation and expansion.

“Ilsley 2.0” will be officially unveiled to the public at a special ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 29, at 10 a.m.

Meanwhile, contractors and library staff continue to get the space ready for its historic reopening.

A big portion of the remaining work will involve restocking the expanded Ilsley’s bookshelves with the approximately 50,000 books that had been temporarily housed at 30 Main St. and at a 4,000-square-foot facility at 75 Meigs Road in Vergennes. Most of that move-in will be done by the firm Meyer Inc., which hauled the collection out early last year.

But even with professional movers on board, many Ilsley

stakeholders — who had already supported the renovation and expansion project through millions in bonding and donations — wanted to personally shepherd at least some of the books back into the “new” Ilsley.

Hart fielded so many offers of help for an Ilsley book move that she decided to gauge interest among some local nonprofits, businesses and individuals with close ties to the library.

Would they be interested in fielding a team of around four people to ceremonially roll a cart of books down the sidewalk from 30 to 77 Main St.?

The answer, in each case, was a resounding yes, according to Hart. “We got slammed with requests,” she said. “Unfortunately, we had to turn some people away.”

Ultimately, Hart and her staff felt they could manage and coordinate 33 teams of book-cart pushers, with around four on each team. Among those participating in the “Ilsley book cart parade” were groups representing the Town Hall Theater, the Yellow House Community, Middlebury Rotary Club, Everybody Wins, the Friends of Ilsley Library and the *Addison Independent*. Among those supplying the push-power were Middlebury Selectman Dan Brown, former Ilsley Library Director Dave Clark, state Sen. Ruth Hardy, Rep. Robin Scheu, Addison Central School District board member Ron Makleff and THT Director in Residence Douglas Anderson.

Teams left in intervals, getting some waves and cheers from passersby as they steered the book-laden carts along the sidewalk during what was a hot, humid late afternoon. A crossing guard provided safe passage across Main Street and then it was on to the new library side door. Ilsley staff and volunteers greeted the cart pushers (including this reporter) and directed them to offloading points for the books.

A short but memorable walk into the next chapter of Middlebury’s storied public library.



ILSLEY LIBRARY DIRECTOR Dana Hart organizes book carts before they are wheeled down Middlebury’s Main Street.

Independent photo/John S. McCright



THE PARADE OF books on trolleys began at the Natinal Bank of Middlebury, which has housed much of the library during renovations.

Independent photo/Steve James



A BRIGHT PINK cart full of books is sheperd across Middlebury’s Main Street.

Independent photo/Steve James



MEMBERS OF EVERYBODY Wins reading mentors roll carts down Middlebury’s Main Street as part of the book parade.

Independent photo/Steve James



TRICIA ALLEN, ILSLEY’S children’s librarian, fills book shelves in the newly renovated children’s section.

Independent photo/Steve James



REED ALLEN HELPS his mother Tricia unload books for the children’s section in the new Ilsley Public Library.

Independent photo/Steve James

Artificial intel

(Continued from Page 1A)
explaining her bill. “The results of elections are very clear right now.”
Scott also established a Vermont AI Economic Task Force on May 18, designed to analyze potential impacts and opportunities of AI in Vermont’s economy and form recommendations for future use. Among the 16 members of the task force is Middlebury College

Professor AJ Vasiliou.
Vermont lawmakers are not unique in their pursuit to regulate uses of artificial intelligence; all 50 state legislatures have introduced legislation addressing artificial intelligence, and over 30 have enacted laws that do so.
Here’s a look at some acts related to AI passed in the Vermont 2026 legislative session:

S.23 (Act 75)
An act relating to the use of synthetic media in elections
Sen. Hardy, a Middlebury Democrat, was the primary sponsor of this bill signed into law on March 5, requiring people to disclose when misleading or fake political photos, video and audio are generated using artificial intelligence within 90 days before a Vermont election. Almost two-thirds of the other 49 states have similar laws. The law applies when “deceptive and fraudulent synthetic media ... appears to a reasonable person to be a realistic representation of a political candidate” that injures their reputation, or when deceptive media is created to disrupt the outcome of an election with misinformation.
The fine for knowingly violating the law is no more than \$1,000 unless it was created with intent to cause bodily harm.
When she was chair of the Government Operations Committee in 2024, Hardy said she was approached by rights advocacy nonprofit Public Citizen about introducing a bill addressing such media being used to sway elections. A similar policy was already in place in many other states, including Texas and California. Hardy felt the bill aligned with Vermont’s traditions of clean, fair elections and it garnered bipartisan support in the General Assembly.
Remembering the fake phone messages in New Hampshire imitating former President Joe Biden’s voice spreading misinformation about the election in 2024, Hardy said that AI can pose a risk to accurate election information when not disclosed.
“We want to make sure that

candidates are judged based on the real information about them, not any kind of deceptive information,” Hardy said.
The law quickly became relevant when Brattleboro resident Hank Poitras, a “citizen journalist,” posted an AI-generated video of U.S. Rep. Becca Balint in June, in which Balint was portrayed saying blanket statements and being dropped in a dumpster by a backhoe. After Attorney Gen. Charity Clark notified Poitras that he was under investigation for the video, he brought a federal lawsuit claiming Act 75 is unconstitutional. That suit is still before the court.
Some lawmakers, including Rep. Monique Priestley, D-Bradford, have concerns about the effectiveness of the act, including the ability to monitor and enforce situations of this nature.
Poitras’s lawsuit argues that his video was clearly satirical and therefore exempt from Act 75, and states more broadly that the law infringes on his right to free speech to criticize political candidates.
Hardy said she cares about the First Amendment and citizens’ ability to criticize the government, which is why the law applies only 90 days before an election and requires disclosure, not an outright ban on AI in political media.
“I firmly believe in our constitutional rights, in the First Amendment right of free speech ... and, believe me, I’ve been on the receiving end of criticism, and that’s part of the job,” Hardy said. “It’s when that criticism is levied in a way that is deceptive or done in a way that is intentional and inaccurate to mislead people during an election that it’s problematic.”

H.816 (Act 156)
An act relating to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the provision of mental health services
Signed by Scott on June 17 of this year, this law prohibits corporations or organizations from delivering or advertising mental health services to the public that aren’t provided by a mental health professional or approved by an institutional review board or privacy board. This means the use of artificial intelligence to directly provide mental health services from an organization is not allowed.
It is permitted for a mental health professional to use artificial intelligence tools for their work when they align with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or are approved by the FDA.
The law also adds two positions to the Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council and requires the advisory council to submit a report to the General Assembly about artificial intelligence

regulation for mental health professionals.
“The intent is to make sure that mental health care is provided and supervised by licensed mental health care professionals,” said Hardy, who voted for the bill. “It does not prevent somebody from using AI, because there are reasonable and helpful ways to use AI in the provision of healthcare.... But what it’s saying is that mental healthcare can’t be provided by AI chatbots.”
Having a license to practice mental health care holds value, Hardy said, and this act helps recognize and protect that.
“It means something, because they have had the training, it means they have the experience to provide the care, and a chatbot does not,” Hardy said. “Also, there are consequences for licensed individuals if they do something that is out of the scope of their practice, license, or violates the care protocols in their field ... there’s consequences for humans with licenses, but there’s not a consequence for an AI chatbot.”

S.71 (Act 145)
An act relating to consumer data privacy and online surveillance
Although not directly addressing artificial intelligence, this act, signed by Scott on June 16, establishes data privacy protections applying to organizations that process the data of at least 35,000 consumers, process sensitive data of at least 3,000 or sell data of 3,000 or more. These limits make it applicable to most generative AI companies.
Priestley, currently running for Vermont Senate, has been working to pass a data privacy bill since she began her first term in 2023. This year, after modeling the bill after Connecticut’s, Vermont finally passed its first comprehensive data privacy law. Despite introducing the bill, Priestley ended up voting against it, unhappy with the changes and concessions made.
“At the end of the day, I voted against that bill ... because while it got something established on the books, it exempted nearly all of healthcare, and the insurance lobbyists, which also represent the data brokers,” Priestley told the Independent. “It had pretty gaping exemptions that will allow some of the industries that sell, focus on selling the data the most, it allowed exemptions for them.”
“What we were told over and over is that the Chamber of Commerce in particular would tell the governor to veto, and they were saying that he would veto whatever they weren’t in favor of, so we watered it down just enough for them to be OK with

it, not have to ask the governor to veto it.”
The exemptions in the data privacy bill include healthcare companies, government entities, and most insurance companies.
What the bill establishes is an ability for Vermonters to edit, delete and have some control over the data that is collected online about them and then sold to companies. By exempting insurance companies and healthcare, Priestley said this leaves major gaps in data security for Vermonters.
AI tools are used to compile personal data profiles, and AI companies themselves rely heavily on user data, Priestley said. Once sensitive data is input into a chatbot, it’s very difficult to remove because it becomes part of the training for the bot.
The privacy bill does start to address data used in AI systems, Priestley said, but there is more work to be done on data protections. She worries that lobbying on this topic will continue to make it difficult for Vermont to move forward but points to the “Kids Code” passed in Vermont last year that establishes data protections for minors as a success. For adult protections, it will take longer, Priestley said.
“Connecticut basically has had to make small steps here and there over the years to try to strengthen it piece by piece,” Priestley said. “So because of the way that our governor kind of listens to the tech lobbyists, we will always remain a step behind Connecticut in the very least, if not further behind.”

H.211 (Act 138)
An act relating to data brokers and personal information
Signed into law on June 16, Act 138 establishes many new requirements to be a registered data broker in Vermont, including sharing whether the broker has, within the last year, shared consumer data or sold to a developer of a “GenAI” system or model. The act defines “GenAI” as “an artificial intelligence system that can generate derived synthetic content, including text, images,

video, and audio, that emulates the structure and characteristics of the system’s training data.”
Nationally, data brokers buy up large amounts of data sold to companies for advertising and to the government for intelligence reasons. Artificial intelligence makes it much easier for brokers to gather the data, organize it and sell it to companies. It also provides a new customer base as GenAI companies train their systems and provide customization using consumer data.

Vetoed: H.727
An act relating to sustainable data center deployment
Vetoed by Scott on May 28, H.727 would have required data centers able to use over 20 megawatts of electricity to meet multiple energy, site and payment standards if they were to be developed in Vermont, based on and building upon Act 250.
In his letter to the House, Scott wrote that although he understands potential concerns of data centers, he feels there are sufficient regulatory laws in place that would limit impacts of data centers, and more regulation would lead to negative economic concerns. Scott said that the bill might’ve applied to other facilities than data centers, which would limit growth.
Hardy firmly disagrees.
She worked closely on the bipartisan legislation as part of the National Resources Committee and said she heard from many constituents who wanted the legislation to go through.
“It was horrible that the governor vetoed it, it was short-sighted, and

it was also really clear that he was siding with data centers,” Hardy said. “He was siding with these companies that are taking advantage of small towns and communities all over the country and saying that he thinks that’s OK in Vermont. And we did not think that was OK. It was a bipartisan bill, and he vetoed a bipartisan bill to side with large companies and not Vermonters.”
Some of the regulatory structures the bill would’ve required data centers to meet included a closed-loop water system, where water was recycled and no chemicals were to be released with water; a certain amount of fees so ratepayers’ electricity bills wouldn’t be raised; and requiring renewable energy to be used to power the centers.
Hardy said the bill was based on research of instances that had gone poorly in other states, including New York, which recently placed a moratorium on data center development.
If reelected this fall, Hardy said reintroducing the data center legislation will be one of her priorities.

Artificial Intelligence laws going forward

Hardy anticipates artificial intelligence being part of every legislative session to come, and said the General Assembly is both concerned about the potential consequences of AI and excited about the possibilities it brings.
“This is here, this is something we have to deal with, and we need to create a structure to address it so that we are allowing for the use of AI and encouraging the use of AI, but making sure it’s done responsibly,” Hardy said. “And done in a way that is respectful of our environment, our elections and our healthcare system.”

Priestley, who has a comprehensive background in technology, wants to see a chatbot companion protection bill, which would implement safety measures against people relying on chatbots for dangerous activities such as stalking. She also wants to see addressed how the state government is sharing and selling data and using AI systems with Vermont data, along with employee protection against AI-automated decisions.
Artificial intelligence impacts all the committees in Vermont’s General Assembly,

Priestley said, but there isn’t a dedicated digital technology or artificial intelligence committee like Priestley has seen in other states.
“Everyone’s kind of trying to catch up and AI is a little bit of a shiny object, AI policy, so it’s like everybody wants a piece, but it doesn’t mean that everybody has the technical know-how,” she said. “For instance there are different definitions, fundamental definitions of what artificial intelligence is and we had a mix of those types of definitions hit the building this year.”



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Milking

(Continued from Page 1A)
spent the past few years helping the kids take their cows to dairy shows, where the animals are judged for their physical qualities. In the afternoon of Aug. 4, after the shows had concluded, she brought two of their cows into the parlor on the fairgrounds to be milked.

Westcom guided the cows — Petals and Gaga — from the barn across the way into a metal corral in the milking parlor, while the kids ran ahead to watch. After transporting them, she and the kids dipped the cows’ udders in iodine, which kills any harmful bacteria before milking.

She then pulled out a metal cow-milking machine with four tubes designed to attach to the cow’s udders.

“This has a pulsator. If you stick your finger in, you’ll be able to feel it,” Westcom explained, gesturing to the tubes that attach to the udders. “When it releases, the cow will let down their milk.”

The milk, sucked through tubes, goes into a glass container that measures how much milk came out, which slowly fills up as Westcom sets up the other cow.

As Westcom demonstrated the milking process, her kids ran around her, helping where they could. They put iodine on the udders. They sprayed the udders after milking to give them a bacteria-preventing seal. They laughed when the cow peed in the barn.

“How do you clean up when the cow relieves itself in the middle of milking?” a naïve visitor asked.

“You don’t,” Westcom answered.

“People do nothing (to clean up) throughout the day,” she explained. “Usually at the end of the day, they run a wash cycle to wash everything, and then they’ll close down.”

After 10 minutes of milking, Westcom removed the machine from Petals and checked how much milk she had produced.

“She had 28 pounds tonight,” Westcom said as she looked at one of the glass containers.

Twenty-eight pounds of milk is



CASSIE WESTCOM HAS hooked up Petals the cow to an electric milking machine at Field Daus to demonstrate what everyday cow milking is like.

Independent photo/Rachelle Talbert

a little over three gallons. Dairy farmers measure milk by weight instead of volume because it is often more precise, particularly in large quantities. Large quantities of milk can expand due to heat, or include pockets of air that change the measurements.

But these cows hold a lot more than many pounds of milk. They hold memories.

Gaga, milked right next to Petals, was John Henry’s first show calf in a previous year. The two competed in the Peeewe division of the Franklin County Fair.

“The one that was in here was Secret Weapon. And then we have Pretty and Still Got It in the barn, and then at the end of the week, Elizabeth will have Manny here for Peeewe.”

Westcom’s cows are both young and old. She owns six dairy cows and four heifers, which are female cows that have not yet given birth, so they cannot be milked.

While some cows are recently born, others come from Westcom’s dairy farm, and fewer still are from her childhood.

“We have a Delilah at home,” Westcom said. “Delilah has been

alive half my life. She’s 15.”

To keep track of the cow families, they’re each named with the first letter of their mother’s name. Any calves that Delilah gave birth to were named with a D, and so on.

“When we sold the cows, we had a lot with D names, because my first cows started with a D. Now we have just Delilah and Dreamer left,” Westcom said.

Westcom pulled a switch, which suctioned the milk through more tubes, going into a large, stainless steel container.

“When you ship milk, you have to be sanitary, so everything’s either glass or stainless steel,” Westcom explained.

John Henry asked to see inside the container, so Westcom lifted him up to look. The stainless steel vat took up the entire center of the room.

“I don’t know what they’re doing with it. I assume there’s a farmer around here that’s taking it for their calves, or somebody for their pigs,” Westcom said.

Westcom then guided the cows out of the milking parlor, leaving the milk for whichever farmer might use it.

By the way

(Continued from Page 1A)
state Agency of Transportation installed a new pre-cast box culvert, which carries water running off Moosalamoo on the south side of the road, under the highway and into the Middlebury River. During construction, travelers were routed to the Brandon gap, which lengthened the commute by 10 times. There’s still a little work to be completed related roadway and associated channel work. A final construction completion date is scheduled for Sept. 18. Hey, they

were a day early this time, so maybe they can do it fast again.

That’s not the only sign that construction projects do really end. The town of Middlebury this week opened the Upper Parking Lot behind Ilsley Library and the town office. It had been closed for more than a year while Ilsley underwent a major renovation. Work inside the library is still happening, but a grand opening is scheduled for Aug. 29 — just a little more than two weeks away!

It was no surprise when the Fish & Wildlife announced recently that Vermont’s black bear population has grown. Here in the newsroom we are hearing more and more human encounters with bears. There are an estimated 7,500 to 8,900 bears in the Green Mountain State, compared to a goal of keeping the bear population to 3,500 to 5,500 back in 2021. The department uses a statistical model to guesstimate the bear population.

Hospital budget

(Continued from Page 1A)
law for hospital services — and a continued shift of payer mix from commercial insurance to Medicare.

- No change from current rates it is receiving from commercial payers in FY26.

- A 1% decrease in expenses, primarily related to \$900,000 less in salary expenses. Porter, along with other UVMHN affiliates, has gradually trimmed its staff size (while reducing its ranks of more expensive traveling health care professionals).

Porter President Bob Ortmyer noted the hospital continues to expand access to care through successful recruitment of primary care providers and specialists, while pursuing operational efficiencies that have generated approximately \$2 million in annual savings through collaboration with Elizabethtown (N.Y.) Community Hospital.

Porter and Elizabethtown hospitals share a president & COO, CFO, CMO, CNO, finance director, infection prevention manager, case management manager and medical group director.

“As healthcare challenges continue to grow across Vermont, our focus remains on providing quality care close to home and ensuring Addison County residents have access to the services they need,” Ortmyer said.

Hospital officials at their GMBC budget meeting also emphasized the growing demand for services, particularly in Porter’s emergency department, which now sees approximately 14,500 visits annually and is operating in a space that struggles to meet

community needs.

“Porter is not standing still,” Ortmyer added. “We’re investing in our people, improving efficiency, strengthening quality, and planning for the future so that our community continues to have access to exceptional care right here in Addison County.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Here are some takeaways from PMC’s budget narrative, which can be found at tinyurl.com/wh8vae65:

- Porter officials aren’t projecting any “service-line closures, transfers, or reductions in FY27,” though they are “intently focused” on improving the long-term stability of the hospital’s outpatient infusion services, which they said are “currently operating at a loss that is not financially sustainable for an organization of our small size.”

As a result, PMC will be evaluating “adjustments to the scope and type of medications we offer, while maintaining access to infusion services at Porter,” according to the institution’s budget narrative. That evaluation will include reviewing opportunities to incorporate “biosimilar alternatives” to infusion services, while coordinating patient treatments with other UVMHN hospitals offering infusion.

“The FY27 budget as submitted includes the level of volume being served today, but at the reduced labor and drug supply costs we seek to achieve,” the narrative states.

- The FY27 hospital budget includes 10.5 traveler staff across the key service areas of radiology, OR/Post-Anesthesia Care, respiratory therapy, med /urgent care, “where permanent staff have been difficult to recruit due to national labor shortages,” reads the narrative. “This reflects a 44% reduction compared to the FY26 budget, and 45% as compared to April 2026.”

- “We expect the commercial insurance mix of our business to continue to shrink as the population in our catchment area ages.”

- The hospital is budgeting for

2,136 admissions in FY27, down 6.1% from FY26. At the same time, Porter is anticipating 14,500 emergency department visits next year, an increase of 500 (3.6%) compared to this year. Officials have pointed to cuts in federal health insurance subsidies as a factor.

- Helen Porter “continues to face structural financial challenges inherent in long-term care reimbursement,” reads the narrative, in reference to the county’s nursing home. PMC proposes to backfill the Helen Porter FY27 budget to the tune of \$4 million (an improvement from \$5 million for FY26).

“It is projected that at the end of FY26, Porter Hospital’s cumulative investment in Helen Porter is expected to exceed

\$32.5 million and as of the end of FY27, \$36.5 million, underscoring both the organization’s long-standing commitment to sustaining these essential services and the broader economic realities impacting the long-term care sector,” reads the budget narrative. “The financial challenges of Helen Porter are primarily due to the resident/payer mix, which is comprised of 60% Medicaid, 20% Medicare, 15% self-pay, and 5% commercial. Medicaid’s daily reimbursement rate is below the daily operating cost and as a result generates a significant part of the annual losses.”

In closing, Porter officials told GMBC members there’s a lot to like about PMC’s FY27 budget submission.

“At its core, this budget is about our patients, ensuring they can continue to receive safe, high-quality, affordable care close to home,” reads the narrative. “It reflects meaningful cost reduction, continued operational transformation and a commitment to improving quality and access. We believe it represents the right balance for our patients, our workforce, and our community, and we respectfully ask for your approval.”

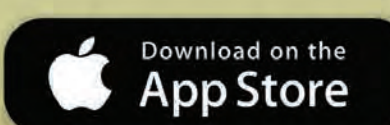
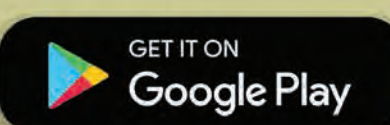
The regulator will make a final decision on whether to accept Porter’s budget proposal sometime this fall.



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Democrats

(Continued from Page 1A)

higher than the 2024 turnout of only 15%, though it was slightly below voter turnout in 2018 (26%), and 2022 (27%). The primary of 2020 reflected a recent high with 34% turnout.

Addison County voters mirrored state results in the governor’s race with Janoo nipping Richards, 2,969 to 2,494. Janoo won most county towns, except Bridport, Cornwall, Goshen, Leicester, Waltham and Weybridge.

In the lieutenant governor’s race, Gray received 3,671 votes in Addison County, compared to 1,419 for McLaren and 611 for Charlestin.

JANOO’S MESSAGE RESONATES

Janoo, an economist who has worked internationally to help rebuild economies of third rural countries, told *Seven Days* at her victory party Tuesday night in Burlington that she knew from the outset “it was going to be a long shot. But I knew if there’s ever a time to do the impossible thing, it is now.”

“Thank you!” she told the crowd of over 200. “We caused an upset. Together, we won,” adding to never underestimate voters who are eager for change.

“We didn’t have big money in this campaign. We were outspent two-to-one. We didn’t have the establishment or the support of big political kingmakers on our side. But we had something so much more powerful. We had you.”

Janoo had cast herself as the race’s anti-establishment choice, tapping into the public’s hunger for a candidate with a new vision and a willingness to challenge the status quo. She not only advocated for primary universal health care (as did most of the other Democratic candidates for governor and lieutenant governor) but was more vocal on pushing for a higher tax



CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR and Democratic Primary winner Amanda Janoo joins with the crowd at her election night watch party in Burlington.

Photo by Kyle Ambusk/Vermont Public

on Vermonters with incomes over \$500,000. She also presented a new economic vision for Vermonters in which the economy worked to benefit the entire population, rather than an economy structured around the trickle-down economics popularized by President Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s.

That theory champions a supply-side economy designed to benefit the wealthy and big business in the hopes that their wealth would trickle down through the rest of the economy. One main premise of that economic system was to lower taxes on the upper income levels, and to reject calls for any new taxes on the wealthiest or their assets. One result has been a widening wealth gap with the wealthiest 1% of Americans now holding about 32% of the nation’s total worth, and the top 10% holding about 67% of the total household wealth and 87% of the stock market and corporate entities. Today the bottom 50% holds less than 2.5% of the nation’s total wealth.

Janoo, 38, has worked with the United Nations and the Wellbeing

Economy Alliance, a global advocacy organization, for the past decade. She recently co-founded the Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont. Janoo, who was born in South Strafford, Vt., and attended Hanover High School before attending college in England, has cast herself as a change candidate and a disruptor of a status quo.

Several political analysts have likened the Janoo-Richards matchup as a reflection of Democratic politics nationally, with Richards, a centrist candidate, facing a grassroots challenge from the left in Janoo.

Prior to the campaign, Richards has been the CEO of Let’s Grow Kids for the past decade. The nonprofit was led by Richards from its inception and was credited with passing the landmark childcare law that helped revitalize childcare in Vermont by adding more workers and subsidizing childcare to Vermonters who need it.

Richards formerly served as deputy chief of staff to Democratic Gov. Peter Shumlin, had worked in Sen. Peter Welch’s office and on the campaign of President Barack Obama.

She had cast herself as a candidate who understood the inner

COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY GOV. & LT. GOV.					
Town	GOVERNOR		LT. GOVERNOR		
	Amanda Janoo	Aly Richards	Esther Charlestin	Molly Gray	Ryan McLaren
Addison	79	74	221	12	29
Bridport	51	77	11	94	35
Bristol	374	205	65	393	126
Cornwall	125	169	34	191	80
Ferrisburgh	234	232	45	295	141
Goshen	16	17	7	20	8
Granville	14	12	5	16	9
Hancock	25	18	10	23	13
Leicester	40	53	6	70	30
Lincoln	214	16	45	214	66
Middlebury	693	596	130	882	337
Monkton	169	136	48	161	105
New Haven	47	29	8	54	15
Orwell	71	39	11	79	35
Panton	54	52	7	72	38
Ripton	76	63	13	97	27
Salisbury	59	57	8	80	35
Shoreham	71	64	15	106	35
Starksboro	170	88	34	161	68
Vergennes	231	218	68	292	102
Waltham	42	43	4	67	25
Weybridge	88	122	12	156	54
Whiting	26	14	3	36	6
TOTAL	2,969	2,494	611	3,671	1,419
Source: Vt. Secretary of State					

workings of state government and who would use that experience to tackle the affordable housing crisis in Vermont and help bring down the state’s high health care costs.

In her narrow loss, Richards was gracious in defeat. In a Wednesday press release she urged all voters seeking a change for the better to get behind Janoo.

“It has been the honor of a lifetime to run for governor of this amazing state,” she said. “Now that the primary is behind us, it’s time for Vermonters to come together and rally behind Amanda Janoo. Amanda and I share many of the same goals for this state and her people, and I will do everything I can to ensure that she is elected our next governor. It’s time for new leadership.”

GRAY UP FOR NEXT CHALLENGE

In the lieutenant governor’s race, Gray will now gear up to challenge incumbent Republican John Rodgers in the General Election on Nov. 3.

In her campaign, Gray, who grew up in Newbury and previously worked as an assistant Vermont attorney general, prioritized housing, advocating for land-use reforms that relax regulations on development, higher taxes on second homes, universal primary care, and paid family leave and medical leave.

As Vermont’s former lieutenant governor, Gray also said in her victory speech Tuesday: “I know this job — I know what the office can be. We deserve a lieutenant governor who has a plan for healthcare and housing and supporting working families.”

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University of
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ICE in Cornwall

(Continued from Page 1A)
Richards only noticed that ICE was at her North Bingham Street home around 12:30 p.m. when she happened to get up and look out her front window, where she noticed a large black vehicle with dark windows parked on the street. After going outside to investigate, she saw an agent and then ran to her neighbor's house to ask them to come out as well.
"It was unbelievable," Richards told the Independent.
The arrested men, identified for now as Alex and Angel, were at Richards's Cornwall house along with seven others for a second day in a row of work on her roof. But on Saturday, multiple ICE agents

arrived in three unmarked vehicles and arrested two of the workers for being in the U.S. without authorization.
The men are now being held in a Massachusetts detention center, according to an Aug. 10 statement released by State Sen. Ruth Hardy on her campaign website.
Others near the property who felt at risk by the ICE agents ran away from the scene, Will Lambek, a spokesman for the organization Migrant Justice, told the Independent. Migrant Justice's Rapid Response Network responded to a call about the arrests and provided support for those affected in the area. At least 20 neighbors and members of the

group Indivisible Middlebury also arrived on the scene after the agents left, said Tanya Byker, Cornwall selectboard chair.
Richards captured some of the raid on camera. In the video, as the vehicles are pulling away, she can be heard shouting, "You can't just take people! You can't just take people."
She also repeatedly yells, "Do you have a warrant? Do you have a warrant? Do you have a warrant?"
The entire interaction lasted fewer than 10 minutes. Richards made that estimation based on time stamps of when she first noticed the vehicle in front of her house and when the video showing the end of the interaction starts.

Migrant Justice was eventually contacted, Richards said, and the organization helped the other seven people, who fled from Richards's home, to a sanctuary space.
In subsequent call with the Independent, Richards emphasized that the raid at her home was at a private property.
It was also a point of emphasis in Hardy's Aug. 10 statement.
"Let me be clear: this ICE raid at a private residence and abduction of people without a legal warrant or public safety reason is unacceptable, and it is traumatic for everyone involved," she wrote.
The statement continues, "the roofing crew members, the homeowner and her family, neighbors in Cornwall, and passers-by were all frightened and angered. The situation was chaotic, executed without proper communication, and resulted in an unsafe situation for workers on the roof and neighbors who were confronted by armed federal agents. It was unfathomable to everyone that the federal government could simply take people, clearly based on racial and ethnic profiling."
Hardy notes in the statement that she visited Richards the following day, and at that time also spoke with the crew manager.
"The crew manager described how traumatized her workers were and how she and others were stepping up to try to finish the job with a smaller and more-stressed crew," Hardy wrote.
She also links to a GoFundMe that as of Wednesday afternoon had raised \$5,300 "to support the families and legal defense of Alex and Angel."
"Community members are organizing, staying vigilant, and adding to a network of people who are working to prevent further ICE abductions," Hardy said in her statement.
The Saturday ICE activity in Cornwall came just a day after five people on their way to a construction job site were arrested in a traffic stop by ICE agents in Londonderry, Vt., around 9 a.m.
Lambek said there were a number of ICE arrests and traffic stops in the Upper Valley region spanning Vermont and New Hampshire over



AN IMMIGRATION AND Customs Enforcement agent on Saturday stands outside a Cornwall home where he and his colleagues arrested two men working on the roof and whisked them away — apparently without showing any warrants.

Photo provided by Mary Richards

the past week, including in White River Junction.
On July 7, three Addison County residents were taken into custody by federal immigration officials in Middlebury.
"It was a traumatic, upsetting experience for the resident and the workers," Byker said of the Cornwall raid. "It was heartening to see all the neighbors come to support."
Byker said that she's sees a lot of news about ICE nationally, but the arrests happening in Cornwall came as a shock.
As ICE arrests come closer to home for many in the Green Mountain State, Lambek urged

Vermonters to always look out for their neighbors and keep them safe.
For those targeted by ICE or U.S. Border Patrol, Lambek emphasized knowing your rights — especially the right to remain silent and ask for an attorney. He recommended always calling the Migrant Justice Emergency Hotline: 802-881-7229.
Witnesses to ICE or Border Patrol arrests can also call Migrant Justice, Lambek said, to report information and identify the situation. Lambek cautioned about posting on social media before calling the hotline and encouraged only posting verified facts to prevent rumors and misinformation.

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Amped armwrestlers

ABIGAIL FITZSIMMONS OF St. Johnsbury (left) and TJ Ashley of Whiting (right) work hard — but don’t forget to have fun — during the annual armwrestling competition at Field Days last week. The contests of raw strength, cunning and perseverance celebrated their 49th year at the Addison County Fair and Field Days on Friday, Aug. 7, drawing competitors from across the Northeast and reaffirming its status as one of the longest-running tournaments in the country. Fitzsimmons competed in the girls’ ages 6-7 category and Ashley in the boys’ 10-11 group. See more photos on Page 3B.

Independent photos/Steve James

New group using tennis to serve people with autism

MIDDLEBURY — A couple Middlebury College students are launching Vermont’s first ACEing Autism chapter at the college this fall. ACEing Autism is a volunteer-driven non-profit organization dedicated to helping people with autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions grow and develop social connections through the sport of tennis. Organizers’ goal is to lower barriers and create a neurodiverse community, according to Richard Liang, a rising junior at Middlebury. He noted that the fall program runs from Oct. 11 to Nov.15. “We will host weekly, one-hour clinics on Sundays at the Middlebury College tennis courts, pairing each participant one-to-one with a trained volunteer,” Liang said. “Our program is open to youth ages 11-18 and adults 18+ with autism or other neurodevelopmental conditions (open to all residents of Vermont).” He added that no prior tennis experience is required, and that tennis equipment, snacks, and refreshments will be provided. “We are currently gauging community interest to

help plan logistics, such as transportation, ahead of our launch,” Liang said. “If you or your family are interested, please fill out our participant interest form. Help us spread the word across Vermont by sharing our message to families you think would be interested in our program.” The participant interest form is online at tinyurl.com/TennisAutismMidd. Liang is the program director, and fellow Middlebury College student Harry Wilson is assistant program director. **VOLUNTEERING** No tennis experience is required to become a volunteer. Volunteers are expected to arrive 30 minutes before clinic start times. Volunteers are responsible for simple on-court activities, encouragement, and support of participants. Volunteers will be paired one-to-one with participants. Volunteers will receive orientation training and on-court guidance. Volunteers must be 15+. Fill out the online interest form if you’d like to volunteer. To learn more about the national program, go to aceingautism.org.

Mindset could make Midd men’s soccer season

By SOPHIA KESHMIRI MIDDLEBURY — For Middlebury College Men’s Soccer Coach Alex Elias, the difference between winning and losing this season isn’t a specific tactical strategy. Or a certain formation. Or a particular player. A number of experienced footballers are returning, including Elias’s leading 2025 goal-scorer. Core midfielders from last fall take the South Street pitch again this fall, and mainstays of the back line will be in front of the net as well. “No gaps,” the coach said. So what’s going to make or break this season? “It’s going to come down to mentality and effort and preparation,” Elias said. “If we do those things right, if we get those things right ... we’re very optimistic to see where the season can go and what we can achieve.” He harkened back to this sentiment while discussing the impending 2026 season, due to begin on the road against the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy on Sept. 5. “Mentality has to be top if we want to win. And that is an area that we fell short last year, where we had a lot of potential, and we were a bit reactive and not always mentally better than our opponent ... there was more kind of vicissitudes in our mentality that led to some disappointing moments for us,” he said. “That’s an area that remains to

be proven. We certainly have the capacity to be very mentally tough, strong, confident, consistent.” The 2025 Panthers, who lost six seniors to graduation in the spring, four of whom were core players, finished the season 10-6-2. The team bowed out of the NESCAC tournament in the semifinals

after a 3-2 overtime loss to Tufts, the eventual league and NCAA champions. Wheaton ended Middlebury’s at-large NCAA tournament berth in a second-round match that ended 1-0. “I think we were certainly humbled last season compared to our expectations and goals,” Elias

said. “There’s some urgency that was created by how last year unfolded that I think has been helpful in our mentality, our preparation, the work everyone has put in since the completion of our 2025 campaign.” When all was said and done, (See Panther soccer, Page 3B)



PANTHER SENIOR WILL Sawin, seen here in a 2024 game against Scripps, was Middlebury men’s soccer’s top goal scorer in 2025. He also spent the summer playing with Vermont Green FC, which recently won its second consecutive title.

Independent file photo/Steve James



Record breakers

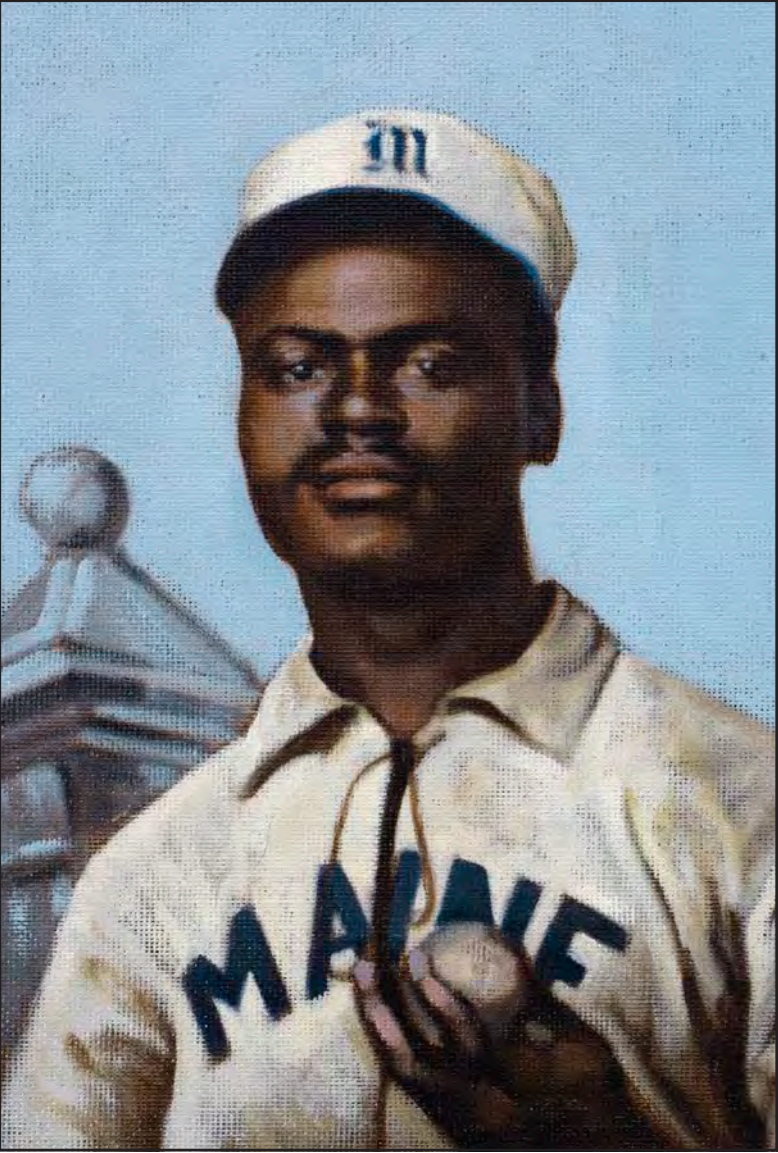
MIDDLEBURY SWIM TEAM members Maxine King, Felix Poduschnick, Cassandra Bellmann and Porter Mackey pose for a photo after making Marlins history during the state championship meet at the Upper Valley Aquatic Center in Hartford on Aug. 1 and 2. Not only was the foursome’s 2:08.89 swim the fastest time any team has finished the mixed 12U 200-yard medley relay at the state meet — by 21 seconds, to boot. It also marked the first time a Marlins team had set a state record. “The entire team was beyond excited for them,” Coach Carina Bellman said. “It was a once in a lifetime kind of unicorn event where you had the state champions in each of their individual events come together, and that just doesn’t happen often.” King was the victor in the girls’ 11-12 50-yard backstroke (34.03), Poduschnick in the boys’ 11-12 50-yard breaststroke (36.47), Cassandra Bellmann in the girls’ 11-12 50-yard butterfly (30.51) and Mackey in the boys’ 12U 50-yard freestyle (30.52). For Coach Bellman, the relay team achieved more than a personal accomplishment. “That’s huge to have those four kids break the Vermont state record. That is definitely a huge accolade,” she said. “But you know, that’s a testament to the community we built, to the history of the team.”

Courtesy photo

Daring drivers brawl in Demo Derby ‘26

NEW HAVEN — The Addison County Fair and Field Days Demolition Derby last week provided its usual large helping of noise and excitement. The timing of the races on Tuesday, Aug. 4, and Wednesday, Aug. 5, didn’t match up well with the *Independent’s* publishing schedule, though we did run a story covering some of the contests in last week’s edition. Divisions run on Tuesday were in the following categories: Bone Stock Cars, Vans, Trucks, and V8s. Competitions on Wednesday were in the Bone Stock Cars, Vans, and Mod Compacts categories. Shown here are the first- through third-place finishers in each heat and final, plus the designated “Mad Dog” of the heat, or MD, which is given to the most aggressive driver. **TUESDAY FEATURE** 1st: Brandon Tierney “Tinker” 2nd: Aiden Putnam (MD) 3rd: Ashley Tierney “Lil Tinker” Mark Billings Junior 55 Corbin Fox 917 Chuckie Havens 10 Meredith Camom 7 Geoffrey Grant 24 Sean Burke 5 Chris Bapp 24C

Isaac Whitney 44 Keegan Curveau 23K Greg Whitney 22G Austin Bowdish 420 Tim Current 67 **VANS/MINI TRUCK TUESDAY** 1st: Greg Whitney 22G 2nd: Terry Reno Senior 07 3rd: Brady Lloyd 11L David Porter 69 Dominick Fleming 18X Packards Keegan Martell “Problem Child” Tanner English 69 Jon Jerome 88 Josh Kennet 331 Nick Ouellette 25X Hunter Given 80H Tim Whitney 47W Gary Grant 22 Evan Lathrop 71 **V8 TUESDAY** 1st: Duncan Cram XXL 2nd: Taylor Atwell 3 3rd: Tommy Woodbury 37 MD: Pierre Laroche 68P Zach Lavoie 79 Jason Vezina 069 Boomer Lafontaine 7X Matt Merchant 42 Sean McFee X2 Winston Forbes 47 (See Demo Derby, Page 3B)



WILLIAM LAMBERT, CREW member on the fated USS Maine, was the star pitcher for the ship’s baseball team.
Painting by Graig Kreindler, used with the permission of Jay Caldwell

We recall the fate of the Maine — and William Lambert

I first saw the image on a vintage postcard. Fascinated, I bought the card and stuck it up on the wall above my desk.

It was a picture of an old-time baseball team with “Maine” lettered on the uniform front, and no information on the card back.

I grew up in Maine, played baseball and loved the game as a kid, and was living in Maine when I first saw this photo. The interest was natural.

I had also developed an interest in the Negro Leagues and Black baseball and its history, so I was intrigued by the Black player in the back row. What was he doing on a team from Maine?

Such a strange image: what’s with the goat mascot in front, and the two guys, the non-baseball players, in the black attire — and that weird background with the stovepipe?

Why is J.H. Bloomer identified in the photo and no one else? What’s so special about him?

Perhaps most curious of all, what about that Black fellow, holding a baseball in his left hand? What’s his story?

Now that we can access all the information in the world with the blink of an eye and a click of a key, we know about this team, and it’s quite a story.

In fact, the team wasn’t from Maine at all, the state of Maine — it was the team from the Maine: the battleship USS Maine.

Those of you who stayed awake in high school for the unit on the Spanish-American War in American history class will no doubt remember the *Maine*.

The USS Maine blew up in Havana harbor on Feb. 15, 1898, about an hour after Marine Corps Fifer C.H. Newton from Washington, D.C., third baseman on the Maine’s baseball team, played “Taps” on his bugle.

The massive explosion killed 266 of the crew of 355, including all members of the baseball team except Landsman John Herman Bloomer, 23, of Portland, Maine, the right fielder.

(Landsman was the lowest enlisted rank in the early Navy, 1830s-1920s, a recruit with little or no prior experience at sea, assigned the most basic, dirtiest tasks on the ship).

Bloomer may have survived the explosion, but was dead by 1907 of acute alcoholism, perhaps, who knows, related to his terrifying experience aboard the *Maine*.

There were eight other Mainers on the *Maine* when it exploded, three who survived. Left fielder William Tinsman (Landsman) was born in Pennsylvania but grew up in East Deering (Portland).

In addition to Newton and Tinsman, those who died from the blast itself, terrible burns, or drowning were second baseman William Gorman (Landsman, Boston), center fielder Charles

Hauck (Landsman, Brooklyn), shortstop John Merz (Landsman, Brooklyn), and catcher Benjamin Marsden (Apprentice Second Class, Jersey City).

Also killed in the explosion were Manager Charles Eiermann (Gunner’s Mate) and Assistant Manager Leon Bonner (Seaman, New York City). Eiermann was from Germany and had been a U.S. citizen for only three years.

Presumably they are the two sailors not in baseball uniforms in the team photo.

John Henry “Shilly” Shillington, from Chicago, a Yeoman Third Class and Navigator’s Writer (a position demanding specialized clerical skills), was the team’s talented shortstop.

Before enlisting in the Navy, Shilly had spent at least three years at Notre Dame University, was a popular and talented student, and shone on the baseball and the basketball teams (its captain in 1897).

A monument dedicated “to the memory of John Henry Shillington . . .” still stands on the campus. Erected in 1915, it features a 10-inch mortar shell (“recovered from the sunken battleship”) on a five-foot red granite base.

That Black fellow holding the ball in the team photo is 23-year-old Engine Stoker William

Lambert from Hampton, Va., the team’s ace pitcher. A lefty, he was described by a shipmate as “a master of speed, curves, and control.”

Lambert demonstrates that the Navy was integrated at the time. Black soldiers in the Army, in Cuba and elsewhere, served in segregated units, commanded by white officers. There were 30 Black crewmembers on the *Maine*, 22 who died in the explosion.

One can imagine what Lambert might have done in baseball had he survived the *Maine* disaster, perhaps playing on one of the Black traveling independent teams at the turn of the century.

That *Maine* baseball team was a stalwart group. In December 1897, just two months before the disaster in Havana, it defeated the team from the USS *Marblehead* for the



Sports (Mostly) KARL LINDHOLM

U.S. Navy Baseball Championship.

It was reported that a game between the *Maine* boys and a team from Havana was being discussed while the ship was in port, an enticing possibility as baseball in Cuba was nearly as advanced as it was in the U.S. in the 1890s, and the country was equally baseball-mad.

The *Maine* was in Havana harbor to protect American commercial interests while the Cubans fought for their independence from Spain. Fanned by a lurid press (“yellow journalism”), sentiment in America ran high in support of Cuba.

The sinking of the *Maine* provided the emotional rationale for declaring war: “Remember the Maine — to Hell with Spain” became the rallying cry. The U.S. declared war on a greatly overmatched Spain on April 25, 1898.

The war itself lasted just over three months, 109 days, and had two theaters: Cuba in the

Gulf of Mexico and Manila Bay, Philippines, in the Pacific. In the Treaty of Paris ending the war, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines were ceded to the United States and Cuba achieved its independence.

The cause of the sinking of the *Maine* was long debated. A naval inquiry after the explosion determined that it was the result of hostile action, an externally located mine. Later investigations by the Navy and other authorities, using more recent methods, concluded that it was an “accident,” a “fire in the coal bunker,” the likely source.

That postcard of the baseball team from the fated battleship *Maine* is still up on the wall in my office at home.

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



THE BATTLESHIP USS Maine, blown up in Havana harbor in February 1898, killing 266 crew members, was thought to be the result of hostile action. “Remember the Maine” became the rallying cry leading to U.S. war with Spain.

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Panther soccer

(Continued from Page 1B)
Middlebury was ranked 15th in the nation among Division III teams at the conclusion of the season.

But by NESCAC standards, that's hardly a unique achievement.

Of the 11 teams in the league, five finished the season in the top 12, and only one was absent from the top 50. Besides Tufts being at the top, Connecticut College sits at No. 4, Bowdoin at No. 6, Williams at No. 10 and Wesleyan at No. 12.

The Panthers' first test versus a top team will be a home game against Conn. College, to be played on Saturday, Sept. 12 at noon. It's just their third game of the season, and a chance to remedy a 1-0, 85th-minute loss to the Camels last year. "That's a big one right out of the gates, where we have to be at our best if we want to take full points at home against a really good team that's been top in the country for a while."

That game is followed by three more conference matches, each a week apart, against Amherst (No. 24), Hamilton (No. 31) and Bowdoin (No. 6).

Many of Elias's players, though not rising seniors, got their legs underneath them last season.

"We return the majority of the players who played big minutes last year for us ... A lot of players who played last year were first and second year guys," he said.

"In terms of the experience of some challenging games and some disappointing results last year, I

think hopefully battle tests our guys."

Among those returning is Will Sawin, who will be a senior this fall, and the team's top goal-getter in 2025. The forward scored nine times and tallied four assists last year.

He enters the 2026 season off a second summer playing with Vermont Green FC, the state's United Soccer League club team that recently won its second consecutive title.

Though Sawin hasn't seen much of the field with the team, primarily composed of D-I players, he will take the field for the Panthers with the benefit of having practiced with an elite group, Elias noted.

The same is true of Leon Brody, a rising junior goalkeeper, and the only other D-III player on the Vermont Green roster.

In addition to those two, Elias noted senior midfielder Colin Dugan.

"I think there's high expectations for them in the league, and they have to prove that they are going to be dominant players for us," Elias said of the trio.

Senior defender Ari Klayman, a player who has consistently seen the field since he joined the team in 2023, is back for his final season as well.

"He's played in the biggest games over his first three years of his career for us," Elias said.

Also joining him on the back line

are juniors Charlie Johnson and Antonio Cosentino, both of whom were fixtures of last year's defense.

Sophomores Hamin Kim (defense/midfield) and Orlando Cavaceppi-Dove (midfield) also return.

"They had major roles as first year players," Elias said. "But they set themselves up to potentially have really impactful roles this year."

Their classmate, Ben Shapiro (midfielder), saw less time than that pair but when he did, it was high stakes. Dylan Payne, also a midfielder, was another notable sophomore who could be key to the season.

Elias has a deep unit in the midfield that he feels is very skilled.

"Including Dylan, Orlando, Colin Dugan, and Ben Shapiro, who can control games," he said. "We have the capacity and the attributes to control games with the ball."

He also sees set pieces as an area the Panthers could thrive, noting, "the potential to be lethal" on kicks.

Transitions could also be fruitful. "We have a lot of pace and can be good in transition."

But that has to translate to balls in the back of the net.

"We did not score enough goals last year, and that was one of the challenges for us," Elias said.

That's not for lack of goal-scoring talent. He noted this team has an abundance of players "who have a lot of goals in them."

"And need to have really good seasons for us, and need to be very productive players in the attacking part of the field if we want to win games and make some noise in the league and the national tournament."



Tough guys

LEVI ROSE OF Ferrisburgh (top), Hunter Grant of Vergennes (middle) and Camille Plouffe of Hubbardton (bottom) lock in during bouts of Field Days armwrestling competition this past Friday. The trio competed in the boys' 8-9, girls' 8-9 and girls' 14-15 categories, respectively. Plouffe, who won her age group's competition, in particular looks to be giving her opponent a hard time.

Independent photos/Steve James



Demo Derby

(Continued from Page 1B)
Willy Forbes 10
FARM TRUCK TUESDAY
1st: Austin Billings 88
2nd and MD: Tim Whitney 47W
3rd: Jayce Houle "Pinball"
Maxx Rheume XX
Colton Bapp 13
Smits 21
Justin Bolster 3T
Tanner Bolster T3
Gabe Cousino 25
Lily Mahoney 623
YOUTH DIVISION WEDNESDAY
1st place: Ryan Rheume 22x
2nd place: Tharron Sheppard 7x
3rd place: Anna Dutton 15
MD: Noah Hancen 45
Shane Zeno: 94
Kohlton Flemming 36K
Kiley Wade 17
Colton Bulter 13A
Wyatt Bradley 22

Misty Havens 10
Griffen Sheldrick 41
Tucker Sheldrick 82
Kallon Dunbar 78
Kendra Parks 6763
Tyler Tatro 15T
Maddox Davis 21
FEATURE WEDNESDAY
1st: Ben Kennedy 110
2nd: Gavin Hughes 20G
3rd and MD: Tim Whitney 47W
Patric Colman 69X
Lucious Sheppard 77X
Brady Lloyd 11L
Calab Whitney 3C
Evan Lathrop 71
Bubba McPhee Bubz
Kenny Marcelle 926
Isaac Whitney 44
Tyler Herbert 717
MOD COMPACT HEAT WEDNESDAY
1st: Grady Devoid 24X
2nd: Chance Mahoney 96

3rd: Dustin Tierney "Wild Child"
MD: Devin Parker "The Numbskull"
Zachary Stone 2X
Brandon Tierney "Tinker"
Chris Murray 7
VANS/MINI TRUCK WEDNESDAY
1st: Kolbi Blaise "Red"
2nd: Devon Fournier "4Runner"
3rd: Dustin Tierney "Wild Child"
MD: Terry Reno 07
Dominick Fleming 18XX
Nick Oulette 25X
Erik Sumner 17X
Cannon Ketchum 11
Eddie Havens 12
Ashley Bodington 16X
Chance Mahoney 96
Tanner English 69
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Bradley Disorda 29T
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Elderly Services to host community education series

MIDDLEBURY — Elderly Services will be hosting a Community Education Series of five informative presentations this fall on topics of importance to both area elders and their families. The series will begin on Sept. 9 and run until Oct. 28. All programs are free and open to our entire community.

Session 1 on Sept. 9 will be “Managing diabetes in older age.” Type 2 diabetes has profound impacts on us as we age, affecting physical health and making us vulnerable to developing dementia. It is also expensive to manage. But Type 2 diabetes is not inevitable; individuals can take steps to prevent or delay it and can also manage the disease to prevent further health complications. In this session participants will learn proven ways to help improve the condition as well as delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. The presenter will be Magie Young, MPH, RDN, CD from Mountain View Nutrition.

Session 2 on Sept. 23 will be “Advanced Care Planning” presented by the Vermont Ethics Network. Participants will find out more about how the Vermont Advance Directive process works, get free forms and informational brochures and learn how to get started with advanced directive forms.

Session 3 on Sept. 29 will cover “Medicare Open Enrollment.” Age Well’s State Health Insurance Assistance Program Team will walk through the steps to prepare for Medicare’s Fall Open Enrollment, the time of year when eligible individuals can change their Medicare coverage. Information presented will include: the

differences between plans, when and how to change drug coverage, benefit programs that help to pay for Medicare costs, and how to use Medicare.gov.

Session 4 on Oct. 14 will be “Driving and Aging — Challenges and Strategies.” What happens if you or a loved one can no longer drive? This will be an informative session on the challenges older drivers face in Vermont. Learn about the Yellow Dot Program, a statewide initiative that gives first responders quick access to important medical information during a crash or emergency. Discover helpful tips on staying independent, safe, and mobile behind the wheel. The program also will cover how to approach the difficult conversation about driving retirement and planning for the future. Presented by: Julia Irish, Vermont Department of Health.

Session 5 on Oct. 28 will be “Building Brain Healthy Habits.” This Alzheimer’s Association program provides research-backed guidance on brain health and outlines the importance of taking action at every age to protect your brain. Research shows there are everyday habits people can begin today to help protect memory and thinking as you get older - potentially reducing risk or delaying the onset of cognitive decline. Presented by: Jordan Cotton, Vermont Chapter/ Alzheimer’s Association.

Sessions will be held at either Elderly Services or the Middlebury Congregational Church. To RSVP or learn more, call Susan Bruce at Elderly Services — 388-3983, ext. 215 or send an email to sbruce@elderlyservices.org.



THURSDAY

Green Mountain Club hike: Otter Creek Gorge in Middlebury. Thursday, Aug. 13. Easy 2.6-mile hike with an elevation gain of 280 ft. This hike requires crossing two short suspension bridges over Belden Falls and takes you through a forest which skirts an open field before reentering the forest. The trail at the end goes over a rock outcropping with a cable for support. No dogs. Bring bug spray, snacks and water. Contact Steve Ralph at 802-398-5448 or sralph00@gmail.com to register. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

Author Talk: “Peddlers, Merchants, and Junk Dealers: Jewish Life in Small-Town Vermont” in Vergennes. Thursday, Aug. 13, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Bixby Library. Retired Middlebury College Professor Peggy Nelson discusses her new book on the history of Jewish immigrant families in small rural Vermont towns.

FRIDAY

Artday Friday: Sketchbooks in Vergennes. Friday, Aug. 14, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Library, 258 Main St. A family-friendly art day every Friday at the library. Supplies provided. Free.

Carillon Concert Series in Middlebury. Friday, Aug. 14, 6 p.m., Middlebury Chapel. The Carillon Concert Series features beautiful concerts from Middlebury Chapel’s bell tower. The melodic sounds of the carillon bells will ring out across the campus. Performer: Joseph Min, winner of the 2024 Queen Fabiola International Carillon Competition. Free.

SATURDAY

Cemetery stone cleaning and restoration in Starksboro. Saturday, Aug. 15, 8 a.m.-noon, Starksboro Village Cemetery. Seeking volunteers to clean, lift, and reset stones. The 1802 cemetery needs care toward Revolutionary and Civil War veteran graves as well as many early town families’ sites. Instruction by the Vermont Old Cemetery Association. Snacks, beverages and pizza provided. For more info and to sign up contact Cecilia Elwert at ceciliaelwert@yahoo.com or 802-453-8447.

For the Luv of Dogs Car Show in Brandon. Saturday, Aug. 15, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Estabrook Field. Fundraiser for the Rutland County Humane Society. All cars, trucks and motorcycles are welcome, no matter if the vehicle is a work in progress or a piece of art. Great food, music, raffles and trophies awarded, followed by a parade through town. Registration \$20; fans attend for free.

Bridport Town-Wide yard sales. Saturday, Aug. 15, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., throughout Bridport. Town-wide yard sales featuring multiple participating households and locations across Bridport, offering a wide variety of secondhand goods and community browsing opportunities.

Addison Fire Dept. Craft & Vendor Fair in Addison. Saturday, Aug. 15, 9-2 p.m., Addison Community Center. A fun day of shopping, handmade treasures and support for the Addison Volunteer Fire Department. Shop handmade jewelry, gnomes, baby/doll clothes, knitted items, cutting boards, jams, hula hoops and more.

Fun with Flowers: A Children’s Program in New Haven. Saturday, Aug. 15, 9:30-10 a.m., New Haven Congregational Church. Join Master Gardeners to learn the many ways flowers welcome insects and birds. Hands on activities for children. In event of rain, activities will be moved inside the church. Free.

Tech Savvy Saturday in Vergennes. Saturday, Aug. 15, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Bixby Library. Robert, a retired technology librarian, is enthusiastic about helping people with their devices. He specializes in iPhones, iPads, and Windows PCs. Call or email to make an appointment: jennifer.pearson@bixbylibrary.org or 802-877-2211.

Water Park at Living Hope Church in Brandon. Saturday, Aug. 15, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Hope Center, 97 Frog Hollow Rd. Water slides, bouncy houses and lots of other outdoor activities. Lunch included. Bring the family or a friend and come enjoy the fun. Free. Contact us at livinghopebrandonvt@gmail.com.

Nature Creative Writing Program in Vergennes. Saturday, Aug. 15, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Bixby Library. A nature-themed creative writing program led by local author Kateri Kosek. Writing prompts will be used to more deeply consider the natural world as a subject in our poetry or prose, tapping into imagery, metaphor, and environmental consciousness to render the outdoors memorably, while steering clear of the clichéd. 12 spots available. Register: jennifer.pearson@bixbylibrary.org.

The Battle of Valcour Bay Tour: “Winds of Change” in Ferrisburgh. Saturday, Aug. 15, 11:30 a.m., Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. This tour explores the events of the Battle of Valcour Bay on Lake Champlain during the American Revolution with a focus on a very important but under-appreciated actor: wind. You’ll learn the basics of sail theory and consider these events and what it was like for soldiers aboard ships during the battle from a new perspective. Free.

Pocock Rocks in Bristol. Saturday, Aug. 15, 2-7 p.m., Main Street. Hudost, Red Admiral, Jacob Green, Eclipse, Tom Bisson & The Rustics and Remember Baker play the annual music festival and street fair. Enjoy food, drinks and shopping from local vendors. Free.

Silent Film Screening: “Son of the Sheik” in Brandon. Saturday, Aug. 15, 7 p.m., Brandon Town Hall. Starring Rudolph Valentino in his final picture. A rip-roaring sequel to “The Sheik” full of romance, adventure and thrills. Jeff Rapis provides live music. Free; donations accepted.

SUNDAY

Bridport Town-Wide yard sales. Sunday, Aug. 16, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., throughout Bridport. See Aug. 15 listing.

Wetland walk in Middlebury. Sunday, Aug. 16, 10 a.m.-noon, Wright Park. Guided nature walk led by Vermont wetland ecologist Zapata Courage, exploring the beaver-influenced ecosystem from the uplands to the Japanese boardwalk and wetland. Learn to identify common wetland plants and discover how floodplain wetlands protect communities while supporting diverse wildlife. Family-friendly, all ages welcome. Free. For more info visit maltvt.org.

Mushroom Exploration Walk with Meg Madden in Orwell. Sunday, Aug. 16, 1-3 p.m., Mount Independence State Historic Site, 497 Mount Independence Road. Mushroom expert Meg Madden leads a walk to look for and learn about mushrooms on the Mount. Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather. Limited spaces; call 802-948-2000 well ahead to reserve your spot.

Waterslide and Nerf Day in Brandon. Sunday, Aug. 16, 1-4 p.m., Estabrook Field. An afternoon of huge waterslides for everyone, provided by the Brandon Area Toy Project. Bring your Nerf and join in the fun battles! Battles, vendors, and more fun. Free.

Dowsing Demonstration with Bill Gee in Salisbury. Sunday, Aug. 16, 2-3 p.m., Salisbury Free Public Library. Dowsing has been around since the dawn of humanity, helping people survive in harsh environments, find resources, and navigate difficult choices. By using simple dowsing tools, you can tap into your own inner wisdom and the wisdom of our planet. In this brief talk, dowsing instructor Bill Gee will walk you through a brief history of dowsing and introduce you to the basic tools of the craft. Bill will take a lot of the mystery away from this ancient craft, and you, too, will discover that anyone can do this. Free. For more info visit salisburypubliclibrary.org/events-1.

Peach Festival in Shoreham. Sunday, Aug. 16, 3-8 p.m., Vermont Trade Winds Farm. Peaches, cider, creemeees, cobbler, cider demos and horse wagon rides. Music by The Sap Tappers and Fly-by Ride. Dinner available.

MONDAY

African Drumming for Beginners in Middlebury. Monday, Aug. 17, 2-3 p.m., CSAC’s The Center. Learn West African drum rhythms with Fode and Shelly. Some drums are available for use during gatherings, or bring your own. Every Monday afternoon (except on holidays). Open to all. Parking available behind the building, please use the street facing entrance. Free. Zylpha, 802-388-3093 or Mary, 802-989-3074. **Monday Night Bingo in Middlebury.** Monday, Aug. 17, 4:30 p.m., Addison County VFW 7823, Exchange St. \$1,000 jackpot. Benefits veterans programs. Kitchen opens 5 p.m., quickies 6 p.m., regular bingo 7 p.m.

Pie in the Park in Vergennes. Monday, Aug. 17, 6-8 p.m., City Green. Delicious homemade pies topped with vanilla ice cream will be served with a beverage. The Vergennes City Band will provide entertainment. \$8 or 2 for \$15. For more info call Marion at 802-417-4300.

Vergennes City Band concert in Vergennes. Monday, Aug. 17, 7-8 p.m., City Green. Relax on the green and listen to some great free summer music.

WEDNESDAY

Bristol Town Band Summer Concerts on the Park in Bristol.

Wednesday, Aug. 19, 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.

THURSDAY

“Out from behind The Yellow Wallpaper: Voices of Vermont Women in Mental Institutions from the Museum’s archives” in Middlebury. Thursday, Aug. 20, 12:30-2 p.m., Henry Sheldon Museum, 1 Park St. What did it look like to receive mental health treatment as a woman in the 19th century? This presentation by Dr. Melissa Dubroff is on letters sent from Addison County women receiving treatment in New England sanitariums including Brattleboro Retreat, Jackson Sanitarium, and Dr. Cunningham’s in Braintree, Mass. First-hand accounts will provide important context for discussions around gender and mental health treatment in Vermont.

Decoupage Workshop in Salisbury. Thursday, Aug. 20, 1 p.m., Salisbury Free Public Library, 853 Maple St. From trash to treasure: Mirjam Brett will help us turn old tins and cans into pretty and useful objects using paper and fabric remnants. For anyone age 10 and up. Materials provided. Free.

Pride Pathways: Suicide Prevention for LGBTQ+ Communities and Allies. Virtual. Thursday, Aug. 20, 6-7:30 p.m. Join the Vermont Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention for a 90-minute virtual pilot presentation on LGBTQ+ suicide prevention, including risk factors, protective factors, warning signs, how to create supportive and affirming environments and how to connect with helpful resources. Registration required. Free. For more info visit vt-pride-pathways-082026.attendeeae.com.

Salisbury Community Cooking Club. Thursday, Aug. 20, 6-8 p.m., Salisbury Free Public Library. Bring your extra tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, herbs or other garden bounty, along with your favorite recipes and ideas. Together we’ll create delicious dishes while sharing gardening tips, stories and laughter. No garden? No problem! Come enjoy an evening of good food, great conversation and community. Registration required. \$15. For more info visit salisburypubliclibrary.org/events-1.

Bristol Historical Society Monthly Meeting. Thursday, Aug. 20, 7-8 p.m., Howden Hall. Reg Dearborn will present “The History of the Bristol Manufacturing Co. (aka The Coffin Factory).” The Coffin Factory was a major Bristol business that prospered from 1869 until 1939. A short business meeting follows. Open to the public and accessible to those with disabilities.

FRIDAY

Artday Friday: Painting with Veggies in Vergennes. Friday, Aug. 21, noon-2 p.m., Bixby Library, 258 Main St. A family-friendly art day every Friday at the library. Supplies provided. Free.

Fish Fry in Middlebury. Friday, Aug. 21, 5-7 p.m., VFW Post 7823, Exchange Street. Haddock or butterfly shrimp; baked potato or French fries; coleslaw; dessert. Eat in or take out. Benefits veterans programs. \$16. 802-388-9468.

Carillon Concert Series in Middlebury. Friday, Aug. 21, 6 p.m., Middlebury Chapel, 75 Hepburn Rd. The Carillon Concert Series features beautiful concerts from Middlebury Chapel’s bell tower. The melodic sounds of the carillon bells will ring out across the campus. Performer: Charles Semowich, Carillonneur Emeritus, Riverside Church, NYC. Free.

Tiny Concert in Monkton. Friday, Aug. 21, 6-9 p.m., Monkton Town Hall. An evening of medicine music with Joydah Mae from Aotearoa/ New Zealand. Joydah has a powerful voice, and her music will take you on journeys through your lifetime, hitting the heart, the soul and every layer in between. Bring a plate of delicious, nourishing food to share in a community meal. \$20 or pay what you can. RSVP: HealingJourneys802@gmail.com

SATURDAY

Vergennes Day celebration. Saturday, Aug. 22, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., City green. The 44th Annual Vergennes Day is a beloved community tradition filled with family fun for all ages. Start your morning with a pancake breakfast at the fire station, cheer on runners during the Little City Road Race. Enjoy 55+ local crafters and exhibitors, food trucks and the famous Vergennes Lions Club Chicken BBQ, kids activities and live music from the Vergennes City Band on the bandstand.

Getting Together with Georgia O’Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz in Ripton. Saturday, Aug. 22, 3-4 p.m., Ripton Community Church. The performance piece is a dramatic reading featuring Diana Bigelow and Jim Stapleton as the historic couple. The dialogue employs many of the iconic artists’ own words and is enhanced throughout by visual images of their artwork. The program sheds light on their personal relationship and their impact on American art. It runs about 45 minutes, after which Jim and Diana invite comments and questions. Donations welcome.

SUNDAY

Green Mountain Club hike to Skylight Pond in Ripton. Sunday, Aug. 23, Afternoon hike up to Skylight Pond. This is a 5- to 6-mile hike with a moderate climb of 1,200 feet. Leashed dogs allowed. Contact Ellen Cronan to register and for more information, 908-595-2926. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

Public Super Bingo and 50/50 Raffle in Vergennes. Sunday, Aug. 23, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Addison County Eagles Aerie 3801. Doors, kitchen and bar open at 11 a.m. and Bingo starts at 12:30 p.m. Bring your own dauber or borrow ours. Food for sale. Open to the public. Entry price includes one packet of 6 cards per game. Extra packets available in 3 cards for \$10 or 6 cards for \$20. Two Winner-Take-All games will be sold separately for \$1 per sheet of 3 cards. 50/50 raffle tickets are 6/\$5. \$20 entry.



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Partyin’ Pocock style

SHEA ZENO OF Starksboro rocks her leopard face paint at last year’s Pocock Rocks festival with sister Nora and friend Callie. Head to downtown Bristol this Saturday, Aug. 15, for Pocock Rocks to hear some of the best local bands, grab delicious bites and enjoy family-friendly activities in support of Bristol CORE.

Independent file photo/Steve James

READ MORE Online!

ADDISONINDEPENDENT.COM





Monkton

Have a news tip?
Email Liz Pecor at lprascal47@gmail.com

NEWS

Monkton soccer season starts soon

MONKTON — Join Catherine at the Russell Memorial Library on Saturday, Aug. 15 for Crafternoon with Catherine at 1 p.m. Read or hear a story or two about insects. You will also get to make “mud and worms” dessert cups! Call the library for more information at 802-453-4471.

Also on Saturday, Aug. 15, join Chris Kollander for Community Yoga in the Community Room of the Town Hall from 9 - 10 a.m. Blocks and straps will be provided but please bring your own mat. All donations benefit the Russell Memorial Library. On Saturday, Aug. 22, Laurel Kelly will be holding this class — same time and place.

On Monday, Aug. 17, Angie Grove will be speaking to the Monkton Museum and Historical Society and guests about what the American Revolution was like in Vermont. She is the Executive

Director of the Ethan Allen Homestead Museum in Burlington. According to Lauren Parren, her talk supplements the Historical Society’s new exhibit beautifully.

Not only were there Revolutionary War battles and soldiers from both sides in Vermont, but there was an internal revolution for Vermont’s independence at the same time. This resulted in the independent State of Vermont from 1777-1791 (often referred to as the Vermont Republic). Vermont’s revolution aligned itself with the American Revolution, often using the same rhetoric and even the same militia fighting units, such as the Green Mountain Boys. But Vermont was a borderland state caught between British Canada and Patriot New England, and nowhere was it more evident that the American Revolution was a civil war than in Vermont. This presentation

will showcase how the American Revolution affected everyday Vermonters and resulted in the independent State of Vermont. All are welcome. This event is free, but donations are always appreciated. Email monktonmhs@gmail.com for more information.

This month’s Poetry club will be held on Saturday, Aug. 22 at 10:30 a.m. in the Russell Memorial Library this time. Bring a poem to share, whether it’s your own or from a favorite author. Contact Melanie at cotem@ymail.com for more information.

It’s time for Monkton Rec Fall Registration. Soccer season starts the first week of September going through mid-October. Everyone gets to play! If your child loves to run around, loves soccer or is just curious about it, consider signing them up for the fall program. This is for grades K through (See Monkton, Page 11B)

VSU announces spring 2026 graduates

RANDOLPH CENTER VT. — Vermont State University is proud to announce that the following local students successfully completed their studies and are now part of VSU’s Class of 2026.

Laura Abell of Middlebury earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Bridget Audet of Cornwall earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Carson Babbie of Orwell earned a Bachelor of Science in Statistics; Cloey Bell of Salisbury earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Abbie Blandy of Brandon earned an Associate of Science in Radiologic Science; Vivian Boateng of Vergennes earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Justin Bolduc of New Haven earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theater; and Benjamin Brown of New Haven earned an Associate of Science in Architectural Engineering Technology.

Also, Sarah Calvin of Brandon earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing; Katie Charbonneau of Bristol earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Ava Collins of N. Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Science in Holistic Health; Sam Cowan of N. Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering Technology; Raluca Cristea of Brandon earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Madysen Debisschop of Middlebury earned a Bachelor of Science in Business

Administration; Aless Delia-Lobo of Middlebury earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; and Stephanie Demar of Roxbury earned an Associate of Science in Nursing.

Also, Jamie Dube-Bordeau of Brandon earned a Bachelor of Science in Applied Psychology & Human Services; Jack Eickenberg of Starksboro earned a Bachelor of Science in Management; Reese Fitzgerald of E. Middlebury earned an Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene; Carter Frankenhoff of N. Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice; Payden Garthaffner of Vergennes earned a Bachelor of Arts in English; Holly Gero of Orwell earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Gwen Gill of Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics; Thane Gill of Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Science in Computer Software Engineering; and Mahaila Gosselin of Salisbury earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

In addition, Nikki Hansen of Brandon earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Katie Havey of Bristol earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Logan Hayes of Goshen earned a Bachelor of Science in Computer Software Engineering; April Hill of Bristol earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Tyler Jewett of Vergennes earned an Associate of Applied Science in Construction Management; Amanda Jimenez

of Hancock earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Samantha Kepes of Middlebury earned a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies; Devon Kibbey of Sudbury earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Kailyn LaDuke of Shoreham earned a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood & Special Education; and Hannah Lawrence of Vergennes earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Also, Emily Mason of Bristol earned a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene; Phoebe Mason of Bristol earned an Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology; Hunter McCray of Bridport earned a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering Technology; Lian McGarry of Middlebury earned an Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology; Alex McGuire of Vergennes earned a Master of Business Administration; Katherine Miles of Addison earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Kinsey Moyer of Leicester earned a Associate of Science in Respiratory Therapy; and Elizabeth Mullikin of Bridport earned a Associate of Science in Nursing.

Also, Oliver Newmarco of Rochester earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Jeffrey Perez Pedraza of Addison earned a Bachelor of Science in Professional (See VSU grads, Page 11B)

Middlebury youth gave back this summer

Group builds chairs and auctions them off for charity

MIDDLEBURY — The Junior Youth Group of the combined Congregational, St. Stephen’s and St. Mary’s churches in Middlebury last month made two cedar wood Adirondack chairs with separate footrests and recently auctioned off to raise money for two local charities.

It was one of several projects the young people completed, including scraping and painting a building at the Parent-Child Center of Addison County, gleaning with HOPE, cooking and serving a Community Supper meal at the Congregational Church, and cooking at Gather for the Breadloaf Mountain Zen Community, among other fun activities.

The youth then held an online auction of the chairs, which were made entirely from donated wood, and raised \$570 for the pair. All proceeds were donated to the local not-for profits, Homeward Bound – the Addison County animal shelter, and HOPE, which is also known as Helping Overcome Poverty’s Effects. People who participated in the online auction not only acquired remarkable items, they also affirmed the work



SYLAS ERNO STEADIES the chair while Jack Simpson drills a hole for a bolt to secure a part of an Adirondack chair that their Junior Youth Group was making last month.

Photos courtesy of May Poduschnick

of our youth and supporting our county’s important social service providers.

The middle schoolers that participated in the Junior Youth

Group chair project were Jack Simpson, Sylas Erno, Levi Garner-Wacker, Felix Poduschnick, Elias Urang, Cassandra Bellmann, Maxine King, Paxton Wright, Patrick Martin, Ben Emerson and Evan Hill. Ollie Choudhury and May Poduschnick were co-leaders of this group.

Volunteer Mark Wilch and his wife, Barbara, offered their workshop space and provided the participants with expert instruction in using power tools and assembling the beautiful Adirondack chairs. Many other volunteers also assisted in making this summer program possible and contribute to the positive experiences of the local youth.



JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP member Cassandra Bellmann, under the watchful eye of Mark Wilch, uses a scroll saw to cut a piece of an Adirondack chair that her group made and sold to raise money for charities.

Photos courtesy of May Poduschnick



ADDISON COUNTY

INDEPENDENT

The 2026 Addy Indy Garden Game

We got five whopping entries in this week’s Garden Game!

Our first entry came from **Jackie Arel**, whose mega zucchini measured 21.5” L x 13.25” C. “It just grew overnight!” she reported. Jackie’s entry ekes out a win over our existing front-runner.

Next up was the first cabbage of the season! **Maëlle Remsen** brought in a hefty cabbage measuring 19.5” C, taking the lead in the cabbage category.

Frequent Garden Gamer **Gary Miller** brought in not one, but two entries: a 9.25” C daikon radish and a whopping 36” L green bean. The first of each this season, both will be tough to beat—and Gary says he has plenty more mega beans on the way! Gary also shared a gardening tip: He plants his radishes alongside his squash to help repel squash vine borers.

Last but certainly not least, **Lisa Valley** brought in the first sunflower of the season. At a beautiful 6.5” D, it takes the lead and adds a little sunshine to this week’s Garden Game lineup.

Keep those garden giants coming!

Fun Facts

Young sunflowers have a superpower called heliotropism. Their developing flower heads track the sun from east to west during the day, then swing back east overnight to greet the morning sun. Mature sunflower heads stop tracking the sun and typically remain facing east so they can heat up more quickly to attract pollinators.



Categories & Front-Runners:

Asparagus (length x circumference) - Monica Przyperhart, 16” x 4.25”
Beet (circumference)
Broccoli (diameter)
Cabbage (circumference) - Maëlle Remsen, 19.5”
Cantaloupe (circumference)
Carrot (length x circumference)
Cauliflower (diameter)
Corn (length x circumference)
Cucumber (length x circumference) - George Marcus, 10” x 10.75”
Edible Leafy Greens (length x width - leaf only) - Christy Lynn, 31” x 10.25”
Eggplant (circumference x circumference) - Joan Derry, 23.5” x 10”
Fennel (length x circumference)
Green Bean (length) - Gary Miller, 36”
Kohlrabi (circumference)
Leek (length x circumference)
Melon (circumference)
Onion (circumference)
Parsnip (circumference)
Pepper (circumference x circumference) - Donna Bezanson, 12” x 5.25”
Potato (length x circumference)
Pumpkin (circumference x circumference)
Radish (circumference) - Gary Miller, 9.25”
Rhubarb (stalk length) - Dorothy Hayes, 25.5”
Rutabaga (circumference)
Summer Squash (length x circumference)
Sunflower (diameter) - Lisa Valley, 6.5”
*Sweet Potato (length x circumference)
Tomato (circumference)
Turnip (circumference)
Winter Squash (length x circumference)
Zucchini (length x circumference) - Jackie Arel, 21.5” x 13.25”
*new category

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Bristol Beat

Mt. Abe releases honor roll

BRISTOL — Mount Abraham Union High School has released its honor roll for the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year. Students named to the roll include:

GRADE 9
Highest Honors: Ella Apuzzo-Kidder, Yasmin Artis, Emily Badger, Mathilda Carrico, Levi Clark, Niall Connell, Jillian Cousino, Lucille Eberhardy, Noella Harris, Chloe LaMarche, Natalie Layn, Cordelia Park, Elena Placencia, Pippa Quinet, Rose Roberts, Matthew Steele,

Una Steele, Milo Stoddard, Gabriella Szczecinski, Finnley Vincelette, Emily Wells, Norah Wisell, Sarah Zelonis

High Honors: Sawyer Behounek, Ellis Carrico, Ila Corrigan, Sadie Fogg, Del Guilmette, Scarlet Jackson, Rhiannon McLeod, Ethan Tanych, Kaylie Thompson, Sydney Tierney, Pakornwat Tiger Uttamang

Honors: Benjamin Bessette, Hayden Bouvier, Abigail Brown, Mae Cannon, Sydnie Cousino, Alexis Freegard, Landon Griner, Pax Gundersen, Magnolia Jackson, Samuel Mack, Hannah Perkins, Jordan Ryersbach, Lila Smith, Abigail Sykes, Bryn White

GRADE 10
Highest Honors: Abigail Barnes, Carina Brightman, Charlotte Desilets, Noah Germon, Luke Goodfellow, Samantha Guilbeault, Camille Hamilton,

Madison King, Gwen LaPerle, Kai Ludka, Elsa Masefield, Keller Obarski, Margaret Park, Morgan Rochon, Eliza Ruble, Julian Schuler, Jaret Sturtevant, Ada Thomas, Edda Twyman

High Honors: Waydon Cherington, Amelia Desilets, Willa Kaeck, Callie Rule, Olivia Sawyer, Payton Shepard, Mazin Swebston, Sophie Underwood

Honors: Mabinti Bangoura, Saebryn Carter, Tanner Cross, Tinsae Deas, Andrew Doherty-Konczal, Sam Gallivan, Quinn Kirshenbaum, Bradley LeVangie, Anika Morton, Eloise Newman,

Bobcat Cafe and Brewery closes

BRISTOL — Bristol’s Bobcat Cafe and Brewery has closed for the foreseeable future.

The team announced in a July 29 social media post that the restaurant would close “until further notice due to a private medical matter.”

“This is a family situation that needs our full attention, and we ask for your privacy and understanding,” the post reads. “We don’t yet know what the future holds, but we know how grateful we are for this community.”

Brothers Christopher and Jon Ruggiero have run the Bobcat since February 2025, when they purchased the restaurant from longtime owners Erin and Sanderson Wheeler.

“Thank you for your support over the last 18 months, it has been an honor to serve you. And to our incredible staff: thank you for your hard work, heart, and dedication. This restaurant wouldn’t have been what it was without you,” the post states. “We’ll be in touch if and when we have news.”

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Mattea O’Bryan, Spencer Sears, Otto Siegfried, Beckett Stilwell, Sawyer Visco Lyons

GRADE 11
Highest Honors: Mason Atkins, Megan Bowers, Reed Cousino, Thompson Davis, Madeline Diop, Bennett Eberhardy, Rhiannon Ellison, Ada Fisher, Sadie German, Raquel Harris, Reese Kihm, Reagan LaFreniere, Lucy Lawson, Lucas Mack, Miley McGregor-Sumner, Isobela Osborne, Sadie Shepard, Scarlett Tarmy, Lux Tierney

High Honors: Madison Bartlett, Aubrey Coffey, Kestrel Edwards, Sean Golden, Willow Heath, Ezaias Herben, Gemma Lyles, Henry Orvis, Leah Tierney, Oliver Zelonis

Honors: Henry Allred, Brooke Barnard, Alison Brown, Abraham Camara, Rowan Clark, Rachel Cousino, Kassi Garrow, Jaran Griffin, Hailey Isham, Jackson Jennings, Cryssandrah McClellan, Baxter Montgomery, Lincoln Painter, Abraham Ready, Truman Sawyer, Natalie Smith

GRADE 12
Highest Honors: Lila Brightman, Genevieve Forand, Morgan Larocque, Wyatt Moyer, Addison Wright

High Honors: Evan Corrigan, Louisa Guilmette, Maris LaPerle

Honors: Bailey Antos-Ketcham, Carter Antos-Ketcham, Hailey Chase, Charlie Germon, Nathan Lester, Connor Nason, Charlie Prouty, Joseph Sullivan, JaeQuin Tomasi

OPINION?
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SAT. AUG. 15

FROM 2:00 PM UNTIL 7:00 PM

MUSICAL GUESTS

WEST STAGE	EAST STAGE
Tom Bisson & The Rustics 3:00	Remember Baker 2:30
Eclipse 4:15	Jacob Green 3:45
Hudost 6:00	Red Admiral 5:15

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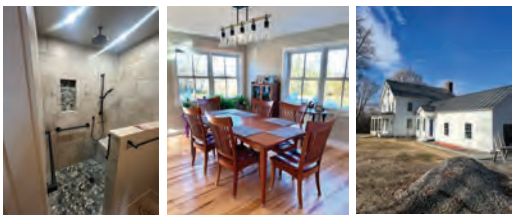
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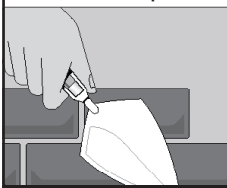


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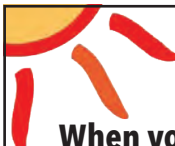
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CLASSIFIEDS

Public Meetings

AL-ANON OFFERS HELP and hope to anyone who has been affected by a loved one's drinking. Middlebury hosts an online meeting Sunday night 7:15pm and a face to face one Wednesday at 1:30pm at CVUUS (2 Duane Court Middlebury near the high school) that you can also access by Zoom. Visit vermont.alanonline.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://aaavt.org/> or call the 24 hour hotline at 802-802-AAVT (2288).

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS is a 12 step program offering recovery from compulsive eating and food behaviors. For meeting times and general information please visit www.oavermont.org or call (802)863.2655.

Public Meetings

PEER RECOVERY 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.



More Help Wanted ads can be found on Page 10B.

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 Vergennes-free thinkers@gmail.com for Zoom and in-person meeting information.

Help Wanted



PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE

The Town of Bristol is seeking a qualified candidate to join its Public Works Department. The Department supports the community and other town departments in many ways beyond maintaining roads, sidewalks, and equipment.

The Public Works Employee is responsible for plowing and sanding roads, repairing roads and drainage systems, roadside mowing, grading, brush and tree removal, sign installation, flagging, routine equipment maintenance, chainsaw operation, and heavy equipment operation including grader, backhoe, and loader. The employee follows applicable safety protocols and performs other duties as assigned by the Public Works Foreman.

The position is full-time and requires a flexible schedule that varies with weather and emergencies, and may include nights, weekends, and holidays.

What we are looking for:

- High school diploma or equivalent, and at least two years of maintenance or construction experience.
- Class B CDL with air brake endorsement, or the ability to obtain one within six months of hire with Town-supported training.
- Experience operating heavy equipment, or a demonstrated willingness to learn.
- Ability to work safely around traffic and heavy machinery in all weather conditions.
- Residence within a reasonable commuting distance of Bristol for winter and emergency call-outs.

Physical requirements:

This is physically demanding outdoor work in all weather. The position requires the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull up to 50 pounds regularly and up to 75 pounds occasionally; to stand, walk, bend, kneel, and reach overhead for extended periods on uneven, icy, or sloped ground; to climb on and off trucks and heavy equipment repeatedly throughout a shift; and to operate equipment for extended periods with exposure to vibration and repetitive controls. Sufficient vision, including depth perception, and sufficient hearing are required to work safely in and near moving traffic. Shifts of twelve hours or more are expected during storm events. Required personal protective equipment includes a hard hat, high-visibility vest, safety-toe footwear, and eye and hearing protection. This is a designated safety-sensitive position, and the successful candidate must meet and maintain U.S. Department of Transportation medical certification standards. The Town will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities.

Compensation and benefits: Starting wage \$23.00 to \$25.50 per hour, commensurate with qualifications and experience. Competitive benefits package including health insurance, retirement through VMERS, and paid leave.

A pre-employment drug test and adherence to federal drug and alcohol testing requirements are required. The full job description is available at www.bristolvt.org.

The position is open until filled. To apply, e-mail, mail, or drop off a resume and three references by the end of the day on September 3, 2026 by 4 p.m. to townadmin@bristolvt.org with "Bristol Public Works Employee" in the subject line, or send to: Bristol Public Works Employee Search P.O. Box 249 Bristol, VT 05443

The Town of Bristol is an equal opportunity provider and employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or familial status.

Help Wanted

Project Manager / Estimator

Established custom home building company is seeking a motivated and experienced Project Manager/Estimator to join our team. The successful candidate will have strong construction knowledge, excellent organizational skills, and the ability to assist with project management while preparing accurate cost estimates.



Responsibilities:

- Prepare project estimates, budgets, and cost analyses
- Develop and manage finish schedules, including plumbing fixtures, lighting selections, tile, paint colors, and other material specifications
- Order necessary materials

Qualifications:

- Experience in construction estimating and/or project management
- Strong understanding of construction methods, materials, and sequencing
- Ability to read and interpret plans and specifications
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Proficiency with email, spreadsheets, and construction management software
- Strong attention to detail and organizational skills

Compensation:

Compensation will be based on experience, qualifications, and performance.

Location:

This is an in-person position and is not remote.

To Apply:

Please email your name, contact information, resume to rgale@mgalebuilders.com.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

Opportunities

HOPE RECEPTIONIST



HOPE is looking for an afternoon receptionist on Thursdays and/or Fridays, noon – 4.

Responsibilities include greeting visitors, checking in clients, answering the phone, and some light clerical tasks. Looking for a cheerful, kind person who is comfortable interacting with a wide variety of people.

To learn more, please call (802) 388-3608.



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| ☐ Services | ☐ Public Meetings** | ☐ Trucks |
| ☐ Free** | ☐ For Rent | ☐ SUVs |
| ☐ Lost 'N Found** | ☐ Want to Rent | ☐ Snowmobiles |
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| ☐ Adoption | | ☐ Vacation Rentals |

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Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

Elderly Services, Inc.

Project Independence Adult Day Center

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*full/part-time ~ single or multiple roles
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Starting wage \$18-20/hour

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25 hours/week or combine with other positions to make full-time. Starting wage: \$25-28/hour.

A bachelor's degree, accounting/budgeting background and experience with QuickBooks & Microsoft Office is required.

For more information, go to
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Head Start is Hiring!

Head Start is a federally funded, national child and family development program which provides comprehensive services for pregnant women, children from birth to age five, and their families. Services for children promote school readiness, and include early education, health, nutrition, mental health, and services for children with special needs. Services for parents promote family engagement and include parent leadership and social service support.

Current Opportunities

Early Head Start Toddler Teacher Associate - Addison County Early Learning Center

Full-time: 40 hours/week, year-round (52 weeks).
Pay: \$22.96 – \$24.07/hour (based on qualifications)

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On-call, as-needed positions. Pay: \$20.00/hour. Opportunity to support early education classrooms on a flexible basis

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Garage Sales

AUG. 15- 573 MONKTOWN Road, Bristol. 8am-1pm. Mostly "By Donation" to benefit Feed My Starving Children Organization. Treasures! Info 802-349-7460.

BARN SALE Sat. Aug. 15, 8-2 p.m. rain or shine. Part of Bridport town-wide sale. 1177 Swinton Road. Antiques, ladderback chairs, iron stone, platters and plates, snowshoes, saddle blankets and jewelry.

BRIDPORT TOWN-WIDE Yard Sales. August 15th and 16th, 9:00 - 4:00. Maps available at sales and Pratt's Store.

Opportunities

MOOSE MOUNTAIN HUNTING CLUB Crown Point, NY. Seeking recreational and hunting club members. 700 acres bordering 45,000 acres of NY state land. Fully equipped camp. 518-546-7025

Help Wanted

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CHIPPER DR Chipper purchased new in 2007. 13 hp Vanguard engine - pull start. \$1000. OBO cash. 802-377-5427.

OLDER CASE BULLDOZER Good shape - reasonable offer. 802-453-3183

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For Rent

2-BEDROOM; East Middlebury. No Pets, No Smoking. \$1500 plus utilities. Semi-furnished. First & last security deposit. 802-771-4686.

3 BEDROOM Single family residence located in Middlebury's Buttolph Acres neighborhood. Property fully renovated in 2018 and includes approximately 1200 sq ft of upstairs finished space and includes a partially finished basement. Property blends the convenience of in-town living with modern upgrades and plentiful gardening opportunities. Rent \$3,000 per month, \$3,000 security deposit, and tenant responsible for utilities, lawn mowing and snowplowing. Rental application and references required. For inquiries, contact 802-989-5113 or email: jhescock89@gmail.com

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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.

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MIDDLEBURY, OFF CAMPUS HOUSING available. ajnerioffice@gmail.com, AJ Neri Property Rentals.

ROOM AND PRIVATE BATH for rent in Bristol core village in attractive, tidy home. Use of kitchen and washer/dryer any time. Internet/TV. Available Sept. 1st - July 1, 2027. Suitable for mature, tidy, non-smoker. No pets please. Owner only home part of week and has small dog. \$1,250/mo. plus one month deposit. Background check. 802-338-2362.

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DRY OR GREEN firewood for sale. Delivery available. 802-349-4212.

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Mushroom walk at Mount Independence

ORWELL — On Sunday, August 16, join mushroom expert Meg Madden for her mushroom exploration walk at the Mount Independence State Historic Site. The program runs from 1 to 3 p.m. She'll provide an orientation first, and then lead you out to look for and learn about the wild

mushrooms that grow at Mount Independence. This walk is always a fascinating time. Madden is the author of “This is a Book for People Who Love Mushrooms.” Wear sturdy walking shoes and dress for the weather. It is suggested you call the site in

advance to reserve your spot: 802-948-2000. The program is sponsored by the Mount Independence Coalition. The event is free, with free admission on August 16 at all Vermont State Historic Sites in honor of Bennington Battle Day.



TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT

NOTICE OF SECOND PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Pursuant to 17 VSA 2645, the Selectboard of the Town of Middlebury will hold a second Public Hearing at 7:20PM on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 in the Large Conference Room of the Middlebury Town Offices, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753, and via Zoom videoconferencing (instructions below), to take public testimony on the Selectboard's revised proposed amendments to the Town Charter.

A summary of the revised proposed amendments to the Town Charter is available below. A copy of the entire revised proposal, along with the initially submitted proposal, is available to the public in the Town Clerk's Office, Town Offices, 77 Main Street, Middlebury, VT 05753, and are available upon request. The Clerk's Office is open Monday-Thursday, 8am-5pm.

Zoom Information - To view and participate in the Second Public Hearing
When: August 25, 2026, 7PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87631434398>
Phone one-tap: +16465588656,,87631434398# US (New York)
Webinar ID: 876 3143 4398

Summary of Revised Proposed Changes to Town Charter

*- Proposed change relates to a practice already taking place

More Significant, Substantive Changes

- 104(1-12) - Expanding topics that Town has ordinance authority over, such as: improvements to public infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, bike facilities, landscaping, lighting, storm drainage, maintenance of aforementioned infrastructure); rideable devices; groundwater (and related remediation); collection of garage/rubbish (and related remediation); fire prevention and control (and fees for admin. and remediation); public property/right of ways; adopting fees for public recreation facilities; closure of sites relating to violations; outdoor advertising; clarifying Downtown Improvement District purpose; noting ability of recovering Town costs of relating actions
- 106(a)(1) - Increasing the ceiling for highest municipal fine from \$1,000 to \$10,000 per offense
- *308(b) - Allowing any person, rather than just any registered Town voter, to apply for committee vacancies
- 704(l) - Removing requirement that Town Manager must first get Selectboard approval to appoint, remove, or suspend a department head; instead, Manager shall confer with Selectboard regarding removal or suspension of any department head.
- 1101 - Changing appointment process for the Zoning Administrator (ZA) adding in a consultation requirement with Planning Commission Chair & Development Review Board Chair; appointment of ZA would be for three-year term with provision for removal of ZA by Selectboard for just cause.

Changes with Limited Impact

- *107(a) - Requiring adopted ordinances to be posted on website, & a summary of principal provisions of ordinance in newspaper or two other physical public posting locations in town
- *107(b) - Removing requirement of reading ordinance change in full at Selectboard public hearing
- *107(c) - Requiring ordinance actions be placed on website& a summary of principal provisions of ordinance in newspaper or two other physical public posting locations in town
- 107(d) - Reducing time Selectboard - adopted ordinance change becomes effective, from 40 to 10 days; suspension due to referendum would still be available
- *107(e) - Town ordinances would be maintained on the Town website by Town Manager's Office instead of Clerk; no longer requiring an ordinance subject index
- 108(a) - Clarifying that a referendum can also be for amending an ordinance; noting time frame for petitions consideration at Town Meeting
- 109 - Reducing time an ordinance adopted through an Initiative becomes effective, from 30 to 10 days; noting role of Town attorney in reviewing initiative ordinance proposal
- 303(b) - Candidates for Selectboard vacancy must also specify the term they are seeking to complete
- 304(d) - Creating Town vote option for appointment of Town Clerk, without removing current election process
- 305(b)(2-5) - Adjusting oversight of Treasurer from Selectboard to Town Manager; Treasurer reports to Selectboard would be quarterly, instead of monthly; clarifying examples of what reports to Selectboard would include
- 306(d)(2,4-5) / 306(e)(1-3) - Amending existing officer positions; removing archaic positions functionally not needed anymore, providing for appointment only if needed
- *308(a) - Publication of vacancies can occur in either newspaper Requiring adopted ordinances to be posted in newspaper or two other physical public posting locations in town
- *308(b) - Applicants for board or committee appointments to submit written request with their interest and qualifications; Removing 10-day requirement for Selectboard nomination of applicants.
- *501(b)(1) - Selectboard can serve as water or sewer commissioners for Town; Selectboard can create a sewer or stormwater utility
- *501(c) - All board/committee available packet documents (beyond just the agenda) must be posted on website prior to their meetings
- *503(e) - The agenda must be posted at least 48 hours ahead of meeting; any available packet documents within 24 hours of meeting
- *504(a) - Adding that Selectboard meeting recording must be posted to Town website in video format
- *504(b) - Updating that Selectboard meeting minutes are posted on website and in Clerk's Office; and all packet documents should be filed in Clerk's Office and website
- 505 - Selectboard members may make general complaints to Town Manager, not to Dept. Heads
- *506 - SB stipend is set by annual Town Meeting budget
- *701 - Town Manager is appointed by contract; no longer for indefinite time period
- *703 - Town Manager is not required to provide a bond to perform role
- *704(d) - Other staff, beyond just Manager, may be ex-officio non-voting committee members
- *704(g) - Town Manager should also include in Town annual report agencies that the Town funds
- 704(h) - Town fiscal statements will be published quarterly, instead of monthly
- 704(n) - Specifying that there must be a capital budget, along with a 5-year capital improvement plan, for Town Meeting
- 704(o) - Noting that the Town Manager is responsible for public recordkeeping and archiving, in accordance with applicable laws
- 706 - Selectboard appointment of Temp. Manager, after Manager removal, may not last for more than 180 days; Selectboard shall have power of appointment, not the temporary Manager

Housekeeping/Clarification Changes

- Throughout Charter - Switching term 'Selectmen' to 'Selectboard'
- 107(d) - Redundant language regarding referendums is removed; authority already exists in Sect. 108
- *108(a) - Simplification of wording; same referendum process
- 109 - Clarifying Initiative petition must include text of proposed change
- *302(a)(1) - Noting Selectboard membership number, from 5 to 7
- *302(a)(5) - Removing Auditor from elected official list per prior Town vote; Town Clerk added (unless Town votes to shift to appointment process for Town Clerk).
- *302(a)(6-9) & 304(f) / 1302(b)(2-3/5) / 1305 - Updating language to reflect past, & possible future local school districts name changes
- *302(e) - Removing process, for adding additional Selectboard membership (no longer necessary)
- *303(a) - Removing antiquated language regarding appointment of original SB membership terms
- *304((a) - Clarifying that appointment of appraiser is subject to Selectboard approval.
- 304(b) - Relocating language relating to election of Auditor, replacing with language relating to selected by Town Manager & Selectboard; references to Auditor role re state laws moved to Appointed Officer section
- 304(f) - Removing antiquated language relating to when school board & East Middlebury Prudential Committee members start their terms; deferring to appropriate Town and State laws on those matters
- *305(a) - Treasurer appointed by Town Manager, not Selectboard, per Town charter amendment in 2023
- 305(b)(3) - Noting Treasurer functions should align with recognized auditing practices
- *306(a) - Noting that Selectboard shall make any appointments required by Charter or other State/local laws
- *306(c) - Clarifying that Selectboard may also amend existing Town personnel code; remove unnecessary language for adoption of personnel code
- 307 - Clarifying section's purpose (Recall) in its title; clarifying time frame of vacancy and annual Town Meeting
- *308(a) - Clarifying that Selectboard appointment authority applies to all Town boards/commissions; publications must be in newspaper or two other physical public posting locations in town
- *309/703 - Noting bonding requirement may also be met through other similar insurance policy coverage
- *501(a) - Noting that Selectboard duties/powers extend to what's in the Town Charter, not just State Constitution and State laws
- *501(b)(1) - Noting that the authority of Selectboard can prescribe duties of boards & committees
- 501(b)(8) - Selectboard members shall have right to attend and speak Town boards/committee meetings, including their executive sessions
- *501(d) -Town to adopt ethics policies/procedures, for all boards/officers/ employees per state law
- *501(e) - SB must annually appoint a newspaper (or equivalent publication site) for public notices
- *503(c) - Clarifying that 4 Selectboard members constitutes a quorum; removing outdated reference to former 5-member board
- *503(d) - Noting that Selectboard actions resulting from executive session must be approved by a motion in a public meeting
- *503(e) - Selectboard agenda physical posting takes place week before meeting at Town Offices/in local newspaper (or other accepted means of publication)
- 503(f) - Any item added to a Selectboard agenda by the Board must do so immediately as the first item of business of the meeting
- *704(g) - Publication of annual Town Report document by Manager shall be done on calendar year, not fiscal; clarifying that the annual fiscal report is in the Town Report covering financial activities for the last completed fiscal year
- *704(i) - Town Manager shall be responsible for doing department head performance evaluations
- *704(k) - Clarifying that Town Manager is responsible for financial controls of Town governance
- *903 - Determination of eligible voters must be made in accordance with State laws
- *1101 - Clarifying that it is the majority of Selectboard that is the necessary threshold for ZA removal
- 1102-1103 - Removing antiquated zoning/subdivision ratification requirements
- 1301 - Updating fiscal year language, reflecting current practice of fiscal year starting in July, not January
- 1302(b) - Removing unneeded link between Town Meeting notice publish date & school district annual meeting
- 1302(d) - Clarifying that the public hearing associated with the annual budget should take place prior to the draft budget that is finalized by the Selectboard
- *1308(a) - Noting that taxes must be paid by the last day of the fiscal year, June 30
- 1502 - Removing antiquated section relating to employees of Town at time of initial Charter adoption
- *1506 - Require Charter to be posted on Town website and in archives, rather than printed copies in Town libraries
- 1507 - Removing language relating to officers of former school district
- *1509 - Reference to utilizing most recently adopted State statutes

Clean out your garage so you have room for the car!

Advertise your Garage Sale here!

Call 802-388-4944

Applications welcome for Miss Vt. & Miss Vt.’s Teen scholarship competitions

VERMONT — Registration to become Miss Vermont 2027 and Miss Vermont’s Teen 2027 is now open. The scholarship competition is an official preliminary to the Miss America and Miss America’s Teen competition and part of the largest scholarship provider for women in the world.

The 2027 competition will be held April 24 and 25 at Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe. Contestants compete in interview, talent, on-stage question, fitness and evening gown.

Each local contestant is awarded an official Miss America local crown and sash in addition to the opportunity to make appearances in their community as well across Vermont with Miss Vermont 2026 Hannah Roque and Miss Vermont’s Teen 2026 Zoey Clopton.

The 2027 prize package includes cash and in-kind scholarships valued at over \$200,000 in total, a trip to the national Miss America and Miss America’s Teen competitions, gifts and services provided by program sponsors, plus the opportunity to make appearances for the organization and various nonprofits across New England.

Details about becoming a

candidate, eligibility rules and competing for the titles of Miss Vermont 2027 or Miss Vermont’s Teen 2027 can be found at missvermont.org — you can also email executivedirector@missvermont.org for more information.



MISS VERMONT 2026, Hannah Roque, is a native of Middlebury and a graduate of St. Michael’s College. Applications for Miss Vermont and Miss Vermont’s Teen 2027 are now open.
Photo from Miss Vermont Scholarship Organization

Monkton

(Continued from Page 5B)

6. Contact Sarah Bouchard at sarahjaynebouchard@gmail.com for questions.

The Monkton Recycling Center stays open from 9 a.m. to noon on the 2nd and 4th Saturday each month because of a dedicated group of people who volunteer. The center is open 26 Saturdays a year. Volunteers receive a brief training and have support so they can effectively run the center.

More volunteers are needed. The center welcomes individuals or members of local groups, clubs or organizations. We have volunteers from organizations such as the 4-H, Scouts and members of the Friends Church. The center is also grateful to have individual volunteers who work several Saturdays each year.

Please consider volunteering or inviting someone join you and sign up for a Saturday together. That would be a big help. It’s easy, and having volunteers is essential to keeping the Monkton Recycling Center open. Contact Robin for more information at: recycling@monktonvt.com

From the desk of Suzanne Monzel:

Tiny Concert will take place Aug. 21 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. at the Monkton Town Hall. Tickets are \$20 or a donation of your choosing. Join us for an evening of medicine music with Joydah Mae from Aotearoa/New Zealand. Joydah hails from Kabayan, Benguet, Philippines. Raised by her grandmother, her ancestral roots and cultural upbringing run deep, supporting the presence of how she shows up today. Having lived in Aotearoa for over 25 years, this place now also home, weaves its presence through her as well. Joydah is a sonic weaver. She has an incredible, powerful voice and her music will take you on journeys through your lifetime, hitting the heart, the soul and every layer in between. Her music and these Tiny Concerts have been described as transformational. It’s not just a concert. It’s an experience of community, love

and remembering. Bring a plate of delicious nourishing food to share in a community meal. Town Hall has a capacity so please RSVP to Kathleen at kscacciaferro@gmail.com if you and your family wish to come.

Voice Activation takes place on Saturday, Aug. 22 from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Monkton Town Hall. Admission is \$150. Voice Activation is a deep dive journey into reconnecting with yourself, your voice, your power! Everyone carries a unique voice, a unique frequency. This space will guide you home to remembering yours and finding the courage to share it. It’s not just about singing; it’s about accessing your own potential, calling forth more of who you truly are and showing up in all of who that is. The voice is a channel between your inner and outer world. It is a tool, a medicine of expression, resonance and truth.

In this five-hour workshop we will uncover and reveal old patterns and conditioning that are holding you back. Releasing layers to create space and reveal your authentic voice. Accessing your core frequency, your truth, your power. Through somatic vocal exploration, indigenous wisdom, ritual and ceremony, we will reactivate the dormant songlines living within your bones. We will awaken the voice within that has been sleeping for centuries. We will return you home to your voice and the voice of your ancestors.

What to bring: Yoga mat or something to lie on; blanket and pillow; water bottle; journal and pen; an open heart; and potluck food for the end of the day!

This work can be intensive, we have found it is most supportive for our attendees to eat before coming and then share a big meal at the end of the day. This allows us to remain deeply present in the work. If we can access it, we will also have cacao which can be drank throughout the day. RSVP to Kathleen at: kscacciaferro@gmail.com.

VSU grads

(Continued from Page 5B)

Pilot Technology; Jadyann Pope of Brandon earned an Associate of Science in Dental Hygiene; Brianna Rafus of Ferrisburgh earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Andrew Raymond of Bristol earned an Associate of Engineering in Electrical Engineering Technology; Branden Reynolds of Lincoln earned a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife & Forest Conservation; Sara Roberts of Bridport earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Bre Rockwell of Bristol earned a Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies; and Amanda Ruplin of Bristol earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing.

Finally, Alyssa Saunders of Vergennes earned a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies; Haley Scott

of Vergennes earned a Certificate in Practical Nursing; Rebekah Simmons of Weybridge earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Bri Stevens-Clark of Whiting earned an Associate of Science in Nursing; Audrey Tembreull of Vergennes earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication; Al Teodosio of N. Ferrisburgh earned a Master of Arts in Counseling; Mia Thebodo of Orwell earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychological Science; Alanna Trudeau of Salisbury earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing; Ocean Verge of Ferrisburgh earned a Bachelor of Science in Resort & Hospitality Management; Alex Yaggy of Bristol earned a Bachelor of Science in Electromechanical Engineering Technology.

PUBLIC NOTICE IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Tri Town Water District, VT 0005001 Levels of Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) & Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) Above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently violated drinking water standards. Although this is not an emergency, customers have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation. We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Test results from the four quarters ending with the **Second Quarter 2026** show that our system violated the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for TOTAL HALOACETIC ACIDS (HAA5) & TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES.

The standard for TOTAL HALOACETIC ACIDS (HAA5) is **60 µg/L**. The running annual average from the last four quarters of results for TOTAL HALOACETIC ACIDS (HAA5) was **70 µg/L**.

The standard for TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES (TTHM) is **80 µg/L**. The running annual average from the last four quarters of results for TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES (TTHM) was **97 µg/L**.

What should I do?

The drinking water standard (MCL) is based on lifetime exposure to TOTAL HALOACETIC ACIDS (HAA5) & TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES (TTHM) which may increase your risk of getting cancer. Continuing to drink the water is a personal decision that you must make for yourself by considering the health risk, cost, and convenience. You may choose to use bottled water or water from an alternate source.

You do not need to boil your water. You can continue to use the water for showering, bathing, washing your food and dishes, brushing your teeth, and other household uses.

If you have a severely compromised immune system, have an infant, are pregnant, or are elderly, you may be at increased risk and should seek advice from your health care providers about drinking this water.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. Drinking water containing TOTAL HALOACETIC ACIDS (HAA5) & TOTAL TRIHALOMETHANES at this concentration will not lead to any short-term effects such as vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach pains.

Haloacetic acids and trihalomethanes are organic chemicals that form when chlorine disinfectants react with natural organic matter in the water.

Some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. In animal studies, some haloacetic acids have been associated with reproductive or developmental effects.

Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

What happened? What is being done?

For more information, please contact Darwin Pratt at 802-758-2202 or Chairman, PO Box 85, Bridport, VT 05734

August 14, 2026

Tri-Town Water District No. 1
PO Box 85
Bridport, VT 05734

Dear Customer,

We want to let you know that our recent water tests showed higher-than-normal levels of Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) and Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) in the drinking water. These acids form when chlorine—used to disinfect and keep your water safe—reacts with natural materials found in the water.

This is not an emergency, and your water is safe to use. If there were an immediate health concern, we would notify you right away. The levels we found are just above the limit set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over a one-year average. You don’t need to take any action. You can continue to use and drink your water as usual. If you have specific health concerns, you may wish to speak with your doctor. Please note that a standard carbon filter is designed to remove both HAA5 and TTHMs from drinking water.

We understand the continued frustration with these test results. We take water quality very seriously and are committed to keeping your drinking water safe and reliable. The District is working on ways to combat these higher levels through flushing and plant improvements. We expect the HAA5 and TTHM levels to return to normal soon and will keep you updated.

If you have any questions, please call us at 802-758-2202.

Thank you for your understanding and for being our valued customer.

Sincerely,
Darwin Pratt, Chairman
Tri-Town Water Board of Commissioners

Public Notices

can be found in this

ADDISON INDEPENDENT on **Pages 10B and 11B.**

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH NOTICE OF HEARING

The Ferrisburgh Zoning Board of Adjustment will hold the following public hearings on **Wednesday, September 2, 2026**, beginning at **6PM**, at the Ferrisburgh Town Office at 3279 US Route 7 and remotely via Zoom. ***Note that this meeting will start one hour earlier than the Zoning Board’s usual meeting time.***

Application Number 26-092: Use existing Grosse Pointe property as a seasonal indoor/outdoor event venue for up to 250 people for up to 12 events per year; add short-term rental use to seven existing residential buildings; change use of four residences from seasonal to year-round use; Applicant: Peter Hoehl; 1044 Grosse Pointe Road; Parcel ID 04/01/45; Lake Champlain District (LC-2), Rural Agricultural District (RA-5), Conservation District (CON-25); Conditional Use.

Application Number 26-094: New two-bedroom single-family residence and new stairs to lake; Applicant: Carolyn Brady; Button Bay Lane “Lot 12”; Parcel ID 13/01/35.1; Lake Champlain District (LC-2); Conditional Use and Waiver.

Application Number 26-099: Relocate existing shed to within side setback; Applicant: Melinda Hinsdale; 19 O’Bryan Lane; Parcel ID 22/20/13; Lake Champlain District (LC-2) and Residential Agricultural District (RA-5); Waiver.

Application Number 26-105: Add Home Occupation/Business II use for trucking business; add second driveway and new 40’x60’ garage for business use; Applicant: Joshua Clark; 2105 Greenbush Road; Parcel ID 05/01/27; Residential Agricultural District (RA-5); Conditional Use.

Application Number 26-106: New antique store with outdoor display area at existing building plus wall & roof signs; Applicants: Nicholas & Karissa Sutley; 3177 US Route 7; Parcel ID 23/20/04; Ferrisburgh Town Center District (FTC-1); Conditional Use.

Application Number 26-107: Periodic outdoor flea market / vintage market events with space for outside vendors; Applicants: Nicholas & Karissa Sutley; 3177 US Route 7; Parcel ID 23/20/04; Ferrisburgh Town Center District (FTC-1); Conditional Use.

The files for the above applications 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: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82185978792?pwd=BAJi39KSGEaqaT5nRXghRWJlYl0KLS1>

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 = 821 8597 8792 / Passcode = 619500

PROPOSED STATE RULES

By law, public notice of proposed rules must be given by publication in newspapers of record. The purpose of these notices is to give the public a chance to respond to the proposals. The public notices for administrative rules are now also available online at <https://secure.vermont.gov/SOS/rules/>. The law requires an agency to hold a public hearing on a proposed rule, if requested to do so in writing by 25 persons or an association having at least 25 members.

To make special arrangements for individuals with disabilities or special needs please call or write the contact person listed below as soon as possible.

To obtain further information concerning any scheduled hearing(s), obtain copies of proposed rule(s) or submit comments regarding proposed rule(s), please call or write the contact person listed below. You may also submit comments in writing to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules, State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05602 (802-828-2231).

14 050 022 Inspection of Motor Vehicles.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 26-E02

AGENCY: Agency of Transportation, Department of Motor Vehicles

CONCISE SUMMARY: The Department is updating the requirements for annual motor vehicle inspections to remove failure reasons that are not directly related to motor vehicle safety. Items being removed include: all references to on-road testing; tire cuts, snags, or weather cracks; broken power steering belts; loss of shock absorber function; rust on brakes; headlamp aiming; ABS or airbag failure lights; horn, speedometer, and odometer malfunction; cracks or star breaks on windshield; power window malfunction; damaged windshield wiper blades; and modification to exhaust system causing an unreasonable sound level.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Ben Shelp, Chief Inspector, Agency of Transportation, Department of Motor Vehicles, 120 State St Montpelier, VT 05602 Tel: 802-828-4647 Fax: 802-828-5418 E-Mail: Benjamin.Shelp@Vermont.gov. gov URL: <https://dmv.vermont.gov/about-vermont-dmv/administrative-rules>.

FOR COPIES: Isaac Luce, Agency of Transportation, Department of Motor Vehicles, 120 State St Montpelier, VT 05602 Tel: 802-522-8924 Fax: 802-828-5418 E-Mail: Isaac.Luce@Vermont.gov.

Prohibited Data and Design Practices.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 26P027

AGENCY: Attorney General’s Office

CONCISE SUMMARY: This Rule implements 9 V.S.A. § 2449f of Act 63 of 2025, Vermont’s Age-Appropriate Design Code Act. It establishes standards for data processing and design practices that apply to covered businesses serving covered minors. The Rule explains which practices are prohibited, defines key terms, provides examples, and helps covered businesses understand how to comply with the law. It is intended to protect covered minors while giving covered businesses clear, flexible guidance for meeting their obligations under Vermont law.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Sarah Aceves, Office of the Attorney General, 109 State Street, Montpelier VT 05609 Tel: 802-828-3170 Fax: 802-828-2154 E-Mail: sarah.aceves@vermont.gov URL: <https://ago.vermont.gov/vermont-age-appropriate-design-code-rulemaking>.

FOR COPIES: Todd Daloz, Office of the Attorney General, 109 State Street, Montpelier VT 05609 Tel: 802-585-5964 Fax: 802-828-2154 E-Mail: todd.daloz@vermont.gov.

Age Assurance Privacy.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 26P028

AGENCY: Attorney General’s Office

CONCISE SUMMARY: This Rule implements 9 V.S.A. § 2449g of the Vermont Age-Appropriate Design Code Act. It establishes standards for how covered businesses determine whether a user is a covered minor while protecting privacy and minimizing unnecessary collection and use of personal data. The Rule provides requirements for selecting and using age assurance methods, protecting age assurance data, ensuring accuracy, providing fallback options and appeals, and documenting compliance. The Rule uses a flexible, technology-neutral approach that requires covered businesses to use the least intrusive age assurance method reasonably available that achieves the level of confidence necessary under the circumstances.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Sarah Aceves, Office of the Attorney General, 109 State Street, Montpelier VT 05609 Tel: 802-828-3170 Fax: 802-828-2154 E-Mail: sarah.aceves@vermont.gov URL: <https://ago.vermont.gov/vermont-age-appropriate-design-code-rulemaking>.

FOR COPIES: Todd Daloz, Office of the Attorney General, 109 State Street, Montpelier VT 05609 Tel: 802-585-5964 Fax: 802-828-2154 E-Mail: todd.daloz@vermont.gov.

Birth Center Licensing Rule.

Vermont Proposed Rule: 26P029

AGENCY: Agency of Human Services, Department of Health

CONCISE SUMMARY: This rule sets forth the standards that apply to the licensing of birth centers in Vermont. This rulemaking establishes the process by which a birth center can apply for a license in Vermont.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Meg McCarthy, Policy Advisor, Agency of Human Services - Vermont Dept. of Health, 280 State Drive Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-904-9319 E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov URL:<http://www.healthvermont.gov/laws-regulations/laws/rules-public-comment>.

FOR COPIES: Jessica Schifano, Policy Director, Agency of Human Services - Vermont Department of Health 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671 Tel: 802-798-6756 E-mail: ahs.vdhrules@vermont.gov.

TOWN OF STARKSBORO DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF HEARING

Jason and Heather Barnard submitted application 26-DRB-06SD for a Final Plan Review Hearing for a 2-lot minor subdivision located on a 11.54+/- acre parcel #10977 at 4400 VT Route 17 in the Town of Starksboro. The proposed subdivision is in the LDRC district. The Final Plan Review Hearing on this application will be held per the 2020 Starksboro Land Use and Development Regulations (SLUDR).

The Starksboro Development Review Board will conduct the hearing on September 10, 2026, starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Starksboro Town Office with remote access (info below). The full application is available to review by request at the Starksboro zoning office, and on the Town website at: <https://www.starksborovt.org/agendas-and-minutes>

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §§ 4464(a)(1)(C) participation in this local proceeding is prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Town of Starksboro is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89617415124>
Meeting ID: 896 1741 5124
Or by Phone: +13052241968

Warning Date: August 13, 2026

TOWN OF LINCOLN PUBLIC NOTICE

**Wednesday, September 2, 2026, beginning at 6:30 pm at the Town Office
62 Quaker Street, Lincoln, Vermont and virtually using Zoom**

The Lincoln Development Review Board will hold public hearings for:

1. Application #26-074 by Kristina Stykos for her property at 1200 French Settlement Road, Parcel ID 34110108, for a 4-lot Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Participation in local proceedings is a prerequisite to the right to take part in any subsequent appeals. Please call the Zoning Administrator at (802) 453-2980 to arrange a time to view complete applications.

The Zoom link will be included in the agenda, which can be found on the Town’s website the week prior to the hearing: <https://lincolnvermont.org>.

CASE STREET CEMETERY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The Case Street Cemetery Association annual meeting will be held at the cemetery on Monday, Aug. 17, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. Bring a chair. Open to the public.

Middlebury Police Log

New York driver arrested after fleeing crash scene

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury police on Aug. 9 responded to a crash on South Main Street where a vehicle had fled the scene after striking two parked vehicles, pushing one into a utility pole.

Police later found the suspect walking on Route 30 in Cornwall and arrested and charged Brittney Hale, 34, of Whitehall, N.Y., for driving under the influence and leaving the scene of an accident.

Between Aug. 3 and 10, police conducted 10 traffic stops, completed two property checks, responded to three animal incidents, conducted six welfare checks, completed two foot patrols and heard one trespassing complaint.

In other recent action, Middlebury police:

- Responded to suspicious activity on the town green on Aug. 3 after someone entered St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church and stole wine and books.
- On Aug. 3 responded to a report of a dog inside a vehicle on Washington Street, but the vehicle was gone when police arrived.
- Investigated a report of stolen packages on Stonecrop Road on Aug. 3.
- On Aug. 3 responded to a two-car crash on Route 7 South.
- Assisted Vermont State Police with a motor vehicle crash on North Branch Road in Ripton on Aug. 3.
- Helped someone who was accidentally locked out of their vehicle by their small child on Aug. 3.
- On Aug. 4 arrested an individual on an in-state warrant.
- Investigated a theft from the Middlebury College bookstore on Aug. 4.
- Assisted the Water Division of the Public Works Department on Aug. 4 by controlling traffic while repairs were conducted in the Case

Street and North Leno Lane area.

- Aug. 4 on behalf of the Charter House Coalition to someone who had made threats to staff and residents.
- On Aug. 4 helped reunite two dogs with their owner.
- On Aug. 4 helped the Addison County Sheriff’s Department with processing someone arrested for driving under the influence.
- On Aug. 5 arrested Joshua H. Santos, 34, of Middlebury on an outstanding warrant.
- Heard a report of someone engaging in concerning behavior downtown on Aug. 5.
- On Aug. 5 responded to a residence to assist someone having thoughts of self-harm. Police located the individual, ensured they were safe and then connected them with the Counseling Service of Addison County for additional support.
- Responded to a Court Street apartment on Aug. 6 for the report of an intoxicated person causing a disturbance.
- On Aug. 6 responded to a motor vehicle complaint on North Pleasant Street.
- Responded to the east side of the Otter Creek under the Cross Street Bridge after receiving a report that two people were engaged in sexual acts in public view on Aug. 6. The investigation is ongoing.
- On Aug. 6 arrested Michael F. Seaver, 71, for having an active warrant out for his arrest.
- Responded to Route 7 South near Foote Street for a report of someone lying in the roadway on Aug. 6. Police searched the area but didn’t find anyone in the road.
- On Aug. 7 heard a report of a suspicious person loitering in the Porter Hospital parking lot.
- Responded to Jayne Court for a noise complaint on Aug. 7 and, while investigating, determined one of the involved parties, Julia E.

Benjamin, 40, had an active cite-and-release arrest warrant. Police said Benjamin was cited without incident.

- On Aug. 7 responded to a report of a suspicious person at the Hannaford Plaza.
- Responded to Boardman Street for an individual who was causing a disturbance on Aug. 7.
- On Aug. 7 responded to a mental health issue on Lindale Circle.
- Looked into a report of a male drinking and driving on Aug. 7.
- On Aug. 7 responded to a report of a male juvenile acting oddly in the Bakery Lane area.
- Responded to a report of larceny on Court Street on Aug. 8 and was able to resolve the matter between the people involved.
- On Aug. 8 responded to a two-vehicle crash with no injuries in the area of Monroe and Court Streets.
- Responded to a report of a suspicious campfire on Water Street on Aug. 8 that police determined was legal.
- On Aug. 8 checked on an Exchange Street business after seeing an open door when the business was closed.
- Collected and disposed of used syringes left in the post office mailbox on Aug. 8.
- On Aug. 8 responded to a report of vandalism of personal property.
- Used the Middlebury police Canine Unit to assist the Vermont State Police in locating a runaway juvenile on Aug. 9.
- On Aug. 9 supported a juvenile in crisis.
- Responded to a report of suspicious activity outside a residence on Aug. 9.
- On Aug. 9 spoke with someone with concerns about a friend drinking too much.
- Assisted state police with processing a driving under the influence case on Aug. 9.
- On Aug. 9 were contacted about a missing juvenile in the Valley View Drive area. Police said the juvenile was located.
- Assisted Middlebury Regional EMS with a medical call at the Stewart’s Shops gas station on Aug. 10.

Cinnamon fern through the lens of time

By NAYA BANERJEE

Near my home in Vermont, at the bottom of a hillside, there is a shelf just above a roadcut where the soil is moist from the groundwater seeping out of the hill. Back in April the first coiled cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomeum*) fiddleheads pushed up through the ground. Huddled with heads bowed in a tight group, clad in shaggy off-white wool as if anticipating the chill, their forms glinted in the morning light as they caught the dew. During the first days of May, the fiddleheads began to unfurl, opening into what looked like leaflets at first, but which then thickened into bright green, bead-like sporangia, the cases for the spores.

These fertile fronds grew stiff and erect in the center of the clump, surrounded by the leafy sterile fronds, which are photosynthetic. Through May and into early June, the spores, which are filled with active chloroplasts, were dispersed, leaving the sporangia behind, which turn from lime-green to a darker forest-green, then tan, and finally the cinnamon color, which gives the species its name. By July, the plant has released its spores, and now spent, the spikes have darkened and withered at the center of each clump of arching green, waist-high foliage.

In the Northeast, cinnamon fern is one of the easiest ferns to recognize when its cinnamon-colored spikes are still present. It

looks similar to its close cousin, the interrupted fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*), which often occupies the same moist woodlands, but the sporangia of interrupted fern grow on a band of modified leaflets in the middle of a leafy frond instead of a separate leafless stalk in the center of the clump.

By late summer the spike of cinnamon fern has crumbled away, and the fertile leaflets of interrupted fern have dropped off, leaving similar-looking vase-shaped ferns. This time of year, turn a frond over to look at where the base of the leaflet meets the stalk: cinnamon fern has a persistent tuft of tan hairs, while interrupted fern is smooth. (Even as fiddleheads, cinnamon fern’s wool is denser and slower to shed than interrupted fern’s.) A second clue is in the leaflet tips; whereas cinnamon fern’s leaflets taper to a point, those of interrupted fern are blunter and more rounded. A final tell is that cinnamon fern prefers wet soils, while interrupted fern is a generalist that will also grow in well-drained uplands.

Remarkably, the cinnamon fern has changed very little over time, appearing in the fossil record in late-Cretaceous rocks, and its lineage has remained stable even longer. In 2014, researchers described a 180-million-year-old fossil rhizome of a close relative from a volcanic mudflow in Sweden, where mineralization was so rapid that nuclei and even chromosomes were preserved. These matched

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those of the modern cinnamon fern almost exactly in size and number. Why have cinnamon ferns changed so little from the times that the last dinosaurs were walking among them? The answers are not definitive, but possibly because the wet, acidic, low-nutrient ground that suits cinnamon fern has existed continuously on the planet since the Mesozoic, and because traits like tough rhizomes and quick-germinating green spores work so well in those wetlands that there has been little pressure to change.

Closer to home, cinnamon fern thrives in the low-disturbance margins of bogs and in swamps, where the fronds can grow as large as five feet. In these locations, the soil has been wet and acidic for centuries and many trees and shrubs struggle to take hold. Ruffed grouse nibble the fiddleheads; yellow warblers and hummingbirds line their nests with the silver-tan wool covering the unfurling fronds.

Weston Testo, a fern biologist at University of Vermont, told me that each clump of ferns grows from a slowly branching underground stem that can keep producing new fronds for centuries. In West Virginia, interrupted fern has been documented in colonies estimated to be over 400 years old, making it among the longest-lived organisms in the Appalachians. Cinnamon fern’s rhizomes spread the same way, and where conditions are right, a single clump can broaden into a circular patch of genetically identical plants, all stems of the same individual.

Contemplating the cinnamon fern in our woods, I see in one glance the spores ripening over spring and summer, the creep of a rhizome over centuries, and the hundreds of millions of years of a lineage that has watched the dinosaurs come and go.

Naya Banerjee is a naturalist based in Vermont. 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.



CINNAMON FERN

Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol

New Haven mural links Vermont’s pollinator efforts to global art project

NEW HAVEN — A piece of an international pollinator mural art project is coming to Vermont.

The community is invited to celebrate a new large-scale mural by internationally recognized artist Matt Willey, with a free public celebration on Saturday, August 22, from 5 – 9 p.m. in New Haven. The event will bring together art, music, food and the Vermont beekeeping and agricultural community to celebrate the mural and the importance of pollinators.

The mural is part of Willey’s ambitious global project, The Good of the Hive, where he is painting 50,000 honeybees — one for every bee in a healthy hive — on buildings and public spaces around the world. Through the project, Willey uses public art to inspire people to think differently about honeybees, pollinators and the interconnectedness of human and natural systems.

Willey has painted pollinator murals at locations around the world, including the headquarters of Burt’s Bees, the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. Now, Vermont will

have its own piece of this growing global art project with a large-scale installation painted directly on a silo and barn in New Haven.

The mural comes to a state with a strong history of leadership in pollinator research, conservation and policy. Vermont is home to the University of Vermont’s Vermont Bee Lab and the Vermont Pollinator Working Group, and recently passed the Pollinator Protection Act in 2024, positioning the state at the forefront of efforts to better understand and protect pollinators and promote more sustainable agricultural practices.

The Vermont mural is supported by the One Hive Foundation, which works to protect pollinator health and support ecologically responsible agriculture.

The mural project is currently underway, with painting expected to continue through early September. Community members are welcome to swing by and see the mural taking shape as Willey brings the bees to life on the silo and barn.

“We’re so excited to welcome Matt to Vermont and to celebrate pollinators with our

community,” said Leslie Spencer, Communications and Events Specialist for the One Hive Foundation. “This mural project is a wonderful way to bring people together around the interdependence of Vermont’s pollinators, farms, and ecosystems.”

The August 22 celebration will offer an opportunity to meet Willey, see the mural’s progress, and learn more about pollinator conservation and sustainable agriculture efforts here in Vermont. The free, family-friendly event will feature live music from Brett Hughes & The Honky Tonk Crowd, food from Vamo Arriba Empanadas and drinks from Barr Hill Gin. Sisters of Anarchy will also participate in the celebration by serving up ice cream flavors made with local honey.

Guests are encouraged to bring a lawn chair, enjoy the mural and music, and spend the evening with friends, family, and members of the Vermont agricultural and beekeeping communities. The location of the event is 3494 Otter Creek Hwy, New Haven, VT 05472. RSVPs are encouraged, but not required.

Vergennes Police Log

Car stolen from Vergennes property

VERGENNES — A car was stolen in the Little City last week, according to the Vergennes Police Department, which continued investigating the incident as of Wednesday, Aug. 12.

On Tuesday, Aug. 4, the department took a report that a red 2016 Mazda 3 Sport was stolen from a residence on Mountain View Lane. It was last seen on the evening of Aug. 3, and was discovered missing the following morning.

The owner reported that her son, Jesse Shadroui Sawyer, had left the residence for a walk the previous evening and was no longer at the home when the car — which has been entered into the National Crime Information Center database as stolen — was found missing.

Local police ask that anyone with information regarding the vehicle’s whereabouts contact Vergennes police.

Between Aug. 2 and Aug. 8, Vergennes police also conducted 17 traffic stops, four directed patrols and one VIN number inspection.

In other recent activity, city police:

- On Aug. 2 took a report of a suspicious person walking around a Vergennes residence. The person was identified and said they were looking for a cat that was

hiding under the vehicle at the complainant’s residence.

- On Aug. 3 investigated a minor crash on Main Street.
- On Aug. 3 helped retrieve property that had been left behind at a residence.
- On Aug. 3 took a report from a resident that a family member was upset with another family member and may be driving from Waterbury to Vergennes intoxicated. Police tried to contact the person, but were unsuccessful. Information was provided to area law enforcement about the vehicle, but it was not located.
- On Aug. 3 responded to a fireworks complaint. Two fireworks were set off. Police were unable to locate the person(s) who set them off.
- On Aug. 3 checked a suspicious vehicle on School Street. During the investigation the vehicle was found to be unregistered and the plates on it were not assigned to the vehicle. The operator, Dean Heffernan, 42, was issued tickets for these violations and a citation to appear in Addison County Superior Court for operating a motor vehicle after criminal suspension.
- On Aug. 6 assisted the Vergennes Fire Department at a call.
- On Aug. 6 received a late report of a car alarm going off

the evening prior with a person standing next to it. Due to the late report, and no further information, no other action was taken.

- On Aug. 6 took a late report of a fender bender. It was for insurance purposes only.
- On Aug. 6 issued a court order to a resident.
- On Aug. 7 took a report that an Addison resident was stealing breakfast sandwiches from a Vergennes business over the course of a month. The person was issued a trespass notice for the business and agreed to pay for the merchandise totaling \$83.34.
- On Aug. 7 motor vehicle operators exchanged information after a crash.
- On Aug. 8 took a report of an argument in the parking lot of a Vergennes apartment building involving a man and a child. Upon arrival, the parties were gone and could not be located.
- On Aug. 8 received the report from a Vergennes resident that they were a victim of stalking. The investigation was ongoing as of Wednesday, Aug. 12.
- On Aug. 8 took a report of a verbal altercation between a pedestrian and truck driver over an incident involving an alleged crosswalk violation.
- On Aug. 8 had a false alarm call at a Vergennes business.

Timothy Coleman.

Police said the death was determined to be of natural causes and does not appear to be suspicious.

In other recent activity, Vermont State Police responded to two traffic accidents, both apparently involving impaired driving.

The first was on Saturday, Aug. 8 at a quarter after 2 a.m., when troopers were dispatched to a reported single vehicle crash of Geary Road in Lincoln. Police report that Gus Yost, 20, of Lincoln was driving a John Deere utility vehicle in the fog on wet road when the vehicle struck a tree next to the road. He sustained minor injuries, and Lincoln Rescue took him to UVM Medical Center for treatment.

Officers detected multiple signs of impairment in Yost. They cited him for driving under the influence.

The next day, Aug. 9, at 5:22 p.m., a state police officer saw a vehicle violation on Route 7 near Dog Team Road in New Haven, and pulled the car over. The trooper noted that driver Adam L. Irons, 34, of Pittsford had a restricted license that required any vehicle he was operating to have an interlock ignition device.

The officer also noted that Irons seemed impaired. In the end, police cited Irons for refusing to take a driving under the influence test, third offense, and for driving without an ignition interlock device installed.

Vt. State Police Log

ADDISON COUNTY — Vermont State Police are trying to figure out the circumstances surrounding the death of a 72-year-old Ferrisburgh man, whose lifeless body was found in a car parked at the Charlotte Town Beach on Sunday evening.

Troopers were notified at about 5:40 p.m. on Aug. 9 that an adult man was found unresponsive in a dark grey Subaru Forester at the beach. Charlotte Fire and Rescue also responded to the scene and ultimately pronounced the man deceased. He was identified as

ARTS+LEISURE

The Addison Independent

August 13, 2026



SNUGGLE INTO AN ANALOG REALITY

AN EVENING OF WORDS AND ART IN RIPTON

Jim Ellefson, Colleen Todd and Tal Birdsey gather ahead of their upcoming community reading and art display at the Chipman Inn on Thursday, Aug. 27. Both Ellefson and Birdsey will be reading from their newest books.

INDEPENDENT PHOTO / ELSIE LYNN PARINI

Have the dizzies from the rides at Field Days worn off yet? Only perhaps to be replaced by political palpitations from the primaries? Is your garden begging for attention? Where over-ripe veggies drip because harvesting had to wait... And — hold tight anxiety— school is right around the corner.

By **ELSIE LYNN PARINI**

Phew, summer's end can be, well, a little much.

Time out and give yourself the gift of grounding on Thursday, Aug. 27, from 5-7 p.m., when the Chipman Inn will host two local authors for a reading and evening in community that's free and open to all.

Leicester author Jim Ellefson, a recently retired creative writing and literature professor of 33 years at Champlain College, will read

from his newest book, "Conversations with the Underground," published by Fomite Press in Burlington. This semi-radical text combines poetry, folk tales, plays, short stories and more.

Ripton author Tal Birdsey, who is the head teacher, co-founder, and director of North Branch School in Ripton, will also read from a book of poetry, "Burnt Mountain Blues," which he plans to have published in February 2027 by Green Writer's Press.

As a bonus, Birdsey's abstract paintings will be hanging on the walls at the inn — a fully immersive experience, complete with light bites, homemade cookies and a chance to collapse into an analog reality.

"We're sympatico, Jim and I, in terms of bringing it up and bringing it down to a level where it feels real, and a part of life," Birdsey

said over coffee last weekend at the inn. "We're talking about ideas, and we're in love with these ideas, and we're overwhelmed by these ideas... There's a high level of joy and awe about it all."

Whether teaching college students at Champlain, or middle schoolers at North Branch, Ellefson and Birdsey strive to create places where people can have "real conversations."

"Sitting in a circle with kids trying to understand big ideas," this is important struggle, Birdsey emphasized. "We're trying to counteract the way things are... We're trying to be analog."

For example, Birdsey is writing a letter to his son every day this year — and his son (a

See **ANALOG** on page 2

FILM SCREENING

Steam, stunts and silent comedy: 'The General' comes alive with the Anvil Orchestra

Some movies endure because they tell unforgettable stories. Others last because they changed the language of cinema. Buster Keaton's "The General" (1926) does both.

This year marks "The General's" 100th anniversary, making it the perfect time to experience it as audiences first did — on the big screen, accompanied by live musicians.

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival will present "The General" with a live performance by the internationally acclaimed Anvil Orchestra, whose inventive, energetic accompaniment transforms silent films into unforgettable theatrical events.

Showtime will be 2 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 29, at the Middlebury Town Hall Theater.

Anvil Orchestra performances are less a traditional film score than a live conversation with the film's images — part concert, part



Fest
preview
By JAY CRAVEN

sound design, part comic improvisation — creating an experience that feels strikingly modern while honoring cinema's earliest traditions.

"The General" tells the story of Johnnie Gray, a Southern railroad engineer whose two great loves are his locomotive and his sweetheart, Annabelle Lee. When Union spies take both, Johnnie launches an improbable rescue mission that becomes one of the greatest chase sequences in film history.

See FILM on page 12



Celebrate Buster Keaton's 100th anniversary of "the General" (1926) at the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival in Middlebury, with a special screening on Saturday, Aug. 29, 2 p.m., at Town Hall Theater.

COURTESY PHOTO

ANALOG

continued from page 1

30-something who lives in New York City) is writing back every day, too. Ellefson practices this "real life" stuff

on the garlic farm he and his wife own and operate in Leicester.

"We've grown as much as 5,000 heads before," Ellefson said. "This year we grew 2,000.

"Really we use the garlic as a form of currency," he explained. "My wife (Lesley Wright) and I ran the young writers' conference at Champlain College for 20 years, and we'd get wonderful keynote speakers we couldn't afford ... We'd say, 'Sorry we can't pay you \$20,000, but we can give you a fraction of that plus five pounds of certified organic garlic.' The garlic wins every time."

Ellefson recently hosted a reading with Birdsey down at their home on Summer's Gale Farm, in a room that Birdsey described as the "eighth wonder of Addison County." The solarium that Birdsey is referring to has an 18-foot olive tree inside as well as a fountain — yes, it sounds magical.

"We bought a house no one wanted — it was a white elephant," Ellefson said. "The estate was previously owned by philanthropist Walter Cerf. We bought 100 acres in 2005, then three years later the original house came up for sale. We cashed in everything we had and came up with this down payment... In our dream we didn't say, look we want a house with a tree and a fountain, but that's what we ended up with."

Anyway, they filled this dream-room full of their "no-good friends and family" for a reading just a few weeks ago.

"After that reading, we sat around and talked," Birdsey recalled. "People were responding and asking questions; it was strangely moving — a journey into analog land."

So the duo is going to try it again, this time at Chipman Inn in Ripton, where new owner Colleen Todd and her partner Ray Paczkowski are leaning into gathering, conversation and connection.

"I always needed to find a small space to feel, cozy and safe and quiet," Todd

Continued on next page

explained, adding that she's struggled with anxiety, the chaos of the world and not feeling connected to it all. "Through that struggle of not finding my place out there, I decided I had to put all of my effort into creating my own space filled with those things that are real: for me that is connection, simplicity, art, good food and kindness."

For the past 13 years Todd supported her father through dementia; driving down to her hometown in New Jersey to care for him every two weeks.

"When he passed it was my chance to root myself," Todd said. "So, I took this risk."

Todd earned a bachelor's from Goddard College, where she wrote her thesis on

"treating the highly sensitive personality through creative expression." Though she says she has no hospitality training, her large Italian family undoubtedly left a mark. "Our door was always open, food was always available and love was everywhere," she said.

"I HAD TO PUT ALL OF MY EFFORT INTO CREATING MY OWN SPACE FILLED WITH THOSE THINGS THAT ARE REAL: FOR ME THAT IS CONNECTION, SIMPLICITY, ART, GOOD FOOD AND KINDNESS."

— Colleen Todd

"I never really knew what my gift or my niche was," Todd said humbly. "I guess it was really simple; just caring for people ... If people are suffering, I want to embrace them and show them something beautiful and make them feel welcome."

Take that anxiety.

COME SNUGGLE

Beyond the reading Aug. 27, Chipman Inn hosts weekly Snug Cafés and Snug Bar & Lounge hours (Thursday through the weekend) where visitors and neighbors are all welcome to come and relax together.

What's "Snug"? The Chipman Inn is a part of The Snug Company that supports the Snug Foundation — a nonprofit dedicated to kindness toward animals, each other, and the planet. Speaking of which, the annual Snugfest will be held just up Route 125 at the Snowbowl on Sept. 13 (more at snugfest.com).

ART ON THE WALLS

The Chipman Inn is also notably a new gallery. Ripton artist Sarah Wesson is helping the inn as a curator to line up a rotating cast

of artists who will share their work on the walls and shelves at the inn.

"I went over to the inn earlier this summer and noticed the freshly painted charcoal grey walls and said, Wow, that would be a nice backdrop for paintings," Wesson recalled. "Colleen was open to the idea of rotating different art on the walls and I was happy to coordinate."

Wesson kicked off the exhibits with a collection of her paintings called "Within Walking Distance" — paintings of plants Wesson picked on her walks.

"Her paintings are very much like her person," Todd said of Wesson's work. "She's very delicate and sweet and gentle and her paintings are elegant."

You still have a chance to see Wesson's work on view through Aug. 17. Next up will be Birdsey's abstract paintings, on view through mid-October.

Though Birdsey comes from a lineage of artists, he is entirely self-taught.

"I'm not very schooled or technical," Birdsey said. "What I try to get to is a painting that has structure, but looks like it was reckless... I'm always trying to find the balance between those two things — finding that tension."

"Tal was my son's teacher at North Branch School, that's how I became familiar with his work," Wesson said. "I like his work very much. He is such an important part of the Ripton community."



Sarah Wesson's paintings of plants she's found on her walks around her Ripton home will be on the walls at The Chipman Inn through Aug. 17.

COURTESY IMAGE / SARAH WESSON



Tal Birdsey's paintings will be on view at The Chipman Inn through Aug. 18 through mid-October.

COURTESY IMAGE / TAL BIRDSEY

The goal is to have new art on the walls every six to eight weeks. If you're interested in exhibiting at the Chipman Inn connect with Sarah Wesson by calling the inn at 802-345-4448 or visiting thechipmaninn.com/contact.

Middlebury Community Players & Company Be present the comedy

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"Five Women Wearing The Same Dress" by Alan Ball. Presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Dramatists Play Service. www.concordtheatricals.com



Young actors take on classic Greek tragedy to mark 15 years

own Hall Theater's Young Company Classical will bring a 16-member acting ensemble and a live rock band to the Rothrock Theatre stage in Middlebury to present "Antigone." Performances will be held Friday, Aug. 14, at 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 15-16, at 2 p.m.

Told through a patchwork of theatrical accounts, this version of the well-known Greek tragedy balances humor, comic bluster, and human connection with insurmountable loss — asking the foundational questions: *How shall we act? What must I do? What is it to be a human being?*

The production features a cast trained in stage combat, physical theatre, voice and text, including Anna Armstrong, Mara Bissonnette, Max Blumenthal, Jonathan Carpenter, Lily Finn, Henry Flynn, Ramona Hahn, Joni Houghton, Saskia F. Jones, Rowan Pickens, Genevieve Rathbun, Lachlan Sears, Julian Stein, Zara Trump, Noa Tzuriel and Sima Woll. Adelynn Leonard created the original music alongside the cast and various youth rock ensembles. The show is directed by Lindsay Pontius and Keziah Wilde.

The show marks a 15-year milestone for the program, which originated in 2011 under Lindsay Pontius. Pontius joined THT in 2011 — three years after the theater opened its doors in 2008 — tasked with learning about the community and creating a program to help the performing arts flourish throughout Addison County.



Actors from Town Hall Theater's Young Company Classical rehearse for the opening of "Antigone" — the classic Greek Tragedy that will take the stage in Middlebury, Aug. 14-16.

COURTESY PHOTO

ABOUT YOUNG COMPANY CLASSICAL

Young Company Classical is a three-week summer program where teens take on a classic play and perform it three times for a live audience.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS:

Tickets range from \$10-\$25, with proceeds from the generous ticket sales directly

benefitting Town Hall Theater's education scholarship program — ensuring that anyone of any age can take part in classes and camps. General admission seating; doors open 30 minutes prior to curtain. To purchase tickets visit townhalltheater.org. For more info contact tickets@townhalltheater.org or call 802-382-9222.



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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: Edith Beatty. Beatty works in encaustic, an ancient medium in which pigmented beeswax is melted, applied and fused layer by layer to build luminous, textured surfaces. Join Beatty for an artist's talk on Friday, Aug. 14. Refreshments begin at 6 p.m., followed by the talk at 7 p.m. A question-and-answer session will follow the presentation. Beatty's work will be on view through August.

EDGEWATER AT THE FALLS

1 Mill Street, Middlebury

For more info visit edgewatergallery.com, call 802-458-0098 or email info@edgewatergallery-vt.com.

"Near Enough to Dream" brings together the work of Weybridge's Victoria Blewer and Main's Dietlind Vander Schaaf, two artists whose practices move between observation and recollection. Though working in distinct mediums, both create images that resist straightforward description, inviting viewers into spaces where memory, atmosphere, and emotion become inseparable. On view July 11-Sept. 6.

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.

PHOTOPLACE GALLERY

3 Park Street, Middlebury

For more info visit photoplacegallery.com.

"Open Call: A Celebration of Contemporary Photography," juried by Paula Tognarelli and Gallery Director Zach Hoffman, presents a wide-ranging survey of current photographic practice in recognition of World Photography Day (Aug. 19). This open call exhibition features work across all styles and subjects, from traditional approaches to conceptual and experimental imagery. Showcasing photographers from around the world, the exhibition includes 35 images in the gallery and 40 in the online gallery. The exhibit will be on view Aug. 7-29.

See EXHIBITS on page 12

Cosmic Forecast

ARIES: March 21/April 20. Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way this week, Aries. You may not get many chances to test your mettle in the weeks to come, so it's important to act now.

TAURUS: April 21/May 21. Taurus, something that started out as a part-time venture could turn into much more. Figure out if this is the path you see yourself going and then make your move.

GEMINI: May 22/June 21. Let loose and have fun for a change, Gemini. Don't delay when others want to invite you out for a night on the town or even a brunch. Say "yes."

CANCER: June 22/July 22. There's a lot going on right now and it may have your head spinning, Cancer. Delegate some of your workload if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself.

LEO: July 23/Aug. 23. Leo, it is important to remember that your online presence never goes away. Watch what you post and be mindful of what you support in social media groups.

VIRGO: Aug. 24/Sept. 22. Family matters require your undivided attention this week, Virgo. You must dig in deep to address them. There are two sides to every story.

LIBRA: Sept. 23/Oct. 23. Libra, just when you started to lose hope, the new horizon you were seeking comes into view. It is well-deserved.

SCORPIO: Oct. 24/Nov. 22. Scorpio, if you find yourself with too much extra time on your hands, why not volunteer with the community to pass the time? This can be a great way to meet people.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 23/Dec. 21. When plans change on a dime, you are ready to roll with the new situation, Sagittarius. Higher-ups may get a peek at your quick thinking, which can land you a promotion.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22/Jan. 20. It's time to make amends with someone who did you wrong, Capricorn. Life is too short to hold grudges, and this person has since mended their ways.

AQUARIUS: Jan. 21/Feb. 18. Unless you take swift action, you could be heading for a financial free-fall, Aquarius. Start to pull back spending for a while and see if the situation will right itself.

PISCES: Feb. 19/March 20. Pisces, you are on fire lately. There's seemingly nothing you touch that isn't turning to gold. This trend will continue, but try not to let it go to your head.



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AUG. 14 — Halle Berry, actor (60)
AUG. 15 — Jennifer Lawrence, actor (36)
AUG. 16 — Taika Waititi, filmmaker (51)
AUG. 17 — Thierry Henry, soccer player (49)
AUG. 18 — Meriwether Lewis, explorer (d)

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

AUG. 19 — Orville Wright, inventor (d)
AUG. 20 — Robert Plant, singer (78)

CALENDAR

August 13-30
2026

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Online!

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THURSDAY, AUG. 13
GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE: OTTER CREEK GORGE IN MIDDLEBURY. Thursday, Aug. 13. Easy 2.6-mile hike with an elevation gain of 280 ft. This hike requires crossing two short suspension bridges over Belden Falls and takes you through a forest that skirts an open field before reentering the forest. The trail at the end goes over a rock outcropping with a cable for support. No dogs. Bring bug spray, snacks and water. Contact Steve Ralph at 802-398-5448 or sralph00@gmail.com to register. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

FRIDAY, AUG. 14
CARILLON CONCERT SERIES IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Aug. 14, 6 p.m., Middlebury Chapel. The Carillon Concert Series features beautiful concerts from Middlebury Chapel's bell tower. The melodic sounds of the carillon bells will ring out across the campus. Performer: Joseph Min, winner of the 2024 Queen Fabiola International Carillon Competition. Free.

FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC IN NEW HAVEN. Friday, Aug. 14, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Sweet Roots and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

YOUNG COMPANY CLASSICAL PRESENTS "ANTIGONE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Aug. 14, 7 p.m., Town Hall Theater. The 16-member ensemble time travels, rocks out and cajoles the audience with humor and pathos bringing to life the world of ancient Greece and making it have meaning today in this staging of Sophocles' Antigone directed by Lindsay Pontius and Keziah Wilde. \$10-\$25.

SATURDAY, AUG. 15
YOUNG COMPANY CLASSICAL PRESENTS "ANTIGONE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Saturday, Aug. 15, 2 p.m., Town Hall Theater. See Aug. 14 listing.

POCOCK ROCKS IN BRISTOL. Saturday, Aug. 15, 2-7 p.m., Main Street. Hudost, Red Admiral, Jacob Green, Eclipse, Tom Bisson & The Rustics and Remember Baker play the annual music festival and street fair. Enjoy food, drinks and shopping from local vendors. Free.

SILENT FILM SCREENING: "SON OF THE SHEIK" IN BRANDON. Saturday, Aug. 15, 7 p.m., Brandon Town Hall. Starring Rudolph Valentino in his final picture. This rip-roaring sequel to "The Sheik" is full of romance, adventure and thrills. Jeff Rapsis provides music. Free; donations accepted.

SUNDAY, AUG. 16
WETLAND WALK IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Aug. 16, 10 a.m.-noon, Wright Park. Guided nature walk led by Vermont wetland ecologist Zapata Courage, exploring the beaver-influenced ecosystem from the uplands to the Japanese boardwalk and wetland. Learn to identify common wetland plants and discover how floodplain wetlands protect communities while supporting diverse wildlife. Family-friendly, all ages welcome. Free. For more info visit maltvt.org.

MUSHROOM EXPLORATION WALK WITH MEG MADDEN IN ORWELL. Sunday, Aug. 16, 1-3 p.m., Mount Independence State Historic Site, 497 Mount Independence Road. Mushroom expert Meg Madden leads a walk to look for and learn about mushrooms on the Mount. Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather. Limited spaces; call 802-948-2000 well ahead to reserve your spot.

YOUNG COMPANY CLASSICAL PRESENTS "ANTIGONE" IN MIDDLEBURY. Sunday, Aug. 16, 2 p.m. See Aug. 14 listing.

ROCHESTER CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY CONCERT:

GYÖRGY KURTÁG AT 100 IN ROCHESTER. Sunday, Aug. 16, 4 p.m., Federated Church of Rochester. Rane Moore, clarinet; Adda Kridler, violin; Steve Beck, piano. Works by Kurtág, Bartók, Milhaud, Mozart, Poulenc and Schumann. Donations welcome. For more info visit rcmsvt.org.

PEET FARM SUMMER CONCERT SERIES: BRISSON, BOSS & PELLETIER IN CORNWALL. Sunday, Aug. 16, 5-7 p.m., Peet Farm Greenhouses. Spread out a blanket, unfold a lawn chair, pull up a picnic and let the music find you as the sun settles over the hills. Free admission.

MONDAY, AUG. 17
VERGENNES CITY BAND CONCERT IN VERGENNES. Monday, Aug. 17, 7-8 p.m., City green. Relax on the green and listen to some great free summer music.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 19
MUSIC AT THE RIVERBEND: DEB BRISSON & THE HAY BURNERS IN BRANDON. Wednesday, Aug. 19, 6 p.m., Riverbend, Central Park. Deb Brisson & The Hay Burners bring rootsy, soulful, bluesy and rockin' alt-country to Brandon. Rain location Brandon Town Hall. Free.

SUMMER LIVE MUSIC: ALBANY SOUND IN BRISTOL.

Wednesday, Aug. 19, 6-8 p.m., Tillerman, 1868 Route 116, Bristol. Enjoy live music and tacos, creative cocktails and mocktails, snacks, and paletas. You are welcome to bring your own blankets & chairs for the lawn. We also set up some tables and chairs. For more info visit thetillermanvt.com/live-music.

BRISTOL TOWN BAND SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE PARK IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m., Town Green. The Bristol Town Band is back for its 156th year of weekly evening concerts. Each Wednesday to 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.

THURSDAY, AUG. 20
PIZZA BY THE POND: ZOE CARTER LIVE IN GOSHEN. Thursday, Aug. 20, 5-8 p.m., Blueberry Hill Inn, 1245 Goshen Ripton Road. Enjoy all-you-can-eat wood-fired pizza made with Vermont flour, lemonade, and the music of award-winning folk singer-songwriter Zoe Carter. Pizza starts at 5, music at 6 p.m. BYOB. Local ice cream and Blueberry

Continued on next page

View Middlebury Community Television's Schedule Online!

Programs to Look Out For:

- All Things LGBTQ - 08/19 - 5PM
- HCC Board Meeting Live! - 8/20 - 5PM
- Team YAP - 8/21 - 5PM
- Democracy Now - Live - Weekdays - 8AM
- MCTV Late Night Lofi - All Night - 10PM
- Church Services - Sunday - 7AM

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middleburycommunitytv.org

Hill cookies also available. Well-behaved leashed dogs welcome. \$34 for adults; \$23 kids 7-11; free for kids 6 and under. Reservations open the Saturday before and are strongly suggested.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY PLAYERS: "FIVE WOMEN WEARING THE SAME DRESS" IN VERGENNES. Thursday, Aug. 20, 7:30 p.m., Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. Five bridesmaids. One hideous dress. Zero desire to be at this wedding. Catch the sharp-tongued comedy by Alan Ball (American Beauty, Six Feet Under). Directed by Kush Sharma. \$10. For more info visit middleburycommunityplayers.org.

FRIDAY, AUG. 21

CARILLON CONCERT SERIES IN MIDDLEBURY. Friday, Aug. 21, 6 p.m., Middlebury Chapel, 75 Hepburn Rd. The Carillon Concert Series features beautiful concerts from Middlebury Chapel's bell tower. The melodic sounds of the carillon bells will ring out across the campus. Performer: Charles Semowich, Carillonneur Emeritus, Riverside Church, NYC. Free.

FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC IN NEW HAVEN. Friday, Aug. 21, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Hard Scrabble, food from Gene's Chili Hut and Vermont wines.

Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free.

TINY CONCERT IN MONKTON. Friday, Aug. 21, 6 - 9 p.m., Monkton Town Hall. An evening of medicine music with Joydah Mae from Aotearoa/New Zealand. Joydah has a powerful voice, and her music will take you on journeys through your lifetime, hitting the heart, the soul and every layer in between. Bring a plate of delicious, nourishing food to share in a community meal. Space limited. \$20 or pay what you can. RSVP: HealingJourneys802@gmail.com.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY PLAYERS: "FIVE WOMEN WEARING THE SAME DRESS" IN VERGENNES. Friday, Aug. 21, 7:30 p.m. See Aug. 20 listing.

SATURDAY, AUG. 22

GETTING TOGETHER WITH GEORGIA O'KEEFE AND ALFRED STIEGLITZ IN RIPTON. Saturday, Aug. 22, 3 - 4 p.m., Ripton Community Church. This performance piece is a dramatic reading featuring Diana Bigelow and Jim Stapleton as the historic couple. The dialogue employs many of the iconic artists' own words and is enhanced throughout by visual images of their artwork. The program sheds light on their personal relationship and their impact on American art. It runs about

45 minutes, after which Jim and Diana invite comments and questions. Donations welcome.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY PLAYERS: "FIVE WOMEN WEARING THE SAME DRESS" IN VERGENNES. Saturday, Aug. 22, 2 and 7:30 p.m. See Aug. 20 listing.

SUNDAY, AUG. 23

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB HIKE TO SKYLIGHT POND IN RIPTON. Sunday, Aug. 23. Afternoon hike up to Skylight Pond. This is a 5-6-mile hike with a moderate climb of 1200 ft. Leashed dogs allowed. Contact Ellen Cronan to register and for more information, 908-595-2926. For more info visit gmcbreadloaf.org.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY PLAYERS: "FIVE WOMEN WEARING THE SAME DRESS" IN VERGENNES. Sunday, Aug. 23, 2 p.m., See Aug. 20 listing.

MONDAY, AUG. 24

VERGENNES CITY BAND CONCERT IN VERGENNES. Monday, Aug. 24, 7-8 p.m., City green. Relax on the green and listen to some great free summer music.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 26

MUSIC AT THE RIVERBEND: GALLISON HILL BAND IN BRANDON. Wednesday, Aug. 26, 6 p.m., Riverbend, Central Park. Gallison Hill Band closes the season with a modern take on classic rock. Rain location Brandon Town Hall. Free.

SUMMER LIVE MUSIC:

REMEMBER BAKER IN BRISTOL. Wednesday, Aug. 26, 6-8 p.m., Tillerman, 1868 Route 116, Bristol. Enjoy live music and tacos, creative cocktails and mocktails, snacks, and paletas. You are welcome to bring your own blankets & chairs for the lawn. We also set up some tables and chairs. For more info visit thetillermanvt.com/live-music.

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL. Wednesday, Aug. 26. Each year, we welcome more than eighty filmmakers and hundreds of audience members for five days of exceptional films, notable honorees, panels and events, topped off by happy

See *CALENDAR* on page 8

FOURTH ANNUAL

snugfest

SEPTEMBER 13th, 2026



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Jen Hartwick, Nick Cassarino and Nate Edgar
Ray Paczkowski and Russ Lawton + Bob Wagner
Hot Pickin' Party + Electric Bear

Middlebury Snowbowl

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SEE
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HAPPEING

WHAT'S HAPPENING

NEXT DOOR.

Meet 'Analog Astronaut' Cassandra Klos in Rochester

BigTown Gallery will host a Community Café Pop-Up in its garden on Sunday, Aug. 16, followed by a gallery presentation by photographer, artist, curator and analog astronaut Cassandra Klos.

The Community Café Pop-Up will run from 8 a.m.-11 a.m., in the garden. Visitors are invited to enjoy coffee, savory hand pies, freshly baked scones and breakfast prepared in the garden's wood-fired oven. All items are available by donation, with proceeds supporting local nonprofits.

The pop-up series has raised more than \$6,000 to date for local organizations, including The Valley Hub, Feed the Valley, Ridgeline Outdoor Collective and the Rochester Farmers Market. Donations from this Sunday's event will support BigTown Projects.

The garden's wood-fired oven will still be warm from the pizza served at the Wild & Scenic Film Festival the night before. Chef PJ Lauriello is leading the two-day pizza-to-café

push, keeping the oven working overtime and giving more than 20 community bakers a well-deserved Sunday off.

Following the café, Klos will give a special presentation, at 11 a.m., in the gallery. Klos first came to the BigTown Gallery in 2024 to co-create the "My Place Photography Workshop" with Jim Dow and BigTown, returning in 2025 to lead a second session. Through these workshops, she has helped participants discover how photography can deepen their understanding of place, memory and community.

Klos is an established photographer, artist and curator whose work documents our present moment for leading print publications in the United States. Her practice has also led to a parallel career as an analog astronaut, participating in five simulated Moon and Mars missions around the world, including serving as commander of simulated space missions in Utah and Arizona. Together, these practices explore the importance of place, bridging



Photographer and analog astronaut Cassandra Klos will give a presentation at 11 a.m. at BigTown Gallery in Rochester after a Community Café Pop-Up. Free and open to all.

IMAGES COURTESY OF CASSANDRA KLOS

simulated extraterrestrial landscapes with the people, environments and communities we call home.

No registration is required. Attendees are welcome to picnic in the garden and stay for Klos's talk in the gallery. For more info visit bigtownvermont.com, or contact stableinn@bigtownvermont.com or 802-565-0324.

CALENDAR

continued from page 7

hours and evening parties. Dedicated solely to the work of first- and second-time directors, MNFF provides a unique and supportive platform for artists taking early steps into the world of independent cinema. Passes and bundles \$35-\$230. For more info visit middfilmfest.org.

BRISTOL TOWN BAND SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE PARK IN BRISTOL.

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 7 p.m., Town Green. The Bristol Town Band is back for its 156th year of weekly evening concerts. This is the last Wednesday this summer that 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.

THURSDAY, AUG. 27

SILENT DISCO ON THE GREEN IN MIDDLEBURY.

Thursday, Aug. 27, 3-7 p.m., Triangle Park. Grab a pair of wireless headphones, choose from three music channels and enjoy this free, family-friendly Silent Disco on the Green. Whether you're dancing with friends, laughing with family or trying something completely new, everyone is welcome at this unforgettable outdoor experience. First 20 folks to RSVP get a special gift. Free. For more info visit tinyurl.com/middsilentdisco.

PIZZA BY THE POND: JADE RAVINS PLAYS LIVE IN GOSHEN. Thursday, Aug. 27, 5-8 p.m., Blueberry Hill Inn, 1245 Goshen Ripton

Road. Enjoy all-you-can-eat wood-fired pizza made with Vermont flour, lemonade and a beautiful atmosphere. Great food, music and outdoor atmosphere. Modern day Johnny and June duo Jaded Ravins play soulful original music. Pizza starts at 5, music at 6 p.m. BYOB. Local ice cream and Blueberry Hill cookies also available. Well-behaved leashed dogs welcome. \$34 for adults; \$23 kids 7-11; free for kids 6 and under. Reservations open the Saturday before and are strongly suggested.

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL THURSDAY, AUG. 27. See Aug. 26 listing. For more info visit middfilmfest.org.

FRIDAY, AUG. 28

FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC IN NEW HAVEN. Friday, Aug. 28, 6-8 p.m., Lincoln Peak Vineyard, 142 River Road. Enjoy live music by Electric Bear, food from Cravens

and Vermont wines. Bring a blanket and relax at the vineyard. Free

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL.

Friday, Aug. 28. See Aug. 26 listing. For more info visit middfilmfest.org.

SATURDAY, AUG. 29

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL.

Saturday, Aug. 29. See Aug. 26 listing. For more info visit middfilmfest.org.

THE VERMONT YAZZ FESTIVAL IN FERRISBURGH.

Saturday, Aug. 29, 2-6 p.m., Town Offices and Community Center, 3279 Route 7. The experimental, improvisational sound-art festival formerly known as BTV Yazz Fest returns for a family-friendly afternoon of left-of-center music, food and art. Face painting courtesy of Unpredictable Artist. Free parking. BYO NA drinks and snacks. Other art

offerings, crafts & vendors. \$15 suggested donation; no one turned away for lack of funds. Contact JB Ledoux with questions: theleduo@gmail.com.

STERLING ELLIOTT IN CONCERT IN STARKSBORO.

Saturday, Aug. 29, 7:30 p.m., Common Ground Center. Cellist Sterling Elliott, still in his mid-twenties, has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the LA Phil, and more. After teaching at a 7-day cello retreat exploring well-being and the arts, he will perform with participants and as a soloist. \$12-\$18. For more info visit cellochanwoods.com.

SUNDAY, AUG. 30

MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL.

Sunday, Aug. 30. See Aug. 26 listing. For more info visit middfilmfest.org.

PUZZLES

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ACROSS

1. Midway between south and southeast
4. Fathers
9. Wine grape
14. Al Bundy's wife
15. Derived from ammonia
16. Venezuelan state
17. Interest rate
18. Experts
20. Vascular tissues
22. Smooth and glossy
23. Administrative region in S. Korea
24. One from Damascus
28. Special interest group
29. It cools your home
30. Oh, God!
31. Intestinal pouches

33. Men
37. Twelfth star in a constellation
38. Former CIA
39. Arrange in grades of size
41. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
42. "The Great Lakes State"
43. Having earlike appendages
44. Momentarily stop
46. Ancient kingdom
49. Of I
50. White clerical vestment
51. Songs to one's beloved
55. Charges
58. Computer application originator
59. A place to dock a

- boat
60. One guided by reason
64. Slang for cigarette
65. Sailboats
66. "Jerry Maguire" actor Zellweger
67. Screen type
68. Country legend Haggard
69. Puts together in time
70. When you anticipate arriving

DOWN

1. Involuntary muscular contraction
2. Eastern US transit agency
3. Leaves a place
4. Cease to participate

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16				
17				18						19				
20			21					22						
23						24	25						26	27
		28				29					30			
31	32					33		34	35	36			37	
38				39	40							41		
42				43							44	45		
46		47	48					49			50			
51				52	53	54				55			56	57
		58								59				
60	61							62	63				64	
65								66					67	
68								69					70	

1	4		8					
				1			3	
		8	6	4				
4	9	2					1	
	8				6		7	
			3		5	1		6
3		5			9			2
			4					

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

5. Current units
6. Cease to exist
7. General's assistant (abbr.)
8. Earth vibration
9. Very strong winds
10. For each one
11. A bog
12. The creation of beautiful or significant things
13. Affirmative
19. Pie _ _ mode
21. Nonclerical
24. Indonesian island
25. Educational

- environment
26. Namibian peoples
27. Bring out or develop
31. Moves into a place of thought
32. Out of the way
34. Loads a ship
35. Beloved Hollywood alien
36. Distinguishes
40. The ancient Egyptian sun god
41. Secondary or explanatory title
45. Relating to a wing

47. One who gives a speech
48. In the middle
52. Loop with a running knot
53. Airborne (abbr.)
54. Sweet persons
56. Put into play
57. Small cattle breed
59. Millisecond
60. Revolutions per minute
61. They _ _
62. Moon crater
63. A place to stay the night

This week's puzzle solutions can be found on Page 15.



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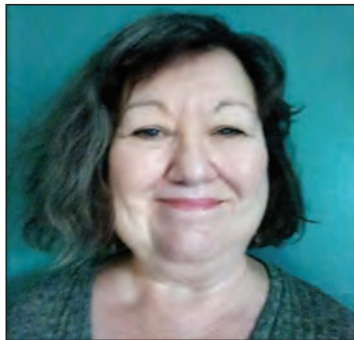
STILL SUMMER, STILL MAKING!

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ASK A MASTER GARDENER

GETTING TO KNOW CHICORY



Deborah Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener who volunteers as a garden columnist and participates in Bennington County Extension Master Gardener Chapter activities.

When you hear the word "chicory" you might first think of curly endive (*Cichorium endivia*), a leafy vegetable available at farmers markets or the grocery store.

By **DEBORAH J. BENOIT** Chicory is also the common name of a wildflower, (*Cichorium intybus*), that is known as

blue sailors, coffeeweed and cornflower.

Chicory is an herbaceous perennial with light blue flowers on stems that can reach over three feet tall. Each flower opens only once, usually just for that morning. Each day, new flowers open.

Chicory was introduced to North America by colonists who grew it for food, animal feed, and use in folk medicine. It spread across the continent and can now be found growing in United States Department of Agriculture Hardiness Zones 3 to 9. Look for a swath of blue in fields or at the side of the road.

If you'd like to add chicory to your flower garden or wildflower patch, finding starter

plants or seeds locally may be challenging, but both can be found online. Whether you purchase starter plants or begin them from seed indoors yourself, transplanting can be tricky. Great care must be taken to avoid damaging the plant's long taproot. Instead, consider sowing seeds directly in garden soil.

In early spring, select a sunny location with rich soil that drains well. Sow seeds according to package directions several weeks before the last average frost date for your area. You can find your last average frost date at garden.org/apps/frost-dates using your zip code.

Chicory can also be directly sown in late summer or early fall. Do so well before your

See *GARDEN* on page 11

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A syrphid fly, a pollinator, enjoys the pollen and nectar of chicory.

GARDEN

continued from page 10

before the ground freezes. Don't be concerned if the above-ground growth dies back after a hard frost. With healthy roots, new growth should emerge in the spring.

Chicory's initial growth forms a rosette of toothed leaves similar to a dandelion. The plant won't produce flowers during that first year, instead spending its energy on developing strong roots. During its second year as the soil warms after the cold of winter, it will send up flower stalks with smaller leaves and put on a continuing show of blue blossoms through fall.

While chicory doesn't do well as a cut flower, its leaves, buds, flowers and roots are all edible. Young leaves can be added to salads. As the season progresses, leaves will grow more bitter. They can be boiled like spinach to reduce the bitter taste. Flower buds can be eaten raw. Freshly

location's anticipated first frost date to allow roots to become well-established picked flowers make a lovely edible garnish, though they may be bitter. As always, be sure to positively identify any plant you intend to consume and be certain it hasn't been treated with pesticides or other toxic substances.

Chicory root can be boiled and eaten as a vegetable, but perhaps the best-known use is as a coffee substitute. For centuries, it has been roasted and ground to brew a naturally caffeine-free beverage. At times when coffee was scarce or cost prohibitive, chicory root has been used on its own or combined with coffee.



Although each bloom lasts only a day, the chicory plant produces new flowers daily for weeks.

PHOTO BY DEBRA HELEBA

In addition to its value as an attractive, edible plant in the garden, chicory attracts pollinators and beneficial insects. Its extended bloom time provides them with a reliable food source for months during the growing season.

If you have questions about growing chicory or home gardening in general, contact the University of Vermont Extension Master Gardener Helpline online at go.uvm.edu/gardenhelpline or by phone (802-656-5421, Thursdays, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.) from April to October.



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

We post our pets too! Follow us and our furry friends.

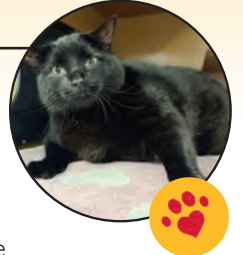


Pets In Need

HOMeward BOUND

Addison County's Humane Society

Ava



Ava is a 4-year-old black shorthair cat with a heart as big as her lovable frame. She's waiting patiently to meet someone who'll appreciate all the sweetness she has to give. Ava was surrendered to us when her previous family sadly couldn't take care of her anymore. She would do best indoors. She may do well with your cats at home if introduced slowly. Ava was 20 pounds when she arrived, and is on a special diet, so we would love it if her next family could keep her on her weight loss journey!

Ferry



Ferry is a young tabby girl ready to bring some energy into your home! She was found as a stray hanging out by the Shoreham ferry. At just 1-and-a-half years old, she's at that fun age where playtime and exploration are her favorite things. She's already litter box trained, so settling in should be a breeze. Ferry is friendly and full of personality; she will thrive as your indoor companion. Ferry would love to meet you and show you what a wonderful addition she can be to your family!

Lily

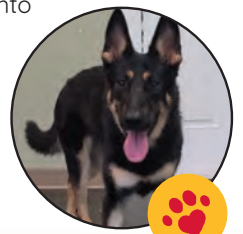


Lily is a 10-year-old grey and white longhair gentleman! (Yes, we know his name is confusing, but it's what he's used to!) Lily is a very social, very chatty boy with a big puffy tail. He is already litter box trained and ready to settle into a cozy indoor home where he can be your affectionate companion. He's a friendly soul who loves a good cuddle, and at his age, he's got plenty of love left to give. Come by and say hi to sweet Lily.

Tia & Tamara



Sisters Tia and Tamara came to the shelter together after being housed with multiple dogs. They haven't had many opportunities to experience the world, and are understandably shy and cautious in new situations. With patience, consistency, and time to build trust, they will blossom into the loyal and loving companions they're meant to be. They're still working on their leash skills, so a fenced-in yard is required. Both girls will do best with someone who understands that good things take time and will let them settle in at their own pace.



Homeward Bound
Addison County's Humane Society



Want to learn more?

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802-388-1100 | HomewardBoundAnimals.org
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FILM

continued from page 2

Keaton insisted on shooting with real trains, real locomotives, real bridges, and real Oregon landscapes. Nearly every spectacular stunt was performed by Keaton himself. There were no digital effects, no hidden safety wires, and no stunt doubles for the star. When Keaton runs across moving train cars or sits casually on the locomotive's connecting rods as its wheels turn beneath him, audiences witness real feats of timing, athleticism and courage.

The film's climax features one of the most spectacular stunts ever attempted: a full-sized locomotive plunging into a river after the bridge beneath it collapses. The sequence was shot in one take.

Keaton possessed one of cinema's most

distinctive comic personas. I love Charlie Chaplin's work, but while Chaplin charmed audiences with warmth and emotion, Keaton remained famously deadpan — the "Great Stone Face." His expression rarely changed, no matter how absurd the circumstances. His comedy came from his unwavering determination, physical precision, and ability to find ingenious solutions to impossible problems.

"*The General*" appears on every list of the greatest films ever made. The Anvil Orchestra is among the world's leading interpreters of silent cinema, bringing wit, imagination and musical versatility to classic films. Their scores weave together percussion, found objects, keyboards, accordion, electronics and an array of sounds that respond in real time to the action on screen.

MNFF features first- and second-time filmmakers — but we also believe that every new generation of directors builds on the

discoveries of those who came before. Long before dialogue took over, Buster Keaton showed how framing, movement, rhythm, suspense, and visual invention could convey everything an audience needed to know.

Now a hundred years old, "*The General*" remains breathtakingly modern. Paired with the Anvil Orchestra's live accompaniment, it transforms into a classic film screening and a shared community event that reminds us why audiences first fell in love with movies.

Editor's Note: This year's festival runs Aug. 26-30. Festival passes and tickets are now on sale at middfilmfest.org.

Jay Craven is co-founder and Artistic Director at MNFF and an independent filmmaker with 11 narrative feature films, a comedy TV series and four documentaries to his credit.

EXHIBITS

continued from page 5

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ART STAND

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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. The exhibit will open May 16 to the public.

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 pacificism, 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.

SPARROW ART SUPPLY

44 Main St., Middlebury

For more info visit sparrowartsupply.com

Featured artist Ashlee Guiles. A collection of thoughtful stained glass mosaics. Guiles highlights the vibrant colors, light and movement that she observes in nature. On view through August.

MORE EXHIBITS

Online!

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NEW HAVEN | 547 Cobble Rd | MLS #5103092
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Meticulously maintained saltbox-style log home tucked away at the end of a quarter-mile drive. Barn with water and electric, chicken coop, fruit trees and stone walls, all only 15 mins. to Bristol or Middlebury from this unique, move-in ready home.

NEW TO MARKET



SALISBURY | 55 Story Dr | MLS #5104301
2 BD | 1 BA | 648 SF | 2.00 AC | \$360,000

Turn-key, fully furnished, energy-efficient home with new appliances, mini splits, and a Tesla battery for backup power. High ceilings and plenty of natural light, a fenced yard and space for gardens and lawn games—all just 7 miles from downtown Middlebury.

NEW TO MARKET



BRANDON | 13 Sunset Drive | MLS #5104125
2 BR | 2 BA | 1330 SF | 0.65 AC | \$399,000

One-level, open-concept living in this well-cared for home. Much to appreciate with the mini-split cooling/heating and gas stove fireplace, vaulted ceiling over the kitchen/great room, rooftop solar, paved drive, and an attached two-car garage.



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World Photography Day meet and greet held in Middlebury on Aug. 19

To celebrate World Photography Day, PhotoPlace Gallery in Middlebury is inviting photographers from across Vermont to an informal evening of conversation, connection and community on Wednesday, Aug. 19, from 5-7 p.m.

Visitors are encouraged to meet fellow photographers, explore the current exhibition, "Open Call: A Celebration of Contemporary Photography," and help shape a new Middlebury and Addison County Photography Club. Professionals, hobbyists and those who simply enjoy making photographs are all welcome to

this free event.

Organizers envision a flexible, member-driven group that could feature:

- Monthly gatherings and social events
- Group photo walks and gallery visits
- Workshops, guest speakers, and portfolio reviews
- Constructive image critiques and collaborative projects

For more info and to sign up to be a part of this new group visit photoplacegallery.com/about/middlebury-and-addison-county-photography-club.



"Rebels" by Zachary P. Stephens earned Honorable Mention in the "Open Call" exhibit on view now at PhotoPlace Gallery in Middlebury.

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It costs a lot — and takes a lot of time and care — to put out the news. Every week, our reporters, photographers, and editors meet with sources all over the county, attend public meetings and sports games, chat with local leaders, visit with artists, farmers, educators, centenarians, and other local characters. Then there's managing press releases, obits, calendar items, letters, op-eds, town news, and all the ad creation, layout, and online postings. And don't forget about MiniBury, circulation, and our incredible sales reps who work every day with local businesses.

Add it all up and we invest over \$25,000 per week into each newspaper — all for the price of \$2 per week at the newsstand,

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Even though we work hard to keep our rates as low as possible, we realize the cost may still be a barrier for some. That's why we were thrilled to partner with our **ADDY ALL-STARS** to offer the SCOOP50 discount (\$50 off a 1-year print + digital subscription).

Since launching the **ADDY ALL-STARS** program on Feb. 29, 2024, support from local donors and successful turnouts like this one have allowed us to subsidize thousands of dollars in subscriptions to *The Addison Independent*. Every new subscriber and every **ADDY ALL-STAR** helps strengthen local journalism in our community.

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